

TOURIST SERVICES - MOBILIZING FACTORS OF EMPLOYMENT

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Abstract: *The development of tourism has several consequences on the use of human resources for the purposes of creating new jobs, determining a relatively high level of professional training structures. The specificity of tourist activity, its complexity, the multitude and variety of components, will influence the staffing needs and its structures on their requirement for training and selection, on the employment efficiency. Human resources in tourism have an important role in boosting demand, creating an atmosphere of relaxation, making the purchase decision, forming and maintaining of interest and sympathy for a certain touristic product or holiday destination, hotel or catering unit, transport or recreational facilities, respectively in determining tourist return. The particularities of the work in tourism influence directly the number and dynamics of employees, their structure, the labor productivity level, co-interest systems, selection and recruitment policies and training organization*

Key words: *human resources; tourist activity; tourist demand; labor productivity; employment efficiency.*

INTRODUCTION

Through a service quality, it is assigned "its ability to satisfy the needs of consumers or beneficiaries". Providing quality services leads to attraction of new clients, the growth of activity volume with current customers and also to the loss of as few customers. The quality achieving in the services field is a very difficult objective that requires skills, wisdom, determination and energy.

Human resources constitute a special human potential, unique, rare, hard to imitate and replace, which must to be understood, motivated and trained in order to overlap its goals across those of the organization.

A particular aspect of tourism-employment relationship is represented by indirect effect of the increase of people employed in this sector. As a consumer of goods and services, the tourism influence, in a beneficial way, the use of employment in certain branches, such as: agriculture, food processing, light industry, construction, building materials industry, etc.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

It has been defined the issue and formulation of the main hypotheses in order to constitute an explanatory and convincing model, inducing the importance and activity of the researched subject. Then, it has been drawn up and completed by the collected information. The drafting of this paper was made in laboratory, based on the notes from the ground, the existing material and consulted bibliography.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The activity of economic agents in the service industry (e.g. of a business hotel, restaurant, transport company, travel agency, etc.) differs in many aspects from activities in industrial enterprises producing goods. Therefore, profile, performance, organizational structure, quality perception of service enterprises will differ in many aspects from producing one.

In the strict sense of quality characteristics, some specialists identified the following dimensions of service quality:

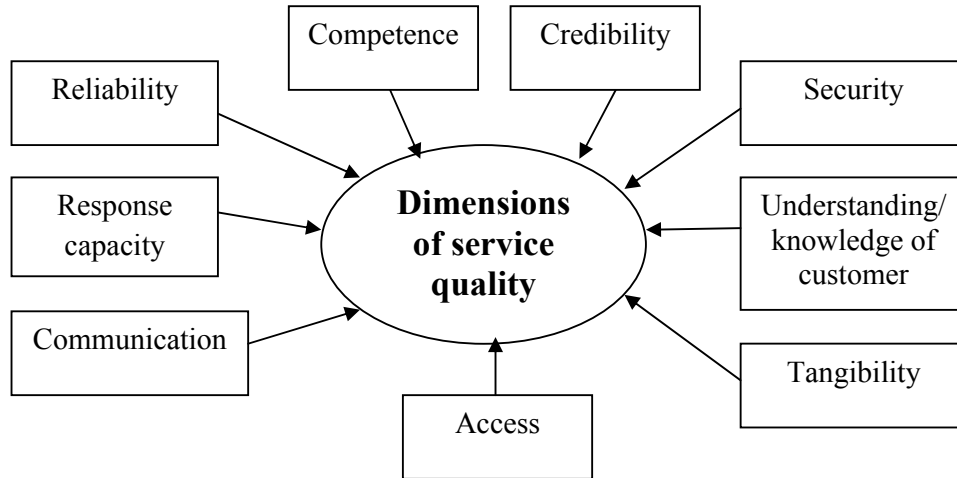


Figure 1. Dimensions of service quality

Subsequently, the authors used the six characteristics of service quality, namely:

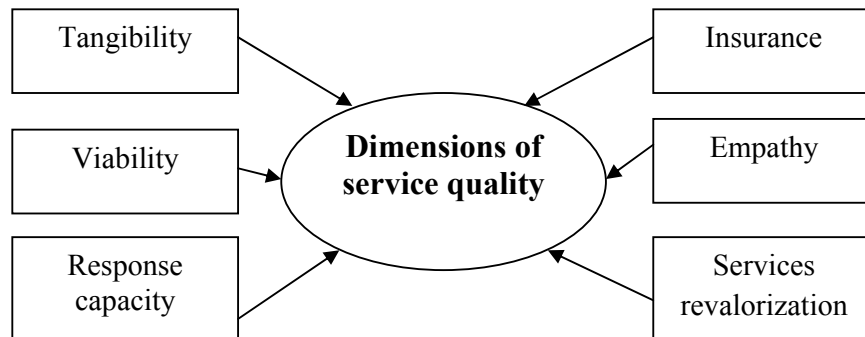


Figure 2. Six dimensions of service quality

The meaning of these characteristics can vary considerably, depending on the nature of services and their users so that, in assessing service quality, the weight given to the various features dependent on the specific spatial and temporal coordinates of each service.

ISO Standard 9004-2 recommends the clear definition of service requirements, in terms of observable characteristics by the customer and susceptible to be assessed. In the same time, it is necessary to define appropriate service processes through some

characteristics which are not always observed by the customer, but which directly affects the service performance.

Tourist services are presented as a set of activities which aimed to meet every need of tourists. A part of activities which give content of tourist services aimed to cover some needs ordinary daily (leisure, food), other have specific characteristics of tourism and respectively particular forms of its manifestation.

Tourism industry is ranked first in the world in terms of contribution to employment, providing a full spectrum of its structure - about 220 million jobs by the end of 2009, estimating that during 10 years, their number will increase to 276 million jobs in service provision specific to the hotels and other accommodation units, restaurants and other catering units, air transport, management and operation of airports, car rental companies, tourism agencies, tour operators, leisure, specialized guides etc.

The raw material of the tourist industry is represented by the human capital, it is important to make it a special place. The staff accountability on the effect of each initiative and on each service provided is essential. This accountability is associated with the manager's responsibility in order to identify and communicate clearly the mission and vision of his company as well as the staff needs and expectations. As highlighted by Guylaine Vachon, the consultants, often managers, forget to effectively communicate the policy established through clear, specific and measurable goals and, as a result, they are acting as a reaction rather than as a proactive manner.

To change the used orientation, the managers could learn from tracks proposed by Linda J. Shea: - Employee selection based on knowledge favorable to service industry; - Staff involvement in all aspects; - Constant communication of company objectives; - Reduction of stress and conflict sources; - Training to deal with difficult situations; - Development of recognition and bonus programs. Staff selection represents the first step. To ensure an efficient result, the staff must be aware of non-quality effects, quality dimensions in tourism enterprises, as well as the culture and needs of the industry.

Obviously, the selection of a candidate, who already has been trained in the field, is an advantage. The individuals who have been completed a training in tourism, whether a college or university level, are familiar with the challenges of a quality approach. In addition, in order to nominate candidates conscious by the quality approach, the industry benefits from a generally trained resource. People, with a recognized and official training, are more open-minded and able to adapt to changes."

Training staff, which has professional skills and attitude required by the tourist industry, is certainly possible by investing time and energy. However, providing a standard regarding the knowledge of employees is impossible and undesirable in the simultaneity of services industry. Training, especially if it is short, could not transfer necessary knowledge to a quality service. The knowledge and know-how, resulted from training, provide, however, favorable conditions of adapting a behavior desired by the industry.

The dimensions of service quality are determined by the staff activities. Their simply enumeration highlights the role of service staff, in a direct contact with the customer, by improving the quality of tourism services: reliability, receptivity, inspired confidence, personalization and their inclusion as objective of employment. Such a role is the consequence of the position held by staff, located at the border between the internal and external environment. The mentioned objectives suppose an emotional activity characterized by symbol, regard, expression of a sincere interest, conversation, etc. Because the improvement of service quality and the increase of productivity are often found in an inverse relationship (due to the specificity of tourist services), it appears

necessary the development of activity in a manner that ensures a balance between quality and quantity of services provided.

The quality of staff in tourism influence the productivity level and, implicitly, the quality of tourist services. In this context, the internal marketing proves to be particularly important. For staff training, the tourism company could choose a staff training strategy in their own system, or staff training in specialized units. From this point of view, it is recommended to establish schools specialized in vocational training, in hotel industry, similar to those from abroad, which are famous for their efficiency of offered trainings.

The management, entrepreneurial and other skills that the tourism sector, especially hotels with links to foreign business, provides are important long-run effects of tourism. Within the hotel industry, there is a trend towards greater investment in staff training.

Tourism development has some consequences on human resource for the purposes of creating new jobs, determining a relatively high level of training of professional structures and functions. The specificity of tourist activity, its complexity, given by the multitude and variety of components, will influence the staff and its structures, their requirement for training and selection, the employment efficiency.

CONCLUSIONS

Tourism is the biggest export service sector in many developing countries. Its value is set to increase in all regions, and especially developing countries, reflecting increased demand and comparative advantages. The tourism sector tends to be liberalised in developing countries compared with other sectors.

The advantages of tourism as mobilizing employment, result from the following aspects:

- an abundance of direct and derived effects for the entire economy;
- the potential to increase the employment in tourism industry is higher than the industry in general;
- number of jobs for beginners, youth, female staff by offering a wide variety of jobs specific to tourism industry;
- seasonal jobs or part-time for people which requires flexibility for the service industry, taking into account the future studies or family responsibilities;
- creation of jobs in areas with high levels of unemployment (especially in rural communities);
- ability to stimulate the creation of new jobs in different regions by investing in infrastructure;
- predominance of jobs in small and medium enterprises - the main engine of the market economy.

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