

Cross-Cultural Aspects of Tourism and Hospitality: A Dyadic Perspective

Intercultural Competence, Intercultural Sensitivity, and Cultural Intelligence

“When in Rome, do as the Romans do” St. Ambrose (340–397)

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Learning Objectives

- ▶ Understand the concept of intercultural sensitivity and its influence on tourism and hospitality service encounters.
- ▶ Understand the components of intercultural competence.
- ▶ Understand how intercultural competence can be developed.
- ▶ Explain the relevance of the dimensions of intercultural sensitivity to various service encounter situations.

Adjustment and Adaptation of Interaction and Communication

- ▶ People need to adjust and adapt their verbal and nonverbal communication even when they interact with people from the same culture, a culture that they may be fairly accustomed with.
- ▶ The adjustment and adapting of verbal and nonverbal communication increases the feeling of resemblance, similarity, commonness and mutuality and hence, familiarity.

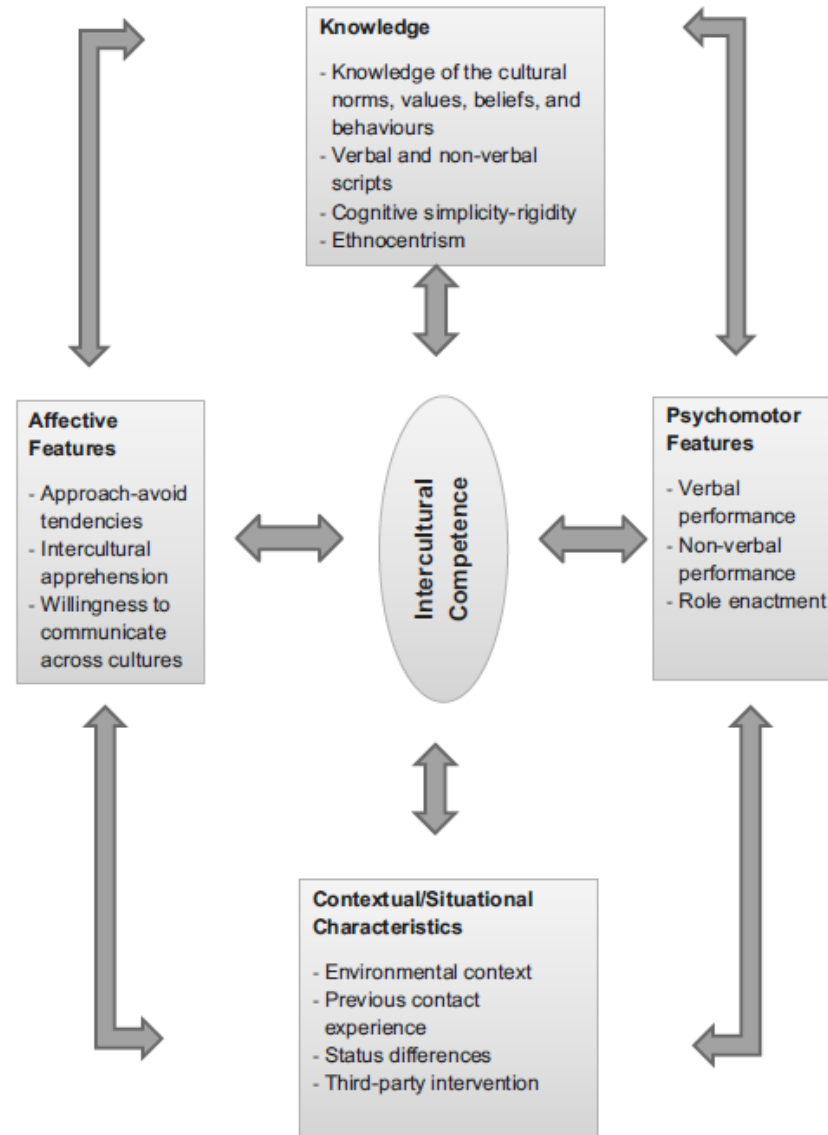
Adjustment and Adaptation of Interaction and Communication

- ▶ The establishment of a feeling of familiarity increases trust and liking (Westerman et al., 2015), by reducing the risk and threat unfamiliar people and contexts may present.
- ▶ Similarity (as opposed to contrast) increases liking and persuasion. (Faraji–Rad et al., 2015)

Intercultural Competence

- ▶ the ability of an individual to communicate effectively in cross-cultural situations and to relate appropriately in a variety of cultural context (Bennett and Bennett, 2004).
- ▶ Intercultural competence increases customer satisfaction and reliability (Baum and Devienne, 2008; Sharma et al., 2009).

Intercultural Competence Model (Neuliep, 2018)



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Intercultural Competence – Components

Knowledge Component

- ▶ *the knowledge of the cultural norms, values, beliefs and behaviours, verbal and nonverbal scripts, cognitive simplicity–rigidity and ethnocentrism.*
- ▶ the extent to which a person knows about the culture of the person with whom s/he is interacting (Neuliep, 2018).

Intercultural Competence – Components

Affective Component

- ▶ comprises the approach–avoid tendencies, intercultural apprehension and cognitive simplicity–rigidity, and willingness to communicate.
- ▶ the extent to which an individual *approaches* or *avoids* intercultural communication, i.e. her/his level of motivation to engage in intercultural communication (Neuliep, 2018).

Intercultural Competence – Components

Psychomotor Features

- ▶ the verbal and nonverbal performance, and the role enactment.
- ▶ Verbal performance – how people use language based on his linguistic knowledge and abilities (Neuliep, 2018).

Intercultural Competence – Components

Psychomotor Features

- ▶ Nonverbal performance – the extent to which a person a person has the ability and willingness to pay close attention to nuances of the
- ▶ kinesic (gestures, body position, head, posture, hand and arm movements)
- ▶ paralinguistic (vocalics – pitch, tone, rate, volume, intensity and accent pattern in verbal communication)
- ▶ haptic (touch), olfactic (smell),
- ▶ proxemic (use of space) codes of the other cultures (Neuliep, 2018).

Intercultural Competence – Components

Contextual / Situational Characteristics

- ▶ *environmental context, previous contact experience, status differences, and the third-party intervention*

Intercultural Sensitivity

- ▶ the ability of an individual to notice and experience cultural differences and the sensitivity to the importance of cultural differences and to the points of view of people in other cultures (Wang and Zhou, 2016).
- ▶ performance of interculturally sensitive employees is higher than the ones who are not interculturally sensitive (Sizoo et al., 2003; Sizoo, 2008).
- ▶ interculturally sensitive employees tend to provide better service to customers (Sizoo et al., 2003; Sizoo, 2008; Khan et al., 2016; Sharma et al., 2015; Stauss, 2016).
- ▶ higher intercultural sensitivity enables adapting more rapidly and cope with customers who are from different cultures (Peng nad Wu, 2016).

Intercultural Sensitivity – Components

- ▶ Interaction Engagement
- ▶ Respect for Cultural Differences
- ▶ Interaction Confidence

High– and Low–Context Dimension

- ▶ the extent to which messages are explicit and context is important in communication

High– and Low–Context Dimension

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Characteristics of High- and Low-Context Cultures

Low Context (Specific) Cultures (West Europeans, Scandinavians, North Americans)	High Context (Diffuse) Cultures (Central Europeans, South East Asians, Arabs, the Mediterranneans, Latins, Africans)
Messages are made explicitly (overtly), and most of the meaning is created in the communication message (verbal or written). Emphasis is more on the content of the message. Interpretation of the messages depends on the content (words) of the verbal or written message.	Messages are implicit, and most of the message may be created through the context. Emphasis is more on the context of the message. Interpretation of messages depends on contextual factors.

Characteristics of High- and Low-Context Cultures

Low Context (Specific) Cultures (West Europeans, Scandinavians, North Americans)	High Context (Diffuse) Cultures (Central Europeans, South East Asians, Arabs, the Mediterranneans, Latins, Africans)
Messages include all the details and the speaker (or the writer) is responsible for the message clarity. Search for and the use information are based on reports, the Internet, and databases. Individual achievement and task oriented. Competitive and task oriented. Contracts tend to be longer and detailed.	The details are embedded in the context and the listener is responsible for understanding the message. Search for and the use information are based on personal sources. Team achievement and relationship oriented. Cooperative and team oriented. Shorter contracts since less information is required.

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High- and Low-Context Countries

Low Context (Specific) Cultures (West Europeans, Scandinavians, North Americans)		High Context (Diffuse) Cultures (Central Europeans, South East Asians, Arabs, the Mediterranneans, Latins, Africans)	
Germany Austria Switzerland Australia Denmark South Africa Norway United States	Canada (English) Finland Sweden Israel , United Kingdom Belgium Netherlands Luxembourg	Japan Korea China India Turkey Mexico India Hungary Argentina Romania Brazil	Greece Indonesia Russia Malaysia Ukraine Taiwan Uruguay Czechia Spain Portugal Italy France

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High- and Low-Context Continuum

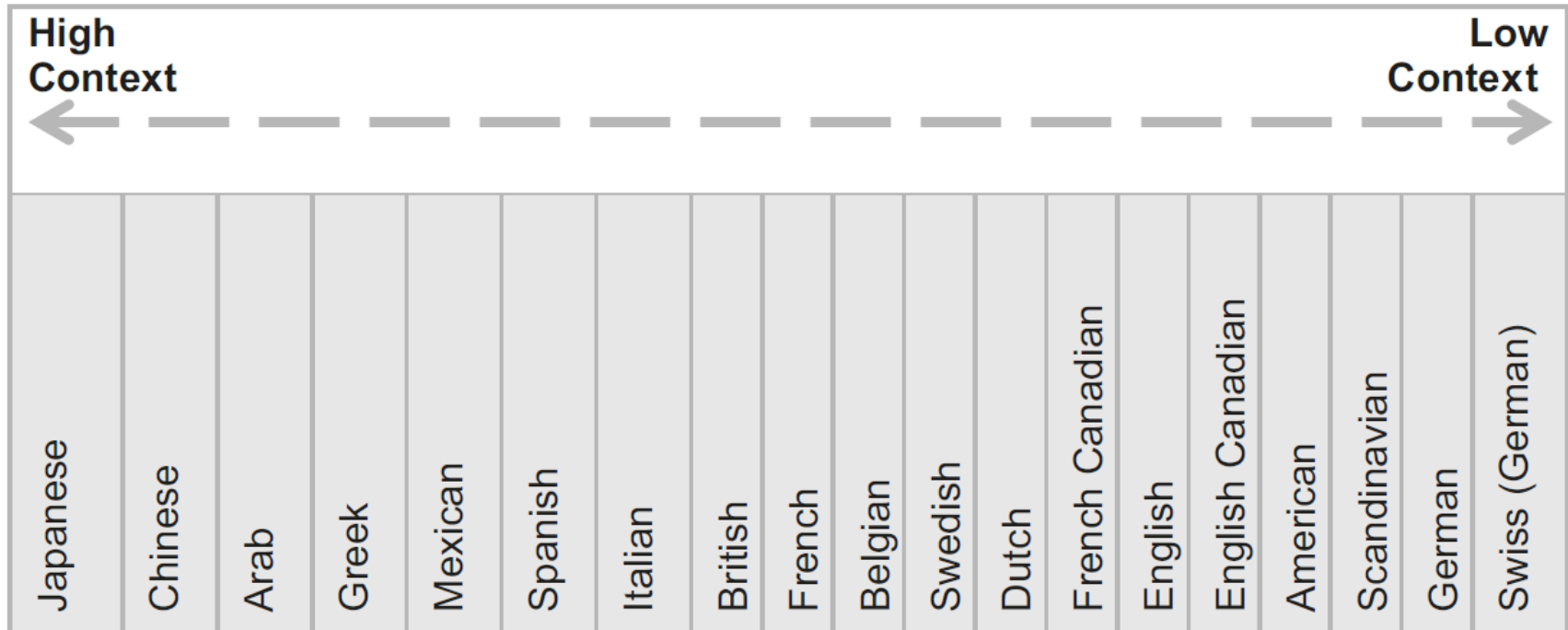


Figure 4.1 High- and low-context cultures continuum

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Research Examples – Implications

- ▶ Frequent waiter check-backs increased high context customers' (from Europe and the US) positive emotional response and their intention to revisit (Lee et al., 2015).
- ▶ The perceptions of service effectiveness, emotional response and the intention to revisit by Japanese customers were not influenced by the server check-back style.

Research Examples – Implications

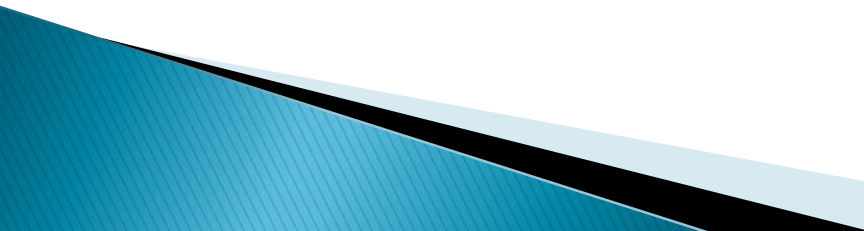
- ▶ Tourists from high context cultures place more emphasis on interpersonal relationships (functional quality) when they evaluate the service.
- ▶ Customers from low context cultures tend to put more emphasis on efficiency and time savings (technical quality).
- ▶ Tourists from high context cultures tend to provide significantly lower ratings to the service encounter and overall service quality as they have higher service expectations.
- ▶ They place more importance on contextual cues in making their service quality evaluations (Mattila, 1999).

Research Examples – Implications

- ▶ In high context cultures achieving productivity and goals, and getting things done very much depend on the relationships among group members and the group processes.
- ▶ In low context cultures achieving productivity and goals, and getting things done primarily depend concentrating on the procedures, and objectives.
- ▶ This means while workplace in a high context culture has a social atmosphere, low context workplace may be quite mechanistic.

Research Examples – Implications

- ▶ Tourism and hospitality customers from low context cultures tend to focus their service quality evaluations on task completion and efficient delivery.
- ▶ Customers from high context cultures focus on the quality of interactions between employees and customers (Mattila, 2000; Yuksel and Yuksel, 2001).



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Characteristics of High- and Low-Context Cultures

Interaction

High-context cultures

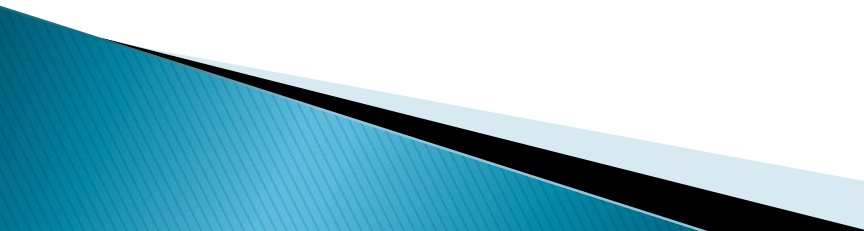
- ▶ nonverbal elements of communication such as the tone of the voice, gestures, facial expression and eye movements are considered to be important in communication.
- ▶ cultures depend very much on nonverbal behaviours.
- ▶ Emotional contagion may be more common.

Characteristics of High- and Low-Context Cultures

Interaction

High-context cultures

- ▶ tourism and hospitality employees from a high context culture may be expected to have better emotion/ facial expression recognition abilities.
- ▶ Emotion/ facial expression recognition constitute a significant element of emotional intelligence (Koc and Boz, 2019).



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Characteristics of Indulgence and Restraint Societies

▶ Indulgence Cultures	Restraint Cultures	Potential Implications for Tourism and Hospitality
More likely to remember positive emotions	Less likely to remember positive emotions	Restraint – tendency of customers to evaluate tourism and hospitality experiences more negatively. Negative attitude towards service recovery efforts. Service recovery paradox may not occur in many instances. Indulgence –tendency of customers to evaluate tourism and hospitality experiences more positively.

Characteristics of Indulgence and Restraint Societies

Indulgence Cultures	Restraint Cultures	Potential Implications for Tourism and Hospitality
Positive attitude and optimism	Cynicism and pessimism	Indulgence – positive attitudes of employees towards change and development initiatives by management. Restraint – a cynical attitude of employees towards change and development initiatives by management.
Thrift is not very important	Thrift is important	Restraint – over emphasis on thrift may result in allocating a smaller budget by customers for tourism and hospitality activities.

Characteristics of Indulgence and Restraint Societies

▶ Indulgence Cultures	Restraint Cultures	Potential Implications for Tourism and Hospitality
Smiling as a norm; loose society	Smiling as suspect; tight society	Indulgence – service employees may establish rapport and social relationships with customers more easily. Customers may feel more relaxed when served by smiling service personnel.

Characteristics of Indulgence and Restraint Societies

Indulgence Cultures	Restraint Cultures	Potential Implications for Tourism and Hospitality
Higher percentage of people who feel healthier and happier. More people participating in actively in sports.	Lower percentage of people who feel healthier and happier. Fewer people participating in actively in sports.	Indulgence – service employees who feel happier and healthier may provide a better service. Sports tourism activities (e.g. golf tourism and skiing) may be more developed. Restraint – service employees who may not feel happy and healthy may not provide a good quality service. Sports tourism activities (e.g. golf tourism and skiing) may be not be highly developed.

Characteristics of Indulgence and Restraint Societies

Indulgence Cultures	Restraint Cultures	Potential Implications for Tourism and Hospitality
More satisfying family life; “household tasks should be shared between partners” view is prevalent.	Less satisfying family life; unequal sharing of household tasks may not be seen as a problem.	Indulgence – engaging in tourism and hospitality activities as a family may be more common –several implications for all marketing mix elements and service quality dimensions. Restraint – engaging in tourism and hospitality activities as a family may not be so common – several implications for all marketing mix elements and service quality dimensions.

Source: Hofstede, G., Hofstede, G.J. and Minkov, M. (2010), Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind, revised and expanded 3rd ed., McGraw–Hill, New York, NY.

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Restraint – Indulgence Scores* of Countries

Country	Restraint Score	Country	Restraint Score
Russia	20	Switzerland	66
China	24	Netherlands	68
Italy	30	US	68
Germany	40	UK	69
Japan	42	Sweden	78
Spain	44	Mexico	97
Turkey	49	Venezuela	100

*Lower scores denote restraint; higher scores denote indulgence.

Source: Hofstede, G. (2020), Cultural Dimensions [online] [Accessed 20.01.2020] Available from Internet: < <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/product/compare-countries/>> (Used with permission)

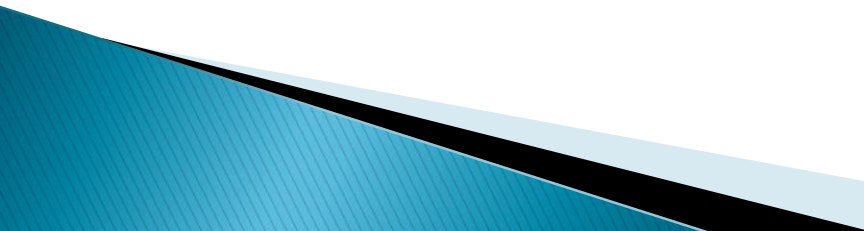
Examples of Incidents Relation to Restraint and Indulgence

Indulgence Culture	Restraint Culture
A tourist from an indulgence culture may know more about the features and history of Basilica Cistern (Istanbul) than a local shopkeeper who may have run a shop in the area catering for international tourists for many years.	After its opening a five-star luxury hotel in Antalya, Turkey (a relatively restraint culture), though the hotel may have excellent physical facilities amenities, hotel management may employ a one of the former construction workers, who worked in the construction of the hotel, as a waiter with little or no training.
As tourism and hospitality customers from an indulgence culture may be more knowledgeable and skilled about the service they may have a more positive attitude towards participating in the service.	A waiter in a restaurant in a restraint culture may not know that the guest would be served from the right hand side.

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Examples of Incidents Relation to Restraint and Indulgence

Indulgence Culture	Restraint Culture
Tourism and hospitality customers from an indulgence culture may evaluate a service more positively as they are more likely to remember positive emotions.	Service recovery paradox may be experienced more infrequently by tourism and hospitality customers from a restraint culture as they are more likely to remember negative emotions.
Service employees from an indulgence culture may have a relatively higher level of service orientation as they have an inherent understanding and feeling of fun, leisure and hedonic experiences.	A manager of tourism and hospitality business from a restraint culture may employ fewer and less skilled staff.



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Research Implications – Examples

- ▶ Chinese (a restraint culture) web sites web pages had a rather low percentage of pictures of people laughing, and a high percentage of people with serious looking faces (Hamid, 2016).
- ▶ In a high indulgence society people would show expression of opinions more readily than a culture than restrains itself (Dukes, 2016) .
- ▶ People from indulgence cultures may be more likely to make formal complaints and engage in electronic word of mouth communications

Research Implications – Examples

- ▶ Tourism and hospitality customers from indulgence countries are more likely to engage in eWOM and react more positively towards eWOM.

Implications – Examples

- ▶ Tourism and hospitality customers from indulgence countries are more likely to engage in eWOM and react more positively towards eWOM.
- ▶ Tend to have higher booking intentions than restrained countries, regardless of the valence of the online review (Ruiz–Equihua et al. 2019).
- ▶ Customers from restraint cultures are less likely to write online reviews (engage in eWOM).
- ▶ And if they did, they tended to produce more negative online reviews, as they were more pessimistic (Ruiz–Equihua et al., 2019).

Implications – Examples

- ▶ Low level of indulgence (i.e. restraint) is correlated with a feeling of pessimism and negativism as restraint and limitations in these societies tend to foster negative feelings and a lack of trust (Hofstede et al., 2010).
- ▶ What may be the implications of this for customers, employees and managers?

Implications – Examples

- ▶ Service recovery paradox did not take place among Russian tourists (a restraint culture) having holidays in Turkey – as are may be more likely to remember the negative experiences (Koc et al., 2020).
- ▶ Service recovery paradox : situation in which a customer has experienced a problem which has been satisfactorily resolved, and where the consumer subsequently rates their satisfaction to be equal to or greater than that in which no problem had occurred' (McCollough and Bharadwaj, 1992:119),
- ▶ i.e. e customer's post-failure satisfaction is greater than pre-failure satisfaction.
- ▶ when customers experience a satisfactory recovery their loyalty tends to increase (Smith and Bolton, 1998; Baker, 2017; Kim, 2017;

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Implications – Examples

- ▶ While the optimism in indulgence oriented cultures usually cause a perception of more personal life control, the pessimism in restraint cultures cause a perception of helplessness (Hofstede et al., 2010).
- ▶ Cynicism results in a decline in job satisfaction, organisational commitment, organisational trust, organisational citizenship behaviour, and increases job alienation and employee burnout (Abraham, 2000; Brandes and Das, 2006; Bedeian, 2007; Brandes et al., 2008).

Implications – Examples

- ▶ The feeling of cynicism (Hofstede et al., 2010) among service personnel (in restraint cultures) may result in a lack of empathy for customers during service failures, and an apathy towards management's change and development attempts.
- ▶ The service employees from a restraint culture may feel helpless when faced with service failures and may externally attribute the causes of the failure and may be reluctant to take the initiative to recover the failure

Implications – Examples

- ▶ Pessimism of employees reduces their motivation (Bunjak et al., 2019) and results in a lack of creativity (.e. in solving customer problems) (Rego et al., 2018).
- ▶ Verduyn and Lavrijsen (2015) – sadness and anger were the longest lasting emotions in mind. Would these emotions last longer in people from restraint cultures?
- ▶ Hint: They are more likely to remember negative experiences.

Implications – Examples

- ▶ Yurur et. al (2011) –employees' emotional behaviours are significantly influenced by the behaviour of customers.
- ▶ As employees from a restraint culture feel that indulging themselves is wrong – they may be irritated by the hedonistically oriented behaviours (pleasure, enjoyment, spending consumption, sexual gratification behaviours) of customers from an indulgence culture – during the consumption of tourism and hospitality services.

Implications – Examples

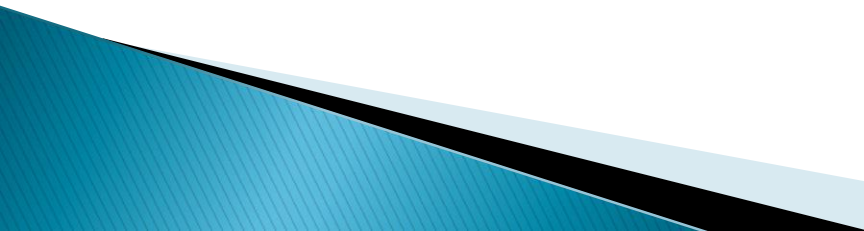
- ▶ Crotts (2003) –people in Japan (restraint culture) tended to leave travel arrangements to professionals rather than to themselves.
- ▶ i.e. they were not highly involved with their holidays arrangements.
- ▶ Involvement may cause customers to engage in more intensive effort to collect and analyse information, customers from indulgence cultures may be more sophisticated and astute, and hence may develop more specific expectations regarding the tourism and hospitality products (Koc, Ar and Aydin, 2017; Khosrowjerdi et al., 2019).

Implications – Examples

- ▶ In indulgence cultures the gender roles may be loosely prescribed.
- ▶ In restraint cultures the gender roles may be more strictly prescribed (Hofstede et al., 2010).

= Inequality/discrimination of work.

- ▶ World Tourism Organisation – (UNWTO) Global Report on Tourism (2011:43), “even in areas where women in tourism perform better than women in other sectors of the economy, women still lag far behind men”.



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