

**Exploring the Relationship between Culture and Satisfaction in a Luxury  
Hotel Setting in Iran: A Homa Hotel Group Study**

**Majid Habibikermani**

**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements of  
Nottingham Trent University for the Degree of  
Doctor of Business Administration**

**February 2022**

This work is the intellectual property of Majid Habibikermani. You may copy up to 5% of this work for private study, or personal, non-commercial research. Any re-use of the information contained within this document should be fully referenced, quoting the author, title, university, degree level and pagination. Queries or requests for any other use, or if a more substantial copy is required, should be directed in the owner(s) of the Intellectual Property Rights.

## Table of Contents

Abstract:.....	12
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	14
1.1. Introduction.....	14
1.2. Tourism Development in Iran .....	14
1.3. The Economic Impact of Travel and Tourism in Iran.....	16
1.4. Iran Tourism Vision 2025 .....	17
1.5. Research Setting.....	18
1.6. Summary of Previous Documents.....	19
1.7. Research Objectives.....	23
1.8. Structure of the Present Document .....	25
1.9. Conclusion .....	27
Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	28
2.1. Overview.....	28
2.2. Luxury and Hotels.....	29
2.3. Customer Satisfaction .....	32
2.3.1. Customer Satisfaction Definition.....	32
2.3.2. Factors in Satisfaction.....	34
2.3.2.1. Past Experience.....	35
2.3.2.2. Purpose of Trip.....	36
2.3.2.3. Gender.....	37
2.3.2.4. Frequency of Travel.....	37
2.3.2.5. Age .....	38
2.3.2.6. Tourism Destination.....	39
2.3.2.7. Personalized Services.....	41
2.3.3. Models of Measuring Satisfaction .....	41
2.3.3.1. SERVPERF Model .....	42
2.3.3.2. Kano Model.....	44
2.4. Culture.....	48
2.4.1. Globalization and Global Culture .....	50
2.4.2. Luxury and Culture .....	52
2.4.3. Satisfaction/service quality and Culture.....	53
2.5. Cultural Models: Hofstede, Cosmopolitanism.....	57
2.5.1. Hofstede's Model.....	57
2.5.2. Hofstede's Model and Service Quality .....	61

2.5.3.	Hofstede's Model and Culture .....	66
2.5.4.	Cosmopolitanism .....	67
2.5.4.1.	Cosmopolitanism and Service Quality .....	70
2.6.	Conceptual Framework .....	70
2.7.	Conclusion .....	74
Chapter 3:	Methodology .....	76
3.1.	Overview .....	76
3.2.	Philosophy .....	76
3.2.1.	Ontology .....	77
3.2.2.	Epistemology .....	80
3.2.3.	Reasoning and Research Mode .....	84
3.2.4.	Choices of the Study .....	89
3.3.	Methods .....	90
3.3.1.	Theoretical Frameworks .....	90
3.3.2.	Research Instruments .....	92
3.3.2.1.	Kano .....	92
3.3.2.2.	Hofstede .....	96
3.3.2.3.	Cosmopolitanism .....	96
3.3.2.4.	HOMALUXPERF .....	97
3.4.	Validity of the Questionnaires .....	97
3.5.	Research Design .....	99
3.5.1.	Sampling .....	99
3.5.2.	Data Collection .....	100
3.5.3.	Data Analysis .....	101
3.5.4.	Design of the Study .....	104
3.6.	Limitations and Delimitations: Method and Theory .....	106
3.6.1.	Limitations .....	106
3.6.2.	Delimitations .....	107
3.7.	Research Ethics .....	108
3.8.	Conclusion .....	109
Chapter 4:	Analysis .....	110
4.1.	Overview .....	110
4.2.	The Descriptive Constitution of the Sample .....	110
4.3.	Further Development of the HOMALUXPERF Construct and Verification of the Cosmopolitanism Construct .....	114

4.4.	Establishing Cultural Categories.....	119
4.5.	Analysis in Pursuit of Study Objectives .....	124
4.5.1.	HOMALUXPERF and Hofstede’s Cultural Categories.....	125
4.5.1.1.	Post Hoc Tests: HOMALUXPERF and Hofstede’s Cultural Dimensions in Shiraz 127	
4.5.1.2.	Post Hoc Tests: HOMALUXPERF and Hofstede’s Cultural Dimensions in Tehran 130	
4.5.1.3.	Summary .....	131
4.5.2.	HOMALUXPERF and Cosmopolitanism.....	132
4.5.2.1.	Post Hoc Tests: HOMALUXPERF and Cosmopolitanism in Shiraz.....	134
4.5.2.2.	Post Hoc Tests: HOMALUXPERF and Cosmopolitanism in Tehran .....	135
4.5.2.3.	Summary .....	136
4.5.3.	Kano -focused Categories and Hofstede’s Cultural Categories .....	137
4.5.3.1.	Kano and Hofstede’s model’s results in Shiraz .....	137
4.5.3.2.	Kano and Hofstede’s Model in Tehran .....	140
4.5.3.3.	Summary .....	142
4.5.4.	Kano-focused categories and Cosmopolitanism .....	143
4.5.4.1.	Kano Categories and Cosmopolitanism in Shiraz.....	143
4.5.4.2.	Kano Model and Cosmopolitanism in Tehran .....	145
4.5.4.3.	Summary .....	147
4.5.4.4.	Conclusion .....	147
Chapter 5:	Discussion .....	149
5.1.	Overview.....	149
5.2.	To Classify The HHG International Guests According to Their Cultural Characteristics 149	
5.3.	To Determine HHG International Guests’ Expectations of the Attributes of a Luxury Hotel 151	
5.4.	To Determine the International Guests' Perceptions of HHG Service Quality .....	154
5.5.	To Determine the Extent of Cosmopolitan Tendencies of HHG International Guests ....	154
5.6.	To Explore If the Service Quality Perceptions and Luxury Hotel Expectations of HHG International Guests Are Affected by Cultural Difference .....	155
5.7.	To Make Recommendations to HHG for Improving Guest Satisfaction Based On Findings 160	
5.8.	Conclusion .....	162
Chapter 6:	Conclusion .....	164
6.1.	Research Objectives.....	164

6.2. Contribution to Theory.....	167
6.3. Contribution to Practice .....	168
6.4. Reflections on the Research Processes and Findings.....	171
6.5. Future Work .....	174
References.....	176
Appendices.....	199
Appendix 1 (A1): CVR Results .....	199
Appendix 2 (A2): Clusters' Composition .....	202
Appendix 3 (A3): Questionnaire.....	209
Appendix 4 (A4): KANO & HOFSTEDE Contingency table .....	217
Appendix 5 (A5): KANO & Cosmopolitanism Contingency table .....	221

## Index of Figures

<b>Figure 1:</b> The Total Contribution of Travel and Tourism to GDP (Source: WTTC (2018), Travel and Tourism, Economic Impact, Iran: 2018) .....	16
<b>Figure 2:</b> Direct Contribution of Travel and Tourism to GDP (Source: WTTC (2018), Travel and Tourism, Economic Impact, Iran: 2018) .....	16
<b>Figure 3:</b> Total Contribution of Travel and Tourism to GDP (Source: WTTC (2018), Travel and Tourism, Economic Impact, Iran: 2018).....	17
<b>Figure 4:</b> Kano model (Berger et al., 1993) .....	46
<b>Figure 5:</b> Conceptual Framework.....	74
<b>Figure 6.</b> The Schematic Representation of the Research Design .....	105
<b>Figure 7:</b> Dendrogram of Classifying Countries based on Hofstede's model Scores .....	121
<b>Figure 8:</b> The Services and Attributes of a Luxury Hotel .....	151
<b>Figure 9:</b> Schematic Modern – Traditional orientation in Shiraz.....	157
<b>Figure 10:</b> Schematic Essential – Nonessential consideration of Utilitarian Outlook in Shiraz .....	157
<b>Figure 11:</b> Schematic Essential – Nonessential consideration of Cleanliness Outlook in Shiraz ....	158
<b>Figure 12:</b> Schematic Modern – Traditional orientation in Tehran.....	158
<b>Figure 13:</b> Schematic Essential – Nonessential consideration of Utilitarian Outlook in Tehran .....	158
<b>Figure 14:</b> Schematic Essential – Nonessential consideration of Cleanliness Outlook in Tehran ...	159
<b>Figure 15:</b> Questionnaire, cover page .....	209
<b>Figure 16:</b> Questionnaire, page 1 .....	210
<b>Figure 17:</b> Questionnaire, page 2 .....	211
<b>Figure 18:</b> Questionnaire, page 3 .....	212
<b>Figure 19:</b> Questionnaire, page 4 .....	213
<b>Figure 20:</b> Questionnaire, page 5 .....	214
<b>Figure 21:</b> Questionnaire, page 6 .....	215
<b>Figure 22:</b> Questionnaire, page 7 .....	216

## Index of Tables

<b>Table 1:</b> Number of foreign guests in HHG from sep. 2015 to sep. 2016.....	19
<b>Table 2:</b> Documents comparison.....	22
<b>Table 3:</b> Models of Satisfaction .....	48
<b>Table 4:</b> Scores of countries based on Hofstede cultural model .....	60
<b>Table 5:</b> Outlooks and Preferences based on the Kano model results.....	95
<b>Table 6:</b> Number of respondents for each Nationality .....	112
<b>Table 7:</b> Respondents' Descriptive Data from Tehran and Shiraz HHG .....	114
<b>Table 8:</b> Rotated Pattern Matrix .....	115
<b>Table 9:</b> Component Matrix for Cosmopolitanism Items .....	117
<b>Table 10:</b> Cronbach's Alpha for all the Components.....	117
<b>Table 11:</b> Results of Independent Sample t-test between Shiraz and Tehran .....	118
<b>Table 12:</b> Correlation between Hofstede's model's Dimension and Satisfaction Factors .....	120
<b>Table 13:</b> Clusters considered for the ANOVA tests used later .....	123
<b>Table 14:</b> Following sections and the analyses performed in each section .....	125
<b>Table 15:</b> Results of One-way ANOVA and Welch ANOVA between Hofstede's model clusters and HOMALUXPERF scores.....	127
<b>Table 16:</b> Multiple Comparisons between HOMALUXPERF scores and Hofstede's model Clusters in level 5, in Shiraz .....	127
<b>Table 17:</b> Multiple Comparisons between HOMALUXPERF scores and Hofstede's model Clusters in level 9, in Shiraz .....	128
<b>Table 18:</b> Multiple Comparisons between HOMALUXPERF scores and Hofstede's model Clusters in level 14, in Shiraz .....	129
<b>Table 19:</b> Multiple Comparisons between HOMALUXPERF scores and Hofstede's model Clusters at level 14, in Tehran .....	131
<b>Table 20:</b> Respondents' Cosmopolitanism Data from Tehran and Shiraz HHG.....	133
<b>Table 21:</b> ANOVA test results between HOMALUXPERF and Cosmopolitanism .....	134
<b>Table 22:</b> Multiple Comparisons between HOMALUXPERF scores and Cosmopolitanism scores in Shiraz .....	135
<b>Table 23:</b> Multiple Comparisons between HOMALUXPERF scores and Cosmopolitanism scores in Tehran .....	136
<b>Table 24:</b> Aggregated Contingency Table from data in Shiraz.....	138
<b>Table 25:</b> Each cluster's Modern or Traditional Ratio in Shiraz.....	139
<b>Table 26:</b> Essentiality Ratio for Each Cluster for Utilitarian Outlook, in Shiraz.....	139
<b>Table 27:</b> Essentiality Ratio for Each Cluster for Cleanliness Outlook, in Shiraz .....	140
<b>Table 28:</b> Aggregated Contingency Table from data in Tehran.....	141
<b>Table 29:</b> Modern-Traditional ratio across each Hofstede's model clusters in Tehran.....	141
<b>Table 30:</b> Essentiality Ratio for Each Cluster for Utilitarian Outlook, in Tehran.....	142
<b>Table 31:</b> Essentiality Ratio for Each Cluster for Cleanliness Outlook, in Tehran.....	142
<b>Table 32:</b> Aggregated Contingency Table in Shiraz .....	144
<b>Table 33:</b> Cosmo-categories' Modern-traditional Ratio in Shiraz .....	144
<b>Table 34:</b> Essentiality of the Utilitarian and the Cleanliness outlooks' services in Shiraz .....	145
<b>Table 35:</b> Aggregated Contingency Table in Tehran .....	145
<b>Table 36:</b> Cosmo-categories' Modern-traditional Ratio in Tehran .....	146
<b>Table 37:</b> Essentiality of the Utilitarian and the Cleanliness outlooks' services in Tehran .....	146
<b>Table 38:</b> Recommendations for HHG Branches.....	170

<b>Table 39:</b> CVR results for HOMALUXPERF suggested items .....	200
<b>Table 40:</b> CVR results for KANO suggested items .....	202
<b>Table 41:</b> Cluster 1 of 5-Cluster level .....	202
<b>Table 42:</b> Cluster 2 of 5-Cluster level .....	203
<b>Table 43:</b> Cluster 3 of 5-Cluster level .....	203
<b>Table 44:</b> Cluster 4 of 5-Cluster level .....	203
<b>Table 45:</b> Cluster 5 of 5-Cluster level .....	204
<b>Table 46:</b> Cluster 1 of 9-Cluster level .....	204
<b>Table 47:</b> Cluster 2 of 9-Cluster level .....	204
<b>Table 48:</b> Cluster 3 of 9-Cluster level .....	204
<b>Table 49:</b> Cluster 4 of 9-Cluster level .....	205
<b>Table 50:</b> Cluster 5 of 9-Cluster level .....	205
<b>Table 51:</b> Cluster 6 of 9-Cluster level .....	205
<b>Table 52:</b> Cluster 7 of 9-Cluster level .....	205
<b>Table 53:</b> Cluster 8 of 9-Cluster level .....	205
<b>Table 54:</b> Cluster 9 of 9-Cluster level .....	206
<b>Table 55:</b> Cluster 1 of 14-Cluster level .....	206
<b>Table 56:</b> Cluster 2 of 14-Cluster level .....	206
<b>Table 57:</b> Cluster 3 of 14-Cluster level .....	206
<b>Table 58:</b> Cluster 4 of 14-Cluster level .....	206
<b>Table 59:</b> Cluster 5 of 14-Cluster level .....	206
<b>Table 60:</b> Cluster 6 of 14-Cluster level .....	207
<b>Table 61:</b> Cluster 7 of 14-Cluster level .....	207
<b>Table 62:</b> Cluster 8 of 14-Cluster level .....	207
<b>Table 63:</b> Cluster 9 of 14-Cluster level .....	207
<b>Table 64:</b> Cluster 10 of 14-Cluster level .....	207
<b>Table 65:</b> Cluster 11 of 14-Cluster level .....	207
<b>Table 66:</b> Cluster 12 of 14-Cluster level .....	207
<b>Table 67:</b> Cluster 13 of 14-Cluster level .....	208
<b>Table 68:</b> Cluster 14 of 14-Cluster level .....	208
<b>Table 69:</b> KANO & HOFSTEDE Contingency Table, Shiraz data (CT1).....	218
<b>Table 70:</b> KANO & HOFSTEDE Contingency Table, Tehran data (CT2).....	220
<b>Table 71:</b> KANO &Cosmopolitan Contingency Table, Shiraz data (CT1).....	222
<b>Table 72:</b> KANO &Cosmopolitan Contingency Table, Tehran data (CT2).....	224



**List of Abbreviations:**

**HHG:** Homa Hotel Group

**WTTC:** World Travel and Tourism

**GDP:** Gross Domestic Product

**USD:** United States Dollar

**ICHTO:** The Iranian Cultural Heritage, Handcrafts, and Tourism Organization

**UNWTO:** United Nation World Tourism Organization

**DBA:** Doctor of Business Administration

**PDI:** Power Distance Index

**IDV:** Individualism versus Collectivism

**MAS:** Masculinity versus Femininity

**UAI:** Uncertainty Avoidance Index

**LTO:** Long-term Orientation

**STNO:** Short-term Normative Orientation

**IND:** Indulgence versus Restraint

**WOM:** Word of Mouth

**ANOVA:** Analysis of Variance

**UK:** United Kingdom

**EFA:** Exploratory Factor Analysis

**CVR:** Content Validity Ratio

**INSTROCT:** Institute of Training Research and Operational Consultancy for Tourism

## **Acknowledgements**

*In the name of God, whose kindness and guidance has put me through education and knowledge acquisition.*

*Without the immense support and help of the people mentioned below, completion of this project, which was an enormous step forward in my life would have been impossible.*

*Firstly, I shall thank my wife, Maryam Nasrollahizadeh, who fully supported me during the years of my research alongside my children.*

*Secondly, I must thank Dr. Woodall and Dr. Welton whom I have always enjoyed their guidance throughout my work and it was such a pleasure to work under their supervision.*

*Thirdly, my coworkers in Homa Hotel Group, especially Mr. Amirsadra Ahmadi, whose vast support and help was fruitful in this journey.*

*At last but not the least, I may thank my mother who had always been the source of my motivation in the period of my higher education and sadly I lost her presence at the very beginning of my journey. Also, my father that has been very supportive and caring, especially during this project.*

**THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK**

**Abstract:**

The possible relationship between customer Satisfaction and Culture is the main focus in the present research project. Satisfaction is defined as the gap between customer Perception and Expectations (Parasuraman et al., 1988). The present research project attempts to explore the impact of Culture on both customer Perception and Expectation and if any impact is observed, it can be inferred that there is a relationship between Culture and Satisfaction. The data collection tool was a questionnaire administered on 412 respondents in Tehran and Shiraz Homa Hotel Group (HHG) which provide services to mostly business guests and leisure guests, respectively. The items of the questionnaire were selected based on an expert review. Culture was measured by the Hofstede's (2011) cultural model. Additionally, lack of cultural distinction was also measured by a Cosmopolitanism measurement (Clevel et al., 2014). Furthermore, Perception was measured by the HOMALUXPERF which is a Perception measurement tool specifically developed by the researcher to be applied in the HHG. HOMALUXPERF was developed based on the SERVPERF model (Cronin and Taylor, 1994). For the evaluation of Expectation, Kano model, which was developed in 1984 by Noriaki Kano, was utilized. The main objective of the research was to categorize respondents based on their cultural evaluation derived from Hofstede's model and Cosmopolitanism measurement and then conduct a comparison between these cultural categories in order to be able to provide suitable and individualized service offerings to the HHG guests based on their cultural background. However, the results of the comparison between cultural clusters in terms of guests' Perception did not produce any significant differences among these clusters of respondents except for occasions where Iranian respondents were involved, which is unclear whether it is an own-country issue or a cultural difference issue. Moreover, the results of the Kano model demonstrated that most of the

services questioned were categorized as "Indifferent", which translates to unimportant/insignificant to guests' Satisfaction (Kano, 1984), by the majority of the respondents. In order to compare the Kano model results across different cultural clusters contingency tables were utilized and the items in the Kano questionnaire were grouped based on their themes. The results were not indicative of any significant differences except clusters where Iranian respondents were present. In conclusion, the results could only produce suggestions for the two branches of HHG based on their constitution of guests.

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

### **1.1.Introduction**

The current study examines the relationship between culture and satisfaction in Iran's Homa Hotel Group (also known as HHG). This research was prompted by a desire to uncover ways to improve guest satisfaction, and the author is the Marketing Director for this group of luxury hotels. The desire to use the services of luxury hotels has grown steadily across the world, and the rapid growth of the hospitality and tourist industries has resulted in an increase in the demand for travel accommodations and luxury hotels. It's worth mentioning that the United States has the most luxury hotels in the world, with the United Kingdom, Canada, Hong Kong, and France following closely after. In addition, throughout the last decade, the Asia-Pacific area has seen an increase in international visitors (Chu, 2014; Tolkach et al., 2016). Luxury hotels are thought to provide the greatest services to its visitors in order to provide a memorable experience (Peterhans, 2010). As a result, the quality of such services is critical in creating and enhancing customer satisfaction, and research reveals that service quality and satisfaction have a substantial relationship. As a result, improved service quality can lead to increased customer satisfaction (Agbor, 2011; Mosahab et al., 2010).

### **1.2.Tourism Development in Iran**

The present history of tourism development in Iran dates back to the 1930s, when the first tourism accommodations, such as guesthouses and hotels, were built and initiatives were taken to promote and encourage tourism (Seyfi and Hall, 2019). Tourist development in Iran has faced several challenges since the establishment of the first authorized tourism institute in the 1930s. In truth, tourism has generally not been a top economic focus, though it has shown some occasional growth. From names and structures to aims and strategy, the organizations in charge of tourist development, planning, and marketing have encountered a

variety of challenges (Alipour and Heydari, 2005). In modern Iran, numerous governmental institutions and administrations have a similar purpose of promoting inbound tourism and its role as an economic and cultural endeavor (Mozaffari et al., 2017).

Similarly, the government has taken a number of initiatives to improve tourism amenities and services. In addition, multi-national corporations and investments in luxury hotels, as well as human resource development and the establishment of hospitality schools, have accelerated the country's tourist growth. The first Hospitality Higher School was launched in 1963 followed by the Hotel Management School in 1966 (Ziaee, Saeedi, and Torab Ahmadi, 2012). During this time, hotel investment was bolstered by management contracts with major international chains such as Hilton, Hyatt, and Intercontinental, as well as the national airline, Iran Air, which by the late 1970s had become the world's fastest growing airline and one of the most profitable airlines worldwide (Baum and O'Gorman, 2010).

According to Iran's Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (Article 51, General Policies), the number of international tourists visiting Iran should increase to 25 million per year by 2021. 2018 (Ahmadi). Baum and O'Gorman (2010) claim that Iran is a desirable destination for international visitors, particularly those interested in history and archeology. The country is commonly associated with pilgrimage, religious, and cultural tourism destinations. Furthermore, it has a vast historic, religious, and cultural history that attracts tourists from all over the world, including those from neighboring Islamic countries with similar belief systems to Iran (Butler and Suntikul, 2017).

### **1.3.The Economic Impact of Travel and Tourism in Iran**

As pinpointed by World Travel and Tourism (WTTC, 2018), the direct impact of travel and tourism on Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was IRR 391,923.0bn (USD 11.8 bn), 2.8 percent of total GDP in 2017 and the total contribution of travel and tourism to Iran GDP was IRR 1,018,310.0bn (USD 30.7bn), 7.3 percent of GDP.

**Figure 1:** The Total Contribution of Travel and Tourism to GDP (Source: WTTC (2018), Travel and Tourism, Economic Impact, Iran: 2018)

**Figure 2:** Direct Contribution of Travel and Tourism to GDP (Source: WTTC (2018), Travel and Tourism, Economic Impact, Iran: 2018)



Travel and tourism have produced 552,500 jobs in Iran, accounting for 2.1 percent of total employment. In 2017, the total contribution of travel and tourism to employment, which includes jobs that are indirectly supported by the industry, was 6.1 percent (1,577,500 jobs).

**Figure 3:** Total Contribution of Travel and Tourism to GDP (Source: WTTC (2018), Travel and Tourism, Economic Impact, Iran: 2018)

#### **1.4.Iran Tourism Vision 2025**

Iran plans to expand the number of international tourists to 20 million by 2025, with a total investment of more than US\$32 billion, of which \$5 billion would come from the government and the rest from private companies (Faghri, 2007). This should produce \$25 to \$30 billion in accordance with the country's 2025 vision. The country has just over 130 four and five star hotels, whereas the tourism sector estimates that at least 400 high-quality lodging facilities are needed to accommodate the expected 20 million visitors. In 2017, Iran proposed 1153 hotels, 2007 hotel apartments, 249 inns, and budget accommodation properties, as well as several homestay facilities (over 1876) (ICHTO, 2018), totaling 271989 beds.

According to global estimates (UNWTO, 2016), the number of international tourists from diverse cultures will increase in Iran in the next years, affecting the hospitality industry and hotels such as HHG. It will be more difficult to provide acceptable quality services to a rising number of various international tourists because Iran's hospitality industry is not as advanced as that of other countries. To avoid such problems, HHG is aiming to improve the quality of its services.

Researchers have discovered that guest culture is one of the most important aspects that might influence customer satisfaction and service quality judgments (Gambo, 2013; Pizam and Ellis, 1999; Reisinger and Turner, 2003). The current study investigates the influence of national culture on guest satisfaction in HHG, as well as the impact of a lack of cultural distinctiveness on this relationship. As a result, the impact of two important culture-related constructs – cosmopolitanism (an indicator of lack of cultural distinction, or the extent to which one is a "world citizen" – see later) and Hofstede's cultural dimensions (indicators of the presence of cultural distinction) – is investigated in this thesis. It's worth noting that, because the study is being conducted in a service-based setting, service quality may be used as a proxy for service satisfaction, as the two are mirrored in this context. One key feature of each is that they enable for the evaluation of both service expectations and service perceptions. As a result, the primary goal of this DBA thesis is to investigate the relationship between satisfaction/service quality, culture, and guests' perceptions of luxury.

### **1.5. Research Setting**

The relationship between culture and satisfaction will be investigated in this study, using participants drawn among HHG visitors in Tehran and Shiraz. HHG was founded as the Hotels Company of Iran in 1972, according to the annual report provided by the central office

of marketing and sales. This company was nationalized during Iran's Islamic Revolution, and it was renamed HHG in 1979. There are five hotels in Tehran, Shiraz, Mashhad, and Bandar-Abbas nowadays. Mashhad has two hotels, one of which is now undergoing renovations and is hence unavailable for lodging. In addition, HHG employs around 800 people and operates five hotels with a total of 1000 rooms. HHG is owned by the Iranian Social Security Organization.

The branches in Tehran and Shiraz are the most suited for the current study since they house the majority of international visitors from diverse cultures (see Table 1).

<b>Hotel</b>	<b>Total number of Guests</b>	<b>Number of Foreign Guests</b>	<b>Share of Foreign Guests among total</b>
Mashhad (Pilgrim)	56247	5377	8.15%
Bandar-Abbas (Business & Leisure)	32214	4250	6.44%
Shiraz (Leisure)	60199	23461	35.56%
Tehran (Business)	49249	32881	49.84%
Homa Hotel Group	197909	65969	100%

**Table 1:**Number of foreign guests in HHG from Sep. 2015 to Sep. 2016

From the total number of 109,448 international and domestic guests in HHG, a sample will be collected for the purpose of this study.

### **1.6. Summary of Previous Documents**

A total of six documents are required for summative assessment by the Nottingham Trent DBA. Four are preparatory materials (marked by the candidates' supervisors), and two are submitted for independent evaluation - a thesis and a reflective document. The following are

the four preparation documents that were created to serve as a basis for the thesis. A research proposal was the first document. It served as an introduction to the entire thesis, stating the research topic and theme. The second document was an academic literature review that introduced a methodology for assessing customer satisfaction in a way that was suitable for this research. According to the findings, hotels can benefit from a measurement that entails analyzing the various demands of different nationalities in order to increase customer satisfaction. Furthermore, it demonstrates that in the following documents, a more in-depth analysis of satisfaction literature is required.

In the third document, a qualitative research was developed to gather in-depth information from guests of various countries staying at HHG on whether or not perceptions of luxury services are influenced by culture. The research was carried out at HHG hotels in Tehran and Shiraz using the SERVQUAL service quality model (Parasuraman et al., 1988). The survey found that "tangible" elements (such as the hotel's appearance and amenities) are the distinguishing characteristics of a luxury hotel. Second, the Iranian environment influenced the guests' expectations. It was also discovered that guests from various countries tended to have diverse perceptions of luxury. Furthermore, guests expressed concerns about more mundane hospitality issues, implying that future research into guest perceptions of HHG should distinguish between 'luxury' and 'everyday' concerns in order to determine a) the relative importance of these two issues, and b) the extent to which one might compensate for the other.

The fourth document was a quantitative analysis that delved deeper into the findings of the third document. The Kano model (Berger et al., 1993) was used to establish which service characteristics are most important to customers. In addition, the SERVQUAL model

(Parasuraman et al., 1988) was used to quantify satisfaction (re-specified as service quality) of those aspects. Moreover, a pilot study was undertaken to assess the data gathering tool's effectiveness and applicability. Similar to document 3, the study's participants were selected from HHG hotels, with the exception that only the Tehran branch was chosen for the piloting phase, as having only one data gathering location was deemed adequate. As a result, document 4 served as a pilot for evaluating the data gathering instrument and analytic methodologies that would be used in document 5, as well as a beneficial guideline for creating a more detailed and exact questionnaire in document 5. Based on the weaknesses identified in document 4, modifications to the data collecting instrument in document 5 will be implemented, leading to results that will provide better confidence to developing an understanding of cultures' influence on visitor satisfaction. Furthermore, Document 6 allows the candidate to reflect on their educational experience and discuss how and what they have learnt.

Document	Description	Contribution
1	Research proposal	Outline the flow of each step in the project
2	Critical literature review and conceptual framework	Enhancement of the knowledge of Luxury, Hotel industry, satisfaction, Service Quality and to comprehend the work that has been done in the field
3	Designing a qualitative study to collect in-depth information about whether or not perceptions of luxury services are impacted by culture, from guests with different nationalities or not.	Determining services that are considered as the means of Luxury in hotels  Determining the impacts of Iranian context on guest expectations  Acknowledging the differences between cultures in terms of point of view towards luxury in Iranian hotels
4	A quantitative piece of work as a pilot to evaluate the efficacy and the suitability of the data collection tool which is to be used in the next phase of the study.	Determining the shortcomings of the data collection tool  Determining ways of improving the data collection tool in order achieve more reliable results
5	The researcher explores and evaluates guest perspective on luxury hotel sector in 2 of the 5 branches of HHG in Tehran and Shiraz branches.	The intended contribution is to determine whether it would be beneficial to provide different service offerings to different cultures  Ideally, provide service offerings for specific cultures
6	The researcher reflects on the whole process of conducting the study and what he has obtained from this DBA program.	Allowing the candidate to reflect on the study journey and to consider how and what he/she has learned.

**Table 2:**Documents comparison

The thesis is the fifth document. It is the largest document in relation to the others, and it is also the most important because it is used to finalize the research. To further understand the influence of culture on visitor expectations and satisfaction, a more comprehensive and in-depth literature analysis regarding satisfaction and culture, as well as their relationships, will be conducted in document 5. Actions such as increasing and including

a larger sample size from different countries, adding more information to the questionnaire in order to clarify the questions, and changing the questions into more precise and specific questions, as indicated by the results of the piloting phase in Document 4, would be implemented in order to achieve more balanced results. Another change that would be made to document 5 is to perform the research in other branches of HHG to fill in the gaps found in documents 2, 3, and 4. As a result, document 5 takes a more in-depth approach in order to acquire a better understanding of the possible differences in cultural expectations/perceptions, and hence the possible relationship between satisfaction and culture. A comparison of the documents is shown in Table 2.

### **1.7.Research Objectives**

The focus of this study is on three specific constructs: 1) guest expectations of what hotel attributes are crucial for a luxury hotel, 2) guest perceptions of HHG's attributes, and 3) visitor national culture. The SERVPERF (Cronin and Taylor, 1994) scale is utilized as a foundation for creating a more focused item pool for HHG services, which will be called HOMALUXPERF. It's worth noting that, unlike SERVQUAL, SERVPERF is a perception-based service quality measure. Both SERVQUAL and SERVPERF systems comprise five dimensions of services: Assurance, Tangibles, Reliability, responsiveness, and Empathy. The Kano model will be used to determine the expectations of hotel customers about service attributes. The following are the attributes of the Kano model: According to their capacity to satisfy consumers' expectations, must-be requirements (features), one-dimensional requirements (features), attractive requirements (features), indifferent, reversal, and questionable requirements (features) exist.

Hofstede's (2011) cultural dimensions model and Clevel et al. 's (2014) cosmopolitanism model will be used to assess the impact of culture. The Hofstede cultural aspects include the Power Distance Index (PDI), Individualism vs. Collectivism (IDV), Masculinity vs. Femininity (MAS), Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI), Long-term Orientation (LTO) vs. Short-term Normative Orientation (STNO), and Indulgence vs. Restraint (IND). The Clevel et al. (2014) cosmopolitanism measure is designed to assess the extent to which visitors subscribe to a worldwide, rather than national culture. A quantitative study employing quantitative methods will be conducted to investigate the influence of culture on expectations and perceptions. Quantitative research is frequently used to investigate the relationship between variables by collecting data on a large scale and interpreting it mathematically or statistically. As a result, in order to achieve the study objectives, the researcher used a quantitative research approach based on the survey technique.

Customer satisfaction is determined by culture, and tourists' opinions of the service are also influenced by culture (Reisinger and Turner, 2003). According to the above, the basic aims of this document are to explore the gaps highlighted in Documents 2, 3, and 4 (as described in section 1.6):

1. To Classify HHG international guests according to their cultural characteristics
  - Based on National Culture scores provided by the Hofstede's model
2. To determine HHG international guests' expectations of the attributes of a luxury hotel
  - How do respondents view services in terms of the Kano model categories?
3. To determine the international guests' perceptions of HHG service quality



- To evaluate respondents' satisfaction using the HOMALUXPERF scale
- 4. To determine the extent of cosmopolitan tendencies of HHG international guests
  - To evaluate the extent of respondent Cosmopolitanism
- 5. To explore if the service quality perceptions and luxury hotel expectations of HHG international guests are affected by cultural difference
  - Comparing guest clusters based both on Hofstede's cultural dimensions model and cosmopolitanism in terms of both HOMALUXPERF and the Kano model results and comparing the both HOMALUXPERF and the Kano results across the two hotels
- 6. To make recommendations to HHG for improving guest satisfaction based on findings from Objective 5
  - Would it be advantageous for the group to provide service offerings based on culture/nationality of the guests?

The research can meet the major objectives of the thesis project using this set of objectives, which is to see if the satisfaction of luxury hotel guests varies by culture. The following is the structure of document 5:

### **1.8. Structure of the Present Document**

The structure of this document is as follows:

The second chapter is a literature review pertaining to all the constructs in this thesis and their relationships. At first, the concept of luxury and hotels in the world and Iran are studied. Then customer satisfaction as an important factor and its measuring models (HOMALUXPERF and the Kano) are discussed. In the following section, culture as another important factor and cultural models (Hofstede and Cosmopolitanism) and their relationship

with luxury is investigated. Then, the relationship between satisfaction/service quality and culture and its dimensions are discussed. Finally, the conceptual framework is designed.

The third chapter discusses the research methodology in details, which explores philosophical aspects and also ontological and epistemological positioning. Then it explores different research approaches (inductive, deductive, and abductive) to research. Following that, research design including the research instrument, sampling, questionnaire administration, and research ethics are presented. As a final point, the limitations and delimitations of this thesis are discussed.

The fourth chapter reports the analysis for the thesis, its results, and findings with statistical descriptions. This section explores and shows the comparisons of HOMALUXPERF with cultural models (Hofstede and Cosmopolitanism) and the Kano model with cultural models (Hofstede and Cosmopolitanism) in HHG hotels in the two cities of Tehran and Shiraz.

The final two chapters of the present document, Discussion and Conclusion are then presented. The Discussion section is used to critically address the findings of the study and is organized according to the research objectives and identifies the implications for each objective based on these findings. Moreover, each objective's results will be referred back to the literature to demonstrate how findings either confirm or support the current body of knowledge with respect to that particular area of interest. The conclusion section will include contributions regarding theory and practice, practical recommendations, reflections on the study's execution, and finally a section to suggest directions and unexplored avenues for future research.

### **1.9.Conclusion**

In this chapter, the researcher delves into the history of tourist development in Iran, as well as the pace at which this industry contributes to the country's total economic condition. Furthermore, the country's tourist vision was outlined in depth. In addition, information on the study's setting, hotels, and guests was supplied to support the study's sample. The document's overall structure, as well as the study aims and methodology, were also given. The necessary theoretical models, frameworks, and associated studies are thoroughly presented in the next chapter.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

### **2.1.Overview**

The current study, which examines guests' perceptions on the luxury hotel industry in Iran, is part of a thesis that models consumer satisfaction in luxury hotels and assesses the model's impacts. It is vital to define the definitions of related issues in order to research this topic. The themes of luxury, hotel industry, satisfaction, and culture are all significant in this study. To investigate the impact of culture on the degree of satisfaction among luxury hotel guests in Iran, the hotel business must first be explored, as well as why such a research would benefit the sector. Next, the concept of luxury must be specified, since it is one of the study's foundations. Apart from these principles, the definition of satisfaction, its elements, and measurement methodologies are also taught in order to conduct a credible research. Another key issue is culture; because HHG visitors come from all over the world, it is impossible to investigate the impact of culture without first knowing what it is and how it can be quantified or described. As a result, the linked literature will be evaluated in this section. The idea that culture is a broad term and that every society has its own culture will be discussed. The relevance of global culture, globalization, and their impacts in the current corporate environment will be discussed, as well as the definition of culture, its importance, and its impact on research. The Hofstede model, its six dimensions, cosmopolitanism, and Ethno/polycentricism notions, as well as the conceptual framework, will be discussed at the conclusion of this section.

The concept of satisfaction and related subjects were extensively discussed in the literature review sections of documents 2, 3, and 4, so the definition of customer satisfaction and its relationships to personal services, as well as its measurement models, are discussed

to a lesser extent in this document. The topic of culture was briefly examined in the literature review sections of papers 2, 3, and 4, thus it is studied in greater depth in the present document. The notion of the hotel business in Iran was explored in document 2, therefore this document will focus on the hotel sector as a whole. A comparison of documents is shown in Table 2.

The importance of the tourist and hotel industries is explored first. In this regard, tourism is an industry that accounts for a significant portion of global economic activity, and the hospitality industry is a particularly active segment of it. Following that, the significance of luxury hotels will be discussed, as well as their definitions. Following that, the literature on customer satisfaction, its definition, and its significance will be examined. The SERVPERF and Kano models of customer satisfaction measurement will be investigated. The goal of this research is to look at the impact of culture on guest satisfaction, and it will be highlighted how these models don't pay enough attention to this.

## **2.2.Luxury and Hotels**

Today, tourism is one of the large industries that owns a considerable share of world's economic Tourism is now one of the world's most important industries, accounting for a significant portion of global economic activity. According to a UNWTO report from 2016, international tourism's entire export income topped 1.5 trillion US dollars in 2015, accounting for around 30% of all commercial service exports worldwide. Tourism ranks fourth in terms of exports after fuels, chemicals, and food, but the UNWTO has updated its tourism development forecast for 2030, predicting a 3.3 percent increase in international visitor arrivals each year from 2010 to 2030. In 2030, worldwide visitor arrivals will total 1.8 billion, with tourism rising in all parts of the world (UNWTO, 2016). As a result, travelers from all over the world with varying preferences and expectations come to various regions, increasing

the need for hotels and lodging (Nord, 2006). Countries must create appropriate infrastructure, such as various types of hotels, in response to the rising demand. The market would grow more competitive, and new competitors would enter the market. This would have implications for Iran's tourist and hotel industries, which will be examined in the sections below.

The hospitality industry is a tremendously active sector of the tourist industry since travelers from all over the world want lodging, which the hotel industry offers. Hotels are for-profit hospitality businesses that sell their facilities and services (Medlik and Ingram, 2000). The activities in the hotel sector increased in the twentieth century, accompanied by the growth and diversification of competition in the lodging industry, and UNWTO's report supports this trend, stating that the global capacity of hotels and similar facilities had reached 12.7 million rooms in the mid-1990s (Medlik and Ingram, 2000). According to Vesna (2005), hotels are constantly expanding, and this expansion can be seen throughout East Asia and the Pacific, Europe, and North America. According to Nord (2006), the major reason for increased investment in the hotel industry is owing to its revenue, and due to the high quality of services provided by hotels to millions of people throughout the world, demand for appropriate hotels is predicted to rise.

It is difficult to give a precise definition of a luxury hotel (Chu, 2014). Luxury is said to have four dimensions: "luxury as a brand," "luxury as luxe product features," "luxury as non-necessities," and "luxury as the power to pursue your passions." According to the third dimension, 4 or 5 star hotels that provide more services than the basic level (such as accommodation and food) are considered luxury, and the emergence of luxury hotels can be

attributed to travelers' desire to experience other lifestyles. As a result, a great deal of emphasis is placed on the visitor experience and satisfaction.

There are just a few hotels that can be regarded true luxury hotels, according to Peterhans (2010), and luxury is more about offering an exclusive experience and delivering the finest of everything for its guests. To do so, hotels must first recognize and respond to their visitors' expectations, and then assess the gaps between their services and their guests' expectations. Then offer a plan for lowering them. Finally, if the standards are completed, they will be able to keep their status as a luxury hotel. Understanding guest expectations, the elements that influence them, and responding to them is a beneficial means of increasing visitor satisfaction and offering the finest services possible (Peterhans, 2010), and luxury hotels are designed to cater to their guests' preferences and demands and seek to respond to the changing trends of their environment (Chu, 2014). The conclusion that can be reached is that in order to be more successful, luxury hotels must understand the needs and preferences of their visitors, since possibly the most important definition of luxury is to give more services than the basic ones.

Iran's hotel industry, like that of other nations, is currently expanding in response to changing environmental trends. According to the secretary of the Iran Hotel Owners Society, Iran has 619 hotels, including 17 five-star hotels, including HHG, which are considered luxury, 27 four-star hotels, 60 three-star hotels, 203 two-star hotels, 212 one-star hotels, and 100 non-graded hotels. Some new hotels have been built and others are planned with foreign investment (Arasli, 2012). The rise of the hotel industry in Europe and other industrialized nations has affected Iran's modern hotel sector. In Iran, there are several hotels of various quality levels, ranging from none to four and five stars. Homa Hotel Group (HHG) is one of

Iran's most prominent luxury hotels, catering to a diverse spectrum of overseas tourists. It was founded in 1972 as the Hotels Company of Iran. HHG now owns and operates five hotels in Tehran, Shiraz, Mashhad, and Bandar-Abbas. According to the number of international guests, the Tehran and Shiraz branches have the most foreign guests from diverse cultures among the other branches. On the other hand, addressing the demands of visitors is critical since guest satisfaction is a need for making a profit in a competitive market, and if hotel products and services' quality of lodging is improved, tourists' satisfaction will improve as well (Ciric et al., 2013), This is one of the reasons why it's critical for HHG to understand and respond to guest needs. As a result, the current study is justified.

### **2.3. Customer Satisfaction**

According to Ball et al. (2006), in today's competitive environment, enterprises must pay greater attention to the function of customer satisfaction and its market consequences in order to stay competitive.

#### **2.3.1. Customer Satisfaction Definition**

Customer satisfaction, according to both theoretical and practical perspectives, is a critical component for organizations in the marketplace that may lead to competitive difference, consequences on future performance, and income development (Lewin, 2009). Customer satisfaction is said to be defined by a person's overall thoughts or attitudes about a product after acquiring it (Solomon, 2002). Because the tourist product is "complex" by definition, the concept of satisfaction is particularly significant and challenging to deal with in the context of tourism (Smith, 1994). The total appraisal of customers after purchase is one of the most common definitions of customer satisfaction in the literature, however there are various definitions from different scholars. For example, Campo and Yagüe (2009) defined



satisfaction in a non-tourism environment as a post-purchase evaluation. Similarly, Churchill and Surprenant (1982) described it as a customer's post-purchase comparison of expectations and perceptions; Hunt (1977) defined it as an appraisal of an emotion; and Oliver (1980) defined it as a customer's post-purchase comparison of expectations and perceptions. Furthermore, Kotler (2000) described it as a feeling of pleasure or disappointment based on a performance comparison, and the majority of them believe that satisfaction is an after-purchase attitude based on a comparison of expectation and product or service performance.

Customer satisfaction has a tremendous impact on a company's future performance (Lewin, 2009). Customer satisfaction, according to Kim et al. (2004), has a variety of benefits, including increasing loyalty, preventing competitors from attracting customers, decreasing customer sensitivity to prices, lowering the cost of acquiring new customers and operating costs, and improving company reputation. Customer pleasure, according to Anderson and Sullivan (1993), leads to repurchases and positive word of mouth (WOM), which leads to loyalty. There are two types of behavioral intents, according to Bendall-Lyon and Powers (2004): economic actions and social behaviors. The first has an impact on a company's financial operations, such as repetitive purchases, higher prices, and willingness to modify behavior. The second is the influence of a customer's conduct on the behavior of other customers, whether present or future customers, such as complaining and WOM behavior. As a result, social behavioral intents have an impact on other consumers' opinions (Bendall-Lyon and Powers, 2004). Other study found that behavioral intentions include repurchase intentions, good WOM communication, intention to recommend, loyalty, switching behavior, and paying more (Kuruuzum and Koksai, 2010), all of which may be seen in the tourist and hospitality industries (Pandey and Joshi, 2010). According to Licata

and Chakraborty (2009), customer satisfaction has a positive relationship with the commitment of the service providers, i.e., high satisfaction leads to high commitment. (Licata and Chakraborty, 2009). Switching behavior is one of the components of behavioral intention, as described previously. Switching, or the act of switching from one service provider to another, is one of the most important aspects of the service industry, and a satisfied customer will have little or no switching behavior, and in general, customers with high satisfaction will have less switching behavior and more loyalty (Saeed et al., 2011).

According to Ball et al. (2006), in today's competitive environment, firms must pay greater attention to the function of customer satisfaction and its market consequences in order to stay competitive.

### **2.3.2. Factors in Satisfaction**

There are different studies which investigate the relationship between service quality and satisfaction. There are a variety of research that investigate at the association between service quality and satisfaction since consuming services and their quality leads to contentment. For example, Rahimi and Kozak (2016) stressed the importance of value for money and core hotel items (such as cleanliness, decoration, room size, and so on) in total customer satisfaction. Consumers perceive satisfaction based on the received value, whereas hotel managers perceive it based on the supplied services, according to Lu et al. (2015). However, both managers and customers underline the strong association between service quality and satisfaction. Lu et al. (2015) made a significant contribution by adopting a qualitative approach and addressing luxury hotels, although the small number of interviews (only 4) might compromise the findings' reliability. Although the purpose of their study was to evaluate the relationship between service quality and hotel guest happiness in luxury hotels,

they did not address customer loyalty, which might be a result of satisfaction, but Khuong et al. (2015) did. Despite the fact that the moderating impact of culture was not taken into account (that is, the effect of culture on the relationship between SERVQUAL characteristics and loyalty), their research was carried out among international guests from various countries. According to the findings, the empathy, assurance, and tangibility factors (SERVQUAL model attributes) as well as the hotel image influenced consumers' loyalty both directly and indirectly at the same time, however the pricing component had an indirect and negative impact.

Customers' satisfaction with HHG hotels' service attributes/dimensions is the topic of this study. Because satisfaction with service dimensions is usually portrayed as service quality, service quality (see, for example, SERVQUAL above, Parasuraman et al., 1988) may be used as a proxy for this, and is utilized in sections of the literature review in the following in this way. Other elements that influence consumer satisfaction have been investigated, including prior experience, trip purpose, culture, gender, frequency of travel, age, and tourist destination. Culture will be covered in greater depth in the culture section (2.3), while the others will be detailed in the following.

#### **2.3.2.1.Past Experience**

Several studies have found that having visited a location before might boost the desire to return (Campo-Martinez et al., 2010; San-Martin et al., 2012). Rodríguez-Molina et al. (2013) looked at the function of previous experience and its impact on behavioral intention, finding that previous experiences moderate the impact of visitor satisfaction on the overall image. San-Martin et al. (2012) found that previous experiences can impact destination loyalty in a study of visitors visiting a location in Spain. In their investigation of the

likelihood of travel to ten locations, Sönmez and Graefe (1998) found that previous travel experiences can boost intention to travel and lower desire to avoid the destination to various extents. Deng and Pierskalla (2011) discovered that repeat visitors with previous festival experience are more satisfied with their vacation. Furthermore, Yuksel (2001) found that repeat tourists are more satisfied than first-time visitors in his study on Turkey tourism destinations.

Choi and Chu (2001) investigated the importance of hotel factors in relation to travelers' overall satisfaction levels in Hong Kong and their likelihood of returning to the same hotels, and discovered that three influential factors, such as staff service quality, room qualities, and value, can influence travelers' overall satisfaction and likelihood of returning to the same hotels. In their research on the influence of service quality on customers' intentions of repeat visits, Emir and Kozak (2011) discovered that front office services, personnel, housekeeping, and hotel food and beverage services are the most influential aspects. Previous experience and satisfaction have a two-way connection, according to Emir and Kozak (2011) and Choi and Chu (2001), and satisfaction has an influence on past experience. As a result, previous experience appears to be a component that influences customer satisfaction, and it appears that guests with prior experience may be more satisfied than first-time visitors.

#### **2.3.2.2.Purpose of Trip**

Ringle et al. (2011) demonstrated the relevance of the moderating influence of purpose of trip on airline passenger safety and the differing perceptions of safety between business travelers and pleasure passengers. Hayat and Supinits (2016) also identified a connection

between the objective of a trip and tourists' overall satisfaction. It indicates that the purpose of the visit has a favorable connection with tourist satisfaction and should be taken into account.

#### **2.3.2.3. Gender**

In Philippine commercial banks, Zalatar (2012) investigated the impact of gender on customer expectations and service quality/satisfaction. Gender has a significant impact on service quality and satisfaction, according to the findings. Similarly, female and male clients valued service quality/satisfaction differently. Spathis et al. (2004) looked at the impact of gender on the quality and satisfaction of service in Greek banks. Gender has an influence on service quality/satisfaction at Greek banks, according to the findings. Male respondents, for example, were more satisfied than female respondents. Salleh et al. (2016), on the other hand, looked at gender disparities in hotel service dissatisfaction in Malaysia. Males are more dissatisfied than females, according to a distribution of 400 surveys among hotel clients in Kuala Lumpur (54.5 percent female). As a result, gender has a crucial impact in influencing hotel customer dissatisfaction.

#### **2.3.2.4. Frequency of Travel**

Moisescu and Gica (2013) looked at the impact of travel frequency on the association between service quality and brand loyalty aspects in their study. The correlation test revealed that in the case of more frequent travelers, the association between reliability and empathy dimensions with overall satisfaction is larger, implying that frequency of travel has an influence on the behavior of the guests. Furthermore, there is a greater association between repurchase intent and service quality. Likewise, the regression test revealed that travel frequency influences the association between service quality and loyalty.

#### **2.3.2.5.Age**

In his study, Shahrivar (2012) looked at the impact of location attributes on tourist satisfaction while adjusting for demographic, cultural, travel behavior, and travel information sources. 234 visitors in Malaysia were surveyed for information. Multivariate Analysis of Variance was used to investigate the impact of demographic factors on total tourist satisfaction. The findings revealed that satisfaction levels fluctuate significantly across visitors of various ages. Younger travelers, for example, were happier more satisfied with the destination than older tourists. As a result, travelers might feel various degrees of satisfaction based on demographic features such as age. In eastern North Carolina, Ellis and Vogelsong (2003) examined the markers of tourist satisfaction. Demographic data from eco-tourism site visitors was one of the indicators. The purpose was to determine whether there was a relationship between demographic data (age, education, race, and income) and overall tourist satisfaction. Age is strongly connected with satisfaction, according to the findings. This indicates that as visitors' ages grow, so does their degree of satisfaction. As a result, site managers should take into account a wide range of customers based on their various demographic data.

Hagan (2015) examined at the relationship between hotel customers' perceptions of service quality and their socio-demographic factors. The questionnaire was sent out to 358 hotel guests in Ghana's western region. Guests' satisfaction with service dimensions (i.e. service quality) is influenced by their socio-demographic characteristics as hotel guests, according to the findings. The premise that there was a relationship between the age of hotel guests and their assessment of service quality was disproved. There were no significant differences in the association between service quality categories (tangible, reliability,

responsiveness, assurance, and empathy) and demographic factors. Similarly, Esu (2015) investigated the impact of socio-demographic characteristics (age, education, and gender) on festival attendees' perceptions of quality, satisfaction, and behavioral intentions. Data was gathered from 473 participants in Nigeria's Calabar Festival. Age as a demographic component has no significant effect on attendees' perceptions of event quality and satisfaction, according to ANOVA and t test studies, while education and gender of participants have a positive significant effect on satisfaction. Although age appears to have varied effects on satisfaction and service quality, it is worth investigating in a research that attempts to investigate the role of culture in satisfaction and service quality.

#### **2.3.2.6.Tourism Destination**

It is said that one of the most significant variables in determining the total satisfaction level of guests is destination satisfaction, which is defined as the emotional condition of tourists after visiting the place (Ibrahim and Gill, 2005). It may be thought of as a tourist's evaluation of the destination's characteristics. According to several studies, tourists who are delighted with their vacation experience are more inclined to return to that location and promote it to others (Kozak and Rimmington, 1998; Oppermann, 1999).

Nonetheless, other factors and variables influence tourist satisfaction with the place. Arasli et al. (2011) cited housing, restaurants, shopping, tourist attractions, transportation, local cuisine, environment, and safety as important determinants of destination satisfaction. Ritchie and Crouch (2003) identified five criteria that may be used to develop a competitive tourist destination in a similar way. Infrastructure and superstructure, location, security, cost and value, and accessibility are some of them. According to the authors, an efficient tourist destination is influenced not only by components of activities or goods that are thought to

have primary impacts, but also by the feature of space, which has secondary effects that planners as key stakeholders should consider (Ritchie and Crouch, 2003).

According to Ritchie and Crouch (2003), infrastructure and superstructure are the most important factors in determining a tourism destination's success. They defined a superstructure as a structure or facility designed to cater to the requirements or interests of tourists. Hotels, restaurants, airports, theme parks, cruise ship ports, conference halls, and interpretation centers are examples of superstructure components. As a result, infrastructure is divided into two types: general infrastructure and basic service infrastructure (Ritchie and Crouch, 2003).

Transportation is another important factor that influences and determines the level of destination satisfaction (Weiermair, 2000). This refers to the availability of cars or even buses for guests to use when they arrive and depart from the hotel, to tour other parts of the city, and to do personal duties or appointments outside of the hotel. Some research in the literature have endorsed this problem, as well as the convenience of transportation (e.g., Li et al., 2020; Yang et al., 2018). In a recent research, Li et al (2020) considered transportation to be an exciting component in their attempt to construct a three-factor theory to unravel the function of diverse variables in affecting hotel guest pleasure. As a result, providing a convenient transportation service increases customer satisfaction since it demonstrates the hotel's concern and appreciation for the guests' time. This service provides guests with convenience because they do not have to wait or look for strange taxi drivers.



#### **2.3.2.7. Personalized Services**

According to Rust et al. (2000), personalized services have an impact on customer satisfaction since they pay attention to customers' needs and wants. Customers receive the impression that their well-being is extremely important to providers, and that their preferences are a primary priority. According to Ball et al. (2006), there are three prerequisites that define personalization; these are:

1. Ability and wanting of provider for customization of services.
2. Different needs of a customer.
3. Communication.

If these three prerequisites are met, personalisation happens, with increased satisfaction and loyalty as a result. As a consequence, service personalisation is an excellent way to keep customers against market competition (Ball et al., 2006).

As a result, more individualized services may boost satisfaction, as this study considered that more personalized services make the hotel more elegant, which connects to the luxury issue in section 1.1, and various cultures may demand different services. Service personalisation may be utilized to improve HHG's guest satisfaction as well as maintain and enhance customer loyalty. So, in order to investigate the guests' needs and requirements, as well as if various guests from other nations would require different services, a comparison of guests' levels of satisfaction and how they assess services with the guests' culture may be carried out.

#### **2.3.3. Models of Measuring Satisfaction**

Customer satisfaction may be measured using a variety of methods and techniques. Some of these models will be introduced in the sections that follow. First, to measure guests'

expectations and satisfaction, a performance-only model of service quality is used to gauge perceptions (SERVPERF). Then, the Kano model that investigates how different features of an offering contribute to guests' expectations is utilized. To put it another way, what characteristics would guests expect to see in a luxury hotel, and which would contribute the most to their satisfaction? It is worth noting that using both models at the same time would help to understand what guests think of HHG's present service attributes (SERVPERF) as well as what attributes guests believe HHG should have in the future to make it more appealing as a luxury hotel (Kano).

#### **2.3.3.1.SERVPERF Model**

Service quality has a long history and is defined as the extent to which a company responds to the demands of its customers. The measuring of service quality is one of the primary topics on which scholars disagree (Nair, 2016). Parasuraman et al. (1985) established an appropriate technique to measure this issue using a study program with interviews after realizing the relevance of service quality for company (Akbaba, 2006). This instrument is known as SERVQUAL, and it measures service quality by comparing service performance to customer expectations. Initially, SERVQUAL included ten dimensions: reliability, competence, credibility, responsiveness, security, courtesy, communication, customer understanding, and access. These 10 dimensions were synthesized by Parasuraman et al. (1988), who arrived at five dimensions. Tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy are the final five aspects (Ladhari, 2012). According to Akbaba (2006), tangibles is the image that is created in the minds of customers by viewing external factors such as physical facilities, equipment, personnel cleanliness, and so on; reliability is the ability of providers to perform the promised services; responsiveness is the willingness of providers to assist customers and

provide good services to them; assurance is the process that can create assurance in customers; and empathy can be created by individual attention. The 22 items in these five aspects are measured using a seven-point Likert scale (Akbaba, 2006).

Today, the SERVQUAL scale is one of the most well-known and widely used scales in the world, with applications in a variety of sectors. Despite the fact that SERVQUAL has been used many times, it has received a lot of criticism. Cronin and Taylor (1992) questioned the SERVQUAL model's foundation of expectations and performance, and proposed the SERVPERF model, which evaluates customer perceptions of service performance directly (Vanniarajan and Gurunathan, 2007; Chi Cui et al., 2003). The SERVPERF model only evaluates services that consumers consume (that is performance). In contrast to SERVQUAL's strength, the SERVPERF model will result in improved responses and results (Rodrigues et al., 2011). As a consequence, it will be employed as a proxy measure of perceptions-only satisfaction in this study (given that SERVPERF is only concerned about service attributes which is the focus of this HHG study). Other transportation and hospitality researchers have preferred SERVPERF to SERVQUAL. For instance, Yilmaz (2009) utilized SERVPERF to measure service quality performance in 4 and 5 star hotels in Turkey. The study modified the SERVPERF standard questionnaire to enhance response quality. Likewise, Li (2010) compared perceived service quality in four-star and above hotels in China across different nationalities using SERVPERF model. The study confirmed significant differences in perceived service quality among different nationalities and suggested further cross cultural analysis of service quality. Other studies using SERVPERF in a hotel context include Babić-Hodović et al. (2019) and Al Khattab and Aldehayyat (2011) demonstrating its relevance to the field.

According to Ladhari (2009), one of the key concerns in using scale-based service quality measures is whether application of a generic scale for measuring service quality in all service contexts is correct. To overcome this, others developed scales specific to certain contexts. Typical examples are: LIBQUAL (a SERVQUAL scale especially for libraries – see Greenwood et al., 2011), and ES-QUAL (developed to use for electronic services – Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Malhotra, 2005). In the hospitality field a HOTELQUAL scale was developed by Falces Delgado et al (1999), since re-evaluated by Ladhari (2012). However, my research has not revealed a scale especially for luxury hotels, nor a SERVPERF variant for any part of the sector.

#### **2.3.3.2.Kano Model**

The majority of organizations and businesses recognize that customer satisfaction is a critical component of long-term success. However, the question here is which product attributes lead to customer satisfaction and which aspects merely avoid dissatisfaction. The Kano model was intended to solve this question and provide management with customer satisfaction data. Noriaki Kano created the Kano model for the first time in 1984 to explain how different attributes contribute to consumer satisfaction (Kuo et al., 2017). Product and service features are grouped into six categories in this model: (1) must-be requirements (features), (2) one-dimensional requirements (features), and (3) attractive requirements (features) In terms of their ability to satisfy consumers' demands, they are (4) indifferent (5) reversal (6) questionable. Kano's approach grouped product qualitative qualities into six categories and displayed them in a two-dimensional graphic (Figure 4). The vertical axis depicts the degree to which the customer is satisfied or unsatisfied, or how happy he or she is. The horizontal axis depicts the degree to which the customer's needs are addressed. Customer satisfaction

and dissatisfaction are represented by the greatest and lowest points on the vertical axis. The customer need is totally met on the right side of the horizontal axis, but the product does not have the desired qualitative attributes of the customer on the left side (Berger et al., 1993).

Three aspects of the Kano model are shown in Figure 4.

- 1) Must-be requirements (features): if this feature was met, it can only prevent dissatisfaction and does not result to the happiness of consumers but if products or services dose not met this feature, customer will be dissatisfied.
- 2) One-dimensional requirements (features): fulfilling this kind of needs has a linear relationship with satisfaction. That is, the more fulfillment of this need will result to more satisfaction.
- 3) Attractive requirements (features): meeting this kind of needs can result to high level of satisfaction, if customer doesn't receive it; he/she will not feel unsatisfied.
- 4) Indifferent requirements (features): these services will not cause satisfaction by their presence and will not cause dissatisfaction by their absence.
- 5) Reversal requirements (features): this means the attribute is not good for customers and feel dissatisfaction about it, so it needs more attention not to be created.
- 6) Questionable requirements (features): when answers from a customer about a service are in conflict and incompatible (Beheshtinia and Farzaneh Azad, 2017; Berger et al., 1993; Dominici and Palumbo, 2013; MacDonald et al., 2006; Thipwong et al., 2020; Zobnina and Rozhkov, 2018).

**Figure 4:**Kano model (Berger et al., 1993)

Kano thought that in order to comprehend a customer's wants, the customer's voice had to be heard. The Kano model offers several advantages for managers, including recognizing and defining priorities since it gives a thorough grasp of the guests' needs and highlights the impact of product or service attributes. It also aids market segmentation (Sauerwein et al., 1996) by determining which customers prefer specific attributes. Despite these benefits, several academics acknowledged the Kano model's flaws and downsides. Despite some criticism (see, for example, Shahin, 2013), most researchers feel the Kano model has worth and efficacy in identifying customers' perceptions of various products and services (Hartono and Chuan, 2011; Mikulic and Prebezac, 2011; MacDonald et al., 2006).

Many studies of customer satisfaction in many industries connected to business, such as banking, finance, industry, transportation, tourism, and hospitality are significant and helpful for both service providers and customers, recognizing these benefits. Customer satisfaction models such as Kano and SERVQUAL have been empirically employed in

transportation as one of the most connected areas (Farajpour et al., 2017; Lai and Wu, 2011; Mokonyama, Lehasa, and Venter, 2010). Such research has revealed the importance of unpacking passengers' satisfaction with the services provided. To attract more customers, transportation systems must evaluate their customers' needs and wants in such a way that their service quality increases, resulting in increased customer loyalty, profitability, and cost savings (Farajpour et al., 2017). Gruber et al. (2011) studied front-line staffs attributes for handling consumer complaints, while dealing with consumers from the UK and Saudi Arabia. The study employed the Kano model as a reference for customer preferences and then examined customer preferences across consumers from the two nations. Customers from Saudi Arabia were found to be easier to please in the survey. Moreover, Slevitch et al. (2013) used the Kano model to improve hotel performance by categorizing services into three categories: core, green, and enabling attributes. Because of its widespread use in a number of contexts and geographical locations, Gregory and Parsa (2013) believe that the future use of the Kano model in the hospitality industry is appropriate. More recently, Pandey, Sahu and Joshi (2020) conducted a systematic literature in the field and suggested KANO was a priority method for evaluating satisfaction the field.

Another reason is that the KANO model supports our inquiry by examining customer expectations without having to be physically present at the place. Although both expectation and perception are covered in SERVQUAL, this model only looks at the expectations that are satisfied. However, in this study, the expectations of those services or things that do not exist in HHG and are not covered in SERVQUAL are investigated. Another reason for employing the Kano model is because the researcher wants to benefit from two separate models (SERVQUAL and the Kano model) in terms of guest satisfaction to enrich the results.

With regard to Kano model, in this study and the field of tourism, customers' responses to its different attributes are collected and analyzed by an evaluation table which has been discussed in the previous Document, D4, of this project. A comparison of Satisfaction Models may also be found in Table 3.

<b>Model</b>	<b>Researcher</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>
SERVQUAL	Parasuraman et al. (1985)	tangibles, reliability, competence, credibility, responsiveness, security, courtesy, communication, understanding customer and finally access
SERVQUAL	Parasuraman et al. (1988)	tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy
SERVPERF	Cronin and Taylor (1994)	tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy
KANO	Noriaki Kano (1984)	must-be requirements, one-dimensional requirements, attractive requirements, indifferent, reversal, questionable

**Table 3:**Models of Satisfaction

Table 3 lists the two satisfaction-related models used in this DBA. Similar to the present study, Basfirinci and Mitra (2014) conducted a research that included Kano and service quality/satisfaction. They employed the SERVQUAL measure for expectations and perceptions, however this DBA research favors the SERVPERF “perceptions only” format.

#### **2.4.Culture**

It has to be mentioned that this section is an extension to the culture section of previous works so it introduces cosmopolitanism and ethno/polycentricism in the following. One of the important subjects which can have an effect on the satisfaction of received services is culture. According to Straub et al. (2002) different scholars produced different definitions of the concept of Culture in different areas with simple to complex definitions. For instance, Parsons and Shils (1951) defined culture as a composed set of values, norms and symbols that guides individual behavior also Herskovits (1955) defined culture as a general agreement



and allows man to adapt himself to his natural and social setting; that it is greatly variable; that it is manifested in institutions, thought patterns and material objects” (Straub et al., 2002, p. 14). According to Deshpande et al. (1989), summary of 164 definitions of culture showed that “culture is a product; is historical; includes ideas, patterns, and values; is selective; is learned; is based upon symbols; and is an abstraction from behavior and the products of behavior” (p.5). Tylor (1871) introduces one of the first and complete definition which defines culture as a complex that comprises "knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, laws, customs and whichever extra means and habits acquired by the people of a society" (as quoted in Straub et al., 2002, p.14). Since culture includes a set of beliefs and values it is like an umbrella term. Every social unit has an exclusive culture (Buhalis and Costa, 2006). This culture can have an effect on customers’ behavior. Chen and Pizam (2006) believe that culture can effect on all of the behaviors (Chen and Pizam, 2006). Reisinger and Turner (2003) believed that culture has two aspects: religious identity (customs, beliefs, values and etc.) and material element (about daily life). Considering this definition, culture shows the behavior of guests and tourists (Reisinger and Turner, 2003).

Culture is not taken into account in the SERVQUAL and SERVPERF models despite the fact that tourism and culture have a close relationship (Gambo, 2013). It is challenging to understand guests' cultural backgrounds since individuals of different groups have distinct beliefs, customs, and norms. Many cross-cultural studies have found that culture influences customer behavior (expected and actual), behavioral intentions (Meng, 2010), hotel perceptions (Koseoglu et al., 2012), service evaluation (Crotts, and Pizam, 2002), tourist behavior (Litvin et al., 2004), intention to visit (Ramkissoon et al., 2011), quality of services, and consumer expectations in tourism (Reisinger, and Turner, 2003). According to these

findings, recognizing cultural differences is a topic that has to be addressed in the context of service quality.

Customers' expectations must be met or service performance will suffer; therefore, cultural differences must be considered in tourism activities, and understanding cultural features of guests is an essential requirement for the development of business in the tourism industry. Today, culture is considered an important factor in tourism development because tourists seek to experience new and different cultures, and each destination's culture must be understood (Wei, 2012).

#### **2.4.1. Globalization and Global Culture**

Globalization's impact can now be seen everywhere, and it has altered many sorts of interactions. The expansion of tourism plays a vital part in this process, and globalization can have an impact not only on removing hurdles but also on making decisions (Aramberri, 2009). Globalization, according to Reid (2003), is a pervasive phenomenon that affects all aspects of the economic environment. As a result, globalization has several key features, such as simultaneous integration and disintegration, and knowledge becoming a power. Globalization may result in changes such as product, service, and country globalization, new development pathways, large migrations, and so on (Reid, 2003).

Globalization, according to Cuterela (2012), is defined as the emergence of a global network that refers to the world's interdependence in all aspects, and the main drivers of globalization are multinational corporations, transnational media organizations, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, and alternative governmental organizations. Globalization may have either positive or negative

consequences, such as narrowing (positive) or widening (negative) the distance between nations, increasing (negative) or decreasing (positive) political dominance, and softening and multiplying cultural identities (Cuterela, 2012). Because the distance between nations is reducing, the cultural distinctions are blurring, these outcomes may produce contradictions in studies on the influence of culture in their field. It has an impact on not only research studies, but also customer expectations and how they report on their experiences.

As stated by Harvey and Houle, (1994), global culture was penetrating the world and the emergence of persons with global culture was growing. If culture is defined as the affiliations and relationships that exist between groups of people, then the fast expansion of worldwide travel may be regarded as an indication of global culture, since it connects individuals all over the globe (Bird and Stevens, 2003). This is consistent with Ritzer's (2011) "cultural convergence" viewpoint, according to which the globalization trend is moving toward similarity and homogeneity throughout the world, and civilizations are becoming increasingly similar. Global culture, according to Featherstone (1990), has five dimensions: ethnoscaples (such as tourists and immigrants), technoscaples (machinery flow), finanscaples (money and its flow), mediascaples (newspapers, television), and ideoscaples (image), and it is clear that discussion about global culture began at the end of the twentieth century.

Poly/Ethnocentrism is another cultural paradigm that is relevant to global culture. Polycentrism, according to Savaneviciene and Kersiene (2015), refers to the diversity and variety of cultures, as well as paying greater attention to the host country and its characteristics (Savaneviciene and Kersiene, 2015). This conclusion may be drawn: host and home culture are major factors in the tourism industry that can influence management and operational styles and cultures of firms in this industry (Pinilla, 2002). Consumer

ethnocentrism is a term used by Chang and Cheng (2011) to describe how consumer ethnocentrism might influence buying choices. According to them, this is a psychological symptom that explains why various customers choose local products over international products. In their research, they discovered a negative association between consumer ethnocentric preferences and Chinese tourists' preference for flying with foreign airlines. It suggests that visitors with strong ethnocentrism have a lower preference for foreign airlines. The findings of their study on the impact of consumer ethnocentrism on preference demonstrated that demographic factors may influence consumer ethnocentrism inclinations, and consumer ethnocentrism can influence preference choices (Chang and Cheng, 2011). Ethnocentrism, according to Jianlin et al. (2010), is a group-centered notion that exists in many social groupings and reflects attitudes toward foreign products. Consumer purchase intentions have a significant association with consumer ethnocentrism of Chinese students concerning local items, according to their results (Jianlin et al., 2010). If today's local companies want to succeed in a competitive climate and satisfy their customers' needs better, one of the greatest techniques is to pay attention to consumer ethnocentrism.

#### **2.4.2. Luxury and Culture**

The way that customers define luxury products and services has transformed the consumption models, and luxury company in the global environment is faced with diverse requirements of the global market. In a global environment, the reason for acquiring luxury goods and services, the impact of luxury ideals, and cultural variations on purchase behavior are all essential considerations. According to Hennigs et al. (2012), customers from diverse areas of the world and of varied origins acquire luxury products for various reasons. Bezzaouia and Joanta (2016) looked at the impact of cultural differences on luxury product purchasing

motivation using the Hofstede cultural model. They discovered that various countries' cultural values had a considerable impact on purchase motivations of luxury goods. In a similar research, Grange (2015) analyzes the impact of culture on how consumers perceive luxury in his master's thesis. Bezzaouia and Joanta (2016), like Hennigs et al. (2012), discovered that perceptions of luxury value are impacted by culture and vary between cultures. In another study, Zhan and He (2012) found that culture had an impact on luxury perception and consumption. Allison (2008) found that the importance of motivation for luxury goods purchasing differs between New Zealanders and Thai customers in her thesis. According to these findings, culture and its dimensions can have a significant impact on the perception and consumption of luxury goods and services, and the current study proposes that culture can influence the choice and use of various services, as well as guest satisfaction, as explained in the section below. The purpose of this study is to look at the relationship between culture and satisfaction in a luxury setting, and the results show that culture has a significant role in luxury settings.

#### **2.4.3. Satisfaction/service quality and Culture**

Following the previous sections' reviews of various researchers' work, it became clear that culture might be a significant impact in satisfaction/service quality (Crotts and Pizam, 2002; Koseoglu et al., 2012; Meng, 2010; Pizam and Jeong, 1996; Ramkissoon et al., 2011; Reisinger, and Turner, 2003; Wei, 2012). The influence of culture on satisfaction/service quality is further investigated in the literature in this area.

Crotts and Edmann (2000) explored the impact of national culture on service evaluation, finding that national culture is a significant factor influencing airline customers' purchase decisions. Limiting the test subjects to six specific countries (UK, Germany, Japan,

Brazil, France, and Taiwan) and, more importantly, only one dimension of the Hofstede cultural model (masculinity versus femininity dimension) could be limiting the findings, given how difficult it is to fully comprehend customers' cultures and how their cultures influence their decisions. Furthermore, because there are so many distinct cultures, employing more than one cultural dimension might help you achieve more. Considering as many cultural dimensions as possible can lead to a greater understanding of hotel guests from various nations and sub-cultures. Turner et al. (2001) discovered that different cultures have varied degrees of satisfaction because tourists of different cultures place different amounts of significance on services, and suppliers should pay heed to these cultural preferences. For example, safety and skilled employees are vital to Japanese tourists, whereas general service and security are more important to North American groups (Turner et al., 2001). The impact of culture on service quality, satisfaction, and behavioral intention is explored by Li et al. (2007), who found that culture has a significant impact on service quality/satisfaction and behavioral intentions of visitors to Hong Kong National Park.

Kim and Mc Kercher (2011) examined the impact of national culture and tourist culture on visitor behavior in a distinct research. They discovered that there are variations between expected and actual conduct of Korean visitors, which both Australian employees and Korean tourists noticed. Korean visitors, for example, have demonstrated some less constrained behavior (Kim and McKercher, 2011). It's a unique study since it takes a different look at cultural effects in the tourist sector, namely the effect of the destination's culture on the cultures of visitors, and it might serve to clarify any inconsistencies in previous studies on the globalization effect.

The influence of culture on satisfaction and service quality in three cultures (the United States, Japan, and China) in U.S. hotels was investigated in Seo's (2012) thesis. The findings suggested that consumer cultural characteristics have an influence on satisfaction, and that there are some variations in expectations across persons of different cultures. Chinese visitors, for example, are more concerned with the amenities and features of the rooms (Seo, 2012).

Hopkins et al. (2009) discovered that cultural variations between employees and consumers had a substantial impact on service performance and satisfaction, which might affect guest satisfaction. Furthermore, customer cultural identity may alter this connection (Hopkins et al., 2009). The contribution of their research was to investigate the moderating influence of cultural identity on the effectiveness of service scripts. As a result, it's crucial to examine HHG visitors' cultural identity and how it affects their satisfaction and impression of services.

Basfirinci and Mitra (2014) used two SERVQUAL and Kano models to undertake a cross-cultural study on airline services among respondents from the United States and Turkey. They discovered that the dimensions of service quality and the Kano model varied in these two nations due to cultural differences. The inference is that in order to properly react to specific special needs, some special services must be prioritized. They used two distinct models of assessing services and compared their attributions in two different nations, which demonstrated that various services had varied levels of relevance for different customers, contrary to earlier studies. These findings suggest that there may be differences within the same nationality, since various persons may have diverse backgrounds despite being of the same ethnicity. The influence of differing cultures of Western and Asian

consumers on services was investigated in Mattila's (1999) research of luxury hotels. She discovered that customers with various cultural characteristics do not have the same view of the service quality provided. As a result, customer perceptions of service quality might be influenced by culture. This conclusion is consistent with the findings of the prior investigations.

As previous studies have shown, in today's environment, culture and its characteristics may influence customers' attitudes, perceptions, and ultimately satisfaction. When the tourist industry and its intense competition are understood, the relevance of this issue becomes evident. Surviving in today's global marketplace and competitive market place necessitates paying close attention to the needs of various customers from various cultures. By examining the importance of culture in evaluating consumer attitudes and perceptions, managers may better fulfill and respond to the diverse demands of customers.

Some of these studies are more pertinent to the current investigation. For instance, the study of Pizam and Jeong (1996), Crofts and Pizam (2002), and Crofts and Edmann (2000) which examined the effect of culture on tourists' behavior and evaluation of services, Turner et al. (2001) which studied the amount of satisfaction between tourists of different culture, Seo (2012) which examined the impact of culture on satisfaction and service quality of three cultures (United States, Japan, and China) in U.S. hotels. Another interesting investigation is of Mattila (1999) which analyze the impression of consumers of service quality in luxury hotels.

Understanding the impacts of culture on the topic requires the use of proper dimensions/models, as they are the only notions that allow the evaluation to take place.



Different theories add cultural dimensions measure cultures in terms of their dimensions. As a result, measuring culture and satisfaction might help researchers better understand the relationship between the two (Nguyen et al., 2015). The various cultural models and their relevance to service quality will be discussed in the following sections.

## **2.5.Cultural Models: Hofstede, Cosmopolitanism**

### **2.5.1. Hofstede's Model**

This study used the Hofstede model because it is the most widely used and applicable cultural model in various fields of study and an effective tool for realizing cultural orientation of different people. Empirical research on the effect of culture on satisfaction has shown that it can be a good model for investigating this effect (Buafai and Khunon, 2016; Lažnjak, 2011; Nguyen et al., 2015; Reimann et al., 2008; Soares et al.2007).

Hofstede developed his model in 1984 after devising an experimental model to examine cultural values of employees in various IBM branches in over 64 different nations. His fundamental notion was that our thoughts have direct control over our lives. As a consequence, a major survey with 116,000 questionnaires was undertaken to get findings. The results revealed four cultural aspects, which were eventually expanded to six (Hofstede, 2011; Lažnjak, 2011; Lee and Liu, 2012; Soares et al., 2007; Wu, 2006).

Individualism vs Collectivism (IDV), Masculinity versus Femininity (MAS), Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI), Long Term Orientation (LTO) versus Short Term Normative Orientation (STNO), and Indulgence versus Restraint are the aspects (IND). The term "power distance" refers to how successfully less powerful people adjust to societal disparities and how much they expect an unequal distribution of power. A high score indicates that individuals have accepted the power gap between them, whereas a low score

indicates that people in society are pursuing equality. To put it another way, high-power distance management and leadership are authoritarian and decentralized (Lažnjak, 2011; Lee and Liu, 2012).

Individualism vs. Collectivism indicates that in a loosely-knit community, people are more likely to be worried exclusively about themselves and their immediate families. People in a close-knit group, on the other hand, trade ultimate loyalty for being looked after by family or group members (Maleki and de Jong, 2013; Meeuwesen et al., 2009; Soares et al., 2007).

The Masculinity vs. Femininity dimension depicts how masculine and feminine cultures are in general. Achievement, heroism, assertiveness, and money incentives for accomplishment are valued in masculine society, whereas cooperation, modesty, caring for the weak, and quality of life are ideal in feminine societies (Arrindell et al., 1997; Hsu et al., 2013; Kim, 2015; Maleki and de Jong, 2013). Femininity culture is marked by minimal discrimination, higher quality between genders, and more collaborative management techniques (Lee and Liu, 2012).

The Uncertainty Avoidance dimension depicts how cultures deal with the reality that nothing can be known. Countries with high scores on this area have a strong code of belief and do not accept out-of-the-box thinking or behavior. Lower Uncertainty Avoidance scores indicate a calmer attitude in which actions take precedence over values (Meeuwesen et al., 2009; Soares et al., 2007). Organizations with low uncertainty avoidance take more risks, are more patient, and flexible (Lee and Liu, 2012).

Lower scores suggest the former, while higher numbers indicate the latter. The long-term orientation component indicates whether a culture wishes to retain age-old traditions or chooses to encourage contemporary education in order to be prepared for the future. (Maleki and de Jong, 2013; Meeuwesen et al., 2009; Soares et al., 2007). More adjustments, prompt behaviors, and attention to running decisions are noticed in the short-term dimension (Lažnjak, 2011; Lee and Liu, 2012).

"Indulgence versus Restraints," or IND, depicts how individuals in a society deal with their natural desires. "Happiness, leisure, and control over one's life" are all aspects of this dimension (Smith, 2011). Societies with a higher IND score agree to have relatively free satisfaction of their desires connected to having pleasure and enjoying life. Low scores in this dimension show that civilizations do not place a high value on leisure time. "Restraint" societies, those with lower scores, hold back the fulfillment of their wishes and regulate them through strict social rules. Maleki and de Jong (2013), argued that happiness, introverted individuals, greater knowledge, sport, and so forth are all examples of indulgence.

Customers with low collectivism, short-term orientation, low power distance, and high uncertainty avoidance have higher service quality expectations, according to Nguyen et al. (2015). This means that service quality expectations differ across individuals, and managers should account for these differences in their services. The link between Hofstede's model and service quality is examined in the next section.

Table 4 and a brief description of dimensions are presented to show instances of how the Hofstede dimensions are scored to produce a different profile for each country. According to table 4, Iran has the highest PDI score among the other countries in the table, indicating

that Iranian society has accepted inequality in power distribution, indicating that it is a hierarchical society, whereas England/Britain and Germany have the lowest scores, indicating that people in those two countries do not accept inequality and believe it should be minimized.

Country	(PDI)	(IDV)	(MAS)	(UAI)	(LTO)	(IND)
USA	40	91	62	46	26	68
England/Britain	35	89	66	35	51	69
Germany	35	67	66	65	83	40
Spain	57	51	42	86	48	44
Japan	54	46	95	92	88	42
Iran	58	41	43	59	14	40

**Key: (PDI) Power Distance Index (IDV) Individualism versus Collectivism (MAS) Masculinity versus Femininity (UAI) Uncertainty Avoidance Index (LTO) Long Term Orientation versus (STNO) Short Term Normative Orientation (IND) Indulgence versus Restraint**

**Table 4:** Scores of countries based on Hofstede cultural model

In terms of the IDV dimension, the United States has the highest score, indicating that the American society has an individualistic culture in which people's self-image is defined in terms of "I" rather than "We," whereas Iran has the lowest score, indicating a collectivist culture in which everyone takes responsibility for fellow members of their group.

The MAS dimension reveals that Japan has the highest score, indicating that their society has a high level of competitiveness, accomplishment, and success motives, and that excellence and perfection are the driving factors in their work. Furthermore, given of society's male standards, high MAS indicates that women have some limitations in ascending

the corporate ladder. Spain has the lowest score in this area, implying that caring for others and quality of life are the most important values in this country.

In the UAI dimension, Japan has the highest score, indicating that people do not tolerate ambiguity and unfamiliar situations in society and try to avoid them, whereas England/Britain has the lowest score, indicating that people are comfortable with ambiguity in society and are adaptable to new and changing environments.

Japan has the greatest score in the LTO category, indicating that the society maintains some ties to its past while addressing current and future issues. There are some ties to fatalism among Japanese people, but Iran has the lowest score in this dimension, indicating that the Iranian society is preoccupied with establishing absolute truth; there is a great deal of respect for traditions; saving for the future is a low priority; and people are more concerned with obtaining quick results.

Finally, in IND dimension England/Britain has the highest score. It means that people in Britain have the tendency to actualize their motives and desires, they are more optimistic and leisure time is more important for them. Germany and Iran have the lowest scores in IND, these means these societies have a tendency to pessimism and are more restraint. These societies highly control their desires and motives.

### **2.5.2. Hofstede's Model and Service Quality**

- **Power Distance Index and Service Quality**

Several studies have looked into the relationship between power distance and service quality. Dash et al. (2009) studied the impact of power distance on service quality

expectations and found that consumers with a short power distance expect high responsiveness and reliability in services, as well as a greater value for tangibility.

Low power distance customers have high overall service quality expectations, according to a research by Donthu and Yoo (1998) in the retail banking industry. Additionally, responsiveness and reliability are more essential to them. In Malaysian Generation Y customers, Kueh and Voon (2007) discovered a negative relationship between power distance and service quality expectations.

In their study, Tsoukatos and Rand (2007) investigate if culture has an impact on service quality and satisfaction. They employed Hofstede's five-dimensional model of culture. The findings revealed that culture has a substantial association with service quality, and that there is a relationship between their dimensions and the importance of service quality for customers who fit their culture. Customers with a high power distance, for example, believe they are unimportant to service providers, resulting in a negative relationship between Power Distance and service quality aspects (reliability, responsiveness, and assurance) (Tsoukatos and Rand, 2007). Furrer et al. (2000) evaluated the relationship between the Hofstede cultural model's five dimensions and SERVQUAL in students from various nations, which is consistent with Seo's findings (2012). The findings revealed that, for people from various cultures, culture has an impact on the value of service quality. High-power distance consumers, for example, place an emphasis on better-trained employees and their trustworthiness (Furrer et al., 2000).

According to these studies, power distance has a significant relationship with customer service quality expectations, and HHG as a luxury hotel in Iran must take into

account these cultural differences. For example, Germany is one of the countries with the highest number of guests in HHG and has a low score in this dimension, so expectations of German guests must be understood and taken into account.

- Uncertainty Avoidance and Service Quality

Uncertainty Avoidance (UA) has a substantial influence on services, according to Reimann et al. (2008), and customers with high UA are less satisfied when their expectations are not met, and vice versa. Nguyen et al. (2015) found that UA had a favorable impact on total service quality expectations, implying that consumers who avoid ambiguity have high service quality expectations from providers. Furrer et al. (2000) found that UA and service quality had a favorable association. Customers with high uncertainty avoidance have greater service quality expectations, according to Donthu and Yoo (1998), and tangibility is less significant to them. This relationship was also confirmed in Kueh and Voon's (2007) investigation. Uncertainty avoidance appears to have a major impact on customer service quality expectations.

- Masculinity and Femininity and Service Quality

However, Kueh and Voon (2007) found no evidence of an association between masculinity and service quality expectations. In Li and Mäntymäki's (2011) study, ease of usage was found to be significant for low masculinity oriented society. According to these findings, Masculinity and Femininity dimensions may have an impact on service quality and dimensions. German, Italian, British/English, and American nationalities are quite common in HHG. These cultures have a high MAS score, indicating that there are more expectations to consider.

- Indulgence and Service Quality

This is a new dimension established by Hofstede et al. (2010) that represents people's control over their desires (Buafai and Khunon, 2016; Yayla-Küllü et al., 2015). There have only been a few research on the link between indulgence and service quality. According to Buafai and Khunon (2016), there is a link between indulgence and tourist product satisfaction. They claimed that for visitors with a high indulgence score, leisure time and spending money are more significant. According to Nguyen et al. (2015), future study should focus on the indulgence index. As a result, the impact of indulgence on service quality is significant and must be taken into account in future studies, and HHG, as a luxury hotel, must evaluate its guests' differences depending on this dimension. For example, according to the Hofstede's model (2011) scores published on Hofstede et al. (2010), people from America and Britain have high scores in this dimension.

- Individualism versus Collectivism and Service Quality

Individualistic customers expect high service quality in terms of responsiveness and tangibility, and they believe they are superior to others (Yayla-Küllü et al., 2015). In the banking business, Dash et al. (2009) discovered that high individualism customers want low empathy and assurance from service providers. Individualism and total service quality have a positive association, according to Donthu and Yoo (1998). The findings of Buafai and Khunon (2016) also revealed a relationship between individuality and satisfaction with tourism products. Individualism has a negative link with assurance and empathy, but a good correlation with reliability, responsiveness, and tangibility, according to Furrer et al. (2000). Donthu and Yoo (1998) and Nguyen et al. (2015) found that collectivism had a negative impact on total service quality expectations, whereas Kueh and Voon (2007) found no link



between the two. According to these studies, individualism and collectivism have a significant impact on customer service quality expectations and satisfaction, and HHG must consider this relationship because guests from the America or Britain have a high IDV score, which means they have higher expectations, which HHG must consider. Li and Mäntymäki (2011) look at the impact of culture in the setting of e-services. They discovered that, even in e-services, culture has an impact on customer perceptions of service quality. Hofstede's cultural dimensions have an impact on the quality of e-services, according to their research on Chinese e-service clients. Consumers who are more collectivist oriented, for example, place a higher value on responsiveness, whereas customers who are more individualistic place a higher value on ease of use.

- Long Term Orientation versus Short Term Orientation and Service Quality

In their study, Kueh and Voon (2007) discovered a positive relationship between service quality expectations and long-term orientation, implying that customers with a high level of long-term orientation expect high service quality. However, Furrer et al. (2000) and Nguyen et al. (2015) discovered a negative relationship between service quality dimensions (assurance and tangibility) and long-term orientation. Donthu and Yoo (1998) discovered a negative relationship between long-term orientation and total service quality expectations. Long-term orientation and service quality expectations are positively related, according to Buafai and Khunon (2016). There appears to be a relationship between Long Term Orientation and hotel clients' service quality expectations. Most of the visitors at HHG are from European nations, such as Germany or the United Kingdom, and these guests have high scores in this dimension, thus their expectations are higher than those of guests from other countries, which HHG should take into account.

### **2.5.3. Hofstede's Model and Culture**

The foundational study undertaken by Hofstede (1980) has dominated the research on culture in connection to business and employment for many years (Tsoukatos, Greece and Rand, 2007). Hofstede (1980) offered a revolutionary model that included four dimensions: "Power Distance," "Uncertainty Avoidance," "Individualism vs Collectivism," and "Masculinity versus Femininity." Hofstede's concept placed culture at the center of all aspects of society. Without a doubt, the cultural background of visitors or guests has a vital influence in creating and altering their views and expectations of service quality and customer satisfaction in the context of hospitality and hoteling. Many research from all across the world have looked at the relationship between culture and consumer satisfaction and expectations. Winsted (1997), for example, examined at customer evaluations of services in Japan and the US and discovered significant differences between the two countries. Civility, personalisation, remembering, conversation, congeniality, delivery, and authenticity were the aspects in the U.S. Civility, personalisation, conversation, concern, and formality were among those identified in Japan. Finally, Winsted (1997) claimed that cultural variety in terms of service quality accounts for a significant amount of consumers' satisfaction with the services they get.

Donthu and Yoo (1998) examined a series of hypotheses tying specific characteristics of culture to general service expectations and across variables of service quality using Hofstede's model to unpack consumers' expectations of services given. (A) Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, and Individualism are all positively associated to total service expectations, according to the researchers. (B) Responsiveness and Reliability are adversely linked to Power Distance. (C) Tangibles are positively associated to Uncertainty Avoidance. (D) Individualism is linked to Empathy and Assurance in a favorable way (Tsoukatos and

Rand, 2007). Furthermore, Mattila (1999) conducted research to evaluate if customers from Western and Asian countries prefer individualized services or an enjoyable physical environment in luxury hotels. Individualism/Collectivism, Power Distance (Hofstede, 1980, 1991), and High versus Low Communication were used to describe the cultural variations between Western and Asian clients (Hall, 1984, as cited in Ruttger, 2017). Finally, she connected her findings to a smaller number of service dimensions, implying that Western consumers depend more on actual signals of physical atmosphere and prioritize service characteristics connected to pleasure than Asian customers.

All of these research show that when it comes to foreign hotel guests, culture and its characteristics have a direct relationship with service quality evaluation and expectations. It's a misconception that visitors are value-free, culture-free, and unaffected by expectations. Wherever a human goes, he or she takes an ocean of impressions and expectations with them. As a result, it is apparent that their cultural background has an impact on their satisfaction and expectations of hotel services. Some countries are concerned with overall service quality, while others are more concerned with details and pleasure-making services. In order to analyze and display the perceptions, expectations, and satisfaction level of international visitors residing in HHG in Iran, the author selected to use Hofstede's model, which is the most extensively employed and referenced model in the applicable literature.

#### **2.5.4. Cosmopolitanism**

When one considers the lengthy history of cosmopolitanism, it is easy to see that Cynic Diogenes, who lived in the fourth century, was the first western philosopher to define the term. "I am a citizen of the world," he asserted when asked where he originated from (Laertius, 2018). As a result of this, in the eighteenth century, the phrases 'cosmopolitanism'

and 'world citizenship' were frequently employed to describe an open-minded and unbiased attitude rather than philosophical views (Kleingeld, 2013). In this view, a cosmopolitan was someone who was not submissive to any one religion or political force, and who was not prejudiced against any particular loyalties or cultural biases (Kleingeld, 2013). Additionally, the term was sometimes used to describe someone who lived a cultured lifestyle, or who enjoyed traveling, valued international relationships, or felt at ease in any situation.

Furthermore, the term has been employed to express global philosophical ideas. For example, in the Cynic tradition, Fougeret de Montbron (1753) defined a cosmopolitan as someone who travels everywhere without strict adherence to a certain cultural setting and sees everything the same. The borders around international interactions and visits have disappeared in the age of globalization, when the entire world is considered as a globalized village. As a result, many tourists now go to other nations to experience their unique culture and beliefs. Nonetheless, this cultural variety, which has sparked a heated discussion about cultural cosmopolitanism, rejects narrow cultural commitments. As a result, the cosmopolitan inspires cultural variety and cherishes a multicultural mixture on the one hand, while rejecting strong nationalism on the other.

It may be considered a major cultural issue since globalized markets must pay greater attention to diverse consumers' perspectives and expectations, as well as their purchase and travel habits (Riefler, 2015). Simply said, cosmopolitanism is a way of thinking and acting toward other countries and things (Riefler and Diamantopoulos, 2009).

The relationship between cosmopolitanism and culture is far from new, as many research on the social foundations of cosmopolitanism have been published. Calhoun (2002), for example, defined modern cosmopolitanism as "the class awareness of frequent travelers,"

while Shweder (2002) portrayed an emerging, two-tiered international system with two "casts." There will be cosmopolitan liberals, who are trained to value neutrality and cultural variety and manage global institutions, and local non-liberals, who are devoted to some form of thick ethnicity and disposed to detach themselves from "others," ensuring that the cosmopolitan liberals value enough diversity in the world. Similarly, the evidence suggests that cosmopolitan perspectives are often associated to a variety of socio-cultural characteristics. Chaney (2002) argues that the ability to place cosmopolitan symbols as symbols of difference, at least for select groups within a society, has been produced by the ever-changing aesthetic and cultural economy, as well as the rising role of cultural citizenship. He characterizes the cosmopolitan cultural citizen as having a wide range of interests and the ability to surpass national culture by adopting a learned aversion to local products.

In the context of hoteling and hospitality, cosmopolitanism manifests itself by influencing guests' perceptions of the culture and way of life of the places they visit. In other words, when individuals are eager to exchange ideas, engage with individuals from other cultures, and learn about their own distinct perspectives, their viewpoint is inevitably geared toward a globalized perspective that readily accommodates diversity. For example, when a tourist from Spain visits Iran and sees native Iranian food, he or she becomes eager to sample it, despite the fact that it may not be similar to the cuisine of his or her own country. This implies they aren't critical or closed-minded when it comes to local meals, products, or services. They have a more positive attitude toward the foreign culture.

The reason for focusing on cosmopolitanism in Iran is that each year, international visitors from various countries with various attitudes visit the country, and as a result, their

expectations and perceptions will likely differ from those who are native to the area, as well as those who visit with their personal cultural proclivities and habits intact (e.g. Basfirinci and Mitra, 2014; Crotts and Edmann, 2000; Donthu and Yoo, 1998; Furrer et al., 2000; Hopkins et al., 2009; Kim and Mc Kercher, 2011; Li et al., 2007; Seo, 2012; Tsoukatos and Rand, 2007; Turner et al., 2001). As a result, understanding this attitude is critical for the tourism industry since attitude may influence guests' actions, perceptions, expectations, and satisfaction levels, as evidenced by past study (Balabanis and Diamantopoulos, 2004; Jianlin et al., 2010; Kaynak and Kara, 2002; Pandey et al., 2015; Rybina et al., 2010; Tillery et al., 2013; Vida et al., 2005; Yoon et al., 1996).

#### **2.5.4.1.Cosmopolitanism and Service Quality**

According to Pandey et al. (2015), in India, cosmopolitanism has no substantial impact on local store loyalty. Rybina et al. (2010) showed that customer cosmopolitanism had a negative effect on ethnocentric attitudes of consumers when they investigated the role of customer cosmopolitanism on consumer buying behavior. Yoon et al. (1996) distinguished between global and local cosmopolitanism. The first seeks excellence and worldwide standards, but the second is more concerned with local culture and goods. Despite the fact that just a few studies have examined at the relationship between cosmopolitanism and service quality, it appears to be substantial.

#### **2.6.Conceptual Framework**

According to the definitions of contentment and culture, culture is a broad concept that has an impact on all aspects of human life (behavior, belief, values and etc.). This idea may be related to and connected to satisfaction as a human sense (comparison of expectations and perceptions). As a result, hotels must be aware of their guests' cultural traits in order to

improve service quality and, ultimately, guest happiness. The notion that can be gained from this is that culture may operate as a lens that influences happiness and service perception, and this study aims to measure the impact of such a cultural lens. Service quality, on the other hand, is utilized as a proxy for satisfaction since it is defined as satisfaction with a specific service (Nair, 2016), and the current study aims to provide a variety of service providing packages for guests of diverse cultures.

Based on the literature, there is some overlap between the two concepts. The following research papers are more related to the current one: Pizam and Jeong (1996) investigated the impact of culture on tourist behavior and service assessment, finding that culture is an influencing element that has an impact on consumer behavior (both expected and actual). Customers' evaluations of services might be influenced by culture, according to Crotts and Pizam (2002). Crotts and Edmann (2000) explored the impact of country culture on service evaluation, finding that national culture is a significant factor influencing airline passengers' purchase decisions. Turner et al. (2001) investigated the level of satisfaction among customers of various cultures. The study found that there are different levels of satisfaction among customers of various cultures because customers of various cultures place different levels of importance on services, and providers should pay attention to these cultural preferences. As a result, assessing the level of importance that guests place on each service may be a valuable asset in determining whether satisfaction is influenced by culture. The importance of culture, service quality, satisfaction, and behavioral intention is studied in Li et al. (2007)'s study. It demonstrates that in Hong Kong National Park, culture has a significant impact on service quality/satisfaction and tourist behavior intentions. In their

study, Tsoukatos and Rand (2007) looked at the impact of culture on service quality and satisfaction. Hofstede's five-dimensional model of culture was used in their research.

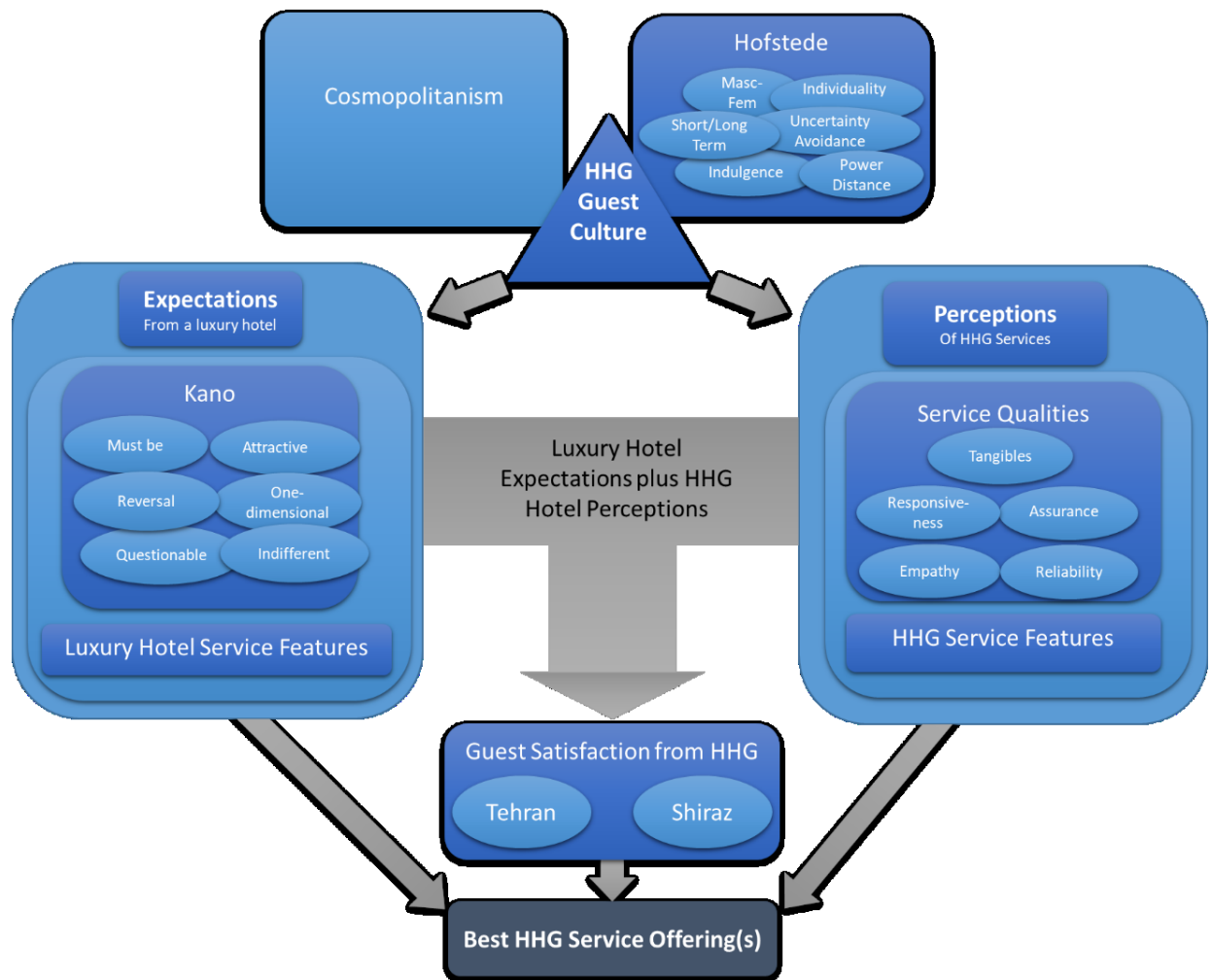
The findings revealed that culture has a strong relationship with service quality, that there are links between their dimensions, and that the importance of service quality/satisfaction for consumers is determined by their cultures. In a more detailed study, Donthu and Yoo (1998) investigated the influence of four Hofstede cultural dimensions on service quality expectations (SERVQUAL) of people from Canada, the United Kingdom, India, and the United States, finding that consumers from countries with a low power distance index, high individualism, high uncertainty avoidance, and short-term oriented consumers have high overall service quality expectations. Furthermore, consumers from a low power distance society anticipate responsive and reliable service providers, but consumers who are individually oriented demand empathy and assurance from service providers, according to the study. Seo's (2012) study on the influence of culture on service quality/satisfaction in U.S. hotels revealed that cultural characteristics of customers have an impact on satisfaction, and that there are some differences between expectations of individuals from different cultures.

The conceptual framework of this study, which was made on the basis of these linkages, is depicted in Figure 5. People are satisfied or dissatisfied based on their comparison of expectations and received services, according to this framework. These expectations may stem from their cultures, and their perceptions of service may be influenced by their cultural backgrounds as well. As a result, if there exist connections between culture and contentment, these connections may be investigated by evaluating guest expectations (Objective 2) and their degree of satisfaction with services across cultures (Objective 3).



SERVPERF, Kano, and cultural models such as Hofstede and cosmopolitanism may be used to evaluate the degree of Service Quality (satisfaction with a service) and expectations, and visitors can be grouped using these models (Objective 1, 2, 3, 4). Each culture may be given a score on several aspects, and then the satisfaction score and the cultural score can be compared to see whether there is a connection between the two (Objective 5). Finally, it might be decided whether delivering service offerings depending on the visitors' culture or nationality is advantageous (Objective 6). Ultimately, this enables the understanding of the impact of guests' culture on:

- Guests' Satisfaction in a luxury hotel setting (HHG) in Iran.
- Guests' expectations in a luxury hotel setting (HHG) in Iran.



**Figure 5:** Conceptual Framework

## 2.7.Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to investigate at the perceptions, expectations, and levels of satisfaction of visitors from various cultures staying in Homa hotels in Iran. It also looked into the relationship between culture and cosmopolitanism, as well as international visitors' satisfaction with the services they got. This chapter addressed the theoretical foundations of the variables of interest in this investigation in this way. It went into the definitions, ideas, and models of satisfaction, tourism, perception, expectation, and cosmopolitanism in great depth. Furthermore, it was claimed that a guest's degree of satisfaction is influenced by their cultural background and preconceptions about luxury hotels. Finally, the study's conceptual

framework was shown in a figure (Figure 5). The following chapter presents the methodological instruments and processes which are used to collect the required data in this study.

## **Chapter 3: Methodology**

### **3.1.Overview**

In tune with the determined research objectives, this chapter describes the methodological processes underlying the study. It includes different sections, each of which tries to clarify a specific area or a relevant issue to the research methods of the study. The first section of the chapter describes the philosophical aspects of ontology, epistemology, and methodology of research together with three approaches to research namely, induction, deduction, and abduction. Next, the participants and research setting wherein an explanation of matters like participants' particularities and sampling processes are provided. The third section presents the research instruments that were employed in the study plus their reliability. The fourth section deals with the data collection procedure and the steps that were taken in the course of data gathering. Following this section, the research design underlying the study is described. The sixth part of this chapter covers the data analysis of the gleaned data discussing the issues of statistical procedures and validations. The last section deals with the limitations and delimitations of the study as well as the research ethics, which were firmly followed by the researcher during the course of conducting the project.

### **3.2.Philosophy**

Ontology, epistemology, and method are three aspects of research, which have special importance and are interdependent concepts. Ontology refers to the nature of reality and study of being, epistemology relates to the legitimacy and adequacy of knowledge, and method refers to the chosen methods and procedures (Gray, 2004; Holden and Lynch, 2004). Philosophical investigation of reality, being, or existence is called ontology and concerns about the nature of reality. This question is answered differently by different philosophers. Aristotle defined a "being" using questions such as: what it is, how it is, how much it is, and

where that “being” is located. According to Petrov (2011), there are four types of ontology referred to as upper ontology (supporting concepts), domain ontology (relates to specific topics), interface ontology, and process ontology (includes element of a process). According to Gray (2004), two conflicting ontological traditions exist: Heraclitus, who emphasizes a dynamic and emerging world, and Parmenides, who emphasizes a stable reality, and Parmenidean ontology has been universally accepted in Western philosophy. Therefore, there are different ideas about the nature of reality. For example, some physicians and natural science researchers believed that reality has to be discovered while other believed that reality is more complicated and dynamic because reality is made and interpret by human’s activities and mind (Brotherton, 2008). For example, in sociology the ontology question can be what is really the subject of sociology? The answer may be something like attempting to settle social concerns, discovering the purpose for our existence, applying basic rules, or comprehending the nature of social actions. Hence, the importance of ontological questions is dependent on our answers to these questions. This subject shows that clearing these concepts is important which is done in the following sections.

### **3.2.1. Ontology**

Understanding the reality and how people perceive it, is the main purpose of this discussion and a critical advantage to the process of research is investigating ontological distinctions (Beck, 1979; Bracken, 2010). Three main philosophies are available to use in order to reveal social truth: Objectivism, subjectivism, and relativism (Saunders et al., 2009); Objectivism which comes from natural science, views social reality as external to social actors and in subjectivism social reality is the result of active interactions between individuals (Bracken, 2010; Saunders et al., 2009). Natural scientists’ and objectivists’ assumptions are aligned together.

Causality is objectivists' belief and it means an independent factor causes a phenomenon, which creates some tangible effects (Holden and Lynch, 2004). According to Vrasidas (2000), objectivism has six major assumptions: First, in the real world there are entities that are designed according to their properties and relations. Second, modeling the real world is possible since it is structured fully and correctly. Third, symbols are to represent the reality and their meaning is relative how they correspond to reality. Fourth, abstract symbols are processed by human mind like a computer to represent the nature. Fifth, thinking is a process of symbol manipulation and it is independent of human body. Sixth, the existence of the reality is independent and external to the human mind and the knower. In contrast, Weber, Kuhn and Feyerabend discussed that the observed subject, the subject matter and the researcher values are not independent of researcher, so, the distance between researcher and subject of research is minimized (Holden and Lynch, 2004). According to Holden and Lynch (2004) subjectivism emphasizes on the meaning of social subjects and explanation of problems rather than causality. In subjectivism, causality is meaningless since phenomena are created based on a continuous process and utilizing reductionalism in understanding of problems is not what subjectivists propose (Holden and Lynch, 2004).

Furthermore, subjectivism stems from idealism, which was promoted by Plato, Hegel, and Kant (Ritzer, 1996). Hegel was a member of the idealism school of thought, which emphasized the centrality of the mind and its results. According to Ritzer (1996), subjectivism has some assumptions: 1) the interiority and subjectivity of reality which means reality is in the mind of people and is created by the interaction between them which means reality is not observable and people define it, 2) Intellection-oriented which means subjectivism theories for explanation of social reality consider intellection and believed that

to understand social reality interpretation of people behaviors have to be considered, that is, his/her inner intentions, 3) Difference between natural and human phenomena. This is the basic difference between objectivism and subjectivism. Subjectivists believe, as social reality is created by humans, thus making them different to natural objective phenomena.

Therefore, in natural sciences objective social reality are dealt with but in social sciences meaningful subjective reality is dealt with. In this view, social reality cannot be studied according to objective evidence but by referring to the subject's mind and what he/she thinks, 4) Emphasis on operative which means society and social reality is the results of actor's performance. The distinctions between Objectivism and Subjectivism, according to Holden and Lynch (2004), lie in their assumptions; objectivism emphasizes on existence of external reality and truth and the state of being actual or real but subjectivism emphasizes on the proposition that universals and abstract concepts are not actually existent but they only exist as a name.

Relativism is the third ontological philosophy; it emphasizes the relative nature of truth and knowledge and is based on the evolving nature of knowledge. However, more intense relativism suggests that many different understandings of reality can coexist, leaving us with no defense for our moral and political positions (Berry, 2010; Burr 2003; Morcol, 2001; Raskin, 2008; Sankey, 2012). For example, numbers are some absolute things but other concept such as beauty; justice, and culture are some relative things, which can be understood differently by different people. Today, relativism is the concept that any opinion on any subject is as valid and true as any other, and that all points of view or belief systems are equally valid and true. Therefore, all types of relativism thought have two features in

common: 1) all of them contend that one thing is relative to some special thought or framework and 2) any thought is equal to other thought or standpoint (Sankey, 2012).

Moreover, another philosophical approach, which is related to relativism, is postmodernism (Taboli et al., 2013). Postmodernism which is a critique to modernism, emphasizes the plurality, obscurity, and fragmentation of reality (Gray, 2004). According to Wong et al. (2011), postmodernism emphasizes diverse interpretations of reality, and research should be humble in its findings and assertions about reality. Taboli et al. (2013) also brought up some specification of postmodernism according to Gergen's (1992) point of view such as using of interpretational and hermeneutic methods to explore reality, inability of language in transferring real thoughts, and diversity of phenomena. Postmodernism seeks to understand reality subjectively, and its common assumption is that reality is subjective and that things have hidden meaning. Researchers have to seek this hidden meaning because in postmodernism, theory and action are not apart from each other and the human action/manner is based on a predetermined intent (Taboli et al., 2013). As Taboli et al. (2013), put it postmodernism is the same as relativism in finding the reality subjectively.

### **3.2.2. Epistemology**

"How we know" is how Tennis (2008, p. 2) defines epistemology while explaining that our epistemic stance determines what kind of knowledge we are going to make. Epistemology specifies the acceptable knowledge and approve/disapprove the preciseness of research results (Harding, 1987). It makes the relationship between knower and known clear (Ayikoru, 2009). According to Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008), epistemology is the study of knowledge which originated from Greek "episteme" which means knowledge and "logos" that roughly means "study or science of" and have two tasks: 1) determining the nature of knowledge and 2) the extent of knowledge. The first one means what knowledge is and the



second one means how much we know. In addition, epistemology defines the production of knowledge and the criteria of possibility of knowledge (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2008). From the view of epistemology, there are three key positions: positivism, interpretivism, and pragmatism.

The term positivism was invented by Aguste Comte. Positivists emphasize on experience and sense. They believe that reality exists external to humans, we can experience or sense it, and the researcher should discover it. For example, if someone says, “water is liquid” in positivism view, if we could sense and experience it then it is accepted. In other words, researchers can pursue the answer of their question from the nature. Positivism epistemology emphasizes on objectivism and independence of observer from truth. Therefore, the researcher can investigate the phenomena without affecting it or being affected by it (Wong et al., 2011). Uecharoenkit (2013) supported that to develop validity, reliability of gathered data from real conditions, positivist method is more appropriate, and this data can be analyzed to explain social phenomena.

After some time, the beliefs of positivists were criticized by themselves and post-positivism emerged (Ayikoru, 2009). The belief among Post positivists is that, although reality is intelligible, it is not perfectly intelligible (Tribe, 2009). According to Adam (2014) post positivism is not anti-positivism and does not reject all of it but it is an endeavor to improve and upgrade it and emphasizes on the quality of data, the context of subject which has been studied and the use of integrated approaches. Epistemologically, post positivists believe that findings are “probably true” rather than “true” (Aliyu et al, 2014). Post positivism, on the other hand, believes in the subjectivity of knowledge and reality, as well

as its presence in people's minds, therefore there are several reality depending on context (Wenjuan et al., 2007).

In contrast to positivists, interpretivists think that reality exists within humans' minds and perceptions (Avramidis and Smith, 1999). In other words, reality is the result of interaction between humans. From the epistemological view, they believe that the only way of perceiving the meaning in the world is interpreting them. So, values and knowledge are the results of interaction (Ayikoru, 2009; Gray, 2004). Therefore, in interpretivist point of view, people are complicated and there are different understandings of a certain reality. For example, people have different interpretations of the same painting or tourists of the same touristic site have different interpretation of it (Veal, 2006).

The final point of view is pragmatism, which focuses on profits, benefits, and outcomes. In pragmatism epistemology, reality is something that is profitable in practice for our life and any path of reaction and thinking which result to pragmatic aspects and solutions is useful; Pragmatists believe that reality is not something unchangeable but it develops over times (Bertella, 2012). In other words, pragmatism, which is rooted from the Greek term “pragma” which means “deed” “work” or “act”, is a philosophical way that accept issues according to their application in people’s life (Kalolo, 2015).

Dewey (1859-1952) as the pioneer of pragmatism believes that in a world that is constantly changing, ideas change as well. According to the thought of these thinkers, pragmatism is a revolution against idealism and is a method of solving intellectual problems in the progress of humans (McDermid, 2008; Stuhr, 1999). Additionally, one of the most well-known philosophers of today’s pragmatism philosophy is Rorty (1931-2007) who has offered new ideas about pragmatism. Rorty’s difference with previous pragmatism

philosophers is his view about experience and he thinks predecessors pay more attention to that experience (Misak, 2013). Instead of emphasizing experience, he focused on language. His new approach to pragmatism is known as neo-pragmatism, and it is based on James' viewpoint (Misak, 2013). William James believed that the extent of statements' correspondence with actual things, as well as the extent to which things cohere, defines the verifiability of Truth (James, 2015).

Epistemology as an aspect of research has been discussed which determines the nature and extent of knowledge (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2008). As discussed above, there are some points of view according to the view of epistemology such as positivism, interpretivism, and pragmatism.

Apart from these discussions, Bhaskar (2013) introduced a new theory, critical realism, which attempts to offer a new way of looking at the relationship between ontology and epistemology. According to this theory, there are three ontological dimensions to reality: Real, which includes mechanisms, structures, and all entities, Actual includes event and non-events, which are generated by mechanisms, and empirical includes all observed and experienced events. In this point of view, the world is stratified and open and a multiplicity of mechanisms create a series of events (Mingers, 2004).

Archer et al. (2016) discussed that other features of critical realism are Ontological Realism, Epistemic relativism, Judgmental Rationality, and Cautious ethical naturalism. The first one suggests that much of what is known exists in reality and does so independently of our awareness or our knowledge, which is similar to objectivism. The second one explains that who we are, our personal history, social background, and our culture, affects our understanding of objective reality. The third one is about applying what is believed to be

‘common sense’ to a situation. Individuals must believe what is the most plausible interpretation of reality to them, despite the fact that different people may have various perspectives on reality. The last feature means that individuals must simultaneously respect what is good and bad in their cultural understanding and must be cautious about being true to themselves.

With regard to the immediately above, this means that based on critical realism’s view, “things” are objectively real. However, this reality cannot be easily or fully accessed, not can every individual’s view of reality be the same way. Nonetheless, researchers who are exploring cultured attitudes of others (similar to the present study), must apply some criteria of interpretation. Therefore, things are understood to some extent and individuals must stay humble towards their assumptions (epistemic humility) in the process of conducting research and presenting conclusions and limitations.

In accordance to the discussed matters, the present study is to explore whether culture impacts satisfaction and the impact of culture on satisfaction, if found, can be considered as a social phenomenon and the only measurement is to explore the number of occurrence in the empirical layer. To discuss further, this measurement is to understand whether this is an event or a non-event in the actual layer.

### **3.2.3. Reasoning and Research Mode**

There are three broad approaches named deduction, induction, and abduction (Trochim and Donnelly, 2008). Induction has a root of unknown to known, and theory development is its major purpose. Inductive technique is effective when the subject of inquiry is new and there is little understanding about it (Brotherton, 2008; Gray, 2004). Figure 5 shows the inductive approach process which starts with identifying the problem to the development of a new theory.

Inductive approach is an open-ended and exploratory approach that begins by observation, and then proceeds to hypothesis creation, which would result in a new theory (Gray, 2004). This induction assumption results to a total opinion, but this approach has been criticized by Karl Popper and other philosophers although it has implications for our life.

Deduction approach is based on positivist beliefs which emphasis on the objectivity of reality and knowledge. This approach is seeking to examine the current theory not theory building (Brotherton, 2008; Gray, 2004). This approach begins with identifying the problem then conducts hypotheses, and finally, the implemented theory is approved, refined, or changed.

As Saunders et al. (2009) mentioned in natural sciences, the dominant research approach is the deductive approach, which allows for the anticipation of phenomena and their occurrence, therefore permitting them to be controlled. Deductive approach commences with a general theory, then creating some hypothesis after observing the phenomena and, at the end, results in the confirmation or the rejection of previous hypothesis (Gray, 2004).

According to Clough and Nutbrown (2012), these two approaches have some differences. Deductive approach aims to test the current theory while the inductive seeks to create a new one, inductive approach begins with some questions while deductive starts with some hypotheses, in inductive approach new phenomena are explored, generally in qualitative studies inductive approach is followed, while in quantitative studies the deductive one is used the most.

The third approach, that is, abduction was first introduced by American philosopher Peirce (1839-1914) into scientific theory. This approach is a response to the weaknesses of the two previous approaches. The weakness of deductive approach is its lack of clarity in

choosing the theory and the weakness of inductive approach is in theory building. In other words, inductive approach starts with a specific observation and ends to a general conclusion, which may be true. Deductive reasoning, on the other hand, begins with a general rule and leads to a specific conclusion that is always correct. Nevertheless, abductive reasoning starts with an incomplete observation and ends to a prediction. Therefore, the abductive reasoning does not have those weaknesses and is more complete (Clough and Nutbrown, 2012; Saunders et al., 2009). According to Reichertz (2010), abduction has been reportedly used in many fields of science and scientists have claimed that their findings are owed to abduction. The great success of abduction can be assigned to its recognition that there is always prior understanding of phenomena, and that these can be used to help researchers to understand new things. Thus, it may not be necessary to invent new theories or examine existing ones. The current understandings may be applied to inform theory development. Additionally, existing theories can be explored without the necessity to approve or disapprove them.

Understanding these approaches is important since these approaches illustrate the research design and its conduction. For example, if the research subject is new and there is limited knowledge about it, inductive approach is suitable. If the researcher wants to create a new theory he/she would use inductive and if he/she wants to examine the existing theory he/she would use the deductive approach (Brotherton, 2008). According to Brotherton (2008), these approaches can determine the way of conducting the literature review, conceptual framework, the methodology, and act as a director, which can help the researcher to do his/her research effectively. Abduction aligns with both critical realism, pragmatism, and post-positivism in many ways, yet the ideas cannot be used interchangeably. The common threads, on the other hand, imply that first, what is believed to be true and valuable

can be investigated, and second, the possibility for findings to be incorrect must be considered.

According to research methods, we have two kinds of basic methods: quantitative and qualitative methods (Brotherton, 2008). Quantitative methods emphasize on gathering numerical data. This data can be gathered in different ways like questionnaires or other sources. According to Veal (2006), there are two kinds of quantitative research: Type A and type B. The first one concentrates on statistical methods and tests like t-tests, regression, and analysis of variance, but the second one does not use such statistical methods and is based on numerical data and uses the basic statistical measures like percentage (Veal, 2006). Generally, quantitative method focuses on objective and numerical data. In quantitative approach, there is a linear procedure and generalization of data and results (Himmer, 2013). Therefore, as Ueacharoenkit (2013) mentioned, the quantitative method is a statistical path for analyzing and describing the results, which follows the deduction approach by choosing a theory and then developing hypotheses, data gathering, analysis, and testing the hypotheses. According to the philosophical assumptions, quantitative methods use positivist knowledge claims, employ surveys and experiments strategy of enquiry, and use closed questions and predetermined approaches to verify theories (Ueacharoenkit, 2013). Eriksson and Larsson (2011) emphasized that quantitative research includes various kinds of variables and quantitative data, which explains beliefs, feelings, and opinions of different people, which can be analyzed objectively and are more suitable for generalization. Likewise, Terechshenko and Radionova (2011) pointed to the purpose of researcher in quantitative research as to generalizing the results.

Qualitative approaches, on the other hand, emphasize gathering as much data as possible from a small number of individuals, and this data is not in numerical form and is obtained using various methods such as observation and interview (Veal, 2006). Distinguishing people's perceptions and attitudes is the main aim of qualitative methods (Himmer, 2013). Additionally, conducting in a real-life setting, gaining holistic information, openness of interpreting qualitative data are some characteristics of qualitative research (Gray, 2004; p. 320).

There are some specific differences between qualitative and quantitative research. In quantitative research, theories are often tested, but in qualitative they are developed; in quantitative research, sampling is usual, but in qualitative it is targeted; in quantitative research, analysis is based on statistical method, but in qualitative research, interpretative approaches are used; generalization in quantitative research is in a statistical sense, but in qualitative, it is based on a theoretical one (Himmer, 2013).

Matveev (2002) and Choy (2014) have mentioned some advantages and disadvantages of qualitative and quantitative methods. Clear specification of the problem and variables, short time, testing hypothesis, suitability for a large number of participants and more control are some strengths of quantitative method. However, it has several weaknesses, such as a lack of information, as it does not account for the effects of the environment and is unable to provide a comprehensive response. On the other side, qualitative methods also have some advantages such as reaching to a deep level of information extracted from those taking part in the interview, flexibility, and interaction with the subject of the research. The qualitative method has various flaws, such as getting away from the core aims, biases in the results, the necessity for a skilled researcher, and its challenges (Choy, 2014; Matveev, 2002).



#### **3.2.4. Choices of the Study**

In order to specify the present study's research paradigm three aspects of this research will be justified in the following passage. The first one is the ontological assumption. As mentioned above it refers to the nature of reality. One of the views in ontology is seeing the reality based on an objective or subjective view. Objectivism believes in an external and measureable reality. Two concepts of this study (culture and satisfaction) are measurable and objective concepts, which can be measured quantitatively. Therefore, this study follows quantitative methods and objectivism point of view.

Quantitative approaches, as previously said, emphasize the collection of numerical data, statistical methods of analysis, explicit explanation of the issue and variables, time efficiency, and increased control. According to this method, reality is objective and outside the researcher and is measureable.

The second aspect is epistemological assumption. As mentioned earlier it refers to the relationship between the knower and known (Ayikoru, 2009). Based on this research, objectives and research problem, the present study is based on the positivist point of view since the proposition is that there is a single and independent reality external to the researcher, which can be measured. As mentioned above the relationship between culture and satisfaction is an external and measureable reality and the researcher does not interact with the research problem. Hence, this relationship can be investigated without exerting any impact on it or being impacted from it. However, in post-positivism (see earlier, Ayikoru, 2009) it was maintained that positivist ideas could be utilized whose limitations are known. Pragmatism and critical realism also support the basic ideas of post-positivism and the present study is therefore more closely aligned with post-positivism stance than positivism.

The third aspect is method. This is about the way and process of conducting the research. This study adopts quantitative method since this study is looking to measure and investigate the relationship between some variables and aims to examine perceptions, preferences, and current behaviors of hotel guests. The main purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of culture on hotel guests' satisfaction and perceptions; to do this, this study used a large hotel guest sample, field experiment for determining the relationship, and finally unpacking the effect of variables on each other.

As discussed in (3.2.3), deductive approach means that the researcher tests an established theory (a largely positivist approach), while inductive approach means the researcher is developing a new theory (drawing on Interpretivism). This study follows Abductive approach. This approach can accommodate seemingly incommensurate research paradigms, especially when practical rather than theoretical solutions is dominant. In addition, in doing a DBA, the primary focus is on practice rather than theory thus makes a theoretical contribution. The primary purpose of this study is not to test a range of theoretical positions, but to explore and describe the current situation regarding guest diversity, guest expectations, and guest satisfaction. This will allow understanding the challenges facing HHG and giving practical recommendations.

### **3.3.Methods**

#### **3.3.1. Theoretical Frameworks**

The current study benefited from three theoretical frameworks and models related to the research concern that functioned like the frame of a building. They are Kano, Hofstede, and cosmopolitanism models. As stated in the literature, culture is considered as an important factor in tourism development because experiencing new and different cultures has become an attraction for tourists (Wei, 2012). Similarly, as previous studies argued earlier, culture

and its dimensions can influence guests' expectation of services considerably. As a result, in the present study the effect of culture is studied by evaluating the Hofstede cultural dimensions and cosmopolitanism dimension in relation to respondents' answers to SERVPERF and Kano instruments. SERVPERF measures service quality, however as it is applied in a service setting, it is argued that it can be utilized as a proxy for a perceptions-only measure of satisfaction. The perception-based service quality/satisfaction measure is not only a validation of expectations (e.g. Parasuraman et al., 1996). However, it is acknowledged that obtaining insights into the facilities that the customers expect in a luxury hotel will shape an understanding of how satisfaction for customers might be improved. Kano addresses the attributes rather than performance level of such an offering and identifies the extent to which they are expected.

Hofstede's model, which comprises six dimensions, was chosen because empirical investigations on the influence of culture on satisfaction demonstrated that Hofstede's model may be a suitable measure in examining this effect (Buafai and Khunon, 2016; Lažnjak, 2011; Nguyen et al., 2015; Reimann et al., 2008; Soares et al., 2007). Moreover, this model emerged from one of the largest scale cross-national studies, which considers many countries with its reliability being repeatedly tested and approved (Lažnjak, 2011).

Moreover, this study considers cosmopolitanism as a cultural dimension because in the recent globalized market, businesses are looking to fit their products' and services' characteristics according to the globalized customers' perceptions and expectations as, nowadays, many people can travel abroad and consume foreign products and services (Riefler, 2015). This could help in understanding the mindsets of the guests and their behavioral motives, which has been confirmed in previous research (Balabanis and

Diamantopoulos; 2004; Jianlin et al., 2010; Kaynak and Kara, 2002; Pandey et al., 2015; Rybina et al., 2010; Tillery et al., 2013; Vida et al., 2005; Yoon et al., 1996).

### **3.3.2. Research Instruments**

In order to meet the requirements of the study, a booklet questionnaire including three sections was utilized by the researcher. The following part presents the details of each of the mentioned sections, which are related to different aspects of the study.

#### **3.3.2.1.Kano**

To determine the importance and priority of each hotel attribute for hotel guests, Kano model was employed in this study. This model determines which features of products and services bring about customer satisfaction, and which features only prevent the dissatisfaction (Sauerwein et al., 1996). Given that guests from different countries have various behavioral patterns and habits as a function of their cultural context, it is important to understand these differences and preferences (Qiting et al., 2013). In the present study, Kano model was chosen to analyze hotel guests' needs for a luxury hotel because this model recognizes and categorizes guests' priorities and necessities in-depth. See Document 4 for detailed review of how scales were developed.

In order to design a Kano model questionnaire, multiple studies were reviewed (Berger et al., 1993; Ho et al., 2013; MacDonald et al., 2006; Qiting et al., 2013; Sauerwein et al., 1996) and a sum of 21 items was chosen by the researcher, based on the lack of services in HHG, to be reviewed by experts (Appendix A1). Following expert review, 12 items were validated for the Kano questionnaire together with an additional item, which was considered necessary based on experts' comments. In total, 13 items were validated for Kano model.


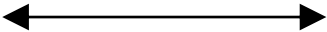
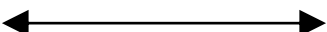

Each item was set into both Functional and Dysfunctional forms in the Questionnaire (Appendix A3).

There are 13 questions in the Kano scale. These are all related to hotel attributes and are 'scored' categorically according to their relationship to guests' expectations of a luxury hotel (Indifferent, Must-be, One-dimensional, Attractive and Reverse and Questionable, see 2.3.3.2 Kano Model in Literature Review section). As a result, no quantitative data can be utilized to create a factor structure statistically for them. Instead, a factor structure (to facilitate subsequent analyses) was established interpretively. Ultimately, the 13 Kano - related questions were grouped into four categories, namely: Modern Outlook, Traditional Outlook, Utilitarian Outlook, and Cleanliness Outlook (see Table 5 for a more comprehensive account). The word "Outlook" was chosen since the Kano model observes the point of view of the guests regarding what a luxury hotel should be. Modern outlook includes Kano -related questions 1, 2, 3, 4 and the Traditional outlook includes questions 5, 6, 7 and 8. Further, as both the scoring of the Kano questions and their categorization are categorical, it was necessary to find a way of combining them into one dependent variable that could be used for subsequent analyses involving both Hofstede and Cosmopolitan categories as independent variables. The Modern and Traditional Outlooks, as it is evident from their names, represent a dichotomy of styles that can be considered along a continuum.

Depending on the responses the guests provided to the questions concerned this might, in turn, suggest that different guests have a more "Traditional" or more "Modern" outlook along a continuum between the two. Utilitarian Outlook, on the other hand, concentrates on the utility services of the hotel (i.e. basic, or hygiene services). This outlook

consists item 9, 10, 11, and 12. Cleanliness outlook is represented just by item 13 and, as it is apparent from its name, it shows cleanliness of preferences in a hotel.

The Utilitarian and the Cleanliness Outlooks are evaluated based on a different continuum, which examines how guests consider the essentiality of the two and characterizes them as “Essential” or “Non-essential”. The intention for this continuum is to see how essential the Utilitarian and the Cleanliness Outlooks is for guests’ satisfaction and in further analyses, the essentiality can be compared across Hofstede’s clusters and the Cosmopolitan groups. The proposed way of comparing results across clusters would offer a simpler and more objective approach to the analysis. Otherwise, it would be represented as a very large matrix ( $78 \times \text{no. of clusters}$ ) for Kano and Hofstede Clusters, as there are six Kano categories and thirteen items and each cluster would have six percentages for each of the thirteen questions. Based on the definitions of the Kano attributes; Attractive/Indifferent/Reverse Services are not required for guests’ satisfaction. On the other hand, the One-dimensional/Must-be attributes are the most necessary and effective attribute on satisfaction. Table 5 below summarizes how the analysis will be conducted. Thus, for Outlook Category ‘Modern’, respondents regarding attributes in Q1 through to Q4 as either attractive, indifferent or reverse (not necessary for satisfaction - not important) will be considered more traditional than modern. Alternatively, respondents regard these attributes as one-dimensional or must be (necessary for satisfaction - important) attributes, which will be considered more modern than traditional.

Outlook categories	Preference options	Respondent answers	Preferences assumed
<b>Modern</b> Q1. Office equipment Q2. Mobile app. Q3. Free Wi-Fi Q4. Eco-friendliness	Modern (High)      Traditional (Low) 	Attractive/Indifferent	Traditional
		One-D/Must be	Modern
		Reverse	Traditional
<b>Traditional</b> Q5. Private dining area Q6. Spa Q7. Gold/crystals Q8. Sandals in Toilet	Modern (Low)      Traditional (High) 	Attractive/Indifferent	Modern
		One-D/Must be	Traditional
		Reverse	Modern
<b>Utilitarian</b> Q9. Toilet Bidet Q10. Pillows Q11. Souvenirs Q12. Child care	Essential (High)      Not Essential (Low) 	One-D/Must be	Essential
		Attractive/Indifferent	Less essential
<b>Cleanliness</b> Q13. Spotless	Essential (High)      Not Essential (Low) 	One-D/Must be	Essential
		Attractive/Indifferent	Less essential

**Table 5:**Outlooks and Preferences based on the Kano model results

Table 5 above summarizes and combines Outlook Categories with respondent answers (Attractive, One-D, etc.) and applies the preference options by which a set of new dependent variables is created (Preferences assumed). By looking at the Table 5,

it is observed that the Reverse attribute is not included in the Essentiality continuum analysis. As the Essentiality refers to the importance of a service in causing satisfaction and “Reverse” attributes cause dissatisfaction, therefore, reverse attributes do not fit in the Essentiality continuum.

Additionally, Kano categories were grouped as the following:

- Attractive and Indifferent: any attributes scoring here are more not essential than essential
- Must-be and one-dimensional: any attributes scoring here are more essential than not essential.

### **3.3.2.2.Hofstede**

In order to measure culture and cultural orientation in this study, Hofstede model was employed. The model includes six dimensions of Power Distance Index (PDI), Individualism versus Collectivism (IDV), Masculinity versus Femininity (MAS), Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI), Long Term Orientation versus Short Term Normative Orientation (LTO) and Indulgence versus Restraint (IND).

In reality, this model was utilized to assess how many of the six dimensions are meaningful among HHG guests from various nations, so that they could be classified and their perceptions and satisfaction levels compared based on those factors.

### **3.3.2.3.Cosmopolitanism**

To measure guests’ cosmopolitanism, a scale from the study of Clevel et al., (2014) was utilized. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) in Clevel et al., (2014) showed that the questions are illustrating one factor. Hofstede model and cosmopolitanism are the bases for analyzing the cultural factors with the results of SERVPERF and Kano models. Cultural differences



would be distinguished by comparing respondent's answers to Kano and HOMALUXPERF model and their cultural factors (cosmopolitanism and Hofstede model).

#### **3.3.2.4.HOMALUXPERF**

In the present study, to measure satisfaction, the SERVPERF scale, Cronin and Taylor (1994), has been used as a basis for developing a tool that evaluates guest's satisfaction in HHG. It is used as a proxy for a perceptions-only measure of satisfaction, although it is primarily a scale for measuring service quality/satisfaction. See Document 4 for detailed review of how scales were developed.

Different studies were reviewed (Debasish and Dey, 2015; Ho et al., 2013; Mohsin and Lockyer, 2010; Mohsin et al., 2011; Siddique et al., 2013). 25 items were chosen for experts to be reviewed (Appendix A1). The chosen 25 items were from all the five dimensions of SERVQUAL. 12 items were verified (Appendix A3) via the method mentioned previously and analyzed through Factor Analysis to reveal the construct factors that these items represent. The initial questions were chosen based on the available services in the HHG and the questions were paraphrased in a way that would include "HHG" in them.

Items state full performance of a service and the answers are based on a 5-point Likert scale with 1 representing Strongly Disagree and 5 representing Strongly Agree. The participants' responses illustrate their perception of HHG services, which is used as a proxy for guest satisfaction. In other words, the scores that show guest perceptions towards HHG services can ultimately be used as a proxy for their satisfaction of services (Adil et al., 2013; Cronin and Taylor 1992).

#### **3.4.Validity of the Questionnaires**

In this study, the researcher checked the validity of the questionnaire items for the Cosmopolitan scale as well as the content and construct validity of items for both Kano and

HOMALUXPERF through a process of expert review and the content validity ratio (CVR) formula proposed by Lawshe (1975). Technically, CVR is based on the opinions of a panel of expert according to three options: essential, useful but not essential, and not necessary (Ayre and Scally, 2014).

$$CVR = \frac{n_e - \left(\frac{N}{2}\right)}{\frac{N}{2}}$$

*Equation 1: Content Validity Ratio Formula*

According to this formula, “ne” is the number of experts who answered essential to any question and “N” is the total number of all experts (Ayre and Scally, 2014). The result of this formula determines the usefulness of a question (Ayre and Scally, 2014). Moreover, the validity of the item pool was examined through the logical validity method in this study. Validity is the ability of an instrument to measure the objectives that it was made to measure. Logical validity is of two types, face validity and content validity (Brotherton, 2008).

In face validity, the item pool should be appropriate to the construct to be measured (perceptions of HOMA Hotel service quality/satisfaction) and concerning content validity, the quantity and quality of questions should adequately represent that construct. In the present research, 9 experts agreed to give comments on the item pool; 6 experts were experienced in the Hotel industry and 3 experts were experienced academics. Among experts who were chosen for their experience, five were five-star Hotel managers and one was a middle manager in a hotel. The 3 academics were experts in tourism studies and/or service marketing studies and taught tourism Nottingham Trent University, Allameh Tabataba'i University, and

Institute of Training Research and Operational Consultancy for Tourism (INSTROCT). Based on the number of the experts, the minimum value of agreement (the proportion of experts who have agreed to one specific question) is 78 percent and any question under this value does not have validity and should be omitted (Lawshe, 1975). Furthermore, each questionnaire has a specific “QRef” number in order to be excluded if the participant was not content to share their data with the study after they have submitted the questionnaire. For construct validity the meaning of each sub-scale (four for Kano following thematic analysis and three for HOMALUXPERF following factor analysis – see later) was shared with panel experts and the salience of each populated sub-scale to the study was agreed.

### **3.5. Research Design**

#### **3.5.1. Sampling**

The participants of this study were 412 HHG hotels’ guests who were residing in Tehran and Shiraz Homa hotel branches. These hotels were chosen since the preferred sample of respondents since there were many international guests with more variety of cultures in the two hotels in comparison to other branches. Tehran is the capital of Iran and Shiraz is a cultural and important touristic city of Fars province in Iran. As mentioned above, these two hotels are located in different areas of Iran and offer different services. Furthermore, Tehran and Shiraz HHG hotels capture the full variety of cultures that are likely to visit HHG group hotels generally. However, the data of Kano model from the Tehran and Shiraz branches can be combined since these questions are about services, regardless of their experience and expectations of attributes in HHG. The population from which we are to draw our sample may be defined as the population that is present at any given moment. (412 over the two hotels), or that which is in residence over the time a sample is taken (which, if two months, could be up to 25,000). According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970), once a population exceeds

1250 sample sizes with a 5% margin of error and a 95% confidence limit vary only slightly and that a sample of 412 would cover all eventualities. There are clearly practical problems in collecting data from those who are in a hotel either for pleasure or business and, additionally, not all residents will be sufficiently fluent in English (the language used for the questionnaire). Following initial piloting of the questionnaire and subsequent awareness of how these issues would play out, it was decided that collecting data from a sample of 412 residents across the two hotels would be both practically and technically appropriate. Given, also, that the research is exploratory and not critical from a decision-making perspective an approximation was also considered appropriate. It was decided that an equal number should be taken from each hotel (approximately 200) so the two sites could be readily compared. It should be noted that the sampling method was convenience sampling which is a non-random sampling technique in which the individuals who happen to be available for the study are selected by the researcher (Mackey and Gass, 2005). The researcher distributed the questionnaires among those guests who were available and eager to be a part of this research until the required sample sizes were reached.

### **3.5.2. Data Collection**

In order to gather the required data, the researcher distributed a validated booklet questionnaire, which included three parts related to Kano, HOMALUXPERF, and Cosmopolitanism among hotel guests in both Tehran and Shiraz HHG. Having the validity indices of the instrument assured, the researcher asked the guests who were available in the lobby area of the hotels to take part in the study and filled in the questionnaire. In the first page of each questionnaire, there was an explanation about the study to assure that respondents clearly understand how to answer different related questions. Given that

knowledge and proficiency in English could not be taken for granted, the researcher also offered sufficient explanations to each participant and waited for the questionnaire to be completed. Likewise, the researcher assured the respondents that their identity and responses would be kept confidential. Then the questionnaire was entered into SPSS and suitable statistical methods were used to analyze the quantitative data.

### **3.5.3. Data Analysis**

The data analysis of this survey study comprised five main steps; Descriptive Analysis of the Data, Cultural Segmentation, Perception Comparison Based on Cultural Clustering, Perception Comparison Based on Personal Information Categories, and the Comparison of Guests' Service Categorization across Cultural Clusters.

More specifically, in the first step, the respondents' data was used for descriptive analysis to understand respondents' attributes in general. Descriptive analysis determines the number of respondents, respondents' nationalities, age, gender, frequency of travel, and purpose of trip. This information was used to investigate the factors of satisfaction further. Moreover, the underlying constructs of HOMALUXPERF and Cosmopolitanism questionnaires were examined through exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to see if such factors/components are represented in the items. Additionally, the reliability of the tools was checked via Cronbach's Alpha as an internal consistency measure. Then the data of both Shiraz and Tehran were compared using t-test to see whether they can be considered as one homogeneous sample or two separate samples.

In the second step, the classification of the respondents was done based on culture using Hierarchical Clustering Analysis and Hofstede's cultural dimensions' scores. The Hofstede's model dimensions include Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance Index, Masculinity and Femininity, Indulgence versus Restraint, Individualism versus Collectivism

and Long Term Orientation versus Short Term Orientation. The respondents' data were then tested by correlation tests in order to choose the dimensions, which are more related to satisfaction. As a result, the related Hofstede's dimensions were then used to cluster respondents via Hierarchical clustering. This then enabled the comparison of service quality/satisfaction mean scores, which was used as a proxy for satisfaction, among clusters in different levels. Segmentation was done based on each guest's country of origin, the score of every country in each culture dimension, and the Hofstede's cultural model. The dimensions' scores were categorized as High [68 to 100], Medium [34 to 68] and Low [1 to 34]. Another method of segmentation, being used, was Cosmopolitanism scale. There are items on the questionnaire that distinguish cosmopolitan participants differently. The segmentation will divide the respondents into Low [7 to 16], Medium [16 to 26] and High cosmopolitan [26 to 35]. The participants' answers to the HOMALUXPERF and Kano model were compared across the categories in the following steps.

In the third step, customers' perceptions of service quality/satisfaction, which were utilized, as a proxy for satisfaction, were evaluated by using data collected via HOMALUXPERF. Next, these mean scores in each factor were compared across Hofstede's clusters in order to find significant differences between clusters. Following the comparison of HOMALUXPERF means across Hofstede's clusters, the HOMALUXPERF means were compared across Cosmopolitanism groups.

In the fourth step, the HOMALUXPERF results were compared across Personal Information items' categories. The respondents' age categories were 20-30, 30-50 and 50<sup>+</sup>. The categories of gender were male and female. The categories of frequency of travel consisted; "Most Weeks", "Most Months", "5 times per Year", "once a Year", "Less than

once a year", and the purpose of trip was comprised of "Business" and "Leisure". The HOMALUXPERF results were compared across these categories to provide more insights into the factors that might have an effect on satisfaction. More specifically, the comparisons were made by calculating the differences between group means using One-way ANOVA (or Welch ANOVA where equal variances could not be assumed) to test the degree and significance of differences in clusters across the cultural groups in both cities. To reach deeper insights, Multiple Comparisons were also done together with Post Hoc tests that locate the differences. Furthermore, effect sizes were also calculated to establish the extent of any identified difference.

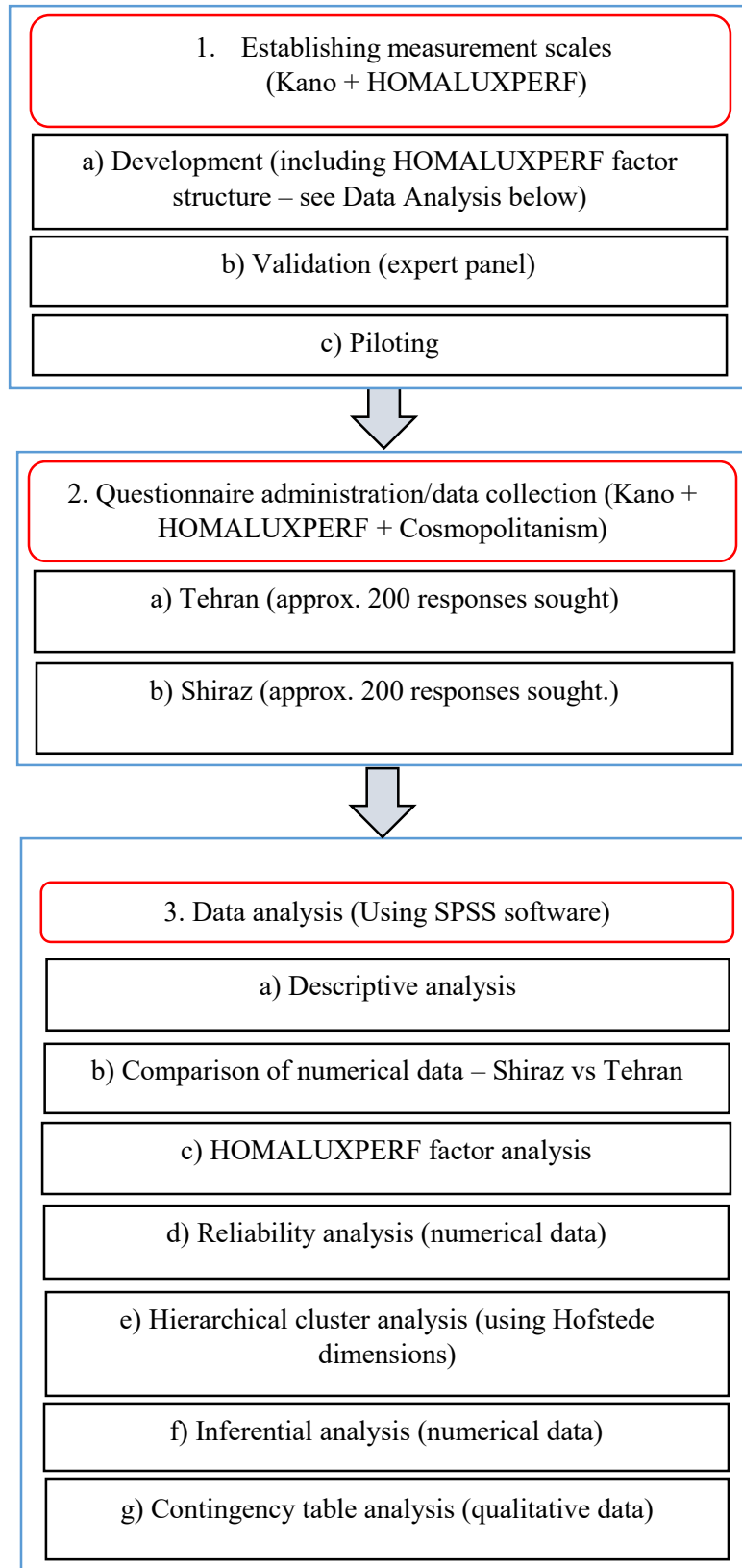
In the last step, the results of Kano model were compared across Hofstede's clusters as well as Cosmopolitanism categories. As mentioned in literature section, in Kano model the features of products and services were divided into six categories, must-be requirements, one-dimensional requirements, attractive requirements, indifferent, reversal, and questionable according to their ability in meeting customers' needs. However, in this study these categories were classified into four cultural orientations, namely "Modern Outlook" Traditional Outlook", "Utilitarian Outlook", "Cleanliness Outlook". Each outlook was questioned by a pair of functional and dysfunctional questions. More Particularly, the researcher benefited from Contingency Tables to classify the participants into the four mentioned outlooks/orientations in Shiraz and Tehran (more elaborated details are provided in the Document 4). The purpose of these categorizations was to determine the differences/similarities across cultures regarding cultural orientations, level of cosmopolitanism, and their satisfaction with each service.

#### **3.5.4. Design of the Study**

The present study took advantage of a survey research design with a questionnaire as the main research tool to collect the needed data from the target participants. According to Creswell (2012), survey research designs are procedures in quantitative research in which investigators administer a survey to a sample or to the entire population of people to describe the attitudes, opinions, behaviors, or characteristics of the population. In so doing, the researchers collect quantitative, numbered data using questionnaires (e.g., mailed questionnaires) or interviews (e.g., one-on-one interviews) and statistically analyze the data to describe trends about responses to questions and to test research questions or hypotheses. The logic behind choosing this research design is that quantitative survey design best suits the unpacking of a large group of individuals' perceptions and opinions, which is the case in the present study (See also Figure 6).



## Phases of the Study



**Figure 6.** The Schematic Representation of the Research Design

### **3.6.Limitations and Delimitations: Method and Theory**

#### **3.6.1. Limitations**

Like any other piece of research, the present study suffers from some limitations, which were beyond the researcher's control despite his considerable efforts. The first limitation lies in Kano model, which is sensitive to survey methodology problems, for example the inclusion of "I am neutral" could have an effect on the frequency of its appearance in the data since the questions that appear vague or ambiguous be answered by "I am neutral" (MacDonald et al., 2006; Mikulić et al., 2011). To overcome this problem, questionnaires have been provided with as much information as possible about how the questionnaire should be responded. The second limitation relates to the factor structure and overgeneralizations of the SERVPERF scale regarding the service contexts as well as its negligence of taking into consideration the types of hotels (resorts, motels, Inns, boutique hotels etc.). However, to overcome these problems, the current study developed an extension of SERVPERF called HOMALUXPERF which is specific to the context of the case study at hand.

Another limitation is related to the conduction of the research in which the presence of the researcher might have affected the respondents' answers to the items. In addition, as an English language questionnaire was used, some respondents may misinterpret items due to their limited language proficiency level. Preparing several versions of the questionnaire (e.g., English, French, German, Arabic and Persian) to accommodate this heterogeneity could be a good suggestion, but this would cause more complications as each version has to be the exact replication of the original and there should be no difference in the meaning of the questions across all versions of the questionnaire. Therefore, using one, English, version of the questionnaire would be more efficient and practical. To help the participants answering

the questions, the researcher provides more explanations to each of them and will wait until the completion of the questionnaire.

Yet another limitation which the researcher was faced with, was the unfamiliarity of experts in doing CVR test, so the researcher tried to give them full information and explanation about how to answer the expert questionnaire. In addition, the study was limited in that the political issues and attitudes of the guests together with the hotel's structures might have had indirect effects on the respondents' answers to the items, which were beyond the researcher's control. Finally, yet importantly, the researcher had no control over willingness, gender, age, and socio-political status of the participants of the study.

### **3.6.2. Delimitations**

As for the delimitations, this study only focused on Hofstede model and cosmopolitanism and other cultural models such as Trompenaars (1994), Hall (1981), Hall and Hall (2006), and Schwartz (1992, 1994) which could be employed as alternative measures of culture effect were excluded from the study. However, these models (i.e., Hofstede and cosmopolitanism) were used in this study as they are extensively applied in culture-related social science research and benefit from a substantive body of prior empirical knowledge offering both academic credibility and comparative potential.

Another boundary set by the researcher around this study is that it solely focuses on some factors which can affect service quality expectation and other factors such as demographic characteristics of customers, their life cycles, price, personal values, personality, purchase motivation which might have an effect on the relationship between culture and service quality expectations are not of concern (Furrer et al., 2000; Kueh and Voon, 2007; Mattila, 1999; Reimann et al., 2008).

In addition, this study just investigates cultural features of the demand side (hotel guests) but it does not consider the effect of the supply side (hotel staff) and their cultural values, which certainly affect the quality of service. Additionally, cosmopolitanism of hotel guests is a dependent variable, which can be influenced by other factors such as guest characteristics and values, origin country environment, and even political position; so, it is difficult to conclude that cosmopolitanism is the only single variable, which can effect on satisfaction of hotel guest. However, as the study includes cultural distinction, it is worth evaluating the lack of cultural distinction as a factor in satisfaction.

Another delimitation concerns the choice of hotels as the researcher focused only on Shiraz and Tehran given these were the largest and also most differentiated. However, it is not clear that results could be generalized to other branches which serve different groups of visitor. Finally, this study followed quantitative survey research design using only a questionnaire despite the fact that using a triangulated method including qualitative techniques like interview, observation, and journal diaries would enrich the data. The Limitations and delimitations reported above identify the principle factors believed in advance to effect both conduct and outcomes of the research. In addition, however, the researcher found more issues affecting outcomes that were not realized in advance but only emerged as relevant during research execution.

### **3.7. Research Ethics**

The present study does not include any sort of forcing, deceiving, or withholding of information to the respondents. Moreover, the research was not aimed specifically at those with either physical or mental incapacity, but that these may have been incorporated into the sample if they were naturally present in the guest population concerned. The questionnaires are randomly distributed across all guests, but the researcher was careful to ensure that

children were excluded. The guests are informed that the questionnaire is a part of a DBA study and not from the hotel administration. There was not any sort of voice/camera recording of the participants. The whole process of the study was confidential and the guests did not specify their names, room numbers, and ID numbers or submit any pictures of them. Additionally, guests were informed that they could depart from the research at any time without giving reasons, and could ask for their data to be removed if this had already been collected. Questionnaires (retained by the researcher) and participants' consent sheets (retained by the respondents) were cross-referenced using a randomized numbering system (See Appendix A3).

The Ethical approval of Nottingham Trent University was sought and the NTU approved the ethics of this study according to the above-mentioned issues.

### **3.8.Conclusion**

The current study, which attempted to investigate the relationship between culture and satisfaction at an Iranian luxury hotel, benefited from a variety of methodological processes. As stated in the literature review, the variables of culture, satisfaction, expectation, perception, and cosmopolitanism are complicated variables which need a triangulation of data in order to reach a vivid and inclusive picture. In so doing, this chapter covered different methodological concerns such as research philosophy, sampling, context, design, instruments, limitations and delimitations, and ethics in gathering and analyzing the data. The following chapter presents the results of different analyses carried out by the researcher in order to come across a comprehensive finding.

## **Chapter 4: Analysis**

### **4.1. Overview**

The main objective of this research is to determine whether luxury hotel guests' satisfaction varies based on their culture and whether culture is a valid predictor of satisfaction. As luxury hotel guests' perceptions of services provided are an important factor in their satisfaction, and because of its wide use in such studies, a SERVPERF-derived scale called HOMALUXPERF has been exclusively developed by the researcher for application to the present study. This has been utilized as a means to evaluate HHG hotel guest perceptions. Further, Kano's (1984) model has been used to develop a measure of different expectations of guests regarding luxury hotel attributes. Additionally, to assess luxury hotel guest's cultures Hofstede's (2011) typological method was employed which is a commonly used model. However, as global culture and globalization are growing phenomena in today's world, Cleavel et al. (2014)'s Cosmopolitanism scale was also used to evaluate the level of guests' globalized culture. In the present chapter, the findings are presented as what follows:

- A descriptive analysis of the respondents' data
- Further development of a HOMALUXPERF scale and verification of the Cosmopolitanism construct
- Establishing cultural categories and Cosmopolitan categories
- Analyses performed in pursuit of study objectives:
  - HOMALUXPERF and Hofstede's cultural categories
  - HOMALUXPERF and Cosmopolitanism
  - Kano-focused categories and Hofstede's cultural categories
  - Kano-focused categories and Cosmopolitanism

The respondents of this study were guests from Shiraz Homa Hotel and Tehran Homa Hotel. A total of 412 questionnaires were gathered during the data collection. The data provided by 201 respondents were gathered from Shiraz HHG branch and 211 responses were gathered from Tehran HHG branch. The respondents were from 42 countries all over the world. Table 6 shows the respondents' nationalities and the number of respondents for each continent. Europe has the most number of respondents, 245 respondents, followed by Asia, 121 respondents, Australia, 24 respondents, Africa, 16 respondents, and America with 6 respondents.

In the administered questionnaire (see Appendix A3), there were 7 items regarding guest's Country of residence, Nationality, Age, Gender, Previous visit to Iran, Travel frequency and purpose of trip which are shown in Table 7.

Country number	Country	No. of Respondents in Shiraz	No. of Respondents in Tehran	Total No. of Respondents	Continent	Number of respondents
1	Morocco	1	0	1	Africa	16
2	S. Africa	0	15	15		
3	USA	1	0	1	America	6
4	Brazil	1	1	2		
5	Canada	3	0	3		
6	China	3	15	18	Asia	121
7	India	1	12	13		
8	Iran	35	1	36		
9	Iraq	1	4	5		
10	Japan	6	5	11		
11	Korea	0	2	2		
12	Lebanon	1	4	5		
13	Malaysia	0	2	2		
14	Pakistan	0	5	5		
15	Russia	0	6	6		
16	Sri Lanka	0	1	1		
17	Taiwan	0	1	1		
18	Thailand	0	1	1		
19	Turkey	2	13	15		
20	Australia	22	2	24	Australia	24
21	Austria	0	3	3	Europe	245
22	Belgium	5	1	6		
23	Croatia	2	0	2		
24	Czech	0	1	1		
25	Denmark	0	3	3		
26	Estonia	0	1	1		
27	Finland	0	2	2		
28	France	17	19	36		
29	Germany	20	31	51		
30	Greece	2	2	4		
31	Hungary	0	1	1		
32	Italy	30	34	64		
33	Netherland	12	8	20		
34	Norway	0	2	2		
35	Poland	0	3	3		
36	Portugal	0	1	1		
37	Romany	0	1	1		
38	Spain	5	4	9		
39	Sweden	0	2	2		
40	Swiss	7	3	10		
41	UK	9	13	22		
42	Ukraine	0	1	1		

**Table 6:**Number of respondents for each Nationality



**a) Age**

Regarding age, the guests in Shiraz were slightly older as most of the guests were 50 years old and above. However, in Tehran, most of the guests were aged between 30 to 50 years.

**b) Purpose of Trip**

In Shiraz, most of the guests were leisure travelers (89.7%) but in Tehran, most of the guests were on business trips (89.6%).

**c) Frequency of Travel**

The guests in Tehran were travelling slightly more frequently throughout the year. The majority of the guest in Shiraz travelled once a year (44.9%) to five times a year (34.8%) but the majority of the guests in Tehran travelled 5 times a year (28.8%) to most months (37.7%).

**d) Previous Visit**

Regarding previous visits to Iran, most of the guests in Tehran (business) had visited Iran before (65.4%) but most of the guests in Shiraz (leisure) were first-time visitors (74.0%).

**e) Gender**

The guests in Tehran were mainly males (81.5%) but the population of females in Shiraz was slightly higher than males (53.8%)

<b>Shiraz</b>	<b>Groups</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Tehran</b>	<b>Groups</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Age</b>	20to30	21	10.5	<b>Age</b>	20to30	28	13.3
	30to50	51	25.5		50plus	62	29.4
	50plus	128	64.0		30to50	120	56.9
	Total	200	100.0		Total	211	100.0
<b>Gender</b>	Male	86	46.2	<b>Gender</b>	Female	38	18.5
	Female	100	53.8		Male	167	81.5
	Total	186	100.0		Total	205	100.0
<b>Previous Visit</b>	Yes	51	26.0	<b>Previous Visit</b>	No	72	34.6
	No	145	74.0		Yes	136	65.4
	Total	196	100.0		Total	208	100.0
<b>Frequency Of Travel</b>	Most Weeks	7	3.7	<b>Frequency Of Travel</b>	LessThan1	12	5.8
	Most Months	13	7.0		Most Weeks	20	9.6
	5perYear	65	34.8		1perYear	38	18.3
	1perYear	84	44.9		5perYear	60	28.8
	LessThan1	18	9.6		Most Months	78	37.5
	Total	187	100.0		Total	208	100.0
<b>Purpose Of Trip</b>	Business	20	10.3	<b>Purpose Of Trip</b>	Leisure	21	10.4
	Leisure	174	89.7		Business	181	89.6
	Total	194	100.0		Total	202	100.0

**Table 7:** Respondents' Descriptive Data from Tehran and Shiraz HHG

#### **4.3. Further Development of the HOMALUXPERF Construct and Verification of the Cosmopolitanism Construct**

Following the administration of the questionnaire and entering of subsequent data, the questions were re-assessed for their reliability and structure. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was utilized to determine how many factors were represented by the questionnaire. EFA determines the items/questions that statistically represent each factor. In this factor analysis, the Direct Oblimin rotation method was used. This is mainly because the SERVPERF model (Cronin and Taylor, 1992), which is utilized as the basis for HOMALUXPERF, used the Oblimin rotation for the EFA. Furthermore, the loadings of some factors on 2 or all the 3 dimensions imply that the factors may be related.

Table 8 shows the items that are statistically representing each factor. The best items are those that load at greater than 0.5 on one particular factor and preferably not more than half that on any other factor (Yong and Pearce, 2013). S09 loads most strongly on Factor 1 but also heavily on Factor 3. There are four stronger items for Factor 1 (S04, S06, S07, and S08) and the researcher considers this a sufficient number to represent that factor, therefore S09 will be excluded.

<b>Rotated Pattern Matrix</b>			
<b>HOMALUXPERF Items</b>	<b>Component</b>		
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
S01		<b>0.89</b>	
S02		<b>0.84</b>	
S03		<b>0.90</b>	
S04	<b>0.67</b>	0.21	
S05	0.36	<b>0.53</b>	
S06	<b>0.85</b>		-0.15
S07	<b>0.93</b>		
S08	<b>0.78</b>	0.12	
S09	0.61		0.52
S010	0.37	0.19	<b>0.51</b>
S011	0.47		<b>0.58</b>
S012	-0.20		<b>0.86</b>

**KEY:** Strong Loadings are in **Bold**

**Table 8:**Rotated Pattern Matrix

For Factor 3, S10 and S11 do not fully satisfy the loading rules but eliminating these items would leave only one question for “Component 3”. Moreover, S05 does not fully comply with the loading rules for Factor 2. As the expert panel had agreed upon a relatively short-form version of a SERVPERF questionnaire to be employed for the survey, the researcher was keen not to drop even more content via EFA. The researcher preferred not to have less than three items per factor and four if possible for subsequent relational analyses.

This was to ensure there was sufficient content in each category for respondents to provide opinions on. Consequently, S10, S11 and S05 were conditionally retained and taken forward into reliability analysis to examine if further justification could be found for retaining them.

The names of the factors were chosen in accordance to the subjects and themes of each factor's questions. In view of the fact that S01, S02, S03, and S05 were linked to the appearance and the ambiance of the hotel, Component 2 was renamed "Hotel Appeal". As the S04, S06, S07, S08 were associated with staffs' appearance and professionalism, and the S10, S11, S12 were related to having consideration for a range of customer sensitivities, Component 1 and Component 3 were respectively named as "Staff Appeal" and "Customer Acquiescence".

Results from administering the Cosmopolitanism scale proposed by Clevel et al. (2014) was also tested with factor analysis and using Yong and Pearce's (2013) decision criteria for factor loading. This determined that the scale is a one-dimensional one, confirming the findings of Chapa and Hausman (2010). Table 9 demonstrates the component matrix for Cosmopolitanism factor analysis.

The next test was to determine the reliability of both HOMALUXPERF and Cosmopolitanism using Cronbach's Alpha. Table 10 shows that Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for the Cosmopolitanism scale was 0.97 which is an excellent value for this coefficient based on the rule of thumb for interpreting alpha (Tavakol and Dennick, 2011). For the HOMALUXPERF scale, the Alpha for "Hotel Appeal", "Staff Appeal" and "Customer Acquiescence" (which will be referred to as "Acquiescence" from this point onwards) were respectively 0.85, 0.87, and 0.70 which are all suitable or acceptable values.

Additionally, this provides support for retaining S05, S10 and S11. The data taken forward into the relational analyses therefore, was based on 10 items, with at least three items per factor. This was provided for a compromise between statistical rigor and meaningful content which was considered appropriate to the further objectives of the study (i.e. establishing robust service quality/satisfaction categories that could be used for understanding relevance of culture to guest satisfaction).

<b>Component matrix</b>	
<b>Cosmopolitanism Items</b>	<b>Component 1</b>
Cosmo1	0.91
Cosmo2	0.92
Cosmo3	0.94
Cosmo4	0.94
Cosmo5	0.91
Cosmo6	0.91
Cosmo7	0.90

**Table 9:**Component Matrix for Cosmopolitanism Items

The next step following the Factor Analysis and testing the reliability if those factors, would be to test if these factors are significantly different between the two cities of Shiraz and Tehran. This was to test whether the data from the two cities can be combined and analyzed as one sample or whether they should be kept separate.

<b>Model</b>	<b>Components</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Reliability</b>
<b>Cosmopolitanism</b>	-	0.97	Excellent
<b>HOMALUXPERF</b>	Hotel Appeal	0.85	Good
	Staff Appeal	0.87	Good
	Acquiescence	0.70	Acceptable

**Table 10:**Cronbach's Alpha for all the Components

An Independent-sample t-test was conducted between the two cities, ("Hotel Appeal", "Staff Appeal", "Customer Acquiescence" which similarly showed that the means of the four factors were different across the two cities. This is because 'Sig' was below 0.05

in all cases (see Table 11). Therefore, the further analyses will be conducted separately. The effect size values (Cohen's d) showed that the differences had medium to large effect sizes. It should be noted that the effect size values were examined against three benchmarks of 0.03 (small), 0.05 (medium), and 0.08 (large).

According to Field (2013), there are three types of effects when it comes to something having an effect on another including: 1) Large effects, 2) Medium effects, and 3) Small effects. In this study, the effect of culture on satisfaction is explored in order to be able to provide recommendations to increase guest satisfaction. Hence, the effect of culture must be in the area of large and medium effects so that the possible recommendations hold sufficient significance. For large effects, 77 participants would be enough and for the medium effects, 160 participants would be sufficient (Field, 2013). Consequently, 200 respondents from each branch of HHG would be ideal for this study.

Factor	Cities						Difference				
	Tehran			Shiraz			Equal Variance	T	df	Sig	Cohen's d
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD					
Hotel Appeal	210	3.54	0.57	193	3.88	0.92	Assumed	4.51	401	0.00	0.45 (Medium)
							Not Assumed	4.42	314.6	0.00	0.50 (Medium)
Staff Appeal	200	3.05	0.70	197	3.53	0.84	Assumed	6.20	395	0.00	0.62 (Medium)
							Not Assumed	6.20	380.83	0.00	0.64 (Medium)
Acquiescence	204	3.36	0.46	192	3.85	0.75	Assumed	7.92	394	0.00	0.80 (Large)
							Not Assumed	7.81	312.89	0.00	0.88 (Large)

**Table 11:**Results of Independent Sample t-test between Shiraz and Tehran

#### **4.4.Establishing Cultural Categories**

In order to cluster guests into cultural categories for the next rounds of analysis, it was deemed to use hierarchical cluster analysis to organize the 42 separate nations according to culture grouping rather than geography. To start with, each country should be scored against each of Hofstede's cultural dimensions (Power Distance, Individuality, Masculinity, Uncertainty Avoidance, Long-term Orientation and Indulgence) using the Hofstede-Insights (2018) system. The clustering would then identify which countries were most similar to each other across all the six categories and organize them accordingly. However, analyzing across all six dimensions would make the analysis very complex, so to reduce these a test was given to see which dimensions correlated best using data collected through the HOMALUXPERF scales. This showed that two dimensions of the Hofstede's model (2011) do not correlate well with service quality/satisfaction.

As shown in Table 12, the Masculinity and Long-term Orientation dimensions of Hofstede's model (2011) were not significantly correlated to any of the HOMALUXPERF factors established earlier. The "Power Distance", "Uncertainty Avoidance", "Individuality" and "Indulgence" dimensions of the Hofstede's model (2011) seemed very relevant to the hotel service quality/satisfaction factors anyhow. Consequently, just these four dimensions were taken through to the next stage of analysis.

Correlations								
			P.D.	INDV	MAS	U.A.	L.O.	INDG
Spearman's rho	Hotel Appeal	Correlation	-.08	.14	.02	-.12	-.08	.13
		Sig.	.11	<b>.00</b>	.70	<b>.01</b>	.10	<b>.01</b>
		N	403	403	403	403	403	403
	Staff Appeal	Correlation	-.11	.21	-.00	-.07	-.07	.15
		Sig.	<b>.03</b>	<b>.00</b>	.96	.17	.15	<b>.00</b>
		N	397	397	397	397	397	397
	Acquiescence	Correlation	-.09	.16	.04	-.07	-.06	.12
		Sig.	.07	<b>.00</b>	.47	.18	.25	<b>.01</b>
		N	396	396	396	396	396	396

**Key:** Significant correlations are in **bold**

P.D.= Power Distance; INDV= Individualism; MAS= Masculinity; U.A.= Uncertainty Avoidance;  
L.O.= Long-term Orientation; INDG= Indulgence

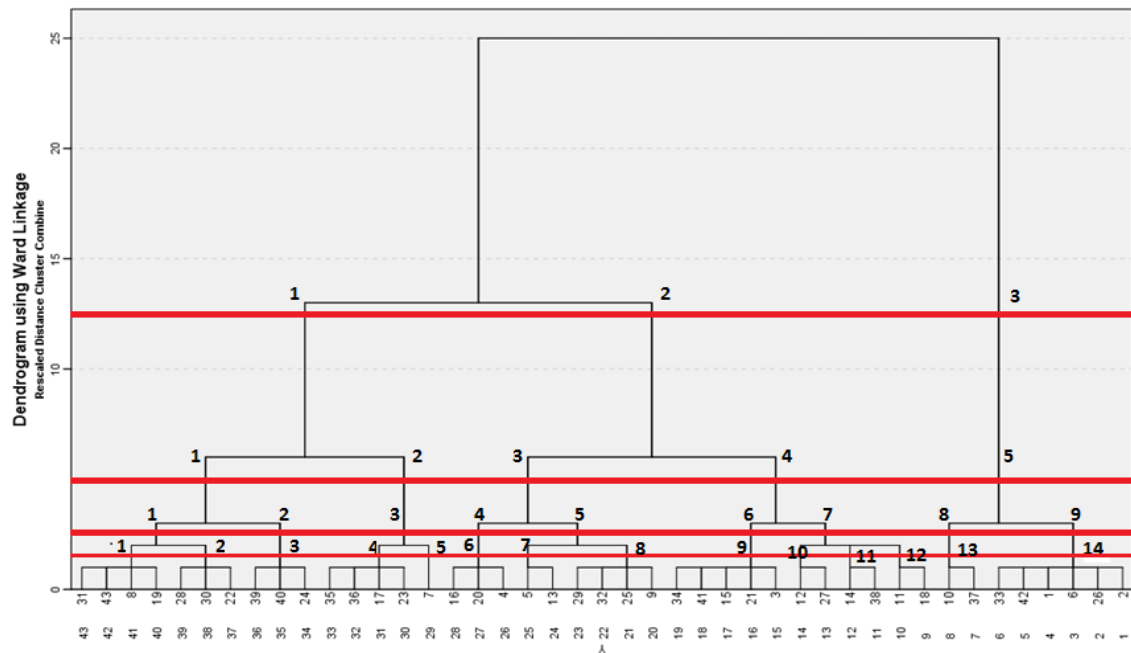
**Table 12:**Correlation between Hofstede's model's Dimension and Satisfaction Factors

Luxury hotel guests were classified into clusters by hierarchical clustering method in IBM SPSS based on the Hofstede's model (2011) scores. The data showed that the total number of nationalities that were present in the sample was 42. The nationalities/countries were numbered (see Table 6) from 1 to 42 and the Hofstede's model (2011) scores of each country organized around the four accepted dimensions was set as separate variables, after which the hierarchical clustering was conducted to classify the countries based on their Hofstede's model (2011) scores.

The Hierarchical clustering produced a Dendrogram based on the Hofstede's model (2011) scores of the respondents' national countries (100 is maximum possible for each). The Dendrogram (Figure 7) shows the clusters in different levels. The



Hofstede's model (2011) scores in the 4 dimensions were classified as “High” (scores between 66.6 and 100), “Medium” (scores between 33.3 and 66.6) and “Low” (scores between 0 and 33.3) for clustering purposes. This was to set each country's collective cultural profile (combination of four scores) at different clustering levels. For example, both USA and Australia are Medium in “PD”, Medium in “UA” and High in “Individualism” and High in “Indulgence” therefore will cluster together at the lowest level of hierarchical analysis. At subsequent levels of clustering, the extent of similarity decreases at each iteration so countries with different, but similar profiles will be clustered together. As a result of the decrease in similarity, the number of clusters decreases and ultimately, just one cluster will exist coincidentally evidencing the full diversity of the countries involved.



**Figure 7:** Dendrogram of Classifying Countries based on Hofstede's model Scores

The purpose of this exercise was to find out if any groups would become significantly different in terms of their SERVPERF scores at different cluster levels. The red lines (drawn

to signify the levels) show the level of classification and each vertical graph line shows a cluster. Four levels of classification are evident as there are four red lines. These levels are called as 3-cluster level, 5-cluster level, 9-cluster level, and 14-cluster level being the number of clusters in each level. Clustering is based on all the countries that are available in the study and the clustering is not specified to one city. The Tables in Appendix A2 show the countries included in each cluster at each level.

As it can be noticed in the Dendrogram at Figure 7, the clusters in different levels can be the same, for instance, cluster 2 in 5-cluster level is exactly identical to the cluster 3 in 9-cluster level. To avoid analyzing the same clusters multiple times in different levels, the repeated clusters were eliminated.

Another important issue was the number of respondents in the clusters. Table 13 shows the clusters in different levels which had at least 18 respondents and were considered large enough for analysis. Sample sizes below this were considered too small for rigorous analysis. The clusters are the same across the cities, for instance, cluster 14 includes the same countries in Shiraz and Tehran, only the number of respondents are different in each city for each country. In summation, two criteria were used to determine the clusters that could be considered for ANOVA tests, first, the number of respondents that each cluster would include and second, not repeating the same cluster at more than one level.

14 cluster level		9 cluster level		5 cluster level		3 cluster level	
Cluster no. (sample size)		Cluster no. (sample size)		Cluster no. (sample size)		Cluster no. (sample size)	
Shiraz	Tehran	Shiraz	Tehran	Shiraz	Tehran	Shiraz	Tehran
1 (3)	1 (6)	1 (3)	1 (14)	1 (3)	<b>1 (18)</b>	1 (13)	<b>1 (54)</b>
2 (0)	2(8)	2 (I)	2 (I)	2 (VII)	2 (VII)	<b>2 (140)</b>	<b>2 (129)</b>
3 (0)	3(4)	3 (10)	<b>3 (36)</b>	<b>3 (53)</b>	<b>3 (65)</b>	<b>3 (46)</b>	<b>3 (29)</b>
4 (7)	<b>4(21)</b>	4(II)	4 (II)	<b>4 (87)</b>	<b>4 (63)</b>		
5(3)	5(15)	<b>5 (19)</b>	<b>5 (29)</b>	<b>5 (46)</b>	<b>5 (29)</b>		
<b>6(34)</b>	<b>6(36)</b>	<b>6 (25)</b>	<b>6 (23)</b>				
<b>7(18)</b>	<b>7(19)</b>	<b>7 (62)</b>	<b>7 (40)</b>				
8(1)	8(10)	8 (IV)	8 (IV)				
9 (III)	9 (III)	9 (V)	9 (V)				
10(0)	10(4)						
<b>11(27)</b>	<b>11(34)</b>						
<b>12(35)</b>	12(2)						
13(0)	13(5)						
<b>14(47)</b>	<b>14(23)</b>						

*Key: Clusters selected for ANOVA tests are in Bold*

*(I) Duplicates cluster 3 in Cluster Level 14, (II) Duplicates cluster 6 in Cluster Level 14, (III) Duplicates cluster 6 in Cluster Level 9, (IV) Duplicates cluster 13 in Cluster Level 14, (V) Duplicates cluster 14 in Cluster Level 14, (VI) Duplicates cluster 5 in Cluster Level 5, (VII) Duplicates cluster 3 in Cluster Level 9*

**Table 13:** Clusters considered for the ANOVA tests used later

To explain this further, any significant differences would suggest that cultural differences, as expressed through Hofstede's (2011) model, has had an effect on the attitudes of the guests in HHG. For example, in 5-cluster level if any of the clusters are significantly different from each other, this would mean guests from these clusters have different opinions and since the classification is based on Hofstede's model (2011) scores, ultimately it would show that based on the guests' cultural differences the level of satisfaction varies. These analyses have been done separately in city 1 (Shiraz) and city 2 (Tehran). Cluster analyses have been done in three levels (5-cluster level, 9- cluster level and 14-cluster level). At 3 Cluster level there are only two clusters in Shiraz that satisfy the designated sample size, so not considered useful to analyze. For Cosmopolitanism, numerical results are available as

these are obtained from a scale that asks respondents to score from 1 to 5. However, to be consistent with Hofstede which was scored as categorical, Cosmopolitanism will be scored similarly. The scores are therefore split into high Cosmopolitanism (25 to 35), medium Cosmopolitanism (16 to 24), and Low Cosmopolitanism (7 to 15).

#### **4.5. Analysis in Pursuit of Study Objectives**

The analyses in sections 4.1 to 4.4 were conducted to prepare the necessary data for comparisons that would aid to accomplish the objectives of the present study. Following on from the preparatory work, the present section covers the analyses required to examine relationships relevant to the research objectives. Table 14 shows the prospective analyses done in the following sections

Section	Analysis	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable
4.4.1	ANOVA: Cultural Difference and Satisfaction	Hofstede clusters: Cluster levels 5, 9, 14	HOMALUXPERF
4.4.2	ANOVA: Absence of Culture Difference and Satisfaction	Cosmopolitanism: High, Medium, Low	HOMALUXPERF
4.4.3	ANOVA: Guest Personal Information and Satisfaction	Age group Frequency of Travel Previous visit Gender	HOMALUXPERF
4.4.4	Contingency Table s: Cultural Difference and Expectations of Luxury Hotel Attributes	Hofstede clusters: Cluster 6, 7, 11, 12, 14, 9, 4	Kano -derived Guest Preferences
4.4.5	Contingency Table s: Absence of Cultural Difference and Expectations of Luxury Hotel Attributes	Cosmopolitanism: High, Medium, Low	Kano -derived Guest Preferences

**Table 14:**Following sections and the analyses performed in each section

#### **4.5.1. HOMALUXPERF and Hofstede's Cultural Categories**

In this part, in order to investigate whether there is a significant difference between hotel guests' satisfaction based on their culture, the ANOVA and Multiple Comparisons were used. To investigate the significant differences between the clusters, the One-way ANOVA test was utilized. The independent variable was the cultural categories and the dependent variable was the HOMALUXPERF scores. The ANOVA test is suitable for comparing means of categorical independent variables and numerical dependent variables (Park, 2003). Table below (Table 15) shows the ANOVA tests between clusters of different clustering levels and the HOMALUXPERF scores. As stated earlier above the Hierarchical clustering is utilized

to find out at which level (if any) groups become significantly different in terms of their HOMALUXPERF scores. Two types of ANOVA tests were utilized, One-way ANOVA and Welch ANOVA. The Welch test ANOVA is used when the “Test of Homogeneity of Variances” shows a significant value for a Dependent Variable. For multivariate measures (e.g. HOMALUXPERF) MANOVAs are usually done to test for between-group differences. These allow for possible factor covariance and provide more conservative estimates of effect. However, as we wanted to identify the possibility of differences (rather than the statistically certain presence of differences) a series of ANOVAs were run, one for each factor. Note, too, that given still relatively small sample sizes, analyses were initially performed using boot-strapping (Konietschke and Pauly, 2014). However, means and standard deviations remained largely as is, and in some cases standard errors depreciated, so this was not continued.

Based on the results, it can be observed that the differences in Shiraz are more significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). Moreover, 14 Cluster level shows more significant differences in both cities than other cluster levels. Only Hotel Appeal and Staff Appeal in 14 Cluster level show significant differences in Tehran city. The 3 Cluster level, Shiraz has only two clusters and the Tehran shows no significance therefore, it is not considered for analysis.

To explore the significant differences more precisely, Post-hoc multiple comparison tests were then carried out to see exactly between which clusters these significant differences occur. Both Tukey and Bonferroni tests were made to study differences given by the One-way ANOVA test (Abdi and Williams, 2010) and Games-Howell Post-hoc tests were used for the Welch ANOVA tests (Einarsdóttir, 2016).

HOMALUXPERF	14 Cluster level				9 Cluster level				5 Cluster level			
	Shiraz		Tehran		Shiraz		Tehran		Shiraz		Tehran	
	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.
Hotel Appeal	4.02	<b>0.02*</b>	2.82	<b>0.03</b>	2.80	0.15	2.53	0.06	2.51	0.06*	0.46	0.71
Staff Appeal	12.84	<b>0.00</b>	2.32	0.06	5.36	<b>0.00</b>	2.50	0.06	8.54	<b>0.00*</b>	0.62	0.60
Acquiescence	2.18	<b>0.03*</b>	1.42	0.23	3.57	<b>0.03</b>	1.31	0.27	3.54	<b>0.04*</b>	1.05	0.37

KEY: \* the Welch ANOVA test's Sig. value. Significant values are in **Bold**

**Table 15:**Results of One-way ANOVA and Welch ANOVA between Hofstede's model clusters and HOMALUXPERF scores

#### 4.5.1.1.Post Hoc Tests: HOMALUXPERF and Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions in

##### Shiraz

Table 16 shows the Games-Howell Post-hoc test results for the Staff Appeal factor of HOMALUXPERF in 5-cluster level, city 1, Shiraz, where ANOVA tests indicate a significant difference then the results of post hoc multiple comparison tests are shown as well.

SERVPERF Factors	Hofstede Clusters				Sig.( $p < 0.05$ )	Effect Size ( $\eta^2$ )	
	Cluster	Mean	SD	Cluster		value	interpretation
Staff Appeal	3	3.66	0.75	4	<b>0.01</b>	<b>0.035</b>	<b>small-medium</b>
				5	0.49	0.004	small
	4	3.25	0.93	3	<b>0.01</b>	<b>0.035</b>	<b>small-medium</b>
				5	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.059</b>	<b>medium</b>
	5	3.82	0.61	3	0.49	0.004	small
				4	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.059</b>	<b>medium</b>
Acquiescence	3	3.94	0.58	No Significance			
	4	3.67	0.90	3	0.09	0.017	small
				5	<b>0.04</b>	<b>0.059</b>	<b>medium</b>
	5	3.99	0.58	3	0.90	0.004	small
				4	<b>0.04</b>	<b>0.059</b>	<b>medium</b>

**Table 16:**Multiple Comparisons between HOMALUXPERF scores and Hofstede's model Clusters in level 5, in Shiraz

The Welch ANOVA test showed no significance for the Hotel Appeal, therefore no Post-hoc test would be necessary for this factor. In Staff Appeal category of services Cluster 4 is significantly different from cluster 3 ( $p= 0.01$ ) and cluster 5 ( $p=0.00$ ). The effect size was small to medium for the former and medium for the latter. There was no significant difference between clusters 3 and 5 ( $p=0.49$ ). In Acquiescence category of services Cluster 4 is significantly different from cluster 5 ( $p= 0.04$ ) with medium effect size.

It should be noted that for determination of effect sizes, eta-squared ( $\eta^2$ ) values were calculated. For the purpose of interpretation of these values, three benchmarks of 0.01 (small), 0.05 (medium), and large (0.14) were used as references. The values between the benchmarks were reported as mixed (i.e., small-medium or medium-high) when fallen in-between or same as the benchmark (i.e., small, medium, large) when close to the benchmark.

SERVPERF Factors	Hofstede Clusters				Sig. ( $p < 0.05$ )	Effect Size ( $\eta^2$ )	
	Cluster	Mean	SD	Cluster		value	interpretation
Staff Appeal	5	3.67	0.86	6	1.00	0.000	small
				7	<b>0.04</b>	<b>0.046</b>	<b>medium</b>
	6	3.67	1.16	5	1.00	0.000	small
				7	<b>0.02</b>	<b>0.055</b>	<b>medium</b>
	7	3.09	0.78	5	<b>0.04</b>	<b>0.046</b>	<b>medium</b>
				6	<b>0.02</b>	<b>0.055</b>	<b>medium</b>
Acquiescence	5	3.93	0.61	6	0.94	0.001	small
				7	0.17	0.025	small
	6	4.01	0.87	5	0.94	0.001	small
				7	<b>0.05</b>	<b>0.042</b>	<b>medium</b>
	7	3.53	0.89	5	0.17	0.025	small
				6	<b>0.05</b>	<b>0.042</b>	<b>medium</b>

**Table 17:** Multiple Comparisons between HOMALUXPERF scores and Hofstede's model Clusters in level 9, in Shiraz



HOMALUXPERF	Hofstede Clusters				Sig.( <i>p</i> < 0.05)	Effect Size (η²)	
	cluster	Mean	SD	Cluster		Pairwise	Overall
Hotel Appeal	6	3.86	0.73	No significance			
	7	4.01	0.63	6	0.93	0.002	small
				11	0.96	0.002	small
				12	<b>0.04</b>	<b>0.035</b>	<b>small-medium</b>
				14	0.99	0.001	small
	11	3.85	0.96	No significance			
	12	3.35	1.02	6	0.15	0.001	small
				7	<b>0.04</b>	<b>0.035</b>	<b>small-medium</b>
				11	0.32	0.002	small
				14	<b>0.01</b>	<b>0.073</b>	<b>medium</b>
	14	4.09	0.76	6	0.65	0.006	small
				7	0.99	0.000	small
				11	0.82	0.006	small
				12	<b>0.01</b>	<b>0.073</b>	<b>medium</b>
Staff appeal	6	3.65	0.69	7	0.92	0.003	small
				11	0.71	0.005	small
				12	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.083</b>	<b>medium-large</b>
				14	0.83	0.005	small
	7	3.82	0.59	6	0.92	0.003	small
				11	0.33	0.012	small
				12	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.083</b>	<b>medium-large</b>
				14	1.00	0.000	small
	11	3.43	0.82	6	0.71	0.005	small
				7	0.33	0.012	small
				12	<b>0.01</b>	<b>0.039</b>	<b>small-medium</b>
				14	0.14	0.019	small
	12	2.83	0.64	6	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.083</b>	<b>medium-large</b>
				7	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.083</b>	<b>medium-large</b>
				11	<b>0.01</b>	<b>0.039</b>	<b>small-medium</b>
				14	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.132</b>	<b>large</b>
	14	3.82	0.61	6	0.83	0.005	small
				7	1.00	0.000	small
				11	0.14	0.019	small
				12	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.132</b>	<b>large</b>
Acquiescence	6	3.95	0.57	7	1.00	0.000	small
				11	0.71	0.006	small
				12	<b>0.04</b>	<b>0.039</b>	<b>small-medium</b>
				14	1.00	0.000	small
	7	3.93	0.63	No significance			
	11	3.72	0.72	No significance			
	12	3.40	0.97	6	<b>0.04</b>	<b>0.039</b>	<b>small-medium</b>
				7	0.14	0.025	small
				11	0.59	0.012	small
				14	<b>0.02</b>	<b>0.050</b>	<b>medium</b>
	14	3.99	0.58	6	1.00	0.000	small
				7	0.99	0.000	small
				11	0.54	0.001	small
				12	<b>0.02</b>	<b>0.050</b>	<b>medium</b>

**Table 18:** Multiple Comparisons between HOMALUXPERF scores and Hofstede's model Clusters in level 14, in Shiraz

The table 17 shows the post-hoc test results for 9-cluster level, evidence of difference between cluster 7 and cluster 6 ( $p= 0.02$ ,  $\eta^2 = 0.055$ , representing a medium effect size) and cluster 5 ( $p=0.04$ ,  $\eta^2 = 0.046$ , representing a medium effect size), in the Staff Appeal factor is present. This means the guests with nationalities of cluster 7, in 9-cluster level, in Shiraz, had different satisfaction levels from other guests in Shiraz and 9-cluster level. In Customer Acquiescence category of services cluster 6 is significantly different from cluster 7 ( $p= 0.05$ ,  $\eta^2 = 0.042$ , representing a medium effect size).

Based on the Table18, in Hotel Appeal category of services, the cluster 12 is significantly different from clusters 7 ( $p= 0.04$ ,  $\eta^2 = 0.035$ , representing a small-medium effect size) and 14 ( $p= 0.02$ ,  $\eta^2 = 0.073$ , representing a medium effect size). In Staff Appeal category of services, the cluster 12 is significantly different from cluster 6 ( $p= 0.00$ ,  $\eta^2 = 0.083$ , representing a medium to large effect size), cluster 7 ( $p= 0.00$ ,  $\eta^2 = 0.083$ , representing a medium to large effect size), cluster 11 ( $p= 0.01$ ,  $\eta^2 = 0.039$ , representing a small to medium effect size) and cluster 14 ( $p= 0.00$ ,  $\eta^2 = 0.083$ , representing a large effect size). In Acquiescence category of services, the cluster 12 is significantly different from cluster 6 ( $p= 0.04$ ,  $\eta^2 = 0.083$ , representing a small to medium effect size) and cluster 14 ( $p= 0.02$ ,  $\eta^2 = 0.05$ , representing a medium effect size).

#### **4.5.1.2.Post Hoc Tests: HOMALUXPERF and Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions in Tehran**

The 5-cluster level and the 9-cluster level analysis in Tehran did not produce any results due to lack of sufficient data.

HOMALUXPERF	Hofstede Clusters				Sig. ( $p < 0.05$ )	Effect Size ( $\eta^2$ )	
	Compared cluster	Mean	SD	Cluster		value	interpretation
Hotel Appeal	4	3.80	0.52	6	0.79	0.005	small
				7	<b>0.02</b>	<b>0.031</b>	<b>small-medium</b>
				11	0.34	0.012	small
				14	0.85	0.004	small
	6	3.61	0.49	No Significance			
	7	3.21	0.78	4	<b>0.02</b>	<b>0.031</b>	<b>small-medium</b>
				6	0.11	0.017	small
				11	0.45	0.001	small
				14	0.17	0.017	small
	11	3.49	0.58	No Significance			
	14	3.62	0.61	No Significance			

**Key:** Significant values are in **Bold**

**Table 19:** Multiple Comparisons between HOMALUXPERF scores and Hofstede's model Clusters at level 14, in Tehran

In Table 19, Multiple Comparisons at 14-cluster level, in Tehran is shown. The Tukey and Bonferroni tests indicated the same results that in Hotel Appeal (F11), cluster 4 is significantly different from cluster 7 ( $p = 0.02$ ,  $\eta^2 = 0.031$ , representing a small to medium effect size).

#### 4.5.1.3. Summary

In summation, the comparisons indicated whether the means of HOMALUXPERF components have significant differences among different clusters, which were made based on the Hofstede's model (2011). Another related issue was that the quality and the appearances of Tehran and Shiraz HHG were different; this was based on the one-sample t-test between HOMALUXPERF results from the two branches that showed the data from these two were significantly different. Subsequently, the analyses were conducted separately.

According to the test results, it can be pointed out that most of the clusters did not show any significant differences among each other. In City 1, Shiraz, the relevant clusters that showed the most significant differences were cluster 4 in 5-cluster level with small to

medium and medium effect sizes in pairwise comparisons, cluster 7 in 9-cluster level with medium effect sizes in pairwise comparisons and cluster 12 in 14-cluster level with small to medium, medium, medium to large and large effect sizes in pairwise comparisons. In city 2, Tehran, the significant differences were scarcer and the only significant differences were between clusters 4 and 7 in 14-cluster level with small to medium effect sizes in pairwise comparisons. The Appendix A2 shows these clusters' compositions.

#### **4.5.2. HOMALUXPERF and Cosmopolitanism**

As mentioned earlier, the Cosmopolitanism scale developed by Cleveland et al. (2014) was utilized to assess the global culture's relationship with the respondents' satisfaction. To approach this agenda, ANOVA test and Post Hoc Multiple Comparisons tests were again utilized.

There were seven questions in the aforementioned scale (see Appendix A3). Based on respondents' answers to these seven questions (scored 1 to 5, maximum 35), the respondents were divided into low (7 to 15), medium (16 to 24) and high (25 to 35) groups. Scores between 7 and 16 were labeled as Low. This is because there is no zero in the answer options (see Appendix A3). The scores between 16 and 25 are labeled as Medium and the ones between 26 and 35 are labeled as High. According to Table 20, the majority of the respondents in Tehran were in Medium Cosmopolitan group (55.6%) however, the majority of the respondents in Shiraz were High Cosmopolitan group (78.4%).

Shiraz	Groups	Frequency	Percent	Tehran	Groups	Frequency	Percent
Cosmopolitanism	High	152	78.4	Cosmopolitanism	High	31	29.4
	Medium	28	14.4		Medium	115	55.6
	Low	14	7.2		Low	61	15.0
	Total	194	100		Total	207	100

**Table 20:** Respondents' Cosmopolitanism Data from Tehran and Shiraz HHG

If the HOMALUXPERF components had significantly different scores in these Cosmopolitan groups, this could show the effects of the Cosmopolitanism (i.e. the relative absence, rather than presence, of cultural diversity) on the guests' satisfaction. The dependent variables for this test were the HOMALUXPERF components and the independent variable was the Cosmopolitanism groups.

Table 21 demonstrates that there are significant differences between Cosmopolitanism and HOMALUXPERF in both Tehran and Shiraz. In Shiraz all the HOMALUXPERF factors show significant differences which translates to Cosmopolitanism having an effect on how the guests perceived the Hotel Appeal services. However, in Tehran the Acquiescence factor did not show any significant differences. The following sections will demonstrate the Post-hoc results, first, for Shiraz City and, second, Tehran City HHG.

HOMALUXPERF	Cosmopolitanism			
	Shiraz		Tehran	
	F	Sig.	F	Sig.( $p < 0.05$ )
Hotel Appeal	21.11	<b>0.00</b>	10.65	<b>0.00*</b>
Staff Appeal	11.90	<b>0.00</b>	12.51	<b>0.00*</b>
Acquiescence	22.31	<b>0.00*</b>	2.16	0.12

Key: “\*” Welch ANOVA Sig. Value, Significant values are in **Bold**

**Table 21:** ANOVA test results between HOMALUXPERF and Cosmopolitanism

#### 4.5.2.1. Post Hoc Tests: HOMALUXPERF and Cosmopolitanism in Shiraz

Table 22 shows the post-hoc results for comparisons between High, Medium and Low cosmopolitan guests in City 1, Shiraz. Based on the post-hoc comparisons Table 22, the Tukey and Bonferroni tests indicated the same results, that in Hotel Appeal the high Cosmopolitanism group, the low Cosmopolitanism group at  $p = 0.00$   $\eta^2 = 0.126$ , representing a medium to large effect size, and the medium Cosmopolitanism group at  $p = 0.01$  with  $\eta^2 = 0.035$ , representing a small to medium effect size, are all significantly different from each other. In Staff Appeal, results show that Low Cosmopolitanism group is significantly different from both high Cosmopolitanism group at  $p = 0.00$  with  $\eta^2 = 0.073$ , representing a medium effect size, and the medium Cosmopolitanism group at  $p = 0.007$  with  $\eta^2 = 0.035$ , representing a small to medium effect size.

HOMALUXPERF Factors	Cosmopolitanism groups				Sig.(p< 0.05)	Effect Size ( $\eta^2$ )	
	Cluster	Mean	SD	Cluster		value	interpretation
Hotel Appeal	Low	2.60	1.13	Medium	<b>0.01</b>	<b>0.039</b>	<b>small-medium</b>
				High	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.126</b>	<b>medium-large</b>
	Medium	3.51	0.86	Low	<b>0.01</b>	<b>0.039</b>	<b>small-medium</b>
				High	<b>0.01</b>	<b>0.035</b>	<b>small-medium</b>
	High	4.05	0.80	Low	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.126</b>	<b>medium-large</b>
				Medium	<b>0.01</b>	<b>0.035</b>	<b>small-medium</b>
Staff Appeal	Low	2.60	0.77	Medium	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.035</b>	<b>small-medium</b>
				High	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.073</b>	<b>medium</b>
	Medium	3.44	0.79	Low	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.035</b>	<b>small-medium</b>
				High	0.49	0.005	small
	High	3.62	0.86	Low	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.073</b>	<b>medium</b>
				Medium	0.49	0.005	small
Acquiescence	Low	2.74	1.13	Medium	<b>0.05</b>	<b>0.042</b>	<b>medium</b>
				High	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.098</b>	<b>medium-large</b>
	Medium	3.65	0.83	Low	<b>0.05</b>	<b>0.042</b>	<b>medium</b>
				High	0.11	0.014	small
	High	4.00	0.58	Low	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.098</b>	<b>medium-large</b>
				Medium	0.11	0.014	small

**Key:** Significant values are in **Bold**

**Table 22:** Multiple Comparisons between HOMALUXPERF scores and Cosmopolitanism scores in Shiraz

In customer Acquiescence, results show the same results as the Hotel Appeal Component. The high Cosmopolitanism group, the low Cosmopolitanism group at  $p= 0.00$  with  $\eta^2 = 0.098$ , representing a medium to large effect size, and the medium Cosmopolitanism group at  $p= 0.01$  with  $\eta^2 = 0.042$ , representing a medium effect size, are all significantly different from each other.

#### 4.5.2.2. Post Hoc Tests: HOMALUXPERF and Cosmopolitanism in Tehran

Table 23 shows the post-hoc comparisons test results between HOMALUXPERF and Cosmopolitanism Model in Tehran. Based on the above post-hoc comparisons table, the Tukey and Bonferroni tests indicate that in Hotel Appeal the high Cosmopolitanism group ( $M= 3.94$ ,  $SD= 0.52$ ) is significantly different from the low ( $M= 3.39$ ,  $SD= 0.64$ ) at  $p= 0.00$  with  $\eta^2 = 0.039$ , representing a small to medium effect size, and the medium Cosmopolitanism group ( $M= 3.50$ ,  $SD=0.49$ ) at  $p= 0.00$  with  $\eta^2 = 0.039$ , representing a small to medium effect size.

Similarly, in Staff Appeal, results show that there is a significant difference between low Cosmopolitanism group (M= 2.44, SD= 0.84) and the high Cosmopolitanism group (M= 3.16, SD= 0.64) at  $p= 0.00$  with  $\eta^2 = 0.059$ , representing a medium effect size, and the medium Cosmopolitanism group (M= 3.12, SD= 0.623) at  $p= 0.00$  with  $\eta^2 = 0.063$ , representing a medium effect size. However, in customer Acquiescence there was no significant difference between the three groups.

HOMALUXPERF Factors	Cosmopolitanism Groups				Sig.( $p < 0.05$ )	Effect Size ( $\eta^2$ )	
	Cluster	Mean	SD	Cluster		Pairwise	Overall
Hotel Appeal	Low	3.40	0.64	High	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.039</b>	<b>small-medium</b>
				Medium	0.51	0.003	small
	Medium	3.50	0.49	High	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.031</b>	<b>small-medium</b>
				Low	0.91	0.003	small
	High	3.94	0.52	Low	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.039</b>	<b>small-medium</b>
				Medium	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.031</b>	<b>small-medium</b>
Staff Appeal	Low	3.16	0.64	High	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.059</b>	<b>medium</b>
				Medium	0.91	0.000	small
	Medium	3.12	0.62	High	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.063</b>	<b>medium</b>
				Low	0.91	0.000	small
	High	2.44	0.85	Low	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.059</b>	<b>medium</b>
				Medium	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.063</b>	<b>medium</b>
Acquiescence	Low	3.30	0.51	High	0.57	0.006	small
				Medium	0.1	0.002	small
	Medium	3.37	0.42	High	0.57	0.004	small
				Low	0.30	0.006	small
	High	3.51	0.41	Low	0.10	0.002	small
				Medium	0.35	0.004	small

**Key:** Significant values are in **Bold**

**Table 23:** Multiple Comparisons between HOMALUXPERF scores and Cosmopolitanism scores in Tehran

#### 4.5.2.3. Summary

The results from guests in Shiraz demonstrated significant differences in service perception of Hotel Appeal among the Cosmopolitanism groups. In Staff Appeal and Acquiescence items, the guests' service perception was significantly different between the Low and Medium plus High Cosmopolitanism groups in Shiraz. However, in Tehran, guests' perception of services was not significantly different in Acquiescence. Unlike Shiraz, the Low and Medium cosmopolitan guests in Tehran did not demonstrate significant differences



in terms of Staff Appeal and Hotel Appeal perception. In turn, the High and Medium plus Low cosmopolitanism demonstrated significantly different perception of services.

#### **4.5.3. Kano -focused Categories and Hofstede's Cultural Categories**

As defined in the earlier stages, satisfaction is often defined as taking account of both expectations and perceptions. Analysis section 4.4.1 further above showed the comparison across the Hofstede's model (2011) clusters in order to observe the effect of these scores on the Perception of the guests. The Kano Model results were obtained using the Kano evaluation Table which is described in the literature review section. In this section, the results of a Kano model (1984) analysis are compared across the Hofstede's model (2011) clusters in order to observe the effect of each guest's culture on the Expectations of the luxury hotel attributes. In the present section, Expectation is observed in respect of what a luxury hotel should represent. A Contingency Table was utilized to compare the Kano model (1984) data across Hofstede's clusters as both dependent (Kano data) and independent variables (Hofstede's data) are categorical (Appendix A2 and A4). The following sections will demonstrate the analysis of Kano model (1984) across the cultural clusters.

##### **4.5.3.1.Kano and Hofstede's model's results in Shiraz**

The Appendix A4 shows the contingency Table s that cross-tabulates Kano results for each of the 13 associated questions against clusters focused on Hofstede's (2011) cultural categories.

A contingency Table allows for visual interpretation of the relationship between a dependent (Kano questions) and an independent (Clusters) variable when both are categorical. Because this Table is very complex this has been simplified using the logic explained in Section 3.3.2.1 and illustrated at Table 5. In "Modern" category of questions,

the frequency percentages of “Attractive” and “Indifferent” were summed up to represent the “Traditional” score. “One-Dimensional” and “Must-be” frequency percentages were summed up to represent the “Modern” score. Finally, Reverse frequency percentages were summed and considered as a “Traditional” score. Table 24 and 28 demonstrated the aggregated contingency Tables for Shiraz and Tehran respectively.

Outlook	Kano Category	Clusters						Preference
		6	7	11	12	14	9	
<b>Modern Outlook</b> <b>1,2,3,4</b>	Attractive/Indifferent	229.6	222.2	214.7	165.6	200	128	Traditional
	Must-be/1Dimensional	153.1	133.4	136.9	180	165.9	204	Modern
	Reverse	5.8	5.6	11.1	28.5	8.6	12	Traditional
<b>Traditional Outlook</b> <b>5,6,7,8</b>	Attractive/Indifferent	288.3	316.8	270.2	177.2	274.4	148	Modern
	Must-be/1Dimensional	32.3	33.4	55.5	140	40.5	144	Traditional
	Reverse	41.2	27.8	44.4	45.8	59.6	56	Modern
<b>Utilitarian Outlook</b> <b>9,10,11,12</b>	Attractive/Indifferent	285.2	272.2	270.3	182.8	289.3	196	Non-Essential
	Must-be/1Dimensional	91.2	44.5	66.6	142.9	72.4	128	Essential
	Reverse	0	22.3	18.5	39.9	4.2	24	-
<b>Cleanliness Outlook</b> <b>13</b>	Attractive/Indifferent	26.4	27.8	44.4	22.9	17	28	Non-Essential
	Must-be/1Dimensional	70.6	55.5	51.8	65.7	78.7	48	Essential
	Reverse	0	0	0	0	0	12	-

**Table 24:** Aggregated Contingency Table from data in Shiraz

#### **a) Traditional and Modern Outlook in Shiraz**

To compare the point of view of each cluster in the sample, a ratio for Traditional and Modern was calculated. The ratios are calculated in order to be able to compare the respondents' (which are represented by clusters) Modern/Traditional and Essential/Non-essential outlook. Table 25 shows both the ratios and also the data used to calculate these. The data is the sum of all values, for each cluster, associated with either Traditional or Modern as indicated in

the Outlook column in Table 25. Thus,  $267.7 (\text{Traditional}/\text{Cluster6}) = 229.6 + 5.8 + 32.3$ . This is to compare each cluster in terms of level of Modern or Traditionally orientation, in Shiraz.

Each reported ratio compares ‘Traditional’ score with ‘Modern’ score by dividing the second of by the first. Therefore, the higher the ratio indicates greater the relative tendency towards modernity. The lower the ratio shows lower the relative tendency towards modernity. In all cases, the ratio is positive towards modernity. Clusters 6, 7 and 14 generally group together towards higher ratios, whilst clusters 12 and 9 are both relatively lower. Cluster 11 falls between the two.

Outlook	Cluster6	Cluster7	Cluster11	Cluster12	Cluster14	Cluster9
<b>Traditional</b>	267.70	261.10	281.30	334.50	249.10	284
<b>Modern</b>	482.60	484.30	451.30	403	509.90	418
<b>Ratio</b>	1.80	1.85	1.60	1.20	2.05	1.47

**Table 25:**Each cluster’s Modern or Traditional Ratio in Shiraz

According to Table 25, the comparison of groups shows that clusters 12 and 9 have a more traditional outlook towards luxury hotels than other groups. Cluster 14 is the most Modern oriented cluster among all.

#### **b) Utilitarian and Cleanliness Outlooks in Shiraz**

In this section, instead of looking to see whether hotel attributes (as represented by Kano questions) are considered either modern or traditional, the choice is whether relevant attributes are essential or not-essential.

Utilitarian Outlook	Cluster 6	Cluster 7	Cluster 11	Cluster 12	Cluster 14	Cluster 9
<b>Non-Essential</b>	285.2	272.2	270.3	182.8	289.3	196
<b>Essential</b>	91.2	44.5	66.6	142.9	72.4	128
<b>Ratio</b>	3.13	6.12	4.06	1.28	3.99	1.53

**Table 26:**Essentiality Ratio for Each Cluster for Utilitarian Outlook, in Shiraz

Table 26 shows how Essential or Non-essential each Cluster considered the Utilitarian outlook. The Essential and Non-essential ratio is calculated by dividing of the sum of Essential Scores and the sum of Non-essential scores using the same technique as for a) Traditional and Modern Outlook with data from Table 25. The frequency percentages of “Attractive” and “Indifferent” will be considered as a Non-essential score and that of “One-Dimensional” and “Must-be” will be considered as an Essential score. The scores of the first are then divided by the second to produce a ratio for Essentiality. Consequently, the higher the ratio in Table 26 indicates less essential the Outlook and vice versa. The Utilitarian Outlook was considered least essential by clusters 11, 7 and most essential by clusters 12 and 9. The clusters 6 and 14 fall between the two.

<b>Cleanliness Outlook</b>	<b>Cluster 6</b>	<b>Cluster 7</b>	<b>Cluster 11</b>	<b>Cluster 12</b>	<b>Cluster 14</b>	<b>Cluster 9</b>
<b>Non-Essential</b>	26.4	27.8	44.4	22.9	17	28
<b>Essential</b>	70.6	55.5	51.8	65.7	78.7	48
<b>Ratio</b>	0.37	0.50	0.86	0.35	0.22	0.58

**Table 27:** Essentiality Ratio for Each Cluster for Cleanliness Outlook, in Shiraz

The Cleanliness Outlook was considered most essential by clusters 14, 12 and 6 and least essential by cluster 11. The clusters 9 and 7 fall between the two. In Table 27, Cleanliness was generally considered more essential than the Utilitarian Outlook.

#### **4.5.3.2. Kano and Hofstede's Model in Tehran**

In the following section, the relationship between Kano (1984) categories and Hofstede groups in Tehran is investigated. Table 28 shows the aggregated contingency Table from Tehran's data.

Outlook	Kano Category	Clusters						Preference
		4	6	7	11	14	9	
<b>Modern Outlook</b> <b>1,2,3,4</b>	Attractive/Indifferent	233.5	285.3	290	261.8	265.2	273.8	Traditional
	Must-be/1Dimensional	133.3	111.6	110	129.2	134.6	121.5	Modern
	Reverse	14.3	2.9	0	0	0	0	Traditional
<b>Traditional Outlook</b> <b>5,6,7,8</b>	Attractive/Indifferent	328.9	329.5	350	335.1	343.5	291.2	Modern
	Must-be/1Dimensional	47.7	58.7	45	44.1	43.3	62.4	Traditional
	Reverse	14.4	2.9	5	5.8	4.3	13	Modern
<b>Utilitarian Outlook</b> <b>9,10,11,12</b>	Attractive/Indifferent	338	317.7	340.6	303	347.8	313.1	Non-Essential
	Must-be/1Dimensional	52.5	70.6	55	73.4	39	60.7	Essential
<b>Cleanliness Outlook</b> <b>13</b>	Attractive/Indifferent	57.1	41.2	60	53	34.8	34.7	Non-Essential
	Must-be/1Dimensional	38.1	58.8	40	47	65.2	60.9	Essential

**Table 28:**Aggregated Contingency Table from data in Tehran

The manner of analyzing the preferences is similar to what was performed in Shiraz. The “Attractive”, “Indifferent” and “Reverse” responses to the Modern Outlook items would indicate Traditional Orientation. The “Must-be” and “One-dimensional” responses to the Modern Outlook items would indicate Modern Orientation.

#### a) Traditional and Modern Outlook in Tehran

Table 29 shows the Modern-Traditional ratio across each Hofstede’s model (2011) clusters.

Outlook	Cluster4	Cluster6	Cluster7	Cluster11	Cluster14	Cluster9
<b>Traditional</b>	295.50	346.90	335	305.90	308.50	336.20
<b>Modern</b>	476.60	444	465	470.10	482.40	425.70
<b>Ratio</b>	1.61	1.28	1.39	1.54	1.56	1.27

**Table 29:**Modern-Traditional ratio across each Hofstede’s model clusters in Tehran

As Table 29 above shows, the comparison of groups shows groups 9 and 6 having a more Traditional Outlook towards luxury hotels than other groups.

#### b) Utilitarian and Cleanliness Outlook in Tehran

In Table 30, similar to Table 26, the “Attractive/Indifferent” percentages were divided by the “Must-be/One-dimensional” scores, so the higher the numbers in Table 30, the less essential the Outlook and vice versa. The Utilitarian Outlook was considered least essential by clusters 14, 4 and most essential by clusters 11 and 6.

Utilitarian Outlook	Cluster 4	Cluster 6	Cluster 7	Cluster 11	Cluster 14	Cluster 9
Non-Essential	338	317.70	340.60	303	347.80	313.10
Essential	52.50	70.60	55	73.40	39	60.7
Ratio	6.44	4.50	6.19	4.13	8.92	5.16

**Table 30:**Essentiality Ratio for Each Cluster for Utilitarian Outlook, in Tehran

According to Table 31, the Cleanliness Outlook was considered most essential by cluster 14, similar to results in Shiraz, and least essential by cluster 4. Similar to the results of Shiraz, Cleanliness was generally considered more essential than the Utilitarian Outlook.

Cleanliness Outlook	Cluster 4	Cluster 6	Cluster 7	Cluster 11	Cluster 14	Cluster 9
Non-Essential	57.1	41.2	60	53	34.8	34.7
Essential	38.1	58.8	40	47	65.2	60.9
Ratio	1.50	0.70	1.50	1.13	0.53	0.57

**Table 31:**Essentiality Ratio for Each Cluster for Cleanliness Outlook, in Tehran

#### 4.5.3.3.Summary

In both cities cluster 14 (UK, America, Canada, Netherland and Australia) considered the Cleanliness Outlook as the most “Essential” in comparison to other clusters. In Tehran, the Utilitarian Outlook was considered the most essential by cluster 11 (Germany and

Switzerland) and least essential by cluster 14. The Cleanliness Outlook was considered least essential by cluster 4 (Spain, Sri Lanka, India, and Lebanon).

In Shiraz, however, the Utilitarian Outlook was considered the most essential by cluster 12 and the least by cluster 7 (Brazil and France). The Cleanliness Outlook was considered the least essential by cluster 11.

#### **4.5.4. Kano-focused categories and Cosmopolitanism**

In the present section, Contingency Tables are utilized similar to the analysis of Kano model (1984) and Hofstede's model (2011). The Cosmopolitanism results (independent variable) were categorized as "High", "Medium", and "Low" similar to the analysis of HOMALUXPERF and Cosmopolitanism in section 4.4.2 further above. The "Traditional" and "Modern" scores (dependent variable) are calculated, with the similar procedure to the Kano model (1984) and Hofstede's model (2011) analysis, across the "High", "Medium" and "Low" Cosmopolitanism categories. The Essentiality ratio of the Utilitarian and Cleanliness Outlooks are calculated similar to the analysis of the Kano model (1984) and Hofstede's model (2011).

##### **4.5.4.1. Kano Categories and Cosmopolitanism in Shiraz**

The following section, explores the relationship between Kano (1984) categories and Cosmopolitanism groups in Shiraz. Table 32 shows the aggregated contingency Table from Shiraz's data. This is similar to what was conducted for Kano and Hofstede's model in the preceding sections.

Outlook	Kano Category	Cosmopolitanism Groups			Preference
		Low	Medium	High	
<b>Modern Outlook</b> <b>1,2,3,4</b>	Attractive/Indifferent	214.29	239.74	191.79	Traditional
	Must-be/1Dimensional	107.13	130.34	177.27	Modern
	Reverse	7.14	18.8	10.75	Traditional
<b>Traditional Outlook</b> <b>5,6,7,8</b>	Attractive/Indifferent	221.43	225.51	254.22	Modern
	Must-be/1Dimensional	71.44	112.42	72.14	Traditional
	Reverse	35.71	43.66	50.36	Modern
<b>Utilitarian Outlook</b> <b>9,10,11,12</b>	Attractive/Indifferent	250	239.74	272.83	Non-Essential
	Must-be/1Dimensional	57.14	111.1	96.01	Essential
<b>Cleanliness Outlook</b> <b>13</b>	Attractive/Indifferent	35.71	25	21.48	Non-Essential
	Must-be/1Dimensional	42.86	64.29	73.16	Essential

**Table 32:**Aggregated Contingency Table in Shiraz

**a) Traditional and Modern Outlook in Shiraz**

Table 33 shows the Modern-Traditional ratio across each Cosmopolitanism category. This is to compare each Cosmo-category in terms of level of Modern or Traditionally orientation, in Shiraz.

As Table 33 shows, the highly cosmopolitan guests are the most Modern oriented in comparison to Medium and Low Modern outlooks. The ratio values show that the difference between highly modern oriented guest and other Cosmopolitanism groups (Medium and Low) is relatively larger than the difference between Medium and Low modern orientation.

	Low	Medium	High
<b>Traditional</b>	292.87	370.96	274.68
<b>Modern</b>	364.27	399.51	481.85
<b>Ratio</b>	1.24	1.08	1.75

**Table 33:**Cosmo-categories' Modern-traditional Ratio in Shiraz



#### b) Utilitarian and Cleanliness Outlook in Shiraz

Table 34 shows the Essentiality of the Utilitarian and the Cleanliness Outlooks that was considered by the guests across the Cosmo-categories.

	Low	Medium	High
<b>Utilitarian Outlook</b>	0.23	0.46	0.35
<b>Cleanliness Outlook</b>	1.20	2.57	3.41

**Table 34:** Essentiality of the Utilitarian and the Cleanliness outlooks' services in Shiraz

In Table 34, the Essential percentages were divided by the Non-Essential scores, so the higher the numbers, the more essential the Outlook and vice versa. The Utilitarian Outlook was considered most "Essential" by Medium and the least Essential by the Low Cosmo-category. Cleanliness Outlook was considered most "Essential" by the High and the least Essential by the Low Cosmo-category.

#### 4.5.4.2. Kano Model and Cosmopolitanism in Tehran

Table 35 shows the aggregated contingency Table for Tehran's data.

Outlook	Kano Category	Cosmopolitanism Groups			Preference
		Low	Medium	High	
<b>Modern Outlook</b> 1,2,3,4	Attractive/Indifferent	295.09	281.75	202.47	Traditional
	Must-be/1Dimensional	104.93	111.32	181.08	Modern
	Reverse	0	3.48	3.33	Traditional
<b>Traditional Outlook</b> 5,6,7,8	Attractive/Indifferent	352.45	335.39	316.02	Modern
	Must-be/1Dimensional	42.63	51.51	54.85	Traditional
	Reverse	0	61.51	42.86	Modern
<b>Utilitarian Outlook</b> 9,10,11,12	Attractive/Indifferent	355.2	331.7	285.12	Non-Essential
	Must-be/1Dimensional	36.56	56.93	94.87	Essential
<b>Cleanliness Outlook</b> 13	Attractive/Indifferent	62.3	50.44	16.13	Non-Essential
	Must-be/1Dimensional	37.71	47.83	83.87	Essential

**Table 35:** Aggregated Contingency Table in Tehran

The relationship between Kano (1984) categories and Cosmopolitanism categories in Tehran is investigated in this section.

**a) Traditional and Modern Outlook in Tehran**

Table 36 shows the Modern-Traditional ratio across each Cosmopolitanism categories.

The information from Table 33 shows similar results with the Shiraz HHG, the highly cosmopolitan guests are the most Modern oriented in comparison to Medium and Low Modern outlooks. The ratio values show that the difference between highly modern oriented guest and other Cosmopolitanism groups is relatively larger than the difference between Medium and Low modern orientation.

	<b>Low</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>High</b>
<b>Traditional</b>	337.72	336.74	260.65
<b>Modern</b>	457.38	508.22	539.96
<b>Ratio</b>	1.35	1.51	2.07

**Table 36:** Cosmo-categories' Modern-traditional Ratio in Tehran

**b) Utilitarian and Cleanliness Outlook in Tehran**

Table 37 below shows the Essentiality of the Utilitarian Outlook and the Cleanliness outlooks' services.

	<b>Low</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>High</b>
<b>Utilitarian Outlook</b>	0.10	0.17	0.33
<b>Cleanliness Outlook</b>	0.60	0.95	5.20

**Table 37:** Essentiality of the Utilitarian and the Cleanliness outlooks' services in Tehran

In Table 37, similar to Table 34, the Essential percentages were divided by the Non-Essential percentages, so the higher the numbers, the more essential the Outlook and vice versa. The Utilitarian Outlook was considered most "Essential" by High Cosmo-category

and the least Essential by the Low Cosmo-category. Cleanliness Outlook was considered most “Essential” by the Medium Cosmo-category guests and the least Essential by the High Cosmo-category.

#### **4.5.4.3.Summary**

The Traditional/Modern ratios in Shiraz indicated that the High, Medium, and Low cosmopolitan groups showed different Outlooks although the difference between the Medium and Low Cosmopolitanism groups was one third of the difference between Medium and High groups. The Utilitarian and the Cleanliness Essentiality ratios, on the other hand, showed that cosmopolitan groups considered the outlooks and their respective items differently with the Medium groups having the highest ratio. The Traditional/Modern results in Tehran were similar to the ones of Shiraz. Dissimilar to the results of Shiraz, the respondents in Tehran showed that there is a difference between Low, Medium, and High groups, with the High group having the highest ratio. Results from Tehran and Shiraz, both demonstrate that level of Cosmopolitanism has an effect on guests’ expectations. In other words, cultural similarity plays a significant role in the expectations of the guests. Consequently, according to the SERVQUAL model developed by Parasuraman et al. (1988), satisfaction is affected by the guests’ expectations and perceptions. Therefore, it can be said that, in a way, lack of cultural difference (i.e., cultural similarity) has an impact on satisfaction.

#### **4.5.4.4.Conclusion**

The current study made an attempt to explore the perceptions, expectations, and satisfaction levels of guests belonging to different cultures in Homa hotels in Iran. This chapter provided an in-depth account of the findings for the research based on different statistical analyses that

the researcher carried out. According to the results, it was identified that Tehran and Shiraz branches were significantly different based on the results of HOMALUXPERF. Hence, the data of each branch was analyzed separately. Moreover, the results indicated that the guests in these branches had different perceptions of services in light of their cosmopolitanism level with Shiraz enjoying a high cosmopolitanism and Tehran with a low level of cosmopolitanism. Similarly, the results demonstrated that the international guests in these two branches had different outlooks based on the Kano categories. Finally, it was identified that based on the level of cosmopolitanism of the guests in Shiraz and Tehran their expectations or perceptions differed. The following chapter presents the discussion of the findings trying to place the current research in the body of knowledge in this domain through comparing and contrasting the results with those of other scholars. It presents each finding separately and compares it with the studies conducted by others.

## **Chapter 5: Discussion**

### **5.1.Overview**

The information acquired from data collection and analysis is discussed in this chapter with the goal of answering the study objectives. The extent to which this research has addressed the document's objectives will be determined by identifying the implications of the findings for each objective and relating the findings back to the literature to understand how the findings either confirm or support the body of knowledge in the study's area of interest.

### **5.2.To Classify The HHG International Guests According to Their Cultural Characteristics**

Hofstede's Cultural Model was chosen as the key cultural criterion for assessing the subjects' (or HHG guests') cultural views since it is one of the most widely used cultural models globally (Nguyen et al., 2015). The Power Distance Index (PDI), Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI), Indulgence (IND), Masculinity (MAS), Short/Long Term Orientation (LTO), and Individualism are the six cultural variables in Hofstede's model (IDV). A correlation test was performed to determine that the parameters were relevant to service quality/satisfaction. Consequently, the Masculinity and Short/Long Term Orientation questions were removed since the results were unrelated to the outcomes of HOMALUXPERF, a SERVPERF-based service quality measure.

Similarly, Kueh and Voon (2007) found no correlation between MAS and service quality expectations in their study. In terms of the relationship between LTO and service quality/satisfaction, the findings contradict those of Kueh and Voon (2007), who found a positive connection between LTO and service quality expectations. As a consequence, MAS did not appear to be related to service quality/satisfaction perceptions or expectations, and it

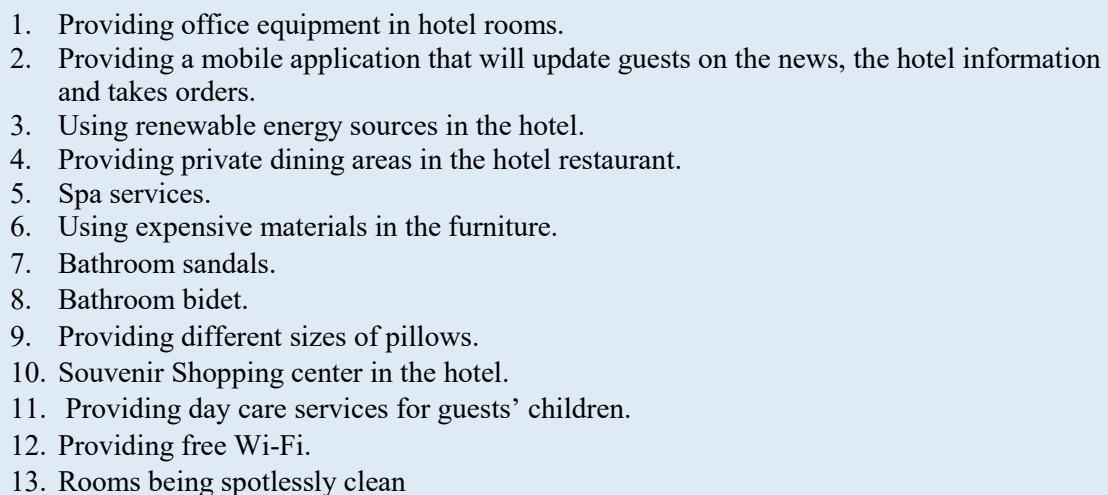
was not included in clustering. Despite the above-mentioned correlations between LTO and service quality expectations, the LTO did not demonstrate any relevance to service quality/satisfaction perceptions, hence it was also excluded from clustering based on the correlation tests conducted in this study. The remaining Hofstede dimensions were then utilized to categorize respondents into distinct cultural groups.

The PDI, UAI, IND, and IDV components of Hofstede's cultural model were used to categorize respondents using a hierarchical clustering approach. The clustering produced five layers of clustering, as shown in Figure 7 of the analysis section. The first level has just two clusters (2-cluster level), the second level has three clusters (3-cluster level), the third level has five clusters (5-cluster level), the fourth level has nine clusters (9-cluster level), and the fifth level has fourteen clusters (14-cluster level) (14-cluster level). The amount of dissimilarity grows from the first to the fifth level, implying that the 14-cluster level has more disparities among the clusters than the other levels. The ANOVA tests did not take into consideration the 2-cluster and 3-cluster levels since there was deemed to be too much cultural diversity in each cluster to have any meaningful relevance. There were times when the composition of clusters did not make sense at different cluster levels, such as in Table 41 in the Appendix, where Iraq and Pakistan are grouped with Romany, Ukraine, Croatia, Portugal, and Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, and Malaysia. These cases were reduced at the 9- and 14-cluster levels, although some remained strange. Table 56, for example, groups Pakistan, Portugal, and Korea together. These odd compositions may have been caused since only four of the Hofstede's model's dimensions were used for the clustering and these countries can be labeled as similar in these four specific dimensions.

Similarly, based on their responses to the cosmopolitanism items, the respondents in the current study were divided into three groups: high, medium, and low cosmopolitanism, which included people of all nationalities.

### **5.3.To Determine HHG International Guests’ Expectations of the Attributes of a Luxury Hotel**

The Kano model has been applied in many investigations, and different dimensions and categories have been discovered, according to the relevant literature. To categorize their goods, Hartono and Chuan (2011) used the KANO model in combination with Kansei Engineering and SERVQUAL model dimensions. Instead of presenting only one KANO feature for the bulk of the questions, the findings showed a variety of KANO attributes. Similarly, the Eid (2017) research, which used KANO to determine Muslim customers' needs, yielded a variety of KANO features. Both investigations used the same approach to determine the KANO category of the items, which was based on their frequency.

- 
1. Providing office equipment in hotel rooms.
  2. Providing a mobile application that will update guests on the news, the hotel information and takes orders.
  3. Using renewable energy sources in the hotel.
  4. Providing private dining areas in the hotel restaurant.
  5. Spa services.
  6. Using expensive materials in the furniture.
  7. Bathroom sandals.
  8. Bathroom bidet.
  9. Providing different sizes of pillows.
  10. Souvenir Shopping center in the hotel.
  11. Providing day care services for guests’ children.
  12. Providing free Wi-Fi.
  13. Rooms being spotlessly clean

**Figure 8:**The Services and Attributes of a Luxury Hotel

In the present study, the results of contingency tables and the Kano analysis indicated that most of the services, were considered as indifferent in Tehran except the two services of “Providing free Wi-Fi” and “Rooms being spotlessly clean” which were not considered indifferent (Figure 8). In other words, the existence or absence of the majority of the services did not create pleasure or dissatisfaction. The two one-dimensional services resulted in satisfaction that was directly proportional to their quality. The higher the quality of these services, the higher the satisfaction.

However, the majority of Shiraz residents rated eleven of the thirteen services as indifferent. There was no difference in satisfaction whether these services were present or not. The other three services, "Providing free Wi-Fi," "Rooms being spotlessly clean," and "Being eco-friendly and operated on renewable energy," on the other hand, were not overlooked by Shiraz's visitors. The only difference between the Tehran and Shiraz branches was that visitors in Shiraz saw "being environmentally friendly and running on renewable energy" as a "One-dimensional" service. This could have anything to do with the guests' trip's objective. Guests on a business trip in Tehran may not consider the hotel's energy sources to be a priority since they are focused with other things related to their business errands. Alternatively, because the aim of the trip had no impact on service quality/satisfaction assessment, it might be due to variances in the visitors' expectations. Furthermore, earlier research that showed "Providing Free Wi-Fi" to be one-dimensional back up these findings (Dominici and Palumbo, 2013; Thipwong et al., 2020). Beheshtinia and Farzaneh Azad (2017) and Zobnina and Rozhkov (2018), on the other hand, saw this feature as "attractive" and "must-be," respectively. This is due to the fact that the study by Zobnina and Rozhkov (2018) took place in a more developed nation (Russia) than Iran. In the other study, "Wi-Fi"



was deemed appealing, presumably due to the fact that there are less international tourists in Rasht, where the research was done.

In several other comparable research, such as Beheshtinia and Farzaneh Azad (2017) and Kuo et al. (2017), cleanliness of the hotel was classified as one-dimensional (2016). This might be related to the fact that cleanliness and hygiene are universally demanded in all sorts of hotels. Furthermore, the current study identified a set of attributes that were seen as "Indifferent" by Thipwong et al. (2020), such as a souvenir shop, babysitting services, and spa services, as well as Zobnina and Rozhkov (2018), who had the same expectations of spa facilities and providing slippers as this research.

Furthermore, after categorizing the Kano model questions into the four cultural groups of "Modern," "Traditional," "Utilitarian," and "Cleanliness outlook," it was discovered that Iranian respondents had the least Modern orientation (1.205) among the other clusters and had the highest Essentiality ratios for Utilitarian and Cleanliness outlooks. Iranian tourists in Shiraz notably requested Traditional Outlook amenities such as Private Dining Area, Spa, Gold/Crystals, and Sandals in the Toilet. This was in contrast to Cluster 14 (the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, the Netherlands, and Australia), which had the highest Modern orientation ratio (2.047) and sought services such as office equipment, mobile applications, free Wi-Fi, and environmental friendliness. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, no analogous studies have been undertaken to date in order to create a comparison or contrast because this element of the study was a fresh inquiry. However, one possible explanation for this result is the Iranian tourists' aversion to utilize technology and contemporary tools when on vacation, despite the fact that they are constantly exposed to such innovations in their everyday lives. As a result, they choose to relax and

enjoy their trip by seeing historical places, consuming local delicacies, and resting. In terms of the high level of utilitarianism among Iranian tourists, it could be argued that, due to their financial situation, Iranians travel less than people in developed countries. As a result, when they do so, they usually try to get the most out of the utilities. As a result, the Utilitarianism ratio among Iranian tourists was high. A key cause for the high degree of cleanliness view might be the religious beliefs of the Iranian people, who are predominantly Muslims and value hygiene and cleanliness as stressed by Islam and the prophet.

#### **5.4.To Determine the International Guests' Perceptions of HHG Service Quality**

The mean scores for each HOMALUXPERF element, Hotel Appeal, Staff Appeal, and Customer Acquiescence, were substantially different between HHG in Tehran and Shiraz, according to the research (Table 11). Because the mean of HOMALUXPERF's three elements in Tehran HHG was about 3 out of 5, it indicates that the hotel's guests in Tehran were moderately satisfied. In compared to the findings in Tehran, the HHG in Shiraz indicated better satisfaction.

The difference between Tehran and Shiraz might be due to differences in service quality or the fact that guests in Tehran had higher expectations than those in Shiraz because Tehran is Iran's capital. This point will become clearer when more components of the study are evaluated.

#### **5.5.To Determine the Extent of Cosmopolitan Tendencies of HHG International Guests**

The cosmopolitanism questions were included in the survey to determine the extent to which guests are cosmopolitan and how this influences satisfaction and the guests' perspectives on various services. In the item pool, there are seven Cosmopolitanism things. Each issue

required respondents to respond with a number between 1 and 5. As a result, the outcomes would range from 7 to 35. Respondents were divided into three groups based on the results: High cosmopolitan (between 25.66 and 35), Medium cosmopolitan (between 16.33 and 25.66), and Low cosmopolitan (between 7 and 16.33). The majority of business visitors in Tehran were somewhat Cosmopolitan, whereas the majority of leisure guests in Shiraz were very Cosmopolitan, according to observations.

As the concept of cosmopolitanism says, those who are more cosmopolitan have a greater desire to learn about different cultures and utilize international services (Lemmetti, 2015). (Hannerz, 1990; Riefler and Diamantopoulos, 2009). Lower cosmopolitanism shown by business visitors in Tehran makes sense because travel is part of their job, but it does not always indicate they want to go to that place, implying that those who prefer to go overseas for leisure are more cosmopolitan, as are the guests in Shiraz.

#### **5.6.To Explore If the Service Quality Perceptions and Luxury Hotel Expectations of HHG International Guests Are Affected by Cultural Difference**

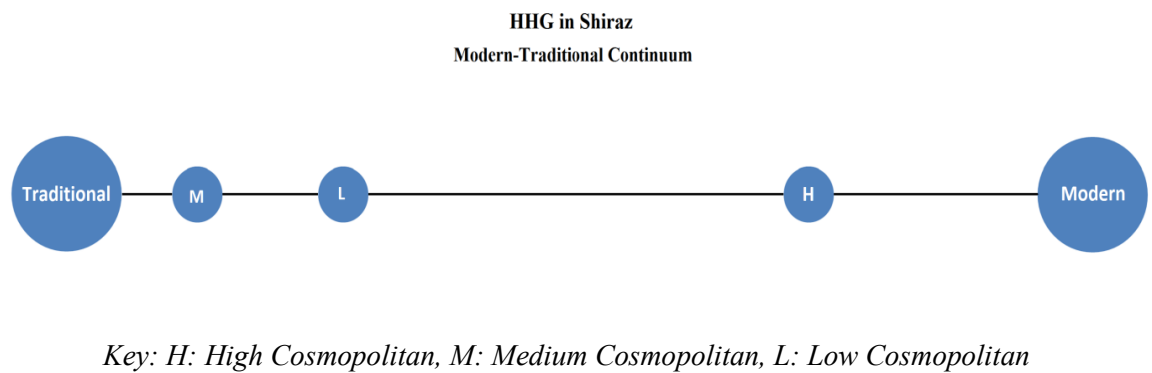
The satisfaction scores of several clusters revealed that Iranian guests were the least happy among all groups participating in this survey, according to the results of the hierarchical clustering approach and post-hoc test. The cultural or nationality discrepancies between the Iranian guests and other cultural groups might have been created by either a cultural or a nationality issue. The cultural problem is concerned with how Iranian tourists may differ from other cultural groups in general, whereas the nationality issue is concerned with how Iranian tourists may differ from those in their own country. The mean scores for each HOMALUXPERF element, Hotel Appeal, Staff Appeal, and Customer Acquiescence, were substantially different between HHG in Tehran and Shiraz, according to the data

analysis. Because the mean of HOMALUXPERF's three factors at the Tehran branch was about 3 out of 5, it indicates that the hotel's guests in Tehran were moderately satisfied. In compared to the Tehran results, the Shiraz branch, on the other hand, exhibited better satisfaction. This conclusion is consistent with Ibrahim and Gill (2005), who considered tourist destination or setting to be one of the most significant elements in influencing guest satisfaction. Diverse quality levels, expectations of the city, and the different country composition of customers in each branch might all be reasons for the disparity between the two hotel branches. Differences in hotels, restaurants, shopping, tourist attractions, transit facilities, local cuisine, environment, and safety, according to Arasli et al. (2011), are key drivers of destination satisfaction. Similarly, only Iranians differed significantly from other nations, which might be a result of genuine cultural differences or the influence of home country.

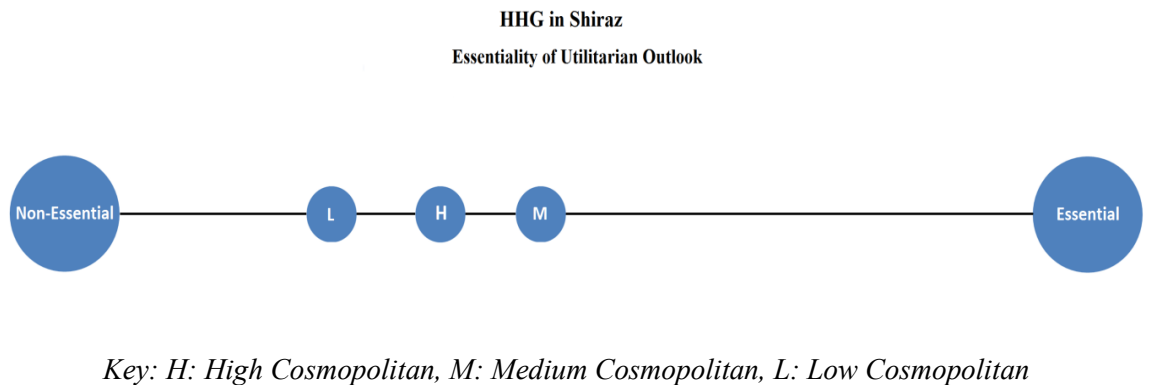
The level of cosmopolitanism of the guests was also discovered to be an essential factor in their pleasure in this study. This is mostly in line with the findings of earlier researchers (Balabanis and Diamantopoulos, 2004; Jianlin et al., 2010; Kaynak and Kara, 2002; Pandey et al., 2015; Rybina et al., 2010; Tillery et al., 2013; Vida et al., 2005; Yoon et al., 1996). The outcomes are due to the adaptability and acceptance of cosmopolitan tourists, who are primarily interested in learning something new and enjoying the place because they are global citizens. As a result, they would overlook the host country's or hotel's problems and display higher levels of pleasure.

More particular, the higher the level of cosmopolitanism among guests in the Tehran and Shiraz branches, the greater their predisposition toward Modern orientation and the importance they placed on cleanliness. Furthermore, guests in Tehran who had a high level

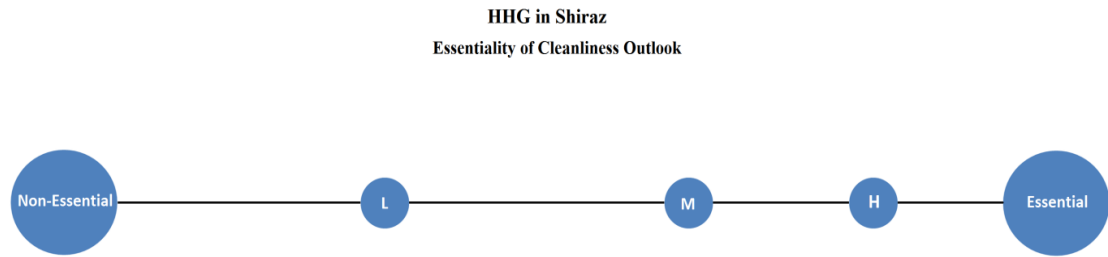
of cosmopolitanism regarded utilitarianism as necessary, but those in Shiraz did not (see Figure 9-14).



**Figure 9:**Schematic Modern – Traditional orientation in Shiraz

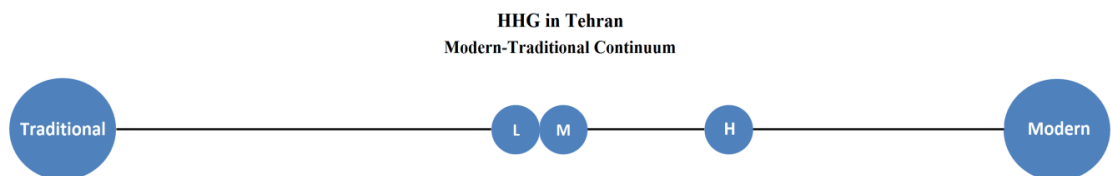


**Figure 10:**Schematic Essential – Nonessential consideration of Utilitarian Outlook in Shiraz



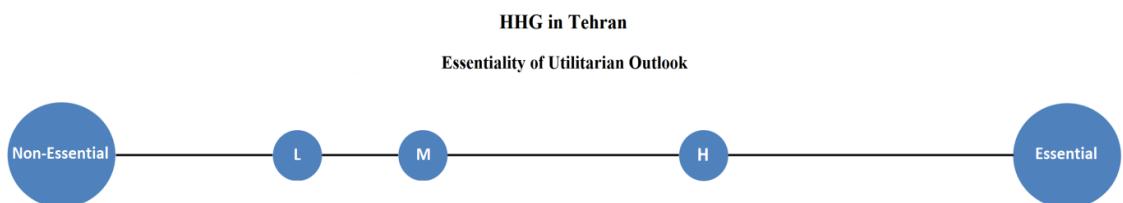
*Key: H: High Cosmopolitan, M: Medium Cosmopolitan, L: Low Cosmopolitan*

**Figure 11:** Schematic Essential – Nonessential consideration of Cleanliness Outlook in Shiraz



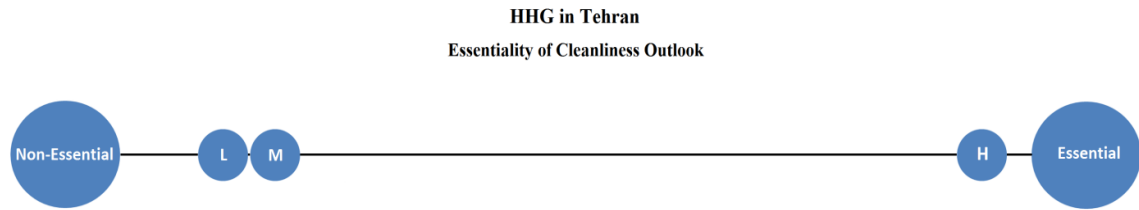
*Key: H: High Cosmopolitan, M: Medium Cosmopolitan, L: Low Cosmopolitan*

**Figure 12:** Schematic Modern – Traditional orientation in Tehran



*Key: H: High Cosmopolitan, M: Medium Cosmopolitan, L: Low Cosmopolitan*

**Figure 13:** Schematic Essential – Nonessential consideration of Utilitarian Outlook in Tehran



*Key: H: High Cosmopolitan, M: Medium Cosmopolitan, L: Low Cosmopolitan*

**Figure 14:** Schematic Essential – Nonessential consideration of Cleanliness Outlook in Tehran

The findings are similar to those of Riefler and Diamantopoulos (2009) and Hannerz (1990), who discussed the impact of cosmopolitanism on consumer behavior, such as the consumption of foreign items. Furthermore, according to Lemmetti (2015), increasingly cosmopolitan customers are continuously trying to encounter new cultures. As previously indicated, the current study examines Modernity, Utility, and Cleanliness in order to compare the Kano model to cosmopolitanism, which has received less attention. As a result, it is clear that no direct comparison can be made in this regard. The results, on the other hand, can be explained by attributing them to the level of awareness and understanding of cosmopolitan tourists willing to employ technology breakthroughs, tools, and keep current in various tourism places. As a result, they have a strong desire to modernize.

Because cleanliness is a universally accepted principle in all aspects of one's life, cosmopolitan guests, who have a high general awareness of different cultures and the importance of health gained from previous travels to different countries, usually try to follow this universal principle during their travels. The importance of the utilitarian view among cosmopolitans may be attributed to their preference for convenience and calm supplied by various technologies, according to the last aspect of this section. Although guests in Shiraz

regarded it non-essential, this might be due to cosmopolitans' excellent adaptation to situations where utilities are not preferred. As a result, they tend to overlook such flaws because they are global citizens who primarily wish to enjoy and familiarize themselves with the place.

### **5.7.To Make Recommendations to HHG for Improving Guest Satisfaction Based On Findings**

The influence of culture on satisfaction should be explored first in order to determine if it will be beneficial to the Homa Hotel group to give service offers based on features of visitor culture. The present study's purpose is to see if culture has a part in determining luxury hotel guest pleasure, as well as to see if the information gained from this research can be used to increase guest contentment. Hofstede's and Cosmopolitanism models were used to measure cultural difference and relative absence of cultural difference, respectively. The respondents were first clustered based on their cultural differences (Hofstede's model), then grouped based on the results of the Cosmopolitanism model. Because the Hofstede's model assessment is based on scores from countries derived from Hofstede's study in 1984 (Hofstede, 2011), but the Cosmopolitanism model assessment is based on individual scores derived from the questionnaire, the results of the assessments of the impacts of cultural differences and the lack of cultural differences were different. Furthermore, there is no proven connection between nationality (the sole known component in this study) and cosmopolitanism. As a result, the results of the two reveal two distinct ideas of satisfaction: perception and expectation (Oliver, 1980).

This research examined the satisfaction of guests in a luxury hotel environment using a SERVPERF-based measure of service quality as a proxy for satisfaction (in two branches



of HHG). The survey also sought to assess visitors' expectations on the nature and scope of services offered by a luxury hotel. Finally, the findings of the HOMALUXPERF and KANO tests were compared between Hofstede's clusters and Cosmopolitan groups. Because the early findings revealed a difference in satisfaction between the two major hotel branches, the data from the two branches of HHG was divided into two datasets. The most noticeable distinction between the two branches is that one caters to business guests while the other caters to holiday guests. Further distinctions were discovered, demonstrating that the more cosmopolitan leisure guests in Shiraz who favored more modern facilities were more likely to be female, less regular travelers, somewhat older, first-time tourists, and home guests. These findings are noteworthy, because it's possible that these characteristics have an influence on satisfaction, either individually or together.

The HOMALUXPERF findings revealed discrepancies between Iranian and non-Iranian visitors, raising questions about culture and geography. In comparison to other clusters, it was clearly clear that Iranian guests were the least happy with HHG services. To put it another way, it was unclear if the discrepancies were due to cultural variations between Iranians and other nationalities or whether Iranians just had different levels of pleasure since HHG is based in their own country. As a result, the quality of all given services must be increased.

The KANO model, on the other hand, was created to make guests feel as though they were on a luxury hotel vacation. The next set of questions focused on services that are not included in the HHG. As a result, the respondents answered KANO model questions without regard to location or HHG. Iranian visitors revealed discernible findings, similar to the results of the comparison between HOMALUXPERF and Hofstede's model. It's conceivable that

the issue of culture had an impact on the outcomes of Iranian tourists. Iranian tourists, along with Cluster 9, had the highest essentiality ratio for Utilitarian Outlook services (S. Africa, Turkey, Greece, Japan and Austria)

When studied in terms of KANO and HOMALUXPERF findings, cosmopolitanism groups exhibited more significant differences than Hofstede's clusters, indicating that absence of cultural difference gives more insight than culture. Because the guests in Tehran were more likely to be Low and Medium Cosmopolitan (29.4 percent and 55.6 percent, respectively), and the Modern-Traditional ratio revealed that the less Cosmopolitan respondents preferred Traditional facilities more than High Cosmopolitan (Ratio=1.51 and 1.35 respectively in comparison to 2.07), the HHG branch in Tehran should concentrate on developing very Traditional facilities. The results in Shiraz, on the other hand, revealed that the vast majority of guests are High Cosmopolitan (78.4%), and that these guests preferred Modern facilities more than Medium and Low Cosmopolitan groups (1.08 and 1.24 in comparison to 1.75); thus, the Shiraz branch should focus on developing very modern facilities. The High Cosmopolitan visitors in Shiraz judged Cleanliness to be the most important in comparison to other Cosmopolitan groups, and because the great majority of guests in Shiraz are very cosmopolitan, the HHG branch in Shiraz should focus on improving Cleanliness attitude. The majority of guests in Tehran, on the other hand, did not think cleanliness to be important. The majority in neither Tehran (Medium and Low) nor Shiraz did not consider the utilitarian perspective essential (High).

### **5.8.Conclusion**

This chapter aims to contextualize the present study in the body of knowledge and research about the role of culture in shaping the perceptions, expectations, and satisfaction level of

hotel guests with respect to the service quality as well as their cosmopolitanism. By comparing and contrasting the study's findings with those acquired by other scholars, the researcher positioned the study and its findings among the performed studies in this research domain. In addition, the researcher provided some reasons for his results in this chapter. Finally, the researcher discovered that foreign guests at the Tehran and Shiraz branches were satisfied in various ways, with those in Shiraz being more satisfied. Furthermore, the Kano model revealed that the subjects had various orientations. They did not, however, differ across the dimensions suggested by Hofstede's model. Furthermore, after dividing the visitors into three groups of high, medium, and low cosmopolitanism, the results revealed that cosmopolitanism created a substantial difference between the groups. As their level of cosmopolitanism grew, so did their level of satisfaction with the services. Furthermore, it was shown that cultural variations had no influence on customers' views of luxury hotel service quality and expectations. Finally, it was suggested that the branches had distinct perspectives on service providing, with Tehran having a traditional perspective and Shiraz having a modern one. The main conclusions, suggestions for further research, and theoretical and practical implications of the study are presented in the next chapter.

## **Chapter 6: Conclusion**

### **6.1. Research Objectives**

In this study, the aim was to explore the relationship between culture and customer satisfaction in the context of Homa Hotel in Iran. More particularly, it made an attempt to measure the guests' perceptions of the offered services through a newly designed questionnaire named HOMALUXPERF with specific set of questions after conducting expert reviews. Additionally, this study tried to examine guests' expectations via the Kano model which categorizes services into five attributes of Attractive, One-dimensional, Must-be, Indifferent, and Reverse. These attributes show how each service is characterized by the guests based on their point of view. Lastly, in order to identify the satisfaction of international guests who consider themselves as "citizens of the world" in the globalized village where the boundaries are completely removed; the present study investigated the possible effect of cosmopolitanism on the guests' satisfaction level. Hence, Hofstede's model and the Cosmopolitanism model were determined as the categorizing cultural measurement in this research. Hofstede's model characterizes cultural diversity amongst those from different geographical, social, and historical backgrounds. The Hofstede's model defined 6 dimensions of culture and each country has a score in each dimension.

The cosmopolitanism model addresses the relative absence of cultural diversity within a defined population that could help to understand the cultural properties of guests individually. Considering both systems and their concept of satisfaction, this study aimed to determine the guests' perception of HHG services and the guests' point of view on different services; then to classify the guests based on their cultural properties. Accordingly, by a comparison between the satisfaction and cultural measurements the possible relationships

between culture and satisfaction could be explored and ideally, various service packages could be identified from the results to be provided to guests with various cultural characteristics.

To be more specific regarding each of the objectives set for the current study, this section provides details concerning each purpose. As stated earlier, the first objective was to evaluate the service quality perception in guests. Initial evaluations of the HOMALUXPERF data showed that guests in Tehran and Shiraz had different satisfaction scores and the guests in Shiraz had higher satisfaction. Furthermore, the results showed that “the Purpose of Trip” was the most obvious difference between the two branches. Likewise, the composition of guests in Tehran and Shiraz were also different in terms of Age Groups, Gender Frequency, Previous Experience, and Frequency of Travel. These are all important factors in determining the degree of satisfaction among the guests as echoed in many studies including Shahrivar (2012), Zalatar (2012), Rodríguez-Molina et al (2013), and Moisescu and Gica (2013) respectively.

Next, the evaluation of Kano model results, service expectation, showed that the majority of the guests considered Kano items as Indifferent. In other words, the set of services that was presented as Kano items were considered to have no discernable effect on the satisfaction of guests. The chosen set of services has been irrelevant to guest satisfaction or the Kano questionnaire format might have confused respondents in a way that they did not fully understand what they needed to do. The services that were evaluated by Kano model were divided into Modern Outlook, Traditional Outlook, Utilitarian Outlook and Cleanliness Outlook based on their theme. Each HHG branch showed different constitution of guests in terms of their orientation towards different outlooks.

The third objective of the study was to classify respondents based on the Hofstede's model scores. Following a factor analysis of results, 4 dimensions of the Hofstede's model were considered relevant to the study. As the nationality mix of the respondents in the two locations was dissimilar, the statistical clustering was, therefore, conducted on the list of all nationalities available in the database according to the results of Hofstede's model. The clusters that held respondents from both cities were chosen to minimize the nationality mix differences.

The fourth objective was to evaluate cosmopolitanism results and to use cosmopolitanism as a mean to group guests into High, Medium, and Low cosmopolitan. The comparisons between Cosmopolitanism groups in terms of satisfaction scores showed that cosmopolitanism is an important factor in satisfaction as the extent of guest cosmopolitanism had affected the results. Additionally, the constitution of High, Medium, and Low cosmopolitan guests was different between Tehran and Shiraz HHG. This is in line with the results of Riefler and Diamantopoulos (2009) and Hannerz (1990) who confirmed the effect of cosmopolitanism on consumer behavior. Similarly, Lemmetti (2015) stated that more cosmopolitan customers always try to experience different cultures. A possible justification for this finding can be that two hotels differ in terms of hospitality context (business or leisure) which led to the different number of levels of Cosmopolitanism.

To explore if the service quality perceptions and luxury hotel expectations of HHG international guests were affected by cultural difference was the fifth objective. How each cultural cluster/group, Hofstede's model clusters and Cosmopolitanism groups, responded to HOMALUXPERF and KANO model was observed in order to explore the effect of cultural difference (Hofstede) and the lack of cultural difference (Cosmopolitanism) on service

quality perceptions and luxury hotel expectations. The cultural difference did not demonstrate major effects on the service quality perceptions and luxury hotel expectations except that there was a significant difference between Iranian guests and guests from other cultures. The significant difference between Iranians and other cultures could be a function of cultural difference or of guests having higher expectations of their home country facilities. The lack of cultural difference showed to have more effects on service quality perceptions and luxury hotel expectations and as the guests in Tehran and Shiraz showed different orientations towards Outlooks, different recommendations could be provided to Shiraz and Tehran. The guests in Tehran were more likely Low and Medium Cosmopolitan, more traditionally oriented. The guests in Shiraz were likely High Cosmopolitan and more Modern oriented. Additionally, the guests in Shiraz assigned more essentiality to Cleanliness. The Utilitarian Outlook was not considered important by the majority in both cities.

The sixth objective was to make recommendations to HHG for improving guest satisfaction based on findings from Objective 5. Based on objective 5 results, the HHG branch in Tehran should focus on developing Traditional Outlook services and the HHG branch in Shiraz should focus on Cleanliness and Modern Outlook services.

## **6.2. Contribution to Theory**

The findings of the present study can add new insights to the body of literature in the area of culture and satisfaction of services in different businesses. More specifically, it contributes to cultural theories which posit that culture and context affect all aspects of human's life. This is also supported by many studies on the importance of culture in satisfaction (Crotts and Edmann, 2000; Donthu and Yoo, 1998; Li et al., 2007; Seo, 2012; Tsoukatos and Rand, 2007; Turner et al., 2001). More particularly, the results echoed those obtained by empirical

studies in non-hospitality contexts. For instance, Donthu and Yoo (1998) conducted an investigation in retail banking sector, Seo (2012) focused on nationalities from USA, Japan and China in hotels located in United States of America, Li and et al (2007) examined Hong Kong national park visitors, and finally Tsoukatos and Rand (2007) investigated insurance companies in Greece.

Likewise, the results of this study can add new information to the Kano model, SERVPERF, and the theory of cosmopolitanism. It adds new dimensions to SERVPERF by developing a new scale called HOMALUXPERF in which three unique concepts of Hotel Appeal, Staff Appeal, and Customer Acquiescence were proposed to evaluate guests' perception. With regard to the Kano model, the present study made a contribution via a distinctive concept entitled "the Essentiality ratio" which assesses the extent to which a service is considered essential by guests. Lastly, the results add fresh insights into the theory of cosmopolitanism through dividing the guests into three levels of low, medium, and high cosmopolitanism and help in measuring the construct more precisely.

### **6.3. Contribution to Practice**

In addition to theoretical level, the results of the present study can offer useful implications at the practical level. They can be of value for different people including hotel managers, staff, operators, researchers in that they can use the findings to understand different cultures and identify service areas that can be promoted in order to satisfy guests from different parts of the world. Researchers can also run similar studies in different contexts focusing on other variables in order to make the data richer.

Using the tools and findings of the present study, different hotels would be able to collect feedback on specific services for future necessities. The present study demonstrated





that the extent of guest cosmopolitanism significantly influences guests' satisfaction and as mentioned in the Literature Review section, globalization and cosmopolitanism have shown growth in the recent years. Consequently, the hotel industry is recommended to invest more attention to the guests' cosmopolitanism in order to tailor hotel services in a way that could increase the cosmopolitan guests' satisfaction. In contrast to nationality/culture of a guest which can be readily known by searching through the guest list, guests' cosmopolitanism could not be known as it is not a demographic characteristic but an attitude. Suggesting that regularly surveying the hotel guests in order to gather information about their cosmopolitanism, would offer guidance on how the hotel should be best furnished and gradual change of the attitude in a given time. This information might help in the identification of areas that need to be changed/improved in a specific hotel.

Based on the results obtained from comparison of cultural group/clusters (Cosmopolitanism and Hofstede's model) based on their responses to HOMALUXPERF and Kano model, lack of cultural distinction showed significant effects on the service quality perception and luxury hotel expectation of the guests. Therefore, recommendations can be made to improve guest satisfaction by improving the HHG branches in Tehran and Shiraz in accordance to the results. Accordingly, the guests in Tehran were oriented more towards Traditional services, were less cosmopolitan, more frequent travelers, slightly younger, more likely male and more likely to be on business trips.

Practically, to meet these characteristics, the HHG in Tehran should focus on Traditional services, namely Private dining area, Spa, Gold/crystal furniture and Sandals in Toilet. The guests in Shiraz, on the other hand, were oriented more towards Modern services, were more cosmopolitan, less frequent travelers, slightly older, more likely female and more

likely to be on leisure trips. Therefore, the HHG in Shiraz should focus on Modern services, such as Office equipment, Mobile application, Free Wi-Fi and Eco-friendliness. Additionally, the more cosmopolitan guests in Shiraz showed more orientation towards Cleanliness Outlook. The Table 38 further shows the recommendations for each HHG branch.

City	Recommendations
 <p>Homa Hotel in Tehran</p>	<p>Traditional services:</p> <p>Private dining area, Spa, Gold/crystal furniture and Sandals in Toilet</p>
 <p>Homa Hotel in Shiraz</p>	<p>Modern services:</p> <p>Office equipment, Mobile application, Free Wi-Fi and Eco-friendliness</p> <p>Cleanliness service:</p> <p>The hotel is spotlessly clean</p>

**Table 38:**Recommendations for HHG Branches

#### **6.4. Reflections on the Research Processes and Findings**

The present study was an effort to discover the relationship between Culture and Satisfaction in a Luxury Hotel setting by clustering the respondents based on their culture and then comparing the clusters based on their satisfaction and expectations results. In this study, the researcher conceptualized the variables and their relationships as such that culture governs guests' expectations and perceptions which, in turn, will determine their satisfaction. Based on the conceptual framework (Figure 5), two models are utilized to measure culture, namely cosmopolitanism and Hofstede (2011). Guests' expectations were evaluated by the Kano model and their perceptions were assessed by HOMALUXPERF that was developed based on the SERVPERF model to specifically measure the guests' satisfaction of HHG in Tehran and Shiraz. More specifically, the Hofstede's model was relied upon for clustering the data.

The results of comparison between cosmopolitanism groups based on HOMALUXPERF showed significant differences. Therefore, it can be argued that the conceptual framework (Figure 5) performed satisfactorily and guests' cosmopolitanism had an effect on their satisfaction through an effect on perceptions and expectations. This might suggest that absence of national culture belonging has an effect on luxury hotel satisfaction. However, it can also be argued that the conceptual framework did not successfully conceptualize the effect of culture on satisfaction as the data did not present any related evidence. The results of comparing clusters' HOMALUXPERF data provided no substantial evidence for a relationship between satisfaction and culture. The reason might be that Hofstede's model scores are general scores given to each country. It can be suggested that conducting a Hofstede's model questionnaire on each respondent would give a more precise

basis for clustering guests as the Cosmopolitan grouping was based on guests' answers and showed more substantive results.

As the pilot study experience outlined the difficulties of conducting a study in a hotel setting, conducting multiple questionnaires in a hotel setting could be challenging. Guests might not be interested in participating in the study either because they do not want to spend time answering the questionnaire. In order to overcome that, guests who are planning to stay at least three days must be chosen and a discount should be considered for respondents.

The Kano model consisted services that were not offered by the HHG and in Kano model results, most of the items were answered with indifferent. Indifferent means the presence or the absence of a service holds no importance to guests' satisfaction which suggests these questions were not useful. However, the Kano items were selected by the results of an expert review on an item pool. For a better combination of items and consequently more determinative results, more number of items should be presented to the experts. For a better understanding of the Kano model, more description and detail of the Kano model and how it should be responded could be provided to respondents. This would benefit the study as some respondents questioned that why are items repeated twice; once for their presence and a second time for their absence. By utilizing suitable questions, Kano would have been a more efficient tool for identifying the impact of culture on guests' expectations.

The study was conducted in two branches of a hotel chain brand in Iran and it added more complexity to the analysis of the gathered data. Firstly, the mix of respondents was not the same in the two locations which could be the source of differences. Secondly, the quality

service delivery in the two locations could vary significantly. In order to amend this issue, the study could be conducted on the same mix of respondents in the two locations and a training program could be held in both locations prior to the study to improve the service delivery consistency of the two locations. Moreover, the sample size in this study was chosen on the basis of both practical and technical criteria, yet the number and diversity of the clusters identified meant that some were not large enough to be used in the analysis. A larger sample size would have helped overcome this but it was not possible in advance to determine how the cluster structure would work out. The present study was for exploratory purposes, but for any future, similar, studies results could be used to determine a more appropriate sample size.

The pilot study was a valuable experience in familiarizing with the data collection challenges such as difficulties convincing guests to participate in the study and acknowledging that Kano model's dysfunctional questions might seem abnormal to them. More detail was provided on Kano model questions but it still remained a problem for respondents. Additionally, the number of respondents were very low in the pilot study; therefore, the challenges of analyzing the data and choosing the right statistical tests had still remained. However, the experience in data collection did help to acquire more respondents in the present study.

In summation, the results did not show substantial relationship between culture and satisfaction/service quality, Kano results showed that the majority of the questions were considered indifferent and conducting the study in two branches caused more complications as the significant differences between locations did not allow for mixing the data. Cultural segmentation of the data must be based on personalized data about respondents' culture as

oppose to the mean score of countries. Deeper review of the Kano literature and producing a larger item pool for experts' review is likely to produce a better set of Kano items in a way that would result into a more balanced outcome. Focusing on similarities between the two branches and conducting a training course for the staff in order to harmonize the quality would likely allow for the data from the two branches to be merged and analyzed together and reduce the complexities of analysis.

### **6.5.Future Work**

In spite of the fact that the present study brought about insightful findings to the body of knowledge in this area, there are still unexplored avenues for the future researchers who are interested in this domain of research. For instance, based on the results which indicated that Iranian guests had the lowest level of satisfaction in comparison to other cultural groups, future studies can be conducted to determine whether cultural differences were the cause of this low satisfaction or the issue of home country played a role in guests' satisfaction. Therefore, foreign studies are needed to observe whether Iranian guests demonstrate different satisfaction levels in a foreign country as well or not. Additionally, the results of the domestic respondents in the second country could be compared to the rest in order to test whether they show the lowest satisfaction levels. Both of these actions would help to understand the differences between Iranian guests and other nationalities. The improvements mentioned in 6.3. Reflection should be considered in conducting the future researches.

Avid researchers also can carry out further studies on the variables of the purpose of trip, gender, frequency of travel, previous visit to see if they affect satisfaction level of the guests. It would be interesting to control for nationality/culture and these factors, to test for such impact in future research.

As indicated in this study, hotel staff are also important in determining the satisfaction level of the guests. Hence, future studies can be conducted on controlling for staff to obtain useful data. Another interesting area of research can be examining the impact of Iranian context as a destination on international customer's expectations and/or satisfaction which is important in understanding the needs of future guests who travel to Iran. Finally, future studies can also be carried out using different research instruments such as interviews, observations, self-reported diaries, and IT-oriented tools in order to reach deep findings which could be generalizable to other contexts.

## References

- Adam, F., 2014. *Measuring national innovation performance*. Heidelberg: Springer.
- Adil, M., Al Ghaswyneh, O.F.M. and Albkour, A.M., 2013. SERVQUAL and SERVPERF: A Review of Measures in Services Marketing Research. *Global Journal of Management and Business Research*, Retrieved from <https://journalofbusiness.org/index.php/GJMBR/article/view/1010>
- Agbor, J. M., 2011. 'The relationship between customer satisfaction and service quality: a study of three service sectors in Umeå', Master thesis, Umeå School of Business, Sweden.
- Akbaba, A., 2006. Measuring Service Quality in the Hotel Industry: A Study in a Business Hotel in Turkey. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 25(2), pp. 170-192.
- Alipour, H. and Heydari, R., 2005. Tourism revival and planning in Islamic Republic of Iran: Challenges and prospects. *Anatolia*, 16(1), pp. 39-61.
- Aliyu, A. A., Bello, M. U., Kasim, R. and Martin, D., 2014. Positivist and non-positivist paradigm in social science research: Conflicting paradigms or perfect partners? *Journal of Management and Sustainability*, 4(3), pp. 79-95.
- Allison, G., 2008. 'A cross-cultural study of motivation for consuming luxuries', Doctoral dissertation, Lincoln University, New Zealand.
- Al Khattab, S. and Aldehayyat, J., 2011. Perceptions of Service Quality in Jordanian Hotels. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 6(7).
- Anderson, E. and Sullivan, M., 1993. The antecedents and consequences of customer satisfaction for firms. *Marketing Science*, 12(2), pp. 125-143.
- Aramberri, J., 2009. The future of tourism and globalization: Some critical remarks. *Futures*, 41(6), pp. 367-376.
- Arasli, H. and Sadeghi, D., 2006. 'Impact of service Quality on Brand loyalty and Brand image in luxury hotels: some evidence from Iran'. *The 1st International Marketing Management Conference*, Tehran, June. <https://civilica.com/doc/20271>



Arasli, H., 2012. Towards business excellence in the hospitality industry: A case for 3-, 4-, and 5-star hotels in Iran. *Total Quality Management & Business Excellence*, 23(5-6), pp. 573-590.

Arasli,H., Baradarani, S., and Naderiadib, N., 2011. Destination satisfaction from the perspective of international tourists visiting Iran. *Conference: Advances in Hospitality and Tourism Marketing and Management*. Istanbul: Turkey, 19-24 June.

Archer, M., Decoteau, C., Gorski, P., Little, D., Porpora, D. and Rutzou, T., 2016. *what is critical realism?* Retrieved from <http://www.asatheory.org/current-newsletter-online/what-is-critical-realism>

Arrindell, W.A., Hatzichristou, C., Wensink, J., Rosenberg, E., van Twillert, B., Stedema, J. and Meijer, D., 1997. Dimensions of national culture as predictors of cross-national differences in subjective well-being. *Personality and Individual differences*, 23(1), pp.37-53.

Avramidis, E. and Smith, B., 1999. An introduction to the major research paradigms and their methodological implications for special needs research. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, 4(3), pp. 27-36.

Ayikoru, M., 2009. Epistemology, ontology and tourism. *Philosophical Issues in Tourism*, pp. 62-79

Ayre, C. and Scally, A. J., 2014. Critical values for lawshe's content validity ratio: Revisiting the original methods of calculation. *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development*, 47(1), pp. 79-86.

Babić-Hodović, V., Arslanagić-Kalajdžić, M., Banda, A. and Sivac, A., 2019. Ipa and Servperf quality conceptualisations and their tole for satisfaction with hotel services. *Tourism and hospitality management*, 25(1), pp.1-17.

Balabanis, G. and Diamantopoulos, A., 2004. Domestic country bias, country-of-origin effects, and consumer ethnocentrism: A multidimensional unfolding approach. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 32(1), pp. 80-95.

Ball, D., Coelho, P. and Vilares, M., 2006. Service personalization and loyalty. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 20(6), pp. 391-403.

- Basfirinci, C. and Mitra, A., 2014. A Cross cultural investigation of airlines service quality through integration of SERVQUAL and the Kano model. *Journal of Air Transport Management*, 42, pp. 239-248.
- Baum, T. G. and O’Gorman, K. D., 2010. Iran or Persia: What's in a name, the decline and fall of a tourism industry? In W. Suntikul, & R. Butler (Eds.), *Tourism and political change*. Oxford: Goodfellow, pp. 175–185.
- Beck, R., 1979. *Handbook in social philosophy*. New York: Macmillan.
- Beheshtinia, M.A. and Farzaneh Azad, M., 2019. A fuzzy QFD approach using SERVQUAL and Kano models under budget constraint for hotel services. *Total Quality Management & Business Excellence*, 30(7-8), pp.808-830.
- Bendall-Lyon, D. and Powers, T., 2004. The Impact of structure and process attributes on satisfaction and behavioral intentions. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 18(2), pp. 114-121.
- Berger, C., Blauth, C. and Boger, D., 1993. Kano’s methods for understanding customer-defined quality. *Center for Quality Management Journal*, 2(4), pp. 3-35.
- Berry, C., 2010. Relativism, regulation and the dangers of indifferent science. *Toxicology*, 267(1-3), pp. 7-13.
- Bertella, G., 2012. ‘A study about knowledge and learning in small-scale tourism in rural and peripheral areas’, Doctoral dissertation, University of Troms, Norway.
- Bezzaouia, M. and Joanta, A. R., 2016. The relationships between cultural values and consumer motivations for purchasing luxury brands. *Ecoforum Journal*, 5(1), pp. 150-161.
- Bhaskar, R., 2013. *A realist theory of science*. London: Routledge.
- Bird, A. and Stevens, M. J., 2003. Toward an emergent global culture and the effects of globalization on obsolescing national cultures. *Journal of International Management*, 9(4), pp. 395-407.
- Bracken, S., 2010. Discussing the importance of ontology and epistemology awareness in practitioner research. *Worcester Journal of Learning and Teaching*, 4, pp. 1-9.
- Brotherton, B., 2008. *Researching hospitality and tourism*. Los Angeles: SAGE.

- Buafai, T. and Khunon, S., 2016. Relationship between Hofstede's cultural dimensions and tourism product satisfaction. *International Journal of Economics and Management Engineering*, 10(8), pp. 2911-2915.
- Buhalis, D. and Costa, C., 2006. *Tourism management dynamics*. Amsterdam: Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Burr, V., 2003. *Social constructionism*. London: Rotledge.
- Butler, R. and Suntikul, W., 2017. *Tourism & political change*. Oxford: Goodfellow Publishers.
- Calhoun, C.J., 2002. Imagining solidarity: Cosmopolitanism, constitutional patriotism, and the public sphere. *Public culture*, 14(1), pp. 147-171.
- Campo, S. and Yagüe, M. J., 2009. Exploring non-linear effects of determinants on tourists' satisfaction. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 3(2), pp. 127-138.
- Campo-Martínez, S., Garau-Vadell, J. B. and Martínez-Ruiz, M. P., 2010. Factors influencing repeat visits to a destination: The influence of group composition. *Tourism Management*, 31(6), pp. 862-870.
- Chaney, D., 2002. Cosmopolitan art and cultural citizenship. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 19(1-2), pp. 157-174.
- Chang, Y. Ch. and Cheng, Ch. H., 2011. Exploring the effects of consumer ethnocentrism on preference of choosing foreign airlines: A perspective of Chinese tourists. *African Journal of Business Management*, 5(34), pp. 12966-12971.
- Chapa, S. and Hausman, A., 2010. Exploring the country-of-origin indicators across product categories: The case of Mexico and Chile. *Multidisciplinary Business Review*, 3(1), pp. 33-49.
- Chen, P, Pizam, A., 2006. Cross-cultural tourism marketing. In Buhalis, D, Costa, C (Eds.), *Tourism management dynamics, trends, management and tools*. Oxford: Elsevier Butterworth, pp. 187–195.
- Chi Cui, C., Lewis, B. and Park, W., 2003. Service quality measurement in the banking sector in South Korea. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 21(4), pp. 191-201.

- Choi, T. Y. and Chu, R., 2001. Determinants of hotel guests' satisfaction and repeat patronage in the Hong Kong hotel industry. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 20(3), pp. 277-297.
- Choy, L., 2014. The Strengths and weaknesses of research methodology: Comparison and complimentary between qualitative and quantitative approaches. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 19(4), pp. 99-104.
- Chu, Y. (2014). 'A review of studies on luxury hotels over the past two decades', Master Thesis, Iowa State University, USA.
- Churchill Jr, G. A. and Surprenant, C., 1982. An investigation into the determinants of customer satisfaction. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 19(4), pp. 491-504.
- Ciric, N., Vujicic, M. and Vukovic, M., 2013. Managing quality of products and services in hotel industry. *Actual Problems of Economics*, 1(139), pp. 538-544.
- Cleveland, M., Laroche, M., Takahashi, I. and Erdoğan, S., 2014. Cross-linguistic validation of a unidimensional scale for cosmopolitanism. *Journal of Business Research*, 67(3), pp. 268-277.
- Clough, P. and Nutbrown, C., 2012. *A student's guide to methodology*. London: Sage.
- Creswell, J.W. (2012). *Educational research: planning, conducting and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. Boston, MA: Pearson Education Inc.
- Cronin Jr, J.J. and Taylor, S.A., 1994. SERVPERF versus SERVQUAL: reconciling performance-based and perceptions-minus-expectations measurement of service quality. *Journal of marketing*, 58(1), pp. 125-131.
- Cronin, J. J. and Taylor, S. A., 1992. Measuring service quality: A re-examination and extension. *Journal of Marketing*, 56(1), pp. 55-68.
- Crotts, J. C. and Edmann, R., 2000. Does national culture influence consumers' evaluation of travel services? A test of Hofstede's model of cross-cultural differences. *Managing Service Quality*, 10(6), pp. 410-419.

- Crotts, J. C. and Pizam, A., 2002. The effect of national culture on consumers' evaluation of travel services. *Tourism Culture & Communication*, 4(1), pp. 17-28. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3727/109830403108750786>
- Cuterela, S., 2012. Globalization: Definition, processes and concepts. *Romanian Statistical Review Supplement*, 60 (20), pp. 137-146.
- Dash, S., Bruning, E. and Acharya, M., 2009. The Effect of power distance and individualism on service quality expectations in banking: A two-country individual-and national-cultural comparison. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 27(5), pp. 336-358.
- Debasish, S. S. and Dey, M. S., 2015. Customer perceptions of service quality towards luxury hotels in Odisha using Servqual model. *International Journal*, 1. pp. 1-9.
- Deng, J. and Pierskalla, C., 2011. Impact of past experience on perceived value, overall satisfaction, and destination loyalty: A comparison between visitor and resident attendees of a festival. *Event Management*, 15(2), pp. 163-177.
- Deshpande, R. and Webster Jr, F. E., 1989. Organizational culture and marketing: Defining the research agenda. *Journal of marketing*, 53(1), pp. 3-15.
- Dominici, G. and Palumbo, F., 2013. The drivers of customer satisfaction in the hospitality industry: applying the Kano model to Sicilian hotels. *International Journal of Leisure and Tourism Marketing*, 3(3), pp.215-236.
- Donthu, N. and Yoo, B., 1998. Cultural influences on service quality expectations. *Journal of Service Research*, 1(2), pp. 178-186.
- Eid, W., 2017. Integrating the Kano model of customer service quality to identify Muslim consumers' requirements: A preliminary study of hotels in Japan. *Journal of Business and Economics*, 8(1), pp. 47-59
- Einarsdóttir, H., 2016. 'The impact of economics crisis on buying behavior and consumer attitudes', Doctoral dissertation, Reykjavík University, Iceland.
- Ellis, C. L. and Vogelsong, H., 2003. Assessing indicators relating to overall tourist satisfaction of ecotourism developments in eastern North Carolina. In: *Schuster, Rudy, comp., ed. Proceedings of the 2002 Northeastern Recreation Research Symposium. Gen.*

*Tech. Rep. NE-302. Newtown Square, PA: US Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Northeastern Research Station. pp. 52-57 (Vol. 302).*

Emir, O. and Kozak, M., 2011. Perceived importance of attributes on hotel guests' repeat visit intentions. *Turizam: znanstveno-stručni časopis*, 59(2), pp. 131-143.

Eriksson, E. and Larsson, N., 2011. '*A multi-sensory brand-experience: sensorial interplay and its impact on consumer's touch behavior*', Master thesis, Linneaus University, Sweden.

Eriksson, P. and Kovalainen, A., 2008. *Qualitative methods in business research*. London: Sage.

Esu, B. B., 2015. Influence of socio-demographic characteristics on attendee's perception of festival quality, satisfaction and behavioral intentions. *International Review of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 10(1), pp. 16-31.

Faghri, R., 2007. *Tourism planning and policy making of the Islamic Republic of Iran: Analysis of the four five-year development plans*. (Unpublished Master's Thesis). Lulea University of Technology, Sweden.

Falces Delgado, C., Sierra Diaz, B., Becerra Grande, A. and Brinol Turnes, P., 1999. HOTELQUAL: a scale for measuring perceived quality in lodging services. *Estudios Turisticos*, 139, pp.95-110.

Farajpour, A., Bazeghi Kisomi, P. and Bagheri, M., 2017. Identifying the factors affecting on service quality & passenger satisfaction in commuter train services. *International Journal of Railway Research*, 4(2), pp.57-66.

Featherstone, M., 1990. Global culture: An introduction. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 7(2-3), pp.1-14.

Field, A., 2013. *Discovering statistics using IBM SPSS statistics*. London: Sage.

Fougeret, D. M. 1753. *Le cosmopolite ou le citoyen du monde*. Paris: Ducros.

Furrer, O., Liu, B. S. C. and Sudharshan, D., 2000. The relationships between culture and service quality perceptions basis for cross-cultural market segmentation and resource allocation. *Journal of service research*, 2(4), pp. 355-371.

- Gambo, M., 2013. Customer perception of the effectiveness of service quality delivery of Islamic banks in Nigeria: An evaluation of Jaiz Bank. *Journal of Marketing and Consumer Research*, 1, pp. 51-60.
- Gergen, K.J. 1992. Organization theory in the postmodern era. In M. Reed and M. Hughes (Eds.), *Rethinking Organization*. London: Sage. pp. 207-226.
- Grange, S., 2015. *culture and luxury value perception*. (Master thesis). BI Norwegian Business School, Norway.
- Gray, D., 2004. *Doing research in the real world*. London: Sage.
- Greenwood, J., Watson, A. and Dennis, M., 2011. Ten Years of LibQual: A Study of Qualitative and Quantitative Survey Results at the University of Mississippi 2001–2010. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 37(4), pp.312-318.
- Gregory, A. and Parsa, H., 2013. Kano's Model: An Integrative Review of Theory and Applications to the Field of Hospitality and Tourism. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 22(1), pp.25-46.
- Gruber, T., Abosag, I., Reppel, A. and Szmigin, I., 2011. Analysing the preferred characteristics of frontline employees dealing with customer complaints. *The TQM Journal*, 23(2), pp.128-144.
- Hagan, E., 2015. Service Quality perceptions and socio-demographic characteristics of hotel guests in the Western region of Ghana. *Journal of Tourism. Hospitality and Sports*, 10, pp. 16-29.
- Hall, E., 1981. *Beyond culture*. Toronto, Ont.: Doubleday.
- Hall, E. and Hall, M., 2006. *Understanding cultural differences*. Yarmouth, Me.: Intercultural Press.
- Hannerz, U., 1990. Cosmopolitans and locals in world culture. *Theory, culture & society*, 7(2-3), pp.237-251.
- Harding, S.G. ed., 1987. *Feminism and methodology: Social science issues*. Indiana University Press.

- Hartono, M. and Chuan, T. K., 2011. How The Kano model contributes to Kansei engineering in services? *Ergonomics*, 54(11), pp. 987-1004.
- Harvey, J. and Houle, F., 1994. Sport, world economy, global culture, and new social movements. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 11(4), pp. 337-355.
- Hayat, M. M. U. and Supinit S., V., 2016. Measuring domestic tourist satisfaction at Cox's Bazar sea beach, Bangladesh. *International Journal of Social Science and Humanities Research*, 4(1), pp. 149-156.
- Hennigs, N., Wiedmann, K.P., Klarmann, C., Strehlau, S., Godey, B., Pederzoli, D., Neulinger, A., Dave, K., Aiello, G., Donvito, R. and Taro, K., 2012. What is the value of luxury? A cross-cultural consumer perspective. *Psychology & Marketing*, 29(12), pp. 1018-1034.
- Herskovits, M. J., 1955. Cultural anthropology. New York: Alfred, A. Knopr. Inc. Ltd.
- Himmer, N. S., 2013. 'How does organizational culture influence the performance of luxury hotels based on the example of the Ritz Carlton hotel company L.L.C.?', Bachelor Thesis, Modul University of Vienna, Austria.
- Ho, L. H., Peng, T. F., Feng, S. Y. and Yen, T. M., 2013. Integration of Kano's model and SERVQUAL for enhancing standard hotel customer satisfaction. *African Journal of Business Management*, 7(23), pp. 2257-2265.
- Hofstede, G., 1991. *Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind*. London: McGraw-Hill. Hofstede, G., 1980. *Culture's consequences: International differences in work related values*. Newbury Park: Sage.
- Hofstede, Geert, G. J. Hofstede and M. Minkov. 2010. *Cultures and organizations software of the mind*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Hofstede, G., 2011. Dimensionalizing cultures: The Hofstede model in context. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture*, 2(1), pp. 1-26.
- Holden, M. and Lynch, P. (2004). Choosing the appropriate methodology: Understanding research philosophy. *The Marketing Review*, 4(4), pp. 397-409.



Hopkins, Sh. A., Nie, W. and Hopkins, W. E., 2009. Cultural effects on customer satisfaction with service encounters. *Journal of Service Science*, 2(1), pp. 45-56.

Hsu, S. Y., Woodside, A. G. and Marshall, R., 2013. Critical tests of multiple theories of cultures' consequences: Comparing the usefulness of models by Hofstede, Inglehart and Baker, Schwartz, Steenkamp, as well as GDP and distance for explaining overseas tourism behavior. *Journal of Travel Research*, 52(6), pp. 679-704.

Hunt, K. H., 1977. *Customers satisfaction /dissatisfaction-overview and future directions*. UK: Cambridge University Press.

Ibrahim, E. and Gill, J., 2005. A positioning strategy for a tourist destination, based on analysis of customers' perceptions and satisfactions. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 23(2), pp.172-188.

James, W., 2015. *Pragmatism: A new name for some old ways of thinking*. Read Books Ltd.

Jianlin, W., Nig, Z. and Qi, D., 2010. *Consumer ethnocentrism, product attitudes and purchase intentions of domestic products in China*. International Conference on Engineering and Business Management (pp. 2262-2265).

Kalolo, J. F., 2015. The drive towards application of pragmatic perspective in educational research: Opportunities and challenges. *Journal of Studies in Education*, 5(1), pp. 150-171.

Kano, N., 1984. Attractive quality and must be quality. *Hinshitsu (Quality)*, 14(2), pp. 147-156

Kaynak, E. and Kara, A., 2002. Consumer perceptions of foreign products: An analysis of product-country images and ethnocentrism. *European Journal of marketing*, 36(7/8), pp. 928-949.

Khuong, M. N., Ngan, Ph. L. and Phuong, T. M., 2015. Factors of affecting guests' satisfaction and their loyalty: A study of luxury hotels in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. *International Journal of Innovation, Management and Technology*, 6(3), pp. 186-190.

Kim, M. K., Park, M. C. and Jeong, D. H., 2004. The effects of customer satisfaction and switching barrier on customer loyalty in Korean mobile telecommunication services. *Telecommunications policy*, 28(2), pp. 145-159.

- Kim, S. S. and McKercher, B., 2011. The collective effect of national culture and tourist culture on tourist behavior. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 28, pp. 145–164,
- Kim, S., 2015. National culture and public service motivation: Investigating the relationship using Hofstede's five cultural dimensions. *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 83 (1), pp. 3-6.
- Kleingeld, P. (2013). Cosmopolitanism. In H. LaFollette, J. Deigh, and S. Stroud (Eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Ethics*, Wiley-Blackwell. pp. 1134-1144.
- Konietschke, F. and Pauly, M., 2014. Bootstrapping and permuting paired T-test type statistics. *Statistics and Computing*, 24(3), pp. 283-296.
- Koseoglu, E., Onder, D. E. and Bilen, O., 2012. A cross-cultural comparison of tourists' perceptions of hotel lobbies. *International Journal of Architectural Research: ArchNet-IJAR*, 6(3), pp. 109-123.
- Kotler P., 2000. *Marketing management: The millennium edition*. New Jersey, USA: Prentice-Hall.
- Kozak, M. and Rimmington, M., 1998. Benchmarking: destination attractiveness and small hospitality business performance. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 10(5), pp. 184-188.
- Krejcie, R.V. and Morgan, D.W., 1970. Determining sample size for research activities. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 30(3), pp.607-610.
- Kueh, K. and Ho Voon, B., 2007. Culture and service quality expectations: Evidence from generation Y consumers in Malaysia. *Managing Service Quality: An International Journal*, 17(6), pp. 656-680.
- Kuo, C.M., Chen, H.T. and Boger, E., 2016. Implementing city hotel service quality enhancements: Integration of Kano and QFD analytical models. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 25(6), pp.748-770.
- Kuruuzum, A. and Koskal, C., 2010. The impact of service quality on behavioral intention in hospitality industry. *International Journal of Business and Management Studies*, 2(1), pp. 9-15.

- Ladhari, R., 2009. A review of twenty years of SERVQUAL research. *International Journal of Quality and Service Sciences*, 1(2), pp.172-198.
- Ladhari, R., 2012. The lodging quality index: An independent assessment of validity and dimensions. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 24(4), pp. 628-652.
- Laertius, D., 2018. *Lives of the eminent philosophers*. Oxford University Press.
- Lai, H.J. and Wu, H.H., 2011. A case study of applying Kano's model and ANOVA technique in evaluating service quality. *Information Technology Journal*, 10(1), pp.89-97.
- Lawshe, C. H., 1975. A quantitative approach to content validity. *Personnel Psychology*, 28(4), pp. 563-575.
- Lažnjak, J., 2011. Dimensions of national innovation culture in Croatia: Content validity of Hofstede's dimensions. *Drustvena Istrazivanja*, 20(4), pp. 1015-1038.
- Lee, Y. Sh. and Liu, W. K., 2012. Leadership behaviors and culture dimensions in the financial industry. *Journal of Applied Finance & Banking*, 2(2), pp. 15-44.
- Lemmetti, H., 2015. 'Brand relationships in shaping cosmopolitan identities a narrative study of Fazer Blue', Master thesis, University of Tampere, Finland.
- Lewin, J., 2009. Business customers' satisfaction: What happens when suppliers downsize? *Industrial Marketing Management*, 38(3), pp. 283-299.
- Li, Ch. L., Lai, P. Ch., Chick, G. E., Zinn, H. C. and Graefe, A. R., 2007. Cross-cultural models of customer service: A case of country park recreation in Hong Kong. *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration*. 25(3), pp. 41-66.
- Li, H and Mäntymäki, M., 2011. An empirical examination of the relationships between the dimensions of culture and e-service quality perceptions. In *24th Bled e Conference e Future: Creating Solutions for the Individual, Organizations and Society*. June 12-15; Bled, Slovenia.
- Li, H., Liu, Y., Tan, C.W. and Hu, F., 2020. Comprehending customer satisfaction with hotels. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 32(5), pp. 1713-1735.

- Licata, J. and Chakraborty, G., 2009. The effects of stake, satisfaction, and switching on true loyalty: A financial services study. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 27(4), pp. 252-269.
- Litvin, S. W., Crotts, J. C. and Hefner, F. L., 2004. Cross-cultural tourist behavior: A replication and extension involving Hofstede's uncertainty avoidance dimension. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 6(1), pp. 29-37.
- Li, Z., 2010. Measuring Customer Perceptions of Hotel Service Quality Based on a SERVPERF Approach. *Journal of China Tourism Research*, 6(1), pp.22-28.
- Lu, C., Berchoux, C., Marek, M. W. and Chen, B., 2015. Service quality and customer satisfaction: Qualitative research implications for luxury hotels. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 9(2), pp. 168-182.
- MacDonald, E., Backsell, M., Gonzalez, R. and Papalambros, P., 2006, November. The Kano method's imperfections, and implications in product decision theory. In *Proceedings of the 2006 International Design Research Symposium* (pp. 1-12). Korean Society of Mechanical Engineers, Seoul, Korea.
- Mackey, A. and Gass, S. M., 2005. *Second language research methodology and design*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Maleki, A. and de Jong, M., 2013. A proposal for clustering the dimensions of national culture. *Cross-Cultural Research*, 48(2), pp. 107-143.
- Mattila, A., 1999. Consumers value judgments: How business travelers evaluate luxury-hotel services. *The Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, 40(1), pp. 40-46.
- Matveev, A. V., 2002. The advantages of employing quantitative and qualitative methods in intercultural research: practical implications from the study of the perceptions of intercultural communication competence by American and Russian managers. In *Collected Research Articles, Bulletin of Russian Communication Association "Theory of Communication and Applied Communication, Edited by I. N. Rozina, 1*, pp. 59-67.
- McDermid, D., 2008. *The varieties of pragmatism*. London and New York: Continuum.

- Medlik, S. and Ingram, H., 2000. *The business of Hotels*. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Meeuwesen, L., van den Brink-Muinen, A. and Hofstede, G., 2009. Can dimensions of national culture predict cross-national differences in medical communication? *Patient Education and Counseling*, 75(1), pp. 58-66.
- Meng, F., 2010. Individualism/collectivism and group travel behavior: A cross-cultural perspective. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 4(4), pp. 340-351.
- Mikulić, J. and Prebežac, D., 2011. A critical review of techniques for classifying quality attributes in The Kano model. *Managing Service Quality: An International Journal*, 21(1), pp. 46-66.
- Mingers, J., 2004. Realizing information systems: Critical realism as an underpinning philosophy for information systems. *Information and Organization*, 14(2), pp. 87-103.
- Misak, C., 2013. Rorty, pragmatism, and analytic philosophy. *Humanities*, 2(3), pp. 369-383.
- Mohsin, A. and Lockyer, T., 2010. Customer perceptions of service quality in luxury hotels in New Delhi, India: An exploratory study. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 22(2), pp. 160-173.
- Mohsin, A., Hussain, I. and Khan, M. R., 2011. Exploring service quality in luxury hotels: case of Lahore, Pakistan. *The Journal of American Academy of Business, Cambridge*, 16(2), pp. 296-303.
- Moisescu, O. I. and Gica, O. A., 2013. The effect of demographics and travel frequency on the relationship between service quality and brand loyalty in the case of traditional travel agencies. *Journal Studia Universitatis Babes-Bolyai Negotia*, 58(3), pp. 23-43.
- Mokonyama, M., Lehasa, S. and Venter, C.J., 2010. Unravelling public transport customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction dynamics in the high-end middle class market. In *Proceedings of the 29th Southern African transport conference, Pretoria, (2010)*.
- Morçöl, G., 2001. Positivist beliefs among policy professionals: An empirical investigation. *Policy Sciences*, 34(3), pp. 381-401.

- Mosahab, R., Mahamad, O. and Ramayah, T., 2010. Service quality, customer satisfaction and loyalty: A test of mediation. *International Business Research*, 3(4), p. 72.
- Mozaffaffari, A., Karimian,R., and Mosavi, S., 2017.The return of the Idea of Iran(2005-2015). In R. Butler &W.Suntikul (Eds.), *Tourism and political change*(pp. 186-199). Oxford: Goodfellow.
- Nair, G., 2016. Impact of service quality on business performance in hospitality industries: An empirical study. *Journal of Tourism, Hospitality and Sports*, 17, pp. 10-28.
- Nguyen, T. N., Cao, T. K. and Phan, T. T. H., 2015. Cultural influences on overall service quality expectations: evidence from Vietnamese customers. *Asian Social Science*, 11(25), pp. 151-159.
- Nord, T., 2006. ‘A cross cultural perspective corporate social responsibility in the hotel industry’, Master Thesis, Stockholm University, Sweden.
- Oliver, R.L., 1980. A cognitive model of the antecedents and consequences of satisfaction decisions. *Journal of marketing research*, 17(4), pp. 460-469.
- Opperman, M., 1999. *Predicting destination choice: A discussion of destination loyalty. Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 5 (1), pp. 78-84.
- Pandey, D. and Joshi, P. R., 2010. Service quality and customer behavioral intentions: A study in the hotel industry. *California Journal of Operations Management*, 8(2), pp. 72-81.
- Pandey, A., Sahu, R. and Joshi, Y., 2020. Kano Model Application in the Tourism Industry: A Systematic Literature Review. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, 23(1), pp.1-31.
- Pandey, Sh., Khare, A. and Bhardwaj, P., 2015. Antecedents to local store loyalty: Influence of culture, cosmopolitanism and price. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 43(1), pp. 5-25.
- Parasuraman, S., Purohit, Y.S., Godshalk, V.M. and Beutell, N.J., 1996. Work and family variables, entrepreneurial career success, and psychological well-being. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 48(3), pp.275-300.

- Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V.A. and Berry, L.L., 1985. A conceptual model of service quality and its implications for future research. *Journal of marketing*, 49(4), pp.41-50.
- Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V. A. and Berry, L. L., 1988. SERVQUAL: A multiple-item scale for measuring consumer perceptions of service quality. *Journal of Retailing*, 64(1), pp. 12-40.
- Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V. and Malhotra, A., 2005. E-S-QUAL: A Multiple-Item Scale for Assessing Electronic Service Quality. *Journal of Service Research*, 7(3), pp.213-233.
- Parsons, T. and Shils, E. E., 1951. *Toward a general theory of action*. New York, NY: Harper & Row Publisher.
- Peterhans, S., 2010. *Standards, training, and guests' perceptions in luxury hotels*. (Senior Honors Theses). Eastern Michigan University, USA.
- Petrov, V., 2011. *Process ontology in the context of applied philosophy*. Walter de Gruyter.
- Pinilla, G. H., 2002. *Are the selection methods used by the hospitality industry culturally sensitive?* (Master Degree). Oxford Brookes University, England.
- Pizam, A. and Ellis, T., 1999. Customer satisfaction and its measurement in hospitality enterprises. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 11(7), pp. 326–339.
- Pizam, A. and Jeong, G., 1996. Cross-cultural tourist behavior: Perceptions of Korean tour guides. *International Journal of Tourism Management*, 17(4), pp. 277-286.
- Qiting, P., Uno, N. and Kubota, Y., 2013. Kano model analysis of customer needs and satisfaction at the Shanghai Disneyland. In: *Proc. of the 5th International Congress of International Association of Societies of Design Research (IASDR)*, pp. 26-30.
- Rahimi, R. and Kozak, M., 2016. Impact of customer relationship management on customer satisfaction: The case of a budget hotel chain. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 34(1), pp. 40-51.

- Ramkissoon, H., Uysal, M. and Brown, K., 2011. Relationship between destination image and behavioral intentions of tourists to consume cultural attractions. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 20(5), pp. 575-595.
- Raskin, J., 2008. The evolution of constructivism. *Journal of Constructivist Psychology*, 21(1), pp. 1-24.
- Reichertz, J. (2010). Abduction: The Logic of Discovery of Grounded Theory. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 11(1), pp. 1-16.
- Reid, D. G., 2003. *Tourism, globalization and development responsible tourism planning*. London: Pluto Press.
- Reimann, M., Lünemann, U. F. and Chase, R. B., 2008. Uncertainty avoidance as a moderator of the relationship between perceived service quality and customer satisfaction. *Journal of Service Research*, 11(1), pp. 63-73.
- Reisinger, Y. and Turner, L., 2003. *Cross-cultural behavior in tourism: concepts and analysis*. UK: Elsevier Science Limited.
- Riefler, P. and Diamantopoulos, A., 2009. Consumer cosmopolitanism: Review and replication of the CYMYC scale. *Journal of Business Research*, 62, pp. 407–419.
- Riefler, P., 2015. Consumer cosmopolitanism. *The Wiley Blackwell Encyclopedia of Consumption and Consumer Studies*, John Wiley & Sons, pp. 1-2.
- Ringle, C. M., Sarstedt, M. and Zimmermann, L., 2011. Customer satisfaction with commercial airlines: The role of perceived safety and purpose of travel. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 19(4), pp. 459-472.
- Ritchie, J.B. and Crouch, G.I., 2003. *The competitive destination: A sustainable tourism perspective*. Cabi. Wallingford, Oxfordshire.
- Ritzer, G., 1996. *Sociological theory*. New Delhi: Tata McGraw-Hill Education.
- Ritzer, G., 2011. *Globalization: the essentials*. UK: John Wiley & Sons.



- Rodrigues, L., Barkur, G., Varambally, K. and Golrooy Motlagh, F., 2011. Comparison of SERVQUAL and SERVPERF metrics: An empirical study. *The TQM Journal*, 23(6), pp. 629-643.
- Rodríguez-Molina, M. Á., Frías-Jamilena, D. M. and Castañeda-García, J. A., 2013. The moderating role of past experience in the formation of a tourist destination's image and in tourists' behavioral intentions. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 16(2), pp. 107-127.
- Rust, R., Zeithaml VandLemon, K., 2000. *Driving customer equity: How customer lifetime value is reshaping corporate strategy*. New York: The Free Press.
- Ruttger, A., 2017. High- and low-context communication in an intercultural environment. Retrieved from <https://www.grin.com/document/414616>
- Rybina, L. Reardon, J. and Humphrey, J., 2010. Patriotism, cosmopolitanism, consumer ethnocentrism and purchase behavior in Kazakhstan. *Organizations and Markets in Emerging Economies*, 2(2), pp. 92-107.
- Saeed, A., Hussain, N. and Riaz, A., 2011. Factors affecting consumers' switching intentions. *European Journal of Social Sciences*, 19(1), pp. 54-61.
- Salleh, M. Z. M., Said, A. M., Bakar, E. A., Ali, A. M. and Zakaria, I., 2016. Gender differences among hotel guest towards dissatisfaction with hotel services in Kuala Lumpur. *Procedia Economics and Finance*, 37, pp. 27-32.
- Sankey, H., 2012. Skepticism, relativism and the argument from the criterion. *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science Part A*, 43(1), pp. 182-190.
- San-Martin, H., Collado, J. and Rodriguez del Bosque, I., 2012. An exploration of the effects of past experience and tourist involvement on destination loyalty formation. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 16(4), pp. 327-342.
- Sauerwein, E., Bailom, F., Matzler, K and Hinterhuber, H. H., 1996. The Kano model: How to delight your customer. In: *Preprints Volume I of the IX. International Working Seminar on Production Economics, Innsbruck/Igls/Austria, February 19-23 1996*, pp. 313 -32.
- Saunders, M., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A., 2009. *Research methods for business students*. Harlow: Pearson Education.

- Savaneviciene, A. and Kersiene, K., 2015. How are HRM practices transferred in MNCs? Lithuania case. *Procedia Economics and Finance*, 26, pp. 982-990.
- Schwartz, S., 1992. Universals in the content and structure of values: Theoretical advances and empirical tests in 20 countries. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, pp.1-65.
- Schwartz, S., 1994. Are there universal aspects in the structure and contents of human values? *Journal of Social Issues*, 50(4), pp.19-45.
- Seo, Y., 2012. 'Cultural impact on customer satisfaction and service quality evaluation in hotels', Doctoral Dissertation, University of Nevada Las Vegas, USA.
- Seyfi, S. and Hall, C. M., 2019. *Tourism in Iran: Challenges, developments and issues*. Rutledge Taylor and Francis Group. London and New York.
- Shahin, A., Pourhamidi, M., Antony, J. and Hyun Park, S., 2013. Typology of Kano models: A critical review of literature and proposition of a revised model. *International Journal of Quality & Reliability Management*, 30(3), pp. 341-358.
- Shahrivar, R. B., 2012. Factors that influence tourist satisfaction. *Journal of Travel and Tourism Research (Online)*, 12(1), pp. 61-79.
- Shweder, R. A., 2002. What about female genital mutilation? And why understanding culture matters in the first place. In R. A. Shweder, M. Minow & H. Markus (Eds.), *Engaging cultural differences: the multicultural challenge in liberal democracies*, New York: Russell Sage Foundation. pp. 216-251.
- Siddique, M., Akhter, M. and Masum, A. A., 2013. Service quality of five star hotels in Bangladesh: An Empirical Assessment. *Asian Business*, 2(4), pp. 67-72.
- Slevitch, L., Mathe, K., Karpova, E. and Scott-Halsell, S., 2013. "Green" attributes and customer satisfaction. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 25(6), pp.802-822.
- Smith, P., 2011. Communication styles as dimensions of national culture. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 42(2), pp. 216-233.
- Smith, S.L., 1994. The tourism product. *Annals of tourism research*, 21(3), pp. 582-595.

- Soares, A. M., Farhangmehr, M. and Shoham, A., 2007. Hofstede's dimensions of culture in international marketing studies. *Journal of Business Research*, 60, pp. 277-284.
- Solomon, M, 2002. *Consumer behavior*. Prentice Hall :Business & Economics.
- Sönmez, S. F. and Graefe, A. R., 1998. Determining future travel behavior from past travel experience and perceptions of risk and safety. *Journal of Travel Research*, 37(2), pp. 171-177.
- Spathis, C., Petridou, E. and Glaveli, N., 2004. Managing service quality in banks: Customers' gender effects. *Managing Service Quality: An International Journal*, 14(1), pp. 90-102.
- Straub, D., Loch, K., Evaristo, R., Karahanna, E. and Srite, M., 2002. Toward a theory-based measurement of culture. *Human Factors in information Systems*, 10(1), pp. 61-65.
- Stuhr, J. J., 1999. *Pragmatism and classical American philosophy: Essential readings and interpretive essays*. (ed.), New York: Oxford University Press.
- Taboli, H., Pourkiani, M. and Ahmadzadeh, S., 2013. Philosophical foundations of postmodernism in organization and management. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Postmodernism in Organization and Management*, 4(9), pp. 1197-1204.
- Tavakol, M. and Dennick, R., 2011. Making sense of Cronbach's alpha. *International Journal of Medical Education*, 2, pp. 53-55.
- Tennis, J., 2008. Epistemology, theory, and methodology in knowledge organization: toward a classification, metatheory, and research framework. *Knowledge organization*, 35(2/3), pp.102-112.
- Terechshenko, M. and Radionova, V., 2011. 'Brand communities: a quantitative study of brand community influence on prospective and existing members', Master thesis, Umeå School of Business, Sweden.
- The Iranian Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism Organization (ICHTO), 2018. Azadi Street, Yadegar-e Imam Highway, Tehran, Iran.
- Thipwong, P., Wong, W.K. and Huang, W.T., 2020. Kano model analysis for five-star hotels in Chiang Mai, Thailand. *Journal of Management Information & Decision Sciences*, 23(1), pp. 1-6.

- Tillery, K., Jourdan, L.F. and Deis, M., 2013. World mindedness, cosmopolitanism, and views of purchasing: Behavior in two cross-cultural student groups. *Franklin Business & Law Journal*, 2013(4), pp. 158-177.
- Tolkach, D., Chon, K.K. and Xiao, H., 2016. Asia Pacific tourism trends: Is the future ours to see? *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, 21(10), pp.1071-1084.
- Tribe, J., 2009. *Philosophical issues in tourism*. Bristol: Channel View Publications.
- Trochim, W. M. K., & Donnelly, J. P. (2008). *The research methods knowledge base*. Australia: Atomic Dog/ Cengage Learning.
- Trompenaars, F. and Hampden-Turner, C., 1994. *Riding the waves of culture*. Chicago: IRWIN.
- Tsoukatos, E. and Rand, G.K., 2007. Cultural influences on service quality and customer satisfaction: Evidence from Greek insurance. *Managing Service Quality*, 17(4), pp. 467-485.
- Turner, L.W., Reisinger, Y.V. and McQuilken, L., 2001. How cultural differences cause dimensions of tourism satisfaction. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 11(1), pp.79-101.
- Tylor, E.B., 1871. *Primitive culture: Researches into the development of mythology, philosophy, religion, art and custom* (Vol. 2). London: J. Murray.
- Uecharoenkit, S., 2013. 'Experiential marketing—a consumption of fantasies, feelings and fun. An investigation of the relationship between brand experience and loyalty within the context of the luxury cosmetics sector in Thailand', Doctoral dissertation, Brunel University Brunel Business School PhD Theses.
- United Nation World Tourism Organization, 2016. *UNWTO Tourism Highlights*.
- Vanniarajan, T. and Anbazhagan, B., 2007. SERVPERF analysis in retail banking. *Review of Professional Management- A Journal of New Delhi Institute of Management*, 5(1), pp. 11-22.
- Vanniarajan, T. and Gurunathan, P., 2007. Retail service quality: An empirical study in Tamilnadu. *SMART Journal of Business Management Studies*, 3(2), pp.15-21.

- Veal, A., 2006. *Research methods for leisure and tourism*. London: Financial Times/ Prentice Hall/Pearson Education.
- Vesna, P., 2005. Tourism and globalization. In: *6th International Conference of the Faculty of Management Koper Congress Centre Bernardin*. Slovenia.
- Vida, I., Dmitrovic, T. and Reardon, J., 2005, July. Consumer domestic purchase behavior in newly transitioning post war economies. In *12th Bennial World Marketing Congress July* (pp. 6-9).
- Vrasidas, C., 2000. Constructivism versus objectivism: Implications for interaction, course design, and evaluation in distance education *International Journal of Educational Telecommunications*, 6(4), pp. 339-362.
- Wei, W., 2012. Research on the cross-cultural marketing strategy of China's tourism enterprises. *Procedia Environmental Sciences*, 12, pp.1110-1115.
- Weiermair, K., 2000. Tourists' perceptions towards and satisfaction with service quality in the cross-cultural service encounter: implications for hospitality and tourism management. *Managing Service Quality: An International Journal*, 10(6), pp. 397-409.
- Wenjuan, W., Duffy Alex, H. B., & Mark, H. 2007. A post-positivism view of function behaviour structure. *International Conference on Engineering Design, ICED'07*. 28-31 August 2007, Cite Des Sciences ET de L'industrie, Paris, France.
- Winsted, K.F., 1997. The service experience in two cultures: A behavioral perspective. *Journal of Retailing*, 73(3), pp.337-360.
- Wong, K.M., Ghazali, M.U.S.A. and Wong, E.S.K., 2011. A review of philosophical assumptions in management research. *African Journal of Business Management*, 5(29), pp.11546-11550.
- World Travel and Tourism Council, 2018. *Travel and Tourism, Economic Impact, Iran: 2018*. London.
- Wu, M., 2006. Hofstede's cultural dimensions 30 years later: A study of Taiwan and the United States. *Intercultural communication studies*, 15(1), p.33-42.
- Yang, Y., Mao, Z. and Tang, J., 2018. Understanding guest satisfaction with urban hotel location. *Journal of Travel Research*, 57(2), pp.243-259.

- Yayla-Küllü, H.M., Tansitpong, P., Gnanlet, A., McDermott, C.M. and Durgee, J.F., 2015. Employees' national culture and service quality: An integrative review. *Service Science*, 7(1), pp.11-28.
- Yilmaz, I., 2009. Measurement of Service Quality in the Hotel Industry. *Anatolia: An International Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 20(2), pp.375-386.
- Yong, A.G. and Pearce, S., 2013. A beginner's guide to factor analysis: Focusing on exploratory factor analysis. *Tutorials in Quantitative Methods for Psychology*, 9(2), pp.79-94.
- Yoon, S.J., Cannon, H.M. and Yaprak, A., 1996. Evaluating the CYMYC cosmopolitanism scale on Korean consumers. *Advances in International Marketing*, 7(1), pp.211-232.
- Yuksel, A., 2001. Managing customer satisfaction and retention: A case of tourist destinations, Turkey. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 7(2), pp.153-168.
- Zalatar, W.F., 2012. Quantifying customers' gender effects on service quality perceptions of Philippine commercial banks. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 57, pp.268-274.
- Zhan, L. and He, Y., 2012. Understanding luxury consumption in China: Consumer perceptions of best-known brands. *Journal of Business Research*, 65(10), pp.1452-1460.
- Ziaee, M., Saeedi, A., and Torab Ahmadi, M., 2012. Exploring the state of tourism in Iran's higher education (in Persian). *Tourism Studies Journal*, 7(17), pp. 61–86.
- Zobnina, M. and Rozhkov, A., 2018. Listening to the voice of the customer in the hospitality industry: Kano model application. *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes*, 10(4), pp. 436-448.