

# HOTELS OF UZBEKISTAN – OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADOPTING SERVICE QUALITY TO INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS

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## KEYWORDS

hotel, service, quality, standardization, tourism, customer, technology, improvement, accommodation services

## ABSTRACT

Service quality in the hospitality industry becomes one of the most vital factors for gaining a sustainable competitive advantage and customers' loyalty in the highly competitive marketplace. It is thus considered as a significant core concept and a critical success factor in the hospitality industry. At the hospitality industry service quality is life of hotel. A successful hotel performs excellent quality service to customers. Many customers choose the hotel according to service quality. That's way hotel owners should try to deliver guests quality service. This article is dedicated to ways to improve the quality of service in hotels located in Uzbekistan, it fully describes the results of research conducted on this issue and measures to adapt the quality of service in hotels to international standards. The object of article is the process of implementing international standards for improving the quality of accommodation services in Uzbekistan. The subject of the research is the system of socio-economic relations depending on usage of international standards in improving the quality of hotel services. The purpose of the research is to elaborate scientific proposals and recommendations for the implementation international standardization system of hotel service quality in Uzbekistan. Comparative analysis, systematic approach, assessment methods were used in the research. The results of the study were theoretically useful in improving the quality of hotel services in the country and have practical significance in monitoring compliance with quality standards in our hotels.

## Introduction.

Service businesses have been growing rapidly in recent decades, while customer demand for high quality service is increasing. To remain competitive, the hotel needs to analyze customers' expectation and perception towards the service quality of its front office staff.

Quality of services is the key to the creation, value and satisfaction of the customer. However, the concept of service quality is very subjective and depends on the perception of the consumer. Hence, on the one hand it should be emphasized that among the factors influencing the choice of a hotels facilities most often respondents pointed out to the price and quality of service. On the other hand, the high rank quality of service is confirmed by the perception of the quality of hotel service, most of customers on the quality of hotel services consist primarily in confidence and the professionalism of hotel staff and the desire and readiness to help guests.

In order to perpetuate Scotland's international reputation for providing a friendly and warm welcome to visitors, it's crucial that we continue to support tourism businesses to remain competitive and improve their product offering. Quality never goes out of style - your stars of excellence help visitors make informed decisions, give confidence in the level of service and quality you deliver and enable your business to truly shine with distinction. Historically, scholars have treated service quality as very difficult to define and measure, due to the inherent intangible nature of services, which are often experienced subjectively. Service quality is a way to manage business processes in order to ensure total satisfaction to the customer on all levels (internal and external). It is an approach that leads to an increase of competitiveness, effectiveness and flexibility of the entire company.( J.S. Oakland 2018). Service quality: "is an evaluation with a predominant cognitive aspect that emerges as a result of the comparison of the service (perceived service) quality that a consumer receives with the service

quality shaped according to the expectations of consumer before the purchase” (Mukhles M Al-Ababneh 2017).

Researchers have innovated various models and mechanisms to define the fundamental interconnection between service quality and customer contentment. Earlier research by Al-Karim & Chowdhury (2014) specified the five attributes for service quality as empathy, tangibles, responsiveness, assurance, and reliability. With the help of the SERVQUAL questionnaire, a couple of studies show that reliability is the most important dimensional aspect. Al-Tit (2015) made critical research on the factors affecting service quality within Brazil's hotel industry. This study established that customers were more concerned with the dimensional aspects of reliability, assurance, and service tangibility. This author also made a significant emphasis on reliability as the most crucial aspect of service quality. Despite that, the author notes that different research 15 scenarios would give varying results. This factor can be attributed to different social factors like religion and the culture of the customer.

Quality in a service or product is not what you put into it. It's what the customer gets out of it. The very reason your business exists is because of your guests. Treating your guests as if they were your boss would definitely steer your business towards success. Service quality in the hospitality industry becomes one of the most important factors for gaining a sustainable competitive advantage and customers' confidence in the highly competitive marketplace, and therefore service quality can give the hospitality industry a great chance to create competitive differentiation for organizations. It is thus considered as a significant core concept and a critical success factor in the hospitality industry. A successful hotel delivers excellent quality service to customers, and service quality is considered the life of the hotel.

Measuring customer satisfaction in the hotel industry is important in order to know guests' opinions. Each guest has different expectations about hospitality services, thus it is important to know their impressions not only by aggregated statistics but also singularly, determine the expectations, the needs and the requests of customers, overcome the gaps between customers' expectation and services offered, supervise the

operations of the enterprise as a system. Guests' loyalty represents a homogeneous cluster which can be measured using behavioral and attitudinal variables.

In order to achieve customer satisfaction, it is important to recognize and to anticipate customers' needs and to be able to satisfy them. Enterprises which are able to rapidly understand and satisfy customers' needs, make greater profits than those which fail to understand and satisfy them. Since the cost of attracting new customers is higher than the cost of retaining the existing ones, in order to be successful managers must concentrate on retaining existing customers implementing effective policies of customer satisfaction and loyalty. This is especially true in the hotel industry.

In Europe, hotels are rated according to their standard and quality. Star rating systems act like an easy guide through which guests can book reservations in hotels as per their budget, needs, and taste.

While this system in Europe provides great assistance, there is no standardized system for hotel ratings. Hotels in Europe are generally graded on a level from one to five stars, at times using half star increments. The hotel rating system in Europe is determined by independent organizations, local and government agencies and the system varies from nation to nation and city to city, and even hotels situated in the same city. In plain language, there is no standardized method that decides the star rating of a hotel.

The rating of each hotel is based on the details that barely matter to clients like annual tax paid by a hotel. Even though rating systems seem confusing, still this is advantageous as it provides a lot of information about a hotel.

For example, a five or four star hotel in Europe offers all sorts of modern amenities and luxury at its best.

In order to identify of service quality of hotels of Bukhara I conduct a survey. The poll total was replenished with 30 guests and was made of 12 questions. Overall 10 hotels were evaluated by tourists. They are: Mekhtar Anbar, Asia Bukhara, Rangrez , Sasha&Son, Khurjin, Sultan, Grand

Emir Residence, Grand Bukhara, Old City hotels. According to results of questionnaire price-quality relationship in these hotels is as following:

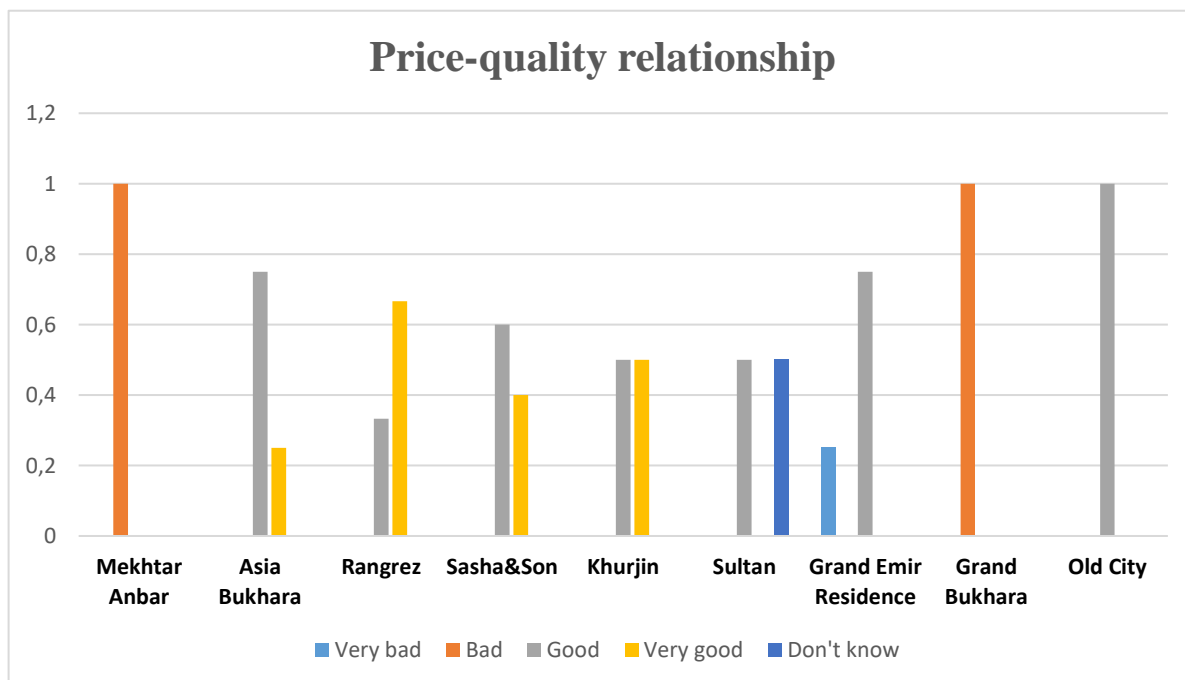


Figure 1. Price-quality relationship

Source: Formed by author

Table 1. Price-quality relationship

Hotels	Very bad	Bad	Good	Very good	Don't know
Mekhtar Anbar		100%			
Asia Bukhara			75%	25%	
Rangrez			33,3%	66,6%	
Sasha&Son			60%	40%	
Khurjin		50%	50%		
Sultan			50%		50%
Grand Emir Residence	25%		75%		
Grand Bukhara		100%			
Old City			100%		

Source: Extracted from survey by author

All of respondents who is staying at hotel Mekhtar Anbar answered that price-quality is bad

in hotel; 3 guests of Asia Bukhara hotel answered that price-quality is good, 1 guest answered that price-quality relationship very good; 1 of guests of hotel Rangrez answered that price-quality

relationship is good, 2 guests answered that it is very good; 3 guests of hotel Sasha&Son answered that price-quality relationship is good, another 2 guest answered that it is very good; 1 guest of hotel Khurjin answered tht price-quality relationship is bad, another 1 good; 1 guest answered that at hotel Sultan price-quality relationship is good, and another one answered that he does not know; according to 3 guest at hotel Grand Emir Residence this indicator is good, according to another one very bad; at hotel Grand Bukhara

price-quality relationship is bad according to 2 guests; at Old City price-quality relationship is good according to 5 guests. Results indicate that at hotels Mekhtar Anbar, Grand Bukhara, and Khurjin Price-quality relationship is bad, at is most of hotels it good, at hotel Asia Bukhara it is very good.

Next question is assessment of the quality of the hotels services. The result was as following:

**Table 2. Assessment of service quality**

Services	Mekhtar Anbar	Asia Bukhara	Rangrez	Sasha&Son	Khurjin	Sultan	Grand Emir Residence	Grand Bukhara	Old City	Overall
Personnel	4,3	4,25	4,6	4,2	4	4,5	4,5	4	4,4	<b>38,75</b>
Location	5	4,75	5	5	5	5	4,25	4	3,2	<b>41,2</b>
Comfort	3,6	4,75	4,3	4,6	4	4	5	3,5	3,6	<b>37,35</b>
Cleanliness	4	4	4	3,4	3,5	3,5	4	4	4	<b>34,4</b>
Amenities	3,3	4,25	4,3	4	4	4	5	3,5	3,8	<b>36,15</b>
Laundry	4	4,25	4,6	4,4	4	4	4,75	4,5	4,2	<b>38,7</b>
Food&Beverage services	4	4,75	5	4,6	5	5	4,75	5	4	<b>42,1</b>
Internet	3	3,5	3,3	3	2,5	3	3,75	3,5	3,4	<b>28,95</b>
Security	4,3	4,75	4	4,4	4,5	4,5	5	4,5	4,4	<b>40,35</b>
Overall	<b>35,5</b>	<b>39,25</b>	<b>39,1</b>	<b>37,6</b>	<b>36,5</b>	<b>37,5</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>36,5</b>	<b>35,4</b>	

**Source:** Accomplished by the author

It can be seen from table service quality of hotel Grand Emir Residence is higher than others, in hotel Sultan service quality is good, in Old City service quality is bad. Quality of personnel marked with 38,75 point; Location 41,2 point; Comfort 37,35 point; cleanliness 34,4 point; amenities 36,15 point; laundry services 38,7 point; food&beverage services 42,1 point; internet 28,95

point; security 40,35 point around the Bukhara. From this I came to conclusion that internet services of Bukhara are poor. But the reason of this is most of hotels in Bukhara situated in overcrowded part of the city, therefore most people use internet in this areas.

In the one of the question was asked what aspects of the hotel should be improved. The following results were achieved:

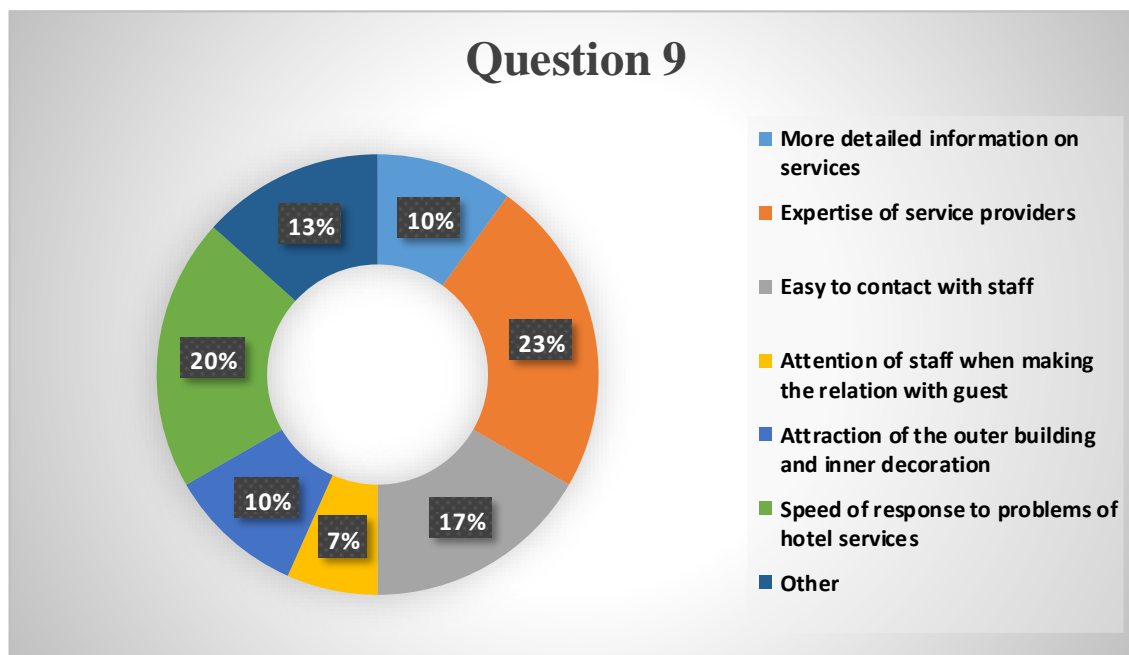


Figure 22. Aspects for improvement

Source: Accomplished by author

3 of all respondents answered that more detailed information on services should be improved, 7 respondents said that expertise of service providers should be improved, 5 respondents answered that they want easy contact with staff, 2 respondents want attention of the staff

when making the relationship with guest should be improved, 3 of guests wants improvement of attraction of the outer building and inner decoration, 6 of respondents want improvement of speed of response to problems of hotel services, another 4 guest recommended other improvements.

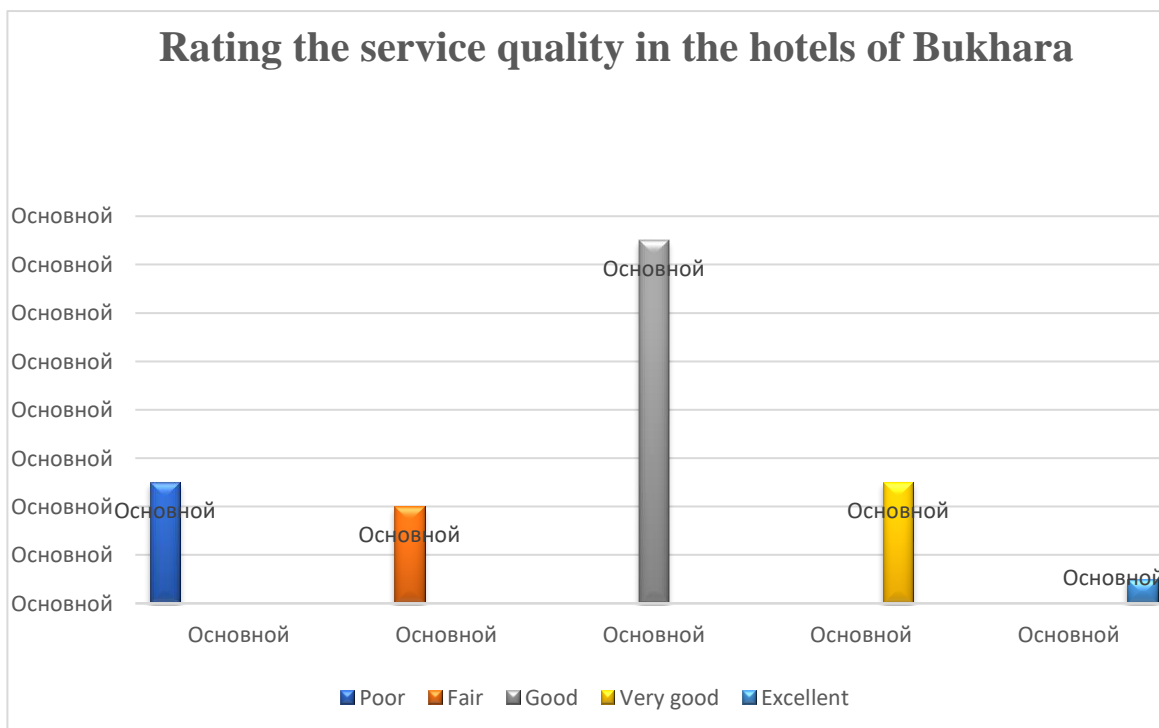


Figure 2. Rating the service quality in the hotels of Bukhara

**Source:** Made by author

16,6 percent of respondents think that service quality in hotels of Bukhara is poor, 13,3 percent of them consider that our service quality fair, 50 percent respondents answered that it is good, 16,6 percent tourists answered that service quality very good, and 3,3 percent of them think that service quality is excellent.

There are many shortcomings in hotel services of Uzbekistan. In particular, the quality of service and its control are far behind. As tourism is improving in our country more and more visitors are coming to our country. That is why, today we are trying to build as many hotels as we can. But, it does not mean we have to facilitate only a place to stay. We should consider all the standards, requirements of competitive tourism industry and also needs and wants of guests allowing them comfort. Nowadays, technological development changed the service quality standards, way of managing and equipping hotels. Like other developed countries, Uzbekistan also capable to take responsibility of utilizing international service quality standards. Even though, in recent years there have been constructed many new modern hotels, the hotels that had already built redesigned and renewed the hotels system and equipment. Today almost in every famous and modern hotels of Uzbekistan offered new services and opportunities.

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