

Hotel Handbook for Intercultural Competence

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Module: Cultural Awareness

Module Number BMIH5003

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Executive Summary

As a service-driven a cyclical industry, hotels always face intense competition and the need for innovation and services. Because of this nature, cultural intelligence is of utmost importance as it enables the hotel employees to act according to the norms, values and cultures of their respective countries. For the analysis of the impact of cultural differences, York Marriott Hotel has been chosen.

This study has been prepared to show examine the cultural differences between two selected countries- the UK and South Korea. As a European country, the UK has several etiquettes for dining, showing gestures and other arrangements. Meanwhile, as a country in the Confucian Asian region, South Koreans have strict cultural rules. Through Hofstede's cultural dimension model, these factors have been pointed out and compared with each other.

After that, the critical analysis of these countries has been performed based on the cultural dimension model. Then, a handbook showing the summary of the overall learning has been prepared in the form of a summary sheet. This will also help the hotel employees of the UK and South Korea. Finally, it has been found that, following the country-specific rules and learning the etiquette of foreign countries help hotels to earn more revenues

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Introduction

Cultural intelligence is referred to as the capability to interact and relate effectively across different cultures, while cultural competence denotes effective communication of an individual's culturally diverse situations (Caputo et al., 2019). Hofstede's theory of cultural dimension is widely used to find cultural differences (Sent & Kroese, 2022).



Figure 01: Hofstede's Framework of Cultural Dimension

Source: Cheng, 2020

This study analyses the variations in culture between the UK and South Korea. It has shown the comparison using this model and described the values and norms in the countries. It has also analysed the need and ways of the employees of the selected hotel- York Marriott Hotel in the UK to adapt to South Korean culture. For their training purpose, comparative analysis and handbook showing "Do's & Don'ts" has been provided too.

Analysis of Country A

The country chosen for the analysis is the UK, while the hotel selected to introduce cultural competence is York Marriott Hotel, situated in Tadcaster Road, York, United Kingdom (Marriott.com, 2022).

Culture of the UK

As per the model, the dimensions are:

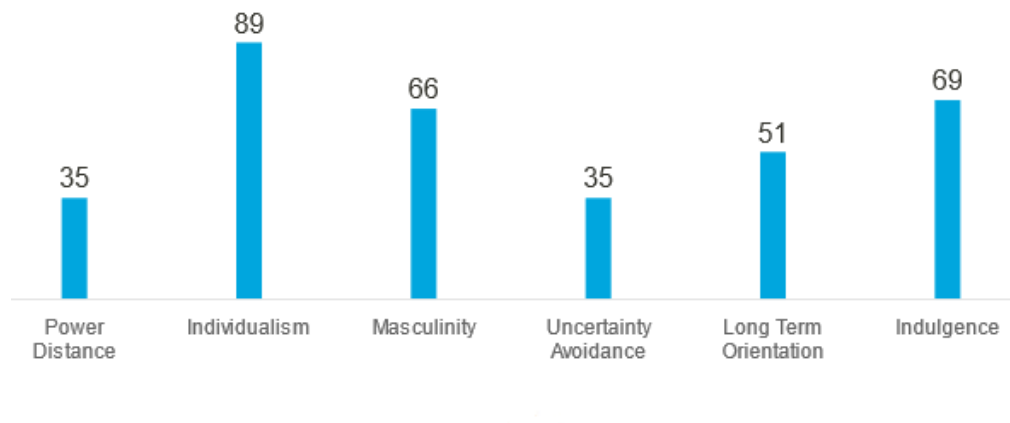


Figure 02: Cultural Analysis of the UK

Source: Hofstede-Insights.com, 2022

Power Distance- It expresses the cultural attitudes towards inequalities of the individuals. With a low score of 35, the people of the UK believe that the minimisation of inequalities in society should be minimised.

Individualism- With a high score of 89, the culture of the country is highly individualistic. The emphasis on personal development, and fulfilment makes the hotel employees perform their jobs affectionately without establishing personal connections with all (Cooper, 2019).

Masculinity- The hotel employees are energetic, competitive and focused to achieve goals due to the masculine culture. At 66 score, the culture is highly motivated by success and achievement.

Uncertainty Avoidance- The UK people are quite happy about the uncertainties of life. The hotel employees have the enthusiasm to go with the flow and to use their qualities in a changed situation.

Long-term Orientation- As the score is intermediate at 51, some of the hotel employees may focus on long-term goals while others focus on short-term ones.

Indulgence- The extent to which the UK people control their emotions and desires is high. The people here seek a way of enjoying life and having fun (Fekete, 2020). So, the hotel should provide sufficient leisure activities with the most comfort for these people.

Analysis of Country B

The study has used South Korea, a country within the confusing Asian region, for the analysis of culture through Hofstede's model.

Culture of South Korea

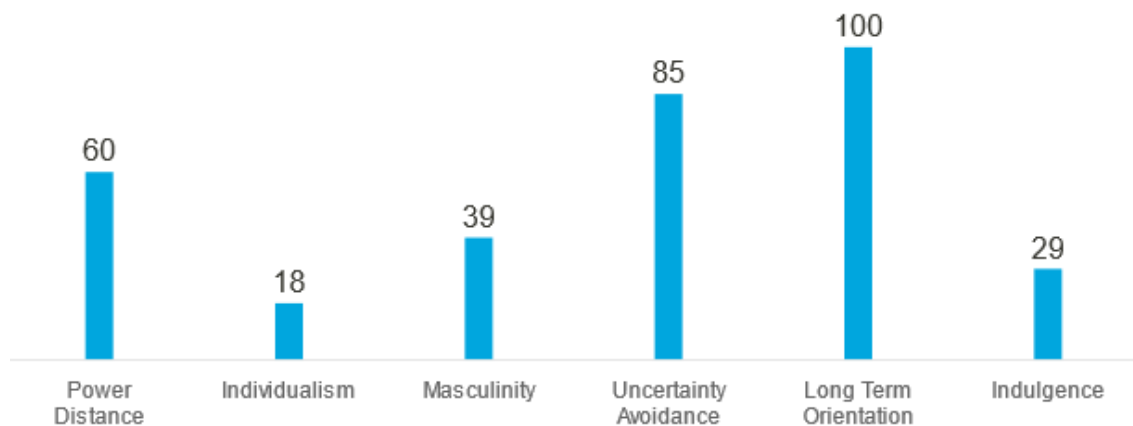


Figure 03: Cultural Analysis of South Korea

Source: Hofstede-Insights.com, 2022

Power Distance- The score is 60, meaning that South Korea is a slightly hierarchical society. Seniority is based on age or position and is strictly maintained. They prefer humble and sweet gestures, which are to be provided by the employees of the hotel.

Individualism- With a very low score of 18, South Koreans are collectivistic. They focus on the enrichment of family life and the creation of memories together (Kim et al., 2021). So, the hotels should provide emphasis on serving all family members.

Masculinity- The people of South Korea believe that work is for living. Here people value equality and quality of work life. So, the workplace relationship is friendly and is based on negotiation.

Uncertainty Avoidance- Time management, hard work and precision inherently motivate people here. The hotel needs to be specific about its services and ensure to be precise while dealing with the people of this country.

Long-term Orientation- South Korea is one of the most pragmatic countries with a score of 100. They believe in the virtue of good work and intentions. So, hotel employees should be passionate to respect their values.

Indulgence- The people of South Korea tend to be restrained, which means they are very driven by social norms and do not care for leisure time much.

Country Analysis

Comparison Analysis

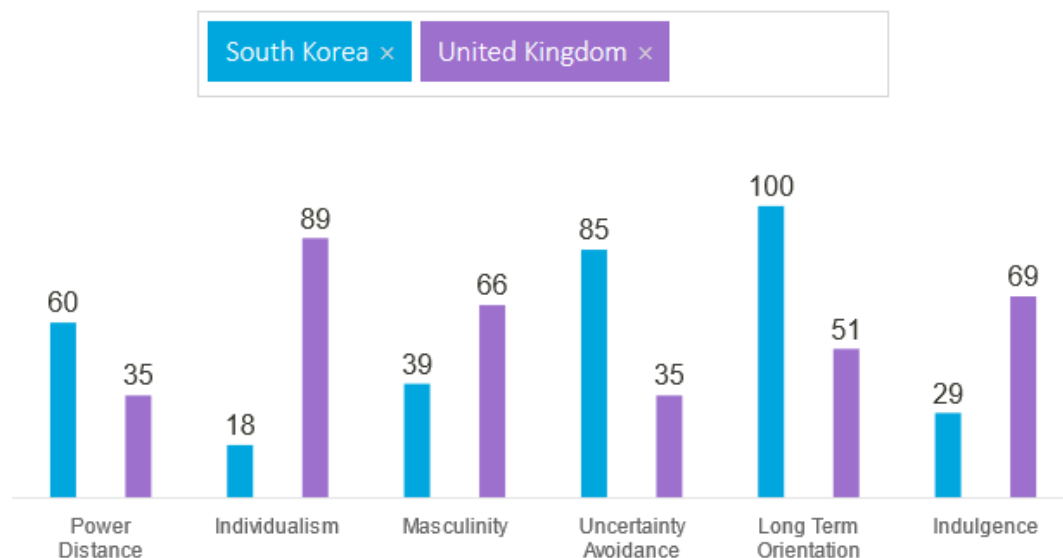


Figure 04: Comparative Analysis of the UK & South Korea

Source: Hofstede-Insights.com, 2022

As shown here, there are some significant issues with the culture of these two countries based on their beliefs, habits and history.

Critical Analysis

South Koreans like everything to be in a proper manner. For example, while receiving something, it is considered rude to take it with one hand only (Kim & Plester, 2019). So, the hotel staff should receive things with two hands. In the UK, this is not a big concern but it is appreciated to say- 'please' while giving or taking something. Bowing is also a part of Korean culture, while most females prefer to give a small bow instead of handshakes.

Age and seniority are of very importance to Koreans. While eating, it is supposed that the elderly will start eating first. Even pouring drinks is not supposed to be done by someone for oneself. So, while being the host, the hotel employees should take proper care of treating elderlies first. Meanwhile, in the UK, pouring drink is not something to be cautious of. People can start to eat before elderlies.

South Koreans have distinctive preferences about some specific things. For example, writing a name with red ink is considered rude. Some Koreans believe the number 4 is not good and they avoid it. So, York Marriott Hotels staff should take these points in mind. Moreover, Koreans are very respectful of maintaining their cultures so; the hotel's staff should learn the basic table serving, drink serving and gesturing etiquettes before greeting them (Richter et al., 2021).

As a family-oriented country, South Koreans prefer eating in a private place, so if the hotel becomes able to provide them a private place to eat with their home food, it will make them contented (Federenko, 2018). Moreover, they expect sincere apologies if any hotel personnel make any mistake. So, learning the common words and cultural norms will be advantageous for the hotel.

Handbook

The following handbook can be used by the hotel employees for getting a guideline of proper etiquette in the UK and South Korea:

Etiquettes		Do's and Don'ts
Greetings	UK	- Gentle handshake with a smile, not holding the hand for too long - Address guests with last name - Keep the eye contact short
	South Korea	- Offer handshake with both hands - Avoid handshake at first with women - Bowing is another option to handshake (Udayanga, 2021) - Avoid any other kind of physical touch
Nonverbal communication	UK	- Formally address and maintain personal space while serving - Avoid talking and laughing loudly - Avoid asking about personal issues and asking where people are going while they asked to 'Excuse themselves'
	South Korea	- Maintain strict table manners and serve food first to the eldest one (Jung, 2022) - Pass dishes with right hand - Avoid blowing nose in public

Attire	UK	- Maintain dress codes and formal wares (Scott, 2021) - Avoid wearing flashy outfits in the hotel
	South Korea	- Avoid wearing too revealing dress - Dressing well is anticipated
Dining	UK	- Never take away the plates if the fork and knife are - Serve appetizers, main courses, desserts one after another
	South Korea	- Putting the bottle and glasses for drinking on the table so that the people can serve themselves - Avoid going to the table too often (Jung, 2022) - Providing private places for eating if possible
Others	UK	- Let the host start eating - Make proper use of napkins, spoons and forks
	South Korea	- Starting to eat with soup - Avoid using one hand to serve foods

Table 01: Summary Sheet for hotel Staff in the UK & South Korea

Source: Author's Creation

Conclusion

The report has shown the importance of cultural intelligence and its impact of it by analysing the cultural differences between the UK and South Korea. Using York Marriott Hotel as the chosen one, this report has pointed out significant cultural norms, practices and preferences in both countries. As a service-driven organisation, this hotel should ensure proper education of the diverse culture of people of the world. Being aware of the cultural differences between the UK and South Korea and acting accordingly will give the management of York Marriott Hotel an upper hand. Using the summary sheet provided at the last of the report will also help in this respect.

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