

1 Implications of Culture for Tourism and Hospitality Marketing Mix in East and Southeast Asia

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Introduction

Culture can have significant effects on the values, insights, attitudes and behaviours of people (Neuliep, 2018), both as customers and service staff, and on various management processes and systems in an organization (Koc, 2020). From the customers' side, they generally think and act in accordance with their cultural 'mental programme' (Crotts and Erdmann, 2000; Hofstede *et al.*, 2010; Koc, 2021). Intercultural differences should be understood and responded to accordingly as they may influence the efficiency and effectiveness of a business significantly (Yang *et al.*, 2022) and jeopardize its survival and/or growth. For instance, the first Starbucks café opened in Mainland China, in the Forbidden City in Beijing, in 2000. It was closed in 2007 after a conspicuous online campaign protested that the American café had 'crushed' the Chinese culture (Han and Zhang, 2009). Nevertheless, earlier in 1983, Tokyo Disneyland, Disney's first theme park operating outside the USA, became a major success, although the cultural distance can be said to be larger compared with the Euro Disney case. Tokyo Disney's success was mainly because the park attracted regular Japanese visitors who were fond of Disney characters. It

has an immersive atmosphere of 'non-Japanese' and a 'non-ordinary world' together with the spaciousness, comfort and cleanliness of the park (Toyoda, 2014).

Intercultural differences are particularly important for tourism and hospitality (T&H). T&H activities have become largely international because of the participation of people from different countries (Mihalič and Fennell, 2015; Koc, 2020). Furthermore, T&H services occur in a social servicescape (Tombs and McColl-Kennedy, 2003) involving frequent and continuous multicultural social communications and interaction among customers, employees and managers (Lieberman and Gamst, 2015; Koc, 2017). Hence, the organization and operation of the marketing mix elements in T&H necessitate the consideration of cultural differences.

Based on the above background, this chapter demonstrates and discusses how culture may affect tourists, particularly the T&H marketing mix elements (7Ps) and T&H activities in East and Southeast Asian countries. The chapter explains appropriate marketing examples by referring to the previous culture and T&H literature. It adopts a similar methodology to that used by Koc and Ayyildiz (2021) in their examination of ten regions in terms of tourist numbers but focused on East and Southeast Asia. Before

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presenting the findings of this comprehensive review, first an overview of the cultural characteristics of East and Southeast Asian countries is provided in the following section.

1.1 Cultural Characteristics of East and Southeast Asian Countries based on Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

East and Southeast Asian countries can be classified, in general, as high-context cultures, with Japan, China and Korea being on the upper end of the high-context continuum (Hall, 1977; Hofstede *et al.*, 2010). According to Tung (1995), approximately 70% of the world's population can be classified as high context. Particularly, people from European countries (e.g. Germany and Norway; except for South and Southeast Europe, such as people from Romania, Greece and Turkey), North America (Canada and the USA) and South Africa can be classified as low context. The contextual orientation influences many aspects of communication, interaction, relationships and learning (Koc, 2020).

In terms of one of the most often used cultural paradigms, Hofstede's six cultural dimensions (power distance (PDI), individualism (IDV), masculinity (MAS), uncertainty avoidance (UAI), long-term orientation (LTO)

and indulgence (IND)) (Hofstede *et al.*, 2010), the countries analysed in the region tend to have similar characteristics, although some variations exist. Country score figures can be accessed through Hofstede Insights (2021). Table 1.1 presents selected East and Southeast Asian countries' cultural dimension scores.

The countries in the region, in general, can be classified as having high-PDI cultures. Some countries have high levels of PDI, such as Malaysia, the Philippines, China, Indonesia, Singapore, Vietnam and Hong Kong, with scores of 100, 94, 80, 78, 74, 70 and 68, respectively. However, other countries do not have such high levels of PDI, such as Thailand, South Korea, Taiwan and Japan, with scores of 64, 60, 58 and 54, respectively. The latter group of countries, although with relatively lower levels of PDI (Thailand, South Korea, Taiwan and Japan), still tend to have higher scores of PDI compared with countries such as the USA (40), the UK (35) and Germany (35).

The countries in the region can be classified as highly collectivistic. The IDV scores (a lower score level denotes a higher level of collectivism) of Indonesia, Taiwan, South Korea, China, Vietnam, Thailand, Singapore, Hong Kong, Malaysia, the Philippines and Japan are 14, 17, 18, 20, 20, 20, 20, 25, 26, 32 and 46, respectively. Despite having a score of collectivism that

Table 1.1. Hofstede's cultural dimension scores for selected East Asian and Southeast Asian countries (source: Hofstede Insights, 2021).

	PDI (Power distance)	IDV (Individualism)	MAS (Masculinity)	UAI (Uncertainty avoidance)	LTO (Long-term orientation)	IND (Indulgence)
China	80	20	66	30	87	24
Hong Kong	68	25	57	29	61	7
Indonesia	78	14	46	48	62	38
Singapore	74	20	48	8	72	46
Vietnam	70	20	40	30	57	34
The Philippines	94	32	64	44	27	42
Malaysia	100	26	50	36	41	57
Taiwan	58	17	45	69	93	49
South Korea	60	18	39	85	100	29
Thailand	64	20	36	64	32	45
Japan	54	46	95	92	88	42

is the lowest in the region, Japan can still be classified as a relatively highly collectivistic country compared with the USA (91), the UK (89) and Germany (67).

In the case of PDI and IDV dimensions, although Japan carries the overall characteristics of the region in general, it is a country whose MAS and UAI scores vary more considerably than for the rest of the countries in the region. Japan has the highest level of MAS with a score of 95 (the highest in the world). The MAS scores for the rest of the countries in the region are not so high. For instance, countries such as China, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Taiwan, Vietnam, South Korea and Thailand have scores of 66, 64, 57, 50, 48, 46, 45, 40, 39 and 36, respectively.

The UAI levels of the East and Southeast Asian countries show some variations. Although some countries have high levels of UAI (e.g. Japan and South Korea with scores of 92 and 85, respectively), other countries have low levels of UAI, such as Singapore (8), Hong Kong (29), Vietnam (30), China (30) and Malaysia (36). The remaining countries of Taiwan, Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines have UAI scores of 69, 64, 48 and 44, respectively.

The LTO levels of the countries in East and Southeast Asia also show some variations. South Korea, Taiwan, Japan, China and Singapore with LTO orientation scores of 100, 93, 88, 87 and 72, respectively, appear to be on the upper end of the continuum. By contrast, the Philippines and Thailand with respective scores of 27 and 32 appear to be on the lower end of the continuum. Furthermore, Malaysia, Vietnam, Hong Kong and Indonesia with scores of 41, 57, 61 and 62, respectively, appear to be more or less in the middle.

Although developed the latest by Hofstede *et al.* (2010) and largely ignored by researchers, the IND dimension is extremely related to T&H (Koc and Ayyildiz, 2021). In general, countries in the region tend to have low to medium levels of IND. Hence, they may be considered restraint or near to restraint cultures. Countries such as Hong Kong, China, South Korea, Vietnam, Indonesia, Japan, the Philippines, Thailand, Singapore, Taiwan and Malaysia have IND scores of 7, 24, 29, 34, 38, 42, 42, 45, 46, 49 and 57, respectively.

1.2 Cultural Characteristics Associated with the Tourism and Hospitality Marketing Mix and Activities in East and Southeast Asian Countries

This section explains how culture may influence T&H marketing in the region by providing research findings regarding the marketing mix elements (7Ps) and activities of product, price, place, promotion, physical evidence, people and process. [Figure 1.1](#) depicts the relationship between cultural characteristics and the marketing mix.

Notably, the marketing mix elements are interdependent, and they may be significantly entangled with one another. For instance, a hotel's website may be considered the promotional (marketing communications) element as it is used to communicate with the customers. It may also be considered the place element as it enables the customers to reach the product/service. Moreover and similarly, the website of a hotel may be associated with the physical evidence element as it provides information regarding the physical layout, premises and other aspects of the tourism establishment (Law and Cheung, 2006; Koc, 2020).

1.2.1 Influence of culture on the product in tourism and hospitality

Product decisions in T&H involve various activities ranging from the design of package holidays to the design and presentation of all the food and beverage items at the hospitality establishment. Recent research showed that in the fast-developing medical tourism segment, customers tend to pay more significant attention to cultural differences (Connell, 2013). From the perspective of cultural dimensions, cultural distance in tourism may cause tourists to purchase souvenirs that demonstrate the specific characteristics of a destination visited (Su *et al.*, 2018). According to Su *et al.* (2018), tourists from masculine and high-PDI cultures are more likely to allocate relatively more money to shopping on holidays. Nevertheless, when cultural distance is similar, as in the case of Mainland

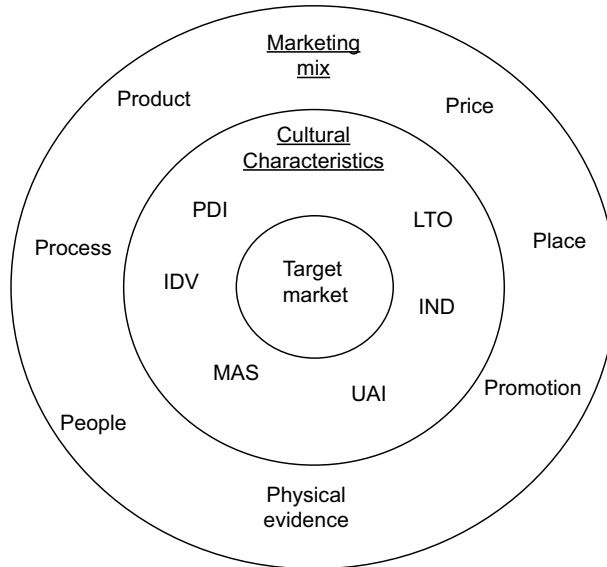


Fig. 1.1. A model of cultural characteristics and the marketing mix (PDI, power distance; IDV, individualism; MAS, masculinity; UAI, uncertainty avoidance; LTO, long-term orientation; IND, indulgence) (source: final figure drawn/produced by Dr Catherine Cheung.)

Chinese tourists visiting Hong Kong, they may be more likely to shop for the daily necessities such as groceries, food and clothes (Timothy and Butler, 1995).

People take holidays in accordance with their self-image (Litvin and Kar, 2003; Litvin *et al.*, 2004). Generally, self-image can be modelled by cultural characteristics. Crofts and Erdmann (2000) suggested that, in general, T&H customers' (T&HCs) perception and behaviour are modelled by their cultural characteristics. The tourists' selection, evaluation and purchase decision of products can be seen as tourists' mental programmes that can lead to differences as to what, why, when and how they buy.

Furrer *et al.* (2000) and Nath *et al.* (2016) observed that T&HCs from high-PDI cultures (e.g. invariably all East and Southeast Asians) emphasize the importance of tangible objects. The reason is that the preciousness and impressiveness of the physical items reflect people's status in the hierarchy, namely showing exceptional, exclusiveness, powerful and high social status, which these customers are seeking. Furthermore, in a recent study of the need for status and mental imagery perspective, luxury Chinese consumers with a high level of need

for status tend to choose photos taken from the first-person (versus the third-person) perspective. The outcomes could be travel motives, such as the visit intention, positive word-of-mouth or loyalty (Mou *et al.*, 2019).

Customers from high-context cultures have a higher level of sensory involvement when they dine, entertain and socialize (Becker, 2000). This may have implications not only for the product element of the T&H services but for other elements as well. Customers from high-PDI cultures mainly use the quality and brand image cues of the business when they make decisions regarding their holidays (Correia *et al.*, 2011). In their comparative study, Harris *et al.* (2005) found that Hong Kong customers from a higher-PDI culture appear to prefer hedonic services more than UK customers from a low-PDI culture. PDI could be the most influential cultural dimension influencing tourists' holiday product and destination choice decisions (Correia *et al.*, 2011).

Similarly, UAI could be particularly relevant for tourism marketing as tourism activities, in addition to intangibility and heterogeneity, face several unknowns ranging from destinations, lodging, transportation, food and beverages, and other factors. Customers who are risk-averse are

more likely to purchase package holidays (Koc, 2000). Research showed a correlation between sensation-seeking and risk-taking in T&H activities (e.g. adventure holidays) (Reisinger and Mavondo, 2006; Gray and Wilson, 2009; Williams and Baláz, 2013). However, gathering together as a group may mean an increase in risk perceptions after the COVID-19 pandemic. Even the customers from high-UAI and collectivistic cultures may seek more individualistic T&H experiences in the future (Cheung *et al.*, 2021).

With a high-UAI culture, the Japanese tend to frequently engage in risk- or uncertainty-reduction behaviours such as purchasing prepaid travel and tour packages, travelling in large groups, shorter stays, visiting fewer attractions/cities, preference/choice for their own cuisine, preferring safe activities such as 'staged' events of shopping, and rigid planning of the trips (Money and Crotts, 2003; Reisinger and Crotts, 2010; Manrai and Manrai, 2011). Moreover, the fact that many Japanese own hotels in Hawaii because only Japanese hotel owners will efficiently match the expectations of other Japanese is also an uncertainty-reduction strategy (Ahmed and Krohn, 1993).

Tourists from cultures with a low UAI level may prefer more lively and exciting vacations. They are adventurous enough to take risks, seek excitement, and may wish to be involved in sports activities like skydiving and water/river rafting (Chen and Jiang, 2019). On the contrary, tourists from low-UAI cultures may wish to engage more in slower and comfortably paced activities, such as visiting friends and relatives and shopping (Chen and Jiang, 2019), or taking part in customized general-interest tourism activities such as participating in recreation and nature tourism (Koc and Ayyildiz, 2022). Customers belonging to high-UAI cultures can be extremely competitive (Han and Heather, 2001). They may seek novelty through their T&H activities (Manrai and Manrai, 2011).

Package holidays offer a structured tourism experience, minimize risk and uncertainty, and provide an environment for collective social interaction (Manrai and Manrai, 2011). Customers from collectivistic cultures may wish to take part in package holidays, whereas customers from cultures with a high level of IDV may wish to take part in individual holidays. Hence, package holidays usually correspond to

high UAI and collectivism. Customers may participate in standard package holidays and structured leisure and pleasure activities because of their collectivist orientation. Moreover, their motivation to participate in T&H activities may be driven by adventure and novelty-seeking. Individualistic customers from the USA and Germany preferred more personalized products and services (Stauss and Mang, 1999). Notably, tourists from individualistic cultures are normally more likely to prefer novelty as opposed to collectivistic tourists from the East and Southeast Asian countries (Kim and Lee, 2000).

Group orientations of collectivistic Eastern and Southeastern Asian people have certain influences on their social behaviour, such as gift purchasing and gift exchanges. They are fond of buying gifts, have higher gift budgets and have more celebration occasions to exchange gifts compared with people from individualistic countries (Reisinger, 2009), who feel less pressure to reciprocate (Park, 1998). Apart from the motive for risk aversion, the social integration motive, which includes factors such as courtesy, prudence, trustworthiness and contentedness, may be more relevant to explain the motivation to take part in package holidays in collectivistic cultures (Manrai and Manrai, 2011).

LTO is measured based on thrift/prudence, endurance/perseverance and having a sense of duty or a sense of shame (Hofstede *et al.*, 2010). However, as people from these societies value long-term commitments and have respect for tradition, just as in the case of collectivistic culture characteristics, LTO results in frequent giving and taking gifts and reciprocating greetings and favours. Hence, in designing tourism destinations, package tours and T&H establishments, the importance attached to buying and giving gifts in the above societies should be considered. From the perspective of the LTO dimension, people from future-oriented cultures (e.g. Singaporeans and Malaysians) are more likely to attain future goals than others by planning and working towards them (Lu *et al.*, 2016).

Future-oriented people, in general, make decisions by using cost-benefit analysis to forecast the likely outcomes of events taking place in the future. Customers from these cultures demonstrate a high level of eagerness to learn (Bergadaa, 1990), and they tend to prefer self-improvement activities in T&H. Research showed

that particularly the senior tourists with future orientation prefer holidays for self-development and learning to discover new things (Li and Cai, 2012; Lu *et al.*, 2016). Future-oriented customers tend to know that tourism and travel supports quality of life and healthy ageing, helps them avoid various illnesses, and maintains and improves physical and mental health (Ahn and Janke, 2011; Lu *et al.*, 2016).

Tourists from past-oriented cultures show a strong interest in thrill-seeking, hedonistic and relaxation getaway holidays, such as staying at sun-and-sea resort hotel or going on a cruise holiday. Tourists from future-oriented cultures have a higher tendency to take part in T&H activities to get self-fulfilment and seek knowledge-enhancement experiences (Miao *et al.*, 2011; Lu *et al.*, 2016).

The MAS paradigm also influences tourists' choice of products and services as tourists from masculine countries (e.g. Ireland, Germany, Italy, the USA and South Africa) tend to prefer lively recreation activities as opposed to those from feminine cultures (e.g. South Korea and Spain) (Pizam and Fleischer, 2005). Young adults from feminine cultures tend to prefer tourism products and activities that are calm, peaceful and culture oriented. Tourists with a feminine orientation are more likely to prefer

inactive and gentle holiday products or activities, such as visiting friends and relatives, shopping, visiting museums, and attending cultural and arts festivals/events (Pizam and Fleischer, 2005).

In relation to promotion and place elements, which will be mentioned below, the fact that Japanese tend to leave travel arrangements to professionals (i.e. the travel agents) (Money and Crotts, 2003) may also be associated with the product element. This behaviour may indicate a lack of involvement in leisure and pleasure, a restraint culture characteristic. As opposed to IND cultures, people from restraint cultures see less value of time spent on leisure, fun and pleasure. Koc (2020) also argued that as service providers in the restraint cultures may have difficulty understanding and internalizing fun, leisure and enjoyment, they might be less likely to ensure a high-quality service in T&H. The quote of Fulke Greville, 'They that seldom take pleasure, seldom give pleasure' (as cited by Koc, 2020, p. 132), may be used to point out the importance of IND in the provision of IND-based services, such as T&H.

Table 1.2 provides a list of literature review papers covering the topic of the influence of culture on T&H product.

Table 1.2. Summary of major studies on cultural dimensions and product in tourism and hospitality.

Cultural dimension	Cultural dimension and product	References
Power distance (PDI), masculinity (MAS) and femininity (FEM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-PDI and MAS cultures spend more money on shopping on holidays • MAS cultures prefer more dynamic and active tourist products or activities; FEM cultures prefer low-energy and static holiday products 	Pizam and Fleischer (2005); Su <i>et al.</i> (2018)
Power distance (PDI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-PDI cultures place importance on tangible products • PDI influences tourists' holiday product and destination choice decisions 	Furrer <i>et al.</i> (2000); Correia <i>et al.</i> (2011); Nath <i>et al.</i> (2016)
Uncertainty avoidance (UAI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-UAI cultures engage in risk-reduction behaviour, generally purchase prepaid tour packages • Low-UAI cultures take risks, prefer more active and spontaneous vacations • High-UAI cultures prefer slow-paced and indoor-based activities, take part in general-interest tourism 	Money and Crotts (2003); Koc and Altinay (2007); Reisinger and Crotts (2010); Manrai and Manrai (2011); Chen and Jiang (2019)

1.2.2 Influence of culture on price in tourism and hospitality

Price is one of the most significant marketing mix elements as it significantly influences how a product or service will sell, if at all. Several T&H studies have investigated the influence of culture on the perceptions of price (Table 1.3). Pricing is relatively more important for services compared with tangible products, as intangibility and perishability are the fundamental characteristics of services (Boz *et al.*, 2017). As the demand for services may fluctuate according to the time of the day, day of the week, months of the year, and seasons, and so on, it is difficult to balance demand and supply. Dynamic pricing, often referred to as yield management

or revenue management, was first introduced by the airlines, hotels and car rental businesses (Talluri and Van Ryzin, 2004). It is a strategy to cope with seasonality and to have a more effective control on pricing and inventory to maximize profits.

Research showed that cultural characteristics may influence T&HCs' attitudes towards price and hence the pricing decisions for T&H businesses. For instance, Correia *et al.* (2011) found that T&HCs from collectivistic cultures (i.e. to a large extent, almost all countries in East and Southeast Asia) may have a greater tendency to be price conscious. Furthermore, tourists from collectivistic countries were more likely to make their evaluations by using the brand and price cues, whereas individualistic

Table 1.3. Summary of major studies on cultural dimensions and price in tourism and hospitality.

Cultural dimension	Cultural dimension and price	References
Collectivism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collectivist cultures may have a higher tendency to be price conscious; more likely to make purchase decisions based on price, brand and the number of alternatives Collectivistic and high-context cultures place more emphasis on the price–quality relationship than individualistic and low-context cultures 	Furrer <i>et al.</i> (2000); Correia <i>et al.</i> (2011); Nath <i>et al.</i> (2016)
Power distance (PDI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High-PDI cultures are more likely to use price to judge quality High-PDI cultures may not engage in bargain-hunting behaviour as doing so may be associated with lower status. 	Bathae (2011); Lalwani and Forcum (2016)
Uncertainty avoidance (UAI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High-UAI cultures are more content with the manifestation of inequality reflected in the price; more likely to make associations between price and service quality High-UAI cultures have a higher level of satisfaction when the hotel's pricing policy is presented, whereas low-UAI cultures' satisfaction levels remain relatively unaffected 	Mattila and Choi (2006); Sabiote-Ortiz <i>et al.</i> (2016)
Long-term orientation (LTO) versus short-term orientation (STO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LTO cultures are less likely to make impulsive purchases, place more importance on value relationships and have expectations about the price they paid STO cultures may feel dynamic pricing system is unfair and may not be able to benefit from low prices due to the lack of planning for the future 	Kwak <i>et al.</i> (2004); Gu and Ryan (2008); Au <i>et al.</i> (2010); Park <i>et al.</i> (2013); Boz <i>et al.</i> (2017)

customers had their own evaluation criteria (Correia *et al.*, 2011).

Jeong *et al.* (2019) researched various T&H services and found that customers from collectivistic and high-context cultures (again, almost all countries in East and Southeast Asia) placed more emphasis on the price–quality relationship than those from individualistic and low-context cultures. Similarly, Lalwani and Forcum (2016) also showed that customers from high-PDI cultures have more proclivity to use price to judge quality. Despite the sensitivity towards price, customers from high-PDI cultures may not engage in bargain-hunting behaviour (Bathae, 2011) as doing so may be associated with a lower status.

Nath *et al.* (2016) studied the responses of tourists from the UK, China and Malaysia towards hotel advertisements. They concluded that customers from high-PDI cultures (China and Malaysia in this case, and to a large extent, all East and Southeast Asian countries) were more likely to believe that high prices may reflect high quality. According to Nath *et al.* (2016), customers from high-PDI cultures had expectations that were more positive, and they were happier when the prices were higher.

The manifestation of prices is perceived differently between customers with high and low UAI. Customers from high-UAI cultures would not mind the manifestation of inequality reflected in prices. According to Sabiote-Ortiz *et al.* (2016), customers from high-UAI cultures (e.g. Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Thailand in East and Southeast Asia) were comfortable with the price manifestation. They had a higher level of need for order and structure. They were more likely to make associations between the level of price and the quality of service. In a comparative study, Mattila and Choi (2006) found that providing a hotel's pricing policy information can have a positive influence on South Korean customers' (high UAI) level of satisfaction, whereas US (low UAI) customers' level of satisfaction was not affected at all.

Research also showed that customers with LTO have a lower intention to make impulsive purchases. They will carefully plan their purchase, evaluate alternatives and make judgements about the future (Kwak *et al.*, 2004). In support of Kwak *et al.*'s (2004) findings, Park *et al.* (2013) also found that customers from

LTO cultures were less impulsive in purchasing, were disposed to delay their gratification and tended to be thriftier, but they had no problems in paying their credit card bills. LTO customers also place more importance on relationships and have expectations for the price they pay (Gu and Ryan, 2008; Au *et al.*, 2010).

Customers from LTO cultures are less impulsive and more restrained; they take a longer view of time and make purchasing plans and schedules (i.e. they do not tend to be last-minute customers). Hence, presale activities with yield management pricing may be more appropriate for these customers (Koc, 2020). From another aspect, customers with short-term orientation are more likely to focus on the near future and are less likely to make long-term plans. Presale activities with dynamic pricing (yield management pricing) may not be suitable for them. Customers with short-term orientation may feel that a dynamic pricing system is unfair. As usual, they may be unable to benefit from low prices because of their lack of future planning.

1.2.3 Influence of culture on promotion in tourism and hospitality

The promotion element encompasses all marketing communication tools, such as advertisements, public relations, sales promotions and personal selling, media and messages that are prepared for the target audience (Koc, 2020; Ayyildiz and Ayyildiz, 2021). Marketing messages for T&H products (i.e. the tangible aspects such as the appearance of service personnel) and services (e.g. the attentiveness, caring attitude, knowledge and courtesy of the service personnel at a hotel or a restaurant) convey a significant amount of information. Multiple information sources are welcomed by tourists from cultures with LTO to make purchase decisions (Correia *et al.*, 2011). Particularly, the product and service messages and the messages conveyed by third parties can be better planned and used as tools to establish a competitive advantage (Koc, 2021). For instance, through staff training and process management activities, product and service messages can be improved.

Bai (2016) stated that when the advertisements of the same product are targeted

at customers with low-context cultures, they appear to be more direct and informative. By contrast, the advertisements of the same product targeted at high-context cultures are less directly informative. The reason is that, in high-context cultures, the information and the formation of meaning are more implied than stated. Moreover, Callow and Schiffman (2002) found that messages evoked more implicit meanings in customers from high-context cultures compared with low-context cultures. Taskin *et al.* (2017) investigated tourists' risk perceptions using neuroimaging tools and found that holidaymakers from a high-UAI and high-context culture pay more attention to verbal cues when they considered travelling to conflict-ridden (risky) destinations, rather than visual cues, which is normally the case.

Cheong *et al.* (2010) observed that in high-PDI cultures (e.g. China), appeals of bejewelled, rank and treasured were more often encountered in food advertisements compared with the low-PDI cultures, such as the USA. Swaminathan (2012) also found that the appeals of ornamental, vain, dear and status correlated positively with PDI, whereas the appeals of humility, nurturance and plain were negatively correlated with PDI. Moreover, Nath *et al.* (2016) demonstrated that the expensive symbols promoted a higher social status and influenced power, wealth and elitism aspirations of high-PDI culture customers more positively. Furthermore, Albers-Miller and Gelb (1996) found that the themes or cues of safety, tamed and durability correlated positively with UAI; the themes or appeals of efficiency, convenience and productivity correlated positively with MAS; and the cues of natural, frail and modest correlated positively with femininity.

Pollay and Gallagher (1990) found that the themes and appeals of independence and distinctiveness were positively associated with IDV, whereas the themes and appeals of affiliation, family and community were negatively associated with IDV. Parker (2003) demonstrated when targeting customers from LTO cultures that the themes of health and nutrition were important. Cheong *et al.* (2010) also found that, in general, nutrition and health were more relevant for Chinese customers (LTO) (Hsu and Huang, 2016) than American customers (short-term oriented). The findings presented here regarding

advertising themes and appeals should not be looked at from a narrow perspective and the perspective of a marketing mix element alone. These themes/appeals can be used to design other marketing mix elements, particularly the product element, as these themes point out the cues that can be used in the positioning of T&H products and services.

Diehl *et al.* (2016) studied advertising themes and showed that the display of cues such as being altruistic, benevolent, kind, affectionate and generous increased the positive evaluations of the advertisement by customers from humane cultures. Moreover, a higher performance orientation message in the advertisement (i.e. cues conveying a sense of achievement, urgency, results and control) resulted in a more positive evaluation of the advertisement in high- and low-performance-oriented cultures.

Notably, much stronger high-performance-oriented cues were necessary for customers from high-performance-oriented cultures for the messages to be considered performance-oriented. From another aspect, for customers from low-performance-oriented cultures, even the weaker performance-oriented messages were sufficient for those messages to be considered performance-oriented (Diehl *et al.*, 2016).

In terms of attitudes towards advertising, Rojas-Méndez *et al.* (2002) found that customers with a high level of past orientation had a higher probability of refraining from advertisements. From another aspect, customers with present time orientation tended to have a more positive attitude towards advertising as they are always in the mood of immediate pleasure-seeking (Rojas-Méndez *et al.*, 2002). Although the attitudes of customers from future-oriented cultures were similar to the attitudes of customers from the present-oriented customers, the underlying motivation was different. Unlike hedonistic drives among customers from present-oriented cultures, customers from future-oriented cultures had a positive view of advertisements. The reason is that they focused on future benefits which may accrue from learning through having been exposed to advertisements.

As mentioned above, when explaining the influence of cultures on the themes and appeals of advertising messages, the content of marketing communications may be significantly influenced by the cultural orientations of

the customers. For instance, De Mooij (2019) discussed that the use of humour was more frequent in low-PDI cultures. In low-PDI cultures, people are not afraid to parody themselves and see youth as independent and individualistic, which is why it is idealized. In high-PDI cultures, status symbols are used more frequently.

Nelson and Paek (2005) suggested that nudity and sexual content in marketing communications messages was considered inappropriate for masculine cultures, as they were more against addressing sexual issues openly. Zhao (2017) found in Japan that advertisements were more likely to be associated with fear and rules/formality, which may be attributed to high UAI, PDI and a relatively low level of IND in the country.

As mentioned above, T&HCs from an IND culture may have a higher interest in recreation, entertainment, leisure and joyful aspects of holidays. Hence, they are motivated to gather and process information before going on a holiday. Therefore, they may have more sophisticated expectations regarding their holidays and leisure activities. For instance, tourists from an IND culture may be aware that a cultural trip to rural Mongolia would have fewer luxuries. Hence, they would develop their expectations accordingly, although it may be a high-end holiday in terms of price. Against this background, T&HCs from IND cultures may be expected to show more interest in the authenticity and relevancy of the planned and unplanned communication messages relating to the T&H product and the destination (Koc, 2017).

Seo *et al.* (2018) investigated the behavioural intentions of international visitors towards local restaurants in South Korea. When choosing a restaurant, tourists/customers from low-UAI cultures rely more on facts and knowledge of the restaurant-related information. By contrast, customers from high-UAI cultures rely more on their feelings and experiences as their behavioural intention and risk-reduction strategy.

Research showed that customers from feminine countries are indifferent to monetary sales promotions; they prefer to receive non-monetary sales promotions, which are more relationship oriented (Kwok and Uncles, 2005; McNeill, 2006; McNeill *et al.*, 2014). By contrast, customers from masculine cultures are

more positively influenced by monetary sales promotions. Studies specifically showed that sales promotions with a female identity (e.g. collection of coupons) were less likely to be effective on men, particularly those with a stronger masculine belief and self-image.

As a marketing communications element, public relations is the least studied, although it may be significantly relevant for marketing T&H in the South and East Asian countries. Kang *et al.* (2016) investigated how a country's culture may affect people's attitudes towards corporate social responsibility (CSR) in the hospitality industry by making 365 samples of secondary data observations from 1993 and 2011. They found that the cultural variable MAS had a negative and significant influence on positive CSR. This finding may be explained because business managers from highly masculine cultures place more emphasis on material gains and economic success. Hence, they are less likely to initiate socially responsible corporate actions (i.e. positive CSR) and are neglecting society needs of enhancing the quality of life.

Table 1.4 provides a list of literature review papers covering the topic of the influence of culture on T&H promotion.

1.2.4 Influence of culture on place and physical evidence in tourism and hospitality

Place in tourism and hospitality

From the perspective of tangible goods marketing, the place element refers to the logistics, distribution systems, suppliers and outlets where the products are made available for the customers. In the services industry and particularly in T&H, in addition to making products/services available to customers, place by means of a marketing mix element is also linked with almost all other 7Ps ranging from the physical evidence (the physical facilities, interior design, and hotel amenities) and people (grooming and politeness of frontline staff when interacting with customers) to the Internet web pages (their content, design, promotion, and the cues used by a hotel or a restaurant).

Table 1.4. Summary of major studies on cultural dimensions and promotion in tourism and hospitality.

Cultural dimension	Cultural dimension and promotion	References
Long-term orientation (LTO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LTO cultures' tourists welcome multiple information sources to make purchase decisions LTO cultures consider themes of nutrition and health to be important 	Parker (2003); Correia <i>et al.</i> (2011); Hsu and Huang (2016)
Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High-context cultures' advertisements tend to be less directly informative, whereas low-context cultures' advertisements tend to be direct and informative High-context cultures are evoked by messages with more implicit meaning, whereas formation of the meaning of messages is more stated than implied for low-context cultures 	Callow and Schiffman (2002); Bai (2016)
Uncertainty avoidance (UAI), context, masculinity (MAS) and femininity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High-UAI and high-context cultures' holidaymakers pay more attention to verbal cues in risky destinations, rather than visual cues UAI correlates positively with business advertising appeals of safety, tamed and durable; the appeals of natural, frail and modest correlate positively with femininity High-UAI cultures are more likely to rely on attitude and past experience Feminine cultures are influenced by non-monetary sales promotion; masculine cultures are more positively influenced by monetary sales promotions MAS has a negative and significant influence on positive CSR 	Albers-Miller and Gelb (1996); Kwok and Uncles (2005); McNeill (2006); Kang <i>et al.</i> (2016); Taskin <i>et al.</i> (2017); Seo <i>et al.</i> (2018)
Power distance (PDI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High-PDI culture appeals to ornamental, status and dear in advertisements. Expensive symbols promoted higher social status and influenced power, wealth and elitism aspirations Low-PDI cultures prefer more frequent use of humour in content marketing, whereas high-PDI cultures prefer more frequent use of status symbols 	Cheong <i>et al.</i> (2010); Swaminathan (2012); Nath <i>et al.</i> (2016); De Mooij (2019)
Individualism (IDV)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IDV culture correlates positively with appeals of independence and distinctiveness, whereas the themes and appeals of affiliation, family and community are negatively related to IDV culture 	Pollay and Gallagher (1990)

Continued

Table 1.4. Continued

Cultural dimension	Cultural dimension and promotion	References
Performance orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High-performance-oriented cultures consider stronger performance-oriented cues necessary, whereas low-performance-oriented cultures consider weaker performance cues are sufficient 	Diehl <i>et al.</i> (2016)
Past, present and future time orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High past time-oriented cultures are more likely to avoid advertising Present time-oriented cultures are less likely to avoid advertising; have a more positive attitude Future time-oriented cultures have a positive view of advertisements as they focus on future benefit 	Rojas-Méndez <i>et al.</i> (2002)
Indulgence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IND cultures have more involvement in fun, leisure and pleasure activities; show more interest in the authenticity and relevancy of the planned and unplanned travel-related communication messages 	Koc (2017)

CSR, corporate social responsibility.

Table 1.5. Summary of major studies on cultural dimensions and place in tourism and hospitality.

Cultural dimension	Cultural dimension and place	References
Uncertainty avoidance (UAI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High-UAI cultures are more likely to depend on personal information sources such as travel agencies, tour operators, friends and relatives 	Money and Crotts (2003); Litvin <i>et al.</i> (2004); Lee <i>et al.</i> (2012)

Lee *et al.* (2012) found that brick-and-mortar travel agencies played an important role for Japanese customers seeking health tourism activities. This notion is in line with some studies (Money and Crotts, 2003; Litvin *et al.*, 2004) which showed that people from high-UAI cultures like to utilize tour advisors of travel intermediaries, friends or relatives. Table 1.5 provides a list of literature review papers covering the topic of the influence of culture on T&H place.

Physical evidence in tourism and hospitality

Physical evidence, often referred to as tangibles, is an important dimension of service quality (SERVQUAL) (Parasuraman *et al.*, 1988). It encompasses a wide range of aspects of T&H, including the building, fixtures, furniture and decoration to how service or frontline employees

present themselves in serving guests. Some of the decisions regarding physical evidence may overlap significantly with other marketing mix element decisions, particularly those pertaining to the product. Thus, readers are recommended to refer to the product element above for wider coverage of this marketing mix element.

Hsieh and Tsai (2009) discovered that tourists from a high-UAI culture (Taiwan) evaluated the quality of the physical evidence/tangible elements of the service as significantly more important compared with tourists from a low-UAI culture (the USA). According to Huang and Teng (2009), Feng Shui, which is the ancient Chinese art of using energy forces to harmonize individuals with their environment, can have certain influences on Chinese customers' service quality judgements.

Table 1.6. Summary of major studies on cultural dimensions and physical evidence in tourism and hospitality.

Cultural dimension	Cultural dimension and physical evidence	References
Uncertainty avoidance (UAI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High-UAI cultures tend to place greater significance on physical evidence/tangible elements of the service than low-UAI cultures High-UAI cultures believe Feng Shui, the ancient Chinese art of balancing the flow of energy, influences Chinese customers' service quality judgement 	Hsieh and Tsai (2009); Huang and Teng (2009)
Power distance (PDI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High-PDI cultures prefer physical evidence/tangibles that signal high status and luxury High-PDI cultures prefer destinations, hotels, restaurants and services that enhance their credibility of belonging to a wealthy and superior social class through physical evidence 	Crotts and Erdmann (2000); Weiermair (2000); Nath <i>et al.</i> (2016); Koc (2020)

As mentioned above, people from high-PDI cultures preferred physical evidence/tangibles that signalled high status, luxury, exclusivity and elitism in making their T&H decisions (Koc, 2020). Some studies (Crotts and Erdmann, 2000; Weiermair, 2000; Nath *et al.*, 2016) found that customers from a high-PDI culture tend to prefer destinations, hotels, restaurants and services that enhance their superior status in society, elements of celebrity and wealth through physical evidence. Table 1.6 provides a list of literature review papers covering the topic of the influence of culture on T&H physical evidence.

1.2.5 Influence of culture on the process in tourism and hospitality

The process element of the marketing mix in T&H is about the design and implementation of sub-service elements that constitute the comprehensive service (e.g. a service product). The booking and reservation systems for accommodation, the reservation for an airline booking, making reservations at a restaurant, and the cooking and serving of food in a restaurant are some of the secondary or tertiary activities that make up a full service (Koc, 2020).

Given the inseparability and heterogeneity characteristics of T&H services, effective

and efficient operational activities to deliver the service on time are extremely crucial for customer satisfaction and marketing of T&H services. Although product quality (goods/service products) may constitute 14% of all service-switching behaviours and dissatisfaction, the inadequate quality of social interaction may constitute as high as 67% of all service switching (Doyle, 2008). That is, services are made up of the interconnected nature of sub-services, processes and interactions. Research showed that when customers perceive a satisfactory recovery of a service, their loyalty is likely to increase (Smith and Bolton, 1998; Baker, 2017; Kim, 2017; Koc, 2017). Moreover, a negative evaluation of a service recovery process may have significant implications for the T&H business. However, compared with people from IND societies, people from restraint cultures have a greater tendency to remember negative memories rather than positive ones. As stated above, most countries in East and Southeast Asia can be classified as high or relatively restraint cultures, and they may be more difficult to please through service recovery actions. They are more likely to be stuck with a negative event, such as service failure.

Although the expectations of the T&HCs from high-PDI cultures are higher, they tend to evaluate the service they receive more negatively (Mattila, 1999; Ladhari *et al.*, 2011;

Table 1.7. Summary of major studies on cultural dimensions and process in tourism and hospitality.

Cultural dimension	Cultural dimension and process	References
Power distance (PDI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-PDI cultures have higher service expectations; evaluate the service they receive more negatively • High-PDI cultures expect an apology from a high-ranking employee; such an apology made creates a higher recovery process • High-PDI cultures' customers perceive themselves as superior compared with service employees 	Mattila (1999); Mueller <i>et al.</i> (2003); Ladhari <i>et al.</i> (2011); Nath <i>et al.</i> (2016); Lee (2015); Patterson <i>et al.</i> (2006); Ergün and Kitapci (2018); Gao <i>et al.</i> (2018)

Nath *et al.*, 2016; Ergün and Kitapci, 2018; Gao *et al.*, 2018), expect more personalized service (Davis *et al.*, 2009) and, interestingly, are less likely to make a complaint (Yuksel *et al.*, 2006). This notion means that T&H businesses need to establish systems to identify customer dissatisfaction, look for ways to make complaining easier or build stronger customer relationship management systems. Moreover, Heung and Lam (2003) showed that Chinese restaurant customers were more likely to have a timid style of communication when they encountered failures. When a failure is recovered, Chinese customers were more likely to remain silent and avoid further friction. However, it is notable presently that Chinese customers voice their complaints on social media and are more likely to make complaints. Interestingly, in a study of the online complaint behaviour of Chinese hotel guests, the traditional Chinese culture was found to be prevalent in the online Chinese community (Au *et al.*, 2014). In the event of service failures, research shows that customers from high-PDI cultures (invariably almost all East and Southeast Asian countries) expect the apology to come from a high-ranking member of staff (e.g. a manager) rather than a lower-ranking member of staff (e.g. a waiter or a receptionist) (Patterson *et al.*, 2006). Mueller *et al.* (2003) conducted research in restaurants and found that when a higher-ranking employee made an apology (i.e. a manager), customer satisfaction in the recovery process tended to be significantly higher.

In terms of the interactions between service providers and customers, hospitality customers from a low-PDI culture (e.g. the USA) overlook bureaucracies in customer interactions with

the employees as they see themselves as equal to them. Customers from low-PDI cultures do not perceive communication initiated by the service staff negatively (Lee, 2015). Conversely, T&HCs from a high-PDI culture (e.g. Japan) are more likely to perceive a service provider's attempt to initiate communication negatively as they tend to perceive themselves as superior compared with the service employees (Lee, 2015).

Table 1.7 provides a list of literature review papers covering the topic of the influence of culture on the T&H process.

1.2.6 Influence of culture on people in tourism and hospitality

As one of the 7P elements, people include all staff directly or indirectly involved in T&H businesses, from the frontline employees to back-office staff. The former includes the front-desk staff at a hotel who have direct contact with the customers, and the latter includes the engineering staff, kitchen staff or human resources support staff. People also include all the managers at various levels of hierarchy whose performance makes an impact on the customer's satisfaction and evaluation of the service performance.

Decisions regarding the people element of the marketing mix may involve human resources management activities, such as hiring, training and performance appraisals. According to Koc (2003), employees in tourism businesses with their appearance, ability, knowledge and skills in interaction may convey important marketing communication messages to customers. Koc (2013) conducted a comparative study of

Table 1.8. Summary of major studies on cultural dimensions and people in tourism and hospitality.

Cultural dimension	Cultural dimension and people	References
Power distance (PDI), uncertainty avoidance (UAI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-PDI cultures have slower/delay in service recovery of service failures. Low-PDI cultures have a faster response to service failures as staff use direct communication with their superiors • In a high-PDI and high-UAI culture such as Serbia, employees tend to agree with company rules and value employment stability, though experience a high level of job stress and dissatisfaction • High-UAI cultures have a lower employee turnover rate; this might be due to a high level of risk aversion and employees might be highly dissatisfied with their jobs 	Nedeljković <i>et al.</i> (2012); Koc (2013, 2020)
Collectivism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collectivistic cultures tend to be uncomfortable with empowerment 	Magnini <i>et al.</i> (2013)

high- and low-PDI cultures and found that a lack of empowerment among employees and a lack of direct communication between subordinates and managers in high-PDI cultures caused delays in the recovery of service failures in T&H. By contrast, in the low-PDI cultures, the response to service failures was faster as they, the staff, were able to use more direct communication with their superiors.

Magnini *et al.* (2013) demonstrated that empowerment might not be applicable to service staff in collectivistic societies. Empowerment of service staff may have significant consequences for T&H establishments in terms of reliability and responsiveness aspects of SERVQUAL (Koc, 2013; Dalgic *et al.*, 2017; Dimitriou, 2017). Koc (2020) also argued that low employee turnover rates in high-UAI cultures should not be confused with job satisfaction. Highly risk-averse staff might not have high job satisfaction but just wish to keep their jobs for survival only.

Nedeljković *et al.* (2012) conducted research in the Serbian hospitality industry, which may be referred here to understand certain issues regarding T&H employees' behaviours in the East and Southeast Asian countries. Serbia, a country with a high level of UAI, PDI and a relatively high level of restraint tendency, has some similar characteristics with the East and Southeast Asian countries to a large extent. Nedeljković *et al.* (2012) demonstrated that employees, in general, tended to agree with company rules and assigned a significant

amount of importance to having stable employment, although they were highly stressed and dissatisfied with their jobs.

Table 1.8 provides a list of literature review papers covering the topic of the influence of culture on T&H people.

Discussion and Conclusions

This chapter has explained and discussed how culture might affect the design and implementation of the marketing mix elements and activities in T&H. The chapter showed specific examples of how certain cultural characteristics may influence T&HCs' beliefs, attitudes, perceptions and behaviours. Because the common cultural characteristics in the East and Southeast Asia region can be summarized in general as relatively high-context, high-PDI, collectivistic and low in IND, the marketing mix strategies need to be designed accordingly, as explained above. However, an umbrella approach, developing strategies for a number of countries, would be wrong, as instances of variations exist. For instance, although the PDI scores of Japan and South Korea are rather high, the PDI scores of China and Singapore are relatively low. Cultural characteristics of a country are stable over time (Hofstede *et al.*, 2010; Minkov and Hofstede, 2011), but the reactions of people may change significantly over time. For instance, China has a collectivistic and long-term-oriented

culture, with recent frequent exposures to dishonest brick-and-mortar travel agencies. Thus, Chinese customers have increasingly begun to switch to online travel agencies (Hsu and Huang, 2016). Hence, although cultural characteristics could be reasonably stable over time, a plethora of research studies may be needed to understand the changes.

The explanations and discussion presented in this chapter are believed to provide important guidelines not only for the practitioners working in the industry, but also for the researchers in academia. The chapter also shows that although plenty of research examples exist in some areas (e.g. marketing communications, advertising, advertising appeals, product expectations) to firmly establish knowledge in those particular aspects, some other areas appear to require further research (e.g. public relations activities as promotional tools, processes and people as the two major marketing mix elements) to make knowledge more solid.

To this end, in addition to the recommendations already made in the chapter, further

recommendations can be made for future studies. For instance, tourists from high-PDI cultures have a greater proclivity to perceive a service provider's attempt to initiate communication negatively as they view themselves as superior compared with the service employees (Lee, 2015). However, T&H services may require a certain level of interaction and the participation of customers (Koc, 2021). Based on this background, the attitudes of customers towards the use of service robots in high-PDI cultures (e.g. Japan and South Korea) in the East and Southeast Asian countries may be investigated. As service robots may eliminate interaction with human service staff, customers may have more positive attitudes towards the use of service robots. Moreover, people from restraint cultures (e.g. Hong Kong, China and South Korea) may have more proclivity towards remembering negative experiences rather than positive ones. Based on this fact, the reactions of customers to the service recovery paradox could be measured.

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