



THE PHILOSOPHY OF HOSPITALITY IN UZBEKISTAN: TRADITIONAL CULTURE AND INNOVATIVE INSTRUMENTS FOR CREATING UNIQUE GUEST'S EXPERIENCE

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ABSTRACT

Hospitality has become an important part of tourism industry that helps to grow the economy of countries. It is a complex sector and it includes different services such as providing guests with accommodation, food and beverages and wonderful experiences. The aim of the study is to explore the role of innovative instruments, hospitality customs and traditional culture on create extraordinary guests' experience. For collecting data, a mixed-method design was used, for qualitative method we analyzed more than 20 articles, journals and previous studies related to this topic for making a better understanding. The papers were taken from different internet sources, and Web of Science, Research Gate, Google Scholar and etc. For quantitative questions multiple choice questions with open-ended questions used for understanding visitor's suggestions, issues and their memorable experiences. In this survey both local and international travelers, hospitality staff, and students from foreign countries have participated. According to the results of survey, we can see that, almost 62% of travelers who experienced the hospitality services are satisfied with the facilities provided by hospitality staff. 55.4% of visitors are likely to suggest Uzbekistan as a travel destination that focuses on traditional culture and hospitality.

CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

Hospitality and traditional culture are one of the essential elements of tourism field according to their importance. Many people visit to the specific travel destination as a consequence of their interests to the customs, traditions, culture, history of a country. In addition to it, hospitality of a travel destination really affects to tourist decision. Uzbekistan is one of the countries which is located at the Silk Road trade routes and it has a rich history and cultural heritage among the Central Asian countries as well. Uzbek people famous with their warm welcome, national cuisine, ancient monuments and etc. For this reason, this study

collects information about traditional customs and hospitality traditions for visitors to improve their understanding. This research titled as “The philosophy of hospitality in Uzbekistan: traditional culture and innovative instruments for creating unique guest’s experience”. This thesis aimed to comprehend the role of hospitality and traditional Uzbek culture in the tourism sector. The primary purpose of this study is to analyze how traditional culture and innovative technologies effect to make guest’s trip unique during their travel.

1.1 Aims and objectives

The primary aims of this study are to analyze the hospitality traditions in Uzbekistan, the role of traditional culture and modern technologies and digital tools for making guests’ trips wonderful and give some suggestions to improve the quality of hospitality services in this country. The objectives of this study are followings:

1. To understand the concept of hospitality and hospitality industry
2. To examine the role of hospitality customs and traditional culture to create memorable guest’s experience while their trip.
3. To determine how current innovations and modern tools are influencing and being used into the hospitality field in Uzbekistan.
4. To analyze challenges and opportunities which hospitality businesses faced while development period
5. To develop some recommendations and strategies for all the stakeholders and businesses of tourism field to enhance visitors’ experience in Uzbekistan.

1.2 The research questions

1. What can be the definition and the concept of hospitality and how it can be applied within the hospitality sector?
2. How do traditional culture and hospitality customs really influence to the creation of unique visitor’s experience during their trip?
3. Which innovative instruments are being utilized and how they affect in the hospitality of Uzbekistan?
4. Which type of key challenges and opportunities do hospitality businesses faced mostly during the period of development?
5. What suggestions can be developed for stakeholders and professionals of the hospitality sphere to enhance overall guest’s experiences in Uzbekistan.

CHAPTER II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Innovative instruments in Hospitality field

In this modern and globalizing world, we cannot imagine our life without technologies and innovative instruments. That is why it is very important to analyze the impacts of innovative tools which is being integrated in hospitality sphere to improve tourist’s satisfaction. Tourists always want their travel to be perfect and innovative instruments play a crucial role to make their trip unique. Hoteliers and tourism professionals should be more creative, adaptive to the new innovations and they have to fine new and special ways to make the grade over their competitors as a result of high competition in the tourism sphere (Buhalis & Leung, 2018).

In Uzbekistan many hospitality companies are starting to change and adapt to the new and modern technologies day by day. One of the primary goals of introducing innovative instruments and digital tools in the hospitality sphere is to improve the guests’ experience

without damaging to the traditional and cultural standards of a country. One of the Uzbek researchers in this field Karimov (2022) said that, combining current technologies with traditional hospitality customs help to create unique practices for travelers. Utilizing modern implements with traditional hospitality may create unique experiences for both local and international visitors.

2.4 Relevant studies

In this section of literature review we will discuss some papers which a little bit relates to this thesis. The research paper explored by Baek et al., (2019) provides a literature review to analyze visitor's experience by analyzing online reviews. The article critically discusses previous studies on the hotel guest's experience and using big data analytics in the hospitality sector. However, all of them focused on an example of European countries due to the lack of studies in Hotel businesses of Uzbekistan. According to the findings of the study, hotel managers should mostly focus on managing the guests' rooms and offering modern services to meet with the customer's experience.

Another research explored by Mirzarakhimov (2024) provided with the valuable improvement of hospitality and tourism in Uzbek national mentality. In addition, this paper examines the traditions, customs, the level of demand for hotel services for foreign guests of Uzbekistan. The aim of the article is to analyze the role of traditional culture of Uzbekistan in tourism field. The authors provided useful insights for development of tourism culture of this country. The next useful study by Chittiprolu et al., (2021) provided us with the valuable information about customer experiences and heritage hotels. In this research authors collected around 1000 reviews from visitors on TripAdvisor website. The main objectives of the review are to compare both positive and negative views and to comprehend the determinants of the satisfaction and dissatisfactions of guests. According to the findings of the paper many visitors mentioned that, traditional services, staff behavior, professionalism, rooms of the accommodation, food and other tangible features mostly affect to satisfy the customers.

CHAPTER III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research approach

Quantitative method that is to say conducted an online survey on the Google Forms among both local and International tourists who visited in Uzbekistan for understanding their satisfaction, experience, and suggestions for improving the quality of hospitality services of this nation. The responses were collected by sharing those questionnaires through social media platforms.

The survey consists of both open-ended and close-ended questions, participants were questioned about their satisfaction with Uzbek traditional hospitality culture, the issues they faced during their travel, factors that affect their travel decision and experiences. Also, their recommendations for improving hospitality field were collected. For the qualitative part of the study, previous studies and related papers from Web of Science, Research Gate, Google Scholar, scholarly publications, articles from journals were reviewed. According to these papers we have gathered information about the role of innovative instruments and traditional customs within the hospitality field, explored the challenges and opportunities faced by hospitality workers and helped to give suggestions for promoting the hospitality industry of Uzbekistan.

3.2 Data collection

In this study a structured survey was used to participants, and it includes both local and international guests who has visited in Uzbekistan and know about traditional culture and hospitality of this country. The survey consisted of 5 socio-demographic questions and 19 topic-related questions for all participants. All those questions are related to hospitality sphere and they help to understand visitors' satisfaction and suggestions.

CHAPTER IV. RESULTS

Quantitative analyses

During the research process, we conducted a survey among locals and international visitors for learning their satisfaction and experiences from their trip. In this online survey 101 participants attended. And now in this part we will analyze the responses of participants.

The socio - demographic profiles of respondents

In this online survey 38.6 % respondents are between 18-24 years old, 32.7% of them are 25-34 years old. The survey consisted of 47.5% males and 52.5% females. The educational background of participants is different and they divided into 4 types, 42.6% people have a master's degree, 36.6 % of them holds another different degree,12.9% completed a bachelor's degree. According to the table, we can understand that, 50 people (49.5) have visited to Uzbekistan only once. People who has visited this country 2-3 times are equal to 24.8%, and 4-5 times around 20%, however only 6 individuals (5.9%) of them visited more than 5 times.

Table 1. The socio - demographic profiles of respondents

Demographic Questions	Frequency (N=101)	Percentage (%)
<i>Age group</i>		
18-24	39	38.6
25-34	33	32.7
35-45	24	23.8
46-54	3	3
55+	2	2
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	48	47.5
Female	53	52.5
<i>Highest educational level</i>		
Bachelor's degree	13	12.9
Master's degree	43	42.6
Doctorate	8	7.9
Other	37	36.6
<i>How many times have you visited to Uzbekistan?</i>		
Once	50	49.5
2-3 times	25	24.8
4-5 times	20	19.8
More than 5 times	6	5.9

Table 2. Summary of quantitative findings (On a scale of 1 to 5)

<i>Quantitative questions</i>	1	2	3	4	5
Rate of the hospitality importance on guest's experience	1 1%	1 1%	16 15.8%	23 22.8%	60 59.4%
Rate of satisfaction from provided services by staff during the trip in Uzbekistan	—	7 6.9%	32 31.7%	38 37.6%	24 23.8%
Level of professional skills (customer service, communication skills) of hospitality staff	—	11 10.9 %	38 37.6%	27 26.7%	25 24.8%
Familiarity rate with the Uzbek hospitality traditions	7 6.9%	22 21.8 %	21 20.8%	26 25.7%	25 24.8%
The importance of Uzbek cuisine on tourist's satisfaction and travel decision	5 5%	7 6.9%	39 38.6%	30 29.7%	20 19.8%
Scale of agreement about effect of current technologies on unique guest's experience	3 3%	9 8.9%	31 30.7%	29 28.7	29 28.7%
The significance of guided tours to understand the history and a culture	2 2%	8 7.9%	36 35.5%	32 31.7%	23 22.8%
Probability of a suggestion Uzbekistan as a travel destination focus on traditional culture	1 1%	3 3%	18 17.8%	23 22.8%	56 55.4%

CHAPTER V. CONCLUSION

By combining both traditional and international standards into the hospitality field, Uzbekistan have a strong position to offer unique and memorable experiences for international visitors. These strategies are not only for attracting millions of tourists each year or to improve the hospitality field like other developed countries, but also for sharing and spreading the traditions and customs of Uzbekistan all over the world. In addition to, if the tourism industry of Uzbekistan continues to develop its infrastructure, they have to find a unique way to promote a deeper understanding of its cultural heritage and traditional hospitality cultures.

Recommendation

Recommendations for improving the quality of hospitality services, to improve guest satisfaction and experience in Uzbekistan:

- Implement Virtual Realities in the hospitality sector;
- Develop marketing and management strategies
- Develop different types of activities and offerings
- Implement feedback mechanisms
- Improve innovative instruments
- Improve road infrastructure
- Cultural nights
- Establish Cooking Classes
- Training classes for hospitality staff

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