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**SATISFACTION OF HOTEL WORKERS AS A COMPONENT OF  
BUSINESS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT  
-A REPORT FROM RURAL AREAS IN SERBIA –**

**SUMMARY**

Satisfaction with the business is the current topic of global research, as one of the most important factors in the successful and quality business in tourist companies. The results of these surveys confirm that customer satisfaction and company profit can only be achieved through a quality service provided by satisfied employees. The authors of the research carried out research in accommodation in rural areas in Serbia in the period from March to May 2017, in order to examine the level of satisfaction of employees in these tourist accommodations. The results that the authors have come up with by survey research, undoubtedly indicate that there are segments in the business that the employees are really dissatisfied with, and that education does not have much connection with the chance of changing the job. Research is just a part of the entire research and aims at pointing out the employees' attitudes about working conditions and improving the quality of services.

**Keywords:** employees, accommodations, quality, satisfaction, rural Serbia

**INTRODUCTION**

The analysis of the success factor in services, especially in tourism and hotel industry, as specific and complex service activities, has shown that the importance of human resources for the success of the hotel organization is indisputable. It is precisely in the hands of management that driving lever is that it creates and drives entrepreneurial energy, connects and unifies the potentials and strengths of all employees (Baddar, 2005). The success of the hotel organization depends, therefore, on all employees and the degree to which they support one another in the process of providing the service. Many authors consider that pleasure is a pleasant or positive emotional condition for employees arising from fulfilled working conditions, and that the satisfaction with work is the general attitude of the employee to his job (Lam et al. 2003). The quality of services offered to the client depends on trained and qualified staff, which is vital for success and survival in the global competitive market. It starts from the

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assumption that a person is a resource, that is, a potential that can create an economic value for the organization by appropriate management practices and skills. Important changes in approach and understanding lie in the field of responsibility for human resources, which transfers from the functional area for the personnel directly to managers of all levels and emphasizes the strategic character of human resources (Poe, 2003). For the business of a hotel organization, it is crucial to identify the link between the performance of employees and the performance of the company, that is, the quality of employee performance management and the quality of the tourist service. In organizations, there is an increased awareness of the importance of human potential. The basic requirement for the development of new models for measuring the performance of a particular company is the flexibility and balance of quantitative and qualitative criteria, with the aim of more adequate and faster response and adjustment to a dynamic and market environment. At the same time, it is at the center of attention to all measurements in the company, measuring employee satisfaction. Employee satisfaction is usually measured by employee satisfaction surveys, including topics such as compensation, workload, work conditions, management perceptions, flexibility, teamwork, resources, etc (Nadiri et al, 2010). The authors of the paper conducted a survey of hotel workers in Serbia, in order to determine the level of their satisfaction. The obtained data were analyzed in the software program SPSS, version 23.0, and the authors started from the research several hypotheses and subhypotheses, in order to deepen the problems of employee satisfaction. The data presented in the paper are only part of a wider survey, and the goal is certainly to influence the quality of business in hotels with their analysis.

## **MATERIAL AND METHODS**

### **Background of study and hypothesis development**

#### *Employee satisfaction and quality of business*

Employee satisfaction is defined as the perception of employees about the degree of fulfillment of their requirements. For some organizations, satisfied employees are people with whom an organization could only be more successful and with the help of which it provides better quality services, moving only as an ascending path. Employee satisfaction is a good starting point in business, and will be expressed when the difference between expectations and experience is low, and vice versa. Factors that affect the level of job satisfaction are very different and depend on the type of work that is being done (Robbins et al. 2007). It starts primarily from the fact that human resources are not like other organizational resources. People have their own interests, goals, character and angle of observing reality. Employees are individuals with their own egos and are ready to invest their knowledge, abilities and energy for organizational goals and only thus achieve their own goals, that is, meet their needs (Anderson et al. 2000). The organization and individual are in a relationship of interdependence from which both parties can win the gain under certain conditions. The problem

with employee satisfaction is that management does not focus on essential things for talented staff. Some workers might be quite happy with work that requires very little effort, working out the minimum minimum needed to keep their jobs (Rotenberry et al. 2007). These employees are probably very satisfied with their jobs, or are not interested in further advancement, but are in some ways happy with what they have. They are unlikely to leave the company, but they do not necessarily add value (Keegan et al, 2005). Employee satisfaction, also known as satisfaction with work, is the degree to which an individual is satisfied with his work and the role he plays in his life. The degree to which employers give priority to employee satisfaction depends on the employer and industry (Homburg et al, 2005). Satisfaction researchers tend to distinguish affective satisfaction and satisfaction from cognitive work. Affective satisfaction is the sum of satisfied emotions and feelings related to the job and its place in the life of an individual, while cognitive satisfaction refers to rational satisfaction over certain aspects of work. There is a wide range of employee satisfaction theories (Testa, 2001). Dispositive theory, for example, claims that individuals are predisposed to a certain level of job satisfaction, regardless of work or industry. Satisfaction depends on the strength of what an employee expects from work and what he / she actually receives. In order to be successful in a competitive market, it is important that hotel managers know how their employees feel at work and what they want (Yang, 2010). How many employees are spent on achieving the goals of the hotel and achieving quality business depends on whether the employee believes that this job will lead to meeting their own needs and desires. Before the management of human resources, through theory and practice, a new task of transforming intellectual capital into additional value for the organization is set. Flexibility and quality of organization in conditions of rapid technological change are possible only if its employees are ready for continuous learning and professional development. The modern approach to human resources management contains levers that directly affect the performance of individuals and organizations (Baddar, 2005). Performance of the contemporary concept of human resources management stems from the following characteristics: strategic character that implies the connection between business strategy and human resources management, access to employees as human capital, connectivity and instrumentality of individuals' goals and organizational goals, or employee dedication, observing employees from management perspective and managerial responsibilities of all levels with the advisory and coordination role of human resources experts, dynamic and developmental character and interconnectedness of all processes in human resources management (Yeh, 2013). Successful organizations in the world look at employees as the primary development resource for achieving quality and survival on the market. Satisfied employees are the key to achieving quality. We can talk about more elements of satisfaction such as satisfaction with organization of work, prize-winning system, interpersonal relations, management, secured working conditions, own workplace, development opportunities, corporate communication (Zopiatis,

2007). Also, satisfaction factors vary according to their organization, according to their environment, according to the social system. In general, employees' satisfaction depends on the employee's expectations and the extent to which they are achieved. So then satisfaction is measured by the difference between the level of employee aspiration and the achieved results. The variety of jobs, years of life, education obviously present some general factors of employee satisfaction. Among the factors that determine satisfaction we can count on "personal adjustment" of the employee towards the company (Kuruuzum *et al.*, 2009).

### *Hypothesis development*

Based on authorial research, as well as available secondary documentation and existing literature, the authors proceeded from the relevant hypothesis to the research:

H1: employees are satisfied with working conditions;

H1a: there is a statistically significant difference in satisfaction with the number of employees;

H1 b: there is a statistically significant difference in the satisfaction of available equipment;

H1c: there is a statistically significant difference in the satisfaction of the work space;

H1d: there is a statistically significant difference in satisfaction with interpersonal relationships;

H1e: there is a statistically significant difference in satisfaction with adequate time for doing business;

H1f: there is a statistically significant difference in the satisfaction of the organization in work;

H2: employees are satisfied with their earnings;

H3: employees are satisfied with the existence of open possibilities for their own development;

H3a: there is a statistically significant difference in satisfaction with the conditions of further education;

H3b: there is a statistically significant difference in satisfaction with the conditions of further progress;

H4: employees are satisfied with the support of management;

H4a: there is a statistically significant difference in the satisfaction of the possibility of doing business with their own way of working;

H4b: there is a statistically significant difference in the satisfaction of the possibility of expressing one's own ideas;

H5: employees are fully committed to the business;

H5a: Employees consider that success is only related to a job;

H5b: Employees are fully accountable at work;

H5c: employees identify business problems with personal;

H6: Employees consider that they have the opportunity (chances) to change the job.

## Methodology

Measuring employee satisfaction is an indispensable part of the process of managing the organization for positioning the company as a whole and its organizational parts both in the part of the strategic analysis and in the strategic choice and the changes. The survey questionnaire is the most frequently used technique for measuring employee satisfaction. From a formal point of view, the advantage of applying the questionnaire is that it provides easy anonymity of the respondents and discretion of the data. The authors of the paper carried out a survey on the rural territory of Serbia. A total of 300 questionnaires were distributed, with constructed short answers with yes and no, but 238 sheets were taken in the analysis, in order to avoid the missing values. Distribution of the questionnaire was uniform in all rural areas. The test period covered March, April and May 2017. The authors used the SPSS software, version 23.0. The paper will only show a part of the research that relates to employee satisfaction, but the research of a broader scope and has included many variables related to the overall management of human resources in order to increase the quality of the services provided. A standardized questionnaire was used by Anastasios Zopiatis, Panayiotis Constanti, Antonis L. Theocharous (2014), with some modifications for this research.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Demographic profile of respondents

Profile of respondents		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	148	62.2%
	Female	90	37.8%
Age	18-30	109	45.8%
	31-50	94	39.5%
	51+	35	14.7%
Education	Secondary	27	11.3%
	High	84	35.3%
	College	104	43.7%
	MSc, Phd	23	9.7%
Lenght of working	1-5	85	35.7%
	6-10	68	28.6%
	11-15	56	23.5%
	15+	29	12.2%
Earnings	<200 e	97	40.8
	200-400 e	105	44.1%
	>400 e	36	15.1%
Total		238	100%

Source: based on author's research

Table 1 clearly shows the profile structure of the respondents. The largest percentage of male respondents were 62.2% and women with 37.8%. When considering the age structure, it is noticeable that the largest participation in the

research is from 18 to 30 years of age (45.8%), then those aged up to 50 years, and the smallest respondents over 50 years of age (14.7%). The more educated structure of respondents with university education prevails (43.7%), followed by a three-year high school (35.3%), and the least number of respondents with MSc and PhD degrees. The employees who participated in the survey in the highest process were employed from 1 to 5 years of work (35.7%), and the rewards of those who work for more than 15 years. When looking at earnings, those with an average salary of up to 200 to 400 euros (44.1%) had the greatest share.

Table 2 shows the analysis of the results obtained by the survey of hotel employees.

Table 2. Frequency and Descriptive Statistics

Items: percentage frequency→	Yes (%)	No (%)	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Number of employees	71.4	28.6	1	2	1,29	,453
Equipment	60.9	39.1	1	2	1,39	,489
Work space	66.8	33.2	1	2	1,33	,472
Relationships between colleagues	69.7	30.3	1	2	1,30	,460
Available time for work	68.1	31.9	1	2	1,32	,467
Organization of work	68.9	31.1	1	2	1,31	,464
Earning	35.7	64.3	1	2	1,64	,480
Education possibilities	31.1	68.9	1	2	1,69	,464
Progression possibilities	34.0	66.0	1	2	1,66	,475
Support of management	52.5	47.5	1	2	1,47	,500
Free mode	46.2	53.8	1	2	1,54	,500
Freedom in insinuation of ideas	26.9	73.1	1	2	1,73	,444
Complete possession of the work	68.5	31.5	1	2	1,32	,466
Living success exclusively related to the job	67.6	32.4	1	2	1,32	,469
Feel responsibility to the job	89.5	10.5	1	2	1,11	,307
Business problems are personal problems	73.1	26.9	1	2	1,27	,444
Chances for changing job	25.2	74.8	1	2	1,75	,435
Valid N (listwise)	238					

Source: based on author's research

About 71.4% expressed satisfaction with the number of employees in hotels (H1a+). The approximate number of employees is satisfied with the equipment available in the work (H1b+), and with the space in which they work (H1c+). When it comes to relations between colleagues, 69.7% are satisfied,

while 30.3% expressed dissatisfaction with interpersonal relations (H1d+). The way in which the processes of human resources management in the hotel organization are shaped essentially determines the attitude of employees towards the job, organization and its goals, and thus the overall organizational efficiency. The available time for work is sufficient for most respondents (68.1%; H1e+), and the organization of the process itself is also rated positively (68.9% satisfied; H1f+).

In general, observing the results of the set subhypotheses, the main H1 hypothesis is confirmed that the employees are satisfied with the working conditions. Observing the results for the wage item, the ratio is as follows: 35.7% satisfied, and 64.3% dissatisfied with the salary, which negates the H2 hypothesis. Salaries are in most cases small, and working hours are not always the best. For all this, the labor force flow is much higher here than is usual in other sectors. The key generic function of human resources management is the development of employees.

Tourism and hotel management are very specific activities that determine the number of jobs and their sustainability, and depend entirely on the work intensity of the employees. Their ability and work efficiency depends on good professional training, including lifelong learning. It is very important that the utmost attention is paid to education that enhances the ability of people to be flexible, professional, communicative and ready to satisfy different needs of service users in tourism. Therefore, the future of the hotel industry is in the hands of education. Development can include a whole range of designed and planned activities focused on new skills and abilities necessary for future work. The respondents also expressed dissatisfaction regarding the possibility of further education and training (68.9%), and the opinion on the impossibility of further promotion is more often represented (66%), which negates the H3 hypothesis, with its sub-codes H3a and H3b. A relatively equal number of respondents pleaded with contentment and dissatisfaction with the support of superiors (H4 can not be denied or fully confirmed). Freedom of business and free expression of attitudes and ideas are also negatively assessed, more precisely, more dissatisfied respondents (H4a and H4b-). A total commitment to work was indicated by 68.5% of respondents (H5+), and 67.6% of them think that their lifetime success is tied exclusively to the work they do (H5a+). Satisfied workers are those who are extremely loyal to their organization and are held even in the worst scenario. They do not work on any coercion, but because they dream to organize their organizations to a new level. Employees must be passionate about their work and passion comes only when employees are satisfied with their work and organization as a whole. All this affects the level of innovation, since it is unlikely that someone who is not committed to a company in the long term will have the motivation, knowledge or experience to contribute to the development process of the given company in tourism. Responsibility for the job is assessed in the following way: 89.5% stated that they absolutely feel the maximum degree of dependency (H5b+), and that business problems are exactly personal problems

(73.1%), which confirms the H5c subhypothesis. Satisfied employees are happy employees who will help their colleagues and cooperate with the organization even in emergency situations. Such employees do not think about leaving their jobs during the crisis, but they work together as a single unit to overcome challenges and get out of the situation as soon as possible. For them, their organization comes first, everything else later. They do not come to work simply because of money, but because they really feel about the organization and believe in their goals.

However, the opportunities, as well as the desire for a new job or job change, were not supported by a large number of respondents. Namely, their 74.8% think that this is currently not possible and the hypothesis H6 is denied. Ensuring permanent employment in tourism and hotel industry is very problematic, due to the existence of a pronounced seasonality of business activities.

On the other hand, this can be an advantage. The large turnover of the workforce leads to the exchange of personnel between firms in an area, which can increase knowledge transfer. This, of course, requires that executives in companies are ready to receive new ideas that their staff can present to them. Human abilities, motivation and engagement do not come to an end in themselves, so it is important for managers to find the right formula for discovering and using this valuable potential. Also, the done analysis of dependence varied education and opportunities or opportunities for change of work. The authors used the Crosstabulation - Chi Square test model, followed by the measurement of symmetry (Phi, Cramers and Contingency Coefficient) in order to reaffirm the probability of dependency. Individuals who have finished high school (22.2%) claim that they have chances and wishes To change the job, while 77.8% deny the answer. The situation is similar when the higher vocational education is concerned: 21.4% for the change of work, while 78.6% denies the answer.

The percentage of respondents who completed the faculties is a higher percentage of those who would change the job, but this feature is not very different, 25% for job change and 75% against. When it comes to human resources, the tourism sector has some special characteristics compared to other service companies. Most of the staff working in tourism companies in our country, but also in the world, are not sufficiently educated. Talented and more educated employees expect more from companies. For these employees, satisfying the job involves different criteria. They want to be engaged and give them the opportunity to progress further education. They want new work challenges, and that their personal and professional opportunities grow and improve their careers.

Respondents with the highest degree of education MSc and PhD degrees, are more interested in change and new chances of 43.5% for job change, while 56.5% are against.

Table 3. Education \* chances for changing job - Crosstabulation

			chances for changing job		Total
			yes	no	
education	Secondary school	Count	6	21	27
		Expected Count	6,8	20,2	27,0
		% within education	22,2%	77,8%	100,0%
		% within chances for changing job	10,0%	11,8%	11,3%
	High School	Count	18	66	84
		Expected Count	21,2	62,8	84,0
		% within education	21,4%	78,6%	100,0%
		% within chances for changing job	30,0%	37,1%	35,3%
	College	Count	26	78	104
		Expected Count	26,2	77,8	104,0
		% within education	25,0%	75,0%	100,0%
		% within chances for changing job	43,3%	43,8%	43,7%
	MSc, PhD	Count	10	13	23
		Expected Count	5,8	17,2	23,0
		% within education	43,5%	56,5%	100,0%
		% within chances for changing job	16,7%	7,3%	9,7%
Total		Count	60	178	238
		Expected Count	60,0	178,0	238,0
		% within education	25,2%	74,8%	100,0%
		% within chances for changing job	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Source: based on author's research

In this case it can be pointed out that more educated people are more inclined to change in their work, they are striving for new experiences, knowledge, additional education, but the approximate value of the answer for and against can be caused by the situation in the country and the poor supply of better jobs in the labor market.

In a further analysis of the correlation testing of these two variables, we established the values of the Chi Square test. The table shows that the Pearson value is 4,838, while the df or the number of degrees of freedom is equal to 3. Asymptotic Significance or the approximate two-sided probability is 0,184. Values are greater than 0.05, meaning that there is no significant connection between these variables. We can not claim that these two variables are in mutual association. In Symmetric Measures the values of Cramer's V, Phi I Contingency Coefficient are approximate, and the Approximat Significance for Cramer's V and for the Contingency Coefficient is identical probabilities to Pearson Chi Square statistics. On the basis of all the analyzes, it is again concluded that the values of significance are higher than 0.05, and that there is no significant dependence on education and the tendency to change the job.

Table 4. Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4,838 <sup>a</sup>	3	,184
Likelihood Ratio	4,413	3	,220
Linear-by-Linear Association	2,678	1	,102
N of Valid Cases	238		

Source: based on author's research

Table 5. Symmetric Measures

		Value	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	,143	,184
	Cramer's V	,143	,184
	Contingency Coefficient	,141	,184
N of Valid Cases		238	

Source: based on author's research

## CONCLUSIONS

The quality of tourist and hotel services depends on the employees in tourism. The hotel product is accessed as a chain of services created to meet the needs of increasingly demanding visitors. Services are provided in a specific area, at a specific time, environment, and other conditions. In order to fulfill the quality of the quality of the service, it is necessary, in all its segments, to fulfill the expectations of tourists, and to overcome them, and to offer products of defined quality to the market, today it is considered a condition of survival. The essence of this paper is that the human factor is key to success in tourism.

However, human resources are not in themselves a key factor in the success of a tourism organization, but it is necessary for management to create such conditions to develop the potentials of employees by certain methods and instruments, to motivate and identify in order to positively influence the organization's performance. We have long realized that only a satisfied worker can give the best results, regardless of what job he is doing. Therefore, to talk about quality is important, but to make a decision about its implementation and really do it, it is responsible and exemplary. Employee satisfaction is essential to ensure higher revenue for the organization. No training or motivation would help, unless and when individuals develop a sense of attachment and loyalty to their organization. Employees spend their half of their time fighting their counterpart or diluting problems with them. There are several factors that determine the quality of services in the service tourism industry, among which the most important human resource and satisfaction at work. The authors of the research carried out a survey for accommodations in rural areas of Serbia.

The aim of the research was to examine the level of satisfaction of the employees in hotels, and in that way to influence the improvement of working conditions and a higher level of business quality by corrective measures. Analyzed data in 238 subjects, and the results of confirmation of epoxy hypotheses and subhypothesis are presented in the following table. The employees were more favorable to the general conditions of work such as space, interpersonal relations. However, dissatisfaction was expressed most with earnings, as well as flexibility in business, to present their ideas, to further educate and advance.

The results show that respondents are mostly devoted to work and dedicated institutions in which they work, because failure and work problems identify with personal problems. However, there is a small percentage of employees who think that they might be able to change their jobs in the near future, and the authors of the work have determined the degree of dependence of education and greater chances for changing the job. It turned out that there is no great association between these variables.

Table 6. The state of the hypothesis after the analysis of the results

Confirmed hypotheses (+)	Denied hypotheses (-)
H1, H1a, H1b, H1c, H1d, H1e, H1f, H4, H5, H5a, H5b, H5c,	H2, H3, H3a, H3b, H4a, H4b, H6

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