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HUMAN RESOURCE AS AN IMPORTANT FACTOR OF INCREASING HOTEL SERVICE QUALITY AND GUEST SATISFACTION

Abstract. In the paper classical theories, concepts and models focused on the complex study of the service quality development in the hotels are discussed. In relation to the conceptual foundations and empirical measures of "service quality", the emphasis is placed on the functional (product or service delivery process) and social (staff attitude towards customers, cultural elements) categories of service quality assessment, and their most important factors influencing the quality of hotel service are confirmed. This was also confirmed by the results of a quantitative survey of guest satisfaction in 5- and 4-star international and local branded hotels in Tbilisi. According to which the share of the personnel and other related assessment components (cleanliness, comfort) in the creation of the hotel rating was revealed, which at the same time will serve as an indicator for long-term competitiveness.

Keywords: Hotel, Service quality, Human resource.

Introduction. The high level of hotels and service qualities existence are influential factors when choosing tourism destination. Particularly for those countries where tourism and hotel industry is main source of income its crucial to study those challenges which should be overcome by the mentioned sectors [1].

The satisfaction of customer demands are one of the main topics in tourism and hospitality industry. It is influenced by the perception of service quality [2]. Generally the customer's opinion about the product or service leads to his satisfaction [3]. and therefore, directly influences intentions for repurchase behavioral [4].

Quality is an important indicator that designates the successful activity of the hotel companies. Considering all this, the subject of research for many leading scientists of the world is to identify the determinants of the service quality

Although branded hotels of international corporations/companies systematically implement - active personnel policy, invest in human capital, assign a strategic role to personnel management services, etc. a universal model of strategic human resources management has not been developed yet, however, the recent trend indicates that human resources management is becoming a system and we think it should be formed in a complex manner.

The Purpose of the research is: to search and develop recommendations for the improvement of the hotel service quality based on effective human resource management.

Discussion of the results. The existing service in the hotel industry like other industries is directly connected to the satisfaction of customers' (International or local visitors) modern

demand. The essence of the peculiarity of tourist services is in many cases associated with its intangible perception and indivisibility. The main characteristic feature of the essence of "hotel industry service" as a commodity product and as a result of the hotel's production activity is the coincidence in time and space of the processes of production, service realization and consumption [5] and the employees, who have certain (in some cases, close) communication links with guests, are perceived by customers as an integral part of the service package.

Accordingly, personnel is presented as one of the important characteristics determining the formation of quality. In addition, the service personnel, who are directly connected with the company's activities and internal order, and also appear as "internal customers" [6].

The theories and concepts that have already become classics in the hotel industry confirm that the characteristics of service employee satisfaction and the high-quality work (service) performed by them are directly related to guest satisfaction. Unsatisfied and unmotivated employee cannot deliver high quality of service [7].

In terms of identifying tools for hotel service quality assessment, it is important to review studies that have identified problems with the conceptual foundations and empirical measures of "service quality". Regarding this factor, all scientists agree that the following circumstances should be distinguished when evaluating the quality of service [8]

Assessment of the level of quality of material (technical services) and immaterial (the service itself) process, which includes the experience of the guest received in the process of providing the service.

The services offered by the hotel service employees form a functional element of quality assessment, which may include: interest expressed by the service employees towards guests, attention to them, respect, warm attitude, force majeure situation assessment of the quality level of the material (technical service) and immaterial (service itself) process, which includes the experience of the guest received in the process of providing the service, quick and effective actions to find a solution and etc [9]

According to the Leshli and Morison (2000), the hospitality industry is, "social phenomenon, which is based on relationships between humans" with its nature the operations of the hospitality industry are open, customers have communication with employees during service delivery process [9].

The specifics of the close relationship between employees and the client, resulting from the production and delivery of the hotel service product, which leads to a close relationship between the hotel staff and the guest, puts high demands on the psycho-emotional requirements of the staff. In order for a hotel to have friendly, caring staff towards guests, it must take care of having satisfied employees. Satisfied employees are usually more loyal and also more actively involved in the organization's activities [4; 10] .

The hospitality business should have fundamental competencies and activities which will help organizations to gain competitive advantage. The following factors are influencing on fundamental competencies: location, brand, infrastructure, employee and customer loyalty, market share, quality of service, technologies, leadership, organizational process and systems, organizational culture [11]. The hotels should create their own unique features by which the customers will differentiate them from competitors [12]. A unique feature of a hotel can be its human resources with its unique competencies.

In term "Human Resources" which are owned by the hotels are considered employees with its complex (Individual, Social, Psychological, Professional) characteristic features. Therefore management decisions related to human resources go beyond purely economic positions and are based on aspects of sociology, physiology and work psychology that must be taken into account in the decisions of top managers of hotels.

In the environment of global economic competition it is crucial to identify factors that determine long-term success. "SERVQUAL" model has been widely used in empirical studies of hotel service quality [13] which is a "multi-dimensional instrument for measuring the quality of

service quality, according to which personnel and their individual skills are considered to be decisive factors in measuring service quality.

The mentioned model was further developed in the works of various scientists and a new service measurement scale "LODGSERV" was created, which was based on five main indicators (reliability, confidence, thoughtfulness, material value and empathy [14].

Later, it was created directly the model related to hotel services "HOLSERV", in which service quality is represented by three dimensions: hotel employees, material values and reliability. From these three indicators, staff was named as the best determining factor of overall service quality [15].

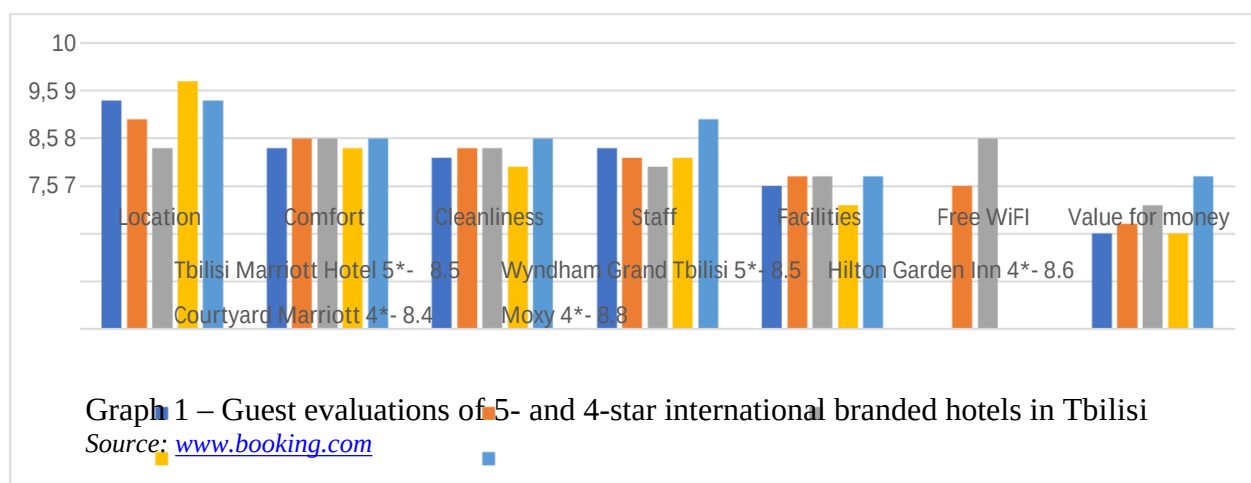
And finally Abbas Al-Rafaye's conceptual model of human resource management, which is very remarkable because it directly relates to the operation of the hotel company and studied "the impact of human resource management on hotel performance using structural equation modeling," the main results of the study indicate that - "Personel Management Practice," "Service Quality," "Employee Satisfaction," "Employee Loyalty," "Customer Satisfaction," and "Customer Loyalty" have a positive effect on the determinants of hotel activity in the financial and innovative areas [16], which ultimately leads to the efficient operation of the hotel company.

Guest Satisfaction Survey in the Georgian Hotels. The aim of the study was to reveal the determining characteristics of service quality "perception" and "satisfaction" by guests in international and local branded hotels in Tbilisi.

For the research were chosen two international branded five star hotels such as: Tbilisi Marriott Hotel and Wyndham Grand Tbilisi. Three international branded four star hotels: Hilton Garden Inn, Courtyard Marriott and Moxy. Two local branded five star hotels: Rooms Tbilisi and Gllaros Old Town, five four star local branded hotels such as: Epigraph Design Tbilisi, Biograph, Sole Palace, Astoria, Clocks.

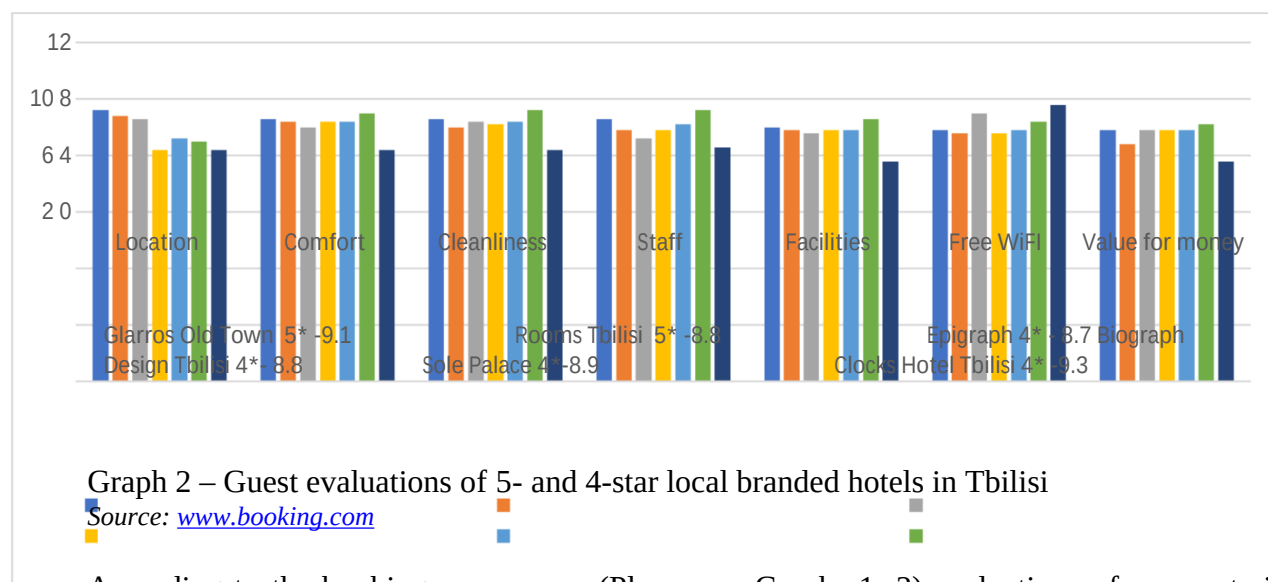
This would allow us to analyze the mutual comparison of two companies with different origins and different classes working on the same market segment.

Evaluations left by guests on the website of the international online travel agency BOOKING.COM were used as a research technique. In particular, the evaluations of hotel services by 12,838 guests of the above-mentioned hotels were analyzed (based on data for the period of January 31, 2024) (see graphs 1 and 2)



Based on the evaluation of the surveyed respondents, 5-star international brand hotels Tbilisi Marriot Hotels and Wyndham Grand Tbilisi have obtained 8.5-8.5 points, while 4-star hotels are rated with a higher overall rating, namely Moxsy - 8.8 points, Hilton Garden Inn - with 8.6 points. This result is explained by higher expectations of service quality towards 5-star hotels. The value for money component is especially low. For Tbilisi Marriot Hotels, it is 8 points, and Wyndham 8.1, while in the case of the location component, Tbilisi Marriot Hotel's rating is 9.4 points, and Wyndham - 9.2 points.

Both 4-star and 5-star local brand hotels have higher ratings than international brand hotels of the same class (Glarros Old Town - 9.1; Sole Palasi - 8.9; Clock Hotel Tbilisi - 9.3) (Rating score) Comparative analysis reveals that they are basically in agreement, the difference varies in a small range ($0.2 < P < 0.5$). In addition, in the evaluations of local branded hotels, the evaluations of intangible components are higher than the total evaluation of components (rating points) and this difference varies in the range of 0.1 to 0.5 points. Which makes us believe that local brand hotels have competitive strategies built more on intangible resources.



According to the booking.com survey (Please see Graphs 1, 2) evaluations of non-material dimensions determining the quality of hotel services, such as staff, as well as cleanliness and comfort, in the perception of which the staff also have a large share, are higher in local brand hotels than for international brand hotels of the same categories.

In the process of reservation, guests already have some knowledge about the following hotel product indicators: brand, location, equipment, free internet and price, on the basis of which they have appropriate expectations. The difference between expectations and received benefits is mainly created by the intangible resources of the hotel. Based on the above, high ratings of local brands (guest satisfaction) are due to: 1. Relatively low expectations compared to international hotels; 2. Strategic management related to the effective use of intangible resources in local branded hotels, which makes them competitive next to international brands.

Conclusion

— The quality of service cannot be objectively evaluated (measured) in the same way as the quality of industrial goods. The main measures of quality assessment are determined for each type of company's services and can be formulated as a certain set of quality determinants.

— Service quality assessment components in the hotel industry should include three categories: material (including technical services); functional (the process of providing the product or service itself); and social (employee's attitude towards customers, cultural elements), thus the service offered by the hotel's service employees forms a functional element of quality assessment.

— In the field of services, "decisions in personnel management go beyond purely economic positions and are based on aspects of sociology, physiology and work psychology, therefore the character of modern personnel policy should be more active and targeted."

— The research of guest satisfaction in Tbilisi hotels showed that the competitiveness strategies of local brand hotels are mainly built on intangible assets, which ensures their competitiveness against international brand hotels.

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