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**CULTURAL DRIVERS OF SERVICE QUALITY: AN
EMPIRICAL STUDY IN THE HOTEL INDUSTRY**

Edit HABİF

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APPROVAL PAGE



DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this master's thesis titled as “Cultural Drivers of Service Quality: An Empirical Study in The Hotel Industry” has been written by myself in accordance with the academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that all materials benefited in this thesis consist of the mentioned resources in the reference list. I verify all these with my honor.

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ABSTRACT
Master's Thesis
Cultural Drivers of Service Quality: An Empirical Study in The Hotel Industry
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Dokuz Eylül University
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As the globalization increases, the competition in service industry also increase, and understanding the needs of the customers becomes a vital issue. The purpose of this study is to assess the influences of cultural dimensions (namely, power distance, individualism, masculinity, long term orientation, and uncertainty avoidance) on service quality variables (that is, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, tangibles, and empathy). Data were collected from guests belonging to different nationalities and staying in five star hotels in İzmir and were analyzed with structural equation modeling. The results of the study indicate that cultural dimensions have some influence on the importance levels attached to service quality dimensions, mainly power distance on reliability, individualism on tangibles, masculinity on reliability, uncertainty avoidance on empathy and long term orientation on responsiveness. The study carries important implications for managers working in the field of tourism and receiving frequently guests from various cultures.

Keywords: culture, service quality, tourism industry, structural equation modeling

ÖZET

Yüksek Lisans Tezi

Hizmet Kalitesinin Kültürle İlgili Öncülleri: Otel Endüstrisinde Görgül Bir Çalışma

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Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi

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İngilizce İşletme Yönetimi Programı

Globalleşmenin artmasıyla birlikte, hizmet sektöründeki rekabet de artmaktadır ve bu nedenle müşterinin isteklerini anlamak önem teşkil etmektedir. Bu çalışmanın amacı, kültürel boyutların (güç aralığı, bireycilik, erkeksilik, uzun döneme yönelme ve belirsizlikten kaçınma) hizmet kalitesi boyutlarına (güvenilirlik, duyarlılık, güvence, fiziksel özellikler ve empati) olan etkisini değerlendirmektir. İzmir’de bulunan beş yıldızlı otellerde konaklayan farklı milliyete sahip misafirlerden veri toplanmıştır ve elde edilen veriler yapısal eşitlik modeli ile analiz edilmiştir. Çalışmanın sonuçları; kültürel boyutların hizmet kalitesi boyutlarının önem derecesine olan etkisine işaret etmektedir. Özellikle güç aralığı boyutunun güvenilirliğe, bireyciliğin fiziksel özelliklere, erkeksiliğin güvenilirliğe, belirsizlikten kaçınmanın empatiye, ve uzun döneme yönelmenin duyarlılığa etkisi olduğu görülmektedir. Bu çalışma, çeşitli kültürlerden misafirleri ağırlayan ve turizm alanında çalışan yöneticilere önemli çıkarım sağlayacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: kültür, hizmet kalitesi, turizm sektörü, yapısal eşitlik modeli

CULTURAL DRIVERS OF SERVICE QUALITY: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY IN THE HOTEL INDUSTRY

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, service industry shows a significant development among world economy. It is seen that services' portion in countries' Gross Domestic Products is increasing year by year. Additionally, service sector is influential in work force employment. Therefore, studies about service sector should not be underestimated (Wirtz et al., 2015: 565-566; Ghobadian et al., 1994: 43).

Tourism industry is one of the leading industries in service sector. It is vital because as tourism revenues increase, foreign trade deficit of countries decrease and it has positive contribution to balance of payment as well as decreasing unemployment rate (Yilmaz et al., 2015: 26-28). As the importance of tourism industry increased, it is referred to as "smokeless industry". Accommodation is also a vital segment in tourism. Therefore, the focus of this thesis will be accommodation facilities.

With the increase of globalization, the competition in service industry significantly increased, thus putting emphasis on service quality became one of the main issues of managers. To improve customers' perception of service quality, it is crucial to analyze expectations of potential customers. Moreover, it is also important to know which service quality dimension is important for the customers.

The importance of service quality dimensions varies contingent upon many different factors. Culture is one of the most significant factors which is influential on service quality perception. Cultural differences effects what customers put emphasis on about quality. Hence, the assessment of these differences would help to understand what is important for which customer. Understanding priorities of customers', who are belonging to different cultures, about service quality will bring the businesses one step forward. This is inevitable in order to be successful in highly competitive service industries (Guesalaga et al., 2016: 89).

Through literature many researches made to assess components of service quality, also compare service expectations of costumers and evaluations across local markets. It is possible to see that there are still some gaps in literature. There are not much studies conducted in a specific local market to evaluate the influence of cultural differences on service quality expectations. Additionally, there are very few studies in literature about examining the influence of culture to customers' evaluation of the

importance of service quality dimensions (Winsted, 1997: 337; Guesalaga et al., 2016: 89; Tsoukatos and Rand, 2007: 467). If Izmir, specifically, is taken in to consideration, it is not possible to see any studies conducted which measures the effect of cultural drivers of service quality in hotel industry.

Through literature studies concerning culture and service quality relationship can be observed. Tsoukatos and Rand evaluated the impact of cultural dimensions on importance of service quality dimensions focusing to Greek insurance industry. Moreover, their study disregards the tangibles dimension of service quality. They see tangibles as a negligible parameter because of the distinct characteristics of the industry they focused in. The study gives an idea about the relationships of the dimensions but as it focused on insurance industry it is not possible to make an assessment about tourism industry (Tsoukatos and Rand, 2007: 473-476). Furrer et al. also evaluated the influence of culture on attaching importance to service quality dimensions. In their study, they only took banking sector into consideration and focused on students from different cultures who have frequent relationships with banks (Furrer et al., 2000: 355-360). Their study is also insufficient for tourism industry. Donthu and Yoo examined the relationship between culture dimensions and expectation from service quality dimensions also in banking sector. They did not measure all the dimensions' relationships and the study lacks measurement about the impact of masculinity dimension of culture. In the study of Mattila, the influence of culture on the evaluation of complex services was examined by comparing Western and Asian customers. Mattila took only the power distance and collectivism dimensions of culture and evaluated the influence of these dimensions on service quality expectations. The other cultural dimensions are disregarded in this study. Moreover, service quality dimensions are not discussed in detail. Additionally, this study is limited with only comparison of Asian and Western customers (Mattila, 1999: 250-252). Armstrong and his colleagues' research is a study in which the service quality is evaluated in detail and the effect of the difference in cross-cultural expectations on service quality is examined. Cultural differences were measured only by asking the nationality of respondents. Any other measurement tool was not used in order to assess cultural differences (Armstrong et al., 1997: 181-185). Wang et. al. made a research in order to evaluate Chinese tourists' perceptions of the UK hotel

service quality. They focused on the influence of Chinese culture in the expectation of Chinese hotel guests. This study is taking only Chinese culture into the consideration. Therefore, it is not suitable to make a generalization with this study. (Wang et al., 2008: 312-315). Hence, there are gaps in the literature in terms of the industry that is focused on and the treatment of the subject. There are not many studies examining the influence of culture on service quality dimensions in hotel industry. These studies are observed to be cross-cultural studies in which the comparison of certain nationalities are made. The distinction of the study is that, it does not evaluate guests' cultural characteristics according to their nationalities, but considers them as individuals and measure every individuals' cultural characteristics separately.

Addressing the gaps in the literature, the purpose of this thesis is to evaluate the effects of cultural drivers on the importance attached to various service quality dimensions. The study aims to find relationship between the dominant cultural characteristics of individuals from different cultures and their evaluation of the level of importance attached to service quality dimensions.

The first part of the study discusses the concept of culture and its dimensions. In the second part of the study the concept of service, quality and service quality are examined in detail. In the third section, background literature is reviewed. In the fourth part, the conceptual model is presented and hypotheses are developed. In the fifth section, the methodology is explained centering on sampling, testing of the reliability and validity of the model. In the final section of the study, findings are presented. Lastly, the conclusions are drawn, limitations are shown, managerial implications are addressed, and future research directions are presented.

CHAPTER ONE

CULTURE

1.1. THE CONCEPT OF CULTURE, THE DEFINITION AND FEATURES OF CULTURE

1.1.1. The Concept of Culture

The meaning of the term “culture” has been highly controversial. Through decades, culture has been evaluated from different perspectives by researchers (Guesalaga et al., 2016: 90-91). The direct or oblique, subtle or pronounced, enduring or ephemeral influences of culture on human behavior can be observed. Culture evolves rapidly and is effected from social, economic, political and technological development. In other words, it has a dynamic nature. In order to be competitive in international market, it is vital to take the dynamic nature of culture into consideration (Craig and Douglas, 2006: 322-323).

Culture involves the understanding of values, beliefs, and customs which exist in a community (Kitchin, 2010: 73). Consumer behavior might show differences between cultures. In other words, cultural differences are influential on consumers’ service quality expectations and evaluations (Guesalaga et al., 2016: 89). For being successful in local markets, it is crucial for multi-national businesses to observe the unique characteristics of the local culture and comply their brands with those unique characteristics (Foscht et al., 2008: 137).

Culture has not only multidimensional characteristics but also has complicated and unpredictable pattern. These characteristics prevent us from effective and general definition (Soares and Shoham, 2007: 279). The expression of culture is still difficult because of globalization, dissolution of borders, rapid changes taking place in information and communication technologies.

1.1.2. The Definitions of Culture

Through literature, it is possible to observe different definitions of culture. This makes it complex to determine a single culture index. Thus, culture definitions from different perspectives should be examined (Henry, 1976: 122).

The modern culture definition which focused on socially patterned human thought and behavior is proposed by Edward Tylor (Tsoukatos and Rand, 2007: 469). In 1881 Tylor defined culture as “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society” (Tylor 1870; cited by Avruch 1998: 6). This definition has been the touchstone for all following considerations of the concept in anthropology. From a similar point perspective, Rokeach states that cultural values are influential in directing behavior patterns (Hayden, 1998: 416).

According to Schwartz “culture consists of the derivatives of experience, more or less organized, learned or created by the individuals of a population, including those images or encodements and their interpretations (meanings) transmitted from past generations, from contemporaries, or formed by individuals themselves.” (Schwartz, 1992: 324). In this statement, Schwartz stressed the socio-psychological pattern of culture.

In general, it is observed that many researchers define cultural groups based on objective aspect. Looking from the objective aspect reveals groups such as race, language, religion and geographical region. In contrast, Triandis focused on subjective aspects of culture rather than objective and emphasizes subjective features such as; shared beliefs, values, attitudes, norms, roles, tasks and ideas (Triandis, 2002: 4-6; Armstrong and Swartzman, 2001: 66).

Until 1970's culture was seen as an objective concept. In 1970's by emphasizing symbolic view, culture started to be considered as a subjective context. From this context, “culture in the mind of the people” statement was arisen by Geertz. (Geertz, 1973: 89; Berry, 2000: 199). Geertz made the definition of culture as “an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means

of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life.” (Geertz, 1973: 89)

Hofstede defined culture as the “collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from those of another”. The statement “category of people” might be “a nation, region, or ethnic group (national etc. culture), women versus men (gender culture), old versus young (age group and generation culture), a social class, a profession or occupation (occupational culture), a type of business, a work organization or part of it (organizational culture), or a family” (Hofstede, 1994: 1). The “mind” refers to head, heart and hands which is for thinking, feeling and acting, with results of beliefs, attitudes and skills (Hofstede, 2001: 9-10).

Goodenough states that “Culture is the various standards for perceiving, evaluating, believing and doing that attributes to other persons as a result of his experience of their actions and admonitions. Insofar as a person finds he most attribute different standards to different sets of others, he perceives these sets as having different cultures” (Goodenough, 1981: 98).

Mead (1985) defined culture as “shared patterns of behavior.” This definition has two different indications. Firstly, this statement indicates that culture is a group-level concept which stands in between the common nature of human and personality of people. The groups that have their unique cultures can be classified as societies, organizations and professions. Secondly, Mead indicates that, culture is not only a concept consists of description and observation of behavior (Ali and Brooks, 2009: 550).

1.2. THE COMPONENTS OF CULTURE

The components of the culture vary among the authors in literature. Hofstede defined the components of the culture in four titles: through symbols, heroes, rituals and values. Symbols, heroes and rituals are cursory whereas value is the deepest component of culture. The onion diagram shows that values take place in the core of the diagram. The "Onion Diagram" shown in Figure 1 contains components that can or cannot be seen directly (Hofstede, 2001: 10-11).

Symbols are “words, gestures, pictures, and objects” that have complex meanings that can only be understood by individuals who share the same culture. In the context of culture, new symbols can be developed very easily and the old symbols can be removed with the same ease. Symbols from a cultural group might be imitated by others. The reason why symbols are placed on the outermost layer in the onion diagram is that, they have a quick changeable structure (Hofstede, 2001: 10).

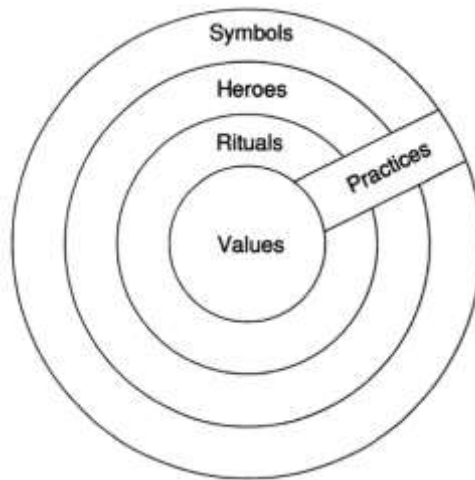
Heroes are alive or dead, real or imaginary people who are extensively appreciated in a culture and thus regarded as a model of behavior. For instance, Batman or Charlie Brown in the United States, Asterix in France might be evaluated as heroes (Hofstede, 2001: 10).

Rituals are technically unnecessary in the process of reaching the desired output. On the other hand, rituals are collective activities considered to be very important in cultures because they keep the individuals in integrity. For example, social and religious ceremonies such as salutations or showing respect to others (Hofstede, 2001: 10).

Values have invisible feature. Evidences in behavior helps values to become visible. In order to explain visible manifestations of culture; symbols, heroes, rituals might be evaluated (Hofstede, 2001: 10).

Practices term appeared after symbols, heroes, rituals and values. Hofstede made quantitative and qualitative analysis in 1985-1986. In the year of 1990, he identified values and practices in the onion diagram. Practices compose the structure of the onion; values form the core. Practices are conscious, visible and manageable. On the other hand, values are unconscious. As a consequence of the study, it is observed that these terms are not only conceptually different but also statistically independent (Hofstede, 2010: 1341).

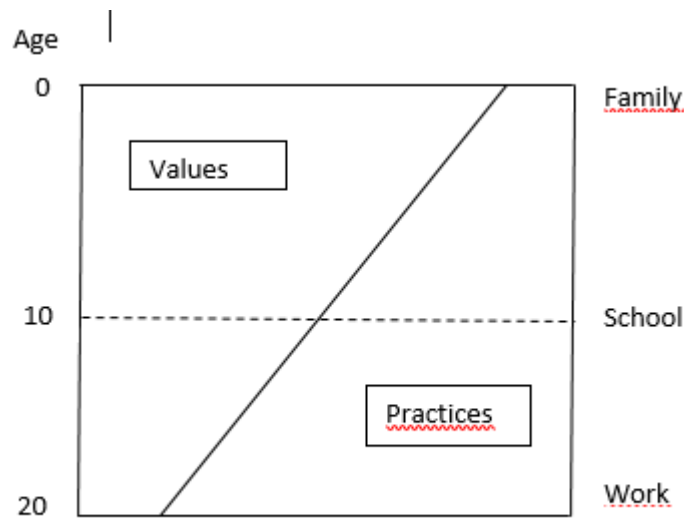
Figure 1: The “Onion Diagram”: Manifestations of Culture at Different Levels of Depth



Source: Hofstede, 2001:11.

The Figure 2 shows the relationship between values and practices. As it might be seen in the figure, values are acquired in the early stages of a human life. Compared to other living beings, it is stated that, at the moment of birth human beings do not have the necessary equipment to survive, and human psychology offers a period in which individual can reach the information that individual needs quickly and unconsciously through the first ten or twelve years. These include symbols (language), heroes (family) and rituals (toilet training), and most importantly, the core values of individual. As a result of this process, the individual gradually progresses to a conscious learning phase that focuses primarily on new practices (Hofstede, 2001: 10).

Figure 2: The Learning of Values and Practices



Source: Hofstede, 2010:10.

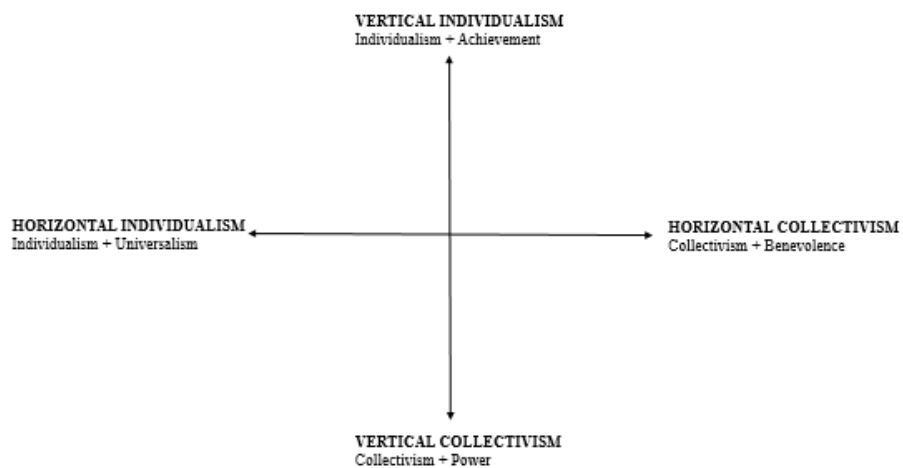
1.2.1. Harry Triandis's Approach

Harry Triandis made many different studies in order to identify cultural differences. He states that the cultural differences can be distinguished as objective and subjective culture (Triandis, 1996: 408). It is possible to observe that Triandis focuses on subjective culture. He suggests that “shared attitudes, beliefs, self-definitions, norms, roles, values” compose cultural syndromes which differentiates cultures (Triandis, 1996: 407). He also states that cultures differ in terms of complexity, tightness, collectivism and individualism (Triandis and Suh, 2002: 139). These cultural dimensions are related to cultural syndromes (Triandis, 1996: 409). Individualism and collectivism dimensions consists most vital differences among cultures (Triandis, 2001: 907). The people in collective cultures are observed to be more interdependent within their groups. Relationships are extremely important for them. They emphasize the importance of the goals and norms of the group they belong to. They behave in a way that is compatible with the group. On the other hand, it is seen that people in individualist societies do not behave compatible with the societies' norms. They put emphasize on their personal goals and they underestimate their groups' goals. It should be noticed that, the characteristics of individualist and

collectivist cultures can also differ from one culture to another. In other words, Triandis suggests that people in individualist or collectivist cultures might not hold all the characteristics of these cultures. For example, collectivism of the Israeli Kibbutz and Korean collectivism are different from each other (Triandis, 2001: 909).

According to Triandis, in most cultures similar patterns are formed by values. In one axis, it is possible to see individualism and collectivism. Collectivism consists conformity and security as values whereas individualism consists self-direction and hedonism as values. Triandis emphasizes the importance of horizontal and vertical species and states that in the second axis it is possible to observe those species in opposite sides. When power and achievement is taken into consideration, this indicates vertical side. On the other hand, benevolence and universalism consists horizontal side of the axis. Triandis suggests that, in a specific culture it is possible to observe people who are vertical collectivist (VC), vertical individualist (VI), horizontal collectivist (HC) or horizontal individualist (HI) (Triandis, 1996: 409-411).

Figure 3: Harry Triandis's Approach



Source: Triandis, 1996: 409-411.

1.2.2. Shalom Schwartz's Approach

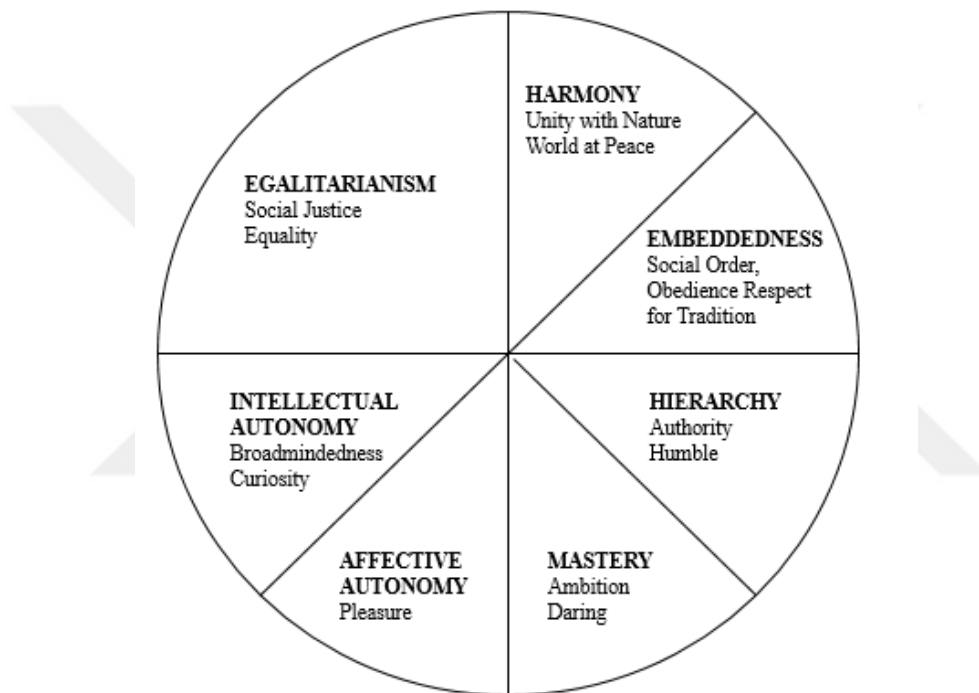
Shalom Schwartz developed a theory which emphasizes cultural values in order to identify differences between culture. He states that, cultural value orientation emerges as societies' one of the most important problem in shaping people's behaviors. His theory shows that there are seven dimensions of cultural values. There are oppositions between these seven dimensions, which cause problems in regulation of managing relations to social world (Schwartz, 2006: 139-141):

- Embeddedness vs. Autonomy:
 - Embeddedness: In embedded cultures it is possible to observe the importance of status quo. People do not behave in a way that would disrupt traditional order. Traditions, security, and obedience are vital values in these cultures.
 - Autonomy: In autonomy cultures people have control over their choices. Freedom and expression of ideas and feelings are important. Autonomy is divided into two different categories such as:
 - Intellectual autonomy: It emphasizes the importance of independence of ideas and intellectual directions. Creativity is a vital value in such cultures.
 - Affective Autonomy: It emphasizes the importance of independent pursuit of pleasure. Exciting life and varied life are important values in such cultures.
- Mastery vs. Harmony:
 - Mastery: In mastery cultures, oppositely to harmony cultures, directing and changing social environment is encouraged. The core values in such cultures are; personal success, ambition, and competence.
 - Harmony: In a harmony culture, people do not try to change the world. Rather they accept the world as it is. Peace in the world, environment protection, and unity with nature are core values of harmony cultures.
- Hierarchy vs. Egalitarianism:
 - Hierarchy: Cultural hierarchy values inequality. This inequality can be seen in role, power or resource distribution. Roles are clear in these

cultures. Authority, social power, wealth, and humility are vital values of hierarchical cultures.

- Egalitarianism: The core values in egalitarianism are responsibility, honesty, help, and social justice. In these cultures, people emphasize the importance of others' interests as well as their own. They don't only concern their own welfare but they concern also others'.

Figure 4: Cultural Dimensions: Prototypical Structure



Source: Schwartz, 2006: 142.

1.2.3. Edward Hall's Approach

Edward Hall in 1976 introduced high and low context cultural factors as key factors in cultural differences. These are based on the way of communication of cultures. According to Hall, in low context cultures, communication is more direct and during communication the information is expressed explicitly in the message. Differently, in cultures which are high context, it is possible to observe implicit messages and non-verbal communication rather than verbal communication.

Additionally, low context cultures value short term relationships while, in high context cultures long-term relationships, loyalty, and traditions are vital. Another difference between high and low context cultures can be seen in terms of individualism and collectivism. While low context cultures are more individualistic, high context cultures tend to be more collectivist. Lastly, in low context cultures, quick changes can be observed while in high context cultures there is no flexibility to change (Hall, 1976: 91-95).

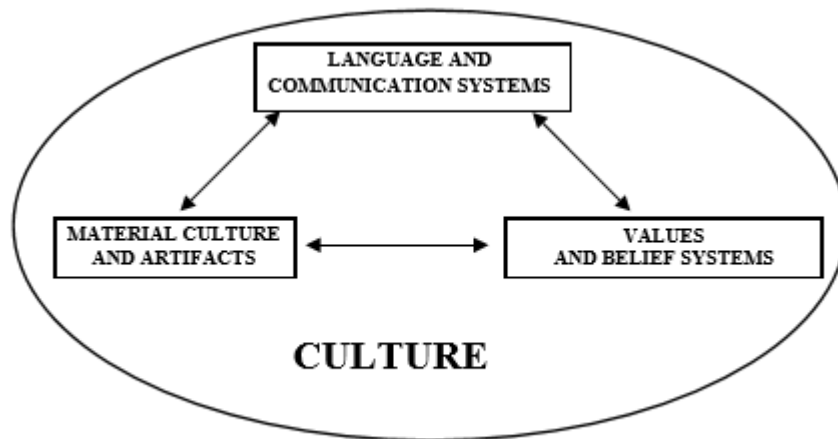
1.2.4. Samuel Craig and Susan Douglas's Approach

In order to observe the components of culture, Craig and Douglas developed a framework. This framework is adopted from Sojka and Tansuhaj's study which is about culture in marketing. Craig and Douglas divided culture in marketing into three groups (Craig and Douglas, 2006: 324):

- “Abstract or intangible elements of culture”. These elements involve values and belief systems.
- “Material aspects of culture”. Artifacts, symbols and rites are examples of material aspects of culture.
- “The communication links”. This provides binding and perpetuating a cultural system.

Some researchers evaluated these three groups independently and some focused on only one of them. As it might be seen from the Figure 5, Craig and Douglas asserts that these are closely associated with each other. For example, language and communication systems allow to transfer the intangible cultural elements such as values and beliefs from person to person and from one generation to another generation. Additionally, artifacts that contain religious symbols to shoes or clothing, may also be an expression of intangible beliefs (Craig and Douglas, 2006: 324).

Figure 5: Components of Culture



Source: Craig and Douglas, 2006: 324.

1.2.5. Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

Hofstede, at late 1970's, published cultural dimension model. The model was a consequent of a survey about how culture is influenced by values. It was conducted to IBM employees which is a cross-cultural organization. He applied this survey to more than 116,000 people working for IBM in more than 50 countries and 3 regions. This model was one of the initial models to understand the significance of cultural differences. In the original theory, Hofstede proposed four dimensions. He identified these dimensions as "individualism" (IND), "power distance" (PDI), "masculinity" (MAS) and "uncertainty avoidance" (UAI) at first. After a while, he also stated "Confucian Dynamism" or "Long-Term Orientation" (LTO) dimension as fifth to his study. The cultural dimensions emerged from his study takes the fundamental problems of communities as basis. The cultural dimensions that Hofstede developed and fundamental problems of the society (Hofstede, 2011: 6). The Power Distance (PDI) cultural dimension is concerned with the problem about human inequalities. Every society has some sort of a problem about overcoming the uncertainty about future. Uncertainty Avoidance is a dimension of culture which deals with this problem. Individualism is the cultural dimension which considers the individuals' relationship with other people in society as the main problem. Masculinity is another dimension of culture. It deals with the problem about role distribution of men and women in society.

“Long Term Orientation” put emphasis on problems about overcoming complexity of present and future (Hofstede, 1983: 64; Craig and Douglas, 2006: 325).

1.2.5.1. Power Distance Index (PDI)

Power distance (PDI) refers to the "extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally" (Hofstede, 2011: 9). Inequality level of a society takes roots from less powerful members as well as leaders. It is known that inequality in a society is inevitable but the level of it is distinct from one society to another (Hofstede, 2011: 9-10).

In the cultures that have high power distance index, social hierarchy has a vital impact. In other words, social status and roles of human beings in society should be clear for everyone. By this way everyone can earn the respect they think they deserve. Brands that are competitive in different regions should also be aware of this index and targeting the social needs of people is a marketing strategy that is commonly used (Mooij and Hofstede, 2010: 89).

In order to measure power distance, Hofstede took three fundamental items into account. First of all, he observed the difference between bosses' preference of decision making styles. Secondly, bosses' actual decision making style perception was examined. Lastly, to conclude the measurement, he took the feeling into consideration that employees were afraid to disagree with their manager (Hofstede, 1980: 82).

Fundamental differences between small and large power distance societies which is observed by Hofstede might be seen in below table. Unlike actual situations, the statements in the below table shows the extremes of cultures. The actual situations can be between the extreme sides (Hofstede, 2011: 10).

Table 1: Small Power Distance vs. Large Power Distance

Small Power Distance	Large Power Distance
Power usage shows goodness of people, it should be used based on laws and fairness.	Power usage does not have to be based on any rules, laws and fairness.
While treating children, parents should be fair.	Obeying parents is taught to the children
Showing respect or fearing from older people is not a must	To respect older people and fearing from them should be ordinary.
Hierarchy hurts the equality of roles in society. It exists for convenience of some people	Hierarchy refers to existential inequality.
Subordinates are willing to tell their ideas.	Subordinates are willing to do what powerful people tell them to do.
The society shows fairness in the distribution of income	Society does not show fairness in the distribution of income.

Source: Adopted from: Hofstede, 2011: 9.

1.2.5.2. Individualism vs. Collectivism (IDV)

Individualism (IDV) vs. Collectivism refers to bilateral continuum situation of culture. Individualism, is defined as; “a situation in which people are supposed to look after themselves and their immediate family only”, on the other hand oppositely, collectivism is defined as, “a situation in which people belong into groups or collectivities which are supposed to look after them in exchange for loyalty.” (Hofstede and Bond, 1984: 419). In other words, individualism shows the “preference for a loosely knit social framework” in society whereas collectivism reveals a “preference for a tightly knit social framework” (Schwartz, 1994: 87). In short, this dimension can be summarized as the choice between “I” or “We” (Hofstede and Bond, 1984: 419).

In individualistic society, the interpersonal connections are usually weak and people are used to take responsibility for their own actions and only their core families’. Oppositely, in collectivistic societies, individuals are a part of a group or extended families such as uncles, aunts, grandparents. They are loyal to the groups they belong. The group will defend the members’ interest and everybody take responsibilities for others’ wellbeing (Hofstede, 2011: 11; Soares and Shoham, 2007: 280).

Table 2 shows major differences between collectivist and individualist societies (Hofstede, 2011: 11):

Table 2: Individualism vs. Collectivism

Individualism	Collectivism
Put emphasis on taking care of immediate family	Put emphasis on taking care of extended families
Focus is "I"	Focus is "We"
Importance of privacy	Importance of belonging
Thinking of on its behalf is logical	Harmony should be the main focus
Other people considered as individuals	Other people considered as “member of the group” or “not a member of the group”
The relationships are less important than tasks	The relationships are more important than tasks

Source: Adopted from Hofstede, 2011:11.

1.2.5.3. Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI)

Uncertainty avoidance (UAI) defined as “the extent to which people feel threatened by ambiguous situations and have created beliefs and institutions that try to avoid these.” (Hofstede and Bond, 1984: 419). In other words, it can be expressed as the tolerance degree of a society against ambiguity and unstructured situations. The term “unstructured situations” is used for unusual, surprising and unknown. To summarize, uncertainty avoidance deals with societies’ willingness to control the future (Hofstede, 2011: 8; Hofstede and Bond, 1984: 419).

The cultures who have dominant uncertainty avoidance attend to reduce uncertainty and make their life as controllable and predictable as possible. In order to control their lives, they comprise laws and regulations. Additionally, they are tightened to strict behavioral codes. On the other hand, uncertainty accepting cultures have less rules and they respect others’ opinions even if they are different from their own opinions (Hofstede, 2011: 10-11; Soares and Shoham, 2007: 280). In cultures with high uncertainty avoidance, it is possible to observe that people are not open to changes and innovation as against to people belonging to cultures with low uncertainty avoidance (Mooij and Hofstede, 2010: 90).

Table 3, summarizes major differences between weak and strong uncertainty avoidance societies (Hofstede, 2011: 10):

Table 3: Weak Uncertainty Avoidance vs. Strong Uncertainty Avoidance

Weak Uncertainty Avoidance	Strong Uncertainty Avoidance
Naturally, there is uncertainty in life, and each day is accepted as it comes	The uncertainty naturally seen in life makes peoples' life difficult, and it is an issue people have to fight with
People tend to take the life easy with low stress and low anxiety.	People tend to show stress. Showing emotions and high anxiety are other features of people.
High degree of tolerance to aberrant, irregular ideas and people.	Showing tolerance to people with extraordinary, irregular ideas is possible. The different things are classified as dangerous.
People do feel uncomfortable with ambiguous and chaotic situations.	People are willing to maintain a clear order
People often change their jobs with no concerns	People do not prefer to change their jobs.
Rules are not liked	Rules are needed.

Source: Adopted from Hofstede, 2011: 10.

1.2.5.4. Masculinity vs. Femininity (MAS)

Another dimension of culture revealed by Hofstede refers to the gap between men and women's value distribution in society. Masculinity (MAS) is defined as "a situation in which the dominant values in society are success, money, and things." While femininity is defined as "a situation in which the dominant values in society are caring for others and the quality of life." (Hofstede and Bond, 1984: 419-420). In short, the masculine societies could be expressed as assertive and feminine societies can be expressed as caring (Hofstede, 2011: 12).

In countries which tend to be feminine the values of men and women seems to be similar, whereas in countries which are masculine, the gap between men and women's values are large (Hofstede, 2011: 12). In masculine societies, the sharing of household work is less. Men does not usually do household shopping. On the other hand, in feminine societies the sharing is made more equally and both wife and

husband is responsible for household work. The demonstration of achievement is vital in masculine societies and this demonstration needs to be supported by material evidences (Mooij and Hofstede, 2010: 89).

Table 4 shows fundamental differences between feminine and masculine societies (Hofstede, 2011: 12):

Table 4: Femininity vs. Masculinity

Femininity	Masculinity
Limited differences among social and emotional roles of genders	Distinctive differences among social and emotional roles of genders
Individuals equalize the importance that they give to family and work	Individuals focus on work but put family into the background
Sensitivity to people who has weak characteristics	Appraise to people who have strong characteristics
Father and mothers have same duties about facts and feelings in the family	Fathers focus on facts, while mothers focus on feelings in the family
A boy and a girl might give similar reaction like crying	Girls and boys should have different reactions. Girls may cry but boys shouldn't.
In a family mothers are dominant in the decision of family size	In a family fathers are dominant in the decision of family size

Source: Adopted from Hofstede, 2011: 12.

1.2.5.5. Long-term Orientation vs. Short-term Orientation (LTO)

The initial study of Hofstede does not take into account Asian countries. When he extended his study to Asia, a new cultural dimension emerged. This dimension is based on Long-Term and Short-Term Orientation of societies.

The teachings of Confucius have a vital role in Asian countries such as China. This dimension takes Confucius thinking as bases and therefore, it is labelled as “Confucian Work Dynamism” (Hofstede, 2011: 13).

Societies with long term orientation tend to show attachment to Confucian values. According to this, in long-term oriented societies it is possible to observe values such as; “persistence, thrift, ordering relationships by status and observing this order, having a sense of shame”. In contrast, short term oriented societies values such

as; “favors, gifts, respect for tradition, protecting one’s ‘face’, personal steadiness, and stability” exist (Hofstede and Minkov, 2010: 494-495; Craig and Douglas, 2006: 325).

Major differences between short and long term oriented societies could be found in Table 5 (Hofstede, 2011: 15):

Table 5: Short Term Orientation vs. Long Term Orientation

Short-Term Orientation	Long-Term Orientation
In life, the past or recent events are the most vital ones.	In life, vital events are expected to occur in the future.
An individual who has a good characteristics will protect his characteristics in all circumstances	An individual characteristics will change due to the variation of circumstances
Good and evil are determined by universal rules.	Good and evil might differ according to different situations.
Traditions cannot be changed, people should stick to them	Traditions can change in time according to difference in situations
Praising and being proud of the country that people live in is important	Adapting and learning from other countries is important
People aim to give good service to others	People put emphasize on thrift and perseverance

Source: Adopted from Hofstede, 2011: 15.

1.2.5.6. Indulgence vs. Restraint (IND)

Indulgence vs. Restraint is the sixth dimension of culture. It is discovered by Michael Minkov and Geert Hofstede in the year of 2010. Indulgence is used for societies “that allow relatively free gratification of basic and natural human desires related to enjoying life and having fun.” (Hofstede, 2011: 15). The aim of this dimension is not focusing on the same aspects with other five dimensions but complementing the dimension emphasizing long vs. short term orientation of cultures (Hofstede, 2011: 15-16).

Differences between indulgent and restrained societies are shown in Table 6 (Hofstede, 2011: 16).

Table 6: Indulgence vs. Restraint

Indulgence	Restrained
Most of the people are happy	Most of the people are not happy
For individuals controlling their own life is vital	For individuals helping other is emphasized
People put emphasis on speech freedom	People do not put much emphasis on speech freedom
Leisure is essential	Leisure is not essential
The positive emotions are remembered more	Positive emotions are not remembered often
People do not put emphasis on order of society	In order to provide order, many police officers are needed

Source: Adopted from Hofstede, 2011: 16.

1.3. COMPARISON OF COUNTRIES BASED ON CULTURAL DIMENSIONS

According to research made in 76 countries by Hofstede and his colleagues, it is observed that East European, Latin, Asian and African countries have high power distance whereas Germanic and English-speaking Western countries have low power distance (Hofstede, 2011: 10). Malaysia is the leading country in PDI with a score of 104, whereas Austria has the lowest score with a score of 11.

Individualism index scores shows that, in more developed and Western countries individualism surpass collectivism. On the other hand, when less developed, and Eastern countries are examined, it is seen that collectivism comes into prominence. Additionally, some countries such as Japan stand in between individualistic and collectivistic countries (Hofstede, 2011: 12). United States leads IDV with a score of 91, on the other side Guatemala has the least score which is 6.

If uncertainty avoidance is examined, it is seen that Latin countries, Japan and German speaking countries, East and Central European countries shows high results in terms of uncertainty avoidance. On the other side, in English speaking, Nordic and Chinese culture countries uncertainty avoidance results are observed to be lower (Hofstede, 2011: 10). It is observed that UAI is extremely high in Greece. The score

of Greece is 112 and this is the highest UAI score in the table. On the other hand, Singapore has the lowest score which is 8.

The femininity and masculinity index scores obtained by Hofstede's study reveals that some Latin countries, German speaking countries, and Japan have high masculinity. On the other hand, femininity is high in Nordic countries and in the Netherlands. English speaking Western countries have scores close to high masculinity, while some Latin and Asian countries such as Portugal, Chile, and Korea have scores close to high femininity (Hofstede, 2011: 13). Japan's masculinity score is 95. This score shows that they have the highest masculinity among other countries. Sweden, a Nordic country, has the lowest masculinity score which is observed to be 5.

Long term orientation is takes teachings of Confucius as bases. These teachings are still vital in Asian, especially Chinese society (Hofstede, 2011: 13). So it is not surprising that China has the highest score in long term orientation. Other Asian countries like; Hong Kong and Japan also have high results in LTO. The lower results for LTO are observed in United States, some European countries and African countries. The score of China in LTO is 118. Egypt which is a country belonging to African region has the lowest score for LTO observed in the table which is 7.

If indulgence scores are examined, it is seen that; in South and North America, Western Europe, and parts of Sub-Sahara Africa, indulgence is mostly seen. Oppositely, restraint is occurred in Eastern Europe, in Asia, and some of the Middle East countries. In the middle of regions with high score of restraint or indulgence characteristic Mediterranean Europe takes place with a moderate score (Hofstede, 2011: 16). Egypt has the lowest indulgence score with 4, whereas Venezuela with as score of 100, has the highest IND score.

CHAPTER TWO

SERVICE QUALITY

2.1. THE CONCEPT OF SERVICE, THE DEFINITION OF SERVICE AND THE FEATURES OF SERVICE

2.1.1. The Concept of Service

The service sector, especially in recent years, has an important role in world economy. While the growth rate of the sectors related to goods production in the economies slowed down, the share of the service sector increased significantly in most of the countries (Wirtz et al., 2015: 565-566).

Service industry could be observed in too many different areas today such as education, health, finance, management, insurance, consultancy, transportation and accommodation. A significant portion of the gross national product (GNP) is the service sector. In the US, Japan and Western European countries, between 60% and 75% of Gross Domestic Products are provided by the service sector. Additionally, in USA through 2000's over 75% of GNP and over 80% of workforce employment is provided by service sector (Wirtz et al., 2015: 565-566). According to World Bank data in 2014, services have a share of 77,98% in US economy. These data show that the significance of service sector increases year by year (Data World Bank, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NV.SRV.TETC.ZS?locations=US>).

2.1.2. The Definition of Service

Throughout literature it is seen that there are various definitions of service. Every researcher emphasizes different dimensions of service. Service is affected from several factors, and its tangible feature makes it difficult to explain in one specific phrase (Cronin and Taylor, 1992: 55). Especially in accommodation sector interpretation of service, quality and service quality concepts has a vital role in long term success.

One of the oldest definitions of service is made by Lehtinen in 1983. Service is defined as “an activity or a series of activities which take place in interaction with a contact person or a physical machine which provides consumer satisfaction.” (Lehtinen, 1983: 21). In this definition Lehtinen estimates the existence of services granted by machines as well as contact persons.

One of the most famous definitions of service is written by Philip Kotler. He described service as “any activity of benefit that one party can offer to another that is essentially intangible and doesn't result in the ownership of anything. Its production may or may not be tied to a physical product.” (Kotler, 2000: 200). So, services might be identified as activities that are performed in order to meet consumers’ needs and wants. Christian Gronross, in 1990, made a broad point of view in contrary to American Marketing Association and described service as “an activity or series of activities of more or less tangible nature that normally, not necessarily take place in interactions between the customer and service employees and/or physical resources or goods and/or systems of service provider which are provided as solutions to customer problems.” (Gronroos, 2000: 46). Zeithaml and Bitner defined service as “deeds, processes, and performances” (Zeithaml et al., 2010: 208). İçöz stated that “regardless of the sale of goods or services, services satisfy the needs and demand, and are activities that can be considered independent”. In this definition it is seen the sale of goods or services is not a sufficient factor to provide qualified service. The needs and demands of potential guests should not be underestimated (İçöz, 2005: 9-11).

The current definitions of services state that services do not produce a concrete output but they are means in production of concrete outputs. There is not a complete definition of what a service is made of but service can be defined as an intangible activity or benefit that one side presents to the other. Services do not result in ownership of anything. Some researchers suggest that there is no generally accepted service definition, and others believe that such a definition cannot be developed. (Uyguç, 1992: 12).

Customers benefit from some services immediately or in a short time, while they benefit from other services in moderate or long-lasting period. Fast food restaurants, cinema, cleaning services are examples of short-term benefits whereas the services that generate moderate benefits are tax advice, dental care. Services that

provide long-term benefits include finance and insurance companies and educational institutions (Akgeyik, 2004: 79).

2.1.3. The Features of Service

To interpret the services' features, comparison between service and goods might be examined. Service is different from physical product. It has unique features which differentiates it from goods. First of all, service is intangible and cannot be stocked whereas good is tangible and can be stocked. Another particular attribute of service is that, the production in service industry is labor-intensive; while good production is capital-intensive. In service industry, production and consumption are simultaneously yet in goods industry consumption follows production. This is also a vital difference between goods and services. When compared to goods businesses, in service businesses measuring the quality is harder. To measure the quality of the service, human factor should be taken into account. In service industry the motivation of the personnel performing the production is more important if it is compared with goods industry. However, both have the same aim: to meet human needs and demands (Buyruk, 1999: 36; Tütüncü and Doğan, 2003: 14; Yılmaz, 2007: 11-12).

As the consequence of literature review, it is seen that four generally recognized features of services are emphasized. These features are; intangibility, perishability, variability, and inseparability (Frochot and Hughes, 2000: 157; Parasuraman et al., 1985: 42).

2.1.3.1. Intangibility

Intangibility is the most important feature that distinguishes services from physical goods (Clemenzen, 2001:37-38; Parasuraman et al., 1985: 42). Service is a process, performance or sequence of activities. For instance, when a salesperson of a hotel sells a room in a phone call, the guest actually does not buy the room, he only takes the right of accommodation there for a certain period of time (Kotler et al., 1996: 82).

In service industry it is not possible to see, smell, hear, taste or touch services before buying it (Ghobadian et al., 1994: 45). Due to these features of the services, the customers try to find concrete tips to have an idea about the service. For this purpose, customers benefit from concrete elements such as the physical conditions of the environment in which the service is provided, the appearance of the personnel, and the tools and equipment used to provide service (Yılmaz, 2007:12).

Some important points arising from the intangible nature of services can be ordered as follows (Tütüncü and Doğan, 2003: 3; Tütüncü, 2009: 23; Zeithaml et al., 1985: 38):

1. It is unlikely that the services will be protected through "patents". So it is quite easy to be imitated.
2. Services cannot be exhibited in display windows like goods.
3. Service cannot be stored. This is why it is difficult to manage fluctuations in demand.
4. Pricing of services is difficult and it is almost impossible to establish objective criteria for price. Hence, it is not easy to build a relationship between quality and price.

2.1.3.2. Inseparability

Physical products are first produced, stored, then sold and consumed. Services are sold first, then produced and consumed at the same time (Clemen, 2001: 38; Yelkur, 2000: 107). The inseparability feature means that the production of the service and the consumption are simultaneous (Zeithaml et al., 1985: 33). Whether the service provider is human or not, the service cannot be separated from production process (Çatı and Baydaş, 2008: 37).

The customer actively participates in the service process. As a result, it can be seen that even the knowledge, experience, motivation and self-confidence of the client can affect the performance of the service system (Tütüncü and Doğan, 2003: 4). Service enterprises need to be in constant contact with customers to meet their needs at the highest level, and to offer them different opportunities. Therefore, enterprises

should be able to offer flexible proposals that are appropriate to the needs of consumers, not standard services (Tütüncü and Doğan, 2003: 4).

Some important points arising from the inseparable nature of services can be ordered as follows:

- Eliminate the time and place benefits
- If the demand is excessive, the production might be inadequate and if the demand is low, it might cause the idle capacity
- It can make direct distribution mandatory

2.1.3.3. Variability

Variability can be expressed as the possibility of a change in performance of a service is high (Zeithaml et al., 1985: 34). The quality and nature of the services may vary from one service to another, from one customer to another, from one month to another, or even from day to day. The feature of variability is related with the fact that the person is the front-line. Therefore, it is difficult to standardize services (Yelkur, 2000: 107; Zeithaml et al., 1985: 34).

The variability of service can be seen in different forms (Çatı and Baydaş, 2008: 42). First of all, variability caused by service provider should be taken in to account. Also customer who receive service might cause variability as every customer has different personality and expectations. Another fact that can cause variability is miscommunication of customer and service provider, which can be evaluated as the mixture of the first two facts. This interaction can differ the quality of same service from one customer to other. Variability could also be seen in form of time that service is provided. Same services served in different times would give out different results. Last but not least; variability according to environmental conditions of the service provided is another form of variability that could be observed (Tütüncü and Doğan, 2003: 5; Tütüncü, 2009: 27).

2.1.3.4. Perishability

The decision of selling, buying or consuming a physical good can be postponed and the goods can be stored, while services' consumption is obligatory, and they cannot be stored (İçöz, 2005: 46). This feature is actually related with the intangible nature of service. Unlike physical products, a final check is not possible after production is complete in services. If service is provided, the businesses always have to provide the right service at the first time (Ghobadian et al., 1994: 45).

Services' perishability feature in hospitality sector might be clarified with an example. For instance, there is a hotel which has 50 rooms. If a hotel sells 30 rooms for a night, remaining 20 rooms cannot be stored for the other nights. The hotel is not able to sell 70 rooms for other night. So, the income that can be obtained from the unsold 20 rooms has been lost forever. (Kotler et al., 1996: 84).

A seat on a flight or a table at a restaurant, a doctor's hour without patient or a haircut of a hairdresser cannot be returned or sold at a later time (Canel et al., 2000: 54).

The substantial marketing problem arising from the perishability is that, to stock the services is not possible to plan the appropriate capacity due to fluctuated demand change. It is because the demand for services is changing from year to year, from season to season, from month to month, from day to day or even from hour to hour. Therefore, if the capacity is kept high, the idle capacity will be generated when the demand is low. If the capacity is reduced, the company will not be able to answer the demand if the demand is high (Yelkur, 2000: 107).

Service establishments have developed strategies to close the gap between supply and demand. With different pricing strategies the demand might be shifted from high demand period to low demand period. By this way, the fluctuation will be prevented. Another strategy to close the gap is to adjust demand with using affective reservation systems. When the demand is low, various gifts and entertainments can be offered to the customers, and demand can be increased during periods of low demand. This is also a useful strategy used in order to balance supply and demand. It is also vital to use marketing strategies to spread demand over time. The marketing strategies that could be used are diversified advertising and promotional activities. To be able to meet

the demand in high season, part-time or seasonal staff can be employed. (Çatı and Baydaş, 2008: 40; Zeithaml et al., 1985: 34; İçöz, 2001: 7).

2.2. THE CONCEPT OF QUALITY, DEFINITION OF QUALITY AND FEATURES OF QUALITY

2.2.1. The Concept of Quality

Although quality concept has been a discussion topic for many years, especially after 1980s it has become prevalent. This is mainly a result of developing technology, increasing level of education and high competition. In the years when technological development were not rapid as recent years, the companies aimed to gain competitive advantage by their level of production. With the technological developments and accessibility to cheap raw material, businesses who were able to make low cost production became popular in the market. After 1980s this point of view started to change and especially in western countries demand moved to qualified products instead of low cost products. In Japan, many analyses were made to increase quality and this led quality to be a research topic (Yong and Wilkinson, 2002: 102-105; Lorente et al., 1998: 378-381).

2.2.2. Definitions of Quality

In literature there are many different quality definitions from different points of views. This is because quality is not only one dimensioned concept, rather it can be defined as multi-dimensioned (Yong and Wilkinson, 2002: 101-102). One of the most basic definition to quality could be found in Oxford English Dictionary, who defined quality as “excellence” or “goodness” (English Oxford Living Dictionaries, <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/quality>). In order to understand what quality is, six approaches might be compromised as; “transcendent, product based, user based, manufacturing based, value based and social-loss” (Sebastianelli and Tamimi, 2002: 444-445).

The transcendent approach is more of a philosophical approach which focuses on innate excellence. (Sebastianelli and Tamimi, 2002: 444-445).

One of the most important contributors to quality concept is J. M. Juran. He defines quality very briefly as “fitness for use” (Ghobadian et al., 1994: 48). More deeply, he states that quality has two different definitions. In the first definition he states is; “quality consists of those product features that are designed to meet consumer needs and expectations and thereby provide product satisfaction. This is known as “quality of design.” In this definition he is looking quality from customer or in other words user perspective. The other definition made by Juran states that; “quality consists of freedom from deficiencies such as products that do not work, factory scrap, late deliveries and design failures that cause trouble for consumers. This is known as quality of conformance.” (Juran and Gyrna, 1988: 2.2-2.3). Deming also gives the quality definition from customer perspective. According to him, quality definition changes along with customer needs. He states that, quality is obtained by customer satisfaction. Customer is the one who can assess if a product is qualified or not. This assessment is a result of the products’ ability to satisfy customers’ needs. In order to meet or exceed customer needs, a professional research, statistical analyses should be prepared by managers. (Gitlow and Gitlow, 1987: 8; Deming, 1986: 169)

Garvin focuses the measurable features of product to evaluate quality. He defines quality as; “Both absolute and universally recognizable, a mark of uncompromising standards and high achievement . . . often quality cannot be defined precisely, that it is simple, unanalyzable property we learn to recognize only through experience” (Garvin, 1988: 41).

According to Crosby, quality means “conformance to requirements” (Crosby, 1979: 17). This definition is related with the product’s degree to meet necessary design standards (Sebastianelli and Tamimi, 2002: 444). This approach proves that Crosby defines quality from manufacturing based point of view (Ghobadian et al., 1994: 48).

As stated by Feigenbaum, who is one of the main contributors to quality control, quality is; “the best for satisfying certain customer conditions, whether the product is tangible or intangible.” (Feigenbaum, 1986: 9). He also states the importance of balance between cost and customer value. So, this statement refers to value based approach to quality.

2.2.3. Features of Quality

To meet the customers' needs in most appropriate way, features of quality must be examined in detail (Bergman and Klefsjö, 1994: 18; Tavmergen, 2002: 23; Tütüncü, 2009: 64-65). Garvin identified a framework which he emphasized eight different attributes to explain quality. These attributes are; “performance, features, reliability, conformance, durability, serviceability, aesthetics and perceived quality” (Mitra, 2016: 7-8; Garvin, 1987: 104-107).

- **Performance:** It is the most important feature that must be found in the product or service. It means the ability to perform the function of the product or service. It is related with measurable attributes. Performance may vary for each product or service. For instance, when a television set is evaluated by the customer, the performance of the television set will be explained by the clarity of picture, sound and color. When a fast food restaurant's performance quality is assessed, customers will focus on the cleanliness of the restaurant or fast service (Garvin, 1987: 104). An objective classification can be made in terms of performance among similar products or services since it is generally measurable properties.
- **Features:** It provides the attractiveness of the product or service. Like performance, features are also measurable attributes. Garvin stated that customers explain the quality of feature by measuring the variability of options and customization of purchases. For example, different design options or colors might be offered with using manufacturing technology. These will help customers to personalize the products and at the end they will be satisfied (Garvin, 1987: 104).
- **Reliability:** The reliability of the product is related with performance of a product or service is compatible with the seller or producer's promises. Therefore, it is seen as the most significant dimension by customers. The continuity of the performance of the product or service over its lifetime helps to explain this dimension. The meaning of the reliability might change due to the feature of good or service (Garvin, 1987: 104-105).
- **Conformance:** Conformance is the level at which predetermined standards or criteria are met. For example, when the administration department of

government gives an advice to citizens, the existing laws and regulations should be conformed. It gives an idea about the technical dimension of the qualification to consumer or user service (Garvin, 1987: 105).

- **Durability:** It is related with the length of use regarding the product or service. Commonly, customers ask for the written results of the test which helps to evaluate the durability in certain conditions. This dimension has a close relationship with reliability. When a product is broken down, the repair cost will occur. In order to prevent this, companies offer lifetime guarantees (Garvin, 1987: 105-106).
- **Serviceability:** It is linked with finding solutions to problems or complaints about the product or services. Quickness, courtesy, competence is influential on the perception of quality by customer. For instance, how the service personnel behave to customer or how the company handle the complaints are the factors which explain serviceability. Managing with complaints is the key point to satisfy customers and it provides willingness to choose the same company in other time (Garvin, 1987: 106-107).
- **Aesthetics:** It is the dimension that expresses how the product appeals to the customer's five senses with features such as shape, form, color, harmony and taste. It does not directly affect the performance of the product or service, but it is significant for customer's quality perception. Although the first five dimensions are objective, aesthetics and perceived quality are subjective. The evaluation of aesthetics of a product or service might change from person to person. In researches it is found that customers might have similar patterns about a taste of a product. In order to examine the quality of food, 33 food categories are used and asked respondent to evaluate them. High quality was repeatedly expressed as “rich and full flavor, tastes fresh, tastes natural, looks appetizing and good aroma” (Garvin, 1987: 107).
- **Perceived Quality:** It refers to the past performance of the product or service. Since consumers do not always have detailed knowledge of all the characteristics of the product, some indirect criteria play an important role in making decisions in such cases. For example, the product or brand image created by the advertisements, the price, advertising, brand name etc., play a

role in the evaluation of the quality of the product or service by the customer, either positively or negatively (Garvin, 1987: 107).

2.3. THE CONCEPT OF SERVICE QUALITY

The concept of service quality is a topic of constant debate in the academic area and there is not a common accepted definition which involves all aspects of service quality (Johnston, 1995: 54). Even though it is not easy to make a definition for service quality concept, it might be the best way to define it with consumers' perspective, rather than the service vendor or manufacturer's perspective. For example; a receptionist may be pleased with the style of the check-in that he made. Though if the customer thinks it's unacceptable, it shows that the quality of service is insufficient. It is a subjective assessment, so it is hard to create one common definition (Kandampully, 2007: 77).

The intangible nature of services makes it difficult to implement quality control policies and to be offered in the same standards as tangible products (Parasuraman et al., 1988: 12-13). It is difficult to check the services' quality before it is presented to customers (Zeithaml et al., 1985: 33). Consequently, the consumption of service is made in the time they are produced, and their qualities are determined by the perceptions of consumers or customers who use the service.

Parasuraman and his colleagues (1985) made some observations on service quality:

- For customers, assessing product's quality is easier than assessing services' quality.
- Service quality perception is the result of comparing service performance with customer expectations.
- Quality assessment is not just about output as a result of service, but also includes the service delivery process.

In this context it is clear that if a company maintains consistently high service quality, it provides a competitive advantage.

2.4. THE DEFINITION OF SERVICE QUALITY

The service quality, like the concept of quality, is too sophisticated to define in a sentence. The definition used for physical goods has remained inadequate with the growth of the service sector today. The service's distinctive features from physical commodities have made it difficult to measure service quality (Parasuraman et al., 1988: 12-13). For example, a hotel management may develop rules, procedures and policies to standardize its services. However, the quality of service has many dimensions which will be an obstacle. The quality of service, such as courtesy and benevolence will be perceived differently by different customers (Mei et al., 1999: 137).

When the literature is examined, it is seen that there are numerous and different definitions related to the quality of service. Since the mid 1980's service quality has been evaluated from customers' point of view.

Parasuraman, Berry and Zeithaml (1985) defined service quality as a "measure of how well the service level delivered matches customer expectations. Delivering quality service means conforming to customer expectations on a consistent basis." (Parasuraman et al., 1985: 42). Gronross (1984: 37) similarly stated that, service quality is "a term often used as if it were a variable itself, and not a function of a range of resources and activities". In the beginning of 1990's, Lewis and Mitchell defined "service quality as the extent to which a service meets or exceeds customers' needs or expectations" (Lewis and Mitchell, 1990: 11).

As it can be seen from the above definitions, the customers are evaluating the quality of the service by comparing the expectation about the service and the service they actually receive. Therefore, it is possible to distinguish service quality as "expected service quality" and "perceived service quality" (Gronroos, 1984: 38).

2.4.1. Expected Service Quality

Webster (1991: 5-8) claimed that the expected service was shaped by marketer's communication, as well as the customer's past experience of service, needs, and information obtained from other customers. Also factors such as the image of the

businesses and the price of a product or service affect the expectation from service level (Ghobadian et al., 1994: 49).

Customers' expectations are revised when they get a new information related to the service. In other words, the expectations of the customers are dynamic. Expectations might change with new habits, social environment, education, economic situation and many other factors. In general, the information sources which shape the customer expectation are derived from two categories. These categories can be classified as; "internal and external". Internal information could be provided from past experiences. In other words, it is about the customer himself. Customer obtain external information from different sources like; word-of-mouth communication and implicit service promises. (Webb, 2000: 6; Zeithaml et al., 1993:5-6).

Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry created a focus group and made interviews with them. As a result of these interviews, they explained service quality with customer perspective. They summarize as; "Service quality, as perceived by consumers, stems from a comparison of what they feel service firms should offer with their perceptions of the performance of firms providing the service." Consequently, service quality has a vital role to explain the expectation and perception of consumers (Parasuraman et al., 1988: 16-17). Therefore, to be successful and survive in the sector, one of the most important things that service businesses should do is to determine the expectations of the potential customers correctly.

2.4.2. Perceived Service Quality

Through literature, the importance of understanding perceived service quality is emphasized. Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1988: 16) define perceived service quality as; "a global judgement, or attitude, relating to the superiority of the service". In other words, perceived service quality could be explained as the consumers' comparison of his expectation from services and assessment of the services' performance. As well as the services features, customers' personal emotions and past experiences are also influential on the assessment of the service performance (Jiang and Wang, 2006: 212). The unique characteristics of each service are the factors that

make the evaluation of the services different from tangible goods (Zeithaml et al., 1985: 34).

Quality of a service offered by service businesses can be controlled by the service provider. Some measurements and standards may be implemented. But the point that should be kept in mind is that, the evaluation of services is made by customer, not by service provider. Therefore, service provider should consider the expectations and demand of the customer (Ghobadian et al., 1994: 49).

The level of customer satisfaction is correlated with perceived service quality level. There are three vital outcomes of quality, which are (Ghobadian et al., 1994: 50);

- Satisfactory Quality: Customer expectation is fully satisfied.
- Ideal Quality: Perceived service quality exceeds customer expectations.
- Unacceptable Quality: Perceived service quality is lower than customer expectations.

Service providers are required to maintain the status of “satisfactory quality” or “ideal quality” every time. Yet in practice, it is not easy to focus on these three aspects of quality. In order to provide “satisfactory quality” or “ideal quality” status, service providers need to be well informed about the quality expectations of customer (Ghobadian et al., 1994: 50). Moreover, the research conducted by Gonzalez, Comesana and Brea states that, if the level of perceived service quality is high, it increases the positive advertisement made through “word-of-mouth communication” and “repurchase intention”; on the other side decreases the “price sensitivity” (Gonzalez et al., 2007: 159).

2.4.3. The Relationship Between Expected and Perceived Service Quality

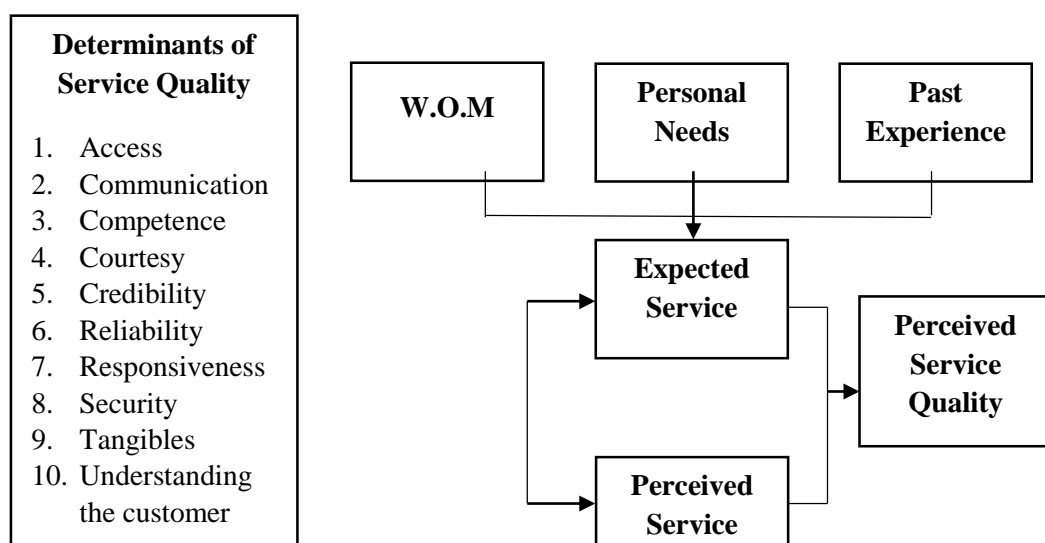
Through literature, as it is possible to observe the influence of perceived quality on customer satisfaction; the relationship between perceived quality and expected quality becomes an important topic to examine (Su et al., 2016: 84). Customer satisfaction or dissatisfaction is often regarded as a consequence of the sum of the difference between expected performance before service purchase and actual performance (Parasuraman et al., 1988: 17). In other words, expectations which arises

from the belief about product or service's features by potential customers, thus customers are also involved as a factor in the quality of service (Webb, 2000: 4). These expectations vary from person to person. Customers will then compare these expectations with actual service performance. If they are anticipated, they will leave as satisfied customers; if they are not anticipated, they will be dissatisfied. The higher the level of customer satisfaction from previous experience means, the greater the expectation for future service performance. This shows how difficult it is to satisfy customers (Hamer, 2006: 220-221).

To sum up, perceived service quality arises from a comparison of customers' expectations of what service should business offer and what service is offered. Therefore, perceived quality of service is related to the difference between the expectations and perceptions of the customers and the direction of this difference.

Parasuraman and his colleagues developed the model displayed on the Figure 6, in order to interpret determinants of perceived service quality. They argue that perceived service quality is a consequence of consumers' comparison of expected service and perceived service (Parasuraman et al., 1985: 47). In the Figure 6, it is seen that determinants of service quality effects the expectation and perception of service. Additionally, word of mouth, personal needs and past experiences of consumer are influential on expected service and perceived service.

Figure 6: Determinants of Perceived Service Quality



Source: Parasuraman et al., 1985: 48.

2.5. DIMENSIONS OF SERVICE QUALITY

The studies about service quality and dimensions of service quality have a history of more than thirty years. When the literature about quality of service is examined, it is seen that since 1970's there was much knowledge about goods quality whereas this knowledge was not adequate to explain service quality. To understand service quality, many researchers made evaluations about it, and proposed service quality dimensions in different ways (Parasuraman et al., 1985: 42).

2.5.1. Sasser, Olsen and Wyckoff's Service Quality Dimensions

Sasser, Olsen and Wyckoff (1978) analyze dimensions of service quality in three dimensions. These are; staff level, facility level and material level. The level of staff contributes to the quality of service of the employees, the level of the facility shows how machinery and equipment affect the quality of service, and the level of material refers to the quality of raw material used for service delivery. Regarding these dimensions, they revealed factors which are influential on service quality level as; "security, consistency, attitude, completeness, condition, availability, and training of service providers". (Sasser et al., 1978; cited Tütüncü, 2001: 54; Parasuraman et al., 1985: 42).

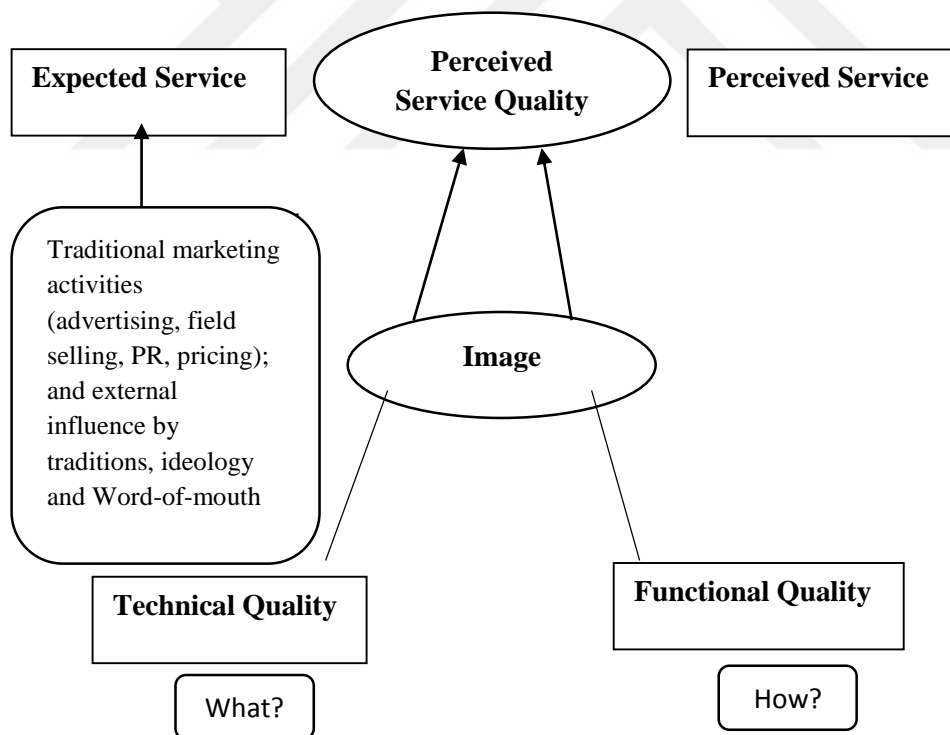
2.5.2. Christian Gronroos's Service Quality Model

Gronroos (1984: 38-39) initially suggested that quality has two dimensions. These are; technical and functional quality. Technical quality expresses tangible characteristics of service; whereas functional quality includes intangible characteristics of service. Functional quality concerns customers' interaction with employees during the presentation of service. Additionally, technical quality is the outcome of production process which consumer receives at the end of interaction with the service provider. The key point is, only the technical quality itself is not sufficient to explain service quality, because during service process customers have an interaction with service provider and that makes the service production process as vital

as the technical outcomes. Functional quality also has an important role in consumer perceptions. As a consequence, it is difficult to evaluate functional quality dimension because of its subjective structure, while technical quality dimension can be evaluated objectively in contrast with functional quality.

According to Gronroos (1984: 39-40), the image of the company can also be classified as the third dimension of service quality. Beside technical and functional quality, the importance of image should also be recognized. Image is an outcome of what the consumer receives from the service and how he receives it while it can also be affected from traditional marketing techniques. If the image of the company is satisfying, some of the problems during the service might be disregarded by consumer but it shouldn't be forgotten that replicated errors might harm the image. The summary of the model is shown in Figure 7.

Figure 7: The Service Quality Model



Source: Gronroos, 1984: 40.

2.5.3. Lehtinen & Lehtinen's Service Quality Model

Lehtinen and Lehtinen (1982) discuss the service quality dimensions from a another perspective. They assume that, service quality is produced in the interaction between a consumer and elements in the service organization. Lehtinen and Lehtinen assume that “physical quality”, “interactive quality”, and “corporate quality” also effects the level of service quality. Physical quality is about the tangible aspect of service as equipment or building. Interactive quality explains the interaction between customer and staff or between customer and other customer. Corporate quality point outs company's profile (Parasuraman et al., 1985: 43). They also assume that corporate quality is more constant in progress of time if it is compared with other two quality dimensions (Kang and James, 2004: 267).

2.5.4. Parasuraman, Zeithalm and Berry's Service Quality Model

The Gaps Model of Service Quality reflects a perspective which offers service organizations a framework to identify services in the form of the gaps that exceed (or fail to meet) customers' expectations. Customer expectations comprise word of mouth, company's past experiences and advertising. When the customer receives the service, he evaluates the quality of the service by comparing what he perceived and what he had expected. Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry developed a service quality model to find out the reasons that cause problems about quality and to give a path way to management to reach perfection in service quality in 1985.

The gap model posits five gaps that reflect a discrepancy between expectations and perceptions (Parasuraman et al., 1985: 44-46; Kotler, 2000: 206-207):

- Gap 1: This gap occurs from managements' lack of understanding exact customer needs. Managements' weak upward communication and incorrect marketing researches would increase this gap.
- Gap 2: This gap is a consequence of lack of managements' performance standardization. Even though the management understand the customer needs, lack of commitment to service quality and performance standardization cause this gap.

- Gap 3: The poor training or insufficiency of service employees may result with this gap. Teamwork and supervisors' control systems play an important role in order to overcome this problem.
- Gap 4: The expectation of consumer might be affected by advertisements or statements that company representatives make.
- Gap 5: Misperception by consumer induce this gap. Word-of-mouth recommendation could also play a vital role in this gap. Based on this gap, Parasuraman and his colleagues developed SERVQUAL method for evaluating service quality level.

It is possible to find how gap model is summarized in Figure 8.



The diagram illustrates the SERVQUAL model, which measures the gap between consumer expectations and service delivery. It consists of the following components and relationships:

- Top Row (Inputs):** Word of mouth, Personal needs, and Past experience.
- Expected service:** Receives input from Word of mouth, Personal needs, and Past experience.
- Perceived service:** Receives input from Expected service and Service delivery.
- Service delivery:** Receives input from Perception of service quality and External communications to consumers.
- Perception of service quality:** Receives input from Management perceptions of consumer expectations and External communications to consumers.
- External communications to consumers:** Receives input from Marketer and feeds into both Service delivery and Perception of service quality.
- Gaps:**
 - gap 1:** The difference between Expected service and Perceived service.
 - gap 2:** The difference between Perceived service and Service delivery.
 - gap 3:** The difference between Service delivery and Perception of service quality.
 - gap 4:** The difference between Perception of service quality and External communications to consumers.
 - gap 5:** The difference between Management perceptions of consumer expectations and Expected service.

2.6. MEASUREMENT OF SERVICE QUALITY

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- Benchmarking
- Total Quality Index
- Servqual
- Servperf
- Critical incident technique
- Linjeflyg's Service Barometer
- Group Interview Method
- Statistical Methods

Each of these methods focuses on different dimensions in measuring service quality. Most commonly seen method for examining the quality of service is SERVQUAL (Parasuraman et al., 1988: 12-13). SERVQUAL method not only used for service industry, but also used for many different sectors (Orwig et al., 1997: 54).

SERVQUAL model is developed to measure perceived service quality. The basis of the SERVQUAL model rely on GAP model. GAP 5, mentioned in the GAP model, considers the discrepancy between customer expectations and their perceptions of service delivered and is considered to be the accurate measure of service quality. The initial aim is to measure customers' perceptions of any service and then measure the perception of service provided by a particular business. According to this model, the discrepancy between expectations and perceptions reflects the quality of service. Therefore, the SERVQUAL scale measures and evaluates service quality with statistical difference between perception and expectation values. Parasuraman and colleagues made focus group interviews and identified 97 variables in their initial studies, which represent the ten dimensions of service quality determined.

The ten service quality determinants and their descriptions have been identified in below table (Parasuraman et al., 1988: 47):

Table 7: Determinants of Service Quality

RELIABILITY is about performance and dependability. It put emphasis on performing a service right the first time. The given promises are vital for firms.
RESPONSIVENESS is related with the employees' willingness or readiness to provide service.
COMPETENCE involves the knowledge of the employee. It is about the skills that are needed to provide the service.
ACCESS consists of the easiness to approach service provider.
COURTESY is related with service providers' politeness, respect, consideration, and friendliness of contact personnel.
COMMUNICATION concerns with giving information to customers in language which they are able to understand.
CREDIBILITY is related with trustworthiness, believability, honesty. Wishing the customer's best interest at heart is a key issue.
SECURITY focuses on keeping the customer away from danger, risk or doubt.
UNDERSTANDING/KNOWING THE CUSTOMER concerns with the ambition about understanding the needs of the customers.
TANGIBLES consists of the services' physical evidences.

Source: Adopted from: Parasuraman and Zeithaml, 1988: 25.

SERVQUAL has advantages and disadvantages. Prominent advantages that researchers focused are as follows:

- SERVQUAL helps to identify the differences between customers' expectation of service and the service they actually receive and reveal the quality level of service provided from customers' perspective. (Parasuraman et al., 1988: 30).
- The scale achieves simple and comprehensible results by determining the differences between customer expectations and service performance. It is also easy to apply and the results might be simply understood (Asubonteng et al., 1996: 80).
- SERVQUAL provides assessment about service quality along with each five service dimensions (Parasuraman et al., 1988: 31).
- It provides pinpointing areas which need managerial attention in order to improve service quality (Parasuraman et al., 1988: 36).

- Dimensions are distinctive. In other words, they are not inter correlated which means that this method is reliable (Parasuraman et al., 1988: 24).
- It possesses content, convergent, construct and face validity (Parasuraman et al., 1988: 28).

On the other hand, criticisms that researches stresses are as follows:

- Face validity shows the extent to which a scale appears to measure what it purports to measure. SERVQUAL might be criticized as it appears to obtain results about customer satisfaction in place of service quality. (Buttle, 1996: 24).
- Dimensional instability is another crucial point which researchers criticized. When the scale is used in different countries, industries, it is seen that problems might occur about the validity of five dimensions (Carman, 1990: 15).
- Expectations of customers might change over time because of experiences. As customers learn from their experiences, their expectations evolve and SERVQUAL might not capture this evolution (Buttle, 1996: 16).
- Although Parasuraman and his colleagues oppose, Buttle asserts that there might be high degree of inter correlation between dimensions (Buttle, 1996: 10).

Taking criticisms into consideration, some of the researchers used different methods to measure service quality. Cronin and Taylor stressed that the service performance of businesses have a significant effect to service quality. So, rather than using SERVQUAL, they developed a model which focuses on the service performance. SERVPERF model uses the same 22 variables as SERVQUAL scale. They claim that, the quality of service is only a result of performance. In other words, according to the SERVPERF model, it is sufficient to measure performance to measure service quality (Cronin and Taylor, 1992: 63-64).

2.7. SERVICE QUALITY IN HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT

To define the quality of service in hospitality sector is more complicated and difficult than other service industries (Mei et al., 1999: 136).

Lockyer analyzed factors that influence accommodation selection with making a comparison between what accommodation managers and business guests believe, in his study. For this purpose, 274 guests and 204 managers are required to rank ten properties of accommodation operations according to their level of importance. Guests and managers both stated that "cleanliness of hotel" is the most important property that effects the choice of accommodation. For managers this was followed by items related to staff and service: "courteous, polite, well-mannered staff"; "enthusiasm, and commitment of staff" and "efficiency of front desk". For business guests, after "cleanliness of hotel", the properties are followed as; "bathroom and shower quality", "standard of bedroom maintenance", "comfort of mattress and pillow"; and for the accommodation in general, "availability of parking" and "noise proofing between rooms". Business guests' ratings showed that they give importance to facilities in the rooms or relating to the rooms. This study helps to explain the difference between what is important for business guests and accommodation management (Lockyer, 2002: 294-297).

Knutson also made a study to determine factors affecting accommodation selection. He determined five factors that business guests place emphasis on while they choose a hotel. These are; "clean and comfortable room", "convenient location", "available services", "safety" and "friendly employees" (Lockyer, 2002: 294).

Akbaba made a research to measure the quality of service in hotel industry. The aim of the study was to understand the expectations of business guests, to designate the service quality dimensions with SERVQUAL commensally. Additionally, his aim was to measure the level of importance of each dimension for guests. The five dimensions which is developed in SERVQUAL model was confirmed, on the other hand different dimensions arise and their components were distinctive from SERVQUAL. These dimensions are; "tangibles", "adequacy in service supply", "understanding and caring", "assurance" and "convenience". The study also gives information about business guests expectations. It is seen that they have the most

expectation from “convenience”. “Assurance”, “tangibles”, “adequacy in service supply” and “understanding and caring” follows it respectively (Akbaba, 2006: 170).

2.8. SERVICE QUALITY MEASUREMENT IN HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT

In recent years, there has been a remarkable increase in the research studies on service quality in the tourism sector. Plenty of different methods to measure service quality are developed by researchers. Despite all the criticisms, it has been determined that many academicians use the SERVQUAL model to measure service quality (Caruna et al., 2000: 3).

Saleh and Ryan analyzed service quality in the hospitality industry and they used SERVQUAL model. At the end of the study they revealed five dimensions about quality of the service, but these dimensions were different from SERVQUAL model. The dimensions they found were “conviviality”, “tangibles”, “reassurance”, “avoid sarcasm” and “empathy” (Saleh and Ryan, 1991: 338).

Mei, Dean and White examined dimensions of service quality in hospitality industry in Australia. Mei and his colleagues decided to enhance SERVQUAL and developed a model called as HOLSERV. The results of their study shows that service quality is represented by three dimensions in the hospitality industry. These dimensions are “employees”, “tangibles” and “reliability”. Among these three dimensions, “employees” has a more powerful function to estimate overall service quality (Mei et al., 1996: 136).

Knutson and his colleagues developed LODGSERV to measure service quality in hotel industry. LODGSERV is based on SERVQUAL. They have determined 26 items in order to measure customer’s expectations and what they perceived from the hotel’s service. In consequence of their study they found out five service quality dimensions. These dimensions are; “reliability”, “assurance”, “responsiveness”, “tangibles” and “empathy” respectively (Knutson et al., 1990: 227-228). The effect of SERVQUAL on this method could be observed as the dimensions determined are equivalent.

Caruana, Ewig, Ramaseshan, in their study, investigate the usefulness of three-column format SERVQUAL to measure service quality. The findings of the study stressed that the perception battery is the salient component to measure service quality. They revised SERVQUAL scale and decreased dimensions from five to three. These are “reliability”, “tangibles” while “responsiveness, assurance and empathy” meld into a single factor (Caruana et al., 2000: 57).



CHAPTER THREE

BACKGROUND LITERATURE

3.1. LITERATURE REVIEW ON SERVICE QUALITY

In literature review about service quality it is possible to see that many of the studies used SERVQUAL method in order to identify and measure service quality dimensions. Therefore, SERVQUAL can be identified as a relevant model in assessing service quality. Parasuraman et. al. in 1985 composed SERVQUAL method and gave a path way for further studies. Atilgan et. al. (2003), White (1999), Akbaba (2006), Tsaura, Lin (2004), Ayeh, Chen (2013), Fick, Ritchie (1991), Nadiri (2005), Augustyn (1998), followed Parasuraman et. al. and used SERVQUAL in their studies. Apart from SERVQUAL method, SERVPERF and HOLSERV scales are also used to assess service quality in literature. In the below table it is seen that Yılmaz (2009) and Karatepe et. al. (2002) used SERVPERF, while Saleh et. al. (1991) used HOLSERV to examine service quality.

From different methods used for measuring service quality, different dimensions are developed. In literature review, most of the studies identified service quality dimensions as “tangibles”, “reliability”, “responsiveness”, “assurance” and “empathy”. These dimensions can be observed in SERVQUAL method as well as in other methods. Yılmaz (2009), Atilgan et. al. (2003), White (1999), Tsaura, Lin (2004), Fick, Ritchie (1991) examined service quality by using these dimensions. Akbaba (2006) made contribution to these five dimensions and added dimensions such as; “convenience”, “adequacy in service supply”, “understanding and caring”. Saez et. al. (2007) tested validity of other dimensions like “complementary offer”, “basic demands” and “security”. Chen et. al. (2011) also made contribution to service quality dimensions by analyzing different dimensions such as; “personal interaction”, “technical quality”, “access quality”. In the study of Akan (1995), it is possible to observe dimensions such as; “courtesy and competence of the personnel”, “communication and transactions”, “knowing and understanding the customer”, “accuracy and speed of service”, “solutions to problems”, “accuracy of hotel reservations”.

“Satisfaction”, “trust”, “loyalty”, “word of mouth”, “repurchase intention” are the outcomes of service quality that are found frequently through literature. In Su et. al. (2016) study, it is observed that “satisfaction” and “repurchase intention” are the main outcomes of service quality. Chen et. al. (2011) takes “satisfaction” and “loyalty” into consideration. Gonzalez et. al. (2007) states that “buying intention” is frequently seen as a result of high service quality. Abkar et. al. (2010) stated that there is a positive relationship between service quality and “satisfaction” as well as “behavioral intention”.

The studies about service quality are applied in different service industries. Through literature, it is seen that some of the studies considerate tourism industry in general. Some of the studies consist more than one segment of service industry while some of the studies focused on a specific segment service industry. The study of Atılgan et. al. (2003), Su et. al. (2016), Abkar et. al. (2010) and Chen et. al. (2011) did not focus on a specific segment, and made their observations on tourism industry in general. Most of the studies focused specifically on hotels in order to measure service quality. Yılmaz (2009), White (1999), Briggs et. al. (2007), Akbaba (2006), Li, Krit (2012), Gonzalez et. al. (2007), Saez et. al. (2007), Tsaura, Lin (2004), Ye et. al. (2014), Wilkins et. al. (2007), Karatepe, Avo (2002), Nadiri, Hussain (2005), Saleh, Ryan (1991) are the studies which focused on hotels in order to assess service quality. On the other hand, some of the studies in Table 10 focused on different service industries to assess service quality. In the study of Fick and Ritchie (1991) it is observed that more than one service firms from different segments of the industry are taken into consideration.

The studies about service quality in literature investigated the relationship of service quality with different variables. Apart from “culture”, “gender”, “social responsibility of an individual” and “hotel price” are variables that are found to be related to service quality. Ye et. al. (2014) analyzed the influence of hotel price in the evaluation of service quality. The studies about influence of culture in the assessment of service quality are going to be evaluated in further parts of this thesis in detail.

Table 8: Literature Review on Service Quality

	Study	Objective	Methodology	Main Findings
1	Yılmaz (2009)	To measure service quality performance of hotels from guests' point of view.	Sample: 234 guests from 3, 4, 5 star hotels in Kapadokya. Data Collection: survey Measurement Instrument: questionnaire Data Analysis: reliability analysis, exploratory factor analysis, principal component analysis, regression analysis	To measure service quality in hotel industry SERVPERF is a reliable model. Guests' overall service consideration is mostly affected from empathy dimension. Tangibles has the lowest scores in the perception of service quality.
2	Atilgan et. al. (2003)	To examine the evaluation of service quality dimensions with correspondence analysis.	Sample: 200 German and Russian tourists in Antalya Data Collection: survey Measurement Instrument: questionnaire Data Analysis: Correspondence analysis	The expectation and perception of tourists about the dimensions of service quality might change from culture to culture.
3	Mei et. al. (1999)	To analyze different service quality dimensions and to find out which dimensions are useful to predict overall service quality.	Sample: 155 hotel guests who stayed five mid-luxury hotels in Australia Data Collection: survey Measurement Instrument: questionnaire scale HOLSERV Data Analysis: Factor analysis	Employees, tangibles, reliability are the dimensions of service quality. Employees dimension has a powerful characteristic for guests to evaluate overall service quality.

4	Briggs et. al. (2007)	Evaluate both customers' and managers' service quality perceptions. To evaluate service quality performances.	Sample: 132 hotel managers Data Collection: survey, interview Measurement Instrument: questionnaire to hotel managers, interview with experts, TripAdvisor comments Data Analysis: ANOVA	There is an “disconnect” between hotel managers and hotel guests about service quality determinants and it is seen that poor quality information causes this result.
5	Akbaba (2006)	To analyze SERVQUAL dimensions and to determine if any additional dimensions should be added to the model or not. To understand the service quality dimensions' importance by guests.	Sample: 250 checked-out business hotel guests Data Collection: survey Measurement Instrument: questionnaire Data Analysis: factor analysis	Business hotel guests mostly have high expectations from "convenience" dimensions. “assurance”, “tangibles”, "adequacy in service supply”, and “understanding and caring” follows convenience respectively.
6	Li, and Krit (2012)	To analyze service quality at hotels which are located in China. To investigate how the fluctuations in service quality effect customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, and brand image.	Sample: 412 Business hotel guests in Yunnan, China Data Collection: face to face interview and survey Measurement Instrument: questionnaire Data Analysis: Structural Equation Modelling	Service quality is positively influential on “customer satisfaction”, “customer loyalty” and “brand image”. Moreover, the effect of customer satisfaction on customer loyalty and brand image is also positive. Lastly, customer loyalty has a positive influence on brand image.

7	González et. al. (2007)	To explain the bilateral relationship between tourist behavioral intentions through perceived service quality and customer satisfaction.	Sample: 270 consumers visiting spa resorts (65 years of age or older) Data Collection: survey Measurement Instrument: questionnaire Data Analysis: factor analysis, regression analysis	Customers' buying intention relies on satisfaction and perceived service quality.
8	Su et. al. (2016)	To assess overall customer satisfaction and customer-company identification. To analyze the mediating variables between Chinese tourists' lodging perception of service quality and repurchase intentions, subjective well-being.	Sample: 451 Chinese leisure visitors Data Collection: survey Measurement Instrument: questionnaire Data Analysis: confirmatory factor analysis, structural equation modeling	The mediating role of overall customer satisfaction on relationship between repurchase intention, subjective well-being and perceived service quality is fully supported.
9	Tsaur et. al. (2002)	To examine dimensions of service quality in airline companies.	Sample: 211 licensed tour guides Data Collection: survey Measurement Instrument: questionnaire Technique for Order Preference by Similarity to Ideal Solution (TOPSIS), Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) Data Analysis: fuzzy set theory	The physical aspect of service has an important role for customers. The most important dimensions that is found in the study are; "courtesy of attendants", "safety", "comfort and cleanness of seat" and "responsiveness of attendants".

10	Tsaura and Lin (2004)	To understand the relationship between human resources management practices, service behavior and service quality in hotels.	Sample: 475 hotel employees and hotel guests Data Collection: survey Measurement Instrument: questionnaire Data Analysis: principal component analysis	There is a partial direct effect of Human Resources Management practices on the perception of service quality by customers. Moreover, through employees' service behavior, there is an indirect effect of HRM practices on perception of service quality by customers.
11	Zabkar et. al. (2010)	To analyze the relationship between “perceived quality”, “visitor satisfaction” and “behavioral intentions”.	Sample: 1056 tourists in Slovenia Data Collection: survey Measurement Instrument: questionnaire Data Analysis: structural equation modeling	The relationship between perceived quality, visitor satisfaction and behavioral intentions are positive.
12	Ye, et. al. (2014)	To examine the influence of hotel price on customers' perceptions of service quality and value	Sample: 43,726 online reviews covering 774 star-rated hotels Data Collection: Online Reviews Measurement Instrument: secondary data Data Analysis: factor analysis, regression analysis	In perceived quality price has a positive influence, while in perceived value the influence of price is negative.
13	Moutinho et. al. (2012)	To determine the overall service quality of a destination and its effect on perceived value, customer satisfaction and behavioral intention	Sample: 1905 guests who stayed at hotels in Side- Manavgat area Data Collection: survey Measurement Instrument: questionnaire Data Analysis: structural equation modelling	“Perceived value”, “behavioral intention”, and “satisfaction” are inextricably linked. Accessibility (transportation), shopping environments and opportunities of a destination influences perceived value, behavioral intention, and satisfaction.

14	Chen et. al. (2011)	<p>To analyze service quality dimensions and sub-dimensions.</p> <p>To evaluate the relationship between service quality, satisfaction, and customer loyalty.</p>	<p>Sample: 616 tourists departing from Kinmen Airport</p> <p>Data Collection: survey</p> <p>Measurement Instrument: questionnaire</p> <p>Data Analysis: descriptive statistics analysis, multiple regression and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA)</p>	<p>The relationship between “tourist satisfaction” and “service quality” is significantly positive. Service quality has a significant impact on long term behavioral intentions through high levels of customer satisfaction.</p>
15	Ayeh and Chen (2013)	<p>To examine the performance of three sectors which are hotel, retail and travel agency in Hong Kong.</p>	<p>Sample: 300 visitors from each sector. Hong Kong International Airport, Macau Ferry Terminal, China Ferry Terminal, KCR Hung Hom Station and the Avenue of Stars.</p> <p>Data Collection: survey</p> <p>Measurement Instrument: questionnaire</p> <p>Data Analysis: The importance–performance analysis (IPA) model, multivariate variance analysis and, MANOVA, ANOVA</p>	<p>It is possible to observe negative relationship between cultural distance and satisfaction. There is no significant difference among three sectors in terms of service quality perception.</p>

16	Marinković et. al. (2013)	To assess how satisfaction of travelers are influenced by service quality dimensions	Sample: 233 individuals who used the services of travel agencies in Serbia at least once in the last 12 months. Data Collection: survey Measurement Instrument: questionnaire Data Analysis: regression, factor analysis	The significant influence of reliability, tangibility and empathy on satisfaction is confirmed, whereas the significant influence of responsiveness and assurance is not confirmed.
17	Wilkins et. al. (2007)	To understand the dimensions and structures of service quality in luxury and first class hotels.	Sample: 664 four and five star hotel guests Data Collection: survey Measurement Instrument: questionnaire Data Analysis: exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis approaches and a structural model, The principal component analysis	The classification of service quality can be made in three groups. These are; “physical product”, “service experience” and “quality food and beverage”.
18	Fick and Ritchie (1991)	To broaden the usage of SERVQUAL in different tourism services and assess the performance of SERVQUAL by comparing the performance of it among different tourism services.	Sample: 200 respondent in categories of airline, hotel, restaurant, and ski area services. Data Collection: survey, interview Measurement Instrument: questionnaire Data Analysis: confirmatory factor analysis	SERVQUAL is a relevant and useful model in measuring quality of service in various tourism services like hotel, restaurant, ski area services.

19	Karatepe and Avo (2002)	To examine the level of service quality and customer satisfaction in hotels located in Northern Cyprus.	Sample: 189 hotel customers Data Collection: survey Measurement Instrument: questionnaire Data Analysis: regression analysis, principal component analysis	"Tangibles" and "intangibles" dimensions have a powerful role to predict customer satisfaction.
20	Nadiri and Hussain (2005)	To measure service quality and its importance for accommodation facilities' service providers.	Sample: 285 European tourists who stayed at Northern Cyprus lodgings Data Collection: survey Measurement Instrument: questionnaire Data Analysis: Regression analysis, exploratory factor analysis	"Tangibles" and "intangibles" dimensions effect perceived service quality. These two dimensions have a positive effect on customer satisfaction.
21	Augustyn and Ho (1998)	To stress the importance of quality improvement in tourism industry.	Review	Service quality proposes a winning strategy for success in the industry.
22	Saleh and Ryan (1991)	To examine the dimensions of service quality in the hospitality industry. To test the validity and reliability of SERVQUAL scale. To establish which dimension has the best characteristic to explain overall service quality.	Sample: 155 guests who stayed at five mid-luxury hotels in Australia Data Collection: survey Measurement Instrument: questionnaire Data Analysis: factor analysis	Service quality has three fundamental dimensions: "behavior and appearance of employee", "tangibles", "reliability". "employees" is a powerful dimension to explain service quality.

23	Akan (1995)	<p>To contribute to service quality for customers of hotel industry in Istanbul.</p> <p>To investigate additional dimensions which might be added to service quality construct. To measure the level of importance of each dimension.</p>	<p>Sample: 234 customers at hotel and Istanbul airport</p> <p>Data Collection: survey</p> <p>Measurement Instrument: questionnaire</p> <p>Data Analysis: factor analysis</p>	Turkish consumers give importance to "friendly, courteous, hygienic and expert service".
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3.2. LITERATURE REVIEW ON INFLUENCE OF CULTURE IN SERVICE INDUSTRY

The rapid growth in globalization provides companies to find business opportunities for market development in different countries. While competing in different countries managers should be aware of cultural differences, as these differences can make them face challenges in terms of quality perception (Morales and Ladhari, 2011: 241-242). Cultural characteristics shapes values and beliefs which are influential on perception of service quality and level of satisfaction. In other words, the importance of service quality dimensions is determined by culture (Tsoukatos and Rand, 2007: 467-468).

Donthu and Yoo conducted a study in the year of 1998 in order to evaluate cultural influences on service quality expectations. In order to measure the relationship, he used Hofstede cultural dimensions and SERVQUAL model developed by Zeithaml, Berry and Parasuraman. Their study was specifically focused on banking services. The result of the study proved that consumers' service quality expectations may differ according to their cultural orientation. The result of the study emphasizes the influence of "power distance, individualism, uncertainty avoidance, and short term orientation". It is observed that if consumer is low on power distance, overall service quality expectation tends to be high. Additionally, if consumer is high on individualism, overall service quality expectation shows higher results. These consumers put emphasis on empathy and assurance service quality dimensions. Another factor that makes consumer to expect high overall service quality is related with high uncertainty avoidance and short term orientation. These findings offer an insight into further researches by revealing the consequences that differences between cultural perspectives causes (Donthu and Yoo, 1998: 178-184).

Mattila observed the impact of culture in the service evaluation process in the year of 1999. She compared Western and Asian consumers' assessment of service quality dimensions. First quality dimension she took into account as the tangibles and results showed that consumers from Asian culture tends to rely on tangible cues less than consumers that have Western cultural background. She also emphasized the

hedonic dimension and personal service dimension to evaluate service quality. According to the results she found, it is possible to observe that Western consumers are more sensitive on personal service, which refers to service providers' ability to perform the promised service. In addition, consumers from Western cultural background put emphasis on hedonic dimensions in their service experience (Mattila, 1999: 250-260).

Furrer, Liu and Sudharshan studied about the relationship between cultural dimensions and service quality dimensions in 2000. They took Hofstede's five cultural dimensions into account. Also, they focused on service quality dimensions obtained from SERVQUAL model. The study reveals that Hofstede's cultural dimensions and the importance of SERVQUAL dimensions are correlated. Some of the dimensions are positively correlated whereas some of them are negatively correlated. If the relationship between power distance dimension of culture and tangibles and assurance dimensions of service quality is examined, it is seen that there is a positive correlation. However, power distance is negatively correlated with other service quality dimensions such as empathy, responsiveness and reliability. Individualism, which is another cultural dimension, is also correlated with service quality dimensions. It is positively correlated with assurance and empathy, while it is negatively correlated with responsiveness, reliability and tangibles. Another cultural dimension masculinity tends to be positively correlated with responsiveness, yet it is negatively correlated with tangibles. Besides these, uncertainty avoidance and long term orientation are other cultural dimensions which show correlation with service quality dimensions. When the result of the study is evaluated, it is possible to observe that uncertainty avoidance shows positive correlation with tangibles. On the other hand, it is negatively correlated with responsiveness, assurance, empathy and reliability. Lastly, long term orientation is observed to be positively correlated with assurance and tangibles, while negatively correlated with responsiveness and reliability. As a consequence, this study shows that cultural differences are influential on service quality perception (Furrer et al., 2000: 355-368).

Winsted developed a study in 1997 which investigates the relationship between cross-cultural differences and behaviorally based service encounter dimensions. She conducted this study to students from two different countries, having different cultural

backgrounds. These countries are USA and Japan. The result of the study is obtained by evaluation of the service in medical and restaurant industries. To identify behavior, she determined eight dimensions which are; “authenticity, caring, control, courtesy, formality, friendliness, personalization, and promptness”. This study displays that, Americans put emphasis on attributes related with individualism. These attributes can be classified as friendliness, personalization, authenticity, and promptness. However, caring, control, courtesy, formality are the dimensions which Japans care more. To conclude, Japanese and American have different priorities in order to evaluate the dimensions of service quality (Winsted, 1997: 337-352).

Another study about the influence of cultural differences on perception of service quality is conducted by Herbig and Genestre at the year of 1996. This study took place in businesses such as banks, grocery stores and department stores. The respondents of the study were Americans and Mexicans. Herbig and Genestre hypothesized that the perception of service quality between respondents from United States and Mexica would show significant differences. Secondly, they developed another hypothesis which claims that the rates of perceived service quality given by respondents from Mexica would be significantly higher than American respondents. In addition to these hypothesis, claiming that the importance of service quality factors will differ between two cultures was another hypothesis of the study. The result of the study validated the hypotheses. It is discovered that perception of service quality is different between USA and Mexican citizens and the ratings for service quality seem to be significantly higher for Mexicans than Americans. Additionally, USA and Mexican citizens give value to different service quality factors. While Americans value “personalized service” and “easily found products”, Mexicans put emphasis on “availability”, “full product line”, “functioning as advertised”, and “confidence in the support staff” (Herbig and Genestre, 1996: 43-49).

The study of Crotts and Erdmann conducted in the year 2000, examines the effect of national culture on consumers’ evaluation of travel services. They used Hofstede cultural dimensions in order to evaluate cultural differences, and they put emphasis on masculinity dimension of culture. The results of the study show that consumer which have low masculinity cultural background are less willing to criticize, and their evaluation of overall service quality is high. Brazil and Taiwan are the two

countries that belong to this group. On the other hand, Japanese consumers whose cultural backgrounds show high masculinity results, tend to rate service quality lower. This study shows that masculinity, a cultural dimension, is influential on perception of service quality (Crotts and Erdmann, 2000: 410-414).

Liu, Furrer and Sudharshan made a study to explain how culture influences behavioral intentions towards services. In order to do his study, they took Hofstede's cultural dimensions into account. Additionally, to explain behavioral intentions they examined loyalty to the company, propensity to switch, positive word of mouth, negative word of mouth, and complaining intentions. According to the results of the study, it is possible to say that customers from high power distance culture have low intention to praise the service and give positive word of mouth even if their perception of service quality is positive. Moreover, customers from a more individualistic culture have low intention to give good word of mouth and praise the service even if their service quality perception is positive. It is seen that, if they perceived negative service quality, they have high intention to switch their service provider, and give negative word of mouth as a result of their service quality perception. Thirdly, customers who have a masculine cultural background, even if their service quality perception is negative, tend to show low intention to switch their service provider. Furthermore, high uncertainty avoidance cultural background leads customers to have high intention to praise service provider if experience of service quality is positive. Oppositely, if their service quality perception is negative, they don't show high intention to give negative word of mouth or to switch to another service provider. Lastly, it is seen that customers who have a long term oriented cultural background also have high intention to praise the service provider as a result of their positive service experience. As a consequence, this study shows that cultural differences between people are influential in their service quality perception and behavioral intentions (Liu et al., 2001: 118-126).

In literature, studies examining culture and service quality's relationship can be found from various point of views. Some of the studies took place in the literature, examine how culture influences the relative importance of service quality dimensions, whereas some studies evaluate the effect of cultural dimensions on expectation from service quality dimensions.

Furrer and et. al. (2000) analyzed the link between cultural dimensions and relative importance of service quality dimensions by composing a study on foreign students. Similarly, Evangelos and Graham (2007) evaluated the same link in Greek insurance industry. Ozdemir and Hewett (2010) focused on collectivism dimension of culture and its effects on importance of service quality. In their study they compared Turkish and United States business undergraduate students. Winsted (1997) aimed to understand the influence of differences in importance of service quality dimensions on evaluation of service experience by conducting a study on American and Japanese consumers.

It is possible to observe many studies focused on the impact of cultural differences on expectation from service quality. Armstrong and et. al. (1997), found significant differences about expectation from services among different cultural groups. Becker and Murmann (1999), in their study, focused on restaurant sector, and found a relationship between culture and timing expectation. In the study conducted by Dash et. al., (2009), the expectation differences of Canadian and Indian customers in banking sector are evaluated. Guesalaga et. al., (2016), investigated cultural sources that determine consumer expectations. The study of Wang et. al., (2008), took place in hospitality industry, and focused on Chinese tourists that visited United Kingdom. The study analyzed how Chinese culture effect these visitors' expectation from UK hotels, and how these expectation influence perception of service experience. The study conducted by Donthu and Yoo (1998) revealed significant relationship between Hofstede's cultural dimensions and expectations from service quality. Mok, Armstrong (1998), similarly, evaluated the effects of cross-cultural differences on the expectation from service quality in hotels.

Through literature review, it is seen that some studies evaluated the relationship between service quality and satisfaction in cross cultural context. For instance, Basfirinci, and Mitra (2015), evaluated the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction by taking U.S. and Turkish citizens cultural values in to consideration. Lu and Ling, (2008), while they were examining the relationship between perceived service quality and passenger satisfaction, found significant differences about service quality perception of passengers from Taiwan and Mainland China. Winsted, (1997), by examining U.S. and Japanese consumers, evaluated the

relationship between service quality dimensions and their effects on customer satisfaction. Bouzaabia, and et. al., (2013), similarly, aimed to find service quality dimensions' effect on satisfaction and loyalty. In their study, they compared Romanian and Tunisian hypermarket to reveal differences about quality perceptions. Moreover, Rahmat and Faisol, (2016), differently, explored the relationship between cultural elements and customer satisfaction by focusing on collectivism dimension of culture. They took Malaysian culture in to consideration, as they are known as a culture with high collectivism characteristic. Pornpitakpan and Han, (2013), did not focus on the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction, and revealed a different view point. They evaluated the effect of culture and service quality on impulse buying. They found significant relationship between service quality and impulse buying. Moreover, by examining U.S. and Singaporean working adults, they found out that cross cultural differences are influential on impulse buying.

Table 9: Literature Review On Influence of Culture in Service Industry

	Study	Objective	Methodology	Main Findings
1	Furrer et. al. (2000)	To examine if there is a conceptual link between all of the cultural dimensions and the relative importance of service quality dimensions identified in SERVQUAL.	Sample: 302 students; U.S. students, international students who has just started to U.S. university, international students in Singapore, and Swiss students. Data Collection: survey Measurement Instrument: Questionnaire Data Analysis: regression analysis, factorial analysis, cluster analysis	The importance of service quality dimensions changes among different cultures.
2	Tsoukatos and Rand (2007)	To evaluate if culture has a relationship with service quality and to understand if the importance of service quality dimensions is linked with culture dimensions.	Sample: 252 customers who used Greek insurance firms Data Collection: survey, interview Measurement Instrument: questionnaire Data Analysis: Pearson's correlation analysis	There is a relationship between the most of the dimensions of culture and service quality. Power distance have relationship with reliability, responsiveness, and assurance. Masculinity have relationship with reliability, responsiveness, and assurance. Uncertainty avoidance has relationship with reliability, responsiveness, and assurance. Long-term orientation has relationship with reliability. Individualism does not have any significant relationship with any dimensions.
3	Ladhari et. al. (2011)	To evaluate how culture and personal values effect perceived service quality	Sample: 509 mall customers at France & Canada Data Collection: survey Measurement Instrument: questionnaire	Uncertainty avoidance along with power distance significantly influence perceived service quality. Additionally perceived service quality is effected by Personal values such as "self-

			Data Analysis: ANOVA, regression analysis	fulfillment, self-respect, sense of accomplishment, and security”.
4	Ueltschy et. al. (2004)	To observe the efficiency of measurement scales about satisfaction and service quality.	Sample: 499 undergraduate business students in the US Midwest, Ontario and Quebec. In Canada, from both English and French-speaking universities in Toronto and Montreal Data Collection: survey Measurement Instrument: questionnaire Data Analysis: confirmatory factor analysis	The measurement of satisfaction and service quality might vary from culture to culture.
5	Armstrong et. al. (1997)	To analyze the influence of expectations on service quality perception of hotel guests in Hong Kong.	Sample: 325 hotel guests from different cultures in three major Hong Kong hotels Data Collection: survey Measurement Instrument: questionnaire Data Analysis: variance analysis, factor analysis	Significant difference in "expectations" between diversified cultural groups is observed.
6	Basfirinci and Mitra (2015)	To assess service quality and its influence on customer satisfaction in a cross-cultural context in U.S. and Turkey.	Sample: 238 university students, business executives, and professionals in Auburn, Alabama (USA), and Trabzon Data Collection: survey Measurement Instrument: questionnaire Data Analysis: Kano model	In US and Turkey it is seen that both SERVQUAL gap scores are negative. Distinctly from SERVQUAL, Kano model results are same for two countries. Yet, in terms of prioritization, these two countries vary in certain service quality attributes.

7	Zhang et. al. (2008)	To review literature about conceptual and methodological issues in cross cultural consumer services and offer theories and approaches to future researches.	Review	Perceived service quality is evaluated by consumers in different ways. Individualistic consumers complain more if they receive poor service compared to collectivistic consumers.
8	Becker and Murrmann (1999)	To examine how cultural differences effect service delivery expectations in casual restaurant dining sector.	Sample: 383 USA (colleges), Hong Kong (graduate business classes) Data Collection: survey Measurement Instrument: questionnaire Data Analysis: multivariate analysis	There is a strong relationship between culture and timing expectations for casual restaurant service. Culture differences cause differences in the expectation from the waiting time for a table, the waiting time for delivering check.
9	Brady et. al. (2001)	To analyze the effects of service quality, service value and satisfaction on consumers' behavioral intentions in cross cultural context.	Sample: 416 US, fast food consumers in Ecuador Data Collection: survey Measurement Instrument: questionnaire Data Analysis: confirmatory factor analysis, structural equation modeling	For American consumers, it is observed that the tradeoff between what they receive from service and what they have to give up to receive the benefit is vital. On the other hand for Latin consumers emotive satisfaction judgement is extremely important.
10	Rahmat and Faisol (2016)	To examine collectivist cultures and how they are satisfied in logistics service. To explore Malaysian culture which has a collectivistic characteristic and how they evaluate logistics service quality.	Sample: 7 service users in logistics sector Data Collection: interviews Measurement Instrument: interviews Data Analysis: qualitative	Cultural elements influence customer satisfaction in Malaysian national cultural context. Moreover, operational technical ability is important for providing customer satisfaction in Malaysian context.

11	Pornpitakpan and Han (2013)	To examine the influence of culture and salespersons' retail service quality on impulse buying	Sample: 190 American and Singaporean working adults Data Collection: scenario Measurement Instrument: scenario Data Analysis: Two-way ANOVA	Impulse buying is highly influenced by service quality. Good service quality provides higher impulse buying. Singaporeans tend to show higher impulse buying than Americans if the service is good.
12	Lu and Ling (2008)	To analyze perceived service quality differences between different cultures such as Taiwanese and Mainland Chinese. To evaluate influence of perceived service quality on passenger satisfaction.	Sample: 404 travelers who travels from Taiwan to Mainland China and Mainland China travelers traveling to Taiwan Data Collection: survey Measurement Instrument: questionnaire Data Analysis: factor analysis, regression analysis	Significant differences are found in the perceptions of service quality between Taiwan and Mainland China passengers.
13	Malhotra et. al. (1995)	To evaluate service quality perceptions of developed and developing countries.	Sample: 1,069 middle-class people. Banking services from three countries: USA, India, and the Philippines Data Collection: survey, interview Measurement Instrument: questionnaire Data Analysis: multivariate analysis of variance	India and Philippines have similarities whereas USA differs from two countries in the perception of service quality.

14	Dash et. al. (2009)	To analyze Canadian and Indian cultural differences and their service quality expectations in banking sector.	Sample: 282 consumers in Canada and India Data Collection: surveys Measurement Instrument: questionnaire Data Analysis: regression analysis, structural equation modeling	Consumers who have low power distance expect highly reliable and responsive service. High power distance consumers give importance to tangibility. Consumers who have high individualism, expect lower empathy and assurance. When Indian and Canadian consumers are compared, Indian consumers give importance to tangibility whereas Canadians give importance to reliability.
15	Bouzaabia et. al. (2013)	To analyze and compare service quality perceptions of Romanian and Tunisian customers and to reveal which service quality dimensions are influential on satisfaction and customer loyalty.	Sample: 200 hypermarket customers in Romania and Tunisia Data Collection: survey Measurement Instrument: questionnaires Data Analysis: confirmatory factor analysis, ANOVA, linear regression	The level of Romanians perceived logistic service quality is found to be higher than Tunisians'. It is seen that relational LSQ is the most influential factor in satisfaction for Tunisians and Romanians. For Tunisians the most influential factor for loyalty is operational LSQ, for Romanians it is relational LSQ.
16	Guesalaga et. al. (2016)	To investigate cultural sources that assess consumer expectations and service quality evaluations between foreigners who live in Chile and Chilean citizens.	Sample: 599 Foreign and Chilean consumers Data Collection: interview, survey, netnography Measurement Instrument: questionnaire Data Analysis: cluster analysis, ANOVA	The expectation of service quality is similar in two groups. In order to understand how cultural factors expectations of customers and quality evaluations, examining cultural differences in individual level would be appropriate.

17	Kashif et. al. (2016)	To analyze service quality perceptions of customers of Pakistani Islamic banks.	Sample: 300 Islamic bank customers in major cities of Pakistan Data Collection: survey Measurement Instrument: questionnaire Data Analysis: quantitative measures; correlation, structural equation modelling	Customers are satisfied from the service quality offered by Pakistani Islamic banking. PAKSERV dimensions contribute to customer satisfaction and loyalty. Pakistani consumers are high risk avoiding and moderately power oriented and they focus on responsiveness and sincerity.
18	Morales and Ladhari (2011)	To evaluate studies about cross-cultural service quality which focus on different methodological approaches.	Sample: 40 studies in online databases: ABI Inform (ProQuest Direct), Emerald Library, Science Direct, EBSCOhost) Data Collection: secondary data Review	It is possible to see various studies that contribute to services marketing area, but there are some missing points of these studies. For instance, the methodology of cross-cultural research is often missed in these studies.
19	Wang et. al. (2008)	To examine service quality perceptions of Chinese tourists who stay at UK hotel. To analyze Chinese culture and their expectations and perceptions of service quality.	Sample: 46 Chinese tourists visiting UK Data Collection: survey Measurement Instrument: questionnaire Data Analysis: paired t-test and the Mann-Whitney test	UK hotels lack empathy, reliability and tangible dimensions and these shortfalls determined negative consumer experiences.

20	Smith and Reynolds (2010)	To examine response styles' effect on evaluation of service quality in cross cultural context.	Sample: 638 students at universities in UK Data Collection: survey Measurement Instrument: questionnaire Data Analysis: partial regression	There is a significant difference in the conclusions which take potential impact of response styles into consideration and which do not take.
21	Donthu and Yoo (1998)	To evaluate the impact of culture on consumers' service quality expectations.	Sample: 281 consumers (72 Canada, 85 Great Britain, 80 India, 41 U.S.) Data Collection: survey Measurement Instrument: questionnaire Data Analysis: variance analysis	Overall service quality expectations are high in low power distance consumers, individualistic consumers, high uncertainty avoidance, short-term-oriented consumers. Low power distance consumers expect reliable and responsive service whereas individualistic consumers expect empathy and assurance.
22	Mok and Armstrong (1998)	To assess the expectations of service quality who stay at hotels and to evaluate the cross-cultural differences effects on the expectations of service quality.	Sample: 325 hotel guests at UK, USA, Australia, Japan, Taiwan Data Collection: survey Measurement Instrument: questionnaire Data Analysis: One way ANOVA	The expectation of tangibles and empathy dimensions have significant differences among guests from different cultures. Reliability, responsiveness, and assurance dimensions have no significant differences among guests from different cultures.

23	Ozdemir and Hewett (2010)	To explore how collectivism effects the importance of service quality and relationship quality for behavioral intentions.	Sample: 165 business undergraduate students in Turkey and United States Data Collection: survey Measurement Instrument: questionnaire Data Analysis: factor analysis, chi square	In order to determine behavioral intentions, the customers with different levels of collectivism puts emphasis on different aspects of service experience. Moreover, in different service industries, providers would observe different levels of influence of collectivism on intention determinants.
24	Mattila (1999)	To assess the differences between Western and Asian guests' evaluation of personalized service and pleasant physical environment in luxury hotels.	Sample: 153 Western expatriates and Asian business travelers living in Singapore, Western and Asian CEOs Data Collection: interview, scenario, survey Measurement Instrument: Laddering Interviews, Scenario Development, questionnaire Data Analysis: robustness analysis, conjoint analysis	Western guests give more importance to tangibility, physical environment compared with Asian guests. For Western guests, hedonic dimension of consumption is more important than Asian guests.
25	Hsieh and Tsai (2009)	To clarify if the management should focus on culture when segmenting markets and to understand if most convenient service differs among different nations.	Sample: 382 Taiwanese and American consumers in the international tourist hotels in Taiwan Data Collection: survey Measurement Instrument: self-administered questionnaire Data Analysis: confirmatory factor analysis	American and Taiwan consumers have significant differences in hotel service quality because of their cultural differences. The differences are seen in these dimensions: “Assurance”, “Tangibles”, “Reliability”, “Reaction” and “Empathy”. Cultural differences effect consumer behavior.

26	Herbig and Genestre (1996)	To analyze variations in perception of service quality between Mexicans and US citizens.	Sample: 301 consumers in Three locales: mid-sized US city on the US Mexican border, American city approximately 150 miles north of the border and a Mexican counterpart comparable in size and distance from the border. Data Collection: survey Measurement Instrument: questionnaire Data Analysis: ANOVA, MANOVA, regression analysis	There are significant differences between Mexican and American consumers in service quality. Mexican interior-city consumers believed that only in specialty stores they can find qualified service or product. Mexican border-town consumers correlate service quality with the speed which the customer needs are met. US border-town respondents believed that service quality means the benefits that a product or a service provide to a consumer.
27	Agarwal et. al. (2010)	To examine cross-national versus cross-cultural approaches in banking services.	Sample: 769 students from United States and India Data Collection: interview Measurement Instrument: interview questions Data Analysis: confirmatory factor analysis, cluster analysis	Cross-national and cross-cultural models of perceived service quality methods show significant differences. Cross-cultural and cross-national market segmentation is vital in order to compete in global markets and increase the performance of the businesses.

28	Winsted (1997)	To examine if American and Japanese consumers have differences in the evaluation of service experience and understand the relationship of dimensions which effect satisfaction of a consumer.	Sample: Two focus groups: English and Japanese students studying at an American university, 156 students Data Collection: survey, Measurement Instrument: open ended questions, questionnaire Data Analysis: factor analysis	Japanese and American sample show significant differences in importance of dimensions which play role on evaluation of service experience.
29	Crotts and Ermann (2000)	To analyze the influence of national culture on consumer evaluations of travel services.	Sample: 983 overseas visitors to USA Data Collection: survey Measurement Instrument: questionnaire Data Analysis: discriminant analysis	National cultural differences effect the decision making process of customer. There is a limited indication about customers' national culture and its' effect on the evaluation of travel services.
30	Liu et. al. (2001)	To assess how culture influences behavioral intentions towards services	Sample: 285 executive or MBA students from different countries Data Collection: survey Measurement Instrument: questionnaire Data Analysis: principal component analysis	It is seen that customers with low individualism or high uncertainty avoidance shows higher intention to praise when they receive remarkable service.

In the literature the influence of Hofstede's cultural dimensions can be observed as many of the studies benefited from the cultural dimensions composed by Hofstede. The study of Hofstede (1983), was a milestone in order to identify cultural dimensions. Table 9 shows that, Furrer et. al., (2000), Evangelos and Graham (2007), Ladhari et. al., (2011), Basfirinci and Mitra, (2015), Donthu and Yoo (1998), Mattila, (1999) and Hsieh and Tsai, (2009) are some of the studies in literature in which cultural dimensions of Hofstede are used to evaluate cross cultural differences.



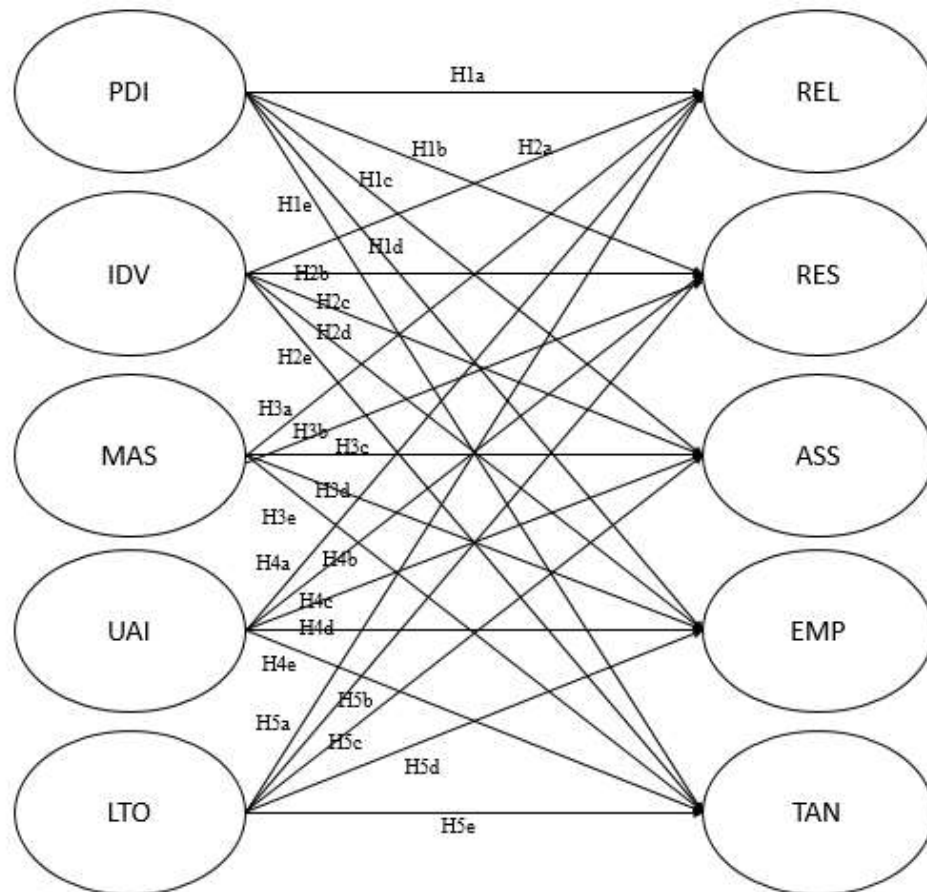
CHAPTER FOUR

CONCEPTUAL MODEL AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

4.1. CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF THE RESEARCH

Figure 9 shows the relationships between culture dimensions and service quality dimensions which are going to be tested. The influence of “power distance, individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, long term orientation” on “reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, tangibles” is examined. 25 hypotheses are composed in order to assess these relationships. The relationships shown in the table can be identified as conceptual model of the research.

Figure 9: The Conceptual Model of the Research



4.2. HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT BASED ON THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CULTURE DIMENSIONS AND SERVICE QUALITY

4.2.1. Power Distance and Service Quality

According to Hofstede, in cultures with high level of power distance inequalities between people and hierarchy is expected (Hofstede, 2011: 9). Donthu and Yoo suggested that in most of the services it is possible to see the power of providers over customers. This power relies on the level of skill and knowledge of service provider and equipment. The people coming from high power distance cultures respect the service providers' power (Donthu and Yoo, 1998: 181). In contrary, according to Mattila (1999: 252), service employees are evaluated as people with lower status and personalization of service is thought to be very important. Wang et. al. similarly suggested that people with high power distance evaluate hotel employees in a less powerful position (Wang et. al., 2008: 317).

The toleration to failure of customers coming from high power distance culture would be high (Donthu and Yoo, 1998: 181). These customers don't see themselves important to service providers (Tsoukatos and Rand, 2007: 471). Therefore, it is suggested that the relationship between importance attached to empathy responsiveness, and reliability is inverse with the level of power distance.

The customers with high power distance who accept the power of service provider would be dependent from service providers according to Furrer and his colleagues (Furrer et al., 2000: 360). So, the importance they will attach to assurance would be high.

It is expected that the level of importance attached to tangibles to be high in customers' belonging to a culture with high power distance. Tangible elements could be seen as respect symbol and these tangible elements would help to maintain the distance (Furrer et al., 2000: 359).

H1a: The higher the power distance, the lower the level of importance attached to reliability.

H1b: The higher the power distance, the lower the level of importance attached to responsiveness.

H1c: The higher the power distance, the higher the level of importance attached to assurance.

H1d: The higher the power distance, the lower the level of importance attached to empathy.

H1e: The higher the power distance, the higher the level of importance attached to tangibles.

4.2.2. Individualism and Service Quality

Hofstede states that highly individualistic people care mostly themselves and their immediate family only. There is not a strong tie between people in individualistic cultures (Hofstede, 2011: 11).

One of the most frequently seen characteristic of people who are highly individualistic is their own interests are vital for them instead of others'. Furthermore, they demand everyone to be efficient. They are also demanding about having services right at the first time (Furrer et al., 2000: 360; Donthu and Yoo, 1998: 181). Therefore, it is suggested that people belonging to highly individualistic culture would attach high importance to responsiveness and reliability.

The degree of self-confidence is observed to be high in individualistic cultures. According to Furrer and his colleagues, the high self-confidence of individualistic people decreases their assurance need.

Individualism and tangibility is assumed to have positive relationship. Tangibles protect the distance between service provider and customer, which highly individualistic customers would like to maintain (Furrer et al., 2000: 360).

It is difficult to establish the relationship between empathy dimension and individualism, as it depends on which item is measured. If expectation from employees about having the customers' best interest sincerely is taken in to consideration, it can be suggested that highly individualistic people would not attach extreme importance on empathy (Furrer et al., 2000: 360).

H2a: The higher the individualism, the higher the level of importance attached to reliability.

H2b: The higher the individualism, the higher the level of importance attached to responsiveness.

H2c: The higher the individualism, the lower the level of importance attached to assurance.

H2d: The higher the individualism, the lower the level of importance attached to empathy.

H2e: The higher the individualism, the higher the level of importance attached to tangibles.

4.2.3. Masculinity and Service Quality

In the study of Hofstede, it is stated that, the core values for masculine societies are success, money and material things. On the other hand, feminine societies put emphasis on quality of life, and caring for others (Hofstede and Bond, 1984: 419-420; Hofstede, 2011: 12).

Men tend to be assertive, tough, and ambitious in highly masculine societies. Their work prevails over family (Hofstede, 2011: 12). Furrer et al. suggests that the toughness of men would provide more assurance. Moreover, they are expected to be extremely professional in their work. Hence, it is suggested that masculinity has a positive relationship with assurance, responsiveness, and reliability (Furrer et al., 2000: 360).

For people belonging to culture with high masculinity, material things are vital. Tangibles are representatives of material things. Thus, masculinity and tangibility is also suggested to have positive relationship (Furrer et al., 2000: 360).

Empathy is related with caring people. Caring others is a core value of femininity (Furrer et al., 2000: 360). Therefore, people with high masculinity would not attach much importance on empathy.

H3a: The higher the masculinity, the higher the level of importance attached to reliability.

H3b: The higher the masculinity, the higher the level of importance attached to responsiveness.

H3c: The higher the masculinity, the higher the level of importance attached to assurance.

H3d: The higher the masculinity, the lower the level of importance attached to empathy.

H3e: The higher the masculinity, the higher the level of importance attached to tangibles.

4.2.4. Uncertainty Avoidance and Service Quality

Uncertainty avoidance is the tolerance degree of societies against ambiguity and unusual, surprising, and unknown situations. People belonging to cultures with high uncertainty avoidance, aim to make their life as controllable and predictable as possible (Hofstede, 2011: 10-11).

In the study of Furrer et al. (2000: 360), it is stated that close relationship is a useful way to reduce uncertainty. Moreover, finding quick solutions to problems reduces uncertainty about possible failure. This is supported by Tsoukatos and Rand (2007: 473). Hence, it is suggested that importance attached to “assurance”, “reliability”, “responsiveness”, and “empathy” have positive relationship with uncertainty avoidance.

According to study of Donthu and Yoo (1998: 181), the people with high uncertainty avoidance avoid risky, uncertain situations which make them uncomfortable. This leads them to make their plans more carefully. They often choose the plan which has the lowest risk from their perception. They don't risk low quality work. In order to decrease perceived risk, they benefit from visible evidences. Visible evidences are related to tangible dimension of service quality. Wang et. al. (2008: 317) also states that people with high uncertainty avoidance prefer to see familiar environment during the service and these familiar environment is provided by tangibles. For this reason, it is possible to suggest that people with high uncertainty avoidance would put high level of importance on tangibles.

H4a: The higher the uncertainty avoidance, the higher the level of importance attached to reliability.

H4b: The higher the uncertainty avoidance, the higher the level of importance attached to responsiveness.

H4c: The higher the uncertainty avoidance, the higher the level of importance attached to assurance.

H4d: The higher the uncertainty avoidance, the higher the level of importance attached to empathy.

H4e: The higher the uncertainty avoidance, the higher the level of importance attached to tangibles.

4.2.5. Long-term Orientation and Service Quality

As revealed by Hofstede, perseverance and thrift are vital values for people belonging to long term oriented cultures. Those people tend to show more future oriented perspective. In contrary, short term oriented people put emphasize on traditions (Hofstede, 2011: 13-15).

Long term oriented people would expect a close relationship with service provider (Furrer et al., 2000: 361). According to Wang et. al. long-term oriented Chinese people put emphasis on friendly personal connection with service provider which is identified as “guanxy”. (Wang et. al., 2008: 316). Therefore, it is possible to suggest that importance attached to reliability, responsiveness, and empathy dimensions of service quality, which are related with relationship with service provider, have positive relationship with long term orientation (Furrer et al., 2000: 361).

For tangibles dimension of service quality, facilities’ visual appeal is important. These visual appeals do not contribute to the relationship with service provider which is important for long term oriented people. Therefore, it is suggested that the importance attached to tangibles has inverse relationship with long term orientation (Furrer et al., 2000: 361).

Long term oriented people are aware that the relationship with service provider will last, thus assurance’s importance is suggested to have a negative relationship with long term orientation (Furrer et al., 2000: 361).

H5a: The higher the long-term orientation, the higher the level of importance attached to reliability.

H5b: The higher the long-term orientation, the higher the level of importance attached to responsiveness.

H5c: The higher the long-term orientation, the lower the level of importance attached to assurance.

H5d: The higher the long-term orientation, the higher the level of importance attached to empathy.

H5e: The higher the long-term orientation, the lower the level of importance attached to tangibles.



CHAPTER FIVE

METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

5.1. METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

5.1.1. Questionnaire Development

The questionnaire consists of 51 questions and three parts. In the first part of the questionnaire respondents are required to answer questions about the degree of importance they put to hotel service quality dimensions. In order to measure the service quality, SERVQUAL, which is designed by Parasuraman and his colleagues, is adapted. In addition, the researches about measuring service quality is examined and also benefited from these. Espinoza (1999) in the study about cross-cultural application of service quality measurement conducted a questionnaire and adapted SERVQUAL to supermarkets. Dash et. al. (2009) examine the influence of power distance and individualism on service quality and applied SERVQUAL in banking industry. Furrer et. al. (2000) analyzed the relationship between service quality perception and culture by using SERVQUAL scale on international students. Saleh and Ryan (1991) composed a questionnaire and used SERVQUAL to measure service quality in hospitality industry. The first part of the questionnaire consists 21 questions that focuses on 5 dimensions of service quality such as; “reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and tangibility”.

In the second part of the questionnaire, respondents’ cultural values are measured with 20 questions. Hofstede’s cultural dimensions enlightens the second part which is about cultural dimensions. These dimensions are; “power distance, individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance and long-term orientation”. In addition to Hofstede’s studies, other studies about culture also taken into consideration in order to conduct the questions in the second part of the questionnaire. Furrer et. al. (2000) used Hofstede’s cultural dimensions to examine the impact of cultural values and these studies also guided the second part of the questionnaire.

Last part of the questionnaire involves demographic questions which consists 10 questions about guests' gender, age, education level, marital status, nationality, annual household income, professions and purpose of visit.

The content and clarity of the questionnaire is tested on a small pilot group. It was conducted in face to face interviews with 19 participants. As a result of the interviews, only in the second part, fifteenth question couldn't have understood by the group at first time, so the sentence was rewritten to make it clear.

5.1.2. Sampling

The sample of the study consists of foreign and Turkish hotel guests who stayed in five star hotels in İzmir, Turkey in 2017. İzmir, which is one of the most important cities, has various attraction centers selected to collect data. Different tourism types such as; sea-sun-sand tourism, health tourism, business tourism, congress tourism and religious tourism are seen in İzmir. Because of diversified features of the city, people from different countries visit İzmir. This makes İzmir an applicable destination to study the cultural drivers of service quality in the hospitality industry.

Five star hotels' physical capacity is more if it is compared with three, two or one star hotels. Also, foreign guests prefer five star hotels because of their popularity and easiness to find information before making the reservation. Some of them are international chains, so it gives confidence to guests before they arrive to the hotel. Additionally, five star hotels work more systematically and professionally than others. Guests who stay at five star hotels are more likely to consciously respond to the questionnaire (Jani and Han, 2014: 14).

When the distribution of number of arrivals, nights spent, average length of stay and occupancy rates in İzmir by type and class of establishment are examined, it is seen that 346.097 foreigners stayed in five star hotels in İzmir, in 2015, while the sum of guests stayed in four, three, two and one star hotels are 229,393 which is lower than five star hotels (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, <http://yigm.kulturturizm.gov.tr/TR,9857/isletme-belgeli-tesisler.html>).

It is possible to observe that, there are 19 five star hotels in İzmir. Some of them are identified as city hotels, while some of them are thermal hotels. Additionally,

resort hotels also exist in İzmir. In order to obtain significant results, all five star hotels were asked to participate to the study. Some of them rejected to attend because of general principles of them. Especially, many of the international chains did not give permission to make the questionnaire to their guests because they were concerned about disrupting the guest. In order to reach the guests who stayed in these hotels, the human resources departments of international companies were helpful, as they host many guests from different countries.

When the distribution of foreign visitors that came to İzmir between 2013-2015 in terms of nationalities, it is seen that with a number of 348.043 German citizens are the most frequent visitors observed in İzmir. England with a number of 91.321, France with a number of 90.330, Netherlands with a number of 86.163, Italy with a number of 71.784 follows Germany respectively according to the 2015 data. There are also visitors from Belgium, USA, Greece, Spain, Russia, Iran and many other countries. This study also targeted to reach the most frequent visitors of İzmir. (TÜROFED Tourism Report, https://issuu.com/yediiletisim/docs/t__rofed_rapor_2016-1)

5.1.3. Data Collection

The questionnaire technique which is one of the most widely used methods to obtain is utilized during the collection of data. Questionnaire technique is a cheaper and faster way to collect data. Seven point Likert scale used in the first two parts, whereas at the last part of the questionnaire, multiple choice and open ended questions used.

There are 19 hotels which are located in İzmir. Some of the hotel managers did not give permission to apply the questionnaire to their hotel guests. So, these hotels are omitted from the study. In total, five hotels accepted to make cooperation. The questionnaire was applied by the researcher. Before giving the questionnaire, the guests in the lobby are asked to fill out it, so response rate is high. Only five respondents did not complete all questions in the questionnaire, so they are disregarded. Response rate is %96 in this study.

In total 119 five starred hotel guests responded to the questionnaire. It is seen that 1 respondent did not respond the question about gender, and 4 respondents missed the question about their profession.

5.2. RESPONDENTS' PROFILE

Table 10 is about the respondents' gender distribution. It is possible to observe that 57,1% of the respondents were male, whereas 42,0% were female.

Table 10: Gender

		Gender		
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Male	68	57,1	57,6
	Female	50	42,0	42,4
	Total	118	99,2	100,0

The questionnaire was responded by guests from various ages above 18 years old. It is seen that most of the respondents are between the age of 25-34, while the least frequent respondent age is above 65.

Table 11: Age

		Age		
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	18-24	13	10,9	10,9
	25-34	44	37,0	37,0
	35-44	22	18,5	18,5
	45-54	28	23,5	23,5
	55-64	9	7,6	7,6
	65+	3	2,5	2,5
	Total	119	100,0	100,0

Table 12 shows the respondents' education level. It is seen that 63,9% of the respondents are graduated from university, while 16% of the respondents are undergraduates. The least frequently seen respondent is graduated from primary school.

Table 12: Education

Education		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Primary	1	,8	,8
	Secondary	16	13,4	13,4
	University	76	63,9	63,9
	Undergraduate	19	16,0	16,0
	Post Graduate	7	5,9	5,9
	Total	119	100,0	100,0

Distribution of marital status of respondents can be found in below table. It is observed that 47,9% of respondents are single, 47,1% is married, and 5% of the respondents are divorced / widowed.

Table 13: Marital Status

Marital Status		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Single	57	47,9	47,9
	Married	56	47,1	47,1
	Divorced/ Widowed	6	5,0	5,0
	Total	119	100,0	100,0

Table 14 shows the country that the respondent is born. 29,4% of the respondents are born in Turkey, which is most frequently seen. Respondents who born in Germany follows this with 14,3%. 22 different countries are found in this table.

Table 14: Country Born

Country Born		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Turkey	35	29,4	29,4
	Greece	11	9,2	9,2
	Germany	17	14,3	14,3
	Brazil	2	1,7	1,7
	Iran	4	3,4	3,4
	China	5	4,2	4,2
	Algeria	2	1,7	1,7
	Nepal	1	,8	,8
	America	9	7,6	7,6
	Spain	3	2,5	2,5

Russia	3	2,5	2,5
Italy	5	4,2	4,2
UK	1	,8	,8
France	5	4,2	4,2
Mexico	1	,8	,8
Canada	3	2,5	2,5
Israel	4	3,4	3,4
Holland	1	,8	,8
Japan	4	3,4	3,4
Lithuania	1	,8	,8
Argentina	1	,8	,8
Sweden	1	,8	,8
Total	119	100,0	100,0

Below table shows the nationality of the respondents. 21 different nationalities observed. 27,7% of the respondents are belonging to Turkish nationality and it is followed by German respondents which is 15,1%.

Table 15: Nationality

		Nationality		
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Turkish	33	27,7	27,7
	Greek	11	9,2	9,2
	German	18	15,1	15,1
	Brazilian	2	1,7	1,7
	Iranian	4	3,4	3,4
	Chinese	5	4,2	4,2
	Algerian	2	1,7	1,7
	Swedish	1	,8	,8
	American	9	7,6	7,6
	Spanish	3	2,5	2,5
	Russian	3	2,5	2,5
	Italian	5	4,2	4,2
	Australian	1	,8	,8
	French	5	4,2	4,2
	Mexican	1	,8	,8
	Canadian	4	3,4	3,4
	Israel	5	4,2	4,2
	Holland	1	,8	,8
	Japanese	4	3,4	3,4
	Lithuanian	1	,8	,8

Argentina	1	,8	,8
Total	119	100,0	100,0

It is known that everybody does not spend his/her life in the country that they were born in. Culture is effected by the country that people spend their lives in. Therefore, country of the respondents that they have spent their most of their lives in, is also asked in the third part of the questionnaire. The distribution of countries spent their lives in can be observed in the below table.

Table 16: Country Spent Most of The Life In

		Country Spent		
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Turkey	32	26,9	26,9
	Greece	10	8,4	8,4
	Germany	21	17,6	17,6
	Brazil	2	1,7	1,7
	Iran	3	2,5	2,5
	China	5	4,2	4,2
	Algeria	1	,8	,8
	America	11	9,2	9,2
	Spain	3	2,5	2,5
	Russia	3	2,5	2,5
	Italy	4	3,4	3,4
	France	6	5,0	5,0
	Mexico	1	,8	,8
	Canada	4	3,4	3,4
	Israel	4	3,4	3,4
	Japan	4	3,4	3,4
	Lithuania	1	,8	,8
	Argentina	1	,8	,8
	Sweden	1	,8	,8
	England	1	,8	,8
	Australia	1	,8	,8
	Total	119	100,0	100,0

Below table shows the respondents' annual household income distribution. 28,6% of the respondents have 50.000\$-74.999\$ annual household income. It is followed by 25.000\$-49.999\$ with a percentage of 24,4% and 75.000\$-99.999\$ with a percentage of 16,8%. The reason that below 10.000\$ and 10.000\$-24.999\$ are seen less frequently might be because of the questionnaire's target was five starred hotels.

Table 17: Income

		Income		
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Below 10.000\$	16	13,4	13,4
	10.000\$-24.999\$	13	10,9	10,9
	25.000\$-49.999\$	29	24,4	24,4
	50.000\$-74.999\$	34	28,6	28,6
	75.000\$-99.999\$	20	16,8	16,8
	Above 100.000\$	7	5,9	5,9
	Total	119	100,0	100,0

The profession of the respondents is asked in the questionnaire's third part. Various professions are observed which shows that there is not a bias of a specific profession.

Table 18: Proffesion

		Proffesion		
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Fashion Designer	1	,8	,9
	Auditor	1	,8	,9
	Teacher	8	6,7	7,0
	Automotive	1	,8	,9
	Tailor	1	,8	,9
	Waiter	1	,8	,9
	Captain	1	,8	,9
	Pilot	3	2,5	2,6
	Front Desk	1	,8	,9
	Hotel Manager	1	,8	,9
	Human Resources	3	2,5	2,6
	Marketing	2	1,7	1,7
	Cafe Owner	1	,8	,9
	Businessman	2	1,7	1,7
	Computer Engineer	1	,8	,9

Accountant	1	,8	,9
Architect	2	1,7	1,7
Baby Sitter	2	1,7	1,7
English Instructor	1	,8	,9
Nurse	1	,8	,9
Pharmacist	1	,8	,9
Doctor	3	2,5	2,6
Engineer	3	2,5	2,6
Dentist	1	,8	,9
Public Relations	1	,8	,9
Textile	2	1,7	1,7
Student	12	10,1	10,4
Sales Manager	1	,8	,9
Sales Executive	1	,8	,9
Banker	1	,8	,9
Travel Agent	1	,8	,9
Owner	1	,8	,9
Shop Assistant	1	,8	,9
Business	2	1,7	1,7
Medical Secretary	1	,8	,9
Silversmith	1	,8	,9
Civil Engineer	2	1,7	1,7
Housewife	1	,8	,9
City Planner	1	,8	,9
Kindergarten Teacher	2	1,7	1,7
Finance Consultant	1	,8	,9
Consultant	2	1,7	1,7
Purchasing Manager	1	,8	,9
Economist	1	,8	,9
Academician	1	,8	,9
Entrepreneur	1	,8	,9
Electronics Engineer	1	,8	,9
Software Engineer	1	,8	,9
Finance	1	,8	,9
Security	1	,8	,9

	Nutritionist	1	,8	,9
	Occupational Safety Specialist	1	,8	,9
	Copilot	1	,8	,9
	Psychologist	1	,8	,9
	Sales Specialist	1	,8	,9
	Designer	1	,8	,9
	Purchasing Manager	2	1,7	1,7
	Purchasing	1	,8	,9
	Travel Agent	2	1,7	1,7
	Air Hostess	1	,8	,9
	Chemist	1	,8	,9
	Optician	1	,8	,9
	Trainer	1	,8	,9
	Retired	2	1,7	1,7
	Fisherman	1	,8	,9
	Tourism	10	8,4	8,7
	Carpenter	2	1,7	1,7
	Total	115	96,6	100,0
Total		119	100,0	

The purpose of respondents' visit is asked in the third part of the questionnaire. It is seen that most of the respondents came to Turkey for fun/holiday purposes with 73,9%. It is followed by business purposes with a percentage of 23,5, and health with a percentage of 2,5 respectively.

Table 19: Purpose of Visit

		Purpose of Visit		
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Business	28	23,5	23,5
	Fun/Holiday	88	73,9	73,9
	Health	3	2,5	2,5
	Total	119	100,0	100,0

CHAPTER SIX

FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH

6.1. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION OF THE DATA

6.1.1. Reliability and Validity of Model

Reliability is about consistency degree between variables' items in the instrument (Hair et al., 2010: 124). In other words, reliability tests the goodness of a measure (Sakeran and Bougie, 2010: 181).

Cronbach's alpha is a measure of reliability which is commonly used through literature. Cronbach's alpha value lies in between 0 and 1. The bigger the value means the more reliable the item is (Ural and Kılıç, 2005: 258).

Hair et. al. (2010: 124) stated that the lowest acceptable limit for Cronbach's alpha is 0,60. Some of the researchers stated that Cronbach's alpha's minimum limit should be 0,70 (Nunnally, 1978: 245).

As a consequence, internal consistency values of the items, which can be seen in table 20, are higher than the acceptable limit of 0,6. Therefore, the data collected from the questionnaire is reliable.

Table 20: Cronbach's Alpha

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
ASS	0,742	0,741	0,041	18,130	0,000
EMP	0,657	0,654	0,056	11,744	0,000
IDV	0,719	0,716	0,054	13,330	0,000
LTO	0,759	0,756	0,039	19,358	0,000
MAS	0,718	0,714	0,049	14,739	0,000
PDI	0,857	0,855	0,027	31,192	0,000
REL	0,787	0,780	0,046	17,198	0,000
RES	0,668	0,661	0,066	10,128	0,000
TAN	0,812	0,809	0,031	26,191	0,000
UAV	0,766	0,760	0,053	14,473	0,000

“Convergent validity is the measure of the extent to which a measure correlates positively with alternative measures of the same construct.” (Hair et al., 2014: 102). In

order to maintain convergent validity, “outer loadings”, “average variance extracted (AVE)”, and “composite reliability” should be taken into account (Rahman and Kamarulzaman, 2012: 1025).

According to Chin, outer loadings greater than 0,5 or 0,6 is acceptable for sustaining convergent validity (Chin, 1998: 325). When social science studies are examined, it is possible to see that the outer loading values tend to be weak. Therefore, if the value of outer loading is even 0,4 it shouldn't be immediately removed from the study. It's effect on content validity should be examined and if it does not contribute to content validity, then it should be removed (Hair et al. 2014: 103).

IND 3, MAS 1, and UAV 3, which had outer loadings lower than 0,40, are removed from the study. Table 21 reveals that, the other items' outer loadings are above 0,6, which means that the convergent validity of the constructs are ensured.

Table 21: Convergent Validity

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
ASS1 <- ASS	0,790	0,786	0,056	14,097	0,000
ASS2 <- ASS	0,766	0,761	0,058	13,101	0,000
ASS3 <- ASS	0,792	0,789	0,052	15,218	0,000
ASS4 <- ASS	0,654	0,649	0,096	6,787	0,000
EMP1 <- EMP	0,632	0,608	0,174	3,638	0,000
EMP2 <- EMP	0,834	0,785	0,151	5,533	0,000
EMP3 <- EMP	0,626	0,612	0,130	4,803	0,000
EMP4 <- EMP	0,686	0,663	0,182	3,767	0,000
IDV1 <- IDV	0,789	0,779	0,082	9,604	0,000
IDV2 <- IDV	0,892	0,890	0,032	28,271	0,000
IDV4 <- IDV	0,717	0,718	0,081	8,900	0,000
LTO1 <- LTO	0,725	0,683	0,170	4,256	0,000
LTO2 <- LTO	0,626	0,591	0,250	2,508	0,012

LTO3 <- LTO	0,795	0,747	0,201	3,955	0,000
LTO4 <- LTO	0,866	0,814	0,166	5,206	0,000
MAS2 <- MAS	0,821	0,800	0,101	8,106	0,000
MAS3 <- MAS	0,616	0,617	0,129	4,769	0,000
MAS4 <- MAS	0,922	0,916	0,035	26,182	0,000
PDI1 <- PDI	0,864	0,861	0,040	21,705	0,000
PDI2 <- PDI	0,884	0,880	0,037	23,637	0,000
PDI3 <- PDI	0,848	0,847	0,043	19,584	0,000
PDI4 <- PDI	0,750	0,748	0,053	14,011	0,000
REL1 <- REL	0,840	0,840	0,028	30,504	0,000
REL2 <- REL	0,745	0,748	0,044	17,027	0,000
REL3 <- REL	0,660	0,648	0,087	7,601	0,000
REL4 <- REL	0,758	0,752	0,062	12,217	0,000
REL5 <- REL	0,645	0,629	0,105	6,142	0,000
RES1 <- RES	0,864	0,839	0,125	6,933	0,000
RES2 <- RES	0,647	0,630	0,185	3,491	0,000
RES3 <- RES	0,787	0,767	0,122	6,445	0,000
TAN1 <- TAN	0,837	0,829	0,039	21,502	0,000
TAN2 <- TAN	0,835	0,830	0,049	16,946	0,000
TAN3 <- TAN	0,615	0,618	0,083	7,403	0,000
TAN4 <- TAN	0,764	0,765	0,057	13,303	0,000
TAN5 <- TAN	0,680	0,673	0,085	8,021	0,000
UAV1 <- UAV	0,820	0,816	0,076	10,722	0,000
UAV2 <- UAV	0,888	0,882	0,044	20,043	0,000
UAV4 <- UAV	0,767	0,754	0,101	7,563	0,000

Average variance extracted is a measure also used to provide convergent validity. Average variance extracted compares the extent of variance explained by the construct and the amount of errors remaining in the construct (Fornell and Larcker, 1981: 45; Hair et al., 2014: 103).

Table 22: Average Variance Extracted

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
ASS	0,567	0,565	0,039	14,424	0,000
EMP	0,490	0,476	0,059	8,302	0,000
IDV	0,645	0,643	0,043	15,101	0,000
LTO	0,575	0,549	0,073	7,865	0,000
MAS	0,635	0,629	0,046	13,733	0,000
PDI	0,702	0,700	0,040	17,483	0,000
REL	0,537	0,534	0,051	10,635	0,000
RES	0,594	0,585	0,064	9,276	0,000
TAN	0,565	0,563	0,042	13,372	0,000
UAV	0,683	0,677	0,052	13,112	0,000

Another measure used in order to assess reliability of items in the scale is composite reliability. Composite reliability also measures the internal consistency. According to some researchers, composite reliability is a more reliable measure than Cronbach's alpha for assessing internal consistency (Deng et al., 2013: 136). According to Hair et. al. (2012: 145), composite reliability values above 0,60 is sufficient in order to assess reliability. In this thesis, it is seen in Table 23 that, composite values are greater than 0,6. Therefore, all the items are reliable.

Table 23: Composite Reliability

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
ASS	0,839	0,836	0,024	34,426	0,000
EMP	0,791	0,765	0,088	9,015	0,000
IDV	0,844	0,841	0,029	29,450	0,000
LTO	0,842	0,803	0,119	7,051	0,000
MAS	0,835	0,828	0,041	20,504	0,000
PDI	0,904	0,902	0,018	51,178	0,000
REL	0,852	0,847	0,029	29,225	0,000
RES	0,813	0,795	0,081	10,037	0,000
TAN	0,865	0,862	0,022	38,838	0,000
UAV	0,866	0,859	0,039	22,137	0,000

Discriminant validity measures the extent to which items measure distinct concepts. In literature it is possible to see methods like Fornell – Larcker criterion and evaluation of cross loadings in order to sustain discriminant validity. Ringle et al. (2014: 115) states that these methods are not sufficient for assessing discriminant validity. They established an alternative method which is heterotrait – monotrait ratio. They have tested its' performance by comparing it with Fornell – Larcker criterion and evaluation of cross loadings. They found out that in assessing discriminant validity in structural equation modeling the heterotrait – monotrait ratio is more effective.

The ratios between the items should be lower than 0,9 if they are discriminant from each other. (Saad and Mansori, 2017: 85). In this study, according to Table 24, all the ratios between the items are below 0,9. This means that all items are discriminant. In other words, discriminant validity is sustained.

Table 24: Heterotrait - Monotrait ratio

	ASS	EMP	IDV	LTO	MAS	PDI	REL	RES	TAN
ASS									
EMP	0.814								
IDV	0.328	0.205							
LTO	0.313	0.258	0.157						
MAS	0.209	0.343	0.162	0.401					
PDI	0.161	0.140	0.243	0.205	0.553				
REL	0.161	0.369	0.278	0.204	0.536	0.564			
RES	0.192	0.379	0.169	0.402	0.267	0.352	0.630		
TAN	0.206	0.375	0.449	0.114	0.202	0.113	0.417	0.156	
UAV	0.382	0.443	0.148	0.265	0.236	0.078	0.087	0.167	0.304

6.2. FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH

6.2.1. Structural Model Results

Structural equation modeling was applied in order to measure the relationship between cultural dimensions and the level of importance attached to service quality dimensions. Structural equation modeling is useful in order to test the relationships between multiple variables. Especially the relation between latent variables, which are identified as variables cannot be observed and measured directly, are effectively measured by using structural equation model (Hair et. al., 2010: 609). Moutinho (2012: 308) also states that structural equation modeling is an appropriate model in order to assess relationships between various variables in social sciences. PLS - SEM (partial least squares - structural equation modeling) application is often seen in social sciences researches. This application provides effective measuring of the relationship between latent variables even in small size samples with bootstrapping (Lai and Hitchcock, 2017: 115). PLS – SEM helps to maximize the percentage of explained variance of the dependent latent constructs (Hair et. al., 2014: 139-140). Therefore, PLS – SEM was evaluated as the best fitting model for this study. Smart PLS 3.0 software was used in order to apply the model.

In order to test the hypotheses, structural equation modeling was employed by using the software Smart PLS 3.0. In structural equation models the relationship between the variables are examined by measuring the path coefficients. Path

coefficient shows the strength and direction. If path coefficient is greater than another, without taking the direction into consideration, then the relationship is strong. The direction of the relationship is shown with positive or negative sign (Hair et al., 2014: 173; Rahman and Kamarulzaman, 2012: 1026-1027).

Bootstrapping is applied in order to assess the significance of the variables. Bootstrapping is a useful method which is often used in small sized samples as its' give out accurate results in such samples (Lai and Hitchcock, 2017: 118). In this study, by using bootstrapping 5,000 samples are generated and a significance level of $p < 0,1$ is defined as acceptable.

According to the given information the p values higher than 0,1 are accepted as non-significant. The table 25 shows the relationship between cultural dimensions and service quality dimensions. The hypothesis can be evaluated by examining table 25. H1a, H1b, H1c, H1d, and H1e examined the relationship between power distance dimension of culture and service quality dimensions.

H1a says that; the higher the power distance, the lower the level of importance attached to reliability. The results showed that, the relationship between power distance and importance attached to reliability is significant. The path coefficient of the relationship is -0,336 and the direction is negative. Therefore, H1a is supported according to the given results.

H1b states that; the higher the power distance, the lower the level of importance attached to responsiveness. The results showed that, the relationship between power distance and importance attached to responsiveness is significant. The path coefficient of the relationship is -0,256 and the direction is negative. Therefore, H1b is supported according to the given results.

H1c suggested that; the higher the power distance, the higher the level of importance attached to assurance. According to the results of the study, it is observed that there is a significant and positive relationship between power distance and importance attached to assurance. However, the relationship's strength is weaker than reliability and responsiveness' relationship with power distance. The strength of the relationship is 0,176. In short, H1c is approved.

H1d hypothesized that; the higher the power distance, the lower the level of importance attached to empathy, while H1e hypothesized that the higher the power

distance, the higher the level of importance attached to tangibles. The p values of these relationships are found to be greater than 0,1. Thus, these relationships are not significant.

As suggested in Donthu and Yoo's (1998: 181) and Tsoukatos and Rand's (2007: 461) studies the customers accept the power of service provider and they do not see themselves important for service providers. Therefore, the inverse relationship between power distance and importance attached to reliability and responsiveness is compatible with the suggestions and findings of those studies. The positive relationship between power distance and level of importance attached to assurance is compatible with Furrer. et. al. (2000: 362), while opposes the results of Tsoukatos and Rand (2007: 476).

H2a suggested that the higher the individualism, the higher the level of importance attached to reliability. The results approved that there is a significant positive relationship between individualism and importance attached to reliability with a path coefficient of 0,167. Hence, H2a is supported.

H2b which stated that, the higher the individualism, the higher the level of importance attached to responsiveness is found to be not significant as the p value is greater than 0,1.

H2c hypothesized that, the higher the individualism, the lower the level of importance attached to assurance. When the results are examined, it is seen that this relationship is inside the significance level and the direction of the relationship is found to be negative, which is -0,181. As a consequence, H2c is supported.

H2d which says that, the higher the individualism, the lower the level of importance attached to empathy is observed as a non-significant relationship as the p value is greater than 0,1.

H2e stated that, the higher the individualism, the higher the level of importance attached to tangibles. Results of the study shows that, individuals put emphasize on tangibles. The relationship is significant and the direction of the relationship is positive. With 0,364, tangibles are observed to be the most important dimension for individualism. This result indicates that H2e is supported.

Tsoukatos and Rand (2007: 477) found out that there is no significant correlation between individualism and other service quality dimensions. This study

partially supports it as the level of importance attached to empathy and responsiveness did not show any significant relationship with individualism. Furrer et. al. (2000: 363) found out a positive relationship between individualism and the level of importance attached to reliability and tangibles; and a negative relationship between individualism and the level of importance attached to assurance. These results are also supported by this study. Donthu and Yoo (1998: 184) found a positive relationship between individualism and expectation from assurance which is not supported by this study.

H3a hypothesized that, the higher the masculinity, the higher the level of importance attached to reliability. When the results are analyzed, there is a significant relationship and the direction of the relationship is negative which is -0,315. Hence H3a is not supported.

The relationship between masculinity and the level of importance attached to responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles found to be not significant. It is seen that their p values are greater than 0,1. Therefore, H3b, H3c, H3d, and H3e cannot be supported.

Although Furrer et. al. (2000: 364), and Tsoukatos and Rand (2007: 477) found a significant negative relationship between masculinity and the level of importance attached to responsiveness, this study does not support them as any significant relationship between those dimensions could not be observed. This study could not also find any significant relationship between masculinity and empathy, like Tsoukatos and Rand; and Furrer et. al. Additionally, Tsoukatos and Rand found an inverse relationship between masculinity and level of importance attached to assurance, but this study does not support it, as it indicates that the relationship is not significant similarly to the results of Furrer et. al. The inverse relationship found in this study between masculinity and the level of importance attached to reliability supports Tsoukatos and Rand's study, while the study of Furrer et. al. was not able to assess a significant relationship between these dimensions.

H4a suggested that, the higher the uncertainty avoidance, the higher the level of importance attached to reliability and H4b suggested that, the higher the uncertainty avoidance, the higher the level of importance attached to responsiveness. The results showed that it is not possible to identify a significant relationship between these dimensions as the p values are greater than 0,1.

According to H4c, the higher the uncertainty avoidance, the higher the level of importance attached to assurance. This relationship is found in significant level. Moreover, it shows a positive relationship with a path coefficient of 0,268. Hence, H4c is supported.

H4d hypothesized that, the higher the uncertainty avoidance, the higher the level of importance attached to empathy. It is seen that there is a positive significant relationship between uncertainty avoidance and the level of importance attached to empathy. The path coefficient of the relationship is 0,320 which is the highest degree among other dimensions' relationships with uncertainty avoidance. So, H4d is supported.

H4e stated that, the higher the uncertainty avoidance, the higher the level of importance attached to tangibles. The results showed that tangibles tend to show a significant negative relationship with uncertainty avoidance. According to the result of -0,240, H4e is not supported.

Donthu and Yoo (1998: 184), suggested and found a non-significant directional relationship between uncertainty avoidance and expectation from tangibles. This study suggested a positive relationship in light of Donthu and Yoo, but the result did not support the hypothesis. Oppositely, result supported Furrer et. al. (2000: 364) findings, and it is seen that, tangibles do not have influence in reducing perceived risk. While the findings of the study about the positive relationship between uncertainty avoidance and the level of importance attached to assurance and empathy are compatible with the studies of Furrer et. al. (2000: 364); Tsoukatos and Rand (2007: 477) was not able to assess a significant relationship between uncertainty avoidance and empathy. Furrer et. al. (2000: 364), and Tsoukatos and Rand (2007: 476) both found a significant positive relationship between uncertainty avoidance and level of importance attached to responsiveness and reliability, but these findings are not supported as these relationships are observed to be not significant.

H5a suggested that, the higher the long-term orientation, the higher the level of importance attached to reliability. Any significant relationship between these variables could not be assessed as it is seen that p value is greater than 0,1.

According to H5b, the higher the long-term orientation, the higher the level of importance attached to responsiveness. The results indicated that, there is a significant

positive relationship between long-term orientation and the level of importance attached to responsiveness. With a path coefficient of 0,345, H5b is supported.

H5c hypothesized that, the higher the long-term orientation, the lower the level of importance attached to assurance. It is seen that there is a negative relationship between long-term orientation and the level of importance attached to assurance. The path coefficient of the relationship is -0,240. Hence, H5c is supported.

H5d stated that, the higher the long-term orientation, the higher the level of importance attached to empathy, and H5e stated that, the higher the long-term orientation, the lower the level of importance attached to tangibles. These relationships are found to be not significant because their p values are greater than 0,1.

Although Tsoukatos and Rand (2007: 476) did not find significant relationship between long-term orientation and level of importance attached to assurance, and responsiveness; the findings of this study support Furrer et. al. (2000: 364).

Table 25: Path Coefficients

		Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
PDI REL	->	-0,336	-0,349	0,083	4,046	0,000
PDI RES	->	-0,256	-0,256	0,105	2,431	0,015
PDI ASS	->	0,176	0,179	0,098	1,793	0,073
PDI EMP	->	0,073	0,076	0,116	0,626	0,531
PDI TAN	->	0,047	0,052	0,098	0,481	0,631
IDV REL	->	0,167	0,171	0,092	1,818	0,069
IDV RES	->	0,018	0,018	0,115	0,157	0,875
IDV ASS	->	-0,181	-0,183	0,092	1,962	0,050
IDV EMP	->	0,040	0,050	0,119	0,339	0,735
IDV TAN	->	0,364	0,375	0,081	4,474	0,000
MAS REL	->	-0,315	-0,311	0,089	3,537	0,000
MAS RES	->	-0,121	-0,121	0,119	1,016	0,310

MAS ASS	->	-0,135	-0,141	0,106	1,276	0,202
MAS EMP	->	-0,151	-0,151	0,152	0,996	0,319
MAS TAN	->	-0,021	-0,016	0,107	0,202	0,840
UAV REL	->	-0,013	-0,011	0,081	0,160	0,873
UAV RES	->	0,024	0,037	0,097	0,247	0,805
UAV ASS	->	0,268	0,273	0,081	3,291	0,001
UAV EMP	->	0,320	0,324	0,095	3,382	0,001
UAV TAN	->	-0,240	-0,237	0,096	2,493	0,013
LTO REL	->	0,075	0,073	0,100	0,745	0,456
LTO RES	->	0,345	0,334	0,112	3,067	0,002
LTO ASS	->	-0,240	-0,245	0,101	2,377	0,017
LTO EMP	->	-0,133	-0,142	0,139	0,958	0,338
LTO TAN	->	0,003	-0,008	0,098	0,028	0,978

R-square is a useful measure to assess the quality of the findings. It gives information about the percentage of explained variance of variables (Hair et al., 2012: 426). It is difficult to assess an acceptable R-square value. It is known that the higher the value is more acceptable (Hair et. al., 2014: 175). R- square values between 0,02 and 0,15 is identified as small, while R-square values between 0,15 and 0,35 is identified as medium, and R-square values greater than 0,35 are identified as large (Hair et al., 2014: 198).

In this study p values < 0,1 are accepted to be in significant interval. The changes in level of importance attached to all the dimensions of service quality are significantly explained by this scale as the p values are lower than 0,1. The results showed that, %33,5 of the variation in the importance attached to reliability is explained in this construct, while %22,4 of the variations in the level of importance attached to assurance is explained. Change in the level of importance attached to responsiveness is explained with %19,7, and 19,2% of change in the level of

importance attached to tangibles is explained. The variation in the level of importance attached to empathy is explained the least with a percentage of 15,4.

Table 26: R-square

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
ASS	0,224	0,272	0,067	3,319	0,001
EMP	0,154	0,235	0,058	2,668	0,008
REL	0,335	0,381	0,068	4,951	0,000
RES	0,197	0,247	0,071	2,783	0,005
TAN	0,192	0,237	0,061	3,134	0,002

6.2.2. Fit index

“SRMR (Standardized Root Mean Square Residual)” is obtained by evaluating the difference between the residuals of the sample and the estimations or predictions. As large values are accepted as worse fit, SRMR can be identified as “badness of fit index”. It is a useful model for understanding if the model is fitting with the data. Values of SRMR are between 0.0 and 1.0. The closer the value to 0 indicates a clean model. (Iacobucci, 2010: 91).

In order to evaluate model, fit, cutoff value close to 0,09 can be identified as acceptable (Hu and Bentler, 1999: 27). Model in this study fits the data as the SRMR value shown in table 27, is 0,097 which is close to 0,09.

Table 27: SRMR (Standardized Root Mean Square Residual)

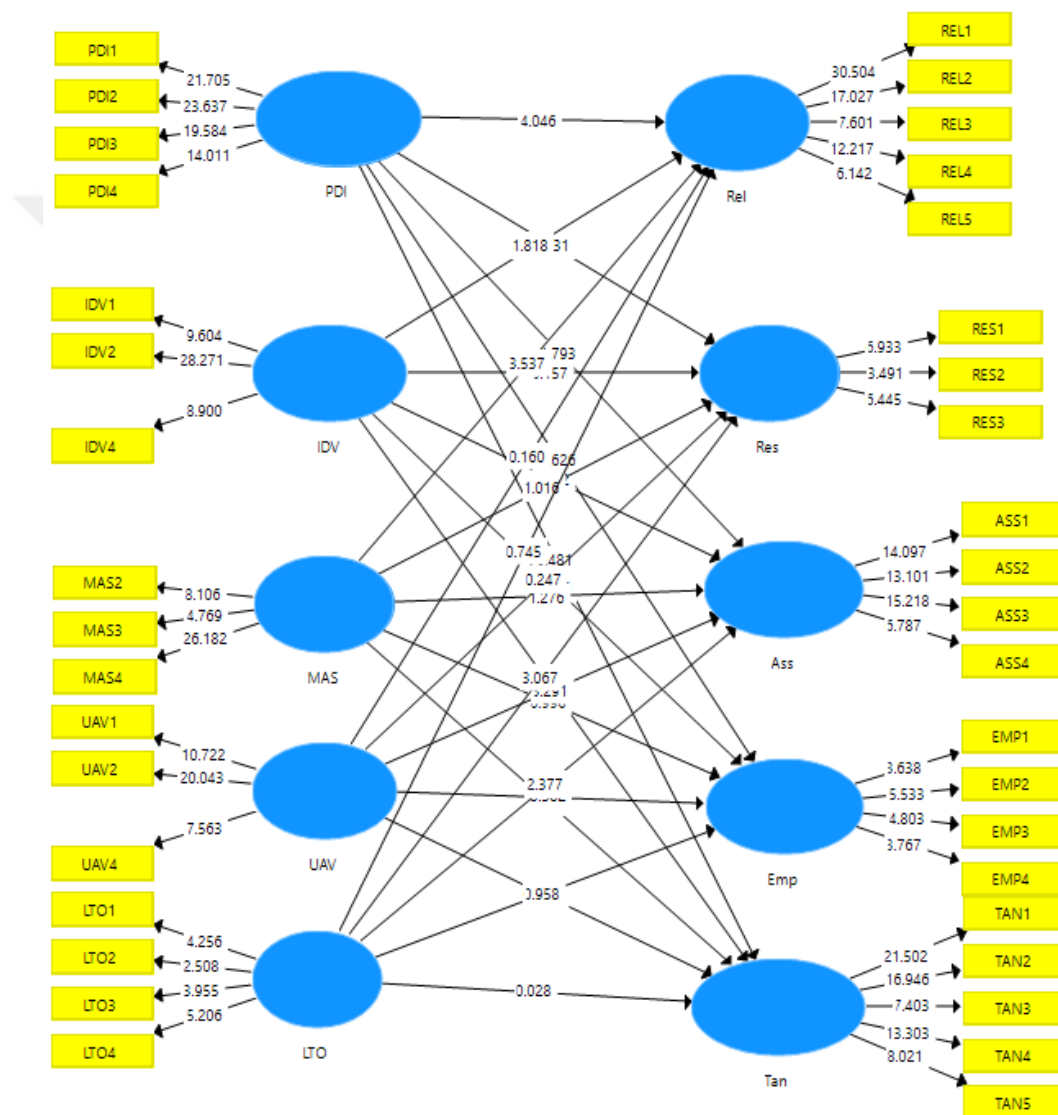
	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Saturated Model	0,097	0,068	0,005	20,817	0,000
Estimated Model	0,115	0,072	0,005	22,754	0,000

6.2.3. Summary of Model

Below, Figure 10 shows the summary of the model. It indicates the loadings of the relationships between latent variables. The effect of cultural differences on the level of importance attached to service quality dimensions can be observed in the table.

Additionally, the loadings of the items composing the variables can also be found in the table. The results about the items' loadings on variables are found from the t-test of outer loading measurement. The relationship between the variables are found by the t-test which can be observed in path coefficient table.

Figure 10: Summary of the Model



CONCLUSION

The importance of service industry is rising in world economy. Therefore, how to improve service quality is a vital issue in recent days (Wirtz et. al., 2015: 565-566).

The purpose of this study was to analyze the effect of cultural dimensions in assessing importance of service quality dimensions. To evaluate service quality, the dimensions identified by Parasuraman et. al. (1988: 12-13) were used. “Tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy” are considered as five dimensions of service quality. The study benefited from Hofstede’s model (2011: 9-15) to identify cultural dimensions which are “power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism, masculinity, and long-term orientation”. The result of the study indicate that cultural dimensions are influential on the level of attaching importance to service quality dimensions.

To evaluate service quality, the dimensions identified by Parasuraman et. al. (1988: 12-13) were used. “Tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy” are considered as five dimensions of service quality. The study benefited from Hofstede’s model (2011: 9-15) to identify cultural dimensions which are “power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism, masculinity, and long-term orientation”. The result of the study indicates that cultural dimensions have impact on the level of attaching importance to service quality dimensions.

The results of the study are obtained by using structural equation modeling in PLS. According to the results obtained from the study, power distance is a driver in assessing the level of attaching importance to assurance, reliability, and responsiveness dimensions of service quality. In cultures with high power distance, it is possible to observe that, people tend to attach more importance to assurance. On the other hand, the relationship of power distance and the level of importance attached to reliability and responsiveness is inverse.

The results of the study indicate that individualism dimension of culture has a significant positive relationship with level of importance attached to assurance, reliability, and tangibility. It is possible to see that individualism and level of importance attached to tangibility has the most powerful relationship. The

relationships between individualism and level of importance attached to empathy and responsiveness are observed to be non-significant in this study.

The result of this study revealed that, masculinity dimension of culture has impact on only the level of importance attached to reliability dimension of service quality. The relationship was expected to be positive, but observed to be inverse. It means that, reliability is vital for people belonging to feminine cultures.

The evaluation of the results of the study reveals that the level of uncertainty avoidance influences the level of importance attached to assurance, empathy, and tangibles. On the other hand, uncertainty avoidance does not have a significant relationship with level of importance attached to responsiveness, and reliability. According to the results of the study, it is seen that, tangibles of the hotels do not help to decrease perceived risk of the guest as the relationship is inverse.

The results of the study revealed that, long-term orientation has a positive impact on the level of importance attached to responsiveness, and a negative impact on the level of importance attached to assurance as hypothesized. In other words, they put emphasis on relationship with service provider and they are aware that this relationship will last and they do not need to be assured.

As the competition in service industry increases with globalization, managers' one of the main focus is increasing the quality of services. In order to be successful in increasing service quality, they should understand which quality dimensions their customers attach importance to.

If managers are aware of what the hotel guests put emphasis on in terms of service quality, they can shape the service accordingly. Benefiting from these findings, would be a path way for success. As people from various culture visit five star hotels in İzmir, knowing the effects of cultural differences on the level of importance attached to service quality dimensions is crucial. There are not any studies in literature examining this relationship on hotel guests in İzmir. Therefore, it would be an important guideline for the hotel managers of the region.

According to the results of the study, hotel managers should put emphasis on employees providing close relationship with customer, and finding quick solutions to problems in order to increase service quality perception of people belonging to cultures with high uncertainty avoidance.

The results of the study revealed that, people who belong to highly individualistic cultures put emphasis on physical evidences in hotels, such as, facilities, equipment, and appearance of the personnel. This is also an important implication for hotel managers.

The study was conducted towards guests from different cultures stayed in five starred hotels in İzmir, Turkey. Hotel managers ill-disposed to apply a survey to their guests. Hotels have their own surveys to measure their satisfaction so managers didn't want to disturb their guests with external surveys. Also, the operation of the hotels is very busy and some managers didn't give permission because it might have slowed down their operation speed. These are the difficulties faced during the study. The time limitations of respondents and the difficulty of persuading guests to complete the survey might be considered as limitations of the study. Furthermore, the study conducted only in one city in 2017, so it is restricted with the tourists in the given time period and place. In order to collect data, convenience sampling is used because easiness to access to volunteer respondents is an advantage of it. On the other hand, it is a limitation to study because the sample might be insufficient in order to represent whole population. There are various approaches to measure cultural differences in literature. This study sticks to Hofstede model and disregarded other models which could also be considered as limitation of the study.

The impacts of cultural differences on level of importance attached to service quality dimensions are evaluated in this study but these relationships would also have outcomes about customer relationship. In further studies, when they take into consideration the perceived service quality, customer relationship outcomes such as satisfaction, revisit intention, and word of mouth intentions could be evaluated. This could be inspiring for further researches.

The study could be expanded in further researches. Only hotel guests in service industry are taken into account in this study. As tourism industry also involves food and beverage, transportation, and recreation activities, the importance attached to service quality dimensions in these segments of tourism industry might differ. Thus, the study which involves all segments of tourism industry could be a milestone in literature.

Additionally, the respondents in this study consists of hotel guests only in İzmir. Although İzmir is one of the most tourist attracting cities in Turkey, expanding the study to other cities could also be an inspiration for further researches.



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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Questionnaire in English

Cultural Dimensions and Hotel Service Quality

Dear Participant,

This questionnaire is prepared to collect data about the influence of cultural dimensions on the importance you attach on a hotel's service quality. All information you provide will be kept strictly confidential. The results of the survey will be used for scientific purposes only.

Thank you for your participation.

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Q1 The following statements refer to the factors associated with hotel service quality. Please indicate the degree of importance of each of the following statements in your evaluation of hotels by circling one of the seven alternatives (1= not important at all and 7= very important)

		Not Important At All						Very Important
REL1	Providing services as promised.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
REL2	Dependability in handling guest's service problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
REL3	Performing services right the first time.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
REL4	Providing services at the promised time.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

REL5	Keeping guests informed about when services will be performed.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
RES1	Prompt service to guests.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
RES2	Willingness to help guests.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
RES3	Readiness to respond to guests' request.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
ASS1	Employees who instill confidence in guests.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
ASS2	Making guests feel safe in the delivery of services.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
ASS3	Employees who are consistently courteous.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
ASS4	Employees who have the knowledge to answer guests' questions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
EMP1	Giving guests individual attention.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
EMP2	Employees who deal with guests in a caring fashion.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
EMP3	Having the guest's best interest at heart.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
EMP4	Employees who understand the needs of their guests.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
TAN1	Modern equipment.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
TAN2	Visually appealing facilities.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
TAN3	Employees who have a neat, professional appearance.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
TAN4	Visually appealing material associated with the service.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
TAN9	Convenient business hours.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Q2 The following statements refer to the cultural values. Please indicate the degree of your disagreement/agreement with each of the following statements by circling one of the seven alternatives (1= strongly disagree and 7= strongly agree)

		Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree	
PDI1	Inequalities among people are both expected and desired	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
PDI2	Less powerful people should be dependent on the more powerful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
PDI3	Inequalities among people should be minimized	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
PDI4	There should be, and there is to some extent, interdependencies between less and more powerful people	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
IDV1	Everyone grows up to look after him/herself and his/her immediate family only	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
IDV2	People are identified independently of the groups they belong to	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
IDV3	An extended family member should be protected by other member in exchange for loyalty	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
IDV4	People are identified by their position in the social networks to which they belong	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
MAS1	Money and material things are important	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
MAS2	Men are supposed to be assertive, ambitious, and tough	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

MAS3	Dominant values in society are, the caring for others and preservation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
MAS4	Both men and women are allowed to be tender and to be concerned with relationships	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
UAV1	High stress and subjective feeling of anxiety are frequent among people	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
UAV2	Fear of ambiguous situations and of unfamiliar risks is normal	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
UAV3	Uncertainty is a normal feature of life and each day is accepted as it comes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
UAV4	Emotions should not be shown	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
LTO1	Willingness to subordinate oneself for a purpose is normal	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
LTO2	People should be perseverant toward long-term results	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
LTO3	Traditions should be respected	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
LTO4	Social obligations should be respected regardless of cost	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Q5 The following questions are related to your demographic profile. Please indicate what applies to you by putting a tick onto the boxes.

1.	Gender:	<input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> Male
2.	Age:	<input type="checkbox"/> 18-24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25-34 <input type="checkbox"/> 35-44 <input type="checkbox"/> 45-54 <input type="checkbox"/> 55-64 <input type="checkbox"/> 65+	

3.	Please indicate your level of education reached:	<input type="checkbox"/> Primary <input type="checkbox"/> Secondary <input type="checkbox"/> University <input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate <input type="checkbox"/> University Post Graduate
4.	Please indicate your marital status:	<input type="checkbox"/> Single <input type="checkbox"/> Married <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced/Widowed
5.	Please indicate the country you were born in:	
6.	Please indicate your nationality:	
7.	Please indicate the country you have spent most of your life in:	
8.	Please indicate your annual household income:	<input type="checkbox"/> Below 10.000\$ <input type="checkbox"/> 10.000\$-24.999\$ <input type="checkbox"/> 25.000\$-49.999\$ <input type="checkbox"/> 50.000\$-74.999\$ <input type="checkbox"/> 75.000\$-99.999\$ <input type="checkbox"/> Above 100.000\$
9.	Please indicate your profession:	
10.	Please indicate your purpose of visit:	<input type="checkbox"/> Business <input type="checkbox"/> Fun/Holiday <input type="checkbox"/> Health <input type="checkbox"/> Sport

Appendix 2: Questionnaire in Turkish

Kültürel Boyutlar ve Otelin Hizmet Kalitesi

Sayın Katılımcı,

Bu anket, kültürel boyutların bir otelin hizmet kalitesine verdiğiniz önem üzerindeki etkisi hakkında veri toplamak için hazırlanmıştır. Paylaştığınız tüm bilgiler kesinlikle gizli tutulacaktır. Anket sonuçları yalnızca bilimsel amaçlarla kullanılacaktır.

Katılımınız için teşekkürler.

Edit HABİF, Yüksek Lisans Öğrencisi, İşletme Yönetimi Programı

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S1 Aşağıdaki ifadeler, bir otelin hizmet kalitesiyle ilişkili faktörleri belirtmektedir. Lütfen bir oteli değerlendirmenizde aşağıdaki ifadelerin her birinin önem derecesini yedi alternatiften birini işaretleyerek belirtiniz. (1= hiç önemli değil ve 7= çok önemli)

		Hiç Önemli Değil	Çok Önemli
REL1	Hizmetin söz verildiği gibi sunulması	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
REL2	Misafirin hizmet sorunlarının ele alınmasında güvenilirlik	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
REL3	Hizmetlerin ilk seferde doğru olarak yerine getirilmesi	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
REL4	Hizmetlerin vaat edilen zamanda sunulması	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
REL5	Misafirlerin hizmetlerin ne zaman gerçekleştirileceği konusunda bilgilendirilmesi	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	

RES1	Misafirlere hızlı hizmet verilmesi	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
RES2	Misafirlere yardım etme isteği	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
RES3	Misafirlerin isteklerine cevap vermeye hazır olunması	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
ASS1	Misafirlere güven veren çalışanlar	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
ASS2	Hizmet sunumunda misafirlerin kendilerini güvende hissetmeleri	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
ASS3	Daima nazik çalışanlar	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
ASS4	Misafir sorularına cevap verebilecek bilgiye sahip çalışanlar	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
EMP1	Misafirlere birebir ilgi gösterme	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
EMP2	Misafirleri önemseyen bir şekilde ilgilenen çalışanlar	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
EMP3	Misafirlerin menfaatlerinin gönülden korunması	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
EMP4	Misafirlerinin ihtiyaçlarını anlayan çalışanlar	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
TAN1	Modern ekipmanlar	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
TAN2	Görsel olarak çekici olanaklar	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
TAN3	Tertipli ve profesyonel bir görünüme sahip çalışanlar	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
TAN4	Hizmetle ilişkili, görsel açıdan çekici malzemeler	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
TAN5	Uygun çalışma saatleri	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

S2 Aşağıdaki ifadeler kültürel değerleri belirtmektedir. Lütfen aşağıdaki ifadelerin her birine katılma/katılmama derecenizi, yedi alternatiften birini işaretleyerek belirtiniz. (1= kesinlikle katılmıyorum ve 7= kesinlikle katılıyorum)

		Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum	Kesinlikl e Katılıyor um
PDI1	İnsanlar arasındaki eşitsizlikler hem beklenmekte hem de istenmektedir.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
PDI2	Daha az güçlü insanlar daha güçlü kişilere bağımlı olmalıdırlar.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
PDI3	İnsanlar arasında eşitsizlikler en aza indirilmelidir.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
PDI4	Daha az güçlü ve daha çok güçlü kişiler arasında karşılıklı bağımlılık belirli bir ölçüde vardır ve olmalıdır.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
IDV1	Herkes sadece kendisine ve yakın ailesine bakmak için yetiştir.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
IDV2	İnsanlar ait oldukları gruplardan bağımsız olarak tanımlanır.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
IDV3	Geniş ailenin üyeleri, sadakat karşılığında diğer üyeler tarafından korunmalıdır.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
IDV4	İnsanlar, ait oldukları sosyal çevrelerdeki konumlarına göre tanımlanır.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
MAS1	Para ve maddi şeyler önemlidir.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
MAS2	Erkekler iddialı, hırslı ve sert olmalıdır.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
MAS3	Toplumdaki baskın değerler, başkalarını önemsemek ve korumaktır.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	

MAS4	Hem erkekler hem de kadınlar ilişkiler konusunda hassas ve ilgili olabilirler.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
UAV1	İnsanlar arasında yüksek stres ve öznel kaygı duygusu sık görülür.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
UAV2	Belirsiz durumlardan ve alışılmadık risklerden korkmak olağandır.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
UAV3	Belirsizlik, yaşamın doğal bir parçasıdır ve her gün olduğu gibi kabul edilir.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
UAV4	Duygular gösterilmemelidir.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
LTO1	Kişinin bir amaç için boyun eğme isteği normaldir.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
LTO2	İnsanlar uzun vadeli sonuçlar konusunda kararlı olmalıdır.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
LTO3	Geleneklere saygı gösterilmelidir.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
LTO4	Sosyal yükümlülükler maliyet ne olursa olsun saygı gösterilmelidir.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

S5 Aşağıdaki sorular demografik profilinizle ilgilidir. Lütfen kutuların üzerine bir işaret koyarak sizin için geçerli olanı belirtiniz.

1.	Cinsiyet:	<input type="checkbox"/> Kadın <input type="checkbox"/> Erkek
2.	Yaş:	<input type="checkbox"/> 18-24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25-34 <input type="checkbox"/> 35-44 <input type="checkbox"/> 45-54 <input type="checkbox"/> 55-64 <input type="checkbox"/> 65+
3.	Lütfen eğitim seviyenizi belirtiniz:	<input type="checkbox"/> İlkokul <input type="checkbox"/> Ortaokul <input type="checkbox"/> Lise <input type="checkbox"/> Lisans <input type="checkbox"/> Yüksek Lisans <input type="checkbox"/> Doktora
4.	Lütfen medeni halinizi belirtiniz:	<input type="checkbox"/> Bekar <input type="checkbox"/> Evli <input type="checkbox"/> Boşanmış/Dul

5.	Lütfen doğduğunuz ülkeyi belirtiniz:	
6.	Lütfen uyruğunuzu belirtiniz:	
7.	Lütfen hayatınızın çoğunu geçirdiğiniz ülkeyi belirtiniz:	
8.	Lütfen yıllık hane halkı gelirinizi belirtiniz:	<input type="checkbox"/> 36.000TL ve altı <input type="checkbox"/> 36.000TL-89.999TL <input type="checkbox"/> 90.000TL-179.999TL <input type="checkbox"/> 180.000TL-269.999TL <input type="checkbox"/> 270.000TL-359.999TL <input type="checkbox"/> 360.000TL ve üzeri
9.	Lütfen mesleğinizi belirtiniz:	
10.	Lütfen ziyaret amacınızı belirtiniz:	<input type="checkbox"/> İş <input type="checkbox"/> Eğlence/Tatil <input type="checkbox"/> Sağlık <input type="checkbox"/> Spor