

ANALYSIS OF HOTEL GUEST SATISFACTION RATINGS AND REVIEWS: AN APPLICATION IN SARAJEVO

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Abstract: The purpose of the study is to demonstrate the level of satisfaction regarding the quality of hotel services in the Canton of Sarajevo, specifically within the areas of Stari Grad, Centar, Novo Sarajevo, Novi Grad, and Ilidža. The analysis focused on hotels with 4 and 5-star ratings located in these municipalities. A total of 49 hotels were included in the analysis, with hotel reviews from the TripAdvisor platform being examined. A visual representation, in the form of a word cloud, was generated for hotels to emphasize important factors that influenced guest satisfaction, as well as to pinpoint potential areas in need of improvement. This thorough analysis offers a deeper understanding of guest opinions and experiences, enabling a better grasp on their feedback and the identification of crucial elements necessary for enhancing service quality within the hotel industry. The top-rated hotels in the city are situated in Stari Grad and Centar municipalities. Their stellar reputation is largely due to their prime locations. These hotels consistently draw in a large number of visitors, setting a high bar for their staff who understand the significance of providing impeccable service. On the other hand, hotels in Ilidža municipality have received lower ratings. Their distance from the city center poses a challenge that necessitates extra efforts to entice guests, a task that appears to be falling short at present.

Keywords: TripAdvisor platform; Hotels; Guest satisfaction ratings; Reviews; Sarajevo.

INTRODUCTION

Technology has revolutionized the hotel industry by providing convenient access to information and services. Through the use of web and mobile applications, guests can easily browse and select hotels, read reviews, compare prices, and make bookings. This has not

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only made the process of finding and booking accommodation more efficient, but has also allowed hotels to gather valuable data on guest preferences and behaviors. By analyzing this data, hotels can gain valuable insights into consumer behavior and tailor their services to meet the needs of their guests (Hargreaves, 2015).

Prior studies have found that customer feedback shared online is a valuable source of information (Wood, Guerry, Silver & Lacayo, 2013; George, Haas & Pentland, 2014). Utilizing online reviews for customer satisfaction research has become a prevalent indirect research approach (Živković, 2011; Barjaktarović, 2014).

According to Choi and Chu (2001), the key factors that influence a traveler's satisfaction in a hotel are the quality of staff, the room amenities, and the overall value. Prioritizing customer commitment is essential for fostering genuine loyalty. It is believed that intentionally nurturing loyalty as a fundamental part of your business will yield more significant outcomes than simply making superficial gestures. Key to guaranteeing customer satisfaction is understanding their needs and delivering the services they desire (Hargreaves, 2015).

Seočanac & Sekulić (2020) determined that special attention should be given to the unique conditions found within the hotel industry, specifically highlighting the important role and impact of qualitative information gathered from online sources. Feedback shared on the internet regarding hotel experiences has become a valuable source for understanding consumer habits. In addition, it has become a vital tool for hotel and tourism management.

The hotel sector in Sarajevo plays a vital role in the city's hospitality and tourism industries, contributing significantly to its overall growth. Hotels are considered an essential service industry, offering guests intangible experiences and high service standards. This study aims to delve deeper into the satisfaction levels of hotel guests and identify areas where improvements can be made by hotel management to enhance overall performance. The study included an examination of guest satisfaction ratings, focusing on aspects such as Location, Cleanliness, Service, and Value. Additionally, a detailed analysis of customer reviews was conducted, utilizing keywords to better gauge the sentiments expressed by guests regarding their hotel experiences. Data collected from Trip Advisor, an online platform, was used to compare and assess customer ratings and reviews for 49 different hotels in Canton Sarajevo.

METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH RESULTS

The study utilized data from Tripadvisor.com to investigate guest satisfaction factors in hotel services in Sarajevo Canton. Information publicly available on Tripadvisor was used to analyze the quality of services in 49 hotels across five municipalities in Sarajevo Canton.

Specifically, the study focused on 4* and 5* hotels in Stari Grad, Centar, Novo Sarajevo, Novi Grad, and Ilidža. The analysis concentrated on relevant data from 2023, covering categories like Location, Cleanliness, Service, and Value. Data collection took place between November 1st and December 15th, 2023, with a particular emphasis on qualitative feedback from guest reviews. By identifying key words in reviews, significant issues were addressed, and results were visualized using a Word Cloud. Fifty reviews were carefully examined for every hotel, if available. The analysis started with the most current reviews from 2023, followed by those from 2022, and so on, until 2019. The best rated hotels in Stari Grad municipality with a rating of 5 are: Hotel Aziza, Hotel Vip and Diamond Rain Boutique Hotel. The Word Cloud for all three hotels is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Key words in reviews for Hotel Aziza, Hotel Vip and Diamond Rain Boutique Hotel



Source: creation by the authors

Hotel Sahat and Hotel Europe have received the lowest ratings among all the hotels in Stari Grad municipality, with both establishments having an overall rating of only 3.5. The visual representation of the word cloud for both of these hotels can be observed in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Key words in reviews for Hotel Sahat and Hotel Europe



Source: creation by the authors

In Centar municipality, three hotels have received a 5-star rating: Hotel Boutique Platinum, Hotel Festival, and Hotel Colors Inn. These establishments are all classified as 4-star hotels. The visual representation of the Word Cloud for these hotels can be seen in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Key words in reviews for Hotel Boutique Platinum, Hotel Festival, and Hotel Colors Inn



Source: creation by the authors

Hotel Holiday Sarajevo and Hotel Belvedere rank as the lowest-rated accommodations in Centar municipality, receiving an overall rating of 3 stars each. Despite being categorized as four-star hotels, these properties have failed to impress guests. The visual representation of feedback for both establishments can be seen in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Key words in reviews for Hotel Holiday Sarajevo and Hotel Belvedere



Source: creation by the authors

In Novo Sarajevo, a thorough analysis was conducted on four hotels, all of which hold a four-star rating. The top-rated establishment is Bosmal Arjaan By Rotana, achieving a

perfect score of 5, while the lowest-rated hotel is Hotel Boutique Bristol, receiving a rating of 3.5. The visual representation of customer reviews for both hotels can be seen in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Key words in reviews for Bosmal Arjaan By Rotana and Hotel Boutique Bristol



Source: creation by the authors

An analysis was conducted on three hotels in the Novi Grad municipality, consisting of two four-star hotels and one five-star hotel. Among them, Ibis Styles Sarajevo emerged as the top-rated hotel with a rating of 4, while Hotel Walter received the lowest rating of 2.5. The Word Cloud representation for both hotels can be seen in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Key words in reviews for Ibis Styles Sarajevo and Hotel Walter



Source: creation by the authors

Fourteen hotels were analyzed in the municipality of Ilidža. the best rated hotels are Malak Regency Hotel and Heritage Hotel Krone, with a total rating of 4.5. The Word Cloud for both hotels is shown in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Key words in reviews for Malak Regency Hotel and Heritage Hotel Krone



Source: creation by the authors

Hotel BM International is rated 3.5 out of 5, while Spa Hotel Terme has a rating of 3.0, making them the lowest-rated hotels in Ilidža. The Word Cloud for both establishments can be seen in Figure 8.

Figure 8: Key words in reviews for Hotel BM International and Spa Hotel Terme

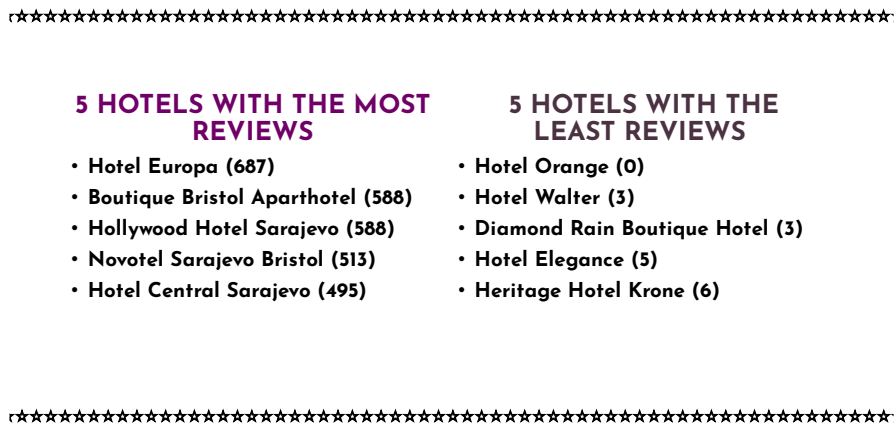


Source: creation by the authors

Overall, there are a total of 6 luxurious hotels in the Canton Sarajevo, each boasting a prestigious 5-star rating. These hotels are scattered across the different municipalities of Sarajevo, with one located in Stari Grad, one in Centar, none in Novo Sarajevo, one in Novi Grad Sarajevo, and three in Ilidža. Additionally, there are a total of 43 upscale hotels in the

Sarajevo region, each holding a commendable 4-star rating. These hotels are spread out among the various municipalities of Canton Sarajevo, with 17 in Stari Grad, 9 in Centar, 4 in Novo Sarajevo, 2 in Novi Grad Sarajevo, and 12 in Ilidža. Figure 9 depicts the hotels that have received the most reviews, as well as those that have received the least reviews.

Figure 9: Hotels with the highest and lowest number of reviews



Source: creation by the authors

Hotel Europa has the largest number of reviews, with 687 reviews, while Hotel Orange has no reviews at all.

Figure 10: Hotel ratings by municipality

GRADES	STARI GRAD	CENTAR	NOVO SARAJEVO	NOVI GRAD SARAJEVO	ILIDŽA
5.0	3	3	1	x	x
4.5	9	4	1	x	2
4.0	4	1	1	2	2
3.5	2	x	1	x	6
3.0	x	2	x	x	1
2.5	x	x	x	1	x
2.0	x	x	x	x	x
1.5	x	x	x	x	x
1.0	x	x	x	x	x

Source: creation by the authors

The top-rated hotels in the city are situated in the municipalities of Stari Grad and Centar. Their exceptional reputation is due to their prime locations, which draw in a large number of visitors. The staff at these hotels uphold high standards, recognizing the significance of providing impeccable service and maintaining a superior appearance. On the other hand, hotels in the municipality of Ilidža have received lower ratings. Their distance from the city center presents a challenge in attracting guests, requiring additional efforts that do not seem to be fully realized at this time.

Figure 11: Best and worst rated hotels

5 BEST RATED HOTELS

- Hotel Aziza
- Hotel Vip
- Hotel Colors Inn
- Malak Regency Hotel
- Bosmal Arjaan By Rotana

5 WORST RATED HOTELS

- Hotel Walter
- Hotel Belvedere
- Hotel Holiday Sarajevo
- Spa Hotel Terme
- Hotel Europa

Source: creation by the authors

The best rated hotels are Hotel Aziza, Hotel VIP, Hotel Colors Inn, Malak Regency Hotel and Bosmal Arjaan By Rotana. The lowest rated accommodations include Hotel Walter, Hotel Belvedere, Hotel Holiday Sarajevo, Spa Hotel Terme, and Hotel Europa.

The hotel has an overall average rating of 3.95, with the location receiving an average rating of 3.94. The cleanliness category boasts a high average rating of 4.25. Service category impressively scored an average rating of 4.24, and the overall value was rated at 4.01.

CONCLUSION

Tourism and hospitality distinguish themselves from other sectors because of the intangible nature of their services. This distinctive characteristic means they heavily rely on information. The easy access to information on the Internet has significantly increased their importance in the service industry. This research seeks to provide a thorough insight into the current service quality benchmarks in Sarajevo hotels by examining customer feedback on

Tripadvisor.com. The results from the statistical analysis show that customers were pleased with the level of service provided by the hotel.

The hotel is rated at an average of 3.95 overall, with the location earning a solid 3.94 rating. The cleanliness category stands out with an impressive average rating of 4.25. Service category also does well with a rating of 4.24, while the overall value is rated at 4.01. The most highly recommended hotels are Hotel Aziza, Hotel VIP, Hotel Colors Inn, Malak Regency Hotel, and Bosmal Arjaan By Rotana. On the other hand, the least recommended accommodations consist of Hotel Walter, Hotel Belvedere, Hotel Holiday Sarajevo, Spa Hotel Terme, and Hotel Europa.

In general, visitors are content with the level of hospitality offered in the Canton of Sarajevo. The positive reviews specifically commend the outstanding cleanliness and service provided. Hotel proprietors can utilize this feedback to elevate guest satisfaction and refine their offerings. The results of this research offer managers a chance to comprehend how guests view a hotel's operations. Through careful scrutiny of guest reviews and feedback, managers can pinpoint any shortcomings and implement necessary changes to boost the overall standard of service. Feedback serves as a vital tool in the ongoing enhancement of services, providing valuable insights that can help managers tackle obstacles and devise strategies for improvement (Seočanac and Sekulić, 2020).

The study's limitation stem from the exclusive reliance on reviews from guests who posted on Tripadvisor.com, thereby neglecting feedback from other platforms and individuals who do not reserve accommodations in Sarajevo online. Suggestions for future research include incorporating alternative hotel reservation websites, encompassing lower-tier lodging establishments, and expanding coverage to all municipalities within Sarajevo Canton.

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