Cross-cultural Service Variation: Airline Service Quality*

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Abstract

Purpose – In a global economy, marketers are required to understand service quality from an international consumer viewpoint. Despite the increased need for cross-cultural research, few studies have developed service quality research international in scope. The present research aims to shed light on variations in airline service quality among international consumers.

Research design, data, and methodology – Conducting cross-cultural research, this study compares airline service quality variations, investigating an international consumer group and a Korean consumer group. T-test and factor analyses are applied to examine mean scores and factor structure of the airline service dimensions.

Results – The results indicate there are significant differences in mean comparisons between the groups. The international consumers indicate significantly higher service perception scores than the Koreans. Further, we find that the factor structure of airline service quality diverges between the groups. The international group considers airline service quality in four dimensions, while Koreans consider it in two.

Conclusions – The study sheds new light on international service variations and suggests that the field of airline service quality may differ by nations and/or cultures.

Keywords: Service Quality, Air Service Quality, Cross Culture, SERVQUAL.

JEL Classifications: L91, L93, M31, N70.

1. Introduction

Discussions on air service quality have gained significant attention since the emergence of low cost carrier. As competition within the airline industry getting severe, companies are pushed to differentiate by offering various types of services or reducing prices. In order to compete on global market more effectively, managers need to understand how their services are perceived and classified from a customer's view point (Cunningham et al., 2006).

Air service quality, especially in international routes, is inevitably related with consumers' perception and behavior from heterogeneous groups. Dynamics associated with the international operating environment increasingly require air companies to better understand perception of service quality variants from cross-cultural perspectives. In order to satisfy various needs of international consumer groups, we need to investigate their culture, which sets a norm of their activities. Culture acts as a carrier of an institutionalization. Such process brings shared value, norms, and activities to members of any given culture (Jefferson, 1991).

Despite the considerable amounts of research done in air service quality, few studies have conducted customer perception on service quality in international scope, to date. To compete in such a globalized environment more effectively, marketers need to understand service quality from the international consumers'view point. Even further, based on cross cultural researches, they need to decide whether to standardize on a global basis or differentiate to meet local needs. If service quality perceptions are standardized across cultures, firms may choose cost reduction by standardizing operations. If not, they may choose offering differentiated services to their customers.

Discussions on air service quality often elaborate about service attributes. Much research rests upon replication of SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman et al., 1985, 1988; PZB here after) and tries to find a link between specific dimensions and loyalty related activities. The five service quality dimensions from the SERVQUAL have been heavily discussed. Cronin and Taylor (1992) criticize that the number of dimension cannot be fixed and different results may be found depending on the nature of industry. Even more, the SEVQUAL result is based upon the Western consumers' perception of service quality. There is an increasing voice that a study tested and found in one culture may not have same result in different culture due to cultural milieu. However, little research has attempted to reflect cross-cultural environment. So, air service quality dimensions, modified from SERVQUAL, need to be tested in international setting so as to give more thorough understanding on variants of international consumers' service perceptions.

To respond to the necessities in the service quality literature discussed above, the current research addresses the following objective. The present paper aims to compare a structure of air service quality dimensions in cross cultural setting. Researchers took SERVQUAL's five dimensions as granted or modified them in their study. However, the result is from the Western's conceptualization. Cross cultural comparison on air service quality dimensions will bring deeper insight into variants of cognizing service quality from international consumer groups. The present paper is structured as follows. First, the literature on service taxonomies is reviewed. Second, based on the data collect on this research, methodology utilized in this cross cultural study is described. Third, the major findings on how the two different groups (aggregation of international consumers vs. Koreans) perceive and interpret air service quality will be discussed. Finally, managerial implications and suggestions for the further research are provided.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Service Quality and SERVQUAL

Service quality has been defined as the customer's overall impression of the relative inferiority or superiority of the organization or its services (Zeithaml et al., 1990). Because the businesses' profitability and growth are fostered by customer retention, Newman (2001) stresses the importance of service quality in service firms. Retention is as a result of customer satisfaction and satisfaction is mostly influenced by value of service quality delivered to customers (Newman, 2001). Thus, it is imperative to define service quality for increasing a firm's profitability and competitiveness.

One of the most widely experimented service quality scales, SERVQUAL, is based upon a disconfirmation concept. The initial SERVQUAL was developed by PZB (1985) as a standardized service quality measurement using a gap analysis. The service quality assessment is conceptualized as the difference between a consumer expectations from a service/products provider and the consumer's evaluation of the given particular service/products transaction processes. The SERVQUAL introduces five dimensions of service qualities: tangibles; reliability; responsiveness; assurance; and empathy (PZB, 1988). Since its introduction, it has been applied in number of countries and service industries.

2.2. Alternative Models of SERVQUAL

The SERVQUAL instrument has been widely utilized for measuring service quality. However, several researchers have raised questioned regarding the soundness of the SERVQUAL-based studies (Babakus & Mangold, 1992; Cronin & Taylor, 1992). Some of critics rest on the relevance of measuring service quality using gap score between what customer expects and perceives. Brown et al. (1993) also argue that there

is a flaw in conceptualizing service quality as a gap scores between expectations and perceptions. Because the expectations score is usually higher than perceptions scores, they argue that the gap method systematically reduces the variance of customer evaluations. One of other criticisms is about universal application of the service quality measurement scale for general purposes to specific industries (Carman, 1990). Including the service expectations and the duplication of service performance in one study often makes the survey too onerous for respondents (Buttle, 1996). Regarding the critique of the gap-based measurement of service quality, PZB (1994) explain that if the research purpose is to measure variances in some dependent construct the 'perceptions-only' is appropriate.

Cronin and Taylor (1992) conduct a comprehensive research, based upon multi-industry sample data, defining service quality and its relationship with satisfaction and loyalty. From a comparative research, they conclude that the un-weighted performance-only scale of the SERVQUAL scale outperforms any other models in explaining customer satisfaction in the service environments. Ultimately, the performance-only based service quality measurement (SERVPERF) better predicts long-term service quality attitude (Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Brown et al., 1993). Because of the inter-correlations among the five service quality dimensions, the authors further argue that service quality scales should be treated as uni-dimension. Carman (1990) also demonstrates that the SERVQUAL scale failed to show the five factor structure in other industries.

2.3. Air Service Quality

SERVQUAL has been one of the most widely utilized service quality measurement scales since its introduction. However researchers have pointed out that service quality dimensions may embrace different name or number of dimensions depends on industry characteristics (Nam, 2013). Thus their five dimensions may not be applicable to some industries.

Due to this issue, in addition to the original SERVQUAL items, airline specific service characteristics are advised to be incorporated to develop a service quality scale suitable for airline services. Airline services come from tangible and intangible processes. The wide service range spans from reservations, ticketing and check-ins, seating, air transportation, quality of foods, variations of amenities and entertainments, baggage check-ins, and airport service at the destination. Another issue affecting service quality in the airline industry is the recent proliferation of low cost airlines. These airlines are not using service quality for competitive advantage, but through cost leadership (Kim, 2013).

Customers' air service quality perceptions have been suggested as the key factor in sustaining an advantage in a strong competitive environment. An airline's competitive advantages are determined by the passengers' perception of service quality. Research has demonstrated that the service quality is one of the foremost reasons for choosing an airline (Aksoy et al., 2003). Moreover, according to numerous airline studies, airline service quality has an influence on service differentiation, pas-

senger perceived value, passenger satisfaction, airline choice, and passenger behavioral intention (Nam, 2013). Consistent with previous studies, such an airline would be a market leader, which gives passengers superior quality service as compared to the perceived airline service from competitors (Prayag, 2007).

Much research has tried to measure different dimensions of service quality of airlines. While attributes of air service quality may vary from researchers, dimensions of the air service can be defined into staff related services, facility related services, and system related services (Seo& Lee, 2011; Lee, 2010). Gourdin (1988) categorized air service quality into three dimensions; price, safety, and timeliness. Later research tends to include comfort of seats and quality of foods in air service dimensions. Jiang (2013) revealed five air service quality dimensions. These are pre-departure services, in-flight services, arrival services, safety, and on-time performance.

2.4. Culture and Service Quality

It has been argued that most consumer behavior theory is based on the Western conceptualization of the world (Cote & Tansuhaj, 1989). The necessity of cross-cultural consumer behavior is raised from both the business world and academia to cope with increased international marketing efforts and to determine the universality of consumer theories (Wilkie, 1990).

Scholars doing international research have argued that managerial values and norms are affected by national cultures. And the national culture causes individuals to conceptualize relationships with others, time, space, human nature, and language very differently (Hofstede, 1993). The consensus of defining culture among most researchers is that it is a learned behavioral pattern, and the learning is shared among group members (Hofstede, 1993). Jepperson (1991, p. 151) argues that culture acts as a carrier of an institutionalization that produces expectations about "properties, orientations, and behavior of individuals as constraining others in society." Such institutionalization progression brings shared value, norms, and activities to members of any given culture. When the members are challenged with dilemmas, they will rely on their previously constructed shared values.

Hirschman (1983) claims that consumer perception is based upon its ability to satisfy cultural values. The national cultural values are integrated into social norms, beliefs, organizations, and social structures which individuals interact with in their daily lives (Bond, 1988). Schwartz and Davis (1981) note that common values rooted in culture can influence individuals' consumption motivations. Commonly held values can stimulate consumers' value judgments about product choices, which in turn affect choice standards.

In the research of European consumers'consumption DeMooij (2000) posits that globalization and economic development will lead to the convergence of consumer needs. And the process will bring about global marketing standardization. However, the researcher finds that European consumers' value differences look to become stronger as their increased economic buying power enables them to express their differences more freely.

She concludes that consumers will satisfy their needs with greater economic freedom, based upon their cultural value systems.

Sultan and Simpson (2000) investigated the service quality perceptions and expectations of European and US passengers for European and US airlines and found that passengers'nationality could be a critical factor influencing perceptions and expectations. Cunningham et al. (2002) conducted comparative research between US and Korean airline passengers toward service quality. They found significant differences on service quality perceptions between the groups. US passenger group gives more generous service perception scores than their counterparts. On the other hand, Koreans were generally satisfied with bumping procedures.

3. Methodology

3.1. Sample and Data Collection

The data for this study were collected mainly in Incheon International Airport in South Korea with five trained interviewers. A pilot test was performed in order to make sure that the questionnaires were read and interpreted as intended. It was conducted during April - May2015. Passengers who have accomplished a series of air services, from ticketing to landing within last six months, were targeted. The survey was distributed to passengers who went through the arriving gates or completed air experiences. Of the over 300 questionnaires, 275 were returned. Due to incomplete or trustworthiness issues seven of them were discarded. A total of 268 surveys were retained for analysis. The respondents are classified into two groups: International vs. Korean. The international group represents 19 nations. Of which Americans take the most (45 or 57.7%) followed by French and Mexicans (5 or 6.4% of each). The international group has perceived air service from 16 airlines. For the group, Emirates (17 or 21.8%) and United air (13 or 16.7%) represents the most. Korean group has perceived air service quality from 22 airlines, of which Korean air (51 or 26.8%) and Asiana (46 or 24.2%) represents the most. Due to overlap of airlines between the groups, they have perceived air service from 26 airlines overall.

The gender distribution seems reasonably equal in the two groups. For the age representation, the age group of 20-29 followed by 30-39, represents most in both groups; however, the sample of international is generally younger than the Koreans. For the occupation, employees represent the most followed by students and professionals In the Korean group; while students represent the most (43.6%) in the international group, followed by government officers and professionals. For the purpose of trip question, Koreans respond to leisure/travel the most (66.3%), while the international seem to have various purposes. Demographic characteristics of participants are shown in the <Table 1>.

<Table 1> Demographics

Demographic Characteristics	Korean (%)	International (%)
	190 (100)	78 (100)
Gender		
Male	86 (45.3)	40 (51.3)
Female	104 (54.7)	38 (48.7)
Age		
20 or younger	3 (1.6)	11 (14.1)
20-29	72 (37.9)	31 (39.7)
30-39	67 (35.3)	15 (19.2)
40-49	30 (15.8)	10 (12.8)
50-59	16 (8.4)	6 (7.7)
60 or older	2 (1.1)	5 (6.4)
Occupation		
Government Officer	5 (2.6)	12 (15.4)
Employee	75 (39.5)	9 (11.5)
Professional	32 (16.8)	11 (14.1)
Self-Employee	9 (4.7)	2 (2.6)
Student	42 (22.1)	34 (43.6)
Home maker	21 (11.1)	4 (5.1)
Others	6 (3.2)	6 (7.7)
Purpose of Trip		
Business	29 (15.3)	17 (21.8)
Leisure/Travel	126 (66.3)	23 (29.5)
Study	13 (6.8)	11 (14.1)
Visiting	9 (4.7)	14 (17.9)
Others	13 (6.8)	13 (16.7)

3.2. Conceptual Model and Measurements

The objective of the present research is to compare a structure of air service quality dimensions in cross cultural setting. In order to reach the research objective, the following research question is raised.

<RQ 1: Korean may have dissimilar structure of air service quality than the international group.>

The survey questionnaire asked respondents to evaluate the quality of services provided by the airline company. Perceived service was measured through the question. The questionnaire consists of 21 air service quality measurement items. Airline service quality measurement scale was from Seo and Lee (2011) and Lee (2010). Researchers have stressed that airline service quality measurement scale needs to incorporated industry specific items. Air service measurement scale utilized in this current research includes staff, in flight, and facility and system dimensions of services. The survey uses a 7 point

Likert scale, where one is for "strongly disagree" and seven is for "strongly agree" with no verbal explanations between two and six.

4. Results

4.1. Descriptive Analysis and Air Service Perception Comparison

In order to answer for the raised research question, multiple processes of analyzation need to be executed. The analyses processes are performed using SPSS 22. Descriptive analysis and T- test of air service perceptions are performed to compare the behavior of International and Korean passenger groups.

The Korean and International groups are asked to evaluate the perceptions of airline service quality measurement items. The results are shown in the <Table 2>. Individuals form International sample generally give higher service perception

scores than the Korean samples. In all of air service perception scale and customer satisfaction measurement scales, respondents from international sample give higher scores than Korean respondents.

Measured on a 7-point Likert scale where 1="strongly disagree" and 7="strongly agree"

From the international group, some of the most highly rated items are "wear well and neat dress" (mean = 6.58), "various in-flight entertainment programs" (mean = 6.71), and "on-time departure & arrival"(mean = 6.18) in the air service factor. Korean sample rated "wear well and neat dress" (mean =

5.29),"cleanness of environment" (mean = 5.06), and "queue in ticket line" (mean = 5.21) items high scores, but on all of measures, including service perception scores and satisfactions, the average rating of international is significantly higher than the Koreans sample. Especially in staff related services items, samples from international evaluate higher perceptions scores than Koreans. Moreover the degree of differences is statistically significant in all of the items.

Factor analysis is performed to validate whether the two groups have similar factor structure on air service quality perceptions.

<Table 2> Perception of Air Service Quality: Results of the t-Tests

Air Service Quality Factor	Korean (n = 190)	International (n = 78)	Difference	t-value	p-value
	Mean				
Staff Related Services					
Politeness	5.27	6.31	1.04	6.11	.000
Kindness	5.26	6.37	1.11	6.81	.000
Accuracy	5.17	6.32	1.15	7.22	.000
Wear well and neat dress	5.29	6.58	1.29	7.89	.000
Show sincere attention	5.15	6.36	1.21	7.40	.000
Handle responsively and quickly on request	5.15	6.03	0.88	4.54	.002
Always willing to give benefits	5.14	6.19	1.05	5.99	.000
In-Flight Services					
Various in-flight entertainment programs	4.90	6.71	1.81	3.06	.334
Satisfactory foods and beverages	4.89	5.74	0.85	4.42	.005
Spacious and comfortable seats	4.72	5.22	0.49	2.72	.265
Cleanliness of environments	5.06	6.08	1.01	6.45	.000
Quiet air ride	4.67	5.87	1.21	6.74	.004
Facility and System					
Queue in ticket line	5.21	6.17	0.96	4.71	.000
New airplane	4.73	5.08	0.36	1.69	.765
Spaciousness of ticketing and boarding area	4.94	5.90	0.95	5.65	.000
Easy and convenience of reservation process	5.18	6.08	0.90	5.14	.000
Easy and convenience of rescheduling process	4.86	5.97	1.11	4.75	.020
On time departure & arrival	5.05	6.18	1.13	6.37	.000
Various customer service programs	4.80	5.96	1.16	6.17	.031
Easiness of use & accumulation of mileage	4.75	5.62	0.87	3.65	.142
Convenient flight schedule	4.72	5.96	1.24	6.56	.039
Customer Satisfaction					
Fulfills my expectations	4.93	5.99	1.05	6.09	.000
In general, I am satisfied with the company	5.11	6.01	0.91	5.08	.000

<Table 3> Pattern Matrix of Air Service Quality form Koreans

Dimension	Items	Reliability (Alpha)	Factor Loadings	
			1	2
Operation Management	Kindness of Employees	.970	.998	
	Politeness of Employees		.994	
	Quick response on requests		.974	
	Sincere Attention to customers		.939	
	Accuracy of tasks		.934	
	Staffs wear well and neat attire		.901	
	Employees try to give benefits to customers		.828	
	Queue in issuing boarding pass		.721	
	On time departure and arrival		.640	
	Easiness of reservation process		.593	
Flight Management	Comfort and spaciousness of seats	.936		.977
	State of the art airplane			.917
	Airplane has various entertainments			.827
	Food and drinks are satisfactory			.757
	The company has various C.S. programs			.708
	Quiet air ride			.657
	Convenient flight schedule			.553
	Easiness of use and accumulation of mileage			.545
	Cleanness of airplane environment			.543
	Spaciousness of ticketing & boarding area			.533
	Easiness of re-scheduling			.531

Loading values less than .4 are not shown.
Total Variance extracted is 70.68%

4.2. Factor Analysis

The following analysis deals with how well air service quality measurement scale utilized in this research exhibits reliability when used for service perception measurement between International and Korean samples. The analysis is performed by each of the consumer groups. The air service quality scale contains a total of 21 items. Because these items were from multiple researchers, it is advisable to run through reliability processes, though they may have proved structural soundness and reliability in their research. Researchers have suggested that the air service quality may comprise with three dimensions. Thus initial reliability test was run on these three dimensions. Based on the analysis using Cronbach's alpha score, all dimensions show acceptable reliability for Korean samples. The alpha scores of all three dimensions show greater than .8 score. For International participants, the alpha scores are above 0.9 besides the in-flight service dimension (.624). One item (had various in-flight entertainment programs) shows negative correlation with others. Eliminating the item would have increased the alpha score to .771, however no further actions are taken at this stage, because factor analysis process has not begun. The value of .8 or higher is considered to be a good (Field, 2005). Thus, all 21 items are further scrutinized for factor comparison between the groups.

Service quality dimension classifications will be performed by multiple-stage purification processes. First, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) is to be performed, and necessary procedures will be followed. Second, reliability test of the factor analysis will be accessed to ensure whether items initially classified by the EFA are reasonably well allocated to the assigned dimensions. Finally, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) will be executed to ensure whether these purification processes have created meaningful results or does not changed factor structure during the process.

Factor analysis is performed in order to answer the RQ. Field (2005) suggests that factor rotation choices should depend on (1) whether there is a theoretical background predicting that the factors should be independent or related, and (2) how the variables cluster together on the factors before rotation. As an alternative, to help decide which method to accept, running both types of rotations are suggested. Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, and Tatham (2006) provide a rule of thumb (p. 127) that orthogonal rotations are preferred when the research goal is data reduction, and oblique rotations are best suited to the goal of obtaining theoretically meaningful factors. Based on these sources, oblique rotation is performed. The oblique rotation (PROMAX) provides a factor loading matrix that is by and large easy to interpret. However, some items have relatively high factor loading in more than one dimension. The following results come from the oblique factor rotation. In this research the oblique rotations generate two factors for Korean group and four factors for International group. Items with dispersed loading values will be eliminated. The exploratory factor analysis(EFA) for

common factor extraction is performed taking Kaiser's recommendation of Eigen values over 1. A total of 21 items are examined by the each of the groups.

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy indicates 0.950 from the Korean group data set and 0.845 from the Internationals. KMO values between 0.7 - 0.8 are considered as good, between 0.8 - 0.9 are great, and above 0.9 are superb (Hutcheson & Sofroniou, 1999, cited in Field, 2005, p. 640). So, we can be confident that factor analysis is appropriate from these data.

Taking Kaiser's recommendation of Eigen values over 1 criterion, the EFA classifies a total of 21 air service quality items in two dimensions for the Korean sample and four factors for the International participants (see the <Table 3> and the <Table 4>). For the Korean sample, total cumulative variances explained by the chosen dimensions are 70.68%. Items with significantly dispersed factor loadings will be eliminated. If the loading value in the dominant dimension is 50% or less than the loading values in the second, deletion of the item will be performed. None of the items show significant factor loading spread. Further, reliability analysis is performed to examine how these items correlate with others within the identified dimensions. Correlation matrix indicates that the overall alpha score of the two dimensions are .970 for the first, and .936 for the second(Field, 2005).

The items in the first factor are staff related items plus accuracy and responsiveness items. The second factor contains items of in-flight services plus management system. Considering the characteristics of items in the dimensions, these are named as "Operation Management"and "Flight Management" respectively.

These 21 items are finalized, because no items are deleted nor allocated in other dimension.

For the International participants, EFA is run through the same criteria, Eigenvalue over 1 using Oblique rotation (Promax). The factor extraction generates four dimensions and Total variance extracted is65.10%.The initial factor analysis produces a factor loading matrix that is by and large easy to interpret, but some items still have high loadings in more than one factor. At the beginning of the research, one of the items (have various entertainment programs) show significant weak alpha scores within the dimension. The very item and another item (Employees show quick response to customers' request) show dispersed factor loadings in more than one dimension. And the factor spread is more than 50% criterion.

So deletion of the items is suggested. Deletion of the item may increase reliability scores, however, it might change the factor structure. The above two items are eliminated from the service quality items and CFA process is performed.

From the CFA, using the same criteria, the analysis generates four factors and 19 of initial items stay within the same EFA structure. Total variance explained by the four factors has improved to 67.08% (see the <Table 4>). Reliability of dimensions is examined using alpha score. The scores are greater than 0.8 in all of the dimensions. Correlation of items within the dimension is also examined. The correlation coefficient of items of the four factors is .721 - .848 in the first, .632 - .764 in the second, .567 - .785 in the third, and .559 - .640 in the fourth. If the value is less than .3, then the item is loosely related with other items, thus elimination is suggested (Field, 2005).

<Table 4> Pattern Matrix of Air Service Quality form Internationals

Dimension		Reliability (Alpha)	Factor Loadings			
			1	2	3	4
Staff related Services	Politeness of Employees	.917	.972			
	Kindness of Employees		.944			
	Accuracy of Tasks		.890			
	Wear well and neat attire		.714			
	Sincere attention to customers		.656			
	Employees try to give benefits to you		.582			
Clean & Quiet Environment	Quiet air ride	.831		.882		
	Cleanness of air environment			.818		
	Spacious & comfortable seats			.774		
	Spaciousness of ticketing &Boarding area			.505		
Business Operations	State of the art airplane	.854			.805	
	Easiness of re-schedule				.754	
	On time departure & arrival				.659	
	Easiness of reservation process				.595	
	Queue in issuing boarding pass				.574	
Augment Services	Easiness of accumulation and use of mileage	.801				.925
	Satisfactory of foods and drinks					.653
	Convenient flight schedule					.602
	Various CS programs					.469

Loading values less than .4 are not shown.
Total Variance Extracted is 67.08%

Naming of the dimensions is based upon items included. The first factor is named as "Staff related Services" because included items are about services from the staffs. The second factor is about how service environment is kept comfortably and visually appealing. It is named as "Clean & Quiet Environment." The third dimension deals with business processes from the customer perspectives. The items included are such as on time departure & arrival, queue in issuing boarding pass, and easiness of reservation or re-scheduling. The dimension is named as "Business Operation."The last factor deals with augment services besides perception of core air service quality. It is named as "Augment Services."

5. Conclusions and Discussions

To cope with heightened service expectations, managers are required to respond more effectively with diverse needs and expectations from the various consumer groups. The objective of the present research is to explore service variants on air service quality from international consumers. From the comparative research, the present research found that international consumer behavior may not be generalized, and it differs by their nations or culture. Two major distinctive differences are found in this cross cultural research.

First, through the comparison of air service quality perception scores, samples of international group consistently give higher scores than that of Koreans. The tendency is found in all of items and the degree of differences is significant. The result is in similar to Cunningham et al.'s (2002) finding that Americans generally give higher service perception scores than Koreans. Second, in the comparison of factor structure between the groups, he samples of international indicate four air service quality dimensions, while that of Korean shows two. From the factor analysis result, we can interpret that Koreans have more integrated domain of air service quality while International group indicates more finely defined air service quality dimensions.

From the above findings, it is imperative that scholars are investigating on cross cultural divergence of consumer behavior or service quality. Much of previous service literature rests upon the Western conceptualization. However, cross cultural research suggests that scholarly finding in one culture may not be validated in other culture due to cultural differences. The perception of air service quality differences between the groups may attribute to expectation differences between the cultures or grading tendencies. Second, the factor structure difference suggests more fundamental approaches to understand domain of service quality variants between the cultures. Usefulness of measuring service quality using globally standardized scale may be limited due to dimensional difference among the countries or culture.

Global managers are mandated to have insight on divergence of consumer behavior. Marketing strategy reflecting diverse needs of global consumers based upon their cultural back ground needs to be adapted to capture the continuously emerging markets.

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