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# ENHANCING GUEST SATISFACTION IN HOTELS: RESEARCHING THE IMPACT OF QUALITY HOSPITALITY SERVICE ON GASTRONOMIC EXPERIENCES IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY IN SERBIA

Povećanje zadovoljstva gostiju u hotelima –  
istraživanje uticaja kvalitetne ugostiteljske usluge na  
gastronomski iskustva u turističkoj industriji u Srbiji

## Abstract

This study delves into the influence of quality hospitality service on gastronomic experiences in the tourism industry in Serbia. Through a comprehensive analysis of guest satisfaction in hotels, particularly focusing on the impact of service staff expertise and gastronomic offerings, valuable insights were gained. The research involved 440 respondents from 4\* and 5\* hotels; data were collected using an online questionnaire and analyzed using SPSS 22 software. By employing quantitative and qualitative methods, the study explored factors such as guest satisfaction and service quality. The findings revealed a significant correlation between the level of knowledge, training, and specialization of hotel service staff and the quality of service provided. Ultimately, the study underscores the importance of enhancing guest satisfaction through a holistic approach to hospitality service, emphasizing the pivotal role of gastronomic experiences in shaping overall guest perceptions and loyalty.

**Keywords:** *quality service, guests, satisfaction, hospitality service, gastronomic experience, tourism industry, Serbia*

## Sažetak

Ova studija bavi se uticajem kvalitetne ugostiteljske usluge na gastronomski iskustva u turističkoj industriji Srbije. Kroz sveobuhvatnu analizu zadovoljstva gostiju u hotelima, sa posebnim osvrtom na uticaj stručnosti uslužnog osoblja i gastronomske ponude, stekli su se značajni uvidi. U istraživanju je učestvovalo 440 ispitanika iz hotela sa 4\* i 5\*; podaci su prikupljeni pomoću online upitnika i analizirani pomoću softvera SPSS 22. Koristeći kvantitativne i kvalitativne metode, studija je istraživala faktore kao što su zadovoljstvo gostiju i kvalitet usluge. Nalazi su otkrili značajnu korelaciju između nivoa znanja, obuke i specijalizacije hotelskog uslužnog osoblja i kvaliteta pružene usluge. Na kraju, studija naglašava važnost povećanja zadovoljstva gostiju kroz holistički pristup ugostiteljskim uslugama, naglašavajući ključnu ulogu gastronomskih iskustava u oblikovanju ukupne percepcije i lojalnosti gostiju.

**Ključne reči:** *kvalitetna usluga, gosti, zadovoljstvo, gostoprimstvo, gastronomsko iskustvo, turistička industrija, Srbija*

## Introduction

Tourism represents one of the largest global industries and makes a great contribution to the economies of the most developed and developing countries, as it is used as a tool for economic progress, diversification at the domestic, regional and national level. Every tourism organization should clearly identify its target market and prepare to meet the needs of that market, ensuring that all employees understand and are committed to constantly and regularly meeting the demands of their guests. For this reason, catering facilities (hotels, restaurants, etc.) should improve the quality of products and/or services in order to increase guest satisfaction. Guest satisfaction is a key issue for the survival of catering establishments. Quality in tourism cannot be viewed individually from the point of view of intangibility, heterogeneity, work intensity, cost structure, but also from the point of view of other aspects, i.e. provider of services (established standards, defined norms, technical and technological elements) satisfaction of tourists' wishes and needs. Today's guests visit destinations that best reflect their needs, desires, goals, and motives. In this way, they can get to know local customs, culture, character of the destination, explore the gastronomy, in one word "the quality of the destination". The challenge that arises in relation to quality in tourism is how to improve the overall value of the tourist offer (service-product). Therefore, in order to achieve satisfaction, tourism organizations should focus more on service quality, identifying guest expectations as well as planning methods that can be used to meet such expectations because satisfaction leads to loyalty and retention.

Empirical research by [47] conducted in Serbia in 2012 indicates that guest loyalty stems primarily from product/service quality. Additionally, the same author states that quality service is the end result of the service process, which is attributed to enthusiastic employees and management. In his research on the quality of products/services in Serbia, [38] claims that the tourist offer is inadequate due to the fact that the offer does not follow the demand and that the price and product/service ratio is inadequate. In addition, the same author adds that quality

improvement can greatly help to strengthen tourism, guest satisfaction, further development of tourist offer (products/services), maintenance of natural resources and positive effects on the economic growth of Serbia.

Various empirical studies have established that the quality of tourism services gives a seal to the destination image [52], [49], [39]. Quality in tourism is built, maintained and improved for years, and it loses very quickly if sufficient attention, time and work are not given to it.

In order to establish, maintain and improve quality, it is extremely important that employees and management in the tourism sector are informed and involved in the process of creating a quality tourist offer (products/services) and are fully aware that their skills, knowledge and commitment are of crucial importance for building the foundation of quality in tourism [6], [28]. In this way, there is a high probability that quality will be maintained and contribute to the satisfaction of guests on the one hand and the success of tourism organizations on the other hand [3]. It is certain that the business of tourist organizations today requires the conformity of the quality of tourist products and services. Understanding the quality of tourism service and its dimensions will improve the effectiveness of the organization and its position in the market [9].

Ensuring continuous quality, reliability, empathy and sustainability improves the destination's image on the global tourism map. Additional research also finds a positive relationship between tourism service quality dimensions and image [51]. With an increasing role of tourism in the overall economy and growing competition on the global tourism market, the importance of developing quality tourism products has been recognized by both the public and private tourism sectors. In order to contribute to the development of quality-based tourism, today's organizations must know what their competitive advantage is and what capabilities they need to grow and maintain it, especially considering the higher levels of guest expectations related to environmental and aesthetic aspects and the overall experience [55].

Quality-based tourism can contribute to the sustainable development of the country by improving the competitiveness of enterprises, meeting social needs and preserving the cultural and natural environment

[21]. The quality of services related to tourism, as well as services in general, is basically balancing the perception and expectations of guests. Successful service providers should, whenever possible, exceed guest expectations. For example, if travel agencies do not meet the expectations of tourists, dissatisfaction will arise, and tourists will not return to such agencies [7].

Guest satisfaction must be a priority in quality assessment, and the service provider must fully understand the product attributes that meet the guests' requirements in terms of product specifications [34]. Quality is the key to competitiveness, survival and business success [22]. However, what should be accepted as a fact is that the quality of the tourist offer cannot exist only in tourist intervals/seasons. Quality in tourism must be appropriate and consistent.

The goal of maintaining quality in tourism, hospitality, and cuisine includes fulfilling the needs of the end user, or guest, as well as the experience, guest satisfaction, and the value of the stipulated price of services and products. Furthermore, the cornerstone of tourist services in attaining guest pleasure is quality.

Based on previous statements, the following hypotheses were put forward:

- H1:* The quality of the hotel's hospitality facilities (restaurant, cafe bar, lounge bar, etc.) depends on the level of knowledge, training, and specialization of the hotel's service staff and affects guest satisfaction.
- H2:* The gastronomic experience of the prepared meals and drinks depends on the expertise of the service staff (cooks, waiters, management) and affects the overall satisfaction of the guests.

## Literature review

Hotel management, as a part of the hospitality industry, represents a hospitality base that includes food, beverage, wellness, and accommodation services (hotels, hostels, resorts, camps, apartments, villas, cottages). As a service activity and an integral part of tourism, the hotel industry represents a significant element of the rapid socio-economic progress of many countries [10], [11].

Hotel management along with other service activities (food, drinks, events, sports, etc.) represents the financial strength of a tourist destination [25], [42]. Quality is often mentioned in the hotel industry, which is an indispensable, integral part of the services and products provided by hotel companies [53]. Quality management in hotel companies is always a big challenge [46] and its improvement is one of the main goals of hotel business [33]. The concept of quality is widely present in hotel business because the word quality is used as a marketing tool aimed at guests and in standard manuals intended for staff [56].

Hotels that adopt consistently effective quality systems achieve potential benefits, such as: maximizing guest satisfaction, employee satisfaction and margins; reduction of costs; better utilization of resources compared to competitors who do not pay attention to quality [44]. Hotels and their food and beverage sectors are key components of the hospitality industry, so ensuring the quality of their tangible and intangible aspects is a key issue for maximizing guest satisfaction and increasing hotel revenue. Thus, quality affects the economic performance of hotels [14]. Hotel establishments are witnessing increasing competition in the context of high-quality service and guest satisfaction [26]. Moreover, the authors [45] state that hotel organizations must better and more precisely understand what guests want from the service experience because this knowledge allows them to minimize the waste of resources.

High-quality goods and services can give a hotel a competitive advantage. The reputation of a high-quality facility generates a satisfied and loyal guest, who rewards the hotel with repeat visits and promotion, which additionally results in the arrival of new guests. On the contrary [31], inadequate establishment and maintenance of quality can be harmful, and for this very reason, hotel companies must pay special attention to the definition and implementation of product/service quality. [18] proposed six steps for a successful quality system in the hospitality industry: 1. Taking into account the type of guests being served; 2. Determining what guests want; 3. Developing a procedure for providing what guests want; 4. Staff training and motivation; 5. Implementation of the revised system; 6. Evaluation and corrections of the service delivery system.

For example, the globally distributed hotel group Hilton has implemented a superior service program, which trains employees to anticipate guest needs, personalize service, and if necessary, resolve complaints quickly and seamlessly, in an effort to ensure a high level of guest satisfaction [16]. This is supported by [47] who also emphasizes that service providers in the first lines of service play a significant role in creating guest satisfaction, harmonizing hotel service and the service process with the needs of today's guests, while building strong personalized relationships and long-term relationships. The same author emphasizes the importance of tourist staff as "carriers of quality" of products/services, differentiating themselves in the modern tourist market, delivering quality service while creating guest loyalty and satisfaction. Additionally, the Hilton Group uses rigorous inspections and surveys to monitor guest loyalty [4].

In addition to Hilton, the world-famous Ritz Carlton hotel group is an example of a company that is extremely focused on human resources (staff) [54]. Quality lies in satisfied staff. In accordance with what previous studies have already shown, satisfied hotel employees feel enthusiastic and inspired by their work and tend to provide guests with a better quality of service [47]. There are various forms of hotel product/service quality, and among the most important are issued [14]:

- Mandatory quality – is based on compliance with certificates, standards and licenses prescribed by the state or other relevant institutions, so that hotel products-services are harmonized and respected by the hotel;
- Objective quality – refers to quality supervision according to established standards;
- Required quality – refers to the conformity of the awareness of the required and expected quality of the guests;
- Expected quality – is based on the perception of guests before visiting the hospitality facility;
- Relative quality – focuses on the satisfaction of service users;
- Integrated quality – represents the level of products and services, which are in accordance with modern market requirements;
- Experienced quality – is reflected in the end result of the guests' experience of hotel products/services, which are realized during the service/production process of the hotel facility;
- Global quality – refers to the harmonization of hotel products and services with global market requirements.
 

In their research, [48] emphasize that quality, as an indispensable part of hotel services, is the key to success, first of all, in retaining regular and attracting new guests. [41] claim that in their operations, hotel facilities should also take into account various aspects of quality that contribute to the creation of the image of the hotel facility:

  - *Technical aspect of quality* – refers to the originality of the appearance of the hotel, starting with the lobby itself, reception, service rooms, rooms (comfort, comfort, lighting), technical devices (internet speed, mini-bar equipment, etc.), conference rooms, accompanying tourist facilities (sports hall, gym, swimming pool, etc.) [19].
  - *The functional aspect of quality* – represents the hotel product/service and their ability to satisfy guests' needs [2].
  - *Spatial aspect of quality* – talks about the connection and functionality of the space inside the hotel with external contents and their connection with the local infrastructure [24].
  - *The ecological aspect of quality* – is reflected in the preservation of the environment, which means operating in accordance with ecological standards, which include proper waste storage, recycling of waste material, control of water consumption, etc. [32].
  - *The social aspect of quality* – implies the ethical responsibility of the hotel towards guests due to unforeseen disasters (political troubles, etc.) [35].
  - *The aesthetic aspect of quality* – concerns the evaluation of the quality of service in hotels and in relation to the hotel exterior and interior, the exterior of the hotel, which significantly contribute to the perception of quality [57].
  - *The economic dimension of quality* – it is expressed by reducing costs, profits of the hotel, while not impairing the established quality of hotel products [27].

Based on the previously mentioned aspects of quality, Figure 1 shows a pictorial representation of quality aspects.

**Figure 1: Aspects of quality in the hotel industry**



Source: Adapted from [41]

On the other side, in order to ensure a consistent level of food quality, then maintain guest satisfaction and control food costs, it is important to use portion size standards, i.e. the amount of each menu item served for a given price that can be described by number/weight while using standard recipes [20]. In other words, management should clearly define quality standards [1]. Guests enjoy visiting establishments where the food quality is good, as this supports the notion of “value for money”.

However, no matter how fast the food is delivered, if the quality of the food is not good enough, it will not attract guests. Food and beverage quality is one of the most important determinants of guest satisfaction in the hotel industry. [30] point out that the relative factors that make up food quality are: presentation, health options, taste, freshness, variety and temperature, and that food presentation affects guests’ appetite and their perception of food and beverage quality.

Similarly, [17] highlighted the importance of food and beverage quality as a measure of guest satisfaction in the restaurant industry, adopting five dimensions or attributes of food quality that include: food freshness, food taste, food nutritional value, menu variety, and food aroma. Providing quality food is an important way to increase guest loyalty and retention and maximize restaurant revenue [30] since repeat guests spend more on

food than new guests on hotel services, hotel products, food and beverages. According to [37], the main contribution of a good quality management system is the provision of consistent quality products, as well as high demand for guest expectations.

Generally, food quality can be described through six components: (1) presentation, (2) variety, (3) healthy options, (4) taste, (5) freshness, and (6) temperature [30]. Control and access to food quality contribute to the same goal, which is guest satisfaction. In order to create a high-quality gastronomic product, it is important to buy good ingredients, store them properly, prepare food according to appropriate standard recipes and control costs.

[43] explained that to achieve a consistent level of food quality, clear standards for the implementation of all activities and processes in food production are necessary, which should be established and easily accessible to all staff. According to [12] well-prepared quality food in a hotel and restaurant, regardless of size, brings profit and increases the total income of the hospitality facility. The same author claims that one of the misconceptions about serving quality food in hotels is hiring a good chef and leaving all operations to him, and he emphasizes the importance of a team approach in hotel service operations, in order to ensure consistent food quality. [13] consider that food preparation has a very short operating cycle that provides little time for error correction – therefore it is crucial to achieve quality food on the first try.

[29] are of a similar opinion, who point out that in order to save time and costs, it is important to produce a quality product the first time, without going back for correction and repair. It has been estimated that the costs of poor quality amount to about 20% of gross profit in the manufacturing industry, while in the service industry they are on average about 30%. The cost of attracting new guests is three to five times higher than the cost of retaining an existing guest, and the gastronomic quality must be impeccable. [36] investigated the reasons for hotel/restaurant failure and identified the following items: lack of a documented strategy; lack of a written mission and vision; inability or unwillingness to create written, documented and maintained operating standards; frequent changes in management and staff; lack of integration of mission

and vision in work; lack of management commitment and employee involvement; and poor quality products.

On the example of luxury hotels in New York and California, it was found that food quality and service quality have a significant impact on the effect of guest loyalty. In a recent study in the Republic of Serbia by [8], the authors point out that the quality of the food and beverage offering depends largely on employee satisfaction.

Another study with empirical research indicates that the quality and safety of food in the hospitality sector depends primarily on the will of management [50]. Duty of food producers (hotels, motels, restaurants, etc.) is to provide high-quality, safe, hygienically prepared meals and drinks, with all the nutritional-sensory properties of food, meeting guests' expectations and thus ensuring the health of guests who consume the prepared food.

Previous studies [15] have identified food quality, service quality and ambience as the main factors that determine restaurant service quality. [23] pointed out the importance of consistent product quality, by documenting work flow and issuing certificates as evidence of compliance with standards. A gastronomic product must be delivered with consistent quality and at an appropriate price in order to meet guests' expectations.

A study with empirical findings shows that by carefully evaluating, preventing and reducing errors in the food and beverage sector, a hotel can significantly improve its financial performance [40]. All entities involved in food production are obliged to establish a food safety system in accordance with the principles of good hygiene practice, good production practice, and HACCP, and thus ensure food safety, i.e. enjoying quality food and drinks [5].

## Methods and research results

Due to the epidemiological situation caused by the Covid-19 virus, data in hotels in Serbia was collected with the help of an online questionnaire with open and closed questions, semi-structured and Likert scale questions, with a focus on the food and beverage sector during a stay in 4\* and 5\* hotels (restaurant, room service, lounge bar). The research was conducted in the period from March 2021 to April 2022.

The survey questionnaire was sent to the hotels by the HORES association of hoteliers and restaurateurs. Out of 546 filled forms, the questionnaire was correctly filled out by 440 respondents who were informed that the survey was completely anonymous and that the collected information would be used exclusively for research purposes (see Table 1). Coupled with meticulous analysis, this study employed the statistical software SPSS 22 to provide robust empirical insights.

Quantitative and qualitative methods were used in the doctoral dissertation to obtain answers to research questions and achieve goals and objectives. In addition, SPSS 22 software was used, with the help of which the author obtained the data presented in the rest of the paper.

The historical-logical method was used for the collection and study of existing literature and overall material related to the issues of research in the dissertation, with a special focus on the quality of the gastronomic offer and its impact on achieving overall consumer satisfaction.

Descriptive analysis presents the conclusions reached on the basis of the collected theoretical-empirical material (see Table 2).

Descriptive statistics were used to analyze and describe food and beverage quality parameters: ambience, innovation, guest satisfaction, services, food and beverage satisfaction, service quality, staff standards, and expertise (analysis and description of quality parameters).

Analytical observation and study of factors that have a special importance for determining the quality of the gastronomic offer, as well as an overview of their possible influence and implications for achieving the highest quality gastronomic service and consumer satisfaction.

Surveying and observation methods, as part of online research, were used to obtain guests' opinions and attitudes about the quality of gastronomy in 4\* and 5\* hotels in Serbia.

Correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between: ambience, innovation, guest satisfaction, prior experience, guest satisfaction with food and beverage, service quality, standards, staff knowledge and expertise, meal arrangement, food and beverage price, meal portion size, and gastronomic experience.

Linear regression was conducted to examine the influence of food and beverages on the overall gastronomic experience, the influence of previous experience on satisfaction with food and beverages, and to investigate the importance of the level of knowledge, training and specialization of hotel service personnel on the quality of service. Also, multiple regression was used to examine the impact of service quality on guest satisfaction. Linear regression was used to measure the influence of the expertise of the service staff on the gastronomic experience, the effect of the gastronomic experience on the satisfaction of guests, as well as the influence of the price on the perception of the quality of food and drinks.

Multiple regression was conducted to check the influence of portion size and food presentation on guest satisfaction, and to examine the importance of ambience,

**Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents**

V1	V2	N	%
Gender	Male	268	60.73
	Female	172	39.27
Years of age	Between 18-26	34	7.74
	Between 27-41	188	42.82
	Between 42-55	141	32.12
	Between 56-64	58	13.21
	65+	18	4.10
Education level	High school degree	63	14.32
	College degree	149	33.86
	Bachelor's degree	129	29.32
	Master's degree	85	19.32
Status of employment	PhD	14	3.18
	Unemployed	28	6.36
	Student	2	0.45
	Retired	20	4.55
	Entrepreneur	76	17.27
Earnings (in RSD)	Employed	314	71.36
	50,000	51	11.59
	50,000-100,000	152	34.55
	100,000-200,000	166	37.73
	200,000+	71	16.14

\*V-Variable; N-number; % - percentage  
Source: [58], Authors' research

taste, food and beverage presentation, service provided, prices of gastronomic products, and innovation on the quality of food and beverages.

H1: The quality of the hotel's hospitality facilities (restaurant, cafe bar, lounge bar, etc.) depends on the level of knowledge, training, and specialization of the hotel's service staff and affects guest satisfaction is confirmed. The knowledge, training and specialization of the service staff have a statistically significant effect on the quality of the service. The quality of service has a statistically significant effect on guest satisfaction.

The results in Table 3 indicate that the model is significant ( $F(1, 438) = 101.42; p = 0.00$ ). One predictor variable explains 18.8% ( $R^2 = 0.188$ ) of the variation of the dependent variable – service quality. Knowledge and training, specialization of service staff contribute significantly to the explanation of service quality ( $\beta = 0.43, p = 0.00$ ). The increase in knowledge and training, specialization of service staff by 1 standard deviation (sd = 0.88) is accompanied by an increase in service quality by 0.43 sd.

H2: The gastronomic experience of the prepared meals and drinks depends on the expertise of the service staff (cooks, waiters, management) and affects the overall satisfaction of the guests is confirmed. The expertise of the staff has a statistically significant effect on the gastronomic experience of the guests. Also, the gastronomic experience has a statistically significant effect on the satisfaction of the guests. In order to check the influence of the gastronomic experience on the overall satisfaction of the guests, linear regression was used. The

**Table 2: Results of descriptive statistical analysis**

		N	%
Previous stay in a 4* or 5* hotel	No	25	5.68
	Yes	415	94.32

\*N=number of respondents %=expression of respondents in percentage  
Source: [58], Authors' research

**Table 3: Contribution of the level of knowledge, training, and specialization of the hotel's service staff to the explanation of service quality**

	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	p	95% confidence interval for B		Correlation	
	B	S.E	Beta			Lower limit	Upper limit	Partial	Semipartial
A constant	1.677	.119		14.117	.000	1.444	1.911		
Knowledge Training Service Staff	.284	.028	.434	10.070	.000	.229	.339	.434	.434

Source: [58], Authors' research

predictor variable is the gastronomic experience, and the criterion variable is the satisfaction of the guests. A preliminary analysis was conducted to check whether the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity were violated. There are no extreme values in the data because Mahalanobis distances are below the critical value for one independent variable of 10.83. The assumption of normality of the residuals was violated ( $W(440) = 0.96, p = 0.00$ ). The results in Table 4 indicate that the model is significant ( $F(1, 438) = 69.09; p = 0.00$ ). One predictor variable explains 13.6% ( $R^2 = 0.010$ ) of the variation of the dependent variable – guest satisfaction.

Gastronomic experience contributes statistically significantly to the model ( $\beta = 0.37, p = 0.00$ ). An increase in gastronomic experience by 1 standard deviation ( $sd=1.00$ ) is accompanied by an increase in guest satisfaction by 0.37 sd.

### Conclusion

Quality is becoming increasingly important for hotel businesses in an increasingly competitive industry. Various reasons have contributed to this, including the increase in the rights of consumers who are aware of the quality of products and services. In accordance with the aforementioned, competition in modern tourist markets makes hotel companies more aware of the need for quality of products and services.

Quality in tourism and hospitality industry is a popular topic in a large number of research papers. There is widespread agreement that quality consists of physical and intangible factors, and that its intangibility often leads to uneven service delivery. Moreover, opinions about quality are developed during the production, distribution and consumption processes. Good and negative guest experiences, as well as their positive and negative emotions, can have a significant impact on the perceived quality of services and products. Moreover, quality comes from the field of

marketing, which emphasizes the human relationship between companies and their clients.

Also, quality includes the idea of meeting and exceeding guests' expectations, and improved service/product quality is considered to have a beneficial effect on hotel business performance. On the other hand, tourism is becoming an increasingly globalized industry, with increased rivalry between destinations. This issue is driven, among other things, by the fact that tourism businesses, including hotels, are now in a stronger position to compete in international locations, resulting in increased international rivalry, not only between destinations but also between hotel facilities. Tourists, on the other hand, are becoming increasingly demanding and are not only interested in prices. In this context, the competitiveness of the hotel business must be focused on improving performance through improved product/service quality and striving for differentiation. This new reality has encouraged many hotel companies to create quality management systems. On the one hand, there is a desire to establish a quality culture, focused on reducing costs and defects, as well as improving products and efficiency. Also, there is a desire to improve the business image, gain a competitive advantage, adapt to the needs of guests and, finally, explore the possibility of entering new markets. For these reasons, hotel companies began to worry about the quality of products and services, fearing that it could affect business performance.

The strategic idea of hotel management about the quality of physical and intangible parts of hotel goods is a means of gaining a competitive advantage in the tourism industry. Hospitality is a multi-billion dollar sector that includes several activities, of which the accommodation sector, the food and beverage sector, and the organization of events stand out in the hotel business. No hospitality company will do well if it is not directed towards its guests, especially if it is not acted in accordance with their wishes, demands, and expectations.

**Table 4: Contribution of the gastronomic experience to the explanation of guest satisfaction**

	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	p	95% confidence interval for B		Correlation	
	B	S.E				Lower limit	Upper limit	Partial	Semipartial
A constant	2.970	.137		21.646	.000	2.700	3.240		
Gastronomic experience	.284	.034	.369	8.312	.000	.217	.351	.369	.369

Source: [58], Authors' research

Service quality in the hotel industry has been identified as a critical aspect in the search for long-term competitive advantage. For this reason, quality can affect performance in two complementary ways. It can have internal consequences through procedures and external consequences through the market. The implications of internal performance are related to the internal functioning of hotel organizations (e.g. increased productivity, improved efficiency, reduction of costs and waste). Therefore, quality can increase the competitiveness and profitability of hotel facilities by standardizing processes, reducing waste, providing more efficient service, and reducing errors. However, the external performance implications are related to the effects of quality on guest satisfaction and demand (e.g. increasing sales and market share, maintaining tourism links, attracting new visitors, and achieving higher levels of tourist satisfaction while improving image).

Quality service starts with the hospitality company and its quality strategy. A well-developed and implemented quality strategy, together with standards, rules and dedicated staff, will help a hotel business to operate successfully. Managing guest expectations will be easier if the organization has defined and reviewed the main components of quality. To achieve outstanding service quality, it should be ingrained in the company's culture. Hotel goods can be considered as diverse, connected and related services and as such represent an excellent area for the introduction of technology and social innovation, which implies the improvement in the quality of hotel services and products.

An important element in this process is the selection of innovations by hotel management that will most effectively contribute to the improvement of the quality of hotel products/services. Interaction in the design and delivery of hotel products and services is a dominant component of service quality, including courtesy, civility, flexibility and a willingness to engage with guests. In accordance with the aforementioned, the quality of hotel products and services has a significant impact on the market position and market share of the hotel company, which significantly contributes to increasing profitability in long-term financial performance and profitability. Of course, it is necessary to pay attention to the gastronomic quality, which represents an important segment of the business

of hotel companies. The reason for visiting or staying in a hotel restaurant is often the meals that can be consumed.

Hotel restaurants must design their gastronomic offer as well as focus on their target group of guests. The development and improvement of quality in the gastronomic sector leads to the development and improvement of other hotel activities that are directly or indirectly interconnected. Today, many famous hotels around the world build their image through a history of exceptional food, i.e. in order to improve the overall quality of service, be it national cuisine or international specialties. Certainly, agricultural goods, vegetables, fruits and beverages (e.g. wine, spirits, etc.) must meet certain quality criteria, as well as the modern tourist's demand for nutritious cuisine. It should be kept in mind that the continuous improvement of gastronomic quality is a preventive and not a corrective approach to its improvement. On the other hand, it is necessary to mention the standards which help hotel companies to successfully maintain and establish business in all aspects of hotel business.

A hotel restaurant's management needs to pay closer attention to its patrons and learn about their wants and expectations regarding the quality of the cuisine in order to make the business lucrative and successful. The existence of hotel restaurants depends heavily on the happiness of their patrons. In hotel facilities, maintaining a high standard of culinary offerings has a big influence on guest retention. In gastronomy, it is essential to perform routine internal and external quality audits in order to attain food quality.

Based on the research, we can conclude that dedication, concentration, ongoing improvement, and quality maintenance in the gastronomic offer of goods and services, as well as personnel in the hotel's hospitality facility, can positively impact the hospitality facilities' successful operation and, ultimately, the satisfaction of the visitors.

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