

A Study To Investigate The Impact Of Different Cultures On Travellers' Satisfaction

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the ways in which cultural differences impact the capacity of tourism firms to satisfy their clients. The service sector is inherently global, thus businesses in it need to understand and accommodate the many cultural expectations and tastes of tourists from other countries. Cultural variables, such as individualism vs. collectivism, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance, are examined in this study to determine their effects on customer satisfaction levels. The article conducts an in-depth literature review and empirical investigation with the use of surveys and interviews with visitors from varied cultural backgrounds to examine key variables that contribute to or diminish customer happiness. The results highlight the significance of considering other cultures while offering services, interacting, and creating the overall experience. The article also provides useful advice for tourism and travel businesses on how to enhance their customer service methods and get higher satisfaction ratings from a culturally diverse audience. As the world's travel industries become increasingly interdependent, this research stresses the importance of ongoing education in cross-cultural competence and flexible service models.

Keywords: *Cross cultural effect, Customer satisfaction, Travel, Tourism industry.*

INTRODUCTION

In today's globally interdependent world, facilitating economic and cultural interaction is a primary role for the travel and tourism industry. As tourists want one-of-a-kind experiences in other countries, industry insiders are more interested in how customers' cultural origins affect their overall pleasure. Improving service, increasing client loyalty, and ensuring long-term success may be achieved by understanding cultural differences in consumer satisfaction. Customers' cultural expectations and preferences are as varied as the destinations they visit in the travel and tourism industry, which is globally focused. The unique beliefs, practices, and expectations that visitors from different parts of the world bring to a destination impact how they rate the quality of the service they get. This cultural heterogeneity presents both challenges and opportunities for service providers that strive to offer exceptional experiences. Recognising and responding to cultural differences is crucial for a firm to effectively service its diverse consumer base. This study delves at the intricate network of multicultural interactions and how they influence the enjoyment of tourist consumers. It delves at how someone's cultural origins affect the service they get in terms of their preferences, routines, and thoughts. In addition, it explores how businesses might benefit from ethnic diversity to make customers happier. By carefully examining case studies and current practices, this essay aims to assist professionals working in multicultural environments in improving the services they provide. The travel and tourism industry is experiencing rapid globalisation, making it more important than ever to understand and capitalise on the cross-cultural implications on consumer satisfaction. This is a great way for businesses to become more competitive while also making the world a better place for all travellers (Zhang et al., 2022).

1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In the inherently global travel and tourism industry, cultural diversity has a significant impact on customer satisfaction and experience. As more and more people travel beyond their own cultural boundaries, businesses in this sector would be well to investigate how other cultures affect customer satisfaction. Cultural variations may influence many aspects of a journey, including how individuals express themselves, what constitutes hospitality, and how they anticipate being treated. Tourists come from many walks of life and have different tastes; this study looks at how different cultures affect customer happiness. In order for the travel and tourism business to better serve its diverse international clientele, the research aims to enhance customer satisfaction and cross-cultural understanding by illuminating these variables (Xi et al., 2021).

2. PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

The main motivation behind this research is to investigate how cultural variables affect visitor satisfaction. The study's overarching goal is to provide light on how various cultural traits influence customers' expectations, experiences, and perceptions so that the travel and tourism industry may better cater to a wide range of ethnic groups. This research seeks to investigate the role of cultural factors in influencing consumer satisfaction in order to help industry players develop better strategies to enhance service quality and customer experiences in varied cultural contexts. Another goal of the study is to help businesses better serve customers from diverse cultural backgrounds by illuminating the cultural aspects that have the most impact on customer satisfaction. The research aims to contribute to the current knowledge on cross-cultural interactions in the tourist industry with the objective of fostering a more inclusive and customer-centric approach.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

How cultural differences impact tourism-related customer happiness has received much attention as of late. This is largely attributable to the fact that globalisation has led to an interaction between many cultural groups. To improve customer satisfaction and service quality, businesses in the tourism sector must be aware of these outcomes. Numerous research in this area have highlighted the relevance of cultural variables, such as future-oriented thinking, power distance, intolerance to ambiguity, and individualism vs. collectivism. According to Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory, these factors influence customers' expectations, perceptions of service quality, and levels of satisfaction. The importance of autonomy and self-actualization may be higher for tourists from collectivist societies than for those from individualist ones, and likewise for tourists from collectivist cultures. Marketing strategies and service offerings must be modified to cater to the diverse interests and preferences of international tourists. Much study has focused on cultural variances and how they affect various aspects of customer happiness. Cultural factors influence how tourists perceive the place, how helpful the information is, and how satisfied they are with the service they get (Xu et al., 2022). Customers are more likely to be satisfied with a service when they and the supplier have similar cultural backgrounds and are able to communicate well. Conversely, cultural incongruity may cause distress and bad experiences. The travel and tourism industry is very sensitive to the impact of language barriers and communication styles on customer satisfaction. While offering exceptional service relies on clear and succinct communication, differences in language proficiency and communication preferences may lead to misunderstandings and disappointments. Suppliers who make an effort to speak the customer's original language or demonstrate cultural sensitivity are more likely to have pleased customers. Businesses in the tourism sector have been experimenting with several approaches to break down cultural barriers and increase customer satisfaction. Staff training programmes that prioritise cultural competence, bilingual signage and materials, and service modification to align with cultural norms are some ways that the cultural divide is bridged. One way that technology has facilitated better communication and understanding between service providers and visitors is via culturally tailored online platforms and translation apps. Also, empirical study has looked at how cultural adaptation plays a role in service restoration attempts. It is critical to use recovery strategies that are culturally relevant in order to reduce negative perceptions and restore customer happiness after service failures. To be effective, measures like apologies and compensations must be accepted across cultures. What constitutes a sufficient apology in one society may fall short in another. According to research on cross-cultural tourism, it is essential to have a deep understanding of different cultural preferences and habits. Businesses that prioritise cultural intelligence and can adapt their products and services to other cultures are more likely to have happy consumers, according to this theory. Businesses catering to tourists may improve the customer experience while also bolstering their chances of long-term success in the global marketplace by adopting this strategy. Because of the cross-cultural influences on customer satisfaction, cultural awareness and flexibility are, in a nutshell, required in the tourism industry. Incorporating cross-cultural insights into company operations will remain crucial for achieving excellence in customer service and providing pleasant tourist experiences as the industry advances (Wei et al., 2022).

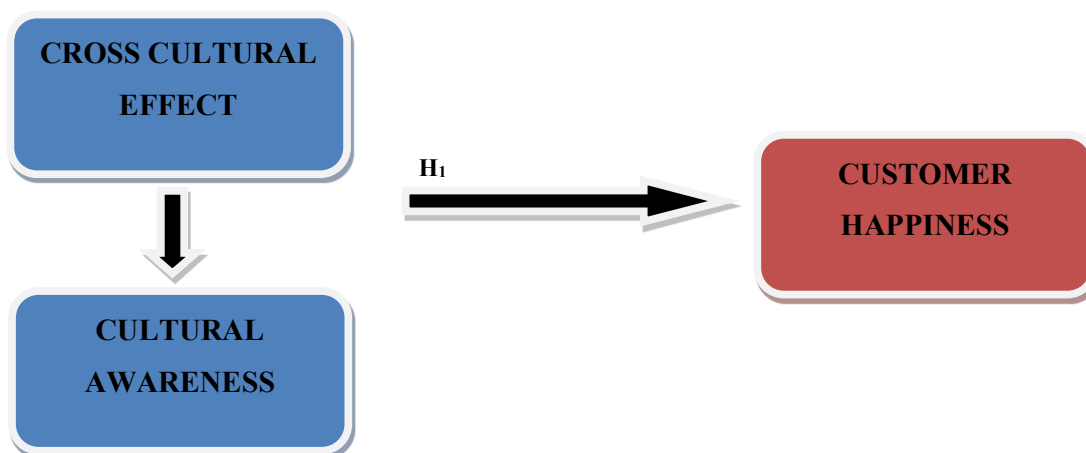
4. RESEARCH QUESTION

- ❖ When it comes to the travel and tourist industry, how important is cultural awareness for increasing consumer satisfaction?

5. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

- ❖ To investigate the role of cultural awareness in elevating customer happiness in the travel and tourist industry.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



METHODOLOGY

5.1 Research Design

By gathering numerical data on variables and putting it into statistical models, quantitative research aims to discover correlations between variables that are statistically significant. The goal of quantitative research is to have a better knowledge of society. When studying issues that have an impact on individuals, researchers often turn to quantitative methodologies. Data presented in tabular and graphical formats is a byproduct of quantitative research. Due to the numerical nature of quantitative data, a systematic approach to data collection and analysis is required. Data averaging, forecasting, investigating relationships, and extending findings to larger populations are just a few of its many possible applications. Studies that depend on in-depth interviews and observations (e.g., text, video, or audio) are known as qualitative studies, whereas quantitative studies are completely opposite. Quantitative research techniques are the backbone of many academic disciplines. Among them are disciplines as varied as economics, biology, sociology, chemistry, psychology, and marketing.

5.2 Sampling

After a successful pilot test with 20 Chinese consumers, the study was conducted with a final sample of 649 customers. Eight hundred randomly selected customers were surveyed. Any survey that is not completely filled out was not taken into consideration by the researcher.

5.3 Statistical Software

For the purpose of statistical analysis, SPSS 25 and MS-Excel were used.

5.4 Statistical tools

Using descriptive analysis, researchers were able to understand the data's essential nature. To determine validity, factor analysis was used.

6. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

800 questionnaires were sent to the individuals who took part. Out of 775 questionnaires that were returned, 649 were evaluated using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences: SPSS version 25.0.

6.1 Factor Analysis

Factor Analysis (FA) is often used to validate the latent component structure of a collection of measurement items. One school of thought is that the observable or measured variable scores are the result of latent (or unknown) causes. The term for this method that relies on models is accuracy analysis (FA). Showing how different variables relate to one another, including how measurement error and other unobserved factors play a role, is its main purpose.

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Method may help one determine whether the data is appropriate for factor analysis. Researchers look at the overall model and each model variable separately to see whether the sample was big enough.

Using statistical measurements, researchers may look for patterns in the potential shared variance of many variables. Reducing the percentage usually makes the data more suitable for factor analysis.

The output from KMO is a number between 0 and 1. If the KMO number is between 0.8 and 1, it means that the sampling was sufficient.

If the KMO is less than 0.6, it means that the sample was insufficient and corrective action is needed. Feel free to apply the best judgement; 0.5 is the value that some writers use, thus the range is 0.5 to 0.6.

1. The KMO When it's near zero, it indicates that the partial correlations are much larger than the overall correlations. Big correlations are a huge roadblock for component analysis.

The standards that Kaiser has established for admission are as follows:

The standards that Kaiser has established for admission are as follows:

From 0.050 to 0.059, it's quite low.

The range of 0.60-0.69 is not typical.

The typical range for middle grades is between 0.70 and 0.79.

Having a quality point score between 0.80 and 0.89.

The range from 0.90 to 1.00 is quite wide.

Table 1: KMO and Bartlett's Test^a

KMO and Bartlett's Test^a		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.978
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	4950.175
	df	190
	Sig.	.000
a. Based on correlations		

So, it turns out that claims made only for sampling are valid. The correlation matrices were subjected to Bartlett's Test of Sphericity to ensure their relevance. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin states that a sample adequacy value of .978 is appropriate. Researchers obtained a p-value of 0.00 using Bartlett's sphericity test. Results from Bartlett's sphericity test showed that the correlation matrix is not an identity matrix, which is a noteworthy finding.

6.2 Test for hypothesis

❖ Cross cultural effect

The term "cross-cultural influence" describes the impact that diverse ways of thinking, feeling, and behaving have on one another when people from different cultures interact. In settings where individuals from different cultural backgrounds interact, like the tourist business, this influence might significantly affect communication, expectations, and overall enjoyment (Mehmood, 2019).

❖ Cultural Awareness

Recognizing, understanding, and appreciating the similarities and contrasts among individuals from different cultural backgrounds is what researchers mean when they talk about cultural awareness in tourism. Cultural competence is the ability to understand and respect the norms, beliefs, and practices of a variety of cultural groups. This knowledge is fundamental for encouraging polite conversations, lessening cultural misconceptions, and improving the experience for everyone involved (Mattila, 2019).

❖ Customer Satisfaction

When it comes to tourism, cultural understanding is crucial for increasing consumer happiness. It entails learning about and being sensitive to the cultural norms and practices of visitors from all over the world. Customers are more satisfied with the services they get from tourist businesses that are sensitive to cultural variations because of the respectful and individualised experiences they receive. Tourists from different countries have different wants and preferences, and those in industry can better accommodate them when they are sensitive to cultural differences. For instance, in order to provide visitors with services that are suitable and valued, suppliers must comprehend visitors' dietary limitations, religious beliefs, and communication styles. Visitors are made to feel cherished and respected by this meticulous attention to detail, which creates an inviting environment. In addition, being sensitive to other cultures helps improve relationships between visitors and businesses. Cultural competency training helps employees better manage cross-cultural communication, which in turn reduces the likelihood of misunderstandings and disputes. Customers are more likely to be satisfied when they have pleasant encounters, and their problems are addressed in a timely and suitable manner. Also, visitors may expect genuine and enlightening experiences thanks to culturally sensitive tourism's emphasis on local traditions and celebrations. Tourists are more likely to have a wonderful time, be satisfied, and return when they feel that their cultural identity is valued and respected. As a whole, there is a close connection between cultural understanding and happy tourists. Businesses in the tourism industry may increase customer happiness and loyalty by encouraging cultural knowledge among their employees. This lead to better service, more meaningful relationships with customers, and more respectful experiences for visitors (Weiermair, 2019).

“On the basis of the above discussion, the researcher formulated the following hypothesis, which analysed the relationship between Cultural awareness and Customer satisfaction.”

H₁: “There is a significant relationship between Cultural awareness and Customer satisfaction.”

H₀: “There is no significant relationship between Cultural awareness and Customer satisfaction.”

Table.2: ANOVA test (H₁)

ANOVA					
Sum					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	74112.307	153	3993.631	678.551	.000
Within Groups	578.472	495	7217		
Total	74690.779	648			

“The outcome is noteworthy in this investigation. F=678.551, and the p-value of.000 (below the.05 alpha threshold) indicates statistical significance. This means the ***H₁: “There is a significant relationship between Cultural awareness and Customer satisfaction.”*** is accepted and the null hypothesis is rejected.”

7. CONCLUSION

Effective cross-cultural communication is essential in the tourist industry since it boosts client satisfaction. In the end, businesses have the power to help their workers and customers interact across cultures. A more sophisticated comprehension of other cultures and improved cross-cultural communication might result from this if it is successful. Businesses have the opportunity to create an inclusive environment and provide customers an exceptional experience by hosting cultural events with traditional cuisine and dance. Successful cross-cultural communication is a must for travel and tourism companies looking to boost customer happiness. Understanding and appreciating cultural differences, recruiting a diverse workforce, utilising technology, and encouraging cultural exchange within firms can help researchers improve cross-cultural communication and create a more personalised and positive customer experience for people from diverse cultural backgrounds. Both theoretical and practical considerations inform the model's objectives. Exploring cultural elements that influence vacation happiness is one area to look at. Developing methods to gauge visitors' levels of satisfaction is one of the particular goals. Through this lens, researchers can make out the many details that go into making visitors happy. The goal is to have a better understanding of the cultural aspects that influence and decide how much fun vacationers have. The results of this influence, in terms of happy consumers and recommendations from those customers, are expected to be predictable.

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