

**IBN HALDUN UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES  
DEPARTMENT OF AIR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT**

**MASTER THESIS**

**THE INFLUENCE OF CULTURAL COMFORTABILITY ON  
CUSTOMER SATISFACTION:  
THE CASE OF AMMAN AIRPORT**

**MURAD SALEH AWAD ALHMOUD**

**THESIS SUPERVISOR: ASSIST. PROF. SUMEYYE KUSAKCI**

**ISTANBUL, 2020**

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THE CASE OF AMMAN AIRPORT**

**by**

**MURAD SALEH AWAD ALHMOUD**

**A thesis submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in  
Air Transport Management**

**THESIS SUPERVISOR: ASSIST. PROF. SUMEYYE KUSAKCI**

**ISTANBUL, 2020**

APPROVAL PAGE

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Masters of Science in Air Transport Management.

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Opinion

Signature

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This is to confirm that this thesis complies with all the standards set by the School of Graduate Studies of Ibn Haldun University.

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## ACADEMIC HONESTY ATTESTATION

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Name Surname: Murad Alhmoud

Signature:



## ÖZ

### KÜLTÜREL RAHATLIĞIN MÜŞTERİ MEMNUNİYETİNE ETKİSİ: AMMAN HAVALİMANI ÖRNEĞİ

Yazar: Alhmoud, Murad

Hava Taşımacılığı Yüksek Lisans Programı

Tez Danışmanı: Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Sümeyye Kusakçı

Ağustos 2020, 64 sayfa

Havalimanı çalışanları ile yolcular arasındaki kültürel farklılıklar, yolcuların havalimanlarında kendilerine sağlanan hizmetlerin kalitesini nasıl algılayıp değerlendirdikleri üzerinde önemli bir etkiye sahip olabilir. Bu çalışmanın amacı, müşteriler ile yerel çalışanlar arasındaki kültürel farklılıkların, müşterilerin kültürel rahatlık ve memnuniyetlerini etkileyip etkilemediğini Amman Havalimanı örneğini kullanarak araştırmaktır. Araştırma kapsamında yaş, cinsiyet ve eğitim gibi demografik faktörler de dikkate alınmıştır. Araştırmanın verisi Amman Havalimanı'nda 100 yolcuya dağıtılan 17 soruluk bir anketle toplanmıştır. Hem kültürel rahatlık hem de müşteri memnuniyeti eğitim ve uyuğa göre farklılık göstermekle birlikte, cinsiyete ve yaşa göre kayda değer bir farklılık gözlenmemiştir. Öte yandan yolcuların kültürel rahatlığının memnuniyetleri üzerinde önemli bir etkisi vardır. Bu araştırmanın sonuçları, kültürün iş dünyasındaki etkilerini tartışan ve kültürel farklılık ve farkındalığın işletme süreçlerine etki ettiğini iddia eden pek çok çalışma ile benzeşmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Kültür, Hofstede, Kültürel Rahatlık, Müşteri Memnuniyeti.

## ABSTRACT

### THE INFLUENCE OF CULTURAL COMFORTABILITY ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION: THE CASE OF AMMAN AIRPORT

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August 2020, 64 Pages

Cultural differences between airport employees and passengers can have a substantial impact on how those passengers evaluate and judge the quality of services provided to them at airports. In this regard, the purpose of the present study is to investigate whether the differences of cultural backgrounds between customers and national employees effect the comfortability and satisfaction of customers using the example of Amman Airport. The demographic factors such as age, gender and education was also taken into consideration. The questionnaire was distributed to 100 passengers at the Amman Airport. While both cultural comfortability and customer satisfactions differs by education and nationality, they do not show significant differences based on gender and age. On the other hand, there is a significant impact of cultural comfortability of passengers on their satisfaction. The results of the present research are similar with most of the studies that have discussed the culture within the concept of business, and confirmed that a cultural difference effect exists, and could appear in many business sectors and personal lives as well.

**Keywords:** Culture, Hofstede, Cultural Comfortability, Customer Satisfaction,

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor, Assist. Prof. Sümeyye Kuşakcı, for her encouragement and continual support throughout this study. Her guidance and patience in conducting this thesis is much appreciated.

I would also like to express my appreciation to all of the lecturers at Ibn Haldun University and to the Turkish Airlines for providing this opportunity. Also, special thanks to the Turkish Airlines members Mr. Mazen Aldisi and Mr. Israfil Hatip for their understanding and support for personal development. Additional thanks to my present general manager Mr. Halit Omurca for his support and his brotherly understanding.

My warmest feeling is addressed to my beloved parents Colonel. Saleh Alhmoud and my beloved mother Fawziya Khasawneh and my siblings. My warmest appreciations for my beloved wife Malak Khasawneh for her support and understanding. Last but not least, I would like to dedicate my deepest appreciation for my friends Omar Khasawneh, Arafat Saleh, Omar Al-Tal, and Suhiab Alhmoud for always being supportive and helpful whenever I needed their help.

*I dedicate this work to my deceased uncle Saed Alhmoud who taught us  
imperturbability, patience, and honesty.*

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of the Study

In today's competitive environment of the aviation industry, airport management aspiring to gain a high level of customer satisfaction have realized that cultural differences between airport employees and passengers can have a substantial impact on how those passengers evaluate and judge the quality of services provided to them at airports. Many studies have examined culture as an important factor affecting customer satisfaction in a variety of businesses providing products and services to customers from different cultural backgrounds (Bleuel, Young, & Gertmenian, 2013; Hopkins, Nie, & Hopkins, 2009; Qu, 2018; Seo, 2012). The aviation industry is no exception (Al-Romaithi, 2014; Arif, Gupta, & Williams, 2013; Stamolampros, Korfiatis, Kourouthanassis, & Symitsi, 2019). Furthermore, the Airports Council International (ACI), which manages the trade association and represents airports around the world has recently published a research report entitled *The Influence of Culture on Airport Passenger Experience*. According to the 2018 ACI report, between 35 to 45% of the overall customer satisfaction is impacted by a person's cultural background. The ACI report highlights that a travelers' cultural background has a direct impact on what expectations they had upon the airport environment. Moreover, the study showed that travelers' cultural backgrounds have an impact on their experience of the airport through the airport management employees and third-party representatives (i.e., restaurant and retail shops in free zones, police, custom, etc.).

Hence, if we closely explore the cultural differences and comfortability dealing between passengers and airport management employees including all third-party representatives, a clearer understanding of the effect of cultural comfortability level on customer satisfaction at airports could be successfully achieved.

## **1.2. Problem Statement**

The above introductory section highlights the relevance of cultural differences and the level of ease while dealing in all businesses providing services to multi-cultural customers, including the aviation industry. So, a high level of customer satisfaction in a multi-cultural environment like airport results from the understanding of cultural differences between local employees and passengers coming from different regions. It is a given that Queen Alia International Airport (QAIA) in Jordan faces many challenges in serving culturally diverse passengers and meeting their expectations of good quality services. For instance, in conflict or problem-solving situations such as delays or annulation of air flights due to bad weather conditions, employees have to deal with multi-national passengers who have already some expectations on how airport employees should help them and provide them with proper service. These expectations are based on their experiences and reactions learned from similar situations and based on their understanding, beliefs, and values acquired from their own culture. However, these kinds of situations are troublemakers if employees rely just on their personal beliefs on how to deal with it without taking individual and cultural differences into account.

Any business providing services to multi-cultural customers will not achieve complete customer satisfaction unless all concerned employees have a clear and complete understanding of customer needs and expectations (Asher & Parker, 1989). On the other hand, cultural comfortability of passengers referring to “the feeling of congruence and comfort of persons of different cultural backgrounds” (Panwar, Kumar, & Ray, 2016) seems to be a crucial component of customer satisfaction. As much as passengers are aware of the cultural differences and comfortable with different cultures; their satisfaction level should be expected to increase.

Unfortunately, Hofstede and GLOBE developed estimated scores for the Jordanian cultural dimensions and that could have a negative impact on further studies attempting to understand the effect of culture on many dimensions of businesses. However, it is necessary to assess the customer satisfaction in terms of cultural differences, regardless of other factors of satisfaction.

Hence, a better understanding of the cultural differences and comfortability can help the airport management in QAIA in order to satisfy the different needs and expectations of passengers more effectively. This study aims to explore whether the cultural differences between employees and passengers and cultural comfortability of customers have an influence on the overall customer satisfaction in QAIA.

### **1.3. Aim of the Study**

Differences between national employees' culture and multi-national travelers cultural backgrounds can have an impact on customer satisfaction of the services provided by the airport staff as well as third party staff, such as police officers, customs officials, restaurants and retail shops employees at QAIA. In this regard, the purpose of the present study is to investigate whether the differences of cultural backgrounds between customers and national employees effect the comfortability and satisfaction of customers. To do so, the present study will examine the effect of cultural comfortability between QAIA local employees and passengers coming from neighboring Arab countries such as Iraq, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia; or European countries such as Italy, France, and Belgium; or Asian countries such as Japan and China on customer satisfaction.

Since the culture has been rarely studied in the Middle East region, this study partly fills the gap in understanding dominating cultures in that region. On the other hand, it raises the discussion around cultural comfortability of foreigners interacting with Jordanian Arab culture. From a practical perspective, this study is of great importance as it can significantly contribute to improve the customer satisfaction level at QAIA by providing a clear picture of the variables affecting the cultural comfortability level of passengers.

### **1.4. Research Questions**

The Hofstede cultural value dimensions will be employed in order to construct the framework of the present study. The Hofstede 6D-Model is considered the most commonly accepted and used model as a solid framework in cross-cultural studies (Alkailani, Azzam, & Athamneh, 2012). Therefore, the present research will attempt to answer the following questions:

- Does customer satisfaction vary based on demographic variables (gender, age, education, and nationality)?
- Does cultural comfortability vary based on demographic variables (gender, age, education, and nationality)?
- Does cultural comfortability affect customer satisfaction?

### 1.5. Hypothesis of the Study

Accordingly, the current research has the following hypotheses:

**Hypothesis One:** There are significant differences between satisfaction level of customer groups based on demographic variables (gender, age, education, and nationality).

H1-(a) There is a statistically significant difference between male and female passengers' satisfaction level.

H1-(b) There is a statistically significant difference between satisfaction levels of different age groups.

H1-(c) There is a statistically significant difference between satisfaction levels of customers with different educational backgrounds.

H1-(d) There is a statistically significant difference between satisfaction levels of customers originating from different cultural background.

**Hypothesis Two:** There are significant differences between cultural comfortability level of customer groups based on demographic variables (gender, age, education, and nationality).

H2-(a) There is a statistically significant difference between male and female passengers' cultural comfortability level.

H2-(b) There is a statistically significant difference between cultural comfortability levels of different age groups.

H2-(c) There is a statistically significant difference between cultural comfortability levels of customers with different educational backgrounds.

H2-(d) There is a statistically significant difference between cultural comfortability levels of customers originating from different cultural background.

**Hypothesis Three:** The higher the cultural comfortability of a passenger is, the higher the customer satisfaction.

## **1.6. Organization of the Study**

This study is separated into two main parts: theoretical and practical. The first two chapters constitute the theoretical part of the study. In the first chapter, the study is introduced. Mainly it includes the aim of the study, problem statement, limitations, research questions, and hypotheses. The second chapter includes the conceptual and theoretical framework of the study. First, the definitions and explanations of key concepts are discussed, then a comprehensive examination of the influence of cultural differences and comfortability on customer satisfaction is traced in the related literature that has been previously explored. Similarly, part two consists of chapters three, four, and five. While chapter three explains the methodology adopted in the study, the fourth chapter presents all relevant results of the study. Finally, the conclusion and recommendations are provided in the fifth chapter. The researcher hopes that these recommendations established on the key results of the present investigation will contribute to the aviation literature. Besides, the results may help QAIA management for considering the cultural factor when setting up developmental plans or training programs for AIG staff.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Mahatma Gandhi once said that no culture can survive if it tries to be exclusive. It is quite understandable that any community's survival is dependent on change acceptance and interaction with various neighboring communities. Willingness and flexibility to change are among the main aspects towards advancing a society.

In the last decade, a cultural study conducted by Baker and Carson (2011) indicated that cultural diversity can noticeably reduce the hostility against ethnic minorities in different communities. Generally, being culturally diverse and aware can make people think well beyond their surroundings in a way that they manage to break free from the chains of prejudice and stereotypes. For instance, Jordan is well-known for having a hospitable environment as well as safety and low crime rates. Tourists from around the globe tour Jordan every year and get to enjoy different places and experiences. However, it is the hospitality of Jordanian people at their workplace that makes them stand out.

The aviation sector involves people from different countries of the world and to coordinate the functions and duties well, they need to be working in harmony. Having varied opinions because of different cultural backgrounds is one of the greatest challenges faced by company managers at different levels. They try to create a common culture that all employees should follow and also should be fit with the customer's needs and expectations.

The literature review includes both the theoretical framework and empirical research sections. Theoretical review including four theories connected to the research questions gives the research the right foundation theoretically. Basically, Hofstede and Globe Studies including their dimensions are explained in detail.

The empirical review looks into the various studies with similar dependent and independent variables. The cultural variation is the independent variable while the customer satisfaction is taken as the dependent variable.

## **2.1. The Concept of Culture**

Despite multiple efforts made to adequately define the concept of culture, it is still difficult to find a unanimous definition due to its multiple interpretations and manifestations (Eelen, 2001; Scollon, Scollon, & Jones, 2012). Scholars from different fields of cultural study provided the literature with various definitions. The British anthropologist Tyler (Goodwin, 2000) defined culture as “the complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.” Similarly, scholars pointed out that “culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiment in artifacts. Moreover, the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e., historically derived and selected) ideas, especially their attached values (Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1952). On the other hand, culture systems may be considered as products of action, as conditional elements of future action”. Hofstede, the most widely cited in the field of cross-cultural studies, defined culture as “the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another” ( Hofstede, 1992). As for other researchers, culture is defined as “a fuzzy set of elementary ideas and values, orientations to life, beliefs, policies, procedures and behavioral conventions that are shared by a group of people, and that influence each member’s behavior and his/her interpretations of the ‘meaning’ of other people’s behavior” (Matsumoto, 1996).

All of the aforementioned definitions of culture and many others imply that culture is a set of variables underlying human behavior. It also indicates that culture is featured with certain aspects and characteristics that allow differentiating one culture from another. For the present study, the researcher will only shed light on three key characteristics.

The first key characteristic is that culture is manifested at three distinctive levels: artifacts, values, and assumptions (Schein, 1990). The artifacts level includes all objects made by a human being, typically items of cultural or historical interest. Burkus (2014) points out that those observable artifacts inside an organization are objects such as furniture, dress norms, and mantras. They can be easily observed even for an outsider, but sometimes difficult to understand, especially when someone tries to understand these cultural items superficially without going any deeper. The next level, the level of values, are considered as a set of declared values and norms that can affect the way members interact and represent an organization (Burkus, 2014). It is worth to mention that values are commonly reinforced in public declarations, such as the aptly named list of core values, as well as in the common phrases and norms that individuals repeat often in their declarations. The final level which is the basic assumptions can be explained as the beliefs and behaviors so deeply embedded that they can often go unnoticed. However, basic assumptions are the essence of a culture, and the plumb line that espoused values and artifacts square themselves against. Basic assumptions manifest themselves in a variety of ways. Sometimes, the basic assumptions are reflected in the espoused values and artifacts, sometimes not. However, when basic assumptions do not align with values, trouble arises. If we try to understand why a certain group behaves the way it does, our understanding may depend just on our analysis of those visible and observed artifacts, and we might misinterpret them. It should be taken into consideration that artifacts and values align with the basic assumptions of the culture observed. Briefly stated, misinterpreting visible objects of a certain culture may lead us to misjudge the entire culture, as those artifacts might not comply with ours. Therefore, it is essential to deeply understand other cultures in order to prevent falling in misinterpretations.

The second key characteristic is that culture can affect behavior and interpretations of behavior. We may refer to culture in order to explain a certain behavior, but we do not understand why one culture considers that behavior as appropriate, whereas another culture considers it inappropriate. The reason behind this lies in the fact that certain aspects of culture are visible but their meaning is not visible for outsiders: “their cultural meaning lies precisely and only in the way these practices are interpreted by the insiders” (Hofstede, 1992). In other words, any behavior, good or bad, can be differently understood based on our interpretation of that behavior. For instance, in the

Arab culture, displaying the soles of the feet is not considered as a good gesture. Such action is perceived as an insult, as you can use the shoe to offend someone. The meaning of such action is not visible for an outsider. If an outsider accidentally shows the soles of his/her feet, then he/she can simply apologize. However, trouble arises when an outsider refuses to apologize for such action that he/she assumes it is acceptable and that there is nothing wrong with doing so.

The third characteristic of culture, which is of great importance for the purposes of the present study, is that culture is learned. Every culture has its uniqueness and can be learned too. When we live in a certain culture, we will learn that culture by interacting with the people who live it. Even inside the society in which we are born, we learn the culture we grow with it by observing and interacting with our parents and relatives. When we make contact with the people of other cultures, we may be victims of the anxiety produced by our movement to another environment that is completely different from the one in which we were born. Some behaviors derived from our own culture may be acceptable or not. What does determine if these behaviors (such as crying or not crying, shaking hands or kissing each other) are acceptable and therefore shall be learned or even are unacceptable and therefore shall be ignored stems from the explanations and interpretations we get from our parents, relatives, teachers and the entire society in which we live.

The explanations and interpretations provided by most or all the members of the society for what constitutes an acceptable or unacceptable behavior form the basis of culture. Ferraro claims that understanding that culture is acquired through learning can lead to greater tolerance for cultural differences (Gary Ferraro, 1998). The learned nature of culture also indicates that it is possible to learn about other cultures since we have learned our own culture through the process of learning. Finally, the learned nature of culture leads us to conclude that foreign workforces, although perhaps lacking certain job-related skills at present, are perfectly capable of learning those skills in the future, provided they are exposed to culturally relevant training programs.

Accordingly, training programs that specifically aim to raise the cultural awareness of employees who are continually exposed to interact with customers from other cultures may help the organization as well as employees appropriately to deal with the

challenges they encounter in conflict situations resulted from the cultural differences in their multicultural workplace. Sometimes, cultural differences can outweigh the cultural similarities. Hence, it is quite important that we know how to deal with them, as they can have an impact on customer satisfaction.

## **2.2. The Prominent Definitions of Culture**

Edward Tylor (1920), a British anthropologist who lived in the 19th century, defined the culture as “the complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society”. It is notable that even though Tylor’s definition is very general and comprehensive, this definition is the most enduring definition of culture. In their book of *High Points in Anthropology*, Bohannan and Glazer (1988) introduced Tylor’s definition as such that “most anthropologists can quote correctly, and the one they fall back on when others prove too cumbersome”.

In 1992, Hofstede defined the culture as the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another. Hofstede’s definition introduced a new approach to our understanding of the culture which is based on mind designs or mind programming and is not fundamentally based on art, law, or morals.

Similarly, Matsumoto (1996) described the culture as “the set of attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors shared by a group of people, but different for each individual, communicated from one generation to the next”. He assumed that the cultural dimensions are transferred from one generation to the other. According to Longstaff and Schwartz, “culture consists of the derivatives of experience, more or less organized, learned or created by the individuals of a population, including those images or encasements and their interpretations (meanings) transmitted from past generations, from contemporaries, or formed by individuals themselves” (Longstaff & Schwartz, 1992). Other scholars tried to add individual beliefs to Schwartz definition: “culture is a fuzzy set of basic assumptions and values, orientations to life, beliefs, policies, procedures and behavioral conventions that are shared by a group of people,

and that influence (but do not determine) each member's behavior and his/her interpretations of the 'meaning' of other people's behavior" (Spencer-Oatey, 2012).

From the previous definitions, the researcher can draw his own definition of culture, which is the set of programmed minds agreed the right and wrong attitudes, feelings, actions and reactions in specific situations and constant circumstances (social occasions, professional workplaces, etc.) involving attitudes, feelings, actions and reactions transferred from one generation to the other.

### **2.3. Cultural Comfortability**

As cultural comfortability is the independent variable of the study, it is necessary to define what the culture comfortability is. Unfortunately, just a few scholars studied the concept of cultural comfortability up to the present. The culture comfortability could be defined as "the feeling of congruence and comfort of persons of different cultural backgrounds" (Panwar et al., 2016). On the other hand, psychologists utilized the term of cultural comfort within the concept of the patient comfort in a psychotherapy session. When the psychologist is culturally different from patients, the cultural comfort refers to "those feelings that arise before, during, and after culturally relevant conversations" (Watkins et al., 2019). Moreover, the researcher defines the cultural comfortability as the degree of accepting a specific attitude based on cultural backgrounds, and the degree of being relaxed and comfortable.

### **2.4. Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions**

Geert Hofstede created one of the most comprehensive studies in history to discover how the national culture could affect the workplace. He conducted his study in more than 40 countries with more than 117000 employees of IBM. The 6-D (Six Dimensions) National Culture Theory could be summarized as six different features differentiating one culture from another.

The Hofstede study is highly applicable to the research in several ways. Firstly, it proved that national cultural differences exist, and it was applied in many professional workplaces. Secondly, the 6-D module of national culture has transferred the meaning

of national culture to something measurable in one way or another as every single dimension in the 6-D module shows a part of the national personality (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010).

#### **2.4.1. Individualism vs. Collectivism (IDV)**

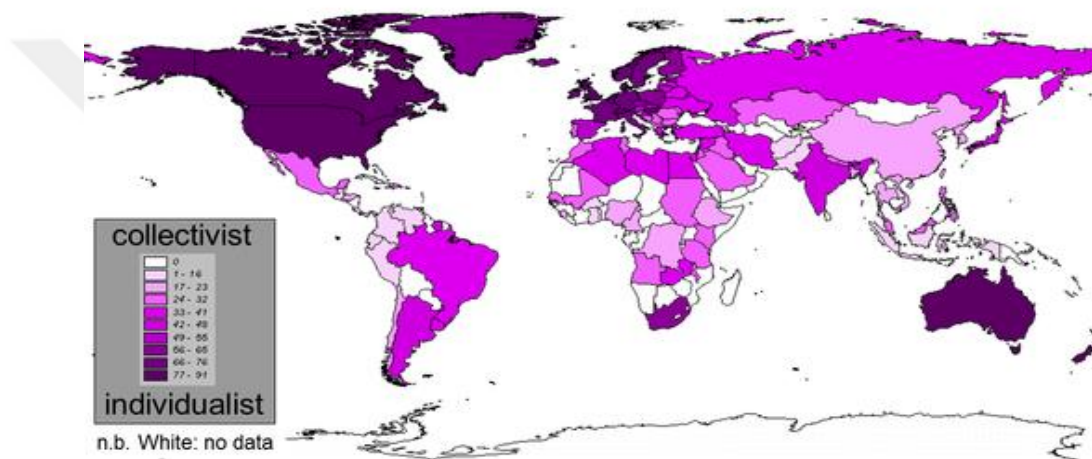
While the individualism dimension is of the idea that people are basically concerned about themselves and their immediate families. Collectivism is based on that the main concern of people is in their communities or groups. In the case of collectivism, the in-group is anticipated to look after individuals as long as they show loyalty to the group. The difference between out-groups and in-groups in the collectivist culture can be seen in communication such as different forms of politeness among the members (Erdoğan & Kaya, 2014). As Minkov and Hofstede (2012) confirmed, social behavior is more likely to differ in neo-individualist, proto-individualist, and collectivist societies.

In the process of modernization, all societies are creating very similar features such as low social integration with relatives, low emphatic capacity, and belief in sexual equality, self-reliance and high aspirations in both occupation and education. Individualism is also a common feature of industrialized societies.

In a collectivist culture, if the rules, beliefs, norms, and even sanctions are clear; conformity might take place more frequently. Nevertheless, whenever there are unclear norms and there is no likelihood of sanctions being imposed, one can observe anti-conformity (Thaden, Wiegmann, Mitchell, Sharma, & Zhang, 2003).

In cultures where individualism is practiced, there are more in-groups like co-workers, family, peers, clubs, etc. The majority of the individual behavior is pointed at attaining the objectives that are applicable within one of the different in-groups, but not within other groups. Minkov and Hofstede (2012) confirm that the connection of the individual to in-group attempts to be stable in collectivist cultures and even at a time that in-group makes highly costly demands, the individual remains with it.

Darwish and Huber (2003) researched on the possible impact of cultural background on the number of cognitions within the collective self and private self. The researchers used Hofstede’s knowledge to argue that the private self can be seen to be emphasized more in individualistic cultures which are mostly in regions like Europe and North America than in the collectivist cultures which are mostly in the Middle East, Asia, and Arabic countries. Nevertheless, research by Baker and Carson (2011) indicates that collectivism is emphasized more in cultures with a collective way of thinking and looking at things than in individualistic cultures. The collectivist individualism data in various countries is further illustrated in Figure 2.1. below.



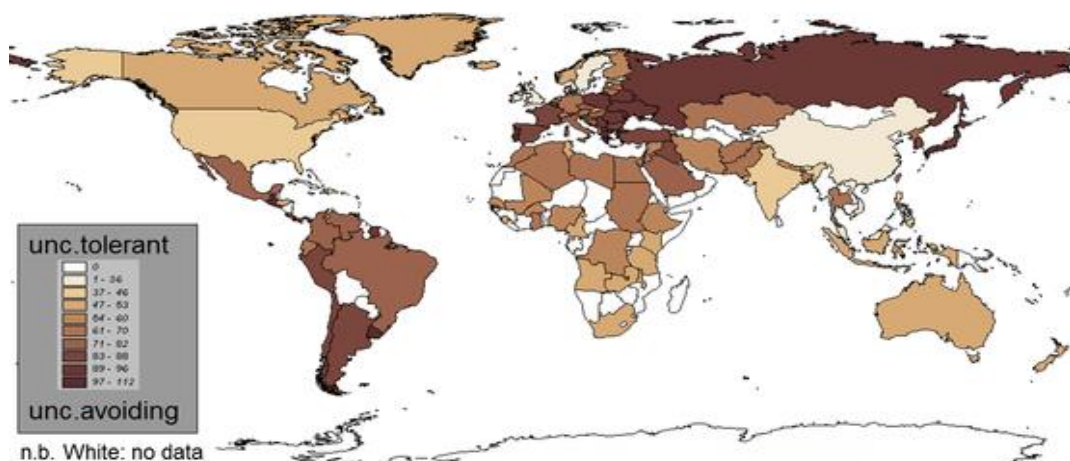
**Figure 2.1. Collectivist vs. Individualistic Countries (Hofstede et al., 2010)**

#### **2.4.2. Uncertainty Avoidance (UAI)**

According to several researchers (Baker & Carson, 2011; Minkov & Hofstede, 2014), the dimension of uncertainty avoidance is based on the ability of a culture to bear with ambiguity. People with such cultures of high uncertainty avoidance are quite dogmatic and rigid. Hofstede (2011) confirms that people with high uncertainty avoidance traits are afraid of unknown situations. Life is considered to contain many risks, and the outcome of stress should be handled well and reduced. Thus, cultures might be reliant on some mechanisms like laws, customs, rules as well as religion as they seek security in different contexts (Brewer & Venaik, 2011). Figure 2.2. shows the uncertainty avoidance map around the world.

High-risk avoidance leads to other different strategies aimed at reducing risks. For instance, business managers originating from culture with high uncertainty avoidance make sure and recommend holding more cash to deal with uncertainties whenever they come in. On the other hand, cultures with low uncertainty avoidance are more likely to foster and exhibit more creativity and innovation (Minkov & Hofstede, 2014).

People with high uncertainty avoidance always show more brand loyalty (Helmreich & Merritt, 2017). Such people are always suspicious of any new products. They tend to view products and services less favorably than the ones in cultures with low uncertainty avoidance and are less satisfied when their expectations are not met. This could be well applicable to the employment relationships so that employees with high uncertainty will be loyal to their companies and unwilling to shift to any other organization.



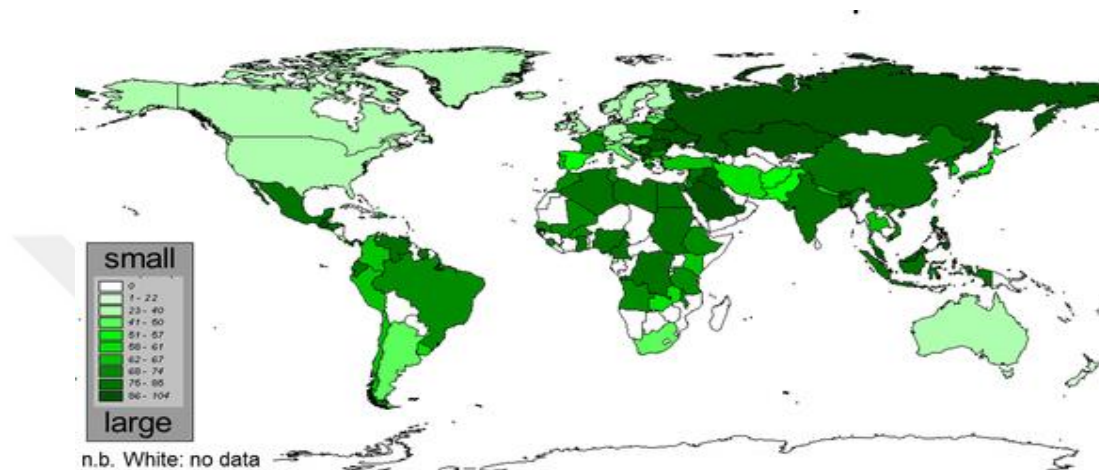
**Figure 2. 2. Uncertainty Avoidance World Map (Hofstede et al., 2010)**

### **2.4.3. Power Distance Index (PDI)**

Power distance index (PDI) is the value that differentiates groups, individuals, nations, and organizations based on to what extent people accept inequalities as either functional or unavoidable. Having a clear understanding of PDI is very crucial in organizational research since it is a common feature of any hierarchy and impacts

several outcomes and processes (Daniels & Greguras, 2014). The PDI map in different parts of the world is shown in Figure 2.3.

Grove and Llc (2005) went further to review theories as well as research connecting power distance to macro and micro level work-related results. The results indicate that PDI is vital in explaining the relationships and to measure organizational outcomes.



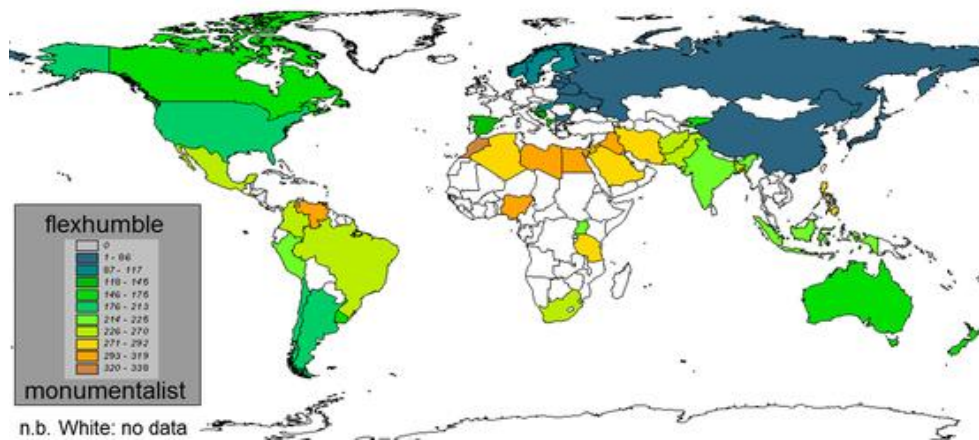
**Figure 2.3. Power Distance World Map (Hofstede et al., 2010)**

#### **2.4.4. Long vs. Short Term Orientation (LVS)**

The future orientation is the level to which collectivity propagates and rewards future-orientated behaviors like gratification delays and planning. The understanding and analysis of time has an impact on how our decisions in the past affect the present time, or how the present decisions affect the future (Minkov & Hofstede, 2012). Figure 2.4. depicts the short- and long-term orientation around the world.

According to Javidan et al. (2006), the time orientation is a part of how groups of people understand the concept of time. Nevertheless, research conducted by Minkove and Hofstede (2012) demonstrated that people tend to worry a lot about the future. The findings also revealed that managers and employees make their decisions based on what they feel is important for the future of their employees and the organization itself. It is tangible that future orientation dimensions could be affected by the IDV

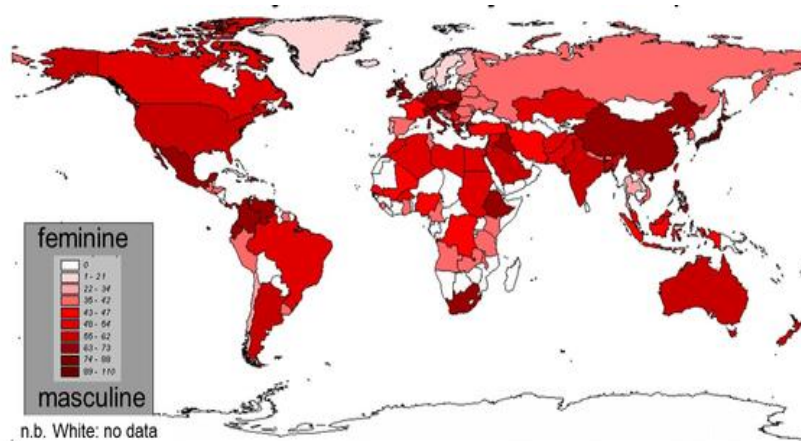
dimension, as the individual manager, employee, or customer's future planning can be influenced by the percentage of their collectivism or individualism.



**Figure 2.4. Short-term vs.- Long-term Orientation World Map (Hofstede et al., 2010)**

#### 2.4.5. Masculinity vs. Femininity (MAS)

Masculinity is the degree of the male personality that appears in a society. The main indicator of the success in a masculine society is assertiveness and heroism. In masculine societies the people are more competitive. Feminine oriented societies have a great awareness about quality of life, and the guide for success is caring about the weakest in society (Hofstede, 1998). Below Figure 2.5. shows the Masculinity vs. Femininity around the world based on Hofstede results.



**Figure 2.5. Femininity vs. Masculinity World Map (Hofstede et al., 2010)**

#### 2.4.6. Indulgence vs. Restraint (IVR)

Indulgence is the degree to which a society cares about the need of entertainment and enjoys the life with limited restrictions. Restraint is the degree of how the society is strict about enjoying the life and has rules limiting the desires of humans. People in restrained societies have more regulations regarding behavior and very strict social norms. Below Figure 2.6. shows how the societies are distributed around the world from Hofstede's indulgence vs. restraint point of view.

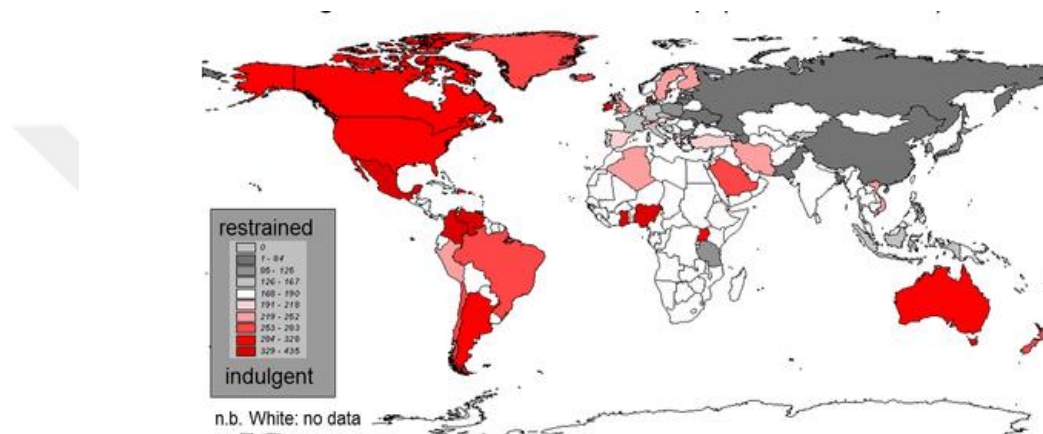


Figure 2.6. Indulgence vs. Restraint World Map (Hofstede et al., 2010)

#### 2.5. GLOBE Study of Cultural Differences

In the business world, GLOBE project is a well-known study for increasing the understanding of culture and leadership. The project has studied 62 societies around the world, in order to clarify how organizational practices, leadership, economic competition, and human behavior is affected by national cultural values (Shi & Wang, 2011). 170 investigators have been volunteered in “GLOBE study for the data collection and analysis and more than 17000 managers responded to the study. The data was collected from 3 different organizations from various sectors such as financial services, telecommunications, and food processing in each country. The qualitative methods have also been applied to enhance quantitative results (Javidan, House, Dorfman, Hanges, & De Luque, 2006). The GLOBE” model has nine different dimensions which are listed as follows (Mensah & Chen, 2013; Minkov & Hofstede, 2014):

*i. Assertiveness:*

The degree to which people value assertive confrontational, confrontation, and how they are aggressive in their relationships with each other. The high assertiveness means the society supports competitiveness and toughness regardless of feelings. The low assertiveness is more focusing towards feelings and tenderness.

*ii. Future Orientation:*

The extent to which individuals engage in future-oriented behavior, such as delaying gratification, planning, and investing in the future no matter the results or the outcomes. Generally, countries that have a higher future orientation, prefer future outcomes from the present investments. However, low future orientation countries prefer immediate payoffs.

*iii. Gender Egalitarianism:*

It is the level to which a culture reduces gender inequity. The higher the gender egalitarianism, the more women in decision making positions. The low the gender egalitarianism, the less women in business and political arena. As might be expected, this is highly related with the equal opportunities for males and females for all levels of education.

*iv. Humane Orientation:*

The extent to which a community promotes and compensates individuals for being fair, altruistic, generous, caring, and kind to others.

*v. In-Group Collectivism:*

The level to which individual articulates pride, loyalty, and cohesiveness to organizations and families.

*vi. Institutional Collectivism:*

The level to which organizational and social institutional practices encourage and reward collective distribution of resources and the collective team.

*vii. Performance Orientation:*

The level to which a society supports and rewards people for their accomplishment enhancement and quality.

*viii. Power Distance:*

The extent to which participants of society require power to be distributed evenly.

*ix. Uncertainty Avoidance:*

The degree to which society depends on social standards, regulations, and measures to alleviate unexpected future situations.

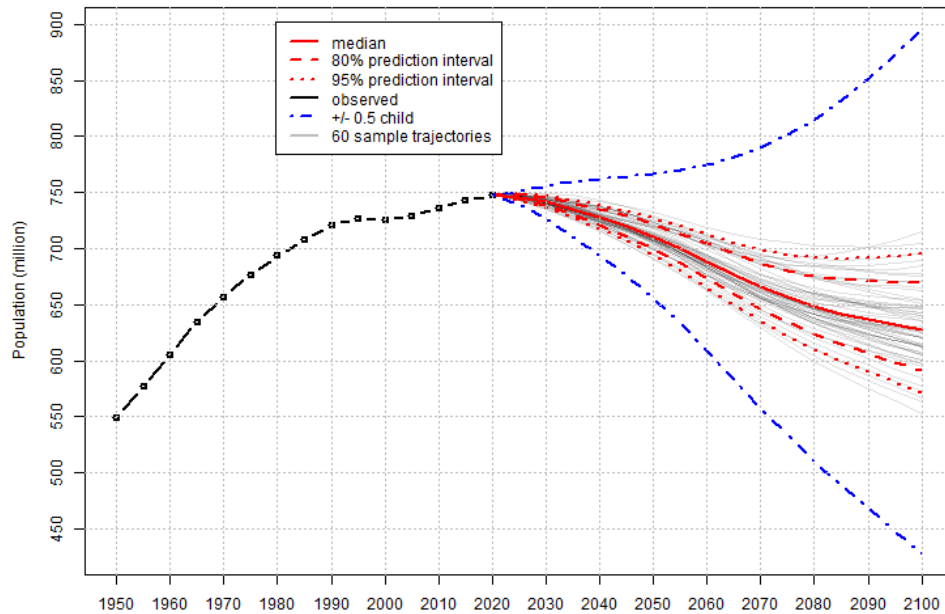
As discussed previously, GLOBE had a wider vision as it completed our understanding of culture from where Hofstede has ended. GLOBE's touch has two different contribution to the literature. Firstly, it added some new dimension "(gender egalitarianism, in-group collectivism, institutional collectivism, and assertiveness)" as mentioned above. Secondly, it classified the cultures around the world to 10 different clusters: Anglo, Nordic, Germanic, Latin European, Eastern European, Latin American, African, Middle Eastern, Confucian Asian, And South-East Asian (Mensah & Chen, 2013).

## **2.6. European Culture**

Europe includes the majority of the civilized nations of modern times. Most of the manufacturing organizations compete to start their production in one of the European countries, because of their free trading contracts with rest of the world. Moreover, it is easy to find the targeted customers in Europe. European companies also have a lot of experience in business law, so they are able to understand their privilege rights perfectly. Besides, the huge purchasing power provides a good advantage for investors to open new markets (Duina, 2006). In addition, the power of Europe also offers a good advantage for Europeans to enter into new markets easily.

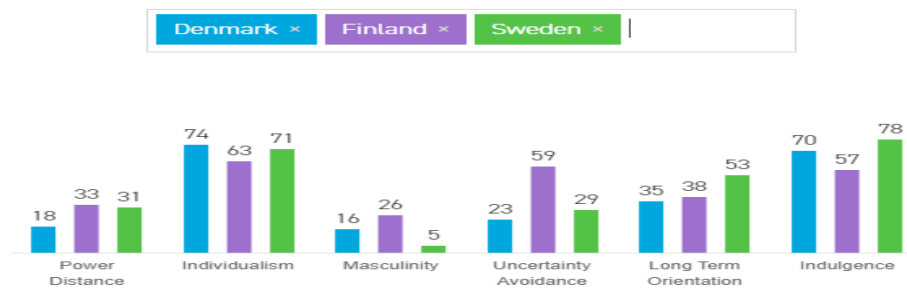
Europe ranks the 6<sup>th</sup> in terms of its size among the world continents, as it takes 4000,000 square miles including the islands around and in it. It is considered as a huge vast peninsula inside the great Eurasian land mass. The Ural Mountains and River take the east borders to separate the Asian continent and Europe. Whereas, the Arctic Ocean takes the border in the north, the Marmara Sea and Dardanelles in the south. The Arctic Ocean takes the west borders (Glatzer, 2019).

According to the report published by the United Nations in 2015, the population of Europe was 741 million (Figure 2.7.), which accounts for less than 11% of the world total population as shown in Figure 5. The UN also reported that if the current trend continues, then the share of Europe to the world population could be decreased to 7% in the year 2050.



**Figure 2.7. Population of Europe (UN, 2019)**

According to GLOBE cultural clusters, Europe is divided into four different cultural groups based on the geographical, demographical, and historical regions. These four groups include (i) Nordic (e.g. Denmark, Finland, Sweden), (ii) Germanic (e.g. Germany, Austria, Netherlands, Switzerland), (iii) Latin Europe (e.g. France, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, Israel), and (iv) Eastern Europe (e.g. Albania, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Poland, Russia, Slovenia) (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004). The comparison of countries within the same cluster based on Hofstede’s cultural dimensions comparison for different countries in the Nordic, Germanic, Latin Europe, and Eastern Europe is shown in Figure 2.8. As noted, Switzerland is added for both Germanic and Latin Europe groups in the GLOBE model due to its variation and geographical possession in the region.



Nordic Europe



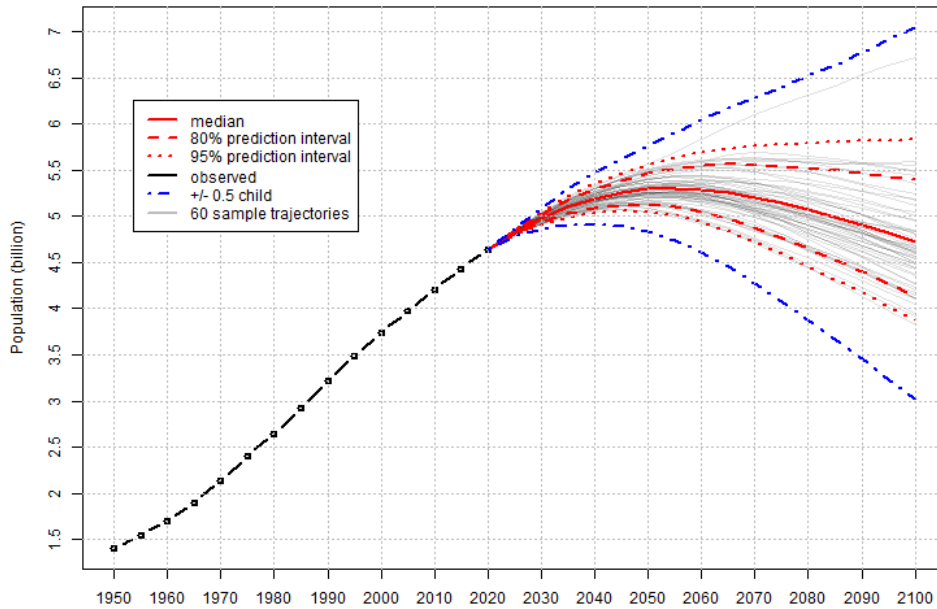
**Figure 2.8. 6-D Hofstede Dimensional Model for European Cultural Clusters (Hofstede-Insights, 2016)**

## 2.7. Asian Culture

There are many ancient civilizations that had appeared in the Asian region such as Chinese, Japanese, Indian, etc. Asia is known for the variation and differences between the existing cultures. (Fuller & Stevens, 2019). The name *Asia*, speculated to be from Akkadian yet originated from Latin Greek, , means to go out, to rise, a reference to the sun, or the land of the sunrise (UN, 2017).

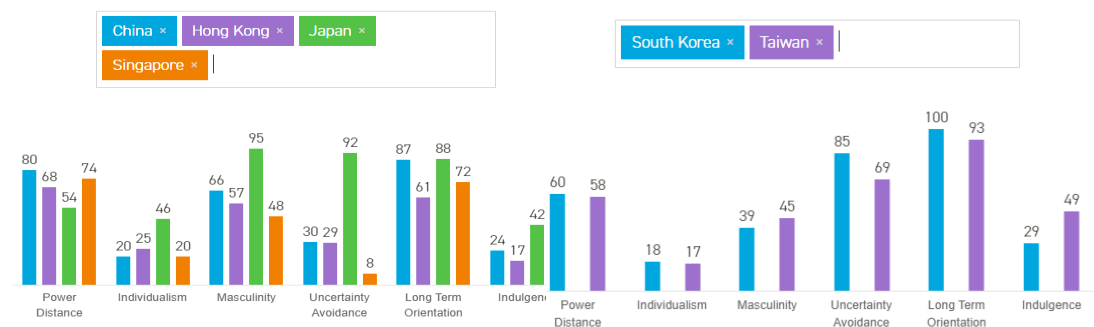
The borders between Asia and Africa is the Red Sea and Suez Channel, while the coast of the eastern Mediterranean draws the border between Asia and Europe. Asia covers 9% of the total earth and it's the largest continent with 39022 square miles (National

Geographic Society (U.S.) & Tait, 2014). Based on the latest United Nations estimations, the Asian continent holds 48 countries with a population of 4,621,615,305 million until January 2020 (Figure 2.9.) shows how the population is increasing in Asia by million.



**Figure 2.9. Population of Asia (UN, 2019)**

According to GLOBE’s categorization, Asia is grouped into three different clusters, including (i) Confucian Asia (i.e. Japan, China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, South Korea), (ii) Southern Asia (i.e. Indonesia, Malaysia, Iran, India, Philippines, Thailand), and (iii) Middle East (i.e. Turkey, Kuwait, Qatar, Morocco, Egypt) (House et al., 2004). The comparison of Asian countries in Confucian Asia, Southern Asia, and Middle East based on Hofstede 6-D cultural dimensions is depicted in Figure 2.10.



**Confucian Asia**



**Figure 2.10. 6-D Hofstede Dimensional Model for Asian Cultural Clusters (Hofstede-Insights, 2016)**

The above countries have many similarities in common, as they do share same history, same common religion, and same language. On the other hand, from the researcher's point of view, it is technically not possible to study the countries above as one group. Because these countries are not sharing exactly the same traditions and social behaviors. In addition, the geographical location also should be taken in consideration. As discussed by other authors, the Hofstede and GLOBE studies do not focus on studying all the Middle Eastern countries, as most of the numbers provided from Hofstede were estimated. Additionally, in Hofstede studies, more focus was given towards the main features of the Middle East that is characterized by its high power distance, high uncertainty avoidance and low individualism (At-Twajjri & Al-Muhaiza, 1996).

## **2.8. Arab Neighboring**

### **2.8.1. Arabian Gulf countries**

The Arabian Gulf countries are named due to the location of these countries on the Arabian Gulf. This area is located in the northwest side of the Asian continent's Gulf area which lies from the north sea of the Arabian Peninsula to the northwest of Iraq (Searle, 2019).

The Arabian Gulf consists of several countries including Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Oman, Kuwait, and Qatar. Saudi Arabia has an area of 2149690 km<sup>2</sup>. The capital of Saudi Arabia is Al-Riyadh, and it has border with Jordan from the south side of Jordan. United Arab Emirates (UAE) covers an area of 83600 km<sup>2</sup> and the capital city of UAE is Abu Dhabi. Sultanate of Oman with an area of 309500 km<sup>2</sup> has its capital named Muscat. The capital city of Kuwait with a size of 17818 km<sup>2</sup> Kuwait City. Bahrain covers an area of 7655 km<sup>2</sup>, and the capital is Manama. Qatar with a size of 11521 km<sup>2</sup> has the capital city Doha (Cadène & Dumortier, 2013).

### **2.8.2. Levant countries**

The Levant or Sham countries as acknowledged in Arabic language includes Palestine, Syria, and Lebanon (see at Figure 2.11.). These countries share the same history, religion, language and traditions (Koch & Stivachtis, 2019).

Figure 2.11. illustrates the location of Jordan around its neighboring countries. Jordan has a common border with all of the Levant countries. Syria is located on the north, Palestine in the west, Iraq on the east, and Saudi Arabia on the south. On the other side, by crossing The Red Sea, Jordan is also connected to Egypt.



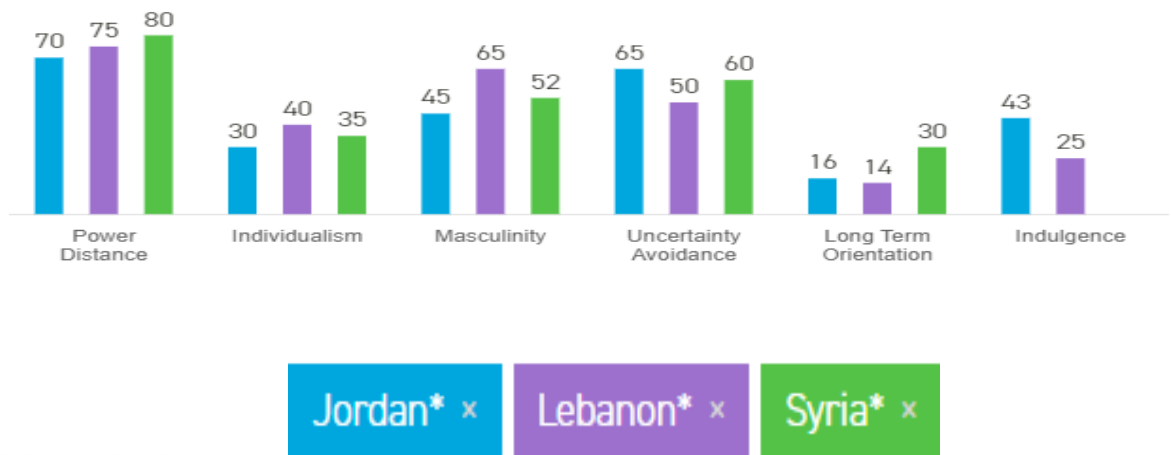
**Figure 2.11. The Levant countries map (Şafak, 2007)**

## **2.9. Jordanian Culture**

Jordan is a part of Muslim Arab Middle Eastern culture. Jordan is a small country comparing with the rest of the Middle Eastern countries., The capital of Jordan is Amman, with an estimated area of 1,680 km<sup>2</sup> (Bani-Domi, 2005). Historically, as Damascus was the capital of The Umayyad's, it was only 329 km far from Amman. At that time, Baghdad was the capital of The Abbasids empire, which its located 800 km away from Amman city. Similarly, at the time of the Ottoman Empire, the Mediterranean Sea was the only thing separating Istanbul from Amman. As a result, this geographical position gave Jordan advantages in many sectors, such as in education, economics, and trading (Al-Wer, 2002). Furthermore, Jordan was one of the safe roads to reach the holy cities of Mecca and Al Madinah, during the traveling of worshipers and merchants for over 1400 years. This situation gave the Jordanians a good experience in dealing with different nations and people, and as Jordan has the Bedouin background, they take extra attention for their guests and they take it more seriously by giving them a good quality of hospitability and comfort, which would surely grow multinational personalities (Rushton & Irwing, 2009).

In Hofstede's study, the findings include estimated numbers for the cultural dimensions of Jordan. Figure 2.12 illustrates the scores of Jordan, Lebanon and Syria in detail.

However, in GLOBE's study, the Jordanian cultural dimensions were not even mentioned and investigated.



**Figure 2.12. Hofstede's Estimated 6-D for Levant Countries (Hofstede-Insights, 2016)**

## 2.10. Customer Satisfaction

Achieving customer satisfaction is not simply a matter of applying a reasonable logic. Customer satisfaction, which is a term frequently used in marketing, includes not only the feelings associated with the purchasing process, but also the atmosphere before and after the execution of purchases and/or delivery of services (Biesok & Wyród-Wróbel, 2011). Several authors reported that customer satisfaction is an overall evaluation based on the total purchase and consumption experience with the good or service over time (Fornell, Johnson, Anderson, Cha, & Bryant, 1996). Hence, it is not an easy task to satisfy customers' needs or meet their expectations, as many companies are competing with each other in the market on the same targeted customers. It is worth to mention that studying customers' behavior is important. This is because marketing strategies can be affected by people needs (Ilieska, 2013). This is the only way to gain a high level of satisfaction of the customers' needs. Customer behavior involves decisions such as whether, what, when, where, and how to purchase goods and services. Marketing aims to understand and direct these decisions. It is essential to know the customers' demands and expectations in order to accomplish an ideal

combination of both: the production factor and the disposal of products. Therefore, the research on customers' needs and their satisfaction is of a great significance.

Since customer satisfaction depends on the quality of interactions that take place between employee(s) and customer(s) during the service encounter, it is possible to improve the level of customer satisfaction by multiple ways. As pointed out by Harps, companies have been forced to change their management habits and send employees to several destinations of the world in order to learn about other cultures and work with people coming from different international backgrounds (Harps, 2000). This is because a clearer understanding of how cultural differences impact customer satisfaction might provide management with strong support.

### **2.10.1. The Definition of Customer Satisfaction**

Customer satisfaction is one of the most important variables that makes the organization stable and can help it to get through the problems internally and externally (Brusco, Cradit, & Brudvig, 2019). It has attracted huge attention among scholars and therefore more than 900 articles and researches on customer satisfaction were conducted between the year 1980 and 1990 (Perkins, 1991).

According to Fornell et al. (1991), it is the customer's overall evaluation of his/her purchase and consumption experience. Oliver reported that "customer satisfaction is the customer's fulfillment response. It is a judgment that a product or service feature, or the product or service itself, provides or is providing a pleasurable level of consumption-related fulfillment, including levels of under- or over-fulfillment" (Oliver, 1980). Furthermore, the results revealed that the confirmation of expectation paradigm suggests developing the satisfaction in three steps: the formation of expectations, the perception of the actual level of received performance, and comparison of performance on the expectations. Thereafter, the customer expectations become one of the most important variables for increasing the satisfaction because if the service level and the performance exceed the expectations we can reach customer satisfaction on some level (Cardozo, 1965).

Most of the business cycles depend on the customer. In addition, the customers have the main positive or negative effect on running the business, as they can influence the profit, status, image, etc. Hence it is important for all of the organizations to meet the customers' expectations and identify the satisfaction level of their products or services (Ranaweera & Prabhu, 2003). As a result, researchers have created several types of measurement tools for customer satisfaction, these tools are summarized in the following sections.

### 2.10.2. Net Promoter Score (NPS)

Net Promoter Score (NPS) is used to calculate the customer's loyalty and overall sentiment rather than indicating one specific experience. NPS is applied in several industries to identify specifically the detractors referring to the ones willing to switch to a different supplier. NPS surveys are usually sent by email or text message (Temple, Burkhart, & Tassone, 2020). An example of the NPS form is shown in Figure 2.16. Additionally, the NPS has divided the respondents into three different groups:

- i. Detractors whose results are between 0-6,
- ii. Passives whose results are between 7 and 8,
- iii. Promoters whose results are between 9 and 10.

How likely are you to recommend our company to a friend or colleague?

Not at all likely					Extremely likely					
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

**Figure 2.13. Example of NPS Form (Temple et al., 2020)**

### 2.10.3. Customer Satisfaction Survey (CSAT)

Customer satisfaction survey (CSAT) is used to measure satisfaction about one specific product or service. CSAT contains several product or service-related questions, such as “what would you give a rate for the product A”. Figure 2.17. depicts an example of a CSAT survey form. Only customers answering satisfied or very

satisfied are considered as satisfied customers (Rotella & Chulani, 2012). The CSAT survey gives a chance for the organizations to improve their products and service quality if the product is graded 1 to 3. On the other hand, if the overall score is 4 or 5 that refers to a strong product (Piola & Romero, 2004).

How would you rate your overall satisfaction with the products/service you received?

<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Very Unsatisfied
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	Unsatisfied
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	Neutral
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	Satisfied
<input type="checkbox"/>	5	Very Satisfied

**Figure 2.14. Example of CSAT Survey Form (Rotella & Chulani, 2012)**

#### **2.10.4. Post-Purchase (PP)**

This type of customer satisfaction survey indicates the satisfaction of the customer after the purchasing process. It aims to identify one specific experience in one specific place and to pinpoint the specific problem (Richins & Bloch, 1991). Normally, businesses employ this type of survey after conducting a general customer satisfaction survey such as NPS with a low score. Post-Purchase guides the company to understand if the problem is in the customer service or quality of the products. This type of survey is usually distributed by mail.

#### **2.10.5. Product or Service Development (Concept Testing)**

This type of customer satisfaction survey is distributed before launching a product to the market. Either a sample or specific detail about the product should be delivered to the customer. This type of survey could provide us a basic understanding of the market level and customers' needs (Dahan & Mendelson, 2001).

### **2.10.6. Empirical Studies on Culture and Customer Satisfaction**

Several authors tried to test the effect of culture on customer satisfaction in various contexts. One of them conducted in a Greek insurance organization in two different folds. The first was in the culture's relation to service quality, while the second one was to indicate the relationship of service quality dimensions with customer satisfaction. The researcher utilized the descriptive-analytical analysis to find the results. The hypothesis of the research was based on the 6-D module of Hofstede. The sample was  $n = 252$ , direct interviews were made with the individuals. The conditions of accepting the sample were as follows: age above 25 year old, holding minimum one insurance policy, and at least having 3 months experience in dealing with the insurance company (Tsoukatos & Rand, 2007). The study showed that there is a relationship between culture and service quality. On the other hand, results revealed an interesting divergence from Hofstede 6-D scores of Greece, and he said that is due to two different reasons, (i) either Hofstede results in Greece are wrong or (ii) out of date.

In a recent study in Australia (Huang & Crotts, 2019), researchers conducted a study with a sample of 39,959 respondents. The main aim of the study was to indicate the relationship between culture and tourist satisfaction using the 6-D module of Hofstede and compare the results with a similar study made in Hong Kong previously. The methodology used to reach the results was the descriptive-analytical method through SPSS. The researcher focused on the tourists visiting Australia. It was conducted at the airport. The researcher used the incoming cards of the passengers in order to shortlist the passengers who came for a vacation, so he has shortlisted his sample to 14892 international holiday-making tourists. The second step shortlisted 7544 international holiday-making tourists from 28 countries. Results shows that there is a direct effect of the passenger's cultural backgrounds on their satisfaction level.

Another study conducted by other researchers (Sunny, Patrick, & Rob, 2019) aimed to discover the impact of cultural values in accepting the technology. The sample was including hotel employees currently working on the west coast of the United States. The survey was distributed to 421 workers to measure the effect of collectivism, long term orientation (LTO), and masculinity on discomfort, perceived usefulness, and perceived ease of use. The main result of this study is collectivism and long-term

orientation are positively related to perceived usefulness and ease of use. Long-term orientation is negatively related to discomfort whereas masculinity is positively related to discomfort.

In a different study, several researchers (Schoefer, Wäppling, Heirati, & Blut, 2019) aimed to increase understanding of reactions of dissatisfied customers upon their cultural background. In this research the descriptive-analytical method was used to collect data from 486 respondents in 34 different countries around the world. In particular, 54% from Asia, 32% European, 10% North American, and 4% South American and Africa, through an SPSS-based analysis. Results showed an indirect effect of culture on behavioral responses in case of service failure. These findings reveal noteworthy implications for service managers. For instance, managers must acknowledge the various cultural dimensions that differentiate between different responses to dissatisfaction of service experiences. It is worth to mention that the level of customer dissatisfaction is evidently an essential factor in promoting the actions of voice, exist, and negative WOM (word of mouth) as well as third-party actions. The cultural value orientation of customers has a (moderating) influence on their response to customer dissatisfaction that should not be ignored.

Several authors (Dingil, Rupi, Schweizer, Stasiskiene, & Aalipour, 2019) tried to measure the effect of national culture on choosing the transportation patterns available for use. The researcher collected the data from 41 countries, and 87 urban areas. The researchers developed the study based on Hofstede's dimensions. Results revealed that Netherlands, Denmark, and Hungary showed a high individualism. Therefore, using bikes for transportation is more commonly popular than using cars. In addition, the research showed that governments in most individualistic countries based on the Hofstede model are trying to build more individualistic transportation patterns. However, countries with higher collectivism based on the Hofstede model prefer using public transportation patterns. Further, the study indicated that the higher uncertainty and masculinity results in using public transportation (e.g. buses and trains) more often.

Recently, other scholars (Lee, Kang, & Kang, 2019) conducted a research study to investigate the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction. The

sample of the study is 7652 industrial customers in 55 countries. The methodology was structural equation modeling (SEM) to test the hypothesis. The (NPS) net promoter score was used to measure the loyalty based on cultural differences in business to business (B2B) services. The study showed a positive relationship between service quality, customer satisfaction and loyalty. However, it was found that there is a negative relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction. It is worth mentioning that individualism can positively affect the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction. On the other hand, the effect was not clear between cultural differences and both service quality and loyalty. Further, the researcher claimed that there is no effect for cultural differences on service quality and loyalty.

Other researchers (Kokareva, 2018) aimed to find whether the customers from different cultural groups evaluate the service differently, how they feel about the customer service provided and identify those differences. This study was carried out at shops, such as duty-free and sales-shops operating at the Helsinki Airport, Finland. A survey was distributed to 159 passengers and respondents were divided into five different groups: Finnish, Russian, American, British, and Japanese. Personal observations were also considered in this study. Results showed heterogeneous customer behavior. On the other hand, the study showed a difference between Finnish, Russian, British, American, and Japanese passengers in the way they evaluate the customer service.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

This chapter explains the research methodology applied in this study. It was divided into five sections. Section 1 describes the population and sample selected for this research study. Section 2 of this chapter demonstrates the survey design and measure including an illustration about the variables used and the distribution method of answers from respondents. Section 3 which is Test for the Study Instrument explains how the reliability of the study was obtained. Finally, section 4 describes the software analysis used in this study and the methods applied in the software in order to obtain the required data analyzes. Principally, the study has a quantitative approach. The researcher used the descriptive-analytical method to collect, classify and analyze the data.

#### **3.1. Population and Sample**

The population of the study covers all passengers at QAIA in Jordan. The study sample includes a total of randomly selected 100 passengers. The passengers were selected based on the following criteria: (i) from different airline carriers, (ii) coming from various destination, (iii) multiple nationalities, and (iv) tourists or residents in Jordan in the past one month.

#### **3.2. Survey Design and Measures**

The main data was attained through the provision of a unique questionnaire for the purpose of the study. All aspects related with the hypothetical framework and research questions were attempted to be covered<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Appendix A: questionnaire form

There are two main variables in the present study, which are (i) customer satisfaction and (ii) cultural comfortability. The survey questions were obtained from previous studies and modified to meet the required research requirements of the present study (Dorris, 2013; Kokareva, 2018). For instance, in order to evaluate the customer satisfaction, the key words “How would you rate...?” were used to assess the degree of satisfaction. On the other hand, the key words “what was the customer expecting while dealing with Jordanians...?” were used to measure the level of cultural comfortability. Table 3.1. illustrates the distribution of the survey questions between variables of the study.

**Table 3.1. The Distribution of the Questions**

Variables	Questions
Customers Satisfaction	Questions from (5 to 11)
Cultural Comfortability	Questions from (12 to 17)

The distribution of answers for the questionnaire was done in accordance with the Likert scale, that shows the level of agreement which respondent shows with the questionnaire statements: (1) Strongly disagree; (2) Disagree; (3) Neither agree nor disagree; (4) Agree; (5) Strongly agree. Table 3.2. illustrates the statistical standard for the interpretation of arithmetic averages and their estimates.

**Table 3.2. The Degree of Approval for Questionnaire Responses**

Mean	Degree of approval
From 1.00 - less than 2.33	a low degree
From 2.33 - less than 3.67	a medium degree
From 3.67 - less than 5.00	a high degree

### 3.3. Tests for the Study Instrument

Reliability of the questionnaire was tested by the Cronbach-Alpha coefficient. According to several studies (Ursachi, Horodnic, & Zait, 2015), if the Cronbach-Alpha coefficient is between 60 – 70 % then it is reliable to analyze and interpret the data of

the research. The closer the Cronbach-Alpha value to 1, the more accurate it is, and vice versa.

Table 3.3. validates that the safety coefficient of the customer satisfaction is around 60%. On the other hand, Cronbach-Alpha for cultural comfortability is above 70 %. This reveals the existence of an inner uniformity among the passages of both groups of questions in the study.

**Table 3.3. Internal consistency coefficients (Cronbach Alpha)**

Variables	Stability coefficient
Customers Satisfaction	0.590
Cultural Comfortability	0.744

### **3.4. Data Analysis Methods**

The data acquired throughout the research questionnaire were recorded into the data analysis software (SPSS) to be processed and analyzed. The following methods were employed:

- i. Cronbach-Alpha test: It is monitored to verify the degree of internal reliability and the level of stability of the paragraphs of the resolution.
- ii. Normality Test: It tests the normality of distribution of the dependent variable
- iii. Distribution of responses duplicates and percentages: have been used to describe the characteristics of the personal and functional sampling unit (e.g. percentage of answering “strongly disagree” for Europeans was high, so we need to calculate the percentage of this answer).
- iv. Arithmetic-mean of responses for each question and for whole variable in total.
- v. Standard deviation: It was calculated to determine the average dispersion degree of responses in the sampling unit.
- vi. T-test & One-Way ANOVA.

- vii. Multiple linear regression: It was implemented to test the impact of the independent variable on the dependent variable.



## **CHAPTER IV**

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

This chapter involves three sections. The first section of the chapter discusses the demographic characteristics of the study sample. Section 2 describes and analyzes the statements given in the questionnaire including statements related to the dependent variable (customer satisfaction) and the independent variable (cultural comfortability) in detail. Lastly, section three reports the statistical results and findings as well as the ANOVA report obtained from the SPSS software, and discusses the three hypotheses accordingly.

#### **4.1. Characteristics of the Study Sample**

Before discussing the findings of the study, the demographic characteristics of the sample should be introduced. As presented in Table 4.1, almost 60% of the respondents are male passengers and a vast majority of them are bachelor or PhD degree holders. While 73% of the respondents are between 25-55 years old, the ones who are in the 46-55 years of range compose 35% of the whole sample. From a nationality perspective, the proportion of Arab passengers, Asian passengers and European passengers are 25, 26 and 20% respectively.

**Table 4.1. Description of the Study Sample According to the Demographic Features**

Variable	Level / category	Number	percentage %
<b>Gender</b>	Male	59	59.0%
	Female	41	41.0%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Age</b>	Less than 25	14	14.0%
	25 - 35 years	26	26.0%
	36 - 45 years	12	12.0%
	46 - 55 years	35	35.0%
	56 years or more	13	13.0%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Education</b>	Diploma and/or less	4	4.0%
	Bachelor's degree	43	43.0%
	Master's degree	14	14.0%
	PhD	39	39.0%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Nationality</b>	Jordanian	29	29.0%
	Arab Neighbors	25	25.0%
	Asian	26	26.0%
	European	20	20.0%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 4.2. Descriptive Analysis of Statements

### 4.2.1. Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction

Table 4.2. reveals that the means of respondents' answers to the "Customers Satisfaction" ranged from 4.34 - 4.54. Statement (5) which states: "How would you rate the extent to what your expectations of the quality of services were met" has an average of 4.54 and a high rating, then paragraph (2) which states: "How would you rate the professional appearance of the airport employee(s)", while the lowest score is in paragraph (1), which stated "How would you rate the friendliness of the airport employee(s)" has an average of 4.34 and a high rating.

**Table 4.2. The Arithmetical Means and Standard Deviations of Responses for Customers Satisfaction Statements**

N o.	Paragraph	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rate
5	How would you rate the friendliness of the airport employee(s)	4.34	0.590	High
6	How would you rate the professional appearance of the airport employee(s)	4.50	0.503	High
7	(If you asked for help from an airport employee) how would you rate his/her answer	4.51	0.611	High
8	How would you rate the quality of services provided to you from airport employee(s)	4.35	0.770	High
9	How would you rate the extent to what your expectations of the quality of services were met	4.54	0.610	High
10	How would you rate an individual attention from airport employee(s) towards you	4.41	0.698	High
11	Generally, how would you rate airport employees' services you were offered while arriving/ departing from QAIA	4.38	0.850	High
	<b>Total average</b>		<b>4.4329</b>	High

#### **4.2.2. Independent Variable: Cultural Comfortability**

Table 4.3. shows that the means of respondents' answers to the Cultural Comfortability ranged from (4.38 - 4.45). The first rated paragraph is (6), which states: Considering my complete experience with airport employees I encountered while arriving at or departing from the QAIA airport, I would recommend the QAIA services to a friend or colleague has an average of 4.45 and a high rating, whereas the latter paragraph (3), that states My cultural background impacts how I evaluate passenger service offered by Jordanian airport employees has an average of 4.38 and a high rating.

**Table 4.3. The Arithmetical Means and Standard Deviations of Responses for Cultural Differences Statements**

No.	Paragraph	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rate
12	I expect that airport employees approach me first and offer help	4.41	0.698	High
13	Passenger services offered by Jordanian airport employees (including but not limited to airport management, customs, police officers, and retail shops employees) meet my overall expectations about high-quality service provider	4.39	0.695	High
14	My cultural background impacts how I evaluate passenger service offered by Jordanian airport employees	4.38	0.693	High
15	Jordanian airport employee could provide better customer service if he/she understood my cultural background	4.39	0.490	High
16	It took long time for me as a passenger to get service from airport employees	4.42	0.606	High
17	Considering my complete experience with airport employees I encountered while arriving at or departing from the QAIA airport, I would recommend the QAIA services to a friend or colleague.	4.45	0.609	High
	<b>Total average</b>	<b>4.4067</b>		<b>High</b>

### 4.3. Hypotheses Test

The hypothesis test is commonly utilized to evaluate the plausibility of a hypothesis by using simple data. In this part of the thesis, the results of the first hypothesis ( $H_01$ ), second hypothesis ( $H_02$ ), and the third hypothesis ( $H_03$ ) for the given data are discussed in detail.

#### 4.3.1. Hypothesis 1 ( $H_01$ )

The first hypothesis of the study argues that there are significant differences between satisfaction level of customer groups based on demographic variables (gender, age,

education, and nationality). This part of the study tests each sub-hypothesis step by step.

H1-(a) There is a statistically significant difference between male and female passengers' satisfaction level.

Table 4.4. shows that the value of F is (2.576), and the significance level is (0.112) and thus is more than (0.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. There are no significant differences at level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) in Customers Satisfaction by gender.

**Table 4.4. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) based on Gender**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Significant
Between Groups	0.330	1	0.330	2.576	<b>0.112</b>
Within Groups	12.546	98	0.128		
Total	12.876	99			

H1-(b) There is a statistically significant difference between satisfaction levels of different age groups.

Table 4.5. shows that the value of F is (1.335), and the significance level is (0.263) and thus is more than (0.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. There are no significant differences at level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) in Customers Satisfaction by age.

**Table 4.5. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) based on Age**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Significant
Between Groups	0.685	4	0.171	1.335	0.263
Within Groups	12.191	95	0.128		
Total	12.876	99			

H1-(c) There is a statistically significant difference between satisfaction levels of customers with different educational backgrounds.

Table 4.6. shows that the value of F is (6.250), and the significance level is (0.001) and thus is less than (0.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. There are significant differences at level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between satisfaction levels of passengers with different educational background. Table 4.7. tabulates the one-way ANOVA analysis for the differences (Scheffe) in detail. It

can be concluded from ANOVA (Scheffe) results in Table 4.7. that there are significant differences between satisfaction levels of customers with different educational backgrounds. Specifically, the satisfaction levels of PhD holders significantly differ from the satisfaction levels of bachelor’s degree holders.

**Table 4.6. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) by Education**

	“Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Significant
Between Groups	2.104	3	0.701	6.250	0.001
Within Groups	10.772	96	0.112		
Total	12.876	99”			

**Table 4.7. One-way ANOVA (Scheffe) by Education**

Education (I)	Education (J)	Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Diploma and less	Bachelor’s	-0.13040-	0.17510	0.906	-0.6287-	0.3679
	Master’s	0.12755	0.18991	0.929	-0.4129-	0.6680
	PhD	0.17857	0.17587	0.794	-0.3219-	0.6790
Bachelor’s degree	Diploma and less	0.13040	0.17510	0.906	-0.3679-	0.6287
	master	0.25795	0.10307	0.107	-0.0354-	0.5513
	PhD	0.30897*	0.07407	0.001	0.0982	0.5198
Master’s degree	Diploma and less	-0.12755-	0.18991	0.929	-0.6680-	0.4129
	Bachelor’s	-0.25795-	0.10307	0.107	-0.5513-	0.0354
	PhD	0.05102	0.10436	0.971	-0.2460-	0.3480
PhD	Diploma and less	-0.17857-	.0.17587	0.794	-0.6790-	0.3219
	Bachelor’s	-0.30897-*	0.07407	0.001	-0.5198-	-0.0982-
	Master’s	-0.05102-	0.10436	0.971	-0.3480-	0.2460

H1-(d) There is a statistically significant difference between satisfaction levels of customers originating from different cultural background.

Table 4.8. shows that the value of F is (3.299), and the significance level is (0.024) and thus is less than (0.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. There are significant differences between satisfactions levels of passengers originated from different cultural background. Table 4.9. tabulates the one-way ANOVA differences due (Scheffe) in detail. It can be seen from the ANOVA (Scheffe) test findings in Table 4.9. that while satisfaction level of

Jordanian passengers does not differ from Asian or other Arab passengers, the difference between Jordanian and European passengers is significant.

**Table 4.8. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) by Nationality**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Significant
Between Groups	1.203	3	0.401	3.299	0.024
Within Groups	11.672	96	0.122		
Total	12.876	99			

**Table 4.9. One-way ANOVA (Scheffe) due to nationality**

(I) Nationality	(J) Nationality	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Jordanian	Arab Neighbors	0.14621	0.09516	0.504	-0.1246	0.4170
	Asian	0.22357	0.09418	0.138	-0.0444	0.4916
	European	0.29335	0.10135	0.045	0.0049	0.5818
Arab Neighbors	Jordanian	-0.14621	0.09516	0.504	-0.4170	0.1246
	Asian	0.07736	0.09767	0.890	-0.2006	0.3553
	European	0.14714	0.10461	0.579	-0.1505	0.4448
Asian	Jordanian	-0.22357	0.09418	0.138	-0.4916	0.0444
	Arab Neighbors	-0.07736	0.09767	0.890	-0.3553	0.2006
	European	0.06978	0.10371	0.929	-0.2253	0.3649
European	Jordanian	-0.29335	0.10135	0.045	-0.5818	-0.0049
	Arab Neighbors	-0.14714	0.10461	0.579	-0.4448	0.1505
	Asian	-0.06978	0.10371	0.929	-0.3649	0.2253

To summarize the previous results, it can be concluded that:

- Customer satisfaction does not differ due to demographic variables such as gender and age.
- Higher education specifically PhD creates a significant difference in customer satisfaction.
- Cultural differences cause significant differences in customer satisfaction.

#### **4.3.2. Hypothesis 2 (H<sub>02</sub>)**

The second hypothesis of the study aims to discover the relationship between cultural comfortability and the demographic variables including gender, age, education, and nationality. It argues that there are significant differences between cultural

comfortability of customer groups by demographic variables (gender, age, education, and nationality). Following section tests each sub-hypothesis step by step.

H2-(a) There is a statistically significant difference between male and female passengers' cultural comfortability level.

The results of ANOVA analysis inquiring into the question of whether the impact of gender on cultural comfortability is statistically significant is shown in Table 4.10. It could be noticed that the value of F is (1.088), and the significance degree is (0.30). Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted, and it can be concluded that there is no significant difference between male and female passenger's cultural comfortability levels.

**Table 4. 10. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) by Gender**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Significant
Between Groups	0.193	1	0.193	1.088	<b>0.300</b>
Within Groups	17.380	98	0.177		
Total	17.573	99			

H2-(b) There is a statistically significant difference between cultural comfortability levels of different age groups.

Table 4.11. shows ANOVA analysis by age. It can be noticed from Table 11. that the F value is (2.275), and the significance degree is (0.067) and thus is more than (0.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. There is no significant difference between comfortability levels of passengers at different age groups.

**Table 4. 11. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) by Age**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Significant
Between Groups	1.536	4	0.384	2.275	<b>0.067</b>
Within Groups	16.037	95	0.169		
Total	17.573	99			

H2-(c) There is a statistically significant difference between cultural comfortability levels of customers with different educational backgrounds.

Table 4.12. shows the ANOVA analysis by education. It can be drawn from this table that the value of F is (6.927), and the significance degree is (0.00) and thus is less than (0.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. There are significant differences between cultural comfortability levels of passengers with different educational levels. Table 4.13. tabulates the one-ANOVA analysis of differences by education in detail.

**Table 4. 12. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) by Education**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Significant
Between Groups	3.127	3	1.042	6.927	0.000
Within Groups	14.446	96	0.150		
Total	17.573	99			

**Table 4. 13. One-way ANOVA (Scheffe) by Education**

Education (I)	Education (J)	Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Diploma and less	Bachelor's	0.32849	0.20278	0.457	-0.2486	0.9055
	Master's	0.50595	0.21993	0.159	-0.1199	1.1318
	PhD	0.65705*	0.20366	0.019	0.0775	1.2366
Bachelor's degree	Diploma and less	-0.32849	0.20278	0.457	-0.9055	0.2486
	master	0.17746	0.11937	0.533	-0.1622	0.5171
	PhD	0.32856*	0.08578	0.003	0.0845	0.5727
Master's degree	Diploma and less	-0.50595	0.21993	0.159	-1.1318	0.1199
	Bachelor's	-0.17746	0.11937	0.533	-0.5171	0.1622
	PhD	0.15110	0.12086	0.669	-0.1928	0.4950
PhD	Diploma and less	-0.65705*	0.20366	0.019	-1.2366	-.0775
	Bachelor's	-0.32856*	.08578	.003	-0.5727	-.0845
	Master's	-0.15110	.12086	.669	-0.4950	0.1928

Table 4.13. shows that there are significant differences between passengers at most with a high school diploma and PhD-holders in terms of their comfortability with

Jordanian Arab culture. It is also evident that there is a significant difference between the passengers with a bachelor's degree and PhD degree attributed to PhD.

H2-(d) There is a statistically significant difference between cultural comfortability levels of customers originating from different cultural background.

The ANOVA analysis results by the nationality is illustrated in Table 4.14. It is evident from the table that the value of F is (3.398), and the significance level is (0.021) and thus is less than (0.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. There are significant differences between cultural comfortability levels of passengers coming from different cultures. Table 4.15. tabulates the one-way ANOVA differences by nationality (Scheffe) in detail. It can be seen in Table 4.15. that there are significant differences between European and Jordanian passenger's comfortability levels with local culture attributed to Jordanians.

**Table 4. 14. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) by Nationality**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Significant
Between Groups	1.687	3	0.562	3.398	<b>0.021</b>
Within Groups	15.887	96	0.165		
Total	17.573	99			

**Table 4. 15. One-way ANOVA (Scheffe) by Nationality**

(I) Nationality	(J) Nationality	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Jordanian	Arab Neighbors	0.29747	0.11102	0.073	-0.0185	0.6134
	Asian	0.07670	0.10987	0.921	-0.2360	0.3894
	European	0.28247	0.11824	0.034	-0.0540	0.6189
Arab Neighbors	Jordanian	-0.29747	0.11102	0.073	-0.6134	0.0185
	Asian	-0.22077	0.11395	0.296	-0.5450	0.1035
	European	-0.01500	0.12204	1.000	-0.3623	0.3323
Asian	Jordanian	-0.07670	0.10987	0.921	-0.3894	0.2360
	Arab Neighbors	0.22077	0.11395	0.296	-0.1035	0.5450
	European	0.20577	0.12099	0.413	-0.1385	0.5501
European	Jordanian	-0.28247	0.11824	0.034	-0.6189	0.0540
	Arab Neighbors	0.01500	0.12204	1.000	-0.3323	0.3623
	Asian	-0.20577	0.12099	.413	-0.5501	0.1385

To summarize the previous results, it can be concluded that:

- Cultural comfortability level does not differ due to demographic variables such as gender and age.
- Higher education specifically PhD creates a significant difference in cultural comfortability.
- European and Jordanian passengers significantly differ from each other in terms of their cultural comfortability.

### 4.3.3. Hypothesis 3 (H<sub>03</sub>)

The third hypothesis studied the relationship between cultural comfortability while dealing with the Jordanian Arab culture and customer satisfaction. It argues that higher the cultural comfortability of passenger is, the higher the customer satisfaction.

Table 4.16. implies that the correlation coefficient of cultural comfortability and customer's satisfaction is 95.5%. The value of the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) is 0.913, which indicates that 91.3% of the total variance can be justified by the model, whereas the rest is due to other factors (Hair, Anderson, Babin, & Black, 2010). The specific test considered here is called analysis of variance (ANOVA) and its results are illustrated in Table 4.17. The value of F is 506.551, and the significance degree is (0.00) which is less than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, which means the impact of cultural comfortability on customer's satisfaction is at a statistically significant level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ).

**Table 4.16. Model Summary**

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	<b>0.955<sup>a</sup></b>	0.913	0.911	0.17023

**Table 4.17. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	73.394	1	14.679	506.551	<b>0.000<sup>b</sup></b>
Residual	7.013	98	0.029		
Total	80.406	99			

## CHAPTER V

### CONSLUSION AND DISCUSSION

#### 5.1. Conclusions

The aim of the current research study was to investigate whether cultural comfortability and demographic backgrounds of airway passengers have an impact on their satisfaction with regard to the services provided by the airport staff and third-party staff at QAIA. Table 4.18 summarizes the results of the hypothesis test conducted in the research and it shows whether the hypothesis is accepted (significant) or rejected (not significant).

**Table 4. 18. Results of the Hypothesis Test**

Hypothesis		Accepted	Rejected
Hypothesis (1): <i>(Customer satisfaction)</i>	H1-(a): <i>gender</i>		✓
	H1-(b): <i>age</i>		✓
	H1-(c): <i>education</i>	✓	
	H1-(d): <i>nationality</i>	✓	
Hypothesis (2): <i>(Cultural comfortability)</i>	H2-(a): <i>gender</i>		✓
	H2-(b): <i>age</i>		✓
	H2-(c): <i>education</i>	✓	
	H2-(d): <i>nationality</i>	✓	
Hypothesis (3):	H3: <i>customer satisfaction</i> <b>vs.</b> <i>cultural comfortability</i>	✓	

Based on the results presented in the previous chapter, the following conclusions can be drawn, and findings could be summarized as follows:

- 1) Descriptive analytical results show a high level of cultural comfortability for travelers at QAIA, where the arithmetic mean for the variable as a whole was 4.41.
- 2) The descriptive-analytical results show a high level of customer satisfaction for travelers at QAIA, where the mean for the variable as a whole was 4.43.
- 3) There are no significant differences at level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between (i) Customers Satisfaction by gender, and (ii) Customers Satisfaction by age.
- 4) Customer satisfaction differs between bachelor and PhD-holders.
- 5) There are significant differences between European and Jordanian passengers in terms of customer satisfaction.
- 6) There are no significant differences at level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between: (i) cultural comfortability by gender, and (ii) cultural comfortability by age.
- 7) There are significant differences between high school graduates and Ph.D. holders in terms of their cultural comfortability. It is also evident that there are significant differences between the bachelor and PhD degree holders.
- 8) There are significant differences at level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between cultural comfortability levels of European and Jordanian passengers.
- 9) There is a significant impact of cultural comfortability of passengers on customer satisfaction.

## **5.2. Discussion**

The results of the present research are reasonable, as it is similar with most of the studies that have discussed culture within the concept of business, and confirmed that a cultural difference effect exists, and could appear in many business sectors and personal lives. Tsoukatos & Rand (2007) reported that the cultural backgrounds and service quality is statistically related. However, there was a divergence between their results and Hofstede. The present research's main findings match with Tsoukatos's result regarding the effect of culture on the performance of business, as both are dealing with customers directly. Further, due to the difference in Tsoukatos & Rand and Hofstede 6D results in Greece, this could give advantage to the present study for not utilizing the 6D model. Since Tsoukatos & Rand assumed that the 6D of Hofstede module could be wrong or out of date.

In addition, Huang & Crotts (2009) discovered similar results with the findings of the present study, as it has showed a direct relationship between cultural backgrounds and

satisfaction level. It is worthy to mention that Huang's sample was 7544 after being shortlisted from 39,959. Further, they directly used the Hofstede 6D model, which was not used in this study, because it contains estimated numbers for Jordan and most of the Middle Eastern countries.

The current study also showed similar results with other studies (Sunny et al., 2019), as there was a direct relationship between some of the cultural dimensions and the way of accepting technology. The sample investigated in the study of Sunny and his fellows was hotel employees. The findings showed that the cultural differences affect the efficiency of getting the work done efficiently in most of the business sectors. Moreover, it could influence the comfortability of customers and ease of accepting the goods or services by them as well.

Another research conducted by other scholars (Dingil et al., 2019) showed that individualist oriented countries in Europe tend for using bikes more than sharing cars (pooling) and public transportation. By reflecting on these claims to interpret the present study, we can conclude that the collectivism oriented societies and personals would not agree with individualism society at least for the transportation method to be used on daily basis. Therefore, this could result in un-comfortability for an individualistic person who prefers using bikes, to be surrounded by a collectivist society that uses public transportations.

By focusing on the idea of customer satisfaction, customer service could be one of the most important factors for increasing the satisfaction, ease and comfortability. As Kokareva (2018) mentioned, there are important differences that could appear while evaluating the customer service level based on cultural backgrounds. As the present study has shown a significant relationship between the cultural comfort and customer satisfaction, it is worth noting that comfortabilty is affected by how other cultures evaluate the present culture (Jordanian Arab culture in the research case) services, actions, reactions.

Another study (Easterbrook, Kuppens, & Manstead, 2016) indicated that higher educational level is causing higher positive expectations with a better understanding and analysis of events. From the researcher point of view; while an individual interacting with a different cultural background, the safe and ease could be felt based on the customer's understanding of the cultural differences. In other words, it is

directly affecting the cultural comfortability; the more person is educated, the more comfortable dealing with other cultures (Jordanian Arab culture in our case).

Since culture has been rarely studied in the Middle East region, this study partly fills the gap in understanding dominating cultures in that region. On the other hand, it raises the discussion around cultural comfortability of foreigners interacting with Jordanian Arab culture. From a practical perspective, this study is of great importance as it can significantly contribute to improve the customer satisfaction level at QAIA, by providing a clear picture of the variables affecting the cultural comfortability level of passengers. In the long run, this study can have a positive impact on the QAIA by allowing it to enter new markets worldwide with a better understanding of the cultural comfortability level of different passenger groups.

### **5.3. Limitations of the Study**

The present research has several limitations. First, the number of cultures represented by passengers is limited. Therefore, some key findings cannot be generalized to other cultural regions that are not included in the study. Second, the present study also confined itself by not considering how local employees perceive the effect of their public culture on the quality of services. Thus, some key findings may not help QAIA employees in their attempts to fit their service performance to the needs of their customers during face-to-face dealings and thus determine what aspects of their culture should be kept when interacting with customers. Moreover, most of the cultural studies were conducted among the European nation, so it was not easy to find direct researches to compare the results of the present study with the similar studies done in the Jordanian Arab culture.

One of the most important limitation was the estimated numbers provided by Hofstede and GLOBE studies. This has limited our present study to indicate the comfortability in general while dealing with Jordanian Arab culture. In other words, the researcher could not go deeper to discuss the culture from Hofstede or GLOBE dimensions as the estimated results would give us inaccurate results.

#### **5.4. Future Recommendations**

The limitations of present study drive the researcher to recommend several subjects to be researched in the future. Firstly, the dimensions of Hofstede and GLOBE to be indicated in Jordan and the Arab neighboring countries, in order to build future research upon them. Secondly, bigger samples will give more exact results. Therefore, it is worth thinking about making a larger sample to indicate the most culturally comfortable nation. Thirdly, other researchers can study other types of cultures than in present study, such as Latin American. Finally, focusing more on the idea of cultural comfortability while comparing nations interacting with each other can provide us with a short-cut for cross-cultural studies in business.

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# APPENDIXES

## APPENDIX A

### Questionnaire

**Dear respondent,**

This questionnaire was prepared to achieve the main objective of my Master's thesis, which is entitled “*The effect of cultural differences on customer satisfaction: Queen Alia International Airport as a case study*”. The data you provide will be used to improve the services provided to passengers at the airport. Your answers will be kept confidential and only used for research purposes. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me on my phone no. +962788760479 or via my email: MALHMOUD@THY.COM

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated and I wish you hope to hear from you soon.

Thank you.

1. What is your nationality

- Jordanian       Arab neighbors       Asian       European

2. Gender

- Male       Female

3. Age

- less than 25       25-35       36-45       46-55       56 and more

4. Education

- High School       Bachelor Degree       Master       PhD

*If the answer is YES, please, answer the following questions by giving your evaluation using scale from 1-5 where: (1= strongly disagree; 2=disagree ; 3=don't know ; 4=agree ; 5= strongly agree )*

5. How would you rate the friendliness of the airport employee(s)?

1    2    3    4    5

Comments:

.....

6. How would you rate the professional appearance of the airport employee(s)?

1    2    3    4    5

Comments:

.....

7. (If you asked for help from an airport employee) how would you rate his/her answer?

1    2    3    4    5

Comments:

.....

8. How would you rate the quality of services provided to you from airport employee(s)?

1    2    3    4    5

Comments:

.....

9. How would you rate the extent to what your expectations of the quality of services were met?

1    2    3    4    5

Comments:

.....

10. How would you rate an individual attention from airport employee(s) towards you?

1    2    3    4    5

Comments:

.....

11. Generally, how would you rate airport employees' services you were offered while arriving / departing from QAIA?

1    2    3    4    5

Comments:

.....

*Please, show the extent of your agreement or disagreement concerning following statements using scale from 1-5 where: 1=strongly disagree; 2=disagree; 3=neutral; 4=agree; 5=strongly agree.*

12. I expect that airport employees approach me first and offer help.

1    2    3    4    5

Comments:

.....

13. Passenger services offered by Jordanian airport employees (including but not limited to airport management, customs, police officers, and retail shops employees) meet my overall expectations about high-quality service provider.

1    2    3    4    5

Comments:

.....

14. My cultural background impacts how I evaluate passenger service offered by Jordanian airport employees.

1    2    3    4    5

Specify:

.....

15. Jordanian airport employee could provide better customer service if he/she understood my cultural background.

1    2    3    4    5

Specify:

.....

16. It took long time for me as a passenger to get service from airport employees.

1    2    3    4    5

Comments:

.....

17. Considering my complete experience with airport employees I encountered while arriving at or departing from the QAIA airport, I would recommend the QAIA services to a friend or colleague?

1    2    3    4    5

Comments:

.....

## CURRICULUM VITAE

### Personal Information:

Name - Surname: Murad Alhmoud

### Education:

2007-2013 BA in Economics, Yarmouk University, Jordan

2017-2020 MA in Air Transport Management, Ibn Haldun University, Turkey

### Experience:

October, 2013 - Mar, 2014	Saudi Airlines Extensya.
September, 2014 – June, 2015	Fly Emirates, Cargo.
February, 2016 – Currant	Turkish Airlines.

### Courses:

- General Civil Aviation Security for Outstations
- Irregular Operations Communication System
- ATC Slot Delay Manager
- Dangerous Goods Awareness (Cat 9,11,12)
- Station Information System
- Check-in Transactions, Transferring and Guidance of Disabled Passengers
- Communication
- Non-Standard Fare Quotation
- AIRBUS A350-900
- Code of Ethics and Ethics Helpline Board
- Information Security and Awareness
- Into-Plane Fuelling Procedures
- Dangerous Goods Awareness Recurrent (Category 10)
  
- Reservation and Fare Quotation
- Basic Passenger Fares and Ticketing
- Refueling with Passengers On-Board or while They are Embarking/Disembarking
- Brand Awareness
- Environment Management
- Sky Chain Cargo Operation System Training NGSC
- Cargo Revenue Management
- Aviation Security and Special Loading Handling
- Airlines Specific

- Airlines Budgeting
- Information Security
- Credit Cards Security and Safety Transfer Money
- HR Appoint of Managers
- Economic Feasibility Study
- Professional Trader at The Forex Markets
- Professional Amadeus Booking System Training
- Management Skills

Referances:

- MR. Mazen Desi, General Manager. Turkish Airlines.
- MR. Maher Qishta, Cargo Manager. Emirates Sky Cargo.

