

Koc, E. (2020). *Cross-Cultural Aspects of Tourism and Hospitality*. ISBN 978-0-367-862893, Routledge: New York & London, 370 pp.

Reviewed by
Aybars Tuncdogan ^{1*}

¹ King's College, London, UK. E-mail: aybars.tuncdogan@kcl.ac.uk

*Corresponding author

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In his new book entitled “Cross-Cultural Aspects of Tourism and Hospitality” (Routledge, 4 September 2020, in English, ISBN: 9780367862893, Hardback: £128.00; Paperback: £26.39; E-book: £26.39), Erdogan Koc provides a summary of culture research with a focus on tourism and hospitality.

The book is written in a concise and to-the-point manner (13 chapters, 370 pages). This is likely to prove to be an advantage for use as a textbook in classroom settings – especially with large groups of undergraduate students, which tend to have differing levels of patience with reading material. Likewise, each chapter is divided into clearly separated subsections, which makes it possible to assign part of the chapter as suggested reading (e.g., for modules that meet more than once a week). Furthermore, chapters have a range of secondary elements that facilitate reading and learning, such as a group of learning outcomes in the beginning of each chapter, activities that can be completed either individually or as a group, ‘information zones’ where extra information is provided for students interested in the subject, and brief case studies that can be used as a starting point for class discussion.

In terms of the content, the first four chapters serve two main purposes. First, they focus on conceptualizing culture as well as key components of the culture, such as national culture, intercultural competence and cultural intelligence. While doing that, some key aspects of culture that are relevant for marketing and management purposes, such as how culture affects communication, also receive particular attention. Second, these chapters also serve to describe the tourism and hospitality context and the substantial role culture plays in this cosmopolitan industry. After the first four chapters that conceptualize culture and delineate the setting, Koc moves on to describe culture-related variables. Essentially, the rest of the book – in a very to-the-point manner – focuses on portraying the overall nomological framework of culture, especially various effects of culture dimensions on marketing and service management outcomes in the tourism and hospitality industry. Variables discussed include power distance, indulgence-restraint, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity-femininity, individualism-collectivism, performance vs. humane orientation and time-orientation. Following that, the book also goes beyond the stream of research initiated by Geert Hofstede, and devotes a chapter also to Trompenaars’ and Hampden-Turner’s cultural dimensions.

This book has implications for research in at least three ways. First, the literature on culture consists of an exceptionally large body of research. This is because a variety of social sciences, including but not limited to tourism (e.g., Godfrey, 2018), sociology (e.g., Kiley & Vaisey, 2020), several subfields of psychology (e.g., McCrae & Terracciano, 2005; Shahaiean, Peterson, Slaughter, & Wellman, 2011), anthropology (e.g., Vertovec, 2011) and economics (e.g., Liñán & Fernandez-Serrano, 2014), have all contributed into this debate over a long period of time. While this diverse knowledge base substantially increases the explanatory power and theoretical sophistication of culture research, it also means that this area is highly fragmented, with several disparate dialogues happening in different groups of journals. By summarizing the body of culture research that is most relevant for tourism and hospitality researchers, Koc has produced a text one can read to acquire this knowledge in a manageable amount of time. This not only helps the researchers, but can also help to increase communication among different streams of research and thus decrease fragmentation in the literature.

Secondly, the structure of this book allows a reader to see which sub-areas of research exist within the literature, and what the key variables and questions in this field are. This is especially valuable for researchers who want to break into cross-cultural tourism and hospitality research. Likewise, this allows practitioners, who may be interested in only a certain group questions, to easily access information they need.

Third, this book essentially provides an in-depth summary of two distinct but highly related areas of research. More specifically, it considers the issue of culture both from the consumer side and organization side, that is, it summarizes the literature both from the marketing and management perspectives. This also means that while this book specifically focuses on the tourism and hospitality industry, the usefulness of this book is by no means limited to researchers and students in the tourism and hospitality area. In particular, researchers from the fields of marketing and management can also read sections relevant for their purposes. Likewise, lecturers can also incorporate various chapters of this book for teaching marketing and management modules.

Overall, I believe that this book is relevant both for researchers interested in understanding conducting culture research and students/practitioners that would like to employ insights from culture research in the real-world. Moreover, because this book shows specific attention to aggregating cross-cultural research within the consumer marketing and service management areas, I think not only individuals from the tourism and hospitality areas, but also those from marketing and management areas will benefit from this book.

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