



IMPORTANCE OF VARIOUS SERVICE TYPES IN HOTELS - EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

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UDC
338.488.64
0.418
Original
scientific
paper

Abstract: Hotels offer different types of services which have different impacts on the users' satisfaction and have an influence in various extents on decision making, when it comes to the selection of hotels. As a part of research, empirical analysis based on the importance of different services which hotels provide, was conducted. The idea of research is to determine the importance of different types of services for users. The survey was conducted on a sample of 850 respondents in Serbia. The study used AHP methodology which is used in the decision-making process analysis and is suitable for studies defining the rank of relevance of individual elements. The obtained results presented in the study provide information such as, what services offered by hotels have the greatest importance for users. Based on the obtained results in empirical research, and by applying cluster analysis, two different segments of hotel guests are identified based on the preferred services. Segments are statistically different and can represent various targets in the hotel business policy.

Received:
21.01.2016.
Accepted:
03.10.2016.

Keywords: users, services, preferences, hotel, decision making, satisfaction

JEL classification: M30

1. Introduction

The hotel sector has undergone significant changes in recent decades. Under the influence of strong competition, hotel services, which were homogeneous and

designed for mass market, have become personalised. The modern literature in the field of tourism emphasises that the adjustment of hotel services to narrower market segments of consumers is extremely important in order to have competitive offer. Under the changed market conditions, hotel companies focus an increasingly significant part of business efforts on understanding the needs and expectations of their service users to create the adequate offer.

Satisfaction of customers (service users) presents a critical factor in business success of the hotel industry in the modern tourist market. (Sohrabi et al., 2012, p. 96). Managing customer satisfaction is one of the main ways to improve market share and profitability of the hotel (Oh & Parks, 1997). Watson et al. (1992, p. 17) state that hotels can achieve competitive differentiation, improve business efficiency, increase customer loyalty, stimulate positive referrals and attract new clients only by offering high quality services which are in accordance with preferences of service users, and which will enable positive satisfaction.

One of the main challenges in hotel management is to provide quality services to guests and improve their satisfaction. (Sohrabi et al., 2012, p. 96) Verma et al. (2003, p. 15) point out that the basic prerequisites to create high-quality services are successful management of service users' satisfaction and analysis of consumer (user) preferences. Therefore, understanding customer preferences of hotel service attributes and incorporating conclusions in the design and strategy of providing services, is the basis for a hotel's successful operation.

Preferences of hotel service users are especially important to understand the decision-making process on the selection of a particular hotel. The modern literature in this area emphasises that the inadequate knowledge of service user preferences influencing decision-making is the basic problem of an effective strategic planning of marketing activities in hotel business (Li et al., 2013, p. 322). The business practice highlights the problem of existence of multiple criteria in the decision-making process. As preferences differ, guests will differently evaluate the same hotel service in the decision-making process. Understanding how different attributes of hotel offer impact the decision-making process is important in the designing of offer and defining marketing activities of the hotel. The problem managers are also facing is the lack of knowledge on the profile of tourists they want to target.

2. Satisfaction of Hotel Service Users and the Need for Analysis of Preferences

The literature in marketing contains numerous definitions of customer satisfaction. One of the most commonly cited definitions defines customer

satisfaction as an assessment of the degree of fulfillment of expectations (Oliver, 1981, p. 28). Expectations are defined as an ideal or desired state by the consumer before consumption and procurement of products (Teas, 1994, p. 134). Therefore, customer satisfaction is related to the degree of satisfaction after the purchase and use of products and services, which is directly affected by the formed expectations before purchase and use of products or services.

According to the definition, which is also often quoted in contemporary literature, customer satisfaction is the result of the customer's perception of value received in the respective transaction and the expected value (Blanchard & Galloway, 1994, p. 21). Blanchard and Galloway point out that expectation of value is formed on the basis of quality of previously consumed products or services compared to the perceived quality of the same products offered by competitors.

Practice has shown that there is a positive correlation between business performances of companies and customer satisfaction (Watson et al., 1992; Oh & Parks, 1997; Chi & Gursoy, 2009) and, therefore, managing satisfaction bears great importance in today's business environment. In modern organisations customer satisfaction has even replaced market share as a long-term measure of the market and business success (Matanda et al., 2009). As consumers become more discerning, informed, educated and demanding over time with respect to product attributes, the requirement for companies to incorporate satisfaction management into all business processes arises as a necessity.

Managing satisfaction is extremely important in the management of hotels. Research conducted by Oh (1999, p. 78) showed that those hotel facilities that operate successfully pay a significant attention to the quality of services in order to reach positive customer satisfaction. Oh, also, argues that it is necessary to design the product in accordance with the perceived (expected) value that the user expects to receive by consuming the product in order to ensure his/her satisfaction. Hotel facilities that ignore the category of the expected value can provide services that will result in lower levels of guest satisfaction and on these grounds generate negative satisfaction. By contrast, successful management of satisfaction of services users implies understanding users' expectations and preferences and creating offer accordingly. Hotel facilities that have the ability to quickly understand and meet expectations and preferences of customers can successfully manage satisfaction and thus provide good operating result (Dominici & Guzzo, 2010, p. 3). At the same time, numerous studies have shown that the costs of attracting new customers are greater than the costs of retaining the existing ones and that the imperative to successful operation implies increasing the level of customer satisfaction and customer loyalty through effective strategies and policies. Reichheld and Sasser (1990, p. 105) conducted a study based on which they concluded that if the companies

manage to retain only 5% of their existing customers, profitability would be increased in the range of 25-125%. This approach to business in particular may have significant positive effects on the hotel industry. In this sense, good relations with users of hotel services may lead to a multiple of positive effects in hotel operation, primarily in terms of greater commitment and attachment of users for hotel brand, positive referrals that will affect attracting new guests, as well as improving guest retention rate (Dominici & Guzzo, 2010, p. 3).

Ariffin and Maghzi (2012, p. 196-197) showed that expectations guests are having from the hotel are influenced by personal factors such as gender, purpose of arrival, nationality, culture and personal understanding of hospitality. Having examined, on the other hand, the impact of hotel factors on guests' expectations with regard to future service, it turned out that the only factor that can significantly affect the level of customer expectations is the category of the hotel. More specifically, guests staying at "five-star" hotels will have higher expectations with respect to hotel service than the guests staying at lower rated hotels. According to a study, the quality of hospitality can be defined as a factor that raises the level of guest satisfaction to such an extent that the guest will be ready to make a re-purchase of the same hotel service, i.e. there will be a conversion into a satisfied loyal guest (Ariffin & Maghzi, 2012 p. 191).

Requirements relating to quality of products and services, as well as the need to harmonise them with the preferences, have become more than obvious in the overall tourism industry (Lam & Zhang, 1999, p. 341). Managing satisfaction and understanding preferences and expectations of service users are key strategic tools for achieving hotel objectives. Hotels with good business results continue to increase investment in improving the quality of service and delivering value to customers (Kim et al., 2001, p. 272). In view of the fact that the tourism activity is characterised by a high degree of innovation in business processes and dynamics in preferences of service users, the pressure on hotel companies to constantly improve their operation and adapt offer to market demands is evident. Consequently, analysis of preferences and expectations in order to maintain a high level of customer satisfaction has become crucial for the survival, development and success in service industries such as tourism (Song et al., 2012).

3. Preferences of Hotel Service Users in Understanding of Hotel Selection Decision-Making Process

Making a decision on the selection of destination and hotel facility is one of the most important decisions when choosing a travel. Understanding the decision-making process is one of the basic prerequisites of successful strategic and operational planning of marketing activities in hotels (Rong et al., 2012, p.

739). Both in theory and in practice, efforts to identify key factors based on which customers make decisions on the choice of hotel facility are more and more present. Different hotels have different services in their offer. Likewise, attributes of same services vary. For example, the layout and size of rooms, equipment of the hotel's wellness center, restaurant menu, garden appearance, etc. vary greatly, even if hotels are in the same category. Great number of authors analysing behaviour of hotel service users highlights the importance of understanding critical factors for the selection of hotel accommodation (Merlo & João de Souza, 2011, p. 8410).

Having reviewed literature in detail it may be noted that central part in nearly all studies having dealt with the analysis of factors influencing decision-making on the choice of hotel facilities is taken by customer preferences and expectations (Sammons et al., 1999; Gu & Ryan, 2008; Khoo-Lattimore & Prayag, 2015). Some authors point out that despite a large number of papers, which incorporate analysis of preferences of hotel service users in the decision-making context, there are still many open issues and a need for additional analyses (Ariffin & Maghzi 2012, p. 191). Ariffin and Maghzi substantiate the stated conclusion by the fact that in contemporary literature there has been relatively little attention paid to examining relation between consumer expectations on the one hand and their demographic and personal characteristics on the other.

Preferences when making decisions on the choice of hotel facility are heavily influenced by the purpose of the journey (McCleary et al., 1993, p. 42) as well as by the origin of passengers (Reisinger & Turner, 1997, p. 139). Having used the exploratory analysis, Gilbert and Tsao (2000, p. 51) sought to indicate the existence of significant disparities in service users' preferences that have arisen as a result of cultural differences. The research has shown that in the process of selection of a hotel facility guests from China take much more into account the price and brand of the hotel, while guests from West Europe countries put far greater emphasis on the quality of service and "value for money". Chu and Choi (2000, p. 375) conducted an analysis based on the comparison of importance of various attributes in the decision-making process in order to determine the difference between tourists travelling for pleasure and those travelling for work. Based on the analysis they identified twenty-six factors which are grouped into six major groups based on which both types of passengers decide when choosing the hotel facility. It has been shown that both types of passengers have the same preferences in the case of all six groups of factors. Choi and Chu (2001, p. 277) conducted another study that focused on the analysis of preferences in selection of the hotel facility. Having applied factor analysis in their study, they identified seven factors that have influenced the selection intentions of guests: quality of professional staff, room features, infrastructural connection of the hotel, business infrastructure within the hotel,

value for money, safety and auxiliary facilities at the hotel. The technique of multiple regression analysis used indicated that the quality of professional staff, room features and value for money are three factors with the most significant influence on selection of the hotel and retention intentions. By using descriptive statistics and independent t-test, Tsai et al. (2011, p. 266) compared the preferences of tourists from China and other tourists who visited Hong Kong with reference to the most important factors they take into account when choosing a hotel. The results pointed to the fact that tourists from China are far more demanding in terms of attributes that a hotel should have, compared to other tourists staying at hotels throughout Hong Kong. A study by Tanford et al. (2012, p. 319) dealt with research of factors that influenced the decision-making on the choice of hotel for two segments of users - (1) segment of customers who have purchased "all inclusive" services and (2) segment of customers who have used a limited number of hotel services. The main difference observed was that the price was the most important factor in decision-making of guests not using full hotel services, while for the second category of mentioned guests, in addition to price, the factor of value guests were receiving from the "all inclusive" service was very important.

Based on qualitative research of preferences of hotel service users in the hotel selection process, Lockyer (2005, p. 487) identified four key factors - hotel location, price, contents at the hotel and tidiness. According to the study carried out by Stringam et al. (2010, p. 81), the basic criteria when choosing a hotel facility are location, room size, staff, buildings and food quality. While researching the relationship between staff and guests, they came to a conclusion that reliability and professionalism were the two factors that influence the most on the customer satisfaction.

Based on the above mentioned, it is clear that preferences of users with regards to hotel services are very different, and their research is necessary in order to form an adequate offer.

4. The Setting and the Methodology of Empirical Research

Based on presented results of previous research, it may be noted that the analysis of preferences of hotel service users is important in managing satisfaction and understanding of the decision-making process. Preferences and expectations of hotel service users vary. Likewise, preferences are dynamic and, therefore, the decision-making process itself and formation of expectations in terms of quality are complex (Harrison, 1999). The concept of understanding customer preferences in practical terms can imply the ability of hotel management to create an offer that will fully comply with the demands of their targeted customers and to favour factors that will influence on the hotel selection in the decision-making process. For this reason it is necessary to

conduct an adequate research based on mathematical and statistical methods and models to properly portray requirements and choices of consumers and relate them to the strategic and operational decisions and ultimately provide optimal service configuration (Verma & Plaschka 2003, p. 160).

The basic idea of empirical research is to determine preferences of service users in terms of importance of different services offered by hotels and their attributes. The main objective of the empirical research is to evaluate the significance of individual services based on the preferences of users. Assessment of significance was done on the basis of Analytic Hierarchy Process methodology. The AHP (Analytic Hierarchy Process) is a complex mathematical model developed for more than 30 years. The selected methodology developed by Saaty enables a relative importance of different elements to be determined in the decision-making process. By reviewing the literature, it was determined that the application of the AHP model failed to analyse the relative importance of different services at hotels (Min et al., 2002), which is a research approach within the paper.

The selected AHP model is adequate for the purpose of research in the paper as it allows the determination of relative importance of different elements under evaluation (Hawkins et al., 2007). The paper has used the fuzzy AHP model, which is an extended basic AHP model. Fuzzy AHP is based on a complex mathematical fuzzy logic in determining a relative importance of various elements under evaluation. The model is an excellent tool with reference to the relevance of the score when evaluations of respondents cannot be precisely determined, but are subjective (Enea & Piazza, 2004). Fuzzy logic used in the model eliminates subjectivity in evaluations and provides a relatively precise determination of the relative importance of different elements.

Fuzzy AHP implies obtaining the score in the way to conduct a pairwise comparison of elements under evaluation. The fuzzy AHP methodology uses triangular fuzzy numbers based on which final scores are calculated.

The procedure of determining the relative importance based on the methodology implies conducting a pairwise comparison of different elements under evaluation. Respondents in evaluation compare the importance of two alternatives. The importance is determined based on subjective evaluation of each respondent in terms of whether an alternative means more than the other and to what extent. Based on the pairwise comparison of judgments fuzzy numbers are formed. Fuzzy numbers are standard fuzzy set of real numbers belonging to a limited range of real numbers. Triangular fuzzy numbers are defined in vector form with three parameters (i, m, u). The parameter m determines the maximum grade, while parameters i and u imply lower and upper bounds.

The example of getting fuzzy numbers and triangular fuzzy numbers is shown in Table 1. The example describes fuzzy numbers and triangular fuzzy numbers on a five point Saaty's pairwise comparison scale.

Table 1 Method to Obtain Fuzzy Numbers on Saaty's Five Point Scale

Oral reply in comparing importance of two elements	Fuzzy number	Triangular fuzzy number in matrix (l, m, u)
Equal importance	1	(1/3, 1, 3)
Little importance	3	(1, 3, 5)
Strong importance	5	(3, 5, 7)
Very strong importance	7	(5, 7, 9)
Extreme importance	9	(7, 9, 9)

Source: Krejčí, J. & Stoklasa, J. (2016). Fuzzified AHP in the evaluation of scientific monographs, *Central European Journal of Operations Research*, 24(2), p. 354

Based on the obtained evaluations the fuzzy comparison matrix is formed. The matrix is obtained based on fuzzy triangular fuzzy numbers for each respondent. Based on fuzzy comparison matrix weight vectors are calculated. Normalization of the matrix is used to obtain the inverse matrix on the basis of which importance weights are calculated. Importance weights make evaluations of relative importance of each element evaluated by respondents.

In order for evaluations to be valid in application of Fuzzy AHP methodology, it is important to test the consistency of respondents' evaluations. Since pairwise evaluations are a matter of subjective assessment of respondents, inconsistent answers based on which relevant conclusions cannot be made often appear. Testing of inconsistency implies determining whether respondents were consistent in their replies and whether there is a degree of illogicality in their replies (Medjoudj et al., 2012). Consistency is calculated based on fuzzy pairwise matrix. We used Saaty's consistency ratio (CR) in the paper. The consistency ratio is calculated as a relation between evaluation matrix consistency ratio (CI) and random matrix consistency.

The consistency ratio demonstrates whether respondents' evaluations are consistent or not. Saaty (2000) states that the requirement of 10% cannot be made smaller such as 1% or 0.1% without trivialising the impact of inconsistency.

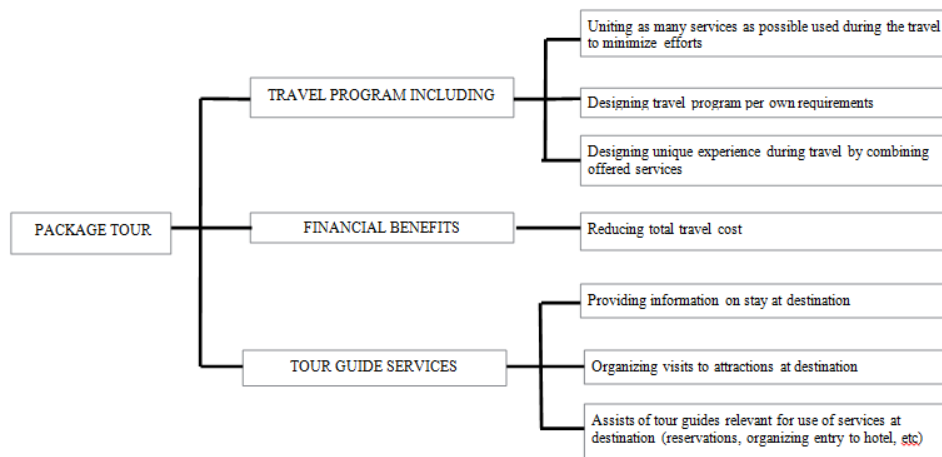
The aim of the research by applying Fuzzy AHP methodology in the paper was to obtain evaluations of relative importance of benefits for each respondent by comparison. Based on the obtained evaluations, segments of tourists analysed in more detail in the paper were determined by applying cluster analysis.

4.1. Hierarchy Diagram

The survey was conducted in several connected phases in accordance with the principles of AHP methodology and research objectives. AHP methodology implies defining the elements to be assessed and presenting their relationships in the diagram hierarchy in the first phase.

The paper started from services received by tourists during their stay at hotels, and then AHP methodology was used to determine which services and their attributes have lower and which ones higher importance for customers. There is a series of attributes and services that tourists take into account in the decision-making process on the choice of hotel facilities (Fitzpatrick et al., 2013). There are a number of studies analysing services and attributes provided during the stay at hotels. Comfort enabled by a hotel and pleasure of stay at rooms is one of the key benefits at hotels (Saleh & Ryan, 1992; Knuston, 1988; Cadotte & Turgeon, 1988; Dubé & Renaghan, 2000). In their study Dubé and Renaghan (2000) emphasised the importance of the size of rooms in relation to the comfort experienced by tourists during their stay at hotels. Different types of services that exist at hotels provide richer content of stay, which presents a source of benefits for tourists and influences the choice of hotels (Dubé & Renaghan, 2000). Comfort and contents of the stay significantly affect the benefits provided by a hotel to customers. The types of services that exist at hotels and their standard have an impact on the designing of benefits (parking, lighting at the hotel and rooms, bathroom equipment, etc) (Knuston, 1988; Cadotte & Turgeon, 1988). A higher level of standard of services related to the quality of an individual service enables a higher amount of benefit for customers (Kasper et al., 2006). Kasper et al. (2006) point out that the standard of a service is affected by the level of technical quality, length of delivery, professionalism of employees, degree of user involvement etc. Food and beverages with respect to their diversity, quality of taste, serving sizes and ways of serving are significant for hotel guests who use hotel services (Saleh & Ryan, 1991). Hotel location in terms of its distance from the most important attractions of the destination and its traffic connections is a significant factor for tourists when choosing a hotel (Poon & Lock-Teng Low, 2005; Dubé & Renaghan, 2000).

Hierarchical relations, which need to be defined in order to evaluate the importance of various services and their attributes, are shown in the hierarchy diagram in Figure 1.

Figure 1 Hierarchy Diagram

Source: The authors' research

4.2. Questionnaire

The significance of various services and their attributes was evaluated on the basis of a questionnaire created in accordance with the AHP methodology. The questionnaire had three sections. *The first part* of the questionnaire contained questions whether the respondent traveled in the past three years and used hotel services. Respondents who replied positively to this question answered questions from the other two parts of the questionnaire. Respondents who answered negatively did not answer questions from the other two parts of the questionnaire. *The second part* of the questionnaire implied comparing the importance of different variables defined in the hierarchical diagram and connected within the same hierarchical level. Respondents provided answers on the five-point scale as to what degree one variable means more to them than another. The possible answers were: they mean the same to me, one of the variables (they marked which variable is in question by circling it) means a bit more to me, more, much more, and absolutely more. *The third part* of the questionnaire contained questions on respondent features such as: gender, level of education, range of personal monthly income, range of their household income.

4.3. Sample

The survey was conducted in the Republic of Serbia in January 2014 on a sample of 850 respondents. The study used a stratified sample shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Description of Sample on Which Rresearch Was Performed

		Original sample
		N=
Gender	Male	290
	Female	510
Age	18-24	125
	25-29	147
	30-39	164
	40-49	142
	50-59	126
	60+	94
Personal monthly net income (in dinars)	No income	187
	Up to 30 000	129
	30 001-50 000	171
	Over 50 000	125
	Does not know / refuses to answer	189
Net monthly income of household per each member (in dinars)	No income	148
	Up to 30 000	120
	30 001-50 000	142
	Over 50 000	103
	Does not know / refuses to answer	287
Residence	Belgrade	197
	Šumadija and Western Serbia	242
	Southern and Eastern Serbia	194
	Vojvodina	158
	No elementary school / elementary school, three-year high school	61
	Four-year high school	324
	College	132
	Faculty	283

Source: The authors have created tabular interpretation

The criterion for defining the strata according to geographical criterion is determined on the basis of the official division of Serbia (excluding Kosovo and Metohija) to four statistical regions - Šumadija and Western Serbia, Belgrade, Southern and Eastern Serbia and Vojvodina (Law on Regional Development of the Republic of Serbia, Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia, No. 51/2009 and 30/2010, 2010).

The survey was conducted by phone, by random selection of numbers from the fixed telephone numbers base of Telekom Srbija.

Based on the evaluations of respondents comparison matrix was formed. The importance of each value element for each individual respondent was determined by using the matrix.

Processing of results implied testing of consistency ratio for each individual respondent. Consistency ratio was tested for each pair of comparisons that respondents did. Each comparison that had the value of consistency ratio higher than 0.05 ($R > 0.05$) was rejected as inconsistent. Respondents who had one or more comparison pairs being inconsistent, where the consistency ratio was higher than 0.05, were not taken for further analysis and drawing conclusions. It was found that there were 213 inconsistent responses in 191 respondents. The analyses were not conducted on respondents who had all consistent answers, which totals the number to 659.

4.4. Research Results

Based on the research conducted by using the AHP methodology, the results shown in Table 3 have been obtained. The results shown in the table were obtained by geometric mean of the respondents score. This is one of the ways to objectify group decision making and based on conclusions about group preferences can be drawn (Saaty, 2000; Saaty & Peniwati, 2008)

Table 3 Level of Importance of Different Attributes of Hotel Services on the Entire Sample

	Level 1 (variable)	Evaluation	Level 2 (variable)	Evaluation	Result	Rank
Hotel service	Possibility to enjoy comfort and activities at the hotel 1)	0.365	Organised entertainment at hotels	0.251	0.0916	7
			Various activities to perform during the stay at the hotel	0.357	0.1303	2
			Comfort and convenience of the stay	0.392	0.1430	1

	Hotel location 2)	0.131	Hotel location	1	0.131	4
	Standard and types of services being offered 3)	0.201	Existence of "all inclusive" service	0.118	0.0237	10
			Harmonization of hotel standard and quality of service	0.402	0.0844	8
			Efficiency and professionalism of personnel	0.480	0.0964	6
	Food and beverages 4)	0.303	Food quality	0.400	0.1212	3
			Serving size	0.267	0.0809	9
			Diversity of food and adjustment of menu to special nutrition regimes	0.333	0.1008	5

1) C. I. = 0.081, C. R.= 0.012; 2) C. I. = 0.093, C.R. =0.015; 3) C.I. =0.069, C.R. = 0.014; 4) C. I. = 0.077, C. R.= 0.019.

Source: The authors' research

Based on Table 3 it may be seen that comfort and convenience of the stay and existence of various activities within the hotel contents (wellness center, bar, bases etc.) have the highest rank of importance for users of hotel services. Apart from comfort, the hotel food quality and location also have relatively high importance. In general, the existence of "all inclusive" service at the hotel has the lowest level of importance.

Cluster analysis was done in order to analyse the degree of heterogeneity of demand. The two-step cluster analysis was used to determine the segments. The two-step cluster analysis involves two stages of clustering: (1) *a priori clustering*, based on which respondents are grouped in pre-clusters, and (2) *hierarchical clustering*, which implies observation of all clusters separately and selection of the most efficient clustering based on which segments are defined. Log-likelihood distance was used to measure the distance in the hierarchical clustering, and BIC (Schwarz's Bayesian Criterion) was used as a criterion of clustering. This approach to clustering is recommended for samples greater than 500 and when the analysis is done on continuous variables, such as with the results obtained in the conducted research.

Based on the analysis, it was determined that two independent segments exist. The size of each segment is presented in Table 4.

Table 4 Size of Segments

	N=	%
Segment 1	343	52.04%
Segment 2	316	47.96%

Source: The authors have created tabular interpretation.

Table 5 shows the evaluations for each element for both segments. Based on the evaluations ranks for each element were determined.

Table 5 Evaluations of Importance of Different Benefits in Package Deals and Ranks for Segments

Level 2 (variable)	SEGMENT 1		SEGMENT 2	
	Evaluation	Rank	Evaluation	Rank
Organised entertainment at hotels	0.1290	4	0.101	8
Various activities to perform during the stay at the hotel	0.1504	2	1.1211	5
Comfort and convenience of the stay	0.1509	1	0.1355	3
Hotel location	0.1310	3	1.1310	4
Existence of "all inclusive" service	0.0211	10	0.0202	10
Harmonization of hotel standard and quality of service	0.0899	8	0.889	9
Efficiency and professionalism of personnel	0.1001	6	0.0999	6
Food quality	0.1116	5	0.1456	1
Serving size	0.0805	9	0.0920	7
Diversity of food and adjustment of menu to special nutrition regimes	0.0909	7	0.1371	2

Source: The authors have created tabular interpretation.

Based on the data presented in Table 5 we can notice that the comfort of the hotel has a relatively high importance for both segments and that the location of the hotel has about the same importance.

Based on the data presented in Table 5, more accurate descriptions for each of the three segments may be provided:

Segment 1 is a category of hotel service users for whom comfort and convenience of the hotel, various activities at the hotel and the hotel location are the most important factors to take into account when making decisions about the choice of hotel. Also, based on these factors they form level of expectations so that satisfaction is largely dependent on these factors. Benefits that imply the existence of organised entertainment at the hotel and food quality are emphasized by rank in this segment. Food serving size and the existence of "all inclusive services" are less significant in this segment.

Segment 2 is a category of tourists who deem the quality and diversity of food at the hotel, as well as the comfort and convenience of the stay at the hotel, as the most important categories. The hotel location in this segment, as in the case of segment 1, is important as observed by rank. Services that include existence of various activities at the hotel and politeness of personnel are emphasized by rank in this segment. This segment deems services of organised entertainment at the hotel, serving size and existence of "all inclusive" offer as the least significant.

Based on the results of the presented segmentation, the importance of a difference between evaluations of variables among segments obtained based on the importance of various benefits in package deals was examined. According to the purpose of the research, the following research hypothesis was set:

H₀. The degree of difference between segments classified according to preferences of different services offered by hotels is statistically significant.

H₁. The degree of difference between segments classified according to preferences of different services offered by hotels is not statistically significant.

Single factor analysis of variance ANOVA was used to test the significance of differences. The analysis is used to test the significance of differences in evaluations between two or more independent sets. ANOVA test is applied by calculating the two evaluations of variance distribution of the basic set: (1) variance between samples, and (2) variance within the sample.

F statistics was obtained by applying ANOVA, and statistical significance of difference is determined on the basis of the value of Sig. If the value of Sig. is between 0.05 and 0.01, then we can claim with 95% or more certainty that there are statistically significant differences between subgroups of categorical variable and that these differences obtained on the sample of respondents actually exist in the population represented by that sample. The analysis results are presented in Table 6.

Based on Table 6 it may be concluded that the difference between segments obtained based on preferences of different services offered by hotels is statistically more significant.

Table 6 Size of F-Statistics and Importance of Differences between Segments Obtained by Segmentation Based on Preferred Benefits in Package Deals

Variables	SEGMENTS	
	F	Sig.
Organised entertainment at hotels	48.9	0.00
Various activities to perform during the stay at the hotel	89.5	0.00
Comfort and convenience of the stay	224.5	0.00
Hotel location	220.1	0.00
Existence of “all inclusive” service	122.1	0.00
Harmonization of hotel standard and quality of service	230.1	0.00
Efficiency and professionalism of personnel	212.1	0.00
Food quality	119.9	0.00
Serving size	161.1	0.00
Diversity of food and adjustment of menu to special nutrition regimes	157.1	0.00

Source: The authors have created tabular interpretation.

5. Conclusion

Critical success factors in the highly competitive hotel market are knowledge on preferences of hotel service users and the possibility to differentiate in relation to competitors. Knowing the preferences is important to understand the decision-making process on the choice of hotel accommodation. Success in managing satisfaction of hotel service users and designing competitive offer will be guaranteed in case of good knowledge of customer preferences, their valuing of various hotel services, as well as the willingness to allocate funds for certain services (Roman & Martin 2016, 488).

Based on the performed research, hotel’s comfort and convenience are the most important in choosing the hotel facility. This benefit traditionally presented an important element of the hotel offer, but its importance in modern conditions also has a particularly high rank.

Based on the research it may be observed that as far as the importance of other attributes of hotel services designed by tour operators in package deals are concerned, the demand is not homogeneous. The research results indicate that there are two segments in which there is a statistically significant difference in terms of preferred attributes. Achieving competitive advantage of the hotel will be possible only if preferences of these segments are acknowledged.

The performed research has a number of limitations. Firstly, empirical research was carried out on the basis of a single methodology-AHP, which partly limits the ability to generalise the obtained results. Secondly, the empirical results indicate general preferences. The impact of situational factors, which may include: friends with whom one travels, social environment in the course of a journey, motivation for travel (honeymoon, visiting relatives and friends, etc.), emotional mood, etc. may significantly affect the preferences and results of evaluation of the importance of different elements of package deals. Thirdly, the setting of the research did not take into account the effects of all external factors on preferences. For example, national culture, as a particularly significant external factor, was abstracted in the research. There is a possibility that under the influence of other national cultures the results of the analysis would be different and that basic values with respect to the obtained results would be different.

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ZNAČAJ RAZLIČITIH VRSTA USLUGA U HOTELIMA - EMPIRIJSKA ANALIZA

Apstrakt: Hoteli nude različite vrste usluga koje imaju različit uticaj na satisfakciju korisnika i u različitoj meri utiču na donošenje odluka o izboru hotela. U okviru rada je sprovedena empirijska analiza značaja različitih usluga koje hoteli pružaju. Ideja istraživanja je da se utvrdi značaj različitih vrsta usluga za korisnike. Istraživanje je sprovedeno na uzorku od 850 ispitanika u Srbiji. U istraživanju je korišćena AHP metodologija koja se koristi u analizi procesa odlučivanja i pogodna je za istraživanja u kojima se utvrđuje rang značaja pojedinačnih elemenata. Dobijeni rezultati predstavljani u radu pružaju informacije koje su usluge koje pružaju hoteli najznačajnije za korisnike. Na osnovu dobijenih rezultata u empirijskom istraživanju primenom klaster analize utvrđena su dva različita segmenta hotelskih gostiju prema preferiranim uslugama. Segmenti se statistički razlikuju i mogu da predstavljaju različite targete u poslovnoj politici hotela.

Ključne reči: korisnici, usluge, preferencije, hotel, donošenje odluka, satisfakcija

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