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# **The Cultural Impacts On Working Conditions for Employees in the Tourism Industry**

*Sweden Versus Turkey*



Authors: Michelle Adamsen, Izabel Belskaya

Supervisor: Christer Foghagen

Examiner: Hans Wessblad

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## **Dedication**

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of Izabel's grandfather Anatoly Belsky, who passed away during the time we were working on this paper.

*Grandfather was interested in cultural studies and liked to discuss various intellectual topics. Unfortunately, I didn't make it to tell him what we were writing our thesis about. I didn't get a chance to make the last call and didn't have the opportunity to say the last goodbye. However, I'm sure he would love this subject. Grandpa, thank you for always believing in me, and goodbye...*

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San Francisco and Kalmar  
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*Michelle Adamsen*

*Izabel Belskaya*



## **Abstract**

Travel is an adventure into a new unexplored culture, different from what surrounds the traveler in the usual life at home. Culture is reflected not only in architecture, food, and literature but also in social relationships. How people react to everything they hear and see is based on the characteristics of their cultures. During travel, there is a clash of multiple cultures in the faces of tourists and tourism workers. The workers are the people presenting their culture to the tourists, but how does culture itself affect the working conditions of these people? The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between cultural norms and the working conditions of workers in the tourism industry. To achieve the purpose of this paper, the cases of Sweden and Turkey were used, since their cultures are fundamentally different from each other. The result of this study showed that Turkish culture is largely based on social relationships and not on following regulations, which leads to corruption and disregard for labor laws. On the other hand, Swedish culture is rule-based, and these characteristics have a beneficial influence on the enforcement of labor laws. The information obtained as a result of this work can be used to study and understand how culture affects the state of working conditions and how the relationship between tourists and tourism workers differs depending on their cultural characteristics.

*Keywords:* Culture, Cultural Impact, High Contextual Culture, Labor Laws, Low Contextual Culture, Monochronic Culture, Polychronic Culture, Scandinavia, Sweden, The Middle East, Tourism Industry, Turkey, Working Rights.



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## **1. Introduction and Background**

What makes people travel? People have a variety of reasons for wanting to travel and be interested in tourism. Many of these motivations are rooted in the cultural and social aspects of the destination they are visiting (Korolev, 2012). Tourists are interested in getting in touch with something unknown and different from their usual life (Prudaeva, 2013). People want to see and experience something new, something that is fundamentally different from how they used to live from day to day. Cultural differences are one of the main reasons why people travel (Korolev, 2012). A culture is a form of human activity that is used to express oneself, as well as accumulate skills and abilities. Culture reflects the skills, habits, and self-expression accumulated by society over the years (Kvartalnov, 2014). Different cultures have different ways of expressing themselves, which piques the curiosity of tourists who come from different cultural backgrounds. This curiosity is one of the main reasons why people are motivated to travel and be interested in tourism (Prudaeva, 2013). Thus, tourism connects relaxation and enrichment of the inner world of a person through acquaintance with the cultures of other people (Prudaeva, 2013). This happens, among other things, through the contact of cultures between tourists and workers in the tourism industry. When traveling, tourists and tourism workers from different cultures often come into contact with each other. Tourism workers are tasked with providing tourists with an authentic experience of the local culture, but what effect does the local culture have on the working conditions of those workers? Furthermore, how does the relationship between tourists and tourism workers change depending on their respective cultural backgrounds?

According to the theory of cultural patterns of interaction, the examples of cultures that represent two opposites are the cultures of Scandinavia and the Middle East (Hall, 1989). Since the concepts of Scandinavian culture and the culture of the Middle East are quite generalized and voluminous. It would mean that studying the labor laws in each of the countries in these two regions would require a lot of time and can lead to confusion instead of



being a tool to clarify. Therefore, the study of two countries representing Scandinavia and the Middle East is more appropriate. The countries that will be used as representatives for each region will be Sweden and Turkey. By comparing the distinct cultures of Sweden and Turkey, we can gain valuable insight into the relationship between culture and the conditions in which people work, as there are currently no prior studies that compare these two countries.

Hall (1989) argues that Swedish culture is low contextual i.e. clear expression of opinions, direct speech, and verbal communication are the foundations of this type of culture. As well as that it is monochronic, which means punctuality and linear completion of tasks, and also supports the expression 'time = money'. Samovar and Porter (2004) say that Swedish culture has a low context style, which is quite similar to Hall's theory. They argue that the low-context communication style is direct, explicit, and focused on the facts. Low-context communication does not rely on implicit or assumed knowledge and instead requires people to be clear and specific about their intentions. As Borzova (2010) mentions, democracy is restrained behavior based on respect for the boundaries of a person and the perception of them as an individual responsible and representing only themselves, and not the honor of the family and community, as well as strict adherence to the rules to achieve the common good, are cultural features of the Swedish people.

Hall (1989) argues that the culture of Turkish people is highly contextual and polychronic. This means that the basis of the cultural norm is non-verbal communication, ambiguous expressions of emotions, hierarchy and status, multitasking and a careless attitude toward time. Therefore, this means that personal relationships and ceremoniality, are more important than time and punctuality. Samovar and Porter (2004) argue as well that Turkish culture has a high context style. They describe it as a style of communication in which the sender relies heavily on nonverbal cues such as body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice to convey meaning and information. They also note that high context style is often used to create a sense of intimacy and trust in communication, as well as to convey additional information and feelings that cannot be expressed verbally.



According to Gutareva and Vinogradov (2015), in Turkish culture, a person is considered as part of the family and community. What an individual does is directly reflected in the honor and reputation of the group to which he belongs. Because of this, following the cultural standards of correct behavior is an integral cultural trait and duty of Turkish people. Such traits as impulsiveness, lack of punctuality, love for verbal signs of respect, and politeness are also distinctive cultural features of these people (Borzova, 2010).

Regardless of the difference in cultures, all people strive to cover their basic needs and be able to achieve the needs of higher levels. This means that people strive not only to cover their need for food and shelter but also for security, stability, a sense of self-importance, and many other aspects (Maslow, 1987). Therefore, in order to achieve different levels of human needs, favorable conditions are needed, which depend not only on the person but also on their environment. Thus, society has a great influence on the living and working conditions of each individual that lives in it.

As mentioned earlier, the cultural features of society differ in different countries. Hence, the conditions and rules of existence also correspond to the cultural norms of a particular area and thus differ from the conditions and rules of existence in a different area. Taking this into account it can be said that the study of the cultural way of life of Swedish and Turkish people and what influence the culture of these countries has on working conditions in the field of tourism, makes it possible, through contrast, to draw a parallel between culture and working conditions.

## **1.1 Research question**

Analyzing all of the above, the question of the study arises:

- *How do the differences in cultures affect the working conditions for employees in the tourism industry?*



To answer this question, it is worth studying the labor laws in two opposing countries (Sweden and Turkey), as well as studying the real state of affairs in these countries (whether these laws are actually enforced) and comparing the above with the cultural characteristics of Sweden and Turkey.

## **1.2 Purpose**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between cultural norms and working conditions of workers in the tourism industry. To achieve this purpose, the cases of Sweden and Turkey are used to further investigate the link through comparison. In other words, the aim is to investigate the significance of the cultural aspects in relation to the working conditions of tourism industry employees. There may be too many disparities between the compared countries due to the amount of cultural working norm differences. This can be both good and bad, but in order to fully comprehend it, it is necessary to examine the most glaring parallels and variances.





## **2. Method**

*The methodological decisions used for the study were discussed in the following chapter. The chosen method for the study was of an inductive approach and was based on a mixed methods strategy while analyzing cultural patterns and labor laws. Semi-structured interviews were used to gather the study's empirical data, which was then processed and interpreted using qualitative content analysis. Additional research was undertaken to provide a comprehensive overview of the cultural and legal landscape. This involved exploring relevant theories and analyzing primary data sources. By incorporating these research methods, a more comprehensive understanding of the subject was achieved.*

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### **2.1 Research Approach**

An inductive approach, based on mixed methods strategies and an exploratory design, was utilized to investigate the relationship between cultural norms and working conditions in the tourism industry. This approach, which was chosen due to its flexibility and potential to uncover new insights, allowed the researchers to better understand the link between culture and working conditions. The inductive approach started off with a theory as a framework for the investigation. The theory by Edward Hall (1989) was used to guide the exploratory investigation and helped with identifying patterns that may exist within the data collected. In the case of inductive research, the theory served as a foundation for investigation and the generation of new information, rather than being assumed or confirmed beforehand. The study's findings were contingent upon emerging patterns and evidence, capable of either reinforcing, challenging, or even leading to the rejection of the initial theory (Merriam & Tisdell, 2017).

The question "How do the differences in cultures affect the working conditions for employees in the tourism industry?" was also more aligned with an inductive study. The question implied an exploration of the relationship between cultural differences and working conditions, without making specific assumptions or predictions about the nature of that relationship



(Creswell & Creswell, 2023). Therefore, it aligned with the inductive reasoning process of moving from specific observations (working conditions across the different culture characteristics of Sweden and Turkey) to broader generalizations (how cultural differences affected working conditions).

Hall's (1989) theory is the basis for an exploratory design where it is used as a starting point to gather more research in the field of culture and how it may impact working conditions. The exploratory research approach was ideal when the goal of the study was to analyze a phenomena, in this example, the impact of culture on working conditions. This method of research was chosen because it allowed the authors to explore the relationship between the two variables in a more open-ended and thorough manner. Through the utilization of this approach, the authors were able to gain a greater understanding of the nuances of the relationship between culture and working conditions in the tourism industry.

However, as there were no current tools or measurements available and no theoretical or conceptual frameworks to draw on from former research (Creswell, et. al., 2003), the authors had to use different theories to draw parallels between the variables. As a result of this, an exploratory mixed methods approach was utilized to test aspects of an emerging theory and to thoroughly investigate the phenomenon both qualitatively and quantitatively (Morgan, 1998; Morse, 1991). To ensure the research team had a clear and organized approach, a logical chain (diagram) was created from the primary subjects and subtopics with their intersections. This diagram served as the foundation for the research, and various theories were used to inform the hypotheses and analysis. This diagram served as the approach for this research along with theories.



## Diagram 2.1

### *Logical Chain of Thesis Construction*



The case study method of inquiry was used to perform the study. As Smith (2017) described it; a case study is used to explore and examine a specific social field in depth. In our study, Sweden and Turkey were utilized as case studies to contrast how cultural differences affected working conditions. A case study was previously used as a research method to gain an in-depth, multifaceted understanding of a complex subject in its real-world setting. It was found that people's behavior was typically consistent with their habitual actions due to their instinctual nature, which required them to expend less energy in the process. These kinds of behaviors were observed to be influenced by the environment and culture of where the individual lived (Smith, 2017). This suggested that people's habits and morals were



influenced by their social and cultural surroundings. With the help of a case study, it was possible to collect data about a specific place (ideography), thereby eliminating the need to study all possible objectives and subjects. Furthermore, the data that was collected through the case study served as the basis for the conducted theory (generalization) (Smith, 2017).

By creating a case study, data was collected from a wide range of sources, such as documents, former studies, labor laws, and interviews which were then thoroughly studied. A case study was created by collecting data from various documents, former studies, labor laws, and interviews which were then thoroughly studied. The research was based on comparisons of official governmental data on labor laws and how they were enforced in real life in the countries of Sweden and Turkey. This data was interpreted through research and interviews with workers in the tourism industry, and based on the theory of cultural patterns of interactions made by Hall (1989), the cultural differences between the two countries were examined and parallels were drawn between the cultural differences and their impacts on working conditions among workers in the tourism sector.

A qualitative phase of the study was conducted which included a chain selection of interviews, as mentioned by Bryman (2011). This method of research entailed gathering information from a small group of people in the tourism industry in Sweden and Turkey and then utilizing this data to make generalizations about a larger population. This approach was based on the premise that if the sample group was similar to the broader population, then the conclusions drawn from the sample group could also be applicable to the larger population (Kornblum & Kiyak, R 2011). This method was a beneficial strategy as it enabled researchers to make broad generalizations about a bigger population based on data acquired from a small number of individuals.

Additionally, the chain selection approach was easy to apply, efficient, and cost-effective, thus making it an ideal choice for researchers with limited resources. Furthermore, this method also allowed researchers to obtain information from a representative sample group to develop accurate and reliable generalizations about the wider population. By gathering data from a representative sample group, researchers could develop a trustworthy and valid generalization



about the larger population. As such, the chain selection approach was a valuable tool for researchers as it was both simple and cost-effective.

The chain selection method was conducted with workers in the tourism industry in both Sweden and Turkey. Three interviews were conducted with people working in the tourism sector in Turkey, and two interviews were conducted with people in the industry in Sweden, as well as a Swedish law student and a Turkish lawyer. This made for a total of seven interviews that were conducted as part of the study's qualitative phase. This selection of interviews provided insight into the labor laws and regulations in both Turkey and Sweden, as well as the differences in working conditions between the two countries.

Additionally, the interviews also allowed researchers to gain a better understanding of how the cultural differences between the two countries impacted the working conditions of the workers in the tourism sector. The data gathered from the interviews was then used to make generalizations about the larger population and to draw parallels between the cultural differences and the effects on the working conditions of the workers in the tourism sector.

Two tables were created to showcase the interviewed individuals, their professions, and the country in which they worked. The first table was used to display the three Swedish interviewees and their professions, while the second table highlighted the four Turkish interviewees and their professions. The two tables were made to enable the reader to differentiate the interviewees' names from one another more easily. However, the decision not to include last names was made out of discretion and respect for the interviewees.

Although, none of the interviewees chose to remain anonymous; hence why this decision was made solely by the authors as the purpose of this research was not to put anyone in a situation where their lives could be at risk. Furthermore, the authors wanted to ensure that the interviewees weren't exposed to any potential harm or negative consequences that could arise from the publication of their full names. By omitting the last names, the authors aimed to protect the integrity of the research and those involved in it.



**Table 2.1**

*The Swedish Interviewees*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Profession</b>	<b>Origin of Profession</b>
Anette	Hotel CEO	Kalmar, Sweden
Stefan	Tourism manager	Kalmar, Sweden
Lucas	Law student	Uppsala, Sweden

**Table 2.2**

*The Turkish Interviewees*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Profession</b>	<b>Origin of Profession</b>
Enver	Owner of hotels and rental apartments	Istanbul, Turkey
Ismail	Tour guide	Istanbul, Turkey
Cem	Hotel receptionist, and student	Istanbul, Turkey
Mehmet	Lawyer	Istanbul, Turkey



The interviews were semi-structured, meaning that the respondents were allowed to explain and elaborate their answers freely without being forced to answer in a particular way. While also having some guidance through the use of our questions to ensure that the information gathered was relevant to the topic of the research. Once the interviews were completed, the information that was gathered was further analyzed and interpreted in the theory of cultural patterns of interactions made by Hall (1989) and laws by the Swedish and Turkish governments. In order to gain a better understanding of the cultural patterns of interactions between the two countries, it was important to gain insight into the perspectives of the interviewees. By gathering and interpreting their responses, the authors were able to draw conclusions on the cultural patterns of interactions between the two countries.

By conducting an investigation of the phenomena initially and then implementing it with the theory and labor laws gathered, it provided evidence of an inductive study method (Smith, 2017). The theory of Cultural Patterns of Interaction by Edward Hall in 1989 was read, analyzed, and used as the main theory for the research conducted. This theory was further reinforced by several other authors e.g Samovar and Porter (2004) who supported the theory formulated by Hall. Whilst the labor laws were chosen by thoroughly analyzing the Swedish law book as well as the Turkish. Laws were also supported by other researchers and former studies. The focus on the laws was concerned with labor laws since the paper was about different cultures' impacts on labor. Laws were also collected from the interviews with the Turkish lawyer and the Swedish law student. The research conducted was a qualitative study in which the data comprised of interviews and conversations with the participants, in addition to observations from the Swedish and Turkish cultures. The data was then analyzed and compared to the theory and labor laws to conclude.

The purpose of the interviews was to obtain an in-depth understanding of how the natural working conditions in Sweden and Turkey were being implemented. Specifically, participants were asked to provide information about the conditions in which people worked, their opinion on the way the system and/or government upheld laws, and their overall view on the prevailing working conditions. In addition, the interviews served as an opportunity to gain



insight into the cultural norms of the respective countries and to assess the interviewee's opinion of the current labor legislation. By collecting this data, the researchers were able to gain a comprehensive picture of the natural work conditions in both Sweden and Turkey.

Thereon, the labor regulations in Sweden and Turkey were researched, whereas official governmental data was collected which then was compared to the information accumulated through the interviews with workers in the tourism sector. In this way, it was possible to draw parallels between whether labor laws were genuinely followed and under what circumstances workers were employed. As well as if there were any similarities or differences in their governments' ways of operating.

In addition, by applying Hall's (1989) theory of Cultural Patterns of Interaction to the ethnicities and ethnography of the two countries studied, it was possible to understand and research their cultural characteristics. Thereafter, drawing parallels and comparisons between the working conditions and culture was able to be made. As well as to investigate how our chosen representatives of these countries interacted to satisfy tourists. The aim was to investigate the relationship between their cultural traits and their working conditions.

The quantitative phase of the study included a comprehensive analysis of statistics and ratings of violations of workers' rights in Sweden and Turkey. These figures were compiled from the latest (2022) annual Global Rights Index made by International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC). Additionally, data from the annual Corruption Perception Index (2022) was obtained, which provided insight into the level of corruption in the two countries researched. This data was then compared to information collected from interviews with tourism workers, law officials, and the official government data obtained from the study of labor laws. This allowed for a comprehensive assessment of the prevailing natural work conditions in both countries and a deeper understanding of any discrepancies between the official labor laws and the reality of the working conditions. The results of this analysis served to strengthen and support the perspectives of both countries regarding labor laws and regulations.





## **2.2 Delimitations and Limitations**

This study focused on the cultural impacts on working conditions in Sweden and Turkey, taking into account the different aspects of the research such as qualitative and quantitative data collection, the emergent themes, and the research instrument's validity testing. Delimitations had been made out of convenience and the decision to focus on these two countries was due to the authors living in Sweden and having access to Swedish information and contacts in the Turkish tourism industry. They outlined the restrictions that had been placed on the study which in this case was a generalization done through chain selection to deem the cultural impact on working conditions in the tourism industry in Sweden and Turkey.

Delimitations were however in contrast to limitations, they showed the decisions that had been taken on the direction and parameters of the study objectives and research questions. Whilst limitations were based on the practical or theoretical restrictions encountered, limitations revealed the weaknesses of the research. The research conducted included potential limitations such as difficulty in attaining objectivity due to the researcher's intense interest in the phenomena, the potential for the qualitative research interview to be seen as subjective, and time constraints preventing the study of laws and cultural patterns in larger regions. To limit the study, the researcher had chosen to focus on Sweden and Turkey, due to the lack of previous studies done about the comparisons of the countries. The researcher made efforts to be impartial while allowing the respondents to speak freely, and all participants received guarantees of confidentiality.

### **2.2.1 Delimitations**

The ability to generalize results solely to the population (through chain selections), specifically workers in the tourist business in Sweden and Turkey, had served as the study's distinguishing characteristic and foundation. The research focused on the events of cultural impacts on working conditions in which the responding participants self-reported. Attempts to replicate the study under different circumstances and approaches could have also provided



different end results. This could therefore have also had different outcomes if other countries had been investigated in regard to the same subject or if other questions had been asked to the same demographic. Additionally, more consideration had to be made to the qualitative and quantitative data collection and the extractions of the analysis's emergent themes, as well as to the research instrument's validity testing after these themes had been identified (Creswell, 2007).

The decision to delimit between Sweden and Turkey had been done out of convenience. This was due to the authors living in Sweden and was, therefore, able to easily collect data. As well as finding information in Swedish that was of relevance. Turkey on the other hand had been chosen because it was one of the most popular countries in the Middle East among tourists (UNWTO, 2020), as well as due to their contacts among workers in the tourism industry in Turkey. Meaning that conducting interviews would not have been a big issue even if there had been a language barrier. The decision had also been made due to the worker's right index done by ITUC (2022) being on opposite ends of the spectrum, one at the top of the list whilst the other was at the bottom of the list.

### **2.2.2 Limitations**

Limitations of the study had also been taken into account, as restrictions on the research design, time, and methods may have affected the results (Jansen, 2022). The research conducted included a number of potential limitations. Due to the researcher's own intense interest in the phenomena being studied, it had been challenging to attain objectivity in qualitative exploratory research by separating the personal experiences and assumptions of the researcher (Creswell, 2007). Throughout this case, the researcher made it possible for themes and patterns from the qualitative phase of the research as well as open interpretation of participant experiences by letting them speak freely.

However, because the qualitative research interview is somewhat reliant on the interviewer's subjective opinion, we were conscious that it might be seen as subjective to a certain extent



(Ryen, 2004). We had made an effort to be as impartial as we could while taking this into account, whilst also letting the respondent speak as freely as possible within the subject.

We verified that all replies were accepted during interviews and that the subject did not feel forced to produce a specific response in order to suit the purpose of the research. We kept the interviewees on track by asking questions in regard to the research subject to ensure that the answers were related to the subject. In the focus groups and during our interviews, the researchers paid close attention to discouraging or preventing this dynamic from forming. All respondents in the quantitative and qualitative research phases had received guarantees of confidentiality and therefore remained anonymous if they wished to.

Although, due to time constraints to conduct larger research surrounding the topic, it had been impossible to study laws and cultural patterns in larger regions such as Scandinavia versus the Middle East. Thus, the limitations had been set to be on Sweden versus Turkey. This decision had been done due to the lack of previous studies done about the comparisons between the countries.

### **2.3 Reliability and Validity**

The concepts of validity and reliability had been used to assess the quality of research, demonstrating how effectively a method or test measures something. However, reliability and validity have been deemed significant for research, some researches have questioned the relevance of it when conducting qualitative research (Bell, Bryman & Harley, 2019). In this case the reliability has been deemed through interviews where similarities in the responses given by participants indicated a positive correlation between the responses, providing the information necessary to make generalizations about the demographics. However, using semi-structured interviews reduced the capacity to repeat dependability.

Validity on the other hand, was associated with a measure's correctness, whereas reliability was focused on its consistency. The validity of the research regarding the cultural impacts on working conditions in the tourism industry had been examined by using two types of validity: external and internal. External validity refers to the ability to apply the study's findings to



other participants and circumstances, while internal validity examines the causes of the study's results and helps reduce unforeseen causes.

### **2.3.1 Reliability**

According to the concept of reliability, a technique, or tool like an interview could provide related or comparable findings under varied conditions, assuming no other modifications took place. For this study, the concept of reliability had been detected through semi structured interviews. The research findings through the interview were dependable on if they were consistently reproduced. That means that if multiple respondents had similar answers, or they answered in such a way where parallels could be drawn between them it was counted as reliable.

Therefore, the degree of reliability could be evaluated using a correlation that is coefficient, for example, if all the interviewees had similar answers to a question asked it was a positive indication that they were reliable. In this case, the correlation had been found through similarities in the interviews which indicated reliability which also provided the means necessary to make generalizations for the demographics. The interviewees could respond with comparable experiences, but on the other hand, as participants and circumstances differed, it was rare that the exact same findings and answers were produced repeatedly. For that reason, dependability was indicated by a substantial positive correlation between the outcomes of similarities in the interviews (McLeod, 2013). Although, similarities between answers could also be dependent on how questions were asked and interpreted by the interviewees. Thus, dependability was indicated by a substantial positive correlation between the outcomes of the interviews.

### **2.3.2 Validity**

Punch (2014) defined validity as the degree to which a measure represents the notion it purports to measure. This meant that validity was a term that was nuanced in design; it pertained to the proximity of what was perceived to be measured to what was meant to be measured. What was meant to be measured was the cultural impacts on working conditions in



the tourism industry. Therefore, the interview questions were constructed to gain knowledge about culture, cultural impacts, and labor laws to name a few. These aspects were all built up to make it possible to indicate where certain factors were connected amongst each other and by drawing these parallels, it gave precise valid results to support or denounce the research. Although, since this study was of mixed methods, it became possible to measure validity in different aspects. This was because there were two ways to measure validity in qualitative research which could be demonstrated, either externally or internally.

However, to do this, it was needed to assure that the circumstances in which the research was performed were indicative of the settings and time to which the findings applied was known as external validity. It had to do with the capability to adapt the study's findings to other participants and other circumstances (Black, 1999). Therefore, the study conducted could be perceived as external due to the factors that could be applicable under different settings, e.g. measuring working conditions in other industries or using different countries as case studies.

Internal validity, on the other hand, examined the causes of a certain study's results and then aided in reducing other unforeseen causes of these outcomes. It also measures whether if the research is connected with the concept or not (Bell, Bryman & Harley, 2019). Meaning that the research study was within the topic of the cultural impact on working conditions in the tourism industry and not something that was irrelevant to the subject. Internal validity was also proof that things had connecting factors, such as culture and working conditions. Therefore, having a strong internal validity made it trustworthy and secure because it supported the concept of cause and effect and the chosen research design. By analyzing and supporting the interviews with theories and facts, as well as drawing parallels between the answers and the main theory, which was the theory of cultural patterns of interactions made by Edward Hall in 1989, it became a secure and credible source. This also made the research conducted valid throughout the case study.

Despite the fact that semi-structured interviews reduced replication reliability, they added to validity by eliciting comparable replies that could be accurately classified without changing the interview guide. In order to verify whether the reasoning and data from the research were



reliable, applicable, and offered insightful knowledge about the topic of the study, leading to reliable conclusions, their validity was assessed (Smith, 2017). To guarantee the validity, the researchers examined the acquired data thoroughly, carefully examining the correctness of the participants' replies to the phenomenon. Furthermore, the use of recorded interviews strengthened the validity due to it being possible to relisten and further analyze the interviews, as well as understanding the information gathered in a broader sense.



### **3. Investigating the Labor Laws Enforcement**

*In the following chapter, the effects of laws will be discussed. Labor law encompasses the legislation governing employment rights and responsibilities of employers and employees. It aims to protect workers, promote full employment, and ensure equal opportunities. The work environment, including physical, social, and psychological conditions, plays a crucial role in employee well-being and productivity. Labor laws vary across jurisdictions, influencing the treatment of workers. In this chapter the cases of Sweden and Turkey will be discussed.*

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#### **3.1 The Work Environment and Laws of Labor**

Legislation governing employment responsibilities and rights, particularly those of the employer and the employee, is known as labor law. Trade unions can also be counted as a party within the regulations that follow labor laws. The relationship between employees and employers is to be governed by the government which must protect labor, promote full employment, and guarantee equal employment opportunities for all workers regardless of race, religion, or gender (Fouzy, 2000). This shows that the base to have healthy relations in the labor market it is needed to have laws protecting the workers' rights. The work environment accounts for the physical, social and psychological conditions where the employees perform their daily work tasks. It includes factors such as the physical workspace, the prevailing company culture, interpersonal dynamics among colleagues, policies in the organization and the overall environment within the workplace (Smith, Johnson, & Davis, 2020). The successful utilization of these regulations enhances the physical and psychological well-being among both management and workers, which in turn influences the quality of work produced and subsequently results in good growth in the economy, which is a crucial component of economic sustainability.

Although, laws vary amongst jurisdictions; meaning that they differ depending on the countries (e.g. Sweden versus Turkey). Countries have various labor regulations, which leads to the conclusion that some may provide a better working environment than others. Therefore



the workers are treated differently and certain laws can be forgotten due to how the government governs these regulations. In this case, the labor laws of Sweden and Turkey will be analyzed through different dimensions, as well as answers from the interviews will be used to draw parallels between what is gathered. This is to see if the labor laws applied in each country make certain that the workers' rights are protected. In Turkey, for example, a business can get out of treating workers fairly if the CEO has power or if they know someone with power. Whilst in Sweden this is regulated way harder and most of the time power is not a factor that lets businesses out of avoiding punishment according to law.

### **3.2 Swedish Labor Laws**

The people of Sweden have a strong sense of duty, which according to Anette, the interviewee, is why the country can be free and open whilst the people still follow the laws and regulations. The country itself has strict but precise laws, where avoiding legislation and rules or bribing government officials to get their way becomes a hard thing for the citizens and business owners to do since they are heavily observed by either unions and/or the government. According to Lars-Arne Sjöberg (2021) Sweden as a country, stability and its social life has tends to be top 10 in ranking against other countries. Sweden was also ranked as one of the least corrupt countries by ranking fourth in the Corruption Perception Index 2021 (Transparency International, 2021). This means that bribery and means of power do not have any significance in how the law is governed for people and businesses. There are also parties within most companies that maintain collective agreements that companies have to follow to increase the support of workers' rights (Kjellberg, 2017). The interviewee, Stefan, supported this by saying that governmentally owned businesses have to follow every law and regulation whilst privately owned businesses do not always do it.

Although, there is an old embedded culture that has existed for a long time in certain business sectors. Where in some work areas, e.g hospitality sectors, deviate from work environment laws because they know that it can become costly for the business which makes them avoid





following the law entirely. According to Stefan, it is mostly in restaurants and hotels these things can be seen in Sweden, because of employees' long working hours and worse working conditions where they are not always paid in accordance to the type of job they give out e.g no overtime pay and low wages.

However, according to Rögnvaldsson (2011) the law Working Hours Act (Arbetstidslagen SFS 1982:673) states that employees are only allowed to work a maximum of 40 hours per week ordinary time, with two days off each week. The employer is also required to compensate for any overtime or unfavorable hours (nights, holidays) worked by paying a higher wage than what would be customary. Nevertheless, this law can be negotiated away with collective agreements in accordance with the law's third paragraph (SFS 1982:673, §3). This claim is supported by Dona Hariri and Sepidar Hosseini (2019) who state that the law is what stands unless there is a collective agreement in the workspace and in that case the collective agreement acts as the law that needs to be followed in that certain workplace. If an employer were to break these laws or collective agreements in regard to the Work Environment Act they will get fined with penalty fees (Arbetsmiljöverket, 2022). Meaning that if an employee e.g does not get paid what they are owed; the employer will be held accountable.

On the other hand, Sweden is one of the few countries in the world that does not have a minimum wage system. However, the workers' wages are controlled by collective agreements made to make certain that no one is unfairly paid. A collective agreement is a formal contract outlining the terms of employment between an employer and a trade union organization (Arbetsmiljöverket, 2022). The regulations made by collective agreements also protect the workers that are not a part of any trade union, but those not a part of the union cannot turn to the unions for help. With that being said, being part of a trade union in Sweden enhances the support the workers will get if some form of injustice were to happen in the workplace. This, as Lucas said, is due to the unions being the ones that drive the case legally instead of the sole worker. If brought up by a trade union it is harder for the business to ignore the case instead of the company obscuring the case if an employee brought the motion forward.



However, there are laws that are implemented to ensure that workers are not exploited. Laws such as the Nature of the Work Environment (Arbetsmiljöns beskaffenhet) (SFS 1991:677, 2 kap. 1§) are created to safeguard employees from physically and emotionally hazardous work situations, ensuring that no one is subjected to discrimination, and prevent minors from being used in child labor. According to the Nature of the Work Environment, employers have to ensure that their employees are not in bad working environments nor have bad working conditions. If something bad were to happen it is the employers fault and they will be held responsible, as well as the company since they could not ensure their workers safety (Sverige, Utredningen om arbetsmiljölagen, 2006). According to Tommy Iseskog (2016) other laws have been implemented to ensure that there is no exploitation in the workplace. Discrimination in the workplace can in certain cases be forms of exploitation, which Iseskog mentions that the laws regarding discrimination have become more strict over the years. The law Discrimination Act (Diskrimineringslagen) (SFS 2017:1128), protects employees from discrimination in the workplace regardless of gender, gender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, handicap, sexual orientation, or age, the Discrimination Act seeks to eliminate discrimination and advance equal rights and opportunities. This law which was implemented in a stricter form in 2017 also mentions the laws of equal treatment in accordance to wages according to Iseskog (2016). The interviewee Lucas, also mentions that this law is heavily followed, who also reported that workplace discrimination is taken seriously and that the employer or offenders must pay a fine called discrimination compensation. The minimum of this fine is 10,000 Swedish Krona (SEK) or 887.084 Euro (EUR) as of January 17th, 2023.

As Anette and Lucas mentioned, most of the Swedish people know their rights when it comes to labor laws, and act accordingly, but Lucas also mentioned that Swedes are shy people that may not always speak out when being put in an unjust situation. Therefore, there are certain laws against how e.g an employee can be dismissed if something were to happen, for example by the law the Employment Protection Act (Lag om Anställningsskydd) (SFS 1982:80). This law describes the rights the employee has if they were to get dismissed without a reason, e.g the employee's age and length of employment will be important even if the employer is forced



to reduce the workforce. The Employment Act also describes the rights the employer has to dismiss an employee with reason e.g if the employee has gotten three warnings or acted inappropriately towards other employees, it gives the right for an employer to dismiss them. This claim was also backed up by Anette that mentioned that there are certain criterias where an employer can rightfully terminate a contract with an employee e.g by them getting three (3) strikes or behaved inappropriately in the workplace. This can conclude that labor laws are used as protection for both the worker and the employer by supporting either party without anyone getting the upper hand. According to Tommy Iseskog (2022), these laws are made to ensure safety in the workplace by making strict laws that everyone should follow.

Consequently, these strict laws of labor have made Sweden become the leading country in labor laws by being ranked first on the International Trade Union Confederation's (ITUC) annual Global Rights Index for the ninth year in a row (ITUC, 2022). This can conclude that Sweden has the best working conditions in the whole world which can be connected to how strictly laws are observed in the country by both trade unions and the government.

### **3.3 Turkish Labor Laws**

According to the International Trade Union Confederation's annual Global Rights Index Turkey is among the ten lowest-ranked places in the world for workers and has been in that spot for two years in a row, they are also included in ITUC's annual ratings of insecure rights. Meaning that workers' rights are constantly violated due to the laws not being strict or not being properly followed (ITUC, 2022). Although labor laws do exist, there is still a lot of injustice in the labor market according to all of the interviewed Turkish tourism workers. The workers in the country are stripped from their rights and one of the interviewees, Cem, said that Turkey is heavily corrupt. While another interviewee, Ismail, hinted at corruption by saying that bribery and knowing powerful people are the ways to get out of the law. By comparing their answers with the Corruption Perception Index (CPI), where Turkey is currently ranked 96th on the scale out of the 180 countries researched (Transparency International, 2021). It shows that the country is not heavily corrupt, but that corruption may still be an occurrence there which was mentioned by the interviewees.



There are trade unions in the country that are meant to help workers' rights, but according to the interviewee Ismail; the chairman of the Turkish federal labor union is against the workers' rights when it is beneficial to the government. According to Nuray Altındağ and Ali Onur Özçelik (2022), the right to free expression is protected by the Constitution of Turkey (Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Anayasasının 26. Maddesi), yet there are several limitations. There have been various instances of unions being arrested for speaking out against the government, and the government has a history of restricting media and free speech. This has made it hard for workers to protest against their unjust working situations as the police will detain them and the workers will lose their jobs as a result (ITUC, 2022).

On one hand, interviewee Enver says that the existing trade unions are “dysfunctional” and “dangerous”. This according to both Enver and Ismail, is due to workers attempting to make their working conditions better whilst the government is putting a stop to it by jailing and firing those who are associated with unions. Although it is legal to have trade unions in the country under the Trade Union Act (Türkiye İş Kanunu, No. 6356) according to Sadık Sözer Çizmeci, (2022), but the legitimacy of trade unions is regulated by official labor legislation (Shakhnazarova, 2007). Çizmeci however states, that it can be tricky although they do have laws in favor it due to the current government. Thus, as the government is trying to stop them from forming it is hard to form new unions for the workers. Although, even the registered trade unions that are regulating are unable to help due to their laws working against them and if something was to be put in motion no one would take them into account.

On the other hand, as the interviewed lawyer, Mehmet said; labor laws in Turkey are protected by the government under the Ministry of Labor and Social Security (Çalışma Ve Sosyal Güvenlik Bakanlığı, abbr. CSGB). CSGB also regulates the Constitution which states that all working Turkish citizens are subject to a 45-hour working week, with one day off per week. If an employee were to exceed the 45 hours they shall get paid accordingly to their law, as it states that they should get paid in the free time of 1.5 hours or 150% of their average monthly salary. Enver, also mentioned that employers will pay you a regular salary even if an employee is working at uncomfortable hours or overtime. Though, the employee is not



allowed to exceed the maximum hours of overtime which is 270 hours per month (Shakhnazarova, 2007). According to the interviewed workers in the tourism industry, this law is not properly observed by the government. The employee oftentimes works overtime without compensation and since there is no law about working uncomfortable hours. Meaning that employees can work at any hour during the day. Ismail mentioned that as a tour guide, they could get assigned to certain travelers for their stay and have to follow them to different cities in Turkey at any hour. This is without being paid any compensation, as well as sometimes needing to pay for their own stay in the city or sleep in their cars if they could not afford to sleep at an accommodation. This behavior is allowed since the workers are afraid to protest or speak out as it is illegal, also rebellion against the employer can lead to loss of job which in turn makes a loss in income for the employed.

However, the Minimum Wage law (Minimum Ücret Kanunu, No. 4857) says that a full-time employee's salary must exceed 5 500 Turkish Lira (TRY), or 270.525 Euro as of January 17th, 2023, regardless of the type of employment and the industry. This law is strictly observed since the salary is at a subsistence level. The law is also supported by Yalin Yayıncılık (2020) who also adds that those who are not fulltime employees or those who are students can not legally make as much as someone who works fulltime. This means that the minimum wage might be lower as stated in the Minimum Wage law. As mentioned above, the employees work 45-hour weeks, which is above the global average since it means they are working 6 days (Shakhnazarova, 2007). This shows that the Turkish workers are badly paid whilst working more than average and at all hours of the day. However, the employees are demanding higher pay according to Enver, which results in businesses hiring illegal workers. This claim was also supported by Ismail and Cem by adding that the illegal workers often demand very low salaries, around 3 350 Turkish Lira, 164.774 Euro as of January 17th, 2023, according to Cem, and are able to work twice as much as the average Turk. Cem also mentions that illegal workers are not supported by the government since they are not protected by the Social Insurance Law (Sosyal Sigortalar Kanunu, No. 5510) which is used in workers' favor. The law does however stipulate that all residents of Turkey, even those who



seek refugee or are stateless have access to the health insurance but that is the only insurance they have right to (Doğan, 2019). The interviewees do state that this is not always the case as some may refuse to treat people who are not resident to Turkey. In terms of employees, all employees are compelled to have insurance to protect them according to both Mehmet and Enver. This law maintains that all workers are legal, as only those with citizenship can acquire insurance in Turkey.

However, as the illegal workers can not attain these insurances, the officials are finding other ways to attain them (illegal workers) by e.g bribes to the government, workplace bullying, and threats to those locally employed. As Ismail describes, he was one of the affected due to his employer forcing him to take uncomfortable shift work otherwise they threatened to make his work score. Tour guides in his sector determine skill depending on the level of satisfaction rate from customers, whereas the one with the highest scores gets the most shift passes. If he gets no tours from customers the company will fire him and instead hire someone, whether they be legal or illegal citizens or not.

According to Yayincılık (2020), if an employee gets fired the law of the Termination of Employment Act (İşten Çıkarma Kanunu, No. 4857) takes place which is in support of the employer due to them being able to fire people for no reason as long as they pay monetary compensation. Yayincılık (2020) also states that the termination has to be mentioned in writing and if it is not, the employee has in the eyes of the law not been fired. Although the employers still have the upper hand in this situation, there are laws that support dismissals for employees. Bakir and Ertan, (2018) states that this law rules under the Dismissal Article in the Turkish Constitution, as law 657 on the Protection of Employees (Çalışanların Korunması Kanunu, No. 657), it states that employers can not wrongfully fire an employee, protection against diseases and unhealthy work environments among others. The legislation stipulates that an employee may be fired in specific situations, such as redundancy, misbehavior, and failure to complete tasks. It also lays out the guidelines and steps for the firing process (Kulaç, Akman & Babaoğlu, 2019). In this case, Ismail would have a legal reason to be fired although



the fault was at the employer for reducing his score which led him to not getting any touring jobs.

However, Cem mentioned that there are also cases of bullying at the workplace but situations such as discrimination occur but are dismissed even if there are laws against bullying in the workplace. According to Mehmet, the law Prevention of Discrimination and Equality of Opportunity (Ayrımcılığın Önlenmesi ve Eşit Fırsatların Sağlanması Kanunu, No. 6111) is the primary discrimination law in Turkey. He also mentions that there are laws such as Turkish Labor Code (Türk İş Kanunu, No. 4857) which provide broad protection against unfair treatment and discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender, color, religion, ethnicity, handicap, or other factors. This law was supported by Publications (2014), which mentions that if an employee is discriminated against the employer shall protect them and if they are discriminated against due to trade union activities they shall be compensated a sum called union compensation.

Mehmet also mentions that there are act that are not as fairly known like the Code of Obligations (Yükümlülükler Kanunu, No. 6098) and the Turkish Criminal Code (Türk Ceza Kanunu, No. 5237). Cobb (2020) mentions that the Code of Obligations help women in the workplace who have been victims to sexual assault and harrassment by protecting them and is one of the most prominent laws in regards to sexual harrassment in the workplace in Turkey. It also ensures that women shall not be victims of sexual assault in the workplace by stating that everyone deserves equal treatment and to have respect from one another whilst working (Cobb, 2020). The Turkish Criminal Code is mentioned by Güneş (2021), whereas he states that those who are not acting accordance to human rights may have a hard time to get prosecuted due to the laws lacking in certain areas, as well as those who are prosecuted may get reduced sentences. Despite these laws, discrimination is fairly common due to it not being governed and the workers not speaking out against it as they are afraid to get unfairly dismissed due to it. Cem mentioned that unless there is something more offensive like a case of rape happening at the workplace no dismissal or disciplinary case will be taken seriously.



The working conditions in Turkey are inhumane and there is an exploitation of human labor, but the government does not stop it due to it being beneficial for the higher earners in the country (business owners) (Shakhnazarova, 2007). The reason the government turns a blind eye is due to business owners bribing them with high sums of money to do so. Hence why the interviewees mentioned that the Turkish government is heavily corrupt because people with power and connection can afford to do what is in their best interest. This can conclude that everything is about connections with the right people or being a person with power and/or money.





## 4. Culture

*In this chapter, the characteristics of Swedish and Turkish culture are described. Which are used in subsequent chapters, where parallels are drawn between cultural characteristics and the implementation of labor laws in each of the countries. According to (Hall, 1989) Swedish culture is low contextual and monochronic. Turkish culture is the complete opposite, which means it is high contextual and polychronic.*

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Culture is a multifaceted aspect that includes tangible and intangible cultural heritage. The ceremonial customs practiced by the people for many years, the music that distinguishes these people from others, poems, folklore tales, works of art created by their representatives, architecture, all this is a material cultural heritage. Intangible cultural heritage includes the cultural norms of the people, traditions, religion, and language (Latipova, 2016). Thus, it turns out that culture creates traditions, and traditions form the cultural norm, which is a set of expectations for behavior that are accepted within a social group.

Culture is the key to the perception and interpretation of certain words, deeds, and behaviors. For example, if someone refuses to drink a cup of tea or coffee while visiting an Eastern person, he/she may take it as an insult. Alternatively, if you do not drink when visiting the home of a representative of a Western country, they may simply assume that you are not thirsty, rather than perceiving it as an abnormal behavior (Gutareva & Vinogradov, 2015). Cultural influence on perception and subsequent processing and actions extends not only to personal, everyday relationships with others but also to the laws of the country. Regardless of cultural background, everyone is entitled to the same basic rights and needs and desires respect, and democracy. However, one's culture can either help or hinder them in achieving these goals (Latipova, 2016).



Hall (1989) made a theory of cultural patterns of interaction in which he highlights the perception of context and time as the basis for the characteristics of the cultures of various peoples. According to his theory, all cultures are divided into high-contextual and low-contextual cultures as well as monochronic and polychronic cultures. Cultures differ in their understanding of context and dependence on it, as well as their perception of time and its importance in building relationships. Hall argues that culture is a powerful force that shapes how people interact and communicate with one another. He refers to culture as an invisible force that exists between people and suggests that it is as real a force as gravity or electricity.

## **4.1 High Versus Low Contextual Cultures**

High contextual cultures differ from low contextual cultures in having branching structures and more complex communication systems. While low contextual cultures are simpler and more direct, high contextual cultures emphasize the process of communicating information rather than outcomes. High contextual cultures also differ from low contextual cultures in the role of feelings and unspoken rules that govern people's behavior (Hall, 1989).

### **4.1.1 High Contextual Cultures**

Hall (1989) considers Turkish culture and the culture of the Middle East, in general, to be highly contextual. He defines high contextual cultures as cultures with strong, shared values, norms, and beliefs that are deeply ingrained in society, and that shape the behavior and interactions of its members. Hall (1989) also argues that these cultures emphasize the importance of maintaining social harmony and rely heavily on nonverbal communication to interpret and exchange meaning. High contextual cultures are seen as highly collectivist, with a strong emphasis on social cohesion and interdependence. They place an emphasis on relationships and the importance of maintaining respectful and harmonious interactions. Hall also argues that high contextual cultures are often slow to change, as they rely on traditions, established practices, and religion to guide behavior. One of the interviewees, Ismail, said that



in Turkish culture, there are a lot of traditional people, with a mindset that is hard to change. They are too proud of being who they are and are not ready, and don't want to change.

Samovar and Porter (2004) divide communication in different cultures into styles that are similar to the context of Hall's theory. They also say that in cultures that use a high context style, communication is often indirect and assumes shared knowledge and understanding between the participants. These cultures tend to emphasize the relationship between people and emphasize the importance of group harmony. Nonverbal cues such as body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice are often used to convey meaning. According to Samovar and Porter (2004), high context communication style is common in many Middle Eastern countries, including Turkey, where verbal communication without any nonverbal cues is often seen as impolite or even rude. This communication style relies on reading nonverbal cues and body language to understand the meaning behind what is being said. In Turkey, it is important to be aware of the cultural nuances when engaging in communication.

One characteristic that distinguishes high contextual cultures is the manner of speech, which implies that the interlocutor understands the context between the lines. Therefore, in these cultures, the substance of the conversation is not as important as how it was said. As mentioned earlier, non-verbal communication plays an important role in understanding each other and building relationships. Gestures, gazes, signals, and postures speak volumes for representatives of high contextual cultures. Also, the characteristic is the lack of straightforwardness and open expression of discontent (Hall, 1989; Samovar & Porter, 2004).

Hall (1989) says that all the cultures of the Middle East, which also includes the culture of Turkey, have some common characteristics. The people of the Middle East, like other cultures, have their own unique set of cultural values, beliefs, and customs. Hall explains that Middle Eastern cultures emphasize hospitality and respect for one another. Hospitable, respectful, and helpful are the words the Turkish interviewees used to describe the representatives of their culture.



Hall (1989) also highlights the importance of family and religious values and how they play an important role in the lives of the people of the Middle East. Equally important is the strong sense of community and the importance of the group over the individual. It is also worth mentioning that Middle Eastern culture is traditional with an emphasis on maintaining an orderly and hierarchical society and on respect for elders and the sharing of knowledge, wisdom, and traditions. Hall describes the Turkish people as outgoing but formal, having a strong sense of national pride, and having an impulsive nature. He also emphasizes that they have a strong sense of family loyalty, a strong commitment to tradition, and a strong belief in the importance of hospitality. He describes Turkish culture as highly ritualized in terms of behavior and interaction.

Samovar and Porter (2004) say as well that Turkish culture is characterized by its hospitality, respect for family, national pride, and a strong sense of community. This can be explained by the fact that Turkish culture practices more ancient traditions based on family, status, clans, and adherence to the norms of society. Turkish culture emphasizes social conformity and hierarchical structure, as well as ideals such as good manners, decency, and propriety. Also, this culture adheres more to social roles than to individual rights and freedoms (Borzova, 2010). The person is the representative of the family; district; city; country; nation; etc. and is responsible for the good name and honor of the whole (Gutareva & Vinogradov, 2015). High contextual cultures place a high value on relationships and connections, making communication more personal and intimate. People rely on a deep sense of community and trust to understand each other and to build relationships, which they place a much higher value on than individual achievement (Hall, 1989).

Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner (2020) argue that Turkish culture is *practician*, meaning that members of this culture value human relationships first and foremost. Formalities and rules play a secondary role. In particularistic cultures, the decision of any cases is mainly based on relationships and trust. The authors also believe that this culture has a high index of



collectivism and belonging. Which indicates the importance of the individual's involvement in the group and the exaltation of the interests of society over individual interests and views. As well as the fact that the status of an individual depends on his belonging to a certain group (kindred or professional affiliation). Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner (2020) also emphasize that Turkish culture is emotional and diffuse. Which means that the representatives of this culture are talkative, vividly express their emotions through words and gestures, and also tend to mix private and public space.

Hofstede (2001) also considers Turkish culture to be collectivist. His claim is that inflexible social structures and distinct social groupings are characteristics of collectivist civilizations. The main characteristic of collectivism is giving the group's interests precedence over the individual's, as well as taking into account how one's decisions and deeds will affect the community that is important to them. High degrees of interconnectedness, harmony within the group, personal connections, collaboration, devotion to traditions, feeling of duty, group decision-making, and emotional reliance on the group are all characteristics of these cultures. Turkish culture, according to Hofstede (2001), demonstrates a high power distance. This indicates that people in this culture are ready to accept an unequal distribution of power, see those in positions of authority with adoration, and consider power to be a major component of life.

#### **4.1.2 Low Contextual Cultures**

Hall (1989) considers Swedish culture to be low contextual. It is a culture that places less emphasis on formal rules, structures, and procedures and instead values informal relationships and individual discretion. These cultures tend to be more open and flexible, with less emphasis on hierarchy and authority. The Swedes are guided by the rule of equality for each individual, regardless of any of his/her distinctive features (gender, age, sexual orientation, nationality, religious preferences, etc.) (Borzova, 2010). People in these cultures are often expected to think independently and be creative, and they tend to value individual input and opinions. A person in Swedish culture is primarily an individual who has the right to choose



and is responsible only for his/her personal actions (Gutareva & Vinogradov, 2015). In a low contextual culture, communication is often direct, open, and informal. People are expected to be open, honest, and direct in their communication (Hall, 1989).

Low contextual cultures use direct verbal expressions to convey their meaning clearly and without relying on subtle cues from the environment or the people involved. This type of culture is characterized by directness and an emphasis on facts and logic. People in these cultures value time and efficiency and generally prefer to express themselves in concise and direct ways. They are less likely to rely on nonverbal communication and expect others to state their opinion or needs directly (Hall, 1989). Swedish people are open and direct when discussing topics, and not using any unnecessary words or phrases. Their communication is marked by a lack of emphasis on hierarchy, and people of all levels can participate in conversations without feeling like they are out of place (Samovar & Porter, 2004).

Swedish people tend to focus on individual achievements and individual responsibility, with less emphasis on collective or shared goals. They place importance on rules and regulations and tend to be less tolerant of ambiguity or deviation from set norms. Low contextual cultures are often characterized by a focus on efficiency and personal achievement, rather than on relationships and social norms. Individualism and independence are highly valued in Swedish culture (Hall, 1989).

Samovar and Porter (2004) say that Swedish culture has a low context style. Which means direct communication and focus on the content of the message rather than on the relationship between the participants. Cultures with low context style emphasize individualism, and verbal communication is usually the primary one. Swedish culture is deeply rooted in the country's long-standing commitment to democratic principles and social justice. Swedes are known to be friendly, welcoming, and open to new cultures and experiences. Communication is highly valued in Swedish culture, and Swedes strive to communicate with respect and understanding.

Characteristics that distinguish low contextual cultures are a clear expression of one's thoughts without understatement and strong non-verbal communication. For representatives



of these cultures, the essence of what was said is important, and not how it was said. The choice of simple and understandable speech to convey a clear assessment of the topic to the interlocutor is also a special characteristic of low contextual cultures. As well as the open and honest expression of disagreement (Hall, 1989; Samovar & Porter, 2004).

Hall (1989) believes that all Scandinavian cultures, including Swedish culture, have some common characteristics. He describes Scandinavian people as having a unique culture that is both practical and open-minded. They value self-reliance, independence, and respect for others. They pride themselves on their ability to get things done and are known for their high level of trust and cooperation. Scandinavians are also known for their interest in the environment, sustainability, and social justice. They are progressive and cosmopolitan, with a focus on the collective good and quality of life.

Borzova (2010) argues that in Swedish culture, there is a desire for active pragmatism, individual initiative, and independence. This culture is more inclined to obey rational principles. Representatives of Swedish culture strive to achieve practical results and use critical thinking to find the right solutions to problems. Hall (1989) argues that Swedish people as being highly individualistic and independent. They tend to value autonomy, self-sufficiency, and individual responsibility but are also loyal to their group and supportive of their fellow citizens. They have a strong belief in the power of democracy and social justice. Swedes generally have a strong sense of fairness and are very tolerant of different beliefs and cultures. Hall (1989) also argues that low contextual cultures usually do not rely on religion to guide behavior.

Swedish culture also emphasizes achieving results and the value of performance. It is worth emphasizing the presence of increased attention to business and professional achievements, as well as greater attention to individual self-realization (Borzova, 2010). High morals, punctuality, loving to keep a distance, quiet, loving equality, and following the rules are the words the Swedish interviewees used to describe Swedes.



Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner (2020) argue that Swedish culture has a high universalism index, which means that members of this culture primarily value following rules. Personal relationships play a secondary role. In a universalist culture, the solution of any business is mainly based on strict adherence to generally accepted rules and laws. The authors also believe that this culture is a culture of individualism and achievement. Which indicates the importance of the uniqueness and self-sufficiency of the individual and the exaltation of personal interests over the interests of the group. Likewise, a person's standing in society is defined by his or her achievements on a personal level, the outcomes of his or her actions, and the effectiveness with which they have been carried out. Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner (2020) also emphasize that Swedish culture is concrete. Which means that representatives of this culture clearly distinguish between private and public space.

Swedish culture is characterized by Hofstede (2001) as being individualistic. In his view, individualism describes a society with a flexible social structure in which people prioritize their own aims over those of the group when making decisions and taking action. People in these cultures also place a strong emphasis on taking care of themselves and their close family. The general group has comparatively little loyalty. Furthermore, people in these cultures have high levels of mobility, which allows them to readily move between various groups as needed. In these civilizations, rivalry and competitiveness are valued over support to one another and collaboration. In these cultures, individual efforts, accomplishment, and self-reliance are highly valued. Hofstede (2001) also suggests that Turkish culture has a low power distance. It means that societal disparity should be reduced in this situation, highlighting the significance of forging bonds based on respect and equality for all people. It is believed that hierarchy is only a formal reflection of social inequality.

## **4.2 Monochronic Versus Polychronic Cultures**

Monochronic cultures tend to focus on one task at a time and place importance on adhering to schedules, being punctual, and respecting deadlines. They are typically very organized and structured and maintain a rigid approach to time management. These cultures tend to view





time as a limited resource and prioritize efficiency and productivity. Polychronic cultures, on the other hand, tend to value flexibility and spontaneity. They prioritize relationships and prioritize the quality of time over quantity. These cultures tend to view time as an abundant resource and prioritize cooperation and collaboration. They are less focused on adhering to strict schedules and are more likely to multitask (Hall, 1989).

#### **4.2.1 Monochronic Cultures**

Swedish culture is monochronic because it emphasizes a clear separation between the past and the present, and between private and public life (Hall, 1989). This is demonstrated by the way Swedes often keep their personal and professional lives separate and focus on one task at a time. Additionally, the Swedish people tend to be punctual and value efficiency and organization (Borzova, 2010).

Monochronic cultures are those that value individualism and focus on the completion of one task at a time. People in this culture prioritize efficiency, punctuality, and order (Hall, 1989). Since Swedish people take their own and other people's borders very seriously, punctuality is a 'sacred' concept for them. Being late emphasizes the lack of respect for the waiting people's personal time, which is rude and bad manners in Swedish culture (Borzova, 2010).

Swedish people tend to keep to their schedules, avoid multitasking, and have a strong sense of time orientation. They value the completion of tasks over social interaction, which means they may be less likely to engage in small talk. They are also direct in communication and prefer to solve problems quickly. They may be more likely to focus on their own goals rather than build relationships with others. They prefer to plan activities in advance and have a clear definition of roles and responsibilities. This type of culture tends to be very organized and structured. People from monochronic cultures are often very task-oriented and place a high value on individual achievement. They tend to be detail-oriented and prefer linear and logical thinking. Monochronic cultures emphasize individualism and are often highly competitive (Hall, 1989).



Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner (2020) describe the representatives of Swedish culture as representatives with a synchronous approach to time. Which means that people make an effort to complete one task at a time, closely observe the time allotted for workplace interactions, and prefer to rigorously adhere to the set plan.

#### **4.2.2 Polychronic Cultures**

Hall (1989) describes Turkish culture as polychronic. Polychronic cultures are those in which multiple tasks are completed simultaneously and it is considered normal to be involved in multiple activities at the same time. These cultures are characterized by a relaxed attitude towards deadlines and time as a whole and often prioritize interpersonal relationships over efficiency and over adhering to strict time. Time is seen as flexible and people do not feel rushed or pressured to accomplish tasks quickly. People often take more time to get to know each other and enjoy conversations, leading to a greater sense of community (Gutareva & Vinogradov, 2015). They are more tolerant of interruptions and distractions and tend to be more accepting of ambiguity and uncertainty. Polychronic cultures often rely more heavily on personal relationships and communication to get things done (Hall, 1989).

Turkish people have a tendency to focus on multiple tasks at the same time, rather than focusing on one task until it is completed. This reflects the traditional Turkish culture of hospitality, where people were expected to attend to their guests' needs first, and then tend to their own tasks. This polychronic approach is reflected in many aspects of Turkish culture today, from the way people communicate to the way they plan projects (Hall, 1989). Punctuality is not characteristic of Turkish culture. However, this is not considered disrespectful. The reason for being late can be communication with an important person. Since relationships are more important than time in Turkish culture, refusing to talk to someone due to lack of time is likely to be considered offensive (Borzova, 2010). This aspect is also argued by Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner (2020) who describe the representatives of Turkish culture as representatives with a synchronous approach to time. Which means that members of this culture engage in constant multitasking and prioritize social interactions,



which heavily influence their daily routines. It is common for individuals in this culture to interrupt their current tasks to warmly greet and engage in conversation with a familiar person who has entered their workplace.



## **5. Analysis of Cultural Impacts on Working Conditions in the Tourism Sector**

*The previous chapters Labor Laws and Culture have described labor laws and how they are enforced and the cultural characteristics of Sweden and Turkey. In this chapter, the information above is analyzed and parallels are drawn between the cultural characteristics of the representatives of these countries and the observance of laws. As well as it is considered how this affects the working conditions in the tourism sector.*

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### **5.1 Case of Sweden**

As mentioned earlier in the Labor Laws chapter, Sweden is a leading country in the field of labor law and ranked first in the International Trade Union Confederation's annual Global Rights Index for the ninth year in a row. It was also said that labor legislation in Sweden not only officially exists but is also observed in most cases. So how does Swedish culture contribute to such good working conditions?

The Culture chapter describes Swedish culture as monochronic, which means that people in Sweden treat time as a precious resource. They are punctual, focusing on one task at a once to get it done on time. Therefore, the existence of a law on working hours and that overtime hours must be paid is strongly welcomed among the representatives of Swedish culture. It is important to consider that respect for one's own and other's boundaries is one of the cultural characteristics of the Swedish people. Thus it can be argued that forcing employees to work overtime without pay or to agree to work overtime for free can be equated with disrespect for personal time, which in turn violates personal boundaries.

Interviewees Anette and Lucas emphasized that most Swedish people know their rights, which is also an indicator of respect for their boundaries and their time. The Swedes' love of respecting all agreements, and the fact that Swedish culture is also based on equality between



people, regardless of age, status, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and various other distinguishing features. This contributes to the observance of Swedish law which prohibits discrimination in the workplace. This means that any employee can count on equal treatment and on being provided with healthy working conditions and working environment from their superiors. The law on the protection of employees from any physically and morally dangerous situations is also respected by employers.

Employees also feel protected from unfair dismissal. As described earlier in this paper, there is a law that states that when dismissing an employee, the age and length of service must be taken into account, and the reason for dismissal must be a good one, such as a forced reduction in staff. A dismissal may also be considered appropriate after three formal warnings to an employee for inappropriate behavior in the workplace. All interviewed tourism workers in Sweden confirmed that this law is strictly enforced by employers. In this case, one can draw a parallel with the lack of hierarchy in Swedish culture. An employer cannot make unreasonable decisions and go unpunished, as employees treat him/her as an equal and will not remain silent in response to unfair decisions.

If nevertheless, the employer has infringed on the rights of the employee, the employee can turn to the trade union for help. As discussed in previous chapters, trade unions in Sweden are very strong, and Swedes, despite their shyness, are able to openly and clearly express their dissatisfaction, and also, as already mentioned in this chapter, they are well aware of their rights and value their personal boundaries. These unions are also responsible for the collective agreement, which sets out the terms of employment between the employer and the union organization. Despite the fact that there is no minimum wage law in Sweden, the rights of workers are not infringed upon and everyone receives at least a salary that will cover the living wage. The size of the salary will be prescribed in the collective agreement, which will protect workers from the willful injustice of employers.



From all of the above, we can conclude that the fact that in Swedish culture a person is perceived as an individual person, and not as part of a whole, contributes to the fact that people do not have to fulfill the requests of others, so as not to denigrate the good name of the family, community, country, etc. with their refusal. The prevalence of equality over the hierarchy, respect for one's own and other's boundaries, and the use of primarily verbal communication lead to the fact that the employee can calmly and clearly express his/her thoughts and dissatisfaction because what matters is what he/she says, and not how and to whom. Workers also have no fear of losing their jobs or being left without money, as the Swedish government provides them with good working conditions that not only contribute to earning a living wage but also contribute to further development, both in work and in their personal life.

Since there is no separate working legislation for tourism workers, everything mentioned in this chapter, in the case of Sweden, applies to the working conditions of all working sectors, including the tourism sector. Speaking about the working conditions in the tourism industry, given the fact that it is in Swedish culture to put personal boundaries first, it can be concluded that tourism workers will not adapt to the needs of tourists if they violate their rights and do not comply with Swedish regulations. Interviewees in Sweden stated that tourists come to Sweden as guests, so they must comply with the laws and regulations of Sweden, and not vice versa.

In conclusion, it can be said that Swedish culture is the reason why labor laws are so respected and observed in the country. The culture of respect for one's own and other's boundaries, the prevalence of equality, and the knowledge of their rights among Swedes all contribute to the fact that employers and employees adhere to labor laws and regulations. The Swedish government also provides its citizens with good working conditions and a living wage. All of this creates an environment in which everyone feels secure and respected.



## **5.2 Case of Turkey**

Since in the case of Turkey there are quite a few nuances in compliance with labor laws, cultural impacts on working conditions in the tourism sector in Turkey, for ease of understanding, will first be considered through the case of a guide in Istanbul, Ismail, one of the interviewees. Ismail said that once he refused his superiors to conduct a tour for tourists because it was outside of his working hours and he did not have the opportunity for personal reasons to do this work.

Despite the official existence of a law on working hours in Turkey, which states that overtime must be paid by the employer, this law is actively ignored in the labor market. Since Turkish culture is polychronic, which means an abstract perception of time and the primacy of social relationships over time, employers take it for granted that employees should get into the situation and work as much as necessary under any circumstances. Given the fact that hierarchy and mutual assistance are also characteristics of Turkish culture, refusing a request from superiors to take overtime is considered unacceptable rudeness and disrespect. Which in turn leads to discrimination in the workplace.

Ismail said that after his refusal, the authorities 'stigmatized him'. He began to receive the most objectionable tasks, and his colleagues got good jobs, despite the existence in Turkey of many laws prohibiting bullying and discrimination in the workplace. These laws come into force only for violations of the highest category, such as violence, everything else is attributed to social relationships, which are not divided into work relationships and personal relationships in Turkish culture. The allocation of crimes of the highest category can also be explained by the cultural characteristics of the Turkish people. A person is considered as a part of the whole, as a representative of Turkish society, leaving someone who committed an inhumane act unpunished will defile Turkish culture and all its representatives.

However, exceptions are possible, in the case of a high social status of the offender and a low social status of the victim. Returning to the hierarchy, mutual assistance, and high



contextuality of Turkish culture, which is based on relationships, in most cases, no one will refuse to help people with whom they have good social ties to avoid punishment. This does not require direct knowledge of the person who is directly involved in the decision. According to Turkish tourism workers' interviewees, this procedure works on the principle of a chain. It is enough to grab onto the 'first link', and then each subsequent 'link' will establish contact with the next one in turn according to the same principle. Which can reach the point of absurdity, like for example 'Son you know that policeman, help your uncle's neighbor's cousin. If you don't help, what will people say about our family?' As it was said earlier, a person is a representative of the whole (family, community, country, etc.). Thus, the existence of a law on punishment for violations of labor laws is not a guarantee that violators will certainly be punished. Therefore, it can be argued that society is ruled by chaos based on networking.

Ismail said that because of the above, to show his dissatisfaction with his superiors is not only useless but also dangerous. Since too strong a manifestation of disagreement and inconvenient behavior for the company can lead to dismissal from work. Turkey has a law to protect workers from unreasonable dismissal, but it only provides monetary compensation in case of dismissal for a good reason. According to Ismail, such a reason is not difficult to find or invent. This law also states that in case of disagreement with the reason for dismissal and the inability to hire a lawyer, the plaintiff has the right to receive a lawyer who will be assigned to him by law enforcement agencies. However, as discussed earlier in this chapter, lawsuits are won by those with the most connections.

Turkish law provides for the existence of trade unions, which must protect the interests of workers in cases of conflict with employers. Unfortunately, as mentioned in the Labor laws chapter, the formation of new trade unions is not encouraged and is sometimes even illegally punished. And the existing trade unions are corrupted by the Turkish government. Based on this, it can be concluded that the high contextual structure of Turkish culture in this case, as





well as in previous cases, plays an unfavorable role, fueling corruption in the country through hierarchy, social relationships, and assistance.

When asked why Ismail himself did not want to find a new job after the unfair attitude of his superiors, he replied that it is very easy to lose a job in Turkey, but finding a new one is much more difficult. He explained that despite the fact that there is a law that all workers in Turkey must have a work permit, employers want to “squeeze” the maximum benefit from their subordinates for a small salary. Therefore, they hire illegal workers who are willing to do more work for wages that sometimes do not even reach the minimum wage set by Turkish law. This salary is so low that it is not enough for a living wage, so people who have all the necessary documents for legal work in Turkey require a higher salary. Which in turn leads to the priority of illegal labor by employers. Taking into account the fact that laws protecting the rights of workers are actively violated, as described above, it can be concluded that the fear of losing a job that financially provides an opportunity to feed a family and pay vital expenses makes workers resign themselves to poor working conditions.

Ismail emphasized that since Istanbul is a tourist city, many ordinary professions such as salesmen, waiters, or taxi drivers become part of the tourism industry if the workplace is located in a tourist area. This results in a lot of jobs in the tourism sector, but since employers prefer to hire illegal workers for less pay, there is a shortage of jobs for people who demand a fair wage for their work.

However, is it true that all entrepreneurs only benefit from non-compliance with the laws in Turkey? Interviewee Enver, who is running a hotel and rental apartment business in Istanbul, said that due to non-compliance with laws, which makes it easy for people with connections and money to do business, a situation is developing in which it is difficult for small businesses to stay afloat. This leads to hiring illegal employees to save money and also fuels corruption, as you have to pay bribes to those who are one step above and can help the business flourish. Enver said that people with small businesses understand that the law will



not protect them, and if they want to ensure the growth of their business and not go bankrupt, they have to do as everyone else does and break the law. Thus, it can be concluded that only people at the highest hierarchical levels benefit from violations of the laws, but people at the lower levels have to adapt to mass behavior, which perpetuates these 'rules' in the labor market.

Based on the foregoing, it can be said that because the government does not provide citizens with working conditions in which they can easily earn a living wage, they have to please those who need to be pleased in order to achieve their own well-being, even if this requires violating the laws of the country. This applies not only to the relationship of employees with employers or entrepreneurs with legal authorities but also to the relationship of tourism workers with tourists. Interviewed tourism workers in Turkey said that for the most part tourism workers in Turkey have to adapt as much as possible to the needs of tourists to such an extent that it begins to violate their rights.

As an example, Cem cited the fact that workers in small souvenir shops and restaurants in tourist areas, for example, do not close the shop or restaurant until the last tourists have left, even if the working day has already come to an end. Ismail's example was that in the high seasons of tourism, guides have to take unpaid overtime and adjust to all the needs of tourists, even if it develops into personal discomfort. Enver stressed that this situation is developing in this way due to the fact that Istanbul, like Turkey as a whole, is heavily dependent economically on tourism. Analyzing this information, it can be argued that tourism workers are forced to please tourists, as they depend on them economically. Hierarchy in this situation occurs according to the principle of financial status. Thus, it turns out that the one who pays is the one who dictates the rules.

The need of tourism workers in Turkey to please tourists in order to earn a living sometimes leads them to use the famous characteristic of Turkish culture - hospitality, which was discussed in the Culture chapter, in order to earn a living. They create the illusion of domestic



hospitality while providing commercial hospitality. Hemmington (2007) describes domestic hospitality as hospitality that is provided to the guest for free, while commercial hospitality is the hospitality that is provided to 'guests' at their expense. Thus they are customers, not guests, and their relationship with the host is economic. An example of the above is the Turkish ice cream trick. An ice cream seller dressed in a national costume performs a theatrical production. As he skillfully spins the ice cream cone and entertains the crowd, he welcomes people and starts asking them to try and snag it from him. He performs a show for the viewer, inviting him/her to lick the ice cream at the conclusion of the performance (Istanbul, 2012). What psychologically causes individuals to feel as though they must reciprocate in some way with the ice cream vendor. Because when someone receives something for nothing, they intentionally want to pay it back by repaying the favor (Cialdini, 2021).

In summary, the cultural characteristics of Turkish society have a significant impact on the labor market and labor rights in the tourism sector. The labor laws in Turkey are often ignored and traditional cultural values, such as hierarchy, mutual assistance, and abstract perception of time, take precedence over legal regulations. Fear of job loss and low wages lead to workers accepting unfair working conditions, while entrepreneurs must break the law to stay afloat. People in Turkey often have to please those with power and this is also true for the relationship between tourism workers and tourists. Due to the fact that Turkey depends heavily on tourism, workers are forced to please tourists and adjust to the needs and demands of the customers, even if this means unpaid work beyond their regular working hours.



## **6. Religious Tourism**

*This chapter aims to prove how laws can differ within cultures by providing the examples of Turkey and Sweden where one has strict religious laws whilst the other does not. It examines the impact of religion on legal frameworks and cultural practices in Sweden and Turkey. It also showcases the freedom of religion in Sweden and the strict adherence to Islamic laws in Turkey, while noting the limited occurrence of religious tourism in both countries.*

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### **6.1 The Effects of Religion**

When religion comes into play the countries shift the way of how laws are operated. As mentioned, Sweden has strict laws in regard to labor and other important aspects. Although when the subject of religion is mentioned the country becomes free, the whole country does what interests them in regard to religion. This is because Sweden has a Fundamental Law of Religious Freedom (Grundlagen om religionsfrihet) in their Constitution, meaning that anyone has the right to practice their religion no matter who they are or what they have done in their past life. This law also comes in regard to tourists that want to visit religious sites and/or places. Though as the Swedish interviewees mentioned, no one solely comes here for religious reasons. Stefan did mention that those who do want to visit do it for its cultural heritage or to feel a sense of belonging within a group, whether it be a religious group, research, or for other reasons, but it is usually a spontaneous day trip rather than a travel purpose. When visiting a religious site, Stefan and Anette mentioned that everyone is respectful of laws and adapts well to the culture.

Whilst religion is a central part of how Turkey is operating. Turkey, which relies heavily on religion, both the citizens and its government are very strict when it comes to its religion and what should and should not be done on religious sites. A lot of the Turkish laws are following the laws and regulations of the Qur'an e.g the Islamic laws based on the Civil Code (Türk



Ticaret Kanunu) since the country is displayed as Islamic. Although, Turkey also has freedom of religion which is guaranteed by the Turkish Constitution and the Law on Freedom of Religion and Religious Education (Din Hürriyeti ve Din Eğitimi Kanunu No. 633). Freedom of religion includes the right to have a personal belief about religion or way of life and the right to practice those beliefs. However, there are limitations to this right, such as that religious activities must take place within the framework of Turkish legislation. The religious limitations may be what you can and can not do while entering a Mosque for example. Cem mentioned that whilst visiting the Ayasofya (Hagia Sophia) Mosque with a female friend. The friend had to wear a scarf that covered her hair, as well as a long skirt down to her ankles and something that covered her shoulders before being able to enter the Mosque. This shows that religion needs to be followed, otherwise, she would not have been allowed on the religious site even if she was Muslim. If someone was to disobey the religious laws they could be penalized and even jailed in the worst cases (U.S Department of State, 2021).

Although, the sole purpose that people travel to Turkey for religious reasons is not that common according to Ismail. He also mentioned that despite that he has seen an increase in Middle Eastern tourists. This is because their common factor is religion as well as they feel at home whilst also being on vacation. Mehmet said that from a law perspective, Middle Easterners treat the laws and workers (in terms of when it comes to religious tourism) better than Sweden and other travelers from western countries since they are aware of the laws. This can be as mentioned above, that Sweden is free when it comes to how they are operating and therefore are not aware of the existing religious regulations. Thus not taking them into account when visiting a country with stricter rules since it is not the norm in their home country whilst those who are used to the laws adapt better.



## **7. Conclusion**

*This research aimed to investigate the cultural impacts on working conditions and analyze their significance. By conducting an in-depth analysis of the subject and examining the collected data, conclusions have been drawn and insights have been categorized into five main areas: The Effect and Importance of Laws and Culture, The Unwritten Rules of Religion, The Different Approaches in Sweden and Turkey, Contextuality, Hierarchy, and Labor Rights and Future Studies and Differentiations. These findings provide valuable understanding of how culture influences working conditions and offer insights into the importance of recognizing and addressing cultural factors for improving workplace dynamics.*

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### **7.1 The Effect and Importance of Laws and Culture**

To conclude, the authors have argued throughout the paper that culture has an impact on working conditions in the tourism industry. In particular between the cultures of Sweden and Turkey. As the tourism industry follows the laws of labor, it is clear that they would differentiate between the two opposing countries since they are fairly different when it comes to their cultures and legal systems. By doing comparisons, apparent parallels could be drawn as to why the cultures are impactful, as well as the power of the government, law officials, and workers' rights are important factors for employees in the industry. It has been stated that the workers in the opposing countries are subject to different types of working conditions whereas one is just and the other is not.

The laws of labor are important for everyone and it has been shown that the basis of them are the government and trade unions since they are the ones that decide how things should be within the countries. Even though the officials are also the ones that are precluding workers' rights in Turkey whilst in Sweden the government is governing businesses strictly to maintain good working environments. In Turkey, it is all about power and money due to corruption in



the country being at an all-time high. Though the laws are strictly followed when it comes to religion. Whereas Sweden is showing a completely different result by not having strictly reviewed laws when it comes to religion and religious sites.

## **7.2 The Unwritten Rules of Religion**

Overall, it is evident that when it comes to religion, the two countries have different approaches to how they operate. As mentioned in the chapters above, religion is not considered a guide to behavior in Swedish culture. Therefore, in most cases, no one forces tourists to adhere to religious rules regarding religious places. Although, tourists are expected to have respect for the general Swedish laws and regulations, as they are guests in the country.

Turkey, on the other hand, has restrictions and regulations in place when it comes to religious sites and practices. Religion is at the core of Turkish culture and everyone is expected to follow them even if they are an inhabitant or guest in the country. Whilst other laws in Turkey are not as strictly followed which makes Sweden and Turkey on opposite ends of each spectrum. Thus, it can be said that this aspect allows researchers to understand how culture affects the implementation of labor laws.

It also shows how detrimental culture influences the enforcement of labor laws outside of religion, and compares how favorably the same culture influences the enforcement of laws when it comes to religion. One can come to the conclusion about the strength of the relationship between culture and the implementation of laws. In other words, the real state of affairs can change beyond recognition, depending on the importance of a particular aspect in a particular culture. As for Sweden, they put more importance on general laws such as those for labor, whilst Turkey shows that religion is at its core. As mentioned above, Sweden is far from religious which means that its laws are not as influenced by religion as they are in Turkey.



### **7.3 The Different Approaches in Sweden and Turkey**

It is evident that the two countries are prioritizing different aspects of their legal systems but on the other hand, Sweden has been ranked first for the ninth year in a row in the International Trade Union Confederation's Global Rights Index and is known for its excellent labor laws that are respected by both businesses and employers. Sweden is also less corrupt than Turkey which can be shown by their 92 rank difference on the Corruption Perception Index (CPI). This can be seen due to Swedish cultural characteristics being on the spectrum of low contextual and monochronic culture. This spectrum values punctuality and respects personal boundaries. Swedes are often aware of their rights, and employers must comply with the law which forbids discrimination and protects employees from dangerous situations. This can also be shown due to their high respect for equality which is also highly valued in Swedish culture. Swedes may not have a wage minimum but they have controlled wages through unions and other collective agreements which ensures that the wage covers the living wage standard.

In Turkey, labor laws are often ignored and the culture is polychronic and based on hierarchy and mutual assistance. This leads to discrimination and bullying in the workplace, where laws are existent but rarely enforced. Since the country's culture is one of high contextuality, which includes the high importance and value of social relationships, it is impossible to refuse a request from superiors without facing consequences. Although there are laws protecting workers from unreasonable dismissal. If a worker were to sue their workplace it is unlikely for them to win the lawsuit if they do not have the right connections as the country is highly built up on networks. There are some trade unions that are supposed to protect the workers from this but most are corrupted by the Turkish government. Consequently, workers are resigned to subpar working conditions and employers prefer to hire undocumented workers for reduced wages. The concern of losing employment and the absence of a livable wage leads people to comply with the demands of those who need to be satisfied, even if it involves violating the law. This pertains to the association between tourism workers and tourists, as they rely on them economically and therefore tend to bend the rules to please the tourists.





## **7.4 Contextuality, Hierarchy, and Labor Rights**

In regards to the culture, Turkey is showing a high contextuality, as mentioned above, where their laws are more confusing and less direct. High contextuality also shows that networking is important as everything is subject to how good your connections are. Whilst Sweden is showing low contextuality which means that they are direct and simple to understand. Low contextuality also has a certain valuation on individuality whereas high contextuality values the relationship and sense of belonging. The Turks also enjoy multitasking as they are polychronic and are subject to being late. Whilst Swedes are monochronic, meaning that they are strict with their times, and being late is considered disrespectful.

In this instance, a comparison to Swedish culture's absence of hierarchy is appropriate. Employees respect their boss as an equal and will speak up against unjust actions, therefore an employer cannot make illogical judgments and escape punishment. However, in Turkey employees can get fired for any reason and it is hard to prove they were falsely dismissed as there are laws supporting employers from doing so. If no reason is made, the employer can make up a reason by either dragging out the legal process, bribing the government, or making up false accusations. There are also barely any registered trade unions that are supporting the workers as they have fallen under the government's corruption. In Sweden, trade unions are oftentimes the ones helping workers with their rights by being the ones that push the motion forward to law officials.

Inhumane and unfair working conditions and the exploitation of human labor are prevalent in Turkey, but the government does not intervene because it benefits the nation's higher incomes (business owners). Business owners bribe officials with large quantities of money to turn a blind eye, which is why they are able to do so. Because those with money and connections can afford to act in their own best interests, the respondents said that the Turkish government is very corrupt. This can imply that having the appropriate connections or having money, power, or both is everything. This type of system implies that your network is your net worth. In Sweden on the other hand, this would be unheard of as the government, employers, and



trade unions are all interconnected and either would report the other in case of an unjust situation taking place.

## **7.5 Future Studies and Differentiations**

This research challenged the ideas about the cultural relationship's influence on labor laws and its ramifications for working conditions. As there are not many studies made within the field this work will have a great impact on understanding the relationship between culture and labor laws in regard to the tourism industry. The work could even help governments and employers to understand how beneficial it is to take workers into account when creating or reshaping new laws and regulations. In doing so, this research stipulates the idea of how impactful these two parties can be when taken into account with one another.

This research has provided valuable insights into the relationship between culture and labor laws, shedding light on their impact on working conditions in the context of Turkey and Sweden. By examining the stark differences in contextuality and hierarchy between the two countries, this study has highlighted the significant influence of cultural factors on the treatment of employees and the overall work environment. The findings have revealed that high contextuality in Turkey contributes to a more confusing and less direct legal framework, leading to challenges in proving wrongful dismissals and providing limited support for workers through trade unions. Conversely, Sweden's low contextuality promotes directness and simplicity in understanding labor laws, with trade unions playing a crucial role in safeguarding workers' rights.

However, the impacts could be different depending on the law studied as well as the people that were chosen for the interview in regard to the research. Under different situations, the result could differ further if other regions or countries were chosen. The more this subject is developed the better it would be for the understanding and research in regard to human rights. Hence why further research into different aspects of all working fields would be the way in the right direction.



Moving forward, it is crucial to recognize the limitations of this study and the need for further research. While the current research focused on the tourism industry and the specific cultural and legal dynamics of Turkey and Sweden, future studies could explore different sectors and expand the scope to include other regions or countries. By doing so, a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between culture, labor laws, and working conditions can be achieved. Moreover, investigating the impact of cultural influences on human rights in various working fields will contribute to a broader understanding of global labor practices and facilitate the development of more equitable and just systems.

In addition to examining different sectors and regions, future studies should also consider the perspectives of various stakeholders, such as employees, employers, trade unions, and government officials. Incorporating multiple viewpoints will provide a more nuanced understanding of the complex interplay between culture, labor laws, and working conditions. Furthermore, longitudinal studies that track changes in cultural attitudes, legal frameworks, and working conditions over time can provide valuable insights into the long-term effects of cultural shifts on labor rights. By undertaking these future research endeavors, we can continue to advance our understanding of the relationship between culture and labor laws, ultimately promoting fair and humane working conditions worldwide.



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