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ENHANCING GUEST EXPERIENCES THROUGH DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY IN HOSPITALITY

POBOLJŠANJE ISKUSTVA GOSTIJU KROZ DIGITALNU TEHNOLOGIJU U UGOSTITELJSTVU

Abstract. *This study investigates the impact of digital technology on guest experiences in high-category hotels in Serbia, conducted from September to October 2024. A structured questionnaire was utilized, distributed via QR codes to ensure convenience, resulting in 223 valid entries analyzed. Key findings indicate that approximately 78% of respondents perceive digital services positively, with mobile check-in/check-out identified as the most valued feature. Satisfaction levels varied significantly by age, education, and employment status, revealing that younger and more educated guests appreciate digital offerings more. The research contributes to understanding how hotels can tailor their digital services to enhance guest satisfaction and loyalty, emphasizing the necessity for a balanced approach that accommodates diverse guest preferences in an increasingly competitive hospitality market.*

Keywords: *guest experience, digital technology, hospitality.*

Apstrakt. *Ova studija istražuje uticaj digitalne tehnologije na iskustva gostiju u hotelima visoke kategorije u Srbiji, sprovedena od septembra do oktobra 2024. Korišćen je strukturirani upitnik, distribuiran preko QR kodova kako bi se obezbedila pogodnost, što je rezultiralo sa 223 analizirana validna unosa. Ključni nalazi pokazuju da oko 78% ispitanika pozitivno percipira digitalne usluge, pri čemu je prijavljivanje/odjavljivanje putem mobilnog telefona identifikovano kao najcenjenija karakteristika. Nivoi zadovoljstva značajno su varirali u zavisnosti od starosti, obrazovanja i statusa zaposlenja, što otkriva da mlađi i obrazovaniji gosti više cene digitalnu ponudu. Istraživanje doprinosi razumevanju kako hoteli mogu da prilagode svoje digitalne usluge kako bi povećali zadovoljstvo i lojalnost gostiju, naglašavajući neophodnost uravnoteženog pristupa koji će zadovoljiti različite preferencije gostiju na sve konkurentnijem ugostiteljskom tržištu.*

Ključne reči: *iskustva gostiju, digitalna tehnologija, ugostiteljstvo.*



Introduction

The way services are provided and how visitors engage with hospitality providers are being completely transformed by digital technology, which is also changing the hospitality sector. Visitors are growing more used to digital conveniences as technology becomes more ingrained in daily life, and the hospitality industry is responding to their demands for streamlined, customized experiences (Neuhofer, Buhalis & Ladkin, 2015). Digital technology, encompassing tools such as mobile applications, artificial intelligence (AI), the Internet of Things (IoT), and big data analytics, allows hospitality providers to tailor services to individual preferences, improve operational efficiency, and enhance the overall guest experience (Acharya & Mahapatra, 2024). One of the primary ways digital technologies enhance guest experiences is through personalization, where data-driven insights are used to cater to individual preferences, from room settings to dining options (Golja & Paulišić, 2021). Additionally, advancements in mobile technology enable seamless services such as mobile check-in and keyless room entry, creating a more flexible, efficient process that aligns with modern guest expectations (Bilgihan et al., 2016).

AI in the hospitality industry has produced smart in-room gadgets and automated customer service, giving visitors a new level of ease while freeing up employees to work on more difficult jobs that improve service quality (Božić & Zrnić, 2024). IoT devices in hospitality settings-like smart lighting controls, entertainment systems, and thermostats-improve the visitor experience by providing personalized, user-friendly spaces that react to inputs in real time. (Mercan et al., 2021; Olsen & Connolly, 2000). Digital technology integration also transforms the backend operations of hospitality firms, going beyond interactions with guests. Digital tools improve data administration, expedite departmental communication, and enable real-time updates, guaranteeing a unified and attentive response to visitor needs (Štilić, Ni-

čić & Puška, 2023; Jabbar, Prabowo & Hanafi, 2024). As the role of digital technology in hospitality continues to grow, its potential to enhance guest experiences is reshaping industry standards, setting a new benchmark for convenience, personalization, and operational efficiency in the modern hospitality landscape (Giannoukou, 2024). Technology has become a key component in reinventing visitor experiences and revolutionizing service delivery as the hospitality industry adjusts to the digital era. Efficiency, customization, and connectivity are becoming more and more important to today's passengers, and digital technology provides creative methods to meet these changing needs. Hospitality providers can create a seamless experience that starts before visitors arrive and continues after they leave by integrating technology into many aspects of guest contact, from pre-arrival services to post-stay communication.

A critical component in enhancing guest experiences is the application of big data analytics (Al-Hyari, Al-Smadi & Weshah, 2023). Hospitality providers use digital platforms to collect information from various consumer touchpoints, including preferences, spending trends, and satisfaction levels. By anticipating demands and personalizing interactions, this data-driven strategy helps organizations improve their services and increase customer happiness and loyalty. Digital automation is another area that has an influence; it reduces wait times, streamlines check-ins, and provides immediate support via chatbots and virtual assistants driven by artificial intelligence. Digital technology improves service quality and visitor engagement by automating routine interactions, freeing workers to concentrate on more intricate and high-touch guest offerings. Additionally, digital technology in the hospitality industry is not just found in specific hotels or resorts; rather, it is a component of a broader ecosystem that also includes digital payment systems, booking platforms, and transportation. By bridging several service providers and streamlining the visitor route,

this network offers visitors a seamless, end-to-end travel experience.

Technologies such as blockchain are gaining traction for secure, transparent transactions, while augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) enrich pre-arrival planning by allowing guests to explore facilities virtually (Bretos, Ibáñez-Sánchez & Orús, 2024). These advancements underscore the potential of digital technology to add value at every stage of the guest journey, reinforcing the importance of its integration within the industry. With the ongoing development of digital technology, hotel businesses now have new ways to surpass guests' expectations. Digital technology has redefined what it means to provide a memorable and fulfilling visitor experience by establishing settings where convenience, personalization, and interaction are effortlessly linked. With an emphasis on automation, digital engagement, operational efficiency, and personalization, this study explores the use of digital technology in the hospitality sector. It specifically looks at how these technologies affect Serbian high-category hotels' patron preferences and levels of satisfaction. Assessing how much digital services improve the entire visitor experience and determining the main elements influencing satisfaction across different demographic groups are the main goals. The increasing use of digital solutions in the hospitality industry and the urgent need to match new technology with the wide range of demands of contemporary visitors are the driving forces behind this study. The study intends to promote the strategic development and deployment of digital technologies in the hospitality industry by filling in gaps in the body of existing literature and offering practical insights.

The purpose of this study is to address the increasing significance of digital technologies in the hotel industry and how they affect the experiences of guests. It is critical to comprehend how tools like mobile applications, artificial intelligence, and the Internet of Things affect guests' happiness given their quick adoption in high-end hotels. Examining how these technologies satisfy guests' changing needs -

who now want individualized, effective, and seamless services - is the goal of the study. It also aims to pinpoint the main elements influencing satisfaction in various demographic groups, offering insightful information for customizing digital solutions to suit a range of tastes. To help hotels stay competitive and relevant in a market that is rapidly changing technologically, this research fills gaps in the literature and provides practical suggestions to promote the strategic development and successful deployment of digital technology. Research highlights that personalization, driven by big data and artificial intelligence (AI), has become a primary objective for hospitality providers aiming to improve guest experiences.

Literature review

The role of digital technology in enhancing guest experiences has been increasingly explored as hospitality services become more customer-centric and technology-driven (Roy & Pagaldiviti, 2023). Scholars and industry professionals alike have recognized that the adoption of digital solutions can significantly influence guest satisfaction, loyalty, and the overall quality of service provided (Anwar, Deliana & Suyanto, 2024; Zrnić, Jovanović & Novaković, 2024). Big data analytics allow businesses to gather and analyze vast amounts of guest information, enabling them to customize services to individual preferences. AI-driven solutions like recommendation engines and tailored room amenities enhance the guest experience by providing targeted offerings, thus creating a unique and memorable stay (Arapou & Kapiki, 2023; Margarido, 2015). This trend aligns with findings from Batra & Chatterji (2024), who emphasize that AI-powered personalization not only boosts satisfaction but also fosters loyalty as guests feel recognized and valued.

Automation has become a defining feature of modern hospitality, streamlined guest interactions and improved operational efficiency. Various studies have documented the use of automated check-in and check-out processes, smart room controls, and digital concierge ser-



vices as fundamental components of the guest journey. Kandampully et al. (2019) highlight that by reducing manual processes and wait times, automation allows for smoother, quicker interactions, enhancing the guest's overall impression of convenience. Similarly, Collins (2023), note that automated customer service through AI chatbots provides guests with instant support, offering an always-available resource for inquiries and support that elevates service consistency. Such studies suggest that automation serves both as a convenience for guests and an efficiency booster for staff, leading to improved guest engagement and satisfaction. Digital technology has also been instrumental in fostering connectivity and engagement, especially through mobile applications and social media. Also, mobile applications have become essential tools in enabling guests to interact with services such as room service, housekeeping, and booking management (Jung, Kim & Farrish, 2014). These applications provide guests with control over their environment and a direct line of communication with the hotel, which research has shown to contribute positively to their overall experience. Additionally, social media platforms offer guests a space to share feedback, which in turn allows hospitality providers to gather insights for service improvement. Engaging guests through these platforms has proven to be an effective way to build brand loyalty, as guests feel more connected to the brand and its values (Das, 2023).

Digital technology has also driven innovation in service delivery, providing new ways for hospitality businesses to differentiate themselves (Zrnić & Božić, 2024). Authors Alsaifi, Alzahrani & Mehmood (2023), discuss how augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) are increasingly being used for virtual hotel tours, enabling guests to explore facilities before booking. These immersive technologies create an interactive pre-arrival experience that builds anticipation and trust, especially among new guests who value a preview of the hotel environment. Similarly, Car, Stifanich & Šimunić (2019), highlight that IoT (Internet of Things) technology in hospitality,

such as smart thermostats, lighting, and entertainment systems, allows for a customized room environment. This ability to create personalized room settings aligns with modern expectations for tailored experiences, further reinforcing the value of digital innovation in elevating service standards (Srinivasan et al., 2024; Forman & Udvaros, 2023). Improving operational efficiency through digital technology has been widely researched, with studies indicating significant benefits for both staff and guests. According to Ghosh & Sen (2023), real-time data analysis through cloud computing and digital platforms enables hospitality providers to respond to guest needs faster and more accurately. This operational responsiveness is critical in meeting high guest expectations, as it minimizes delays and ensures a fluid service process. Furthermore, Mnyakin (2023), highlight that real-time data from digital platforms helps hospitality providers track key performance metrics, such as guest satisfaction and occupancy rates, to make informed decisions that positively impact the guest experience. By utilizing digital tools to monitor and adjust services in real-time, hospitality providers can maintain a high level of service quality. Despite the numerous advantages, the literature also points to several challenges associated with digital technology in hospitality. Scholars like Wylde et al., (2022), note that privacy concerns arise when collecting and storing guest data, making it essential for businesses to implement robust cybersecurity measures. While digital technology can enhance guest experiences, it may also depersonalize interactions, as reliance on automation can reduce human contact - a key aspect of traditional hospitality. Managing these challenges requires a balanced approach, where technology supports but does not overshadow the human element that defines the hospitality experience.

Research methods

The study aimed to explore how digital technology impacts guest experiences in high-category hotels across Serbia. This research was conducted through a structured que-

tionnaire, which was specifically designed for this study to align with the study's objectives and research questions. Based on research by Arapou & Kapiki (2023), a questionnaire was created for the purposes of this study.

Factor analysis was not conducted because the goal of the research was not focused on identifying latent factors. The questionnaire was designed to directly measure variables related to the research questions, eliminating the need for factor grouping. The study focused on analyzing individual variables and their relationships, without requiring a deeper understanding of latent structures. Given the specific research objectives, factor analysis was not necessary for further interpretation of the data.

The survey questions focused on demographic characteristics, guest satisfaction levels, and the perceived influence of digital technology on hotel experiences. These items were designed to align conceptually with the study's primary research questions, which were formulated based on an extensive review of the literature and the study's objectives. The questionnaire was distributed via QR codes, allowing guests to access the survey easily on their devices, ensuring convenience and user accessibility.

The research period spanned from September 2024 to October 2024. A total of 244 responses were collected, although 21 responses were excluded due to incomplete answers, resulting in a final sample of 223 respondents. These survey responses were analyzed to interpret statistical trends related to demographic information, satisfaction levels, and the role of digital technology in enhancing guest experiences. While the research questions provide the study's conceptual focus, the structured questionnaire operationalized these questions to collect data systematically. The research questions themselves were developed by the author to reflect the study objectives and ensure alignment with the main themes of the research. Further statistical findings and their connection to each research question are detailed in the study's analysis section, with demographic trends, guest satisfaction insights, and technological impacts contextualized accordingly. Table 1. presents the demographic data of the respondents, highlighting key characteristics such as gender distribution, age groups, education levels, and employment status, which collectively provide a comprehensive overview of the sample population involved in the study.

Table 1. *Respondents demographics data*

Demographic category	Subcategory	N	%
<i>Gender</i>	Male	135	61
	Female	88	39
<i>Age Group</i>	18-27	56	25
	28-45	84	38
	46-64	59	26
	65+	24	11
<i>Education Level</i>	High School	43	19
	College	71	32
	Faculty	68	30
	Master's	30	13
	Ph.D.	11	5
<i>Employment Status</i>	Unemployed	32	14
	Employed	155	70
	Entrepreneur	36	16

Source: Author's findings

Table 1. provides an overview of the demographic characteristics of the respondents, allowing for an understanding of the sample composition. The gender distribution shows a slightly higher percentage of male respondents (60.5%), while the age groups are balanced, with the 28-45 category representing the majority (37.7%).

Educational levels range from high school to Ph.D., with the college level being the most common. Employment status data indicates that most respondents are employed (69.5%), followed by entrepreneurs and unemployed individuals.

This demographic profile provides insight into potential biases or trends associated with gender, age, education, or employment. able 2 illustrates the satisfaction levels by age group, revealing significant differences in guest perceptions of digital technology in high-category hotels, thereby highlighting how age influences overall satisfaction with digital services offered during hotel stays.

Descriptive Statistical Analysis

The descriptive statistics for satisfaction levels across various demographics are presented in the following tables:

Table 2. Satisfaction Levels by Age Group

Age	Standard Deviation	N	(%)
18–27	0.45	56	25.1
28–45	0.67	84	37.7
46–64	0.75	59	26.5
65+	0.95	24	10.8

Source: Author`s calculation

Younger respondents (18–27 years) reported the highest satisfaction levels, while the oldest group (65+ years) showed the lowest. This trend suggests varying comfort levels with digital services across age groups. The table presents data on satisfaction levels across different age groups. For individuals aged 18 to 27, the mean satisfaction score is 4.5, which indicates a high level of satisfaction. The standard deviation for this group is 0.45, suggesting that

most scores are close to the mean. This group comprises 56 respondents, representing 25.1% of the total sample. In the 28 to 45 age group, the mean satisfaction score is slightly lower at 4.3, with a standard deviation of 0.67, indicating a bit more variability in satisfaction levels among respondents. This group has the largest number of participants, with 84 individuals, accounting for 37.7% of the total sample. For those aged 46 to 64, the mean satisfaction score drops further to 3.8, and the standard deviation is 0.75, showing a wider spread in scores. There are 59 respondents in this group, representing 26.5% of the total. Lastly, the 65 and older age group has the lowest mean satisfaction score at 3.2, reflecting a lower overall satisfaction level. The standard deviation for this group is 0.95, indicating significant variability in responses. With only 24 respondents, this group constitutes 10.8% of the total sample. Overall, the data suggests that satisfaction tends to decline with age, as younger individuals report higher satisfaction levels compared to older individuals.

Table 3. Satisfaction Levels by Education level

Education Level	Standard Deviation	N	(%)
High School	0.60	43	19.3
College	0.50	71	31.8
Faculty	0.40	68	30.5
Master`s	0.30	30	13.5
Ph.D.	0.20	11	4.9

Source: Author`s calculation

Higher educational attainment correlates with greater satisfaction, underscoring the importance of sophisticated digital offerings for educated guests. For instance, advanced features such as AI-driven virtual assistants, personalized recommendations based on past preferences, and seamless integration of smart room technologies align well with the expectations of highly educated individuals. These services cater to their likely preference for efficiency, customization, and innovation in the hospitality experience.

Table 4. *Satisfaction Levels by Employment status*

Employment Status	Standard Deviation	N	(%)
Unemployed	0.80	32	14.3
Employed	0.50	155	69.5
Entrepreneur	0.60	36	16.1

Source: Author's calculation

Table 4. shows that unemployed individuals have a mean satisfaction score of 3.7, indicating relatively low satisfaction. The accompanying standard deviation of 0.80 suggests that there is considerable variability in satisfaction within this group. There are 32 unemployed respondents, which accounts for 14.3% of the total sample. In contrast, employed individuals report a higher mean satisfaction score of 4.2, reflecting a generally positive perception of their situation. The standard deviation for this group is 0.50, indicating that their satisfaction scores are relatively consistent. This group is the largest, with 155 respondents, making up 69.5% of the total sample.

Additionally, entrepreneurs have a mean satisfaction score of 4.3, slightly higher than that of employed individuals, indicating very positive satisfaction levels. The standard deviation of 0.60 indicates moderate variability in this group. There are 36 entrepreneurs in the data set, representing 16.1% of the total. Overall, the findings suggest that employed individuals and entrepreneurs report higher satisfaction levels compared to unemployed individuals, who tend to have lower satisfaction. Employed and entrepreneurial respondents reported higher satisfaction levels compared to unemployed respondents.

ANOVA was used in this research to compare the mean satisfaction levels across multiple independent groups, as it is a robust statistical method for detecting significant differences when the assumption of approximate normality is met. Given the sample sizes and the nature of the data, ANOVA was deemed appropriate for analyzing variations in satisfaction across different demographic categories.

Table 5. *Anova test – Single Factor for Age*

Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance
18-27	56	250.9	4.480357	0.197244
28-45	84	363.1	4.322619	0.389723
46-64	59	230.1	3.9	0.525517
65+	24	86.8	3.616667	0.896232

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	18.99555	4	6.331852	14.70669	9.27E-09	2.645824
Within Groups	94.28875	219	0.430542			
Total	113.2843	223				

Note: SS (Sum of Squares) – Sum of Squares; df (Degrees of Freedom) – Degrees of Freedom; MS (Mean Square) – Mean Square; F (F-statistic) – F-statistic; P-value (Probability Value) – Probability Value; F crit (F Critical Value) – F Critical Value

Source: Author calculation



The ANOVA analysis investigates whether there are significant differences in satisfaction levels among four age groups: 18-27, 28-45, 46-64, and 65+. The descriptive statistics provide an overview of the data, showing the number of respondents in each group, the total satisfaction scores, the average satisfaction levels, and the variance within each group. The results indicate that the 18-27 age group has the highest average satisfaction score of 4.48, suggesting that younger respondents tend to be more satisfied. In contrast, the 65+ age group has the lowest average satisfaction score of 3.62, indicating lower satisfaction levels among older respondents. Additionally, the variance in satisfaction scores increases with age, implying that opinions on satisfaction among older individuals are more diverse and dis-

persed. The ANOVA test was conducted to determine if these differences in satisfaction levels are statistically significant. The F-statistic obtained from the test is 14.71, which is significantly higher than the critical F-value of 2.65. This suggests that the differences in satisfaction levels among the groups are not due to random chances. Moreover, the p-value is extremely low (9.27E-09), which is far below the conventional significance threshold of 0.05. This means that the probability of these differences occurring by random variation is almost zero, strongly supporting the conclusion that age has a significant impact on satisfaction levels. Based on the descriptive statistics, it is evident that satisfaction levels tend to decrease with age, with younger individuals expressing higher satisfaction compared to older respondents.

Table 6. Anova test - Single Factor for Education

Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance		
High School	43	160.4	3.730233	0.321207		
College	71	285.1	4.015493	0.224185		
Faculty	68	289.5	4.257353	0.163378		
Master's	30	136.3	4.543333	0.10254		
Ph.D.	11	51.1	4.645455	0.032727		
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	16.94487	4	4.236217	21.26354	8.05E-15	2.413059
Within Groups	43.43092	219	0.199224			
Total	60.37578	223				

Note: SS (Sum of Squares) – Sum of Squares; df (Degrees of Freedom) – Degrees of Freedom; MS (Mean Square) – Mean Square; F (F-statistic) – F-statistic; P-value (Probability Value) – Probability Value; F crit (F Critical Value) – F Critical Value

Source: Author calculation

The ANOVA analysis examines whether there are statistically significant differences in satisfaction levels based on education level, specifically among individuals with a high school diploma, college degree, faculty degree, master's degree, and Ph.D. The

descriptive statistics show that the number of respondents varies across these groups, with high school graduates having the largest sample size of 43 and Ph.D. holders the smallest with only 11 respondents. The total satisfaction scores and their averages

indicate a trend where satisfaction levels increase as the level of education rises. High school graduates have the lowest average satisfaction score of 3.73, while Ph.D. holders report the highest satisfaction level at 4.65. The variance in satisfaction scores is also noteworthy, as it decreases with higher education levels. High school graduates have the highest variance (0.32), suggesting more diverse opinions on satisfaction, whereas Ph.D. holders exhibit the lowest variance (0.03), indicating that their satisfaction responses are more consistent. The ANOVA test was conducted to determine if these observed differences in satisfaction across education levels are statistically significant. The results reveal an F-statistic of 21.26, which

is substantially higher than the critical F-value of 2.41, suggesting that the differences among the groups are not due to random chance. Additionally, the p-value is extremely small (8.05E-15), which is far below the conventional threshold of 0.05. This confirms that there is a statistically significant relationship between education level and satisfaction. In other words, satisfaction levels are not equal across the different educational groups, and the differences observed in the descriptive statistics are meaningful. Based on the provided averages, it is evident that individuals with higher education levels tend to have higher satisfaction, with the largest gap occurring between high school graduates and those with advanced degrees.

Table 7. *Anova test - Single Factor for Employment*

Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance
Unemployed	32	126.9	3.965625	0.484909
Employed	155	651.9	4.205806	0.285096
Entrepreneur	36	154.6	4.294444	0.239397

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	2.03823	3	1.019115	3.330647	0.037582	3.036898
Within Groups	67.31585	220	0.305981			
Total	69.35408	223				

Note: SS (Sum of Squares) – Sum of Squares; df (Degrees of Freedom) – Degrees of Freedom; MS (Mean Square) – Mean Square; F (F-statistic) – F-statistic; P-value (Probability Value) – Probability Value; F crit (F Critical Value) – F Critical Value

Source: Author calculation

The ANOVA analysis examines whether there are statistically significant differences in satisfaction levels based on employment status, specifically among unemployed individuals, employed individuals, and entrepreneurs. The descriptive statistics reveal that the number of respondents varies across these groups, with employed individuals forming the largest sample size of 155, while entrepreneurs and unemployed individuals

have significantly fewer respondents, with 36 and 32, respectively.

The total satisfaction scores and their averages indicate that entrepreneurs report the highest satisfaction level, with an average of 4.29, followed closely by employed individuals at 4.21. Unemployed individuals, on the other hand, have the lowest level of satisfaction, with an average of 3.97. This suggests that employment status may influen-

ce satisfaction, with those who are actively working or running their own businesses tending to be more satisfied than those who are unemployed. Additionally, the variance in satisfaction scores differs among the groups, with unemployed individuals showing the highest variance of 0.48, indicating more diverse responses within this group. Entrepreneurs, in contrast, have the lowest variance (0.24), suggesting that their satisfaction levels are more consistent.

The ANOVA test was performed to determine whether these observed differences in satisfaction levels across employment status groups are statistically significant. The results show an F-statistic of 3.33, which is

higher than the critical F-value of 3.04. This suggests that the differences in satisfaction between groups are not due to random chance. The p-value (0.0376) is lower than the standard significance threshold of 0.05, confirming that the effect of employment status on satisfaction is statistically significant.

However, based on the descriptive statistics, it is evident that unemployed individuals have significantly lower satisfaction compared to those who are employed or entrepreneurs. The relatively small p-value suggests that employment status plays a role in determining satisfaction levels, although the effect is not as strong as in previous analyses for age and education.

Table 8. *Research questionnaire*

Question	Results (n=223)
Which of the following digital services did you use during your hotel stay? (Select all that apply)	Mobile check-in/check-out: 120, In-room smart controls: 100, Virtual concierge services: 60, Digital payment options: 140
How frequently did you use the services mentioned above during your stay?	Daily = 60, A few times = 100, Once = 40, Not at all = 23
What motivated you to use digital services at this hotel? (Select all that apply)	Convenience: 110, Time-saving: 85, Ease of access: 95, Curiosity: 45, Recommendation: 60
How comfortable are you with using digital tools (mobile apps, digital payments, smart devices) during your stay at a hotel?	Very Comfortable = 80, Somewhat Comfortable = 90, Neutral = 30, Somewhat Uncomfortable = 15, Very Uncomfortable = 8
Does your age influence how much you value digital technology in your hotel experience?	Yes = 130, No = 93
How often do you use digital technology in your daily professional or personal life?	Very Frequently = 70, Frequently = 85, Occasionally = 40, Rarely = 20, Never = 8
Does your employment status influence your willingness to use digital services during hotel stays?	Yes = 140, No = 83

Source: Author's calculation

The data collected from the 223 respondents provides a comprehensive insight into the use of digital services in hotels, as well as guests' attitudes toward digital technology and its impact on their overall experience. Here's a detailed explanation of the results:

The most used digital service was digital payment options, with 140 respondents (approximately 63%) utilizing these services during their stay. This suggests that digital payment methods are highly preferred and widely accepted among hotel guests. The

second most used service was mobile check-in/check-out, with 120 respondents (around 54%) taking advantage of this feature. In contrast, in-room smart controls and virtual concierge services were less frequently used, with 100 (45%) and 60 (27%) respondents, respectively, indicating that while these services are gaining popularity, they may not be as universally embraced as mobile check-in or payment options.

When examining how often guests used these digital services, most respondents (100 individuals, or 45%) used these services a few times during their stay. This was followed by 60 respondents (27%) who used the services daily. A smaller proportion, 40 respondents (18%), used the services only once, while 23 respondents (10%) did not use these services at all. This pattern reflects a general trend toward moderate to frequent usage, with some guests not fully engaging with the available digital tools.

Respondents cited various reasons for using digital services at the hotel. The top motivation was convenience, with 110 respondents (49%) selecting this option. This was followed by ease of access (95 respondents, 43%) and time-saving (85 respondents, 38%). These findings emphasize that guests are drawn to digital tools that simplify and streamline their experience. Curiosity and recommendation were also factors, with 45 (20%) and 60 (27%) respondents, respectively, reporting these as motivations. While curiosity may suggest that some guests were exploring new technologies, recommendations indicate that peer or marketing influences also played a role in encouraging service usage.

In terms of comfort with using digital tools, most respondents felt very comfortable (80, or 36%) or somewhat comfortable (90, or 40%). However, a smaller group felt neutral (30, or 13%), and even fewer felt somewhat uncomfortable (15, or 7%) or very uncomfortable (8, or 4%). These results show a generally positive reception toward the use of digital tools in a hotel setting, though there is still a minority that is less comfortable with adopting new technologies.

Regarding age as a factor in the valuation of digital technology, 130 respondents (58%) reported that their age does influence how much they value digital services in their hotel experience. This suggests that younger guests may place more importance on the availability of such services compared to older guests, who may be more hesitant or less inclined to use digital technologies.

Respondents' satisfaction with the level of technological innovation offered by the hotel showed that 98 respondents (44%) were very satisfied (rating 5), while 80 respondents (36%) rated their satisfaction as 4. A smaller proportion rated their satisfaction lower, with 30 respondents (13%) selecting a score of 3, and even fewer selecting 2 (10 respondents, or 4%) or 1 (5 respondents, or 2%). This high level of satisfaction indicates that most guests feel positively about the technological offerings at the hotel, with only a minority expressing dissatisfaction.

When asked if they would expect digital innovation to influence their loyalty toward the hotel, most respondents (91, or 41%) gave a 5 (very likely), and 88 respondents (39%) selected a 4. This suggests that guests are more likely to remain loyal to a hotel that offers modern digital services. A smaller group (30 respondents, or 13%) selected a 3, with 14 respondents (6%) indicating that they would not prioritize digital innovation when considering future stays.

In terms of digital technology usage in daily life, 70 respondents (31%) reported using digital technology very frequently, and 85 respondents (38%) used it frequently. This indicates that a large proportion of guests are accustomed to using digital technology regularly in both their professional and personal lives. A smaller number, 40 respondents (18%), used it occasionally, while 28 respondents (12%) used it rarely or never. These results align with the general familiarity of respondents with digital tools and highlight the increasing integration of technology into daily routines.

For the last questions, the Mann-Whitney U test results are presented in the table, con-

firming that employment status significantly influences the willingness to use digital services during hotel stays. The Mann-Whitney U test was included as a robustness check

to confirm the findings, particularly given potential concerns regarding the distribution of data and sample size differences across groups.

Table 9. Responses based on employment status influence on willingness to use digital services

Test	U Statistic	p-value	Statistical Significance
Mann-Whitney U Test	11620	3.38×10^{-50}	Yes ($p < 0.05$)

Source: Author's calculation

The U statistic is 11,620, and the p-value is 3.38×10^{-50} , which is far below the standard significance threshold of 0.05. This means that the difference between the two groups (those willing and unwilling to use digital services) is statistically significant. The results strongly suggest that employment status plays a crucial role in determining whether a respondent is willing to use digital services in hotels.

When asked if employment status affects their willingness to use digital services during their hotel stays, 140 respondents (63%) reported that it does, while 83 respondents (37%) stated that it does not. This suggests that employed individuals, likely due to their greater exposure to digital technologies in their work environment, may be more inclined to embrace digital solutions during their hotel stays.

Table 10. Results of descriptive statistics for items related to satisfaction with digital technologies in hotels

Question	Mean (M)	St. Deviation (SD)
Digital technology enhanced overall satisfaction	4.00	1.08
Mobile check-in/check-out services are convenient and time-saving	4.00	1.07
In-room smart technology improved hotel experience	3.94	1.04
Virtual concierge services met needs during stay	4.02	1.05
Preference for more digital solutions in future stays	4.02	1.04
I am satisfied with the level of technological innovation offered by this hotel	4.20	0.87
Would you expect digital innovation to influence your loyalty toward this hotel?	4.15	0.89

Source: Author's calculation

The results presented in the table 10. show the mean and standard deviation values for each question on a Likert scale, indicating participants' opinions on various aspects of digital technology in their hotel

experience. Questions presented in the survey were not directly on the Likert scale, but the Likert scale was used as a tool to measure levels of satisfaction. A Likert scale was used to measure guest satisfaction

and perceptions related to digital technology in high-category hotels across Serbia, with response options ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree. The questions were designed to gather opinions about various aspects of digital technology in the hotel experience, and the Likert scale was employed to express how satisfied participants were with those aspects, ranging from 'completely dissatisfied' to 'completely satisfied.' So, while the scale allows for the rating of satisfaction levels, the questions themselves were not formulated on the scale.

For the question regarding how digital technology enhanced overall satisfaction, the mean score is 4.00, which indicates a generally positive response from most participants. The standard deviation of 1.08 suggests that while most responses were high, there was some variability, with a small number of respondents providing lower ratings.

Similarly, for mobile check-in/check-out services, the mean score of 4.00 indicates strong agreement with the statement that these services are convenient and time-saving. The standard deviation of 1.07 shows a slight spread in responses, though it still suggests general satisfaction.

The question about in-room smart technology received a mean score of 3.94, slightly lower than the previous two questions, which suggests that while respondents generally found the technology to improve their experience, opinions were more divided, as reflected in the standard deviation of 1.04.

Virtual concierge services had the highest mean score of 4.02, indicating that most respondents felt their needs were met by these services. The standard deviation of 1.05 further supports this, indicating that most responses were relatively close to the mean, though there was some variation.

Lastly, the question about preferring more digital solutions in future stays also scored a mean of 4.02, highlighting a strong desire for further digital innovations. The standard deviation of 1.04 shows consistent

support for more digital services in future hotel stays.

The analysis of the survey responses reveals that guests generally express high satisfaction with the technological innovation provided by the hotel, with a mean score of 4.20 and a standard deviation of 0.87, indicating consistent positive feedback. Similarly, the question about the impact of digital innovation on guest loyalty has a slightly lower mean of 4.15 with a standard deviation of 0.89, suggesting that most guests agree digital innovation positively influences their loyalty, though responses show slightly more variability.

The responses suggest that digital technology, particularly in the form of mobile check-in/check-out services and virtual concierge services, is highly valued by guests. The slight variations in responses across the questions indicate that while most respondents are satisfied with current offers, there is still some divergence in individual preferences and experiences.

The following research questions aim to explore how guests perceive and interact with digital technology during their stays in high-category hotels in Serbia. By examining guest satisfaction, valued digital services, and demographic factors, these questions seek to identify which digital tools are most impactful and how they vary across different guest profiles. Specifically, the questions address levels of guest satisfaction, the importance of specific digital services, and how factors such as age, education, and employment status influence guest preferences and experiences. Through this investigation, insights will be gained into the role digital technology plays in enhancing the hotel experience and catering to diverse guest needs.

Table 11. outlines the research questions along with their corresponding findings, demonstrating the relationship between various aspects of digital technology and guest experiences in high-category hotels, and providing valuable insights into guest preferences and satisfaction levels.

Table 11. Research Questions

RQ1: To what extent do guests feel digital technology enhances their satisfaction during hotel stays in high-category hotels in Serbia?	A large majority, 78%, indicated that digital services positively influenced their hotel experience, highlighting the role of digital solutions as a driver of satisfaction.	Positive Influence on Satisfaction: 78%
RQ2: Which digital services are most valued by guests in high-category hotels in Serbia?	Mobile check-in/check-out services were the most highly valued, with 50% of respondents ranking them as essential. In-room smart controls were preferred by 30%, and virtual concierge services were noted by 20%.	Valued Services: - Mobile Check-in/Check-out: 50% - In-room Smart Controls: 30% - Virtual Concierge: 20%
RQ3: How does guest age influence perceptions of digital technology in enhancing hotel experiences?	Younger guests, particularly those aged 18-27 and 28-45, reported higher satisfaction ratings (4.5 and 4.3, respectively) compared to older guests (46+), who averaged below 3.8, indicating varying comfort levels with digital tools.	Average Satisfaction Ratings by Age Group: - 18-27: 4.5 - 28-45: 4.3 - 46-64: 3.8 - 56+: <3.8
RQ4: What are the most frequently used digital services among hotel guests?	The analysis showed that mobile check-in/check-out services were most frequently used, followed by in-room smart controls and virtual concierge services, demonstrating a strong demand for technologies that enhance convenience.	Frequency of Use: - Mobile Check-in/Check-out: 50% - In-room Smart Controls: 30% - Virtual Concierge: 20%
RQ5: Do guests with higher educational levels show a greater preference for using digital services during their stay?	Higher educational levels correlate with increased satisfaction, where respondents with advanced degrees (Master's: 4.5, Ph.D.: 4.6) reported greater comfort with digital technologies compared to those with lower educational levels.	Average Satisfaction by Education Level: - High School: 3.6 - College: 4.0 - Faculty: 4.2 - Master: 4.5 - Ph.D.: 4.6
RQ6: Does employment status influence the perceived impact of digital technology on guest experience?	Employed guests (4.2) and entrepreneurs (4.3) showed higher satisfaction ratings than unemployed respondents (3.7), suggesting that professional exposure to technology influences positive perceptions of digital services.	Average Satisfaction by Employment Status: - Unemployed: 3.7 - Employed: 4.2 - Entrepreneur: 4.3

Source: Author's findings

This study addresses RQ1, which investigates the extent to which digital technology enhances guest satisfaction during hotel stays in high-category hotels in Serbia. Given the hospitality industry's increasing reliance on digital solutions, understanding guest perceptions is essential for assessing whether these innovations align with guest expectations. The survey gathered responses on satisfaction levels associated with digital tools such as mobile check-in, virtual concierge, and other in-room technologies. A large majority, 78% of respondents, indicated that digital services positively influenced their hotel experience. This figure highlights the role of digital solutions as a driver of satisfaction and points toward the potential need for hotels to further invest in technology that enhances the guest experience. This question seeks to measure the overall impact of digital technology on guest satisfaction within Serbian hotels. Given the hospitality industry's increasing reliance on digital solutions, understanding guest perceptions is essential for assessing whether these innovations align with guest expectations. The survey gathered responses on satisfaction levels associated with digital tools such as mobile check-in, virtual concierge, and other in-room technologies. A large majority, 78% of respondents, indicated that digital services positively influenced their hotel experience. This figure highlights the role of digital solutions as a driver of satisfaction and points toward the potential need for hotels to further invest in technology that enhances the guest experience.

In RQ2, the research explores which digital services are most valued by guests in high-category hotels in Serbia. Here, the research aims to identify specific digital tools and services that guests find most beneficial, which can guide future investment and development in the hospitality sector. Survey data showed that mobile check-in/check-out services were the most highly valued, with 50% of respondents ranking them as essential. In-room smart controls were also preferred by 30% of guests, re-

flecting a growing trend for personalized experiences. Meanwhile, virtual concierge services were noted by 20% of respondents, indicating an appreciation for on-demand information and assistance through digital channels. This data reinforces the importance of personalizing the digital offerings in high-category hotels, as it appears that convenience and control are key factors in guest satisfaction.

Addressing RQ3, this study examines how guest age influences perceptions of digital technology in enhancing hotel experiences. Age can significantly influence how individuals perceive and interact with technology. This question explores age-based differences in satisfaction with digital services to understand how high-category hotels might cater their offerings to various age groups. Respondents aged 18-27 and 28-45 gave higher satisfaction scores, with an average rating of 4.5 and 4.3, respectively, suggesting younger guests have a more favorable view of digital integration. Conversely, respondents aged 46+ gave lower scores, averaging 3.8 and below, indicating a less enthusiastic reception. This variation underscores the need for high-category hotels to consider diverse technology adoption rates and preferences across age demographics, possibly by offering both high-tech and low-tech service options to cater to varying comfort levels with digital tools.

For RQ4, the study investigates the most frequently used digital services among hotel guests. This question focuses on identifying which digital services are currently most utilized by guests, as usage patterns can indicate demand and practical functionality. Survey results showed that mobile check-in/check-out services were the most frequently used, followed by in-room smart controls and virtual concierge services. These findings demonstrate a strong demand for technologies that streamline logistical aspects of a hotel stay, emphasizing convenience and efficiency. Identifying these usage patterns allows hotel management to prioritize the development of these features, ensuring that

the most valued digital services remain available and continually optimized. To satisfy guest expectations and improve overall satisfaction, hotels might concentrate on optimizing these services.

In RQ5, the research explores whether guests with higher educational levels show a greater preference for using digital services during their stay. This question explores whether educational attainment influences the propensity to engage with digital services. Data reveals a trend where respondents with advanced degrees (Master's or Ph.D.) showed a higher preference and satisfaction with digital services, scoring an average satisfaction of 4.5 and 4.6, respectively. This finding could suggest that higher educational attainment correlates with a higher comfort level or familiarity with digital technologies, which, in turn, impacts satisfaction. Recognizing this trend may encourage hotels to enhance digital offerings, as educated guests appear to expect and appreciate sophisticated digital options during their stays. This group prioritizes convenience and innovation; therefore, hotels should think about improving their digital offerings to match their needs.

Finally, RQ6 investigates whether employment status influences the perceived impact of digital technology on guest experience. Employment status might affect guests' openness to digital experiences, particularly if their work experience involves technology. Data shows that employed guests and entrepreneurs tended to view digital services positively, with satisfaction ratings averaging 4.2 and 4.3. Unemployed respondents, however, had a lower average rating of 3.7. This variance suggests that those with professional exposure to technology or regular interaction with digital tools are more likely to appreciate and engage with digital services in a hotel setting. To ensure accessibility for everyone, hotels should think about creating user-friendly digital services that appeal to both tech-savvy professionals and visitors with less technological know-how.

Results and discussion

The results of this study provide significant insights into how digital technology enhances guest experiences in high-category hotels in Serbia. The findings indicate a strong overall satisfaction with digital services among respondents, with 78% of participants reporting that these technologies positively influenced their hotel experience. This high percentage suggests that hotels that invest in digital tools and services may be better positioned to meet guest expectations and enhance satisfaction levels.

When examining the most valued digital services, mobile check-in/check-out emerged as the leading preference, with 50% of respondents identifying it as essential. This trend underscores the importance of convenience in guest interactions with hotel services. In-room smart controls followed closely, highlighting a demand for personalized experiences that allow guests to tailor their stay according to individual preferences. Virtual concierge services, while noted by a smaller percentage (20%), still reflect a growing interest in on-demand assistance and information through digital channels. The implications of these findings suggest that high-category hotels should prioritize the development and implementation of these digital offerings to cater to guest preferences and enhance overall satisfaction.

Age played a critical role in shaping perceptions of digital technology among hotel guests. Younger guests, particularly those aged 18–27 and 28–45, reported higher satisfaction levels with digital services, averaging 4.5 and 4.3, respectively. In contrast, respondents aged 46 and older expressed lower satisfaction levels, with scores averaging below 3.8. This discrepancy indicates that hotels must be mindful of the varying comfort levels with technology across different age groups. By providing a blend of high-tech and traditional service options, hotels can effectively cater to the diverse preferences of their clientele.

The study also revealed trends regarding educational attainment and its influence on

engagement with digital services. Respondents with advanced degrees, such as Master's or Ph.D., demonstrated a higher preference for digital offerings, with satisfaction scores of 4.5 and 4.6, respectively. This finding suggests a correlation between educational levels and familiarity with technology, implying that hotels should enhance their digital offerings to align with the expectations of educated guests.

Employment status further affected perceptions of digital technology. Employed guests and entrepreneurs exhibited a more positive view of digital services, averaging satisfaction ratings of 4.2 and 4.3, while unemployed respondents reported lower satisfaction levels, averaging 3.7. This variance indicates that professional exposure to technology can enhance guest appreciation and engagement with digital services. Overall, the results highlight the significant role digital technology plays in shaping guest experiences in high-category hotels in Serbia. The findings encourage hotel management to not only invest in the development of digital services but also to tailor these offerings according to guest demographics and preferences. By doing so, hotels can enhance guest satisfaction and foster loyalty in an increasingly competitive hospitality market.

Conclusion

The research findings illuminate the critical role digital technology plays in enhancing guest satisfaction within high-category hotels in Serbia. As the hospitality industry continues to evolve in the digital age, understanding guest perceptions becomes increasingly vital for hotels seeking to maintain competitiveness and relevance. The data collected demonstrates that approximately 78% of respondents view digital services as positively impacting their overall hotel experience, signifying a substantial shift in guest expectations. This underscores the necessity for hotels to integrate technological solutions that not only facilitate convenience but also enrich the overall experience. The significant

preference expressed for mobile check-in/check-out services indicates a growing demand for efficiency and ease of access in hotel operations. In a world where time is of the essence, guests increasingly appreciate services that minimize wait times and streamline their arrival and departure processes. The popularity of in-room smart controls and virtual concierge services further emphasizes the trend toward personalized experiences, allowing guests to tailor their stay to their individual preferences. This shift towards personalized service can enhance guest loyalty and encourage repeat business, as guests are more likely to return to establishments that cater to their specific needs.

Analyzing guest demographics reveals essential insights regarding age, education, and employment status. Younger guests, particularly those aged 18 to 45, demonstrate a higher satisfaction rating for digital services, averaging scores of 4.5 and 4.3, respectively. This pattern not only indicates their comfort with technology but also suggests that they are more likely to embrace innovations that enhance their experience. Conversely, older guests (aged 46 and above) reported lower satisfaction levels, averaging below 3.8, highlighting the need for hotels to offer a balanced approach that accommodates both tech-savvy guests and those who may prefer traditional service models. Moreover, the correlation between educational attainment and satisfaction with digital services presents a critical avenue for hotels to explore. Respondents holding advanced degrees reported higher satisfaction ratings, indicating that educational background may influence how guests perceive and utilize digital technology. This connection could suggest that higher educational attainment is associated with increased familiarity and comfort with digital platforms, leading to enhanced guest satisfaction. Consequently, hotels might consider developing tailored marketing strategies that address the preferences of various educational backgrounds, ensuring that all guests feel valued and understood.

Employment status also plays a significant role in shaping perceptions of digital services. Data shows that employed guests and entrepreneurs tend to view these services more favorably, while unemployed respondents reported lower satisfaction levels. This variance indicates that individuals with regular interaction with technology in their professional lives are likely to appreciate the advantages that digital tools bring to their hotel experience. Thus, hotels should consider the professional backgrounds of their guests when designing and implementing digital services, potentially offering additional training or support for those who may not be as familiar with the technology.

This study illustrates that digital technology is a pivotal factor in enhancing guest experiences within the hospitality sector. The evidence gathered highlights the need for hoteliers to embrace technological advancements while remaining sensitive to the diverse preferences of their clientele. By strategically leveraging technology to enhance guest experiences, hotels can foster customer satisfaction, loyalty, and ultimately, sustained success in a competitive market. As the hospitality industry continues to adapt to technological advancements, ongoing research will be essential in ensuring that hotels meet the evolving needs and preferences of their guests, securing their position as leaders in a fast-paced environment. The insights gained from this study provide a foundation for further exploration into the transformative impact of digital technology in hospitality, paving the way for future innovations that enhance the guest experience.

While the findings provide valuable insights into the relationship between digital technology and guest satisfaction, it is crucial to recognize the limitations of this study. The relatively short research period and the limited sample size may constrain the generalizability of the results. Future research endeavors should aim for a more extensive participant pool and a longer data collection period to gain a more nuanced understand-

ing of the dynamics at play. Engaging with a broader demographic spectrum can reveal deeper insights into varying preferences and expectations, allowing hotels to refine their offerings further.

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FROM TASTE TO RECOMMENDATION: AN ANALYSIS OF FACTORS SHAPING EWOM AT GASTRONOMIC EVENTS IN VOJVODINA (R. SERBIA)

ОД УКУСА ДО ПРЕПОРУКЕ: АНАЛИЗА ФАКТОРА КОЈИ ОБЛИКУЈУ EWOM НА ГАСТРОНОМСКИМ ДОГАЂАЈИМА У ВОЈВОДИНИ (Р. СРБИЈА)

Abstract. *Gastronomy is increasingly recognised as a compelling motive for tourist visits, especially in regional and rural areas where local cuisine serves as a cultural and experiential asset. This study examines the impact of gastronomic offerings on the visibility of tourist destinations through eWOM, focusing on selected gastronomic events in Vojvodina (R. Serbia). The research employed a quantitative methodology, utilising a structured survey designed to assess five distinct factors: gastronomic motivation (authenticity and locality), social and emotional experience, pre-visit information-seeking behaviour, post-visit evaluation, and behavioural outcome (eWOM intention). The survey was conducted among 312 visitors to four major gastronomic events in Vojvodina. Data were analysed using factor and regression analysis. The findings indicate a positive*

Анстракт. *Гастрономија се све више препознаје као снажан мотив за туристичке посете, нарочито у регионалним и руралним подручјима где локална кухиња представља културни и искуствени ресурс. Ова студија испитује утицај гастрономске понуде на видљивост туристичких дестинација путем eWOM-а, са фокусом на одабране гастрономске манифестације у Војводини (Р. Србија). Истраживање је спроведено применом квантитативне методологије, користећи структурирану анкету дизајнирану за процену пет специфичних фактора: гастрономска мотивација (аутентичност и локалитет), социјално и емотивно искуство, понашање у трагању за информацијама пре посете, евалуација након посете и понашајни исход (намера eWOM-а). Анкета је спроведена међу 312 посетилаца на четири значајне гастрономске манифестације у Војводи-*

correlation between various factors, including gastronomic motivation, social and emotional experiences, pre-visit information-seeking behaviour, post-visit evaluation, and behavioural outcomes related to eWOM. These insights suggest that gastronomic events can effectively contribute to digital promotion strategies.

Keywords: gastronomic tourism, eWOM, tourist motivation, Vojvodina, gastronomic events, digital promotion.

Introduction

Gastronomic tourism has emerged as a significant segment of the tourism industry, particularly in regions that emphasize authentic local cuisine, traditional food products, and gastronomic events (Privitera et al., 2018; Rachão et al., 2019). Contemporary tourists increasingly seek experiences that extend beyond conventional leisure activities, with gastronomy serving as a compelling motive for destination choice and a critical component of the overall travel experience (Gregana & Ylagan, 2024). Tourist destinations increasingly utilize gastronomic events not only as a means of attracting visitors but also as a strategy for reinforcing local identity and boosting the local economy. In this context, gastronomic offerings acquire a new role, functioning not merely as a service component but as a strategic tool for positioning destinations within the competitive tourism market (Seyitoğlu & Ivanov, 2020; Vukolić et al., 2023).

The development of digital technologies has further amplified the impact of gastronomic experiences, particularly through electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), which has become one of the most influential forms of destination promotion (Verma & Yadav, 2021). Tourists increasingly base their travel decisions on online reviews, recommendations, and shared experiences from other

ни. Подаци su analizirani primenom faktorске и регресионе анализе. Резултати указују на позитивну корелацију између различитих фактора, укључујући гастрономску мотивацију, социјално и емотивно искуство, понашање у трагању за информацијама пре посете, евалуацију након посете и понашајне исходе у вези са eWOM-ом. Ови увиди сугеришу да гастрономске манифестације могу ефикасно допринети стратегијама дигиталне промоције.

Кључне речи: гастрономски туризам, eWOM, туристичка мотивација, Војводина, гастрономске манифестације, дигитална промоција.

travellers, positioning gastronomy as a key driver of positive digital feedback. The impact of gastronomy on tourist satisfaction is effectively transferred to the digital realm, where eWOM plays a pivotal role in raising destination awareness and shaping visitor perceptions (Kim & Hwang, 2022).

In this study, the focus is placed on the region of Vojvodina, a region known for its diverse and culturally rich gastronomy. The unique culinary heritage of Vojvodina presents an opportunity to examine how gastronomic events contribute to the digital visibility of destinations through eWOM. The subject of this research is the examination of the influence of specific factors – gastronomic motivation (authenticity and locality), social and emotional experience, pre-visit information-seeking behaviour, post-visit evaluation, and behavioural outcome (eWOM intention) – on the visibility of tourist destinations through eWOM in the context of selected gastronomic events in Vojvodina. The objective of the research is to assess the impact of five distinct factors – gastronomic motivation, social and emotional experience, pre-visit information-seeking behaviour, post-visit evaluation, and behavioural outcome (eWOM intention) – on tourists' propensity to recommend the destination through eWOM.

To achieve this objective, the research tasks include identifying and categorizing

five key factors influencing eWOM activity: Gastronomic motivation – authenticity and locality (primary motivator), Social and emotional experience (secondary motivator), Pre-visit information-seeking behaviour (informative factor), Post-visit evaluation (evaluative factor), and Behavioural outcome – eWOM intention. Each factor is examined in relation to its influence on tourists' willingness to recommend the destination through eWOM.

Literature review

Gastronomy has become one of the most important segments of the tourism offer, not only as a means of meeting basic needs, but also as a cultural and experiential element that significantly influences the perception of a destination (Kovalenko et al., 2023). In contemporary tourism, food is increasingly treated as a cultural asset that symbolises the tradition, history, customs, and lifestyle of the local population. Tourists expect to gain an authentic experience through gastronomy and to feel the spirit of the place they are visiting (Souza et al., 2020). In this context, gastronomic offerings represent a powerful tool for destination differentiation and identity-building in an increasingly competitive tourism market (Lequeux-Dincă et al., 2024).

Especially in rural regions such as Vojvodina, local gastronomy can serve as a driver of tourism development policy. The richness of national cuisines, ethnic diversity, and traditional recipes allows for the creation of products with high cultural and economic potential (Čavić et al., 2020). In addition to food, this includes beverages, local products with geographical indications, seasonal specialties, and handmade items related to food preparation. Organising gastronomic events such as festivals, fairs, or tastings becomes a means of promoting destinations, as well as a mechanism for preserving cultural heritage and supporting local producers (Nesterchuk et al., 2021; Solunoglu & Orgun, 2024).

Moreover, gastronomy has a significant impact on the economic aspect of tourism

(Bertan, 2020). It contributes to job creation, revitalisation of agriculture, and increased consumption of local products. A perceived quality gastronomic offer encourages longer stays, higher spending per visitor, and often influences repeat visitation (Bichler et al., 2021; Gajić et al., 2024). Precisely because of these characteristics, gastronomy is positioned as a key component of sustainable tourism development in regional destinations such as Vojvodina (Grubor et al., 2022; Čavić et al., 2023).

Tourist motivation represents a complex psychological process that drives certain forms of behaviour aimed at satisfying specific needs and desires (Kim et al., 2021). When it comes to gastronomic events, motivation is often based on multiple levels: the desire to enjoy taste and aroma, the need to discover new cultural and culinary values, the pursuit of social interaction, as well as interest in educational and entertaining content (Villagómez-Buele et al., 2020). Gastronomy provides an intense experience involving multiple senses—taste, smell, appearance, texture, and the atmosphere in which food is consumed (Spence, 2022).

Tourists who attend gastronomic events are often driven by personal curiosity, a desire to get acquainted with local cuisine, or the wish to experience something authentic and unique (Sthapit et al., 2020). Such events include traditional food festivals, wine events, culinary shows, tastings of local specialties, and other forms of gastronomic activities (Vukolić et al., 2021). These experiences not only satisfy individual preferences but also connect tourists with the local culture, encourage emotional engagement, and facilitate the formation of positive impressions of the destination (Yin et al., 2023).

Participants in gastronomic events often report high levels of satisfaction that go beyond food itself—including socialising, atmosphere, music, venue, host hospitality, and visual impressions. All of these factors influence their perception of the destination and increase the likelihood of a return visit or a recommendation to others (Ba-

du-Baiden et al., 2022). Understanding the motivational factors of tourists is therefore key to effectively designing a gastronomic offer that is competitive, authentic, and appealing to diverse visitor profiles (Richards, 2021).

Electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) is a process in which individuals share their experiences, opinions, and recommendations about tourism products and destinations via the internet (Aprilia & Kusumawati, 2021). It encompasses all forms of communication - from social media posts and comments on tourism websites to blogs, video content, and reviews. Unlike traditional marketing, eWOM relies on users' authentic experiences and therefore carries a high level of credibility and influence on the behaviour of potential tourists (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2021).

In the context of gastronomic tourism, eWOM holds particular importance as food and gastronomic experiences are intuitively linked to visual and emotional communication (Richards, 2021). Tourists often share photos of meals, taste descriptions, impressions of restaurants or events, which creates content that can reach a wide audience (Kim et al., 2021). This type of content not only promotes individual products or locations but contributes to building the overall image of the destination. The more positive and unique the experience, the more likely it is to be shared in the digital space (Xiao et al., 2022).

Additionally, eWOM allows destinations to receive feedback from visitors and improve their offerings based on real user expectations and satisfaction. Through the analysis of online comments, it is possible to identify which aspects of the gastronomic offer are most valued by tourists and where there is room for improvement (Cassar et al., 2020; Vukolić et al., 2022). Successful integration of gastronomy and eWOM promotional strategies can significantly increase the visibility and attractiveness of a destination on a global level, particularly in the case of lesser-known regions such as Vojvodina (Vukolić et al., 2024; Herstanti et al., 2024).

Methodology

The study was conducted in 2024 at four selected gastronomic events in the region of Vojvodina which is located in the north of the Republic of Serbia: the Sausage Festival in Turija, the Grape Harvest Days in Vršac, the Kulenijada in Erdevik, and the Golden Cauldron of Vojvodina Festival in Apatin. These events were selected because they are important manifestations that attract both domestic and international visitors, where gastronomy is at the centre of the tourist experience.

The sample consisted of a total of 312 visitors who participated in the survey during the events. Data were collected through fieldwork using a standardised and structured questionnaire, which was pre-tested in a pilot study conducted with 30 respondents. Based on the pilot study results, the formulation and order of some questions were modified to improve clarity and respondent understanding. The questionnaire was created in accordance with similar studies in the field of gastronomic tourism and eWOM communication, and it contained three main sections: socio-demographic characteristics of respondents (gender, age, education level, place of residence); and motivational factors and interests related to gastronomy (importance of local food, interaction with hosts, interest in tradition and culinary techniques, and intention to recommend the destination online). The sample was selected using a random sampling method, encompassing all visitors present at the four selected gastronomic events in Vojvodina during the data collection period. This approach ensured a diverse and representative sample, capturing a wide range of tourist profiles.

The survey was conducted at different times during the events in order to ensure sample representativeness and to capture a diverse spectrum of visitors. The questionnaire included closed questions, as well as items rated using a five-point Likert scale (from 1 – not important at all to 5 – very important). The collected data were analysed using descriptive statistics and methods of factor and regression analysis in order to identify key

motivational factors that influence tourists' willingness to recommend the destination through eWOM (Jalilvand et al., 2012; Bu et al., 2021; Milin, 2023; Akhi et al., 2023).

The questionnaire was specifically constructed for the purposes of this study, drawing upon previous research by Cordova-Buiza et al. (2021) and Vukolić et al. (2024) who investigated similar aspects of gastronomic motivation, social interaction, and digital behaviour in the context of gastronomic tourism and eWOM communication. The internal consistency and reliability of the questionnaire were tested using Cronbach's alpha, with a coefficient of 0.855, indicating a high level of internal consistency.

Results

The study included visitors of different age groups, educational backgrounds, and economic status, ensuring sample diversity and greater relevance of the results. Regarding gender, 177 respondents (56.73%) were male, while 135 (43.27%) were female. The most represented age group was 31 to 60 years, accounting for 133 participants (42.63%). Participants aged 18 to 30 made up 105 respondents (33.65%), while 74 participants (23.72%) were over 61 years old. In terms of educational background, most respondents had completed secondary school – a total of 126 participants (40.38%). A further 121 respondents (38.78%) held a university or college degree, while 65 respondents (20.83%) had a master's or doctoral degree. Regarding monthly income, 29 respondents (9.29%) reported having a low average income, while the largest number, 136 respondents (43.59%), declared earning a medium average income. High average income was reported by 110 respondents (35.26%), and 37 respondents (11.86%) belonged to the very high income category.

Cronbach's alpha coefficient is a measure of internal consistency, indicating how closely related a set of items are as a group. This coefficient is considered an indicator of scale reliability and is most commonly used when

multiple questionnaire items are rated using a Likert scale. In this study, the reliability of the questionnaire was tested using Cronbach's alpha, and the obtained value was 0.855. This value indicates a high level of internal reliability, confirming that the selected items are consistent in measuring motivational factors and attitudes related to gastronomic experiences and the intention to engage in eWOM activity.

The results of the analysis (Table 1) of the five identified factors in this study provide insight into tourist attitudes, motivations, and behaviours in the context of gastronomic events in Vojvodina, as well as their willingness to engage in electronic recommendation (eWOM).

Factor 1: Gastronomic Motivation – Authenticity and Locality had a mean value of $M = 3.25$, indicating a moderately expressed motivation to visit destinations for traditional food experiences. The highest-rated item in this factor was "Authentic gastronomy is, for me, an important part of the cultural experience" ($M = 4.81$), clearly indicating that the cultural value of food is a strong motivator for tourists. Preference for local over industrial products was also highly rated ($M = 3.99$), whereas less emphasis was placed on attending events as a way of learning about traditions ($M = 3.05$).

Factor 2: Social and Emotional Experience (Secondary Motivational Factor) recorded a mean value of $M = 3.33$, reflecting a generally positive visitor experience. The standout item was "Gastronomic events provide an unforgettable tourist experience" ($M = 4.12$), suggesting a significant emotional connection to such events. Other items received relatively consistent ratings, indicating that aspects such as interaction with hosts ($M = 3.35$), live tastings ($M = 3.25$), and the visual appeal of the event ($M = 3.22$) were moderately important to the overall experience.

Factor 3: Pre-Visit Information-Seeking Behaviour (Informative Factor) had one of the highest average values ($M = 3.62$), indicating the importance of online information prior to attending gastronomic events. Res-



pondents highly valued the ability to search online for information about local gastronomy ($M = 3.85$) and to follow gastronomic pages and profiles on social media ($M = 3.89$). However, the influence of social media content on the decision to attend received slightly lower ratings ($M = 3.15$), suggesting that while digital content is relevant, it is not the dominant motivator.

Factor 4: Post-Visit Evaluation (Evaluative Factor) recorded a mean of $M = 3.15$, indicating a moderately positive perception of the post-visit experience. The highest-rated item within this factor was “Sharing impressions about food with other visitors is interesting to me” ($M = 3.89$), suggesting that the social component of the gastronomic experience is important for tourists. Similarly, the statement “Food is a way for me to connect with other people” received a relatively high

rating ($M = 3.80$), further emphasizing the social dimension of gastronomic tourism.

Factor 5: Behavioural Outcome – eWOM Intention (Outcome Factor) had the highest overall mean value ($M = 3.88$), clearly confirming a strong willingness to recommend gastronomic destinations through digital platforms. The highest-rated items were “I recommend gastronomic destinations to friends via digital platforms” ($M = 4.55$) and “I enjoy posting photos of food and events on social media” ($M = 4.25$), reflecting a strong link between satisfaction with gastronomic experiences and the willingness to engage in eWOM. Interestingly, the item “After a good gastronomic experience, I gladly leave a review online” received the lowest score within this factor ($M = 2.15$), indicating that tourists are more inclined to share visual content and informal impressions rather than writing formal reviews.

Table 1. *Descriptive Statistics of Factors and Statements in the Analysis of eWOM Behaviour at Gastronomic Events*

Factor	m*	SD*		m*	SD*
Factor 1: Gastronomic Motivation – Authenticity and Locality (Motivational Factor)	3.25	0.858	When choosing a destination, the taste of traditional, local food is important to me.	3.66	0.885
			I always want to try dishes that are characteristic of the region I am visiting.	3.15	0.751
			Authentic gastronomy is, for me, an important part of the cultural experience.	4.81	0.855
			I prefer local products over industrial or imported ones.	3.99	0.852
			Attending a gastronomic event is a way for me to learn about the traditions of a place.	3.05	0.873
Factor 2: Social and Emotional Experience (Secondary Motivational Factor)	3.33	0.562	The atmosphere at gastronomic events influences my overall satisfaction.	3.15	0.751
			Interaction with hosts and chefs is important to me during a gastronomic event.	3.35	0.793
			I enjoy live tastings and food presentations.	3.25	0.713
			Good organisation and the visual appeal of the event affect my impression.	3.22	0.859
			Gastronomic events provide an unforgettable tourist experience.	4.12	0.788

Factor 3: Pre-Visit Information-Seeking Behaviour (Informative Factor)	3.62	0.776	Before visiting a destination, I always search online for information about the local gastronomy.	3.85	0.571
			I read reviews and comments from other visitors before deciding to attend a gastronomic event.	3.26	0.854
			Information on social media influences my decision to attend an event.	3.15	0.566
			Viewing photos of food and ambience motivates me to visit a destination.	3.55	0.856
			I follow gastronomic pages and profiles on social media.	3.89	0.698
Factor 4: Post-Visit Evaluation (Evaluative Factor)	3.15	0.665	I enjoy attending gastronomic events with friends or family.	3.45	0.710
			Food is, for me, a way to connect with other people.	3.80	0.677
			Participating in gastronomic activities together is important to me.	3.55	0.660
			Enjoying local specialities connects me to the culture of the place.	3.22	0.850
			Sharing impressions about food with other visitors is interesting to me.	3.89	0.651
Factor 5: Behavioural Outcome – eWOM Intention (Outcome Factor)	3.88	0.788	After a good gastronomic experience, I gladly leave a review online.	2.15	0.735
			I enjoy posting photos of food and events on social media.	4.25	0.798
			I recommend gastronomic destinations to friends via digital platforms.	4.55	0.799
			My positive experience motivates me to share impressions online.	3.90	0.887
			I believe that eWOM can help other tourists when choosing a destination.	4.02	0.843

**M*=mean; *SD*= standard deviation

Source: Author's research

Before conducting the factor analysis, the adequacy of the data was assessed using the KMO measure and Bartlett's test of sphericity. The KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) sampling adequacy coefficient was 0.812, indicating a good level of inter-variable correlation and the appropriateness of the data for factor analysis (values above 0.8 are considered very good). Bartlett's test of sphericity showed statistical significance ($\chi^2 = 1456.237$; $df = 276$; $p < 0.001$), suggesting a sufficient number of significant correlations

among the items in the questionnaire. These results confirm that the application of factor analysis is methodologically justified and valid based on the obtained data.

Table 2 presents the results of the factor analysis, indicating the eigenvalues, the percentage of explained variance, and the cumulative percentage of variance for each extracted factor. Based on the Kaiser criterion (retaining factors with eigenvalues greater than 1), five factors were extracted, collectively explaining 74.5% of the total

variance in respondents' answers. The first factor, Gastronomic Motivation – Authenticity and Locality, has an eigenvalue of 4.58 and independently accounts for 25.4% of the variance, indicating that it carries the largest portion of information from the dataset and is the dominant factor representing tourists' motivation to experience authentic and culturally significant local food. The second factor, Social and Emotional Experience, with an eigenvalue of 3.14, explains an additional 18.6% of the variance, highlighting the importance of the social and emotional aspects of gastronomic events, such as interaction with hosts and the overall atmosphere. The third factor, Pre-Visit Information-Seeking Behaviour, contributes 13.2% of the variance, with an eigenvalue of 2.1, indicating the relevance of online searches, social media influence, and information-seeking behaviour prior to visiting a gastronomic event.

The fourth factor, Post-Visit Evaluation, with an eigenvalue of 1.55, explains 9.8% of the variance. This factor captures how visitors reflect on their gastronomic experiences and how these reflections influence their perceptions of the destination. The fifth factor, Behavioural Outcome – eWOM Intention, accounts for 7.5% of the variance, with an eigenvalue of 1.22, representing the tourists' willingness to engage in electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) through sharing their experiences and recommending the destination via digital platforms. Cumulatively, these five factors explain a substantial proportion of the total variance (74.5%), suggesting that the factor structure effectively summarises the variability in responses and provides a robust framework for analysing the key dimensions of gastronomic experiences and their influence on eWOM intention.

Table 2. *Eigenvalues and Total Explained Variance*

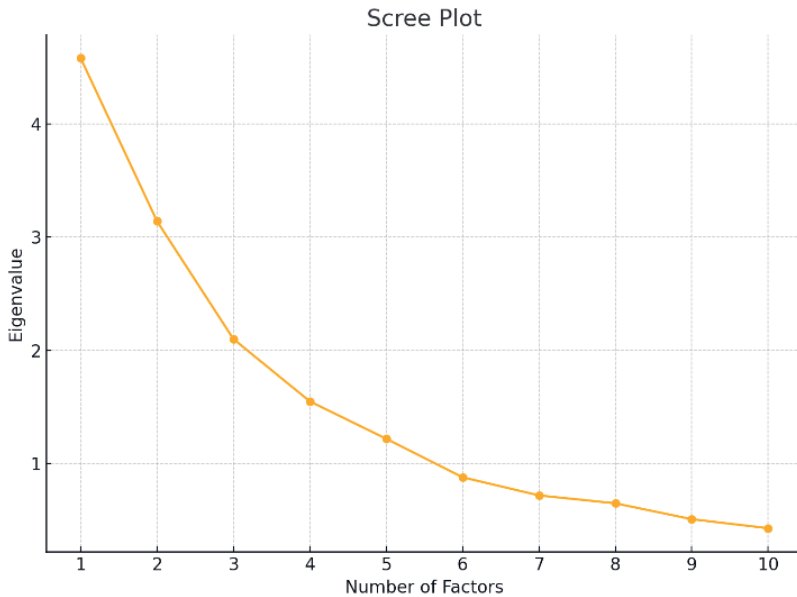
Factor	Eigenvalue	% of Explained Variance	Cumulative %
F1: Gastronomic Motivation – Authenticity and Locality	4.58	25.4	25.4
F2: Social and Emotional Experience	3.14	18.6	44.0
F3: Pre -Visit Information-Seeking Behaviour	2.1	13.2	57.2
F4: Post -Visit Evaluation	1.55	9.8	67.0
F5: Behavioural Outcome – eWOM Intention	1.22	7.5	74.5

Source: *Author's research*

Figure 1 presents the scree plot, which graphically displays the eigenvalues in order of the factors extracted in the factor analysis. As can be observed, there is a clear inflection point ("elbow") after the fifth factor, after which the curve sharply declines and the values level off. This shape of the curve indicates that the first five factors have significantly higher eigenvalues compared to the others, supporting their retention in the subsequent

analysis. After the fifth factor, the eigenvalues drop below 1.0, which is consistent with Kaiser's criterion, according to which only factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 are retained. The scree plot, therefore, visually confirms the results of the explained variance table and demonstrates that the five-factor model most appropriately describes the data structure in this study.

Figure 1. *Scree Plot of Extracted Factors*



Source: *Author's research*

Table 3 presents the results of the multiple linear regression analysis, indicating the impact of the four identified factors on the dependent variable – eWOM Intention. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.612$) suggests that the model explains 61.2% of the variance in eWOM intention based on the examined factors. The most influential factor in predicting eWOM intention is F3 – Pre-Visit Information-Seeking Behaviour (Informative Factor), with a standardised coefficient $\beta = 0.47$ ($p < 0.001$). This result indicates that tourists who actively seek information about gastronomic events prior to their visit, particularly through online platforms and social media, are significantly more likely to engage in eWOM. The second most significant predictor is F1 – Gastronomic Motivation – Authenticity and Locality (Motivational Factor), with $\beta = 0.29$ ($p = 0.002$). This finding confirms that tourists motivated by the authenticity and cultural value of local gastronomy are also more inc-

lined to share their experiences online. F4 – Post-Visit Evaluation (Evaluative Factor) had a positive but non-significant effect on eWOM intention, with $\beta = 0.11$ ($p = 0.175$). Although this factor captures tourists' reflections on their experiences and their potential impact on eWOM, the influence was not statistically significant in the current model. F2 – Social and Emotional Experience (Secondary Motivational Factor) demonstrated the lowest impact, with $\beta = 0.08$ ($p = 0.295$), indicating that the emotional and social dimensions of the gastronomic experience do not play a statistically significant role in predicting eWOM intention in this study. Overall, the findings suggest that pre-visit information-seeking behaviour and gastronomic motivation are the strongest predictors of eWOM intention, emphasising the importance of digital engagement and perceived authenticity in shaping tourists' online recommendations.

**Table 3.** *Results of the Multiple Linear Regression Analysis*

Independent Variable (Factor)	β (Standardised Coefficient)	t-value	p-value
F1 – Gastronomic Motivation – Authenticity and Locality (Motivational Factor)	0.29	3.12	0.002
F2 – Social and Emotional Experience (Secondary Motivational Factor)	0.08	1.05	0.295
F3 – Pre-Visit Information-Seeking Behaviour (Informative Factor)	0.47	5.43	< 0.001
F4 – Post-Visit Evaluation (Evaluative Factor)	0.11	1.36	0.175
Coefficient of Determination (R^2): 0.612			

Source: *Author's research*

Discussion

In this study, which explored the relationship between various aspects of the gastronomic experience and tourists' intention to recommend a destination through electronic eWOM, the regression analysis results indicate a significant connection between specific motivational and behavioural factors and eWOM behaviour. Specifically, the results show that the greatest influence on the intention for eWOM is exerted by the factor "Awareness and Digital Behaviour Prior to the Visit" ($\beta = 0.47$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that tourists who actively seek information online, read reviews, and follow gastronomic content on social media are more likely to leave a digital trace in the form of a recommendation after their visit. The second most significant predictor is the factor "Gastronomic Motivation – Authenticity and Locality" ($\beta = 0.29$, $p < 0.01$), supporting the notion that tourists motivated by the cultural value of local food and traditional flavours are also more inclined to share their positive experiences online.

These findings can be interpreted within the context of current trends in tourism, where gastronomy has become a central component of the destination experience and digital communication plays a key role in disseminating recommendations and shaping the destination's image. However, while these results are statistically significant, it is important to emphasise that regression analysis

only reveals the presence of linear relationships and does not necessarily imply causality. Other factors, such as personal value systems, experiences with service staff, visual presentation of food, or social influences, may further modify eWOM behaviour but were not included in this model. Furthermore, although the assumptions of normality, linearity, and homogeneity of variance were satisfied, it is worth noting that the analysis does not account for potential non-linear relationships or interactions between factors, which could be a direction for future research. The study is limited to gastronomic events in Vojvodina, and the results should therefore be interpreted in the context of the specific local culture, gastronomic offerings, and the tourist profile of the participants.

Conclusions

This study aimed to examine the impact of various aspects of the gastronomic experience on tourists' willingness to recommend a destination through electronic eWOM, with a specific focus on gastronomic events in Vojvodina. Based on the analysis of the collected data, five factors were identified that explain tourists' motivations and behaviours in the context of gastronomic tourism. Using factor and regression analysis, it was determined that the greatest influence on eWOM is exerted by the factor "Awareness and Digital Behaviour Prior to the Visit," indicating that tourists who actively seek infor-

mation, follow gastronomic content on social media, and read reviews prior to arriving at a destination are more likely to share their experiences online. The factor “Perception of gastronomic motivation - Authenticity and locality” was also identified as a significant predictor, reaffirming the importance of traditional and local food in forming a positive experience and recommendation.

These findings indicate a strong connection between the perception of gastronomic offer and digital communication in tourism. Gastronomy is no longer merely an accompanying element of the tourism offer but has become a central travel motivation and a tool for building a destination's image in the digital space. The study confirms that well-designed gastronomic events that combine high-quality food, authenticity, social interaction, and digital visibility have great potential in creating positive tourist experiences and encouraging eWOM.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

The findings of this research contribute to the theoretical understanding of gastronomic tourism as a multidimensional phenomenon that encompasses tourist motivations, behaviours, and digital habits. The study shows that eWOM is not an isolated activity that occurs after the trip but a process that begins prior to the visit during the information-seeking phase. These results support existing theoretical models in which gastronomy is interpreted as a means of communicating the cultural identity and values of a destination. At the same time, the study expands the existing literature by linking elements of online behaviour with gastronomic motivation, indicating new directions in the study of digital tourism.

From a practical perspective, the results have important implications for designing tourism marketing strategies and developing gastronomic events. Tourism organisations, local communities, and event organisers should place greater emphasis on digital visibility before, during, and after the event. Promoting authentic gastronomy through social

media, collaborating with food bloggers, and creating interactive content can significantly influence eWOM activity. By investing in well-designed gastronomic programmes that combine tradition, social experience, and visual appeal, destinations can significantly enhance their recognition, competitiveness, and reputation in the digital environment.

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Оригинални научни рад

УТИЦАЈ МЕНАЏМЕНТА НА ЗАДОВОЉСТВО ЗАПОСЛЕНИХ У УГОСТИТЕЉСКИМ ОБЈЕКТИМА У РЕПУБЛИЦИ СРБИЈИ

THE IMPACT OF MANAGEMENT ON EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION IN HOSPITALITY ESTABLISHMENTS IN THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

Анстракт: Задовољство запослених представља један од кључних фактора који утичу на квалитет услуга у угоститељству, а улога менаџмента у његовом обликовању је од суштинског значаја. Циљ овог истраживања је да испита утицај менаџерских пракси на задовољство запослених у угоститељским објектима у Републици Србији. Истраживање је засновано на анкетном испитивању 153 запослена у различитим врстама угоститељских објеката. Резултати су показали да запослени високо вреднују тимски рад и могућност коришћења сопствених способности, али да постоји простор за унапређење у области транспарентности комуникације и флексибилности менаџмента. Ово истраживање доприноси бољем разумевању фактора који утичу на задовољство запослених у угоститељству и може послужити као основа за унапређење менаџерских стратегија усмерених на побољшање радног окружења и повећање задовољства радника.

Abstract: Employee satisfaction is one of the key factors influencing service quality in the hospitality industry, and the role of management in shaping it is of essential importance. The aim of this study is to examine the impact of managerial practices on employee satisfaction in hospitality establishments in the Republic of Serbia. The research is based on a survey conducted among 153 employees in various types of hospitality establishments. The results indicate that employees highly value teamwork and the opportunity to utilize their own skills, but there is room for improvement in the areas of communication transparency and managerial flexibility. This study contributes to a better understanding of the factors affecting employee satisfaction in the hospitality sector and can serve as a basis for improving managerial strategies aimed at enhancing the work environment and increasing employee satisfaction.

Кључне речи: Менаџмент, угоститељство, задовољство послом, Република Србија

Key Words: Management, hospitality, job satisfaction, Republic of Serbia



Увод

У савременом пословном окружењу, обележеном брзим технолошким и социјалним променама, менаџери се суочавају са бројним изазовима у настојању да осигурају стабилност и конкурентност својих организација (Haseeb et al., 2019; Miśkiewicz, 2019). Један од кључних аспеката њихове улоге јесте мотивисање запослених и усмеравање њихових активности ка остварењу стратешких циљева компаније (Pleša & Čiprić, 2024; Kubanov et al., 2024). У литератури се срећу различити стилови руковођења, при чему је избор адекватног стила управљања од пресудног значаја за ефективност рада и степен ангажованости запослених (Ariussanto et al., 2020; Marshoudi et al., 2023). Угоститељски сектор, као динамичан и изузетно осетљив на промене у потрошачким навикама и тржишним условима, захтева посебан приступ управљању људским ресурсима, с обзиром на значај задовољства запослених за укупни квалитет услуга и искуство гостију (Kong et al., 2018; Yoopetch et al., 2021).

Са аспекта организације, високо задовољство запослених има бројне позитивне ефекте, укључујући смањење флукуације радне снаге, повећање продуктивности, унапређење тимског рада, смањење трошкова обуке и побољшање квалитета услуга (Fang et al., 2021; Adwan et al., 2024). Истовремено, са индивидуалног становишта, задовољство запослених утиче на њихову лојалност, мотивацију и укупни допринос развоју организације. Кључни фактори који утичу на степен задовољства укључују финансијску компензацију, могућности за стручно усавршавање, напредовање у каријери, квалитет међуљудских односа, сигурност запослења, радне услове, флексибилност радног времена и организациону културу (Yao et al., 2019; Hudays et al., 2024).

Предмет овог рада је анализа улоге и утицаја менаџмента на задовољство запослених у угоститељском сектору Републике Србије. Истраживање се бави

испитивањем различитих менаџерских приступа, њиховог ефекта на радну мотивацију и продуктивност запослених, као и испитивањем кључних фактора који утичу на перцепцију запослених о радном окружењу.

Задатак рада је да утврди у којој мери менаџерске активности имају утицаја на различите аспекте радног окружења, те у којој мери оне утичу на ниво задовољства запослених у угоститељским објектима на територији Републике Србије.

Циљ истраживања је да се кроз емпијску анализу утврди ниво задовољства запослених у угоститељском сектору Србије, узимајући у обзир различите аспекте радног окружења. Посебан фокус је на утицају менаџмента и кључним мотивационим факторима који обликују однос запослених према послу и послодавцу. Истраживање настоји да допринесе разумевању значаја ефикасног управљања људским ресурсима у угоститељству и да понуди препоруке за унапређење менаџерских пракси које би довеле до побољшања радне климе и смањења флукуације радне снаге.

Преглед литературе

Менаџмент и задовољство запослених у угоститељству

Менаџмент у туризму и угоститељству представља кључни фактор успешног пословања у сектору услуга (Belas et al., 2020; Abidin et al., 2021). Менаџери имају задатак да обезбеде квалитетну услугу, оптимизују ресурсе и мотивишу запослене, чиме директно утичу на њихов ниво задовољства и радне перформансе (Gerginova, 2022). Ефикасан менаџмент у овом сектору не подразумева само техничке и административне вештине, већ и способност препознавања и прилагођавања специфичностима радног окружења, које карактеришу динамичност, сезоналност и директна интеракција са потрошачима (Morgan et al., 2021; Qizi, 2025).

Сходно томе, менаџери у овим секторима морају бити веома прилагодљиви, са способношћу да брзо реагују на промене, креирајући тимски оријентисано окружење у којем запослени осећају подршку и мотивисаност за постизање организационих циљева (Rachmawati et al., 2021; Albogami et al., 2024).

Задовољство послом представља комплексну психолошку категорију која обухвата индивидуалну перцепцију и емоционалну реакцију појединца на услове рада, професионалне односе, могућности за напредовање и радно окружење (Zhu, 2012; Delgado et al., 2025). Важно је направити разлику између задовољства послом и општег задовољства запослених. Наиме, запослени може бити задовољан конкретним радним задацима које обавља, али истовремено незадовољан организационим културом, менаџментом или условима рада (Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020; Abbas et al., 2020). Насупрот томе, могуће је да радник има позитивну перцепцију радног окружења, али да његов посао не испуњава његова очекивања у погледу изазова и професионалног развоја (Meng et al., 2014). У угоститељској индустрији, овај феномен је посебно изражен међу запосленима који обављају оперативне и логистичке функције, попут помоћних куvara, хигијеничара, магационера и сличних позиција (Heimerl et al., 2020).

Задовољство запослених представља мултидимензионални конструкт који обухвата перцепцију радног окружења, међуљудских односа, могућности за професионални развој и усклађености личних и организационих циљева (Melían-González et al., 2015; Goretzki et al., 2021). Истраживања аутора Ganji et al. (2021) и Parida et al. (2023) показују да је задовољство запослених кључни предиктор организационе ефективности и ниже стопе флукутације радне снаге. Различити аутори дефинишу задовољство послом као емотивни одговор запослених на радне услове и пословне обавезе (Raziq & Maulabakhsh, 2015; Bhavya & Satyavathi,

2017). Кључни фактори који утичу на задовољство запослених укључују зараде и бенефиције, организациону културу, флексибилност радног времена, квалитет руковођења, могућност напредовања и обуку (Nantavisit et al., 2023). У угоститељству, специфичност овог фактора огледа се у потреби за високим ангажовањем радне снаге, честој интеракцији са гостима и захтевима за рад у сменама, што додатно утиче на перцепцију запослених о радном месту (Shani et al., 2014).

Мотивација, стрес и радна ефикасност

Мотивација запослених је уско повезана са задовољством послом и директно утиче на радне перформансе (Cvjetković, 2022). Угоститељски сектор, као услужна делатност, заснива се, пре свега, на директној интеракцији запослених са гостима, што чини њихову ангажованост и задовољство послом од пресудне важности за перцепцију квалитета услуге (Cimbaljević et al., 2024). Мотивациони процес у овом контексту подразумева сложену динамику утицаја различитих фактора (Hattie et al., 2020). Савремена истраживања указују на то да запослени у угоститељству често теже уравнотежености између екстринзичне и интринзичне мотивације, при чему недостатак једне врсте може умањити укупан ниво задовољства и довести до флукутације радне снаге (Putra et al., 2017; Chang & Teng, 2017; Zheng et al., 2020). Због тога је од суштинског значаја да менаџмент угоститељских објеката развија стратегије које уважавају индивидуалне потребе запослених, подстичу мотивацију кроз јасне могућности напредовања и континуирану подршку, те тиме доприносе стварању подстицајног радног окружења и вишем степену организационе посвећености (Teo et al., 2020; Dorta-Afonso et al., 2021).

Стрес на послу и сагоревање су појаве које имају значајан утицај на задовољство и продуктивност запослених (Gumasing & Ilo, 2023). Стрес може настати услед преоптерећености послом, нејасно дефини-



саних радних улога, лоше комуникације са надређенима или конфликта у тиму. Према истраживању Nawaz & Sandhu (2018), висок ниво стреса у угоститељству често доводи до смањене продуктивности и повећане склоности ка сагоревању на послу. У угоститељству, стресни фактори укључују рад под притиском, висока очекивања гостију, непредвидивост радног времена и физички напор (Yoo, 2023). Дугорочна изложеност стресу може довести до професионалног сагоревања, које се манифестује кроз емотивну исцрпљеност, деперсонализацију и смањен осећај постигнућа (Fesun & Zhurat, 2024). Организације које препознају значај управљања стресом имплементирају стратегије које укључују флексибилне радне аранжмане, програме подршке запосленима и унапређење радног окружења. Студија спроведена у Кини (Guo et al., 2024) указује да хотели са јасним стратегијама за смањење стреса имају знатно нижи степен флукуације запослених.

Методологија

Креирање анкетног упитника

Истраживање је спроведено на територији Републике Србије, у ком су учествовали запослени радници различитих угоститељских система пословања. Број прикупљених анкетних упитника даље је одредио које статистичке анализе ће се примењивати у истраживању. Анкетни упитник послат је ка 200 испитаника, од чега је прикупљено и обрађено 153. Испитаници су анкетирани електронским путем, као и лично од стране анкетара, анкета је била у потпуности анонимна. У сврху истраживања користили су се као модели радови аутора Guenzi et al (2019) и Chang et al (2020), уз одређене модификације како би се што боље прилагодило теми рада.

Анкетни упитник састојао се из 4 целине: прва целина односила се на социо-демографске карактеристике испитаника, везане за: пол, године старости, образовни ниво, број година радног искуства у

угоститељству, месечне, позицију и врсту угоститељског објекта у ком су запослени. Друга целина имала је задатак да прикупи податке везане за однос са менаџментом, где су запослени одговорили на 15 тврдњи подељених у 4 дела – транспарентност односа, моралну перспективу, одлучивање, и самосвесност. Трећа целина анкетног упитника испитивала је процене запослених о раду, те су испитаници одговорили на 15 тврдњи подељених у 4 дела – друштвену усамљеност у радном окружењу, прихватање сарадње / тимског рада, задовољство послом и присуство стреса на послу. Последња целина имала је задатак да прикупи податке о задовољству запослених послом, где су испитаници одговорили на 15 тврдњи, такође подељених у 4 дела – о условима управљања, лично испуњење, коришћењу способности у раду и о условима рада. Као метрика за оцену степена слагања испитаника коришћена је петостепена Ликертова скала, где су испитаници оцењивали варијабле од 1 до 5, а где су одговори конципирани од „апсолутно се не слажем“ до „апсолутно се слажем“. Сва питања анкетног упитника су била затвореног типа.

Резултати рада и дискусија

Анализа социо-демографских карактеристика испитаника

У овом истраживању учествовало је 153 испитаника запослених у угоститељским објектима на територији Републике Србије. На основу података из табеле 1, може се видети да је у истраживању учествовао приближно исти број припадника женског (52,9%) и мушког пола (47,1%). Испитаници су најчешће били старости до 30 година (56,2%). Скоро половина испитаника (49,7%) навело је средњу школу као највиши степен образовања. Када је реч о радном искуству у угоститељству, највећи број испитаника се бави овим послом мање од пет година (39,2%). Више од половине испитаника запослен је на оперативним пословима (55,6%), већина у хотелским објектима (58,2%).

Табела 1. Социо-демографске карактеристике испитаника

	Број испитаника	Проценат (%)
Пол		
Мушки	72	47.1
Женски	81	52.9
Године старости		
До 30 година	86	56.2
Од 31 до 40 година	55	35.9
Преко 41 године	12	7.9
Ниво образовања		
Средња школа	76	49.7
Виша/висока школа	23	15.0
Основне академске студије	36	23.5
Мастер/докторске студије	18	11.8
Године радног искуства у угоститељству		
Мање од 5 година	60	39.2
Од 6 до 10 године	48	31.4
Од 11 до 15 година	27	17.6
Преко 15 година	18	11.8
Радна позиција		
Средњи менаџмент (шеф кухиње, шеф сале, и сл.)	26	17.0
Оперативни послови (кувар, конобар, шанкер, и сл.)	85	55.6
Помоћни радник (помоћни кувар, помоћни конобар)	42	27.5
Врста угоститељског објекта		
A la cart ресторан	43	28.1
Хотел	89	58.2
Специјализован ресторан	11	7.2
Остало	10	6.5

Извор: Аутори

Анализа односа са менаџментом

Резултати приказани у Табели 2 указују на различите аспекте односа између запослених и менаџера, при чему се тврдње са највишим оценама односе на одлучивање ($M = 3.81$, $SD = 1.13$) и моралну перспективу ($M = 3.61$, $SD = 1.18$). То сугерише да запослени

генерално сматрају да њихови менаџери имају способност доношења одлука заснованих на вредностима и претходним резултатима, што је у складу са резултатима студије Guenzi et al. (2019), који истичу да се поверење у менаџерске способности позитивно одражава на радну мотивацију.



С друге стране, ниже оцене транспарентности односа ($M = 3.05 - 3.37$) указују на одређени ниво резервисаности међу менаџерима у погледу комуникације. Мањак отворене комуникације утиче на смањење задовољства запослених. Запослени који перципирају менаџере као искрене и отворене за дискусију имају виши ниво посвећености и тимске сарадње (Nangoli et al., 2020). Најнижу оцену остварила је тврдња у оквиру групе моралне перспективе, која се односи на спремност

менаџера да преиспита своје ставове о важним питањима ($M=2.99$; $SD=1.29$). Овакав резултат указује на то да запослени перципирају своје менаџере као мање флексибилне у погледу преиспитивања сопствених ставова и одлука, а разлози за такве ставове могу бити различити, од ауторитативног стила руковођења, страха од признавања грешака, али и недостатка повратних информација (Iqbal & Shakoор, 2023).

Табела 2. Анализа односа са менаџментом

Ред. бр.	Изјава	M (n=153)	SD
Транспарентност односа			
1.	Мој менаџер каже тачно оно што мисли..	3.30	1.17
2.	Мој менаџер је спреман да призна грешку када је направи.	3.05	1.31
3.	Мој менаџер подстиче запослене да износе своје мишљење.	3.37	1.25
4.	Мој менаџер је спреман да искрено покаже своје емоције.	3.08	1.25
Морална перспектива			
5.	Мој менаџер захтева повратну информацију како би побољшао интеракцију са запосленима.	3.61	1.18
6.	Мој менаџер је свестан ставова запослених према његовим способностима.	3.36	1.26
7.	Мој менаџер уме да процени када је време да преиспита своје ставове о важним питањима/проблемима.	2.99	1.29
8.	Мој менаџер показује разумевање и бригу како ће одређене радње утицати на запослене.	3.23	1.34
Одлучивање			
9.	Мој менаџер показује да верује у сопствене активности које предузима.	3.81	1.13
10.	Мој менаџер доноси одлуке на основу својих вредности и претходних резултата.	3.71	1.14
11.	Мој менаџер не захтева да заузмем став који подржава његове одлуке.	3.33	1.22
12.	Мој менаџер доноси одлуке у складу са етичким нормама.	3.60	1.22
Самосвесност			
13.	Мој менаџер жели да чује мишљења/ставове иако она нису у складу са његовим.	3.52	1.25
14.	Мој менаџер пре доношења одлуке анализира релевантне чињенице и податке.	3.48	1.25
15.	Мој менаџер пажљиво слуша различита мишљења запослених пре него што донесе одлуку.	3.31	1.32

Извор: Аутори

Анализа процене запослених о послу и радном окружењу

У Табели 3 приказани су резултати који се односе на перцепцију запослених о послу и радном окружењу, који су показали да су ставке са највишим оценама оне које се односе на тимски рад ($M = 4.20 - 4.27$), што указује на висок степен колегијалности и спремности за сарадњу. Ови резултати су у складу са бројним студијама (Phuong & Huy, 2022; Irfana et al., 2023; Jung et al., 2023) које истичу да тимска сарадња позитивно утиче на продуктивност и смањује стрес на раду.

Показатељи социјалне подршке нису добили високе оцене ($M = 2.68 - 3.48$), што представља неочекиване резултате и може указивати на осећај изолованости код појединих запослених, нарочито у

пословима који подразумевају индивидуални рад или рад у сменама. Овај резултат је сличан оном који су утврдили Jung et al. (2022), где су запослени у угоститељству често наводили да доживљавају осећај усамљености на послу.

С друге стране, стрес на послу је добио ниже просечне оцене ($M = 2.42 - 2.86$), што указује да већина запослених не перципира свој посао као претерано стресан. Ипак, показатељи као што је „Проблеми повезани са послом су ме држали будним ноћу“ ($M = 2.61$, $SD = 1.47$) указују да поједини запослени доживљавају хроничан стрес, што је у складу са студијом Porter et al. (2024), која показује да несигурност на радном месту и флукуација радне снаге могу довести до повећаног нивоа стреса.

Табела 3. Анализа процене запослених о послу и радном окружењу

Ред. бр.	Изјава	M (n=153)	SD
Друштвена усамљеност у радном окружењу			
1.	Постоји много људи на које се могу ослонити када имам проблема.	3.17	1.30
2.	Постоји много људи којима могу потпуно веровати.	2.68	1.19
3.	Имам довољно људи са којима се осећам блиским.	3.48	1.27
Прихватање сарадње / тимског рада			
4.	Познат/а сам као тимски играч када наступамо у групама.	4.20	0.95
5.	Увек испуњавам своје обавезе према другима са којима радим.	4.27	0.91
6.	Увек сам на располагању да одиграм своју улогу у фаворизовању општег добра групе.	4.20	0.80
7.	Тимски рад је нешто у чему сам одувек уживао/ла.	3.95	1.09
Задовољство послом			
8.	Мој рад је веома задовољавајући.	4.16	0.90
9.	Осећам да заиста радим нешто вредно у свом послу.	4.16	1.00
10.	Мој рад је изазован.	4.22	0.98
11.	Мој рад је веома интересантан.	4.12	1.02
Стрес на послу			
12.	Осећам се немирно или нервозно због посла.	2.86	1.34
13.	Проблеми повезани са послом су ме држали будним ноћу.	2.61	1.47
14.	Осећам се нервозно пре него што присуствујем састанцима у овој организацији.	2.42	1.32
15.	Да имам другачији посао, моје здравље би се вероватно побољшало.	2.79	1.45

Извор: Аутори



Анализа задовољства послом

Анализа задовољства запослених различитим аспектима посла приказана је у табели 4. Највише оцене добиле су изјаве везане за коришћење способности ($M = 4.01 - 4.10$) и лично испуњење ($M = 3.61 - 3.81$), што указује на то да запослени углавном имају прилику да користе своје вештине и осећају се остварено у свом раду. Ово је у складу са теоријама (Wau & Purwanto, 2021; Rachmawati et al., 2024) према којима су могућности за про-

фесионално остварење кључни фактори у повећању радне мотивације.

С друге стране, најниже оцењена тврдња је „Увек добијем награду за добро одрађен посао“ ($M = 2.74$, $SD = 1.38$), што може указивати на незадовољство системом награђивања. Овај налаз је у складу са истраживањем Koo et al., (2020), које показује да недостатак материјалних и нематеријалних подстицаја често доводи до мање посвећености и веће флукуације радне снаге.

Табела 4. *Задовољство запослених послом*

Ред. бр.	Изјава	М (n=153)	SD
Услови управљања			
1.	Мој менаџер је компетентан у доношењу одлука.	3.49	1.24
2.	Начин на који мој менаџер поступа са својим запосленима је добар.	3.56	1.34
3.	Услови рада на послу (загревање, климатизација, рашчишћавање) су добри.	3.45	1.36
4.	Увек добијем награду за добро одрађен посао.	2.74	1.38
Лично испуњење			
5.	Испуњава ме осећај достигнућа који добијам од посла.	3.61	1.17
6.	Имам прилику да радим ствари које не иду против моје савести.	3.77	1.11
7.	Имам слободу да користим сопствени суд.	3.81	1.12
Коришћење способности			
8.	Имам прилику да радим нешто што користи моје способности.	4.09	1.02
9.	Имам прилику да радим сам на послу.	3.76	1.28
10.	Имам прилику да радим ствари за друге људе.	4.10	0.87
11.	Имам прилику да испробам сопствене методе обављања посла.	4.01	1.05
Услови рада			
12.	Имам прилику да с времена на време радим различите ствари.	4.03	1.09
13.	Имам прилику да будем „неко“ у заједници.	3.67	1.15
14.	Имам прилику за напредовањем у овом послу.	3.86	1.20
15.	Имам прилику да кажем људима шта да раде.	3.65	1.24

Извор: Аутори

Закључак

Ово истраживање је пружио увид у утицај менаџмента на задовољство запослених у угоститељским објектима у Републици Србији. Резултати су показали да

су кључни фактори који доприносе задовољству запослених повезани са тимским радом, могућношћу коришћења сопствених способности и личним испуњењем. Истовремено, одређени аспекти менаџер-

ског стила, као што су транспарентност у комуникацији и флексибилност у доношењу одлука, идентификовани су као области које захтевају унапређење.

Посебно је значајно запажање да запослени у угоститељству генерално исказују висок степен преданости тимском раду и професионалном ангажовању, али да су изражени изазови у погледу недостатка транспарентне комуникације са менаџментом, као и недовољне повратне информације које би омогућиле бољу адаптацију менаџерских одлука. Низак степен задовољства системом награђивања такође указује на потребу за побољшањем стратегија мотивације и признавања доприноса запослених. Иако постоје одређене слабости у менаџерским праксама, резултати овог истраживања могу послужити као основа за даље унапређење радног окружења кроз боље стратегије комуникације, награђивања и укључивања запослених у процес доношења одлука.

Ограничења истраживања

Иако ово истраживање пружа вредне увиде у утицај менаџмента на задовољство запослених, постоје одређена ограничења која треба узети у обзир приликом интерпретације резултата. Истраживање је спроведено на узорку запослених у Србији, што може ограничити могућност генерализације налаза на друге земље са различитим културним, економским и организационим карактеристикама. Истраживање је такође фокусирано на субјективне перцепције запослених, док би укључивање објективних показатеља, као што су стопа флукуације радне снаге, продуктивност и економски резултати угоститељских објеката, могло пружити свеобухватнију слику односа између менаџмента и задовољства запослених.

Предлози за будућа истраживања

Будућа истраживања би могла продубити разумевање ове теме кроз неколико смерница. Упоредивање резултата различитих типова угоститељских објеката,

као што су хотели, а не карт ресторани и специјализовани угоститељски објекти, како би се утврдило да ли се менаџерске праксе и њихови ефекти разликују у зависности од врсте пословања. Такође, компаративна истраживања између различитих земаља или региона могла би пружити шири контекст у вези са улогом културних фактора у управљању људским ресурсима у угоститељству. Употреба квалитативних метода, као што су дубински интервјуи или фокус групе са запосленима и менаџерима, могла би допринети бољем разумевању специфичних изазова и решења у овој области.

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ШПАНСКА КУХИЊА: ПОЗНАВАЊЕ, ЗАСТУПЉЕНОСТ И ЗАДОВОЉСТВО ПОСМАТРАНО ИЗ УГЛА УГОСТИТЕЉСКИХ РАДНИКА

SPANISH CUISINE: AWARENESS, PREVALENCE, AND SATISFACTION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF HOSPITALITY EMPLOYEES

Анстракт. Шпанска кухиња представља једну од најзначајнијих гастрономских традиција, познату по својој разноврсности, регионалним специјалитетима и културној вредности. Њена разноврсност гастрономских производа настала је као резултат јединственог географског положаја, али и сложених културно-историјских утицаја. Кухиња ове земље одавно превазилази њене границе и представља једну од најважнијих интернационалних кухиња са великим бројем јела прихваћених широм света. Предмет овог истраживања је познавање и заступљеност шпанске кухиње, као и задовољство понудом у угоститељским објектима на подручју Београда, као значајног угоститељско-туристичког центра. Основни задатак је да се испита ниво информисаности угоститељских радника о карактеристикама шпанске гастрономије, као и да се утврди заступљеност јела у актуелној угоститељској понуди. Циљ истраживања је да се утврди у којој мери су запослени у угоститељству упознати са карактеристикама шпанске кухиње, колико су јела присутна у понуди и да ли

Abstract. Spanish cuisine represents one of the most significant gastronomic traditions, known for its diversity, regional specialties, and cultural value. Its variety of culinary products has developed as a result of Spain's unique geographical position and complex cultural and historical influences. The cuisine of this country has long transcended its borders and is now considered one of the most important international cuisines, with numerous dishes embraced worldwide. The subject of this research is the awareness and presence of Spanish cuisine, as well as the satisfaction with its offering in hospitality establishments in Belgrade, a major hospitality and tourism center. The primary objective is to examine the level of knowledge among hospitality workers regarding the characteristics of Spanish gastronomy and to determine the representation of Spanish dishes in the current food service offerings. The aim of the research is to assess the extent to which hospitality employees are familiar with the characteristics of Spanish cuisine, how present these dishes are in menus, and whether there is satisfaction



постоји задовољство односно потенцијал за њихово шире укључивање у понуду. Истраживање је спроведено анкетирањем запослених у угоститељским објектима на подручју Београда, а подаци су анализирани применом дескриптивне статистике. Резултати истраживања су показали ограничену информисаност о шпанској кухињи, ниску заступљеност њених јела у понуди, али и високу отвореност ка њеном увођењу у меније.

Кључне речи: шпанска кухиња, угоститељство, гастрономија, Шпанија, тапаси

Увод

Јела шпанске кухиње представљају сложен и разноврстан систем као резултат дуге еволуције кроз историју. Поред регионалне разноликости, ова кухиња се одликује специфичним техникама припреме јела које су настале посредством локалних ресурса и повољних климатских особина простора (Anderson et al., 2019). Храна у Шпанији превазилази физиолошку потребу, она је незаобилазан друштвени и културни феномен, који се користи као средство за очување гастрономске културе и традиције (Santareno et al., 2013). Шпанска гастрономија је неизоставан део туризма, што се огледа у активностима њених региона који користе локалне специјалитете као средство диференцијације на туристичком тржишту. Захваљујући познатим шефовима и куварима, Шпанија је постала глобални центар високе кухиње (Jiménez-Beltrán et al., 2016; Berbel-Pineda et al., 2019).

Кухиња ове земље одавно превазилази њене границе, представља једну од најважнијих интернационалних кухиња са великим бројем јела прихваћених широм света (Serrano, 2016). Један од најраспрострањенијих доприноса шпанског кулинарског умећа огледа се у концепту тапаса, дељењу хране и obroка као друштвеног чина (Lera, 2012; Batlle-Bayer et al., 2020). У многим земљама традиционална

with or potential for their broader inclusion in the offer. The research was conducted through a survey of employees in hospitality establishments in the Belgrade area, and the data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The results of the study indicated limited awareness of Spanish cuisine, low representation of its dishes in the current offering, but also a high openness toward incorporating them into menus.

Keywords: spanish cuisine, hospitality, gastronomy, Spain, tapas

шпанска јела се прилагођавају локалним укусима и навикама, а гастрономија постаје средство меке моћи, која доприноси међународном културном утицају Шпаније (Procas & Bartoso, 2021).

Предмет истраживања је познавање и заступљеност шпанске кухиње, као и задовољство њиховом понудом у угоститељским објектима на подручју Београда.

Задатак рада је био да испита ниво познавања и заступљености, као и задовољства понудом посматрано из угла заслужених у угоститељству као кључних актера у креирању угоститељске понуде. Из тих разлога је дефинисан и **циљ рада**, а то је да одговори на следећа истраживачка питања:

1. Колико су запослени у угоститељству упознати са карактеристикама шпанске кухиње?
2. У којој мери су јела шпанске кухиње заступљена у угоститељским објектима?
3. Да ли су запослени задовољни тренутним стањем понуде шпанских јела у Београду?

Преглед литературе

Шпанска кухиња је у 21. веку доживела велику ренесансу, улазећи у фокус интернационалне гастрономије, не само због богатог историјског наслеђа, већ и због прилагодљивости у различите гастроном-

ске и угоститељске концепте (Jerez, 2023). Разноврсност гастрономских производа резултат је јединственог географског положаја, али и сложених културно-историјских утицаја (Wild, 2015). Традиција утицаја од стране Римљана и Арапа оставила је трајне трагове у структури јела, начину припреме и употреби сировина и зачина – што се и данас препознаје кроз употребу маслиновог уља, шафрана, цитрусног воћа и различитих зачина (Hirschfelder et al., 2020; Boukid, 2024).

Шпанија је изразито регионализована у гастрономском смислу, а сваки од њених 17 аутономних региона негује сопствену кулинарску традицију, што чини шпанску кухињу идеалном за истраживање кроз призму локалног идентитета, гастро-туризма и специјализованих угоститељских понуда (Sánchez-Cañizares & Castillo-Canalejo, 2015; Pérez-Priego et al., 2023; Cordova-Buiza et al., 2024). Од тапаса у Каталонији и баскијских пинтоса, до паеле у Валенсији и гаспача у Андалузији – сваки регион нуди сопствени гастрономски наратив (Hernández-Rojas et al., 2021; Recuero-Virto, 2025).

Савремени трендови у гастрономији, нарочито у урбаним срединама, указују на пораст интересовања за аутентичну, али истовремено и иновативну интерпретацију традиционалних кухиња (Segano, 2016; Del Moral, 2020). У том смислу, шпанска кухиња показује висок степен флексибилности, што је чини погодном за интеграцију у меније ресторана широм света, а растућа популарност медитеранске исхране као модела изbalансираног начина исхране додатно позиционира шпанску гастрономију као пожељну у савременој гастро-угоститељској понуди (Fuentes-Luque, 2017; Tomé, 2021; Boronat et al., 2023). Један од значајнијих елемената који доприносе овом тренду је фокус на локалне, сезонске и свеже састојке, као и једноставне технике припреме које истичу укус и квалитет намирница (Wallnoefer et al., 2021; Vargas et al., 2021). Маслиново уље, разне врсте рибе, морских плодова,

махунарки и свеже поврће представљају окосницу исхране, што је усклађено са принципима нутритивне вредности и гастрономске одрживости (Mazzocchi et al., 2019; Mannucci et al., 2023).

Савремена литература из области гастрономије, туризма и менаџмента све чешће истиче потребу за интеркултурним гастрономским компетенцијама у угоститељству (Edelstein, 2011; Kocевskii Risteski, 2020). Примери успешне имплементације страних кухиња указују на то да културна размена кроз храну постаје не само комерцијално исплатива, већ и социјално релевантна (Kim et al., 2021; Grubor et al., 2022). Угоститељски радници имају кључну улогу у интернационализацији националних кухиња, а компетенције и отвореност ка новим гастрономским културама постају све значајнији фактор у стварању конкурентне и разноврсне понуде (Pu et al., 2024; Шмуговић, 2024).

Истраживање које је 2019. године спровела Схкодрова, показало је да је на територији Београда постојало неколико ресторана који су у својој гастрономској понуди укључивали јела шпанске кухиње. Ови ресторани нису нудили искључиво традиционална шпанска јела, већ су најчешће били део ширег шпанско-латиноамеричког концепта, комбинујући укусе и технике кувања из различитих култура шпанског говорног подручја. Овакви угоститељски објекти представљали су новину на београдској гастрономској сцени, а њихова разноврсна понуда привлачила је различите категорије потрошача (Shkodrova, 2019).

Методологија рада

За потребе истраживања креиран је упитник као најваљиднији метод прикупљања ове врсте података. У сврху његовог креирања, као модел је коришћен рад аутора Nguyen et al. (2020), уз одговарајуће модификације како би се што боље прилагодио теми овог истраживања. Анкетни упитник се састојао из три дела:

- Први део се односио на социо-демографске карактеристике испитаника (пол, старост, ниво образовања, место становања).
- Други део анкетног упитника састојао се од шест питања са четири понуђена одговора, у коме је требало да испитаници одаберу један који је тачан, а која су се односила на општу информисаност и познавање карактеристика шпанске кухиње.
- Трећи део упитника односио се на тренутно стање и ставове запослених у угоститељству о понуди шпанских јела. Уз помоћ Ликертове скале, испитаници су одговарали на постављене тврдње оценом од 1 до 5, од „потпуно се не слажем“ до „потпуно се слажем“.

Анкетирање је извршено методом оловка-папир и путем онлајн упитника. Истраживање је спроведено анонимно, у периоду од јула до септембра 2024. године. Анкетом су обухваћени угоститељи специјализованих ресторана са интернационалном понудом хране у Београду. Анкетирање је било добровољно и анонимно, а испитаници су били различитог узраста, степена образовања и месечних прихода. За потребе овог испитивања подељено је око 150 анкетних упитника. Прикупљено је 131, од којих је 122 било валидно. Добијени подаци су систематизовани и обрађени применом дескриптивне статистике, а добијени резултати су у раду приказани табеларно. У сврху креирања истраживања као модел се користио рад аутора Nguyen et al., (2019), уз одгова-

рајуће модификације како би се што боље прилагодило теми истраживања.

Резултати рада и дискусија

Анализа социо-демографских карактеристика испитаника

У циљу свеобухватне анализе података прикупљених анкетним упитником, најпре се приступило анализи социо-демографских карактеристика испитаних потрошача што приказује Табела 1. Према полу, узорак је чинило 57,4% мушкараца и 42,6% жена. У погледу старосне структуре, највећи део узорка чинили су млади до 30 година – 40,2%. Старосна група од 31 до 40 година обухвата 27,9% испитаника, група од 41 до 50 година 21,3%, док је 10,7% било старије од 51 године. Већина испитаника, њих 82%, долази из урбаних средина, док 18% учесника живи и ради у руралним срединама. Образовање је представљало важну променљиву у оквиру истраживања. Највећи број испитаника има завршену средњу школу – 36,9%, док 36,1% има високо образовање (високу школу или факултет). Свега 18% је завршило мастер, магистарске или докторске студије, а најмањи проценат чине испитаници са завршеном вишом школом – 9%. Посматрајући област стручне спреме, већина испитаника стекла је звање из области туризма и угоститељства – 60,7%. Из области економије, права и менаџмента долази 9%, а из техничко-технолошких наука, пољопривреде и хемије 9,8%. Остали – 20,5% имају звања из других области.

Табела 1. Социо-демографске карактеристике

		(n)	%
Пол	Мушки	70	57,4
	Женски	52	42,6
Старосна доб	До 30 година	49	40,2
	31-40	34	27,9
	41-50	26	21,3
	51 и више година	13	10,7

Место становања	Урбано	100	82,0
	Рурално	22	18,0
Највиши ниво образовања	Средња школа	45	36,9
	Виша школа	11	9,0
	Висока школа/факултет	44	36,1
	Мастер/магистарске/докторске студије	22	18,0
Област образовање	Туризам и угоститељство	74	60,7
	Економија, права, менаџмент	11	9,0
	Технологија, пољопривреда, хемија	12	9,8
	Нешто друго	25	20,5
Место рада – тип угоститељског објекта	Услуге хране и пића (ресторани, пабови, барови..)	82	67,2
	Смештајни објекти (хотели, мотели, апартмани)	22	18,0
	Мешовити објекти	18	14,8
Радна позиција	Оперативни радници (кувари, конобари, сомелијери)	57	46,7
	Оперативни менаџмент (шеф кухиње, шеф сале)	27	22,1
	Виши менаџмент (директори, власници)	38	31,1
Године рада у угоститељству	До 5 година	50	41,0
	6–10 година	27	22,1
	11–15 година	19	15,6
	16 и више година	26	12,3

Извор: Аутори, 2025

Највећи број испитаника, њих 67,2%, ради у објектима специјализованим за услуге хране и пића. У објектима са примарним смештајним услугама ангажовано је 18%, док 14,8% ради у мешовитим угоститељским објектима. Према радној позицији, 46,7% запослених су на оперативним позицијама (кувари, конобари, сомелијери), 31,1% су виши менаџери (директори, власници), док 22,1% чине оперативни менаџери (шефови кухиња, сале). Када је реч о дужини радног стажа у угоститељству, 41% испитаника има до пет година искуства. У категорији од 6 до 10 година је 22,1%, док је 15,6% анкетираних запослено у периоду од 11 до 15 година. Најмањи проценат – 12,3%, има радно искуство дуже од 16 година.

Анализа упознатости угоститеља са карактеристикама шпанске кухиње

Други део анкете односио се на упознатост угоститеља са карактеристикама шпанске кухиње. Ова питања су се односила на опште познавање порекла и врста карактеристичних производа шпан-

ске кухиње. Добијени резултати упознатости угоститеља са карактеристикама шпанске кухиње приказани су у Табели 2.

Прво питање се односило на порекло тапаса и регион из кога потичу, на шта је 41% испитаника одговорило исправно, да је то Андалузија, док је чак 38,5% угоститеља сматрало да је Каталонија место порекла. Следеће питање се односило на зачине у традиционалној шпанској паељи и већина испитаника (70,5%) је одговорило тачно и означило да су то шафран и паприка, што указује да су испитаници упознати са паељом и њеним састојцима. Треће питање се односило на шпанско слатко вино, а испитаници су са чак 57,4% означили да се ради о сангрији, док је 33,6% знало да је реч о шерију, ови подаци су у корелацији са резултатима истраживања које су спровели Hall и Mitchell (2008), који показују да потрошачи најчешће доживљавају сангрију као слатко вино, иако је шери слатко вино заштићеног порекла из Андалузије. Четврто питање у овом делу се односи на тортиљу еспањолу, јело

од кромпира, јаја и лука, на шта је тачно одговорило 43,4%, а чак 33,6% сматрало је да је то пататас бравас.

Питање 5 приказује одговоре на постављено питање: „Која врста меса је главни састојак шпанског производа хамон иберико?“ На шта је 65,6% испита-

них угоститеља одговорило тачно, да је реч о свињетини, а 28,7% сматра да је то говедина. Последње питање се односи на познавање сира добијеног прерадом овчијег млека из регије Ла Манча, а 69,7% је одговорило тачно да је реч о манчего сиру.

Табела 2: Упознатост угоститеља са карактеристикама шпанске кухиње (n=122)

1. Који шпански регион је најпознатији по тапасима?		
Андалузија	50	41%
Баскија	21	17,2%
Каталонија	47	38,5%
Галиција	4	3,3%
2. Који зачини се најчешће користе у припреми паеле?		
Цимет и мускатни орашћић	11	9%
Мајчина душица и оригано	12	9,8%
Шафран и паприка	86	70,5%
Кари и куркума	13	10,7%
3. Која врста шпанског вина је најпознатија као слатко вино из региона Андалузија?		
Риоха	9	7,4%
Шери	41	33,6%
Сангрја	70	57,4%
Кава	2	1,6%
4. Како се зове јело од кромпира, јаја и лука, које је веома популарно у Шпанији?		
Пататас бравас	41	33,6%
Тортиља Еспањола	53	43,4%
Пинчос	14	11,5%
Емпанадас	14	11,5%
5. Која врста меса је главни састојак шпанског производа хамон иберико?		
Говедина	35	28,7%
Пилетина	3	2,5%
Свињетина	80	65,6%
Јагњетина	4	3,3%
6. Који сир од овчијег млека има заштићену ознаку порекла из регије Ла Манча?		
Махон	15	12,3%
Идијасабал	12	9,8%
Манчего	85	69,7%
Кабралес	10	8,2%

Извор: Аутори, 2025.

Резултати овог дела истраживања су дали одговор на прво истраживачко питање – *Колико су запослени у угоститељству упознати са карактеристикама шпанске кухиње* – утврђено је да иако постоји одређен ниво информисаности, он је често фрагментован и недовољан, што указује на потребу за едукацијом и бољом презентацијом ове кухиње.

Анализа заступљености јела шпанске кухиње у угоститељским објектима

Последњи део анкетног упитника био је подељен у два дела, а први део се односи на анализу тренутне понуде шпанских јела у угоститељским објектима на територији Београда.

У Табели 3 детаљно су приказани одговори испитаника у вези са заступљености шпанских јела у угоститељским објектима у којим раде. Анализом добијених резултата утврђено је да чак 79 испитаника изражава неслагање са тврдњом да њихов угоститељски објекат располаже задовољавајућом понудом шпанских јела, док се свега 4 испитаника у потпуности слажу са том тврдњом. Просечна вредност на скали износила

је 1,65. Од укупно 122 испитаника, 55 је навело да гости често исказују интересовање за шпанска јела, али упркос томе, просечна вредност ове тврдње износила је 1,88. Нешто бољи резултат остварен је у вези са доступношћу аутентичних шпанских састојака, са просечном оценом 2,48. Што се тиче присутности шпанске кухиње као специјалитета дана на менијима, само три испитаника потврдно су одговорила на ову тврдњу, док се 80 изјаснило негативно, са просечном оценом 1,57. Добијени резултати у складу су са резултатима истраживања из 2022, која потврђују потребу за додатном промоцијом медитеранских јела у немедитеранским земљама (Mielgo-Ayuso et al., 2022). Сличан тренд примећен је и у погледу промоције шпанских јела – 80 испитаника у потпуности се не слаже са тврдњом да су шпанска јела адекватно промовисана у њиховим објектима, што резултира просечном вредношћу од 1,62.

Највишу просечну вредност у оквиру анкете – 2,88 – добила је тврдња која се односи на капацитет угоститељских објеката да у будућности прошире понуду шпанских јела (Табела 3).

Табела 3. Анализа заступљености јела шпанске кухиње у угоститељским објектима (n=122)

	ТВРДЊЕ	1	2	3	4	5	ПРОСЕК
1.	Угоститељски објекат у којем радим има задовољавајућу понуду шпанских јела.	79	20	14	5	4	1,65
2.	Шпанска јела су често тражена од стране наших гостију.	55	43	13	6	5	1,88
3.	Могућности за набавку аутентичних шпанских састојака су добре.	28	37	30	24	3	2,48
4.	Шпанска јела су често истакнута као специјалитет дана у нашем менију.	80	23	13	3	3	1,57
5.	Шпанска јела су добро промовисана у нашем објекту.	80	21	11	7	3	1,62
6.	Угоститељски објекат у којем радим има капацитет да прошири понуду шпанских јела.	24	28	30	18	22	2,88

Извор: Аутори, 2025.



Са становишта маркетинга и тржишног позиционирања, резултати указују на недовољну промоцију и ниску видљивост шпанских јела у понуди. Иако је примећено интересовање гостију за овај тип кухиње, ово не прати реална понуда. Угоститељи препознају потенцијал у смислу повећања профита и побољшања имица ресторана, али без адекватне логистике – попут лакше доступности аутентичних састојака – тај потенцијал остаје недовољно искоришћен.

Друго истраживачко питање – *У којој мери су јела шпанске кухиње заступљена у угоститељским објектима* – добило је јасан одговор кроз резултате који показују ниску заступљеност ових јела, слабу промоцију и недовољну доступност аутентичних састојака.

Анализа задовољства запослених тренутном понудом шпанских јела у Београду

Резултати приказани у Табели 4 указују на ниво задовољства тренутном понудом шпанских јела, а само три испитаника изразила су задовољство постојећом понудом шпанских јела у угоститељским објектима истраженог региона, док је највећи број, њих 42, навело да се у потпуности не слаже са овом тврдњом. У вези са тврдњом да би проширење по-

нуде шпанских јела могло привући већи број гостију, 37 испитаника заузело је неутралан став, док се 29 делимично слаже, а 28 испитаника у потпуности слаже са овом оценом. На тврдњу да би увођење шпанских јела у понуду могло довести до повећања профита, 30 испитаника изразило је сагласност, док је 28 испитаника остало неутрално. У погледу потенцијалног утицаја проширене понуде шпанских јела на углед ресторана, 25 испитаника се у потпуности слаже са тврдњом да би то побољшало имиџ њиховог објекта, али највећи број испитаника, њих 42, заузео је неутралну позицију. Највећу просечну вредност у овом сегменту истраживања – 3,61 на скали од 1 до 5 – добила је тврдња да угоститељи подржавају укључивање шпанских јела у понуду свог угоститељског објекта. Са овом тврдњом сагласно је 39 испитаника, док се 33 у потпуности слаже (Табела 4). Иако је постојећа понуда шпанских јела изузетно ограничена (2,08), постоји снажна подршка њиховом укључивању у будућу понуду (3,61). На тврдњу да ли су угоститељи задовољни понудом шпанских јела у угоститељству у Београду, чак 71 испитаник, односно 58% дало је негативан одговор. Свега 7 испитаника (6%) одговорило је да је задовољно понудом, док 44 испитаника (36%) нема став.

Табела 4. Анализа задовољства понудом шпанских јела у Београду

	ТВРДЊЕ	1	2	3	4	5	ПРОСЕК
1.	Задовољан сам тренутном понудом шпанских јела у нашем региону.	42	40	31	6	3	2,08
2.	Сматрам да би проширење понуде шпанских јела привукло више гостију.	11	17	37	29	28	3,38
3.	Верујем да би увођење више шпанских јела у мени повећало профит.	12	22	28	30	20	3,19
4.	Мислим да би увођење шпанских дегустационих менија било добро прихваћено.	13	9	36	27	37	3,54
5.	Већи избор шпанских јела би побољшао углед нашег ресторана.	16	12	42	27	25	3,27
6.	Подржавам укључивање више традиционалних шпанских јела у наш мени.	9	12	29	39	33	3,61

Извор: Аутори, 2025.

На треће истраживачко питање – *Да ли су запослени задовољни тренутном понудом шпанских јела у Београду* – одговорено је такође недвосмислено: већина испитаника изразила је незадовољство, али је истовремено показала спремност и подршку идеји укључивања више шпанских јела у угоститељску понуду. Приметно је да већина испитаника изражава незадовољство тренутним стањем, што указује не само на дефицит у понуди, већ и на могући недостатак иницијативе или инфраструктуре неопходне за увођење и очување квалитета таквих специјалитета. Ипак, висок проценат испитаника који подржава идеју проширења понуде и укључивања традиционалних шпанских јела говори у прилог томе да постоји основа за развој овог сегмента гастрономске понуде.

Закључак

Резултати овог истраживања указују на ограничену упознатост запослених са основним карактеристикама шпанске кухиње. Иако одређени број испитаника показује основно познавање неких традиционалних шпанских јела и производа, као што су пачаљо, тапаси или манчељо сир, анализе указују на присутне погрешне претпоставке и конфузију око географског и културног порекла одређених елемената шпанске гастрономије.

Угоститељи у Београду у великом броју препознају потенцијал шпанске кухиње за унапређење гастрономске понуде, профита и имиџа ресторана. Подршка укључивању шпанске кухиње у меније добија највише оцено, што указује на отвореност и интерес за иновације, нарочито у контексту све већег значаја медијеранске и здраве исхране у глобалним гастро-трендовима.

На основу резултата испитивања извесна је недовољна заступљеност шпанске кухиње и јела у угоститељским објектима на подручју Београда, али је присутна и неутралност са постављеним тврдњама,

чиме се отвара низ релевантних питања у вези са позицијом и потенцијалом шпанске гастрономије у Београду.

Локално тржиште показује ограничену присутност шпанских јела, али и значајан простор за развој. Препоручује се унапређење едукације угоститељског кадра, боља промоција и омогућавање лакшег приступа аутентичним састојцима. Уколико се ови изазови адекватно реше, шпанска кухиња би могла заузети значајније место на српској гастрономској сцени, како у погледу културне размене, тако и у контексту економске користи за угоститељски сектор.

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EMPOWERING RURAL WOMEN: A KEY FACTOR IN SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

OSNAŽIVANJE RURALNIH ŽENA: KLJUČNI FAKTOR ODRŽIVOG RAZVOJA TURIZMA

Apstrakt: Empirical evidence suggests that the empowerment of rural women is an essential predictor of sustainable development in the tourism sector. As primary custodians of cultural capital and local traditions, their indispensable participation in community-based tourism initiatives significantly correlates with the improvement of economic sustainability, the preservation of cultural diversity, and the strengthening of social cohesion. This study investigates the causal relationship between the empowerment of rural women and tourism development, analyzes strategies for the amplification of their participation, and identifies inherent challenges. The central finding of the study implies that the empowerment of women is a key determinant of their inclination towards entrepreneurial activities within the domain of tourism.

Apstrakt: Empirijski dokazi sugerišu da je osnaživanje žena u ruralnim područjima esencijalni prediktor održivog razvoja u sektoru turizma. Kao primarni nosioci kulturnog kapitala i lokalnih tradicija, njihovo nezamenljivo učešće u turističkim inicijativama zasnovanim na zajednici značajno korelira sa poboljšanjem ekonomske održivosti, očuvanjem kulturnog diverziteta i jačanjem socijalne kohezije. Ova studija istražuje uzročno-posledičnu vezu između osnaživanja ruralnih žena i razvoja turizma, analizira strategije za jačanje njihovog učešća i identifikuje inherentne izazove. Centralni nalaz studije implicira da je osnaživanje žena ključni determinator njihove sklonosti ka preduzetničkim aktivnostima u domenu turizma.

Keywords: women, rural tourism, sustainability, rural areas

Ključne reči: žene, ruralni turizam, održivost, ruralna područja



Introduction

According to Firstianto et al. (2024) empowering rural women is a multifaceted endeavor that carries significant implications for the socio-economic development of communities worldwide. Defined as the process of increasing the capacity of women to make choices and transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes, empowerment encompasses a wide range of social, economic, and political dimensions. Empowerment, in this context, involves enabling women to gain control over their lives, make informed decisions, and participate actively in their communities (Jiang et al., 2024). Empowering women in rural regions is a complex undertaking with far-reaching consequences for the socio-economic advancement of communities globally. Within the realm of agritourism and rural tourism, women are instrumental as guardians of cultural patrimony, traditional practices, and indigenous customs. (Arroyo, C.G. et al, 2019) They are vital in maintaining the unique character of a destination and diversifying its appeal to visitors (Jo, Y et al., 2024). Their proactive engagement not only bolsters the financial viability of tourism initiatives but also encourages the safeguarding of cultural heritage and strengthens community bonds. As key stakeholders in agricultural production and household administration within rural economies, the empowerment of women also underpins broader community economic stability (Özçatalbaş, O., & Sogue, B., 2020). Rural women often serve as the backbone of agriculture and household management, contributing significantly to food production and economic stability. According to Kitole & Genda (2024), women account for approximately 43% of the agricultural labor force in developing countries. When rural women are empowered, their increased productivity and decision-making abilities lead to improved family nutrition, education, and health outcomes. For instance, research shows that when women have access to resources and training, they invest more in their children's

education and healthcare, resulting in a ripple effect that enhances community welfare. Thus, empowering rural women is not merely a gender issue; it is a vital component of sustainable development and poverty alleviation (Gao & Wu, 2017).

To effectively empower rural women, a variety of strategies must be implemented. One of the most critical avenues for empowerment is access to education and vocational training programs (Ling et al., 2013). Education equips women with the knowledge and skills necessary to participate in economic activities and make informed decisions. According to Vujko et al. (2019) programs that focus on literacy, numeracy, and vocational skills have proven successful in various rural settings. According to Sahrakorpi & Bandi (2021) initiatives in India have demonstrated that women who receive vocational training in areas such as sewing or agriculture are more likely to start their own businesses and improve their economic status. Additionally, microfinance has emerged as a powerful tool for fostering entrepreneurship among rural women. By providing small loans, women can invest in income-generating activities, thereby gaining financial independence and contributing to their families' well-being (Ljaljevic et al., 2023). Community organizations also play a pivotal role in supporting rural women by creating networks that offer resources, mentorship, and advocacy. These support systems can help women navigate the complexities of entrepreneurship and build confidence in their abilities (Pécot et al., 2024).

Access to information is a fundamental factor in empowering women entrepreneurs in rural tourism (Vujko et al., 2024a). Information equips these women with the knowledge necessary to make informed decisions about their business ventures, allowing them to identify opportunities that might otherwise remain hidden (Chen & Barcus, 2024). The connection between information access and community development is also profound; when women succeed in rural tourism, they contribute to the local economy, create jobs,

and inspire other women to pursue similar paths (Despotović et al., 2018). This ripple effect not only empowers individual women but also promotes broader social change, reinforcing the importance of ensuring that women in rural areas have the information they need to thrive (de Groot et al., 2017).

In rural areas, women play a particularly important role. After completing secondary education, many women either remain in their rural communities to start a family or, if they pursue higher education, move to larger cities or often do not return to their hometowns. The reasons for this vary. Primarily, women today lack sufficient support (Regmi et al., 2023). They are often discouraged from developing their ideas into initiatives that could benefit their households, local communities, and themselves. Many believe that municipal or local authorities will not provide them with the necessary financial or structural support (Rashwan et al., 2024).

Traditional craftsmanship and home-made products hold significant value in rural communities (Vujko et al., 2024b). Older generations have the opportunity to pass down knowledge of customs and traditions to younger women, fostering initiatives that contribute to local development, particularly in rural tourism. For example, older women create woolen products such as sweaters and socks, as well as various handicrafts and souvenirs. However, some women may hesitate to start their own businesses due to a fear of failure (Sutrisno et al., 2024). Sustaining rural tourism requires careful consideration to prevent environmental damage while preserving local traditions, culture, and customs. Women in rural areas possess the potential for successful entrepreneurship (Stanovčić et al., 2018). Many are already engaged in producing and selling traditional domestic products such as cheese, milk, honey, and winter preserves. With proper support, these entrepreneurial efforts could significantly contribute to the economic and cultural sustainability of rural communities.

They can also produce pottery, glass, or a certain type of jewelry (Zhang et al.,

2025). Women in rural areas are known as excellent housewives and can develop their own business by making various cakes and pastries. Today, we live in the so-called internet era, where everything is easily accessible and this in some way favors marketing, and certain small businesses can experience a level of expansion (Zhao et al., 2024). Education of the local population is also necessary. In addition to personal income, women can contribute to the economy and the local community, as well as to the rural environment, with their knowledge and craft skills. It is generally known that women are imaginative and that they can combine the beautiful and the useful, and with their knowledge and skill create something that does not exist in our area. Houses can be remodeled with traditional motifs and offered as such to potential tourists for accommodation. Of course, the support and permission of the municipality is necessary. The development of rural tourism is of great importance for every country and tourist destination. This also applies to Serbia (Vujko et al., 2024b).

The paper started from the initial hypothesis of paper H that the empowerment of women in the villages is a decisive factor in the sustainable development of rural destinations. Women are the “carriers” of tourist activities in villages, so the further development of rural tourism directly depends on the willingness of women to actively influence the creation of a sustainable tourist offer in rural destinations. The research was conducted on a sample of 217 rural women and showed that women in rural tourism most need information about funds and methods of financing, about ways of managing and registering their companies engaged in rural tourism, as well as empowerment as a direct influence on women entrepreneurship in rural destinations.

This research endeavors to investigate the significance of women’s empowerment in rural tourism, the strategies for enhancing their engagement, and the challenges hindering their advancement within this sec-



tor. A survey was conducted on a sample of 217 women residing in rural areas of Fruška Gora to identify the salient factors influencing their participation in rural tourism and the obstacles they encounter.

The central research hypothesis posits that the empowerment of women in rural communities constitutes a crucial determinant for the sustainable development of rural destinations. The study aimed to address the question of the primary requisites for increased female participation in rural tourism. To this end, three sub-hypotheses were formulated, focusing on the perceived need for information pertaining to financial resources, business registration procedures, and business management principles, as well as the overarching imperative of women's empowerment.

Methodology

The research sample comprised 217 female individuals recruited from various villages within the geographical area of Fruška Gora. The selection criteria included women participating in established local events, namely the "Sremska kulenijada" held in Erdevik, the "Banoštorski dani grožđa" in Banoštor, and the "Guščijada" in Šatrinci.

Data were collected through the administration of surveys at the respondents' designated exhibition spaces, where they displayed artisanal products or food items. The survey instrument was designed to garner insights into the current landscape of rural tourism within the investigated destinations, as perceived by women actively engaged in or possessing the potential for involvement in this sector.

The survey questions encompassed the following domains:

- **Awareness of Funding Opportunities:** This section addressed the respondents' knowledge of available funding sources, the procedures for application, and perceived barriers to accessing financial resources.
- **Knowledge of Business Registration and Management:** This area explored

the respondents' understanding of the regulatory frameworks for tourism-related business registration, as well as their familiarity with business management principles (including marketing, finance, and administration).

- **Motivation and Challenges in Engaging with Rural Tourism:** This domain investigated the respondents' motivations for participating in rural tourism, as well as perceived obstacles such as fear of failure, lack of self-confidence, and familial responsibilities.

The collected responses were subjected to analysis based on the age cohorts of the respondents to identify potential variations in their needs and attitudes across different generational groups. The Pearson Chi-Square test was employed for statistical data processing.

Results and discussion

Table 1 shows that the largest percentage of women have a problem with information about funds and ways of financing their ideas. According to Table 1 the lack of information on funding opportunities for women in rural tourism presents a significant barrier to their entrepreneurial success and, by extension, to the overall development of their communities. Access to information is not merely a logistical issue; it is a fundamental prerequisite for empowerment and economic progression. By identifying various sources of funding and understanding the barriers that inhibit women from accessing this information, we can begin to formulate strategies to support them more effectively. Enhancing information access for women in rural tourism is essential not only for their individual success but also for fostering sustainable community development. Therefore, it is imperative that stakeholders, including government entities, NGOs, and community organizations, collaborate to create an environment where women can thrive in rural tourism, ultimately leading to more vibrant and economically sound rural communities.

Table 1. Information on how to fund ideas

			Age				Total
			18-25	26-39	40-59	Over 60	
I need more information on how to fund ideas.	Totally agree	Count	11	35	37	18	101
		% of Total	5,1%	16,1%	17,1%	8,3%	46,5%
	Agreee	Count	8	23	28	17	76
		% of Total	3,7%	10,6%	12,9%	7,8%	35,0%
	No opinion	Count	3	10	11	5	29
		% of Total	1,4%	4,6%	5,1%	2,3%	13,4%
	Disagreee	Count	0	6	2	0	8
		% of Total	0,0%	2,8%	0,9%	0,0%	3,7%
	Totally disagreee	Count	0	2	1	0	3
		% of Total	0,0%	0,9%	0,5%	0,0%	1,4%
Total		Count	22	76	79	40	217
		% of Total	10,1%	35,0%	36,4%	18,4%	100,0%

Source: Autor's research

Looking at table 2, it can be concluded that there is no statistical significance in the responses of the respondents in relation to

age. This primarily means that the problem is uniform and that all women in the villages face it.

Table 2. Pearson Chi-square Test

	Value	Df	Significance (p)
Pearson Chi-Square	9,217	12	,684

Source: Autor's research

Project writing is essential in rural tourism as it serves as a blueprint for initiating and sustaining tourism initiatives that can significantly benefit local communities. At its core, project writing involves the systematic documentation of a project's purpose,

goals, activities, and anticipated impacts. In the context of rural tourism, well-written projects are crucial for attracting funding from governmental and non-governmental organizations, as they demonstrate the viability and potential impact of proposed initiatives.

Table 3. Lack of information on how to write a project

			Age				Total
			18-25	26-39	40-59	Over 60	
I need more information on how to write a project that will be funded by the EU or the Ministry of Tourism.	Totally agree	Count	17	42	44	26	129
		% of Total	7,8%	19,4%	20,3%	12,0%	59,4%
	Agreee	Count	4	23	26	5	58
		% of Total	1,8%	10,6%	12,0%	2,3%	26,7%
	No opinion	Count	1	8	8	3	20
		% of Total	0,5%	3,7%	3,7%	1,4%	9,2%
	Disagreee	Count	0	3	0	3	6
		% of Total	0,0%	1,4%	0,0%	1,4%	2,8%
	Totally disagreee	Count	0	0	1	3	4
		% of Total	0,0%	0,0%	0,5%	1,4%	1,8%
Total		Count	22	76	79	40	217
		% of Total	10.1%	35.0%	36.4%	18.4%	100.0%

Source: Autor's research

Despite the clear advantages of project writing, women in rural destinations often encounter numerous challenges that hinder their ability to engage in this vital activity (Table 3). One primary obstacle is the lack of access to training and educational resources that teach the skills necessary for effective project development. Many rural

areas lack formal educational institutions offering courses in project writing, leaving women without the tools they need to articulate their ideas effectively. Additionally, cultural and social barriers can further discourage women from participating in project writing initiatives.

Table 4. *Pearson Chi-square Test*

	Value	df	Significance (p)
Pearson Chi-Square	23,085	12	,027

Source: Autor's research

Table number 4 shows that there is a difference. Younger respondents want more information from the EU or the Ministry, while older women (over 60) do not. Respondents over the age of 60 may think that they have to study additionally, that is, to be educated, which for them represents an obstacle. They also assume that they must be proficient in the foreign language, and many women may not even speak another foreign language. Younger women find it easier because the education system enabled them to study (foreign language) and use modern technology (e.g. internet - MS Office).

By addressing the challenges faced by women through targeted training, mentorship, and the use of technology, we can empower them to articulate their visions effectively and contribute to the growth of rural tourism. As we move forward, it is essential to prioritize these efforts to ensure that women in rural areas can fully participate in and benefit from the opportunities that tourism can provide, ultimately fostering sustainable development and economic resilience in their communities. The data of these tables confirmed the sub-hypothesis of the work h1 - that women need information about the financing of their ideas in order to engage in rural tourism.

Table 5. *Information about registration a company*

			Age				Total
			18-25	26-39	40-59	Over 60	
I need information on how to register my company in tourism that deals with receptive tourism.	Totally agree	Count	20	41	43	20	124
		% of Total	9,2%	18,9%	19,8%	9,2%	57,1%
	Agreeee	Count	1	27	19	15	62
		% of Total	0,5%	12,4%	8,8%	6,9%	28,6%
	No opinion	Count	1	8	9	5	23
		% of Total	0,5%	3,7%	4,1%	2,3%	10,6%
	Disagreee	Count	0	0	5	0	5
		% of Total	0,0%	0,0%	2,3%	0,0%	2,3%
	Totally disagreee	Count	0	0	3	0	3
		% of Total	0,0%	0,0%	1,4%	0,0%	1,4%
Total		Count	22	76	79	40	217
		% of Total	10,1%	35,0%	36,4%	18,4%	100,0%

Source: Autor's research

Table 5 shows whether information is required regarding the registration of a company engaged in receptive tourism. Receptive tourism is of great importance for the development of tourism of a certain destination. In addition to catering facilities for accommodation, receptive tourist agencies that will attract tourists to a certain destination, in this case Fruška Gora, can also be important. The respondents need additional education about receptive tourism. It should be explained what is meant by receptive tourism, what women can do,

how to do business if they work in a tourist agency, that is, how to attract tourists. In rural areas, it is necessary to establish a receptive tourist agency, because the task of a receptive tourist agency is to attract tourists, and an increase in the number of tourists leads to an increase in income, which will help the economy and the local community itself. Employees of a receptive tourist agency must know how to attract tourists or a group of tourists, without damaging the environment, which is why they need education.

Table 6. Pearson Chi-square Test

	Value	Df	Significance (p)
Pearson Chi-Square	27,316 ^a	12	,007

Source: Autor's research

Table number 6 shows that there is a difference in answers in relation to age groups. The value is less than 0.05 ($p=0.007$). This difference may be due to the fact that the younger generations are more interested in changes and are engaged in tourism com-

pared to the older respondents. Also, the number of highly educated women is growing today, and the younger generations are interested in using their knowledge and education in the best way and in attracting tourists.

Table 7. Information on the categorization of accommodation capacities

			Age				Total
			18-25	26-39	40-59	Over 60	
I need information on how to categorize accommodation units that I can rent out as part of my household.	Totally agree	Count	14	48	37	25	124
		% of Total	6,5%	22,1%	17,1%	11,5%	57,1%
	Agreee	Count	5	16	31	13	65
		% of Total	2,3%	7,4%	14,3%	6,0%	30,0%
	No opinion	Count	1	11	6	2	20
		% of Total	0,5%	5,1%	2,8%	0,9%	9,2%
	Disagreee	Count	2	0	3	0	5
		% of Total	0,9%	0,0%	1,4%	0,0%	2,3%
	Totally disagreee	Count	0	1	2	0	3
		% of Total	0,0%	0,5%	0,9%	0,0%	1,4%
Total		Count	22	76	79	40	217
		% of Total	10,1%	35,0%	36,4%	18,4%	100,0%

Source: Autor's research

Table 7 shows whether our respondents need any additional information regarding the categorization of accommodation that they can rent out as part of their household. Slightly more than half of the respondents answered that they completely agree. This means that they do not have enough information about the categorization of accommodation. The reasons why the respondents do not agree or have no opinion may stem from insufficient information about the categorization of objects. They may consider that categorization is a

long process, that their household or part of the household cannot be categorized, or that they do not want to use part of their household as a catering facility for accommodation. It is necessary to provide certain information and point out all the conditions that must be fulfilled in order for a specific accommodation facility to be categorized according to the guidelines of the Ministry of Tourism. The involvement of governmental and non-governmental organizations in the categorization process can be crucial at this stage.

Table 8. *Pearson Chi-square Test*

		Value	df	Significance (p)
Pearson Chi-Square		20,314	12	,061

Source: Autor's research

Table 8 shows that there is no significant difference in the responses of female respondents regardless of age ($p=0.061$). Respondents may have a certain perspective or idea of how to turn their household or part of the household into a catering facility for

accommodation, but they are not sufficiently informed about how to arrange it, what category of accommodation would be or how to categorize it. It is common knowledge that each catering facility for accommodation has a certain category.

Table 9. *Information on the registration of a company engaged in handicrafts*

			Age				Total
			18-25	26-39	40-59	Over 60	
I want to know if I can register entrepreneurship for the handicrafts I do.	Totally agree	Count	13	40	52	21	126
		% of Total	6,0%	18,4%	24,0%	9,7%	58,1%
	Agreee	Count	7	20	16	12	55
		% of Total	3,2%	9,2%	7,4%	5,5%	25,3%
	No opinion	Count	2	6	7	5	20
		% of Total	0,9%	2,8%	3,2%	2,3%	9,2%
	Disagree	Count	0	4	3	1	8
		% of Total	0,0%	1,8%	1,4%	0,5%	3,7%
Tottaly disagree	Count	0	6	1	1	8	
	% of Total	0,0%	2,8%	0,5%	0,5%	3,7%	
Total		Count	22	76	79	40	217
		% of Total	10,1%	35,0%	36,4%	18,4%	100,0%

Source: Autor's research

Table 9 shows whether women have information about the registration of a company engaged in handicrafts. It is common knowledge that in rural areas, women are engaged in handicrafts. Women can produce certain products, such as souvenirs, magnets, knit sweaters, socks. What is important to them is precisely whether they can register their skill, that is, their entrepreneurship. Of

the total number of respondents, more than half (58.1%) completely agree. This means that they do not have enough information on how to register their hobby or occupation. Handicrafts are interesting, each product can be unique. Today, handicrafts are more like a hobby than a profession. That is why it is necessary to include the local organization, as well as non-governmental organizations.

Table 10. *Pearson Chi-square Test*

	Value	Df	Significance (p)
Pearson Chi-Square	10,937	12	,534

Source: Autor's research

The results of Table 10 show that the value exceeds 0.05 ($p=0.534$). The difference in answers is noticeable, but not significant, because as we have already mentioned, slightly more than half of the respondents answered

that they completely agree. Handcrafting of objects is characteristic of rural areas and therefore there is no statistically significant difference in the responses of the respondents in relation to their age.

Tabela 11. *Information on dealing with special forms of tourism*

			Age				Total
			18-25	26-39	40-59	Over 60	
I want to deal with organizing special forms of tourism (cycling, hiking, collecting medicinal plants, etc.), so I need additional information on how to register a business.	Totally agree	Count	7	24	44	20	95
		% of Total	3,2%	11,1%	20,3%	9,2%	43,8%
	Agree	Count	12	28	12	14	66
		% of Total	5,5%	12,9%	5,5%	6,5%	30,4%
	No opinion	Count	3	14	18	2	37
		% of Total	1,4%	6,5%	8,3%	0,9%	17,1%
	Disagree	Count	0	6	3	3	12
		% of Total	0,0%	2,8%	1,4%	1,4%	5,5%
	Totally disagree	Count	0	4	2	1	7
		% of Total	0,0%	1,8%	0,9%	0,5%	3,2%
Total		Count	22	76	79	40	217
		% of Total	10,1%	35,0%	36,4%	18,4%	100,0%

Source: Autor's research

Special forms of tourism in rural areas can be interesting and successful. Fruška gora, as a national park of Serbia, can offer various forms of tourism. The results of Table 11 show that slightly less than half of

the respondents fully agree that they need additional information about special forms of tourism (43.8%), while a certain number disagree (5.5%). Women should be educated about special forms of tourism, especially on

Fruška Gora. There are well-maintained hiking trails, and you can combine hiking with medicinal plant picking in this area. Some medicinal plants can be made into teas. Apart from teas, various skin balms and creams can also be made. It is necessary to provide all relevant information to interested women,

which plants exist, where they grow, which teas can be made from those plants and for what purposes those medicinal plants could be used. It is also necessary to provide information about the bicycle paths that exist through Fruška Gora, as well as the possibility of organizing competitions.

Table 12. *Pearson Chi-square Test*

	Value	df	Significance (p)
Pearson Chi-Square	27,316	12	,007

Source: Author's research

The results show that there is a statistical difference between the age generations (Table 12). Some respondents need additional information, while some do not. The

respondents, who do not need additional information, are probably interested in other forms of tourism, since Fruška gora is a real treasure for tourism.

Table 13. *Information about distribution channels*

			Age				Total
			18-25	26-39	40-59	Over 60	
I need the placement of the products I make (homemade food and drinks), as well as a distribution network with restaurants near me. That's what I'm particularly interested in when it comes to empowerment.	Tottally agree	Count	14	23	27	11	75
		% of Total	6,5%	10,6%	12,4%	5,1%	34,6%
	Agreeee	Count	4	28	34	26	92
		% of Total	1,8%	12,9%	15,7%	12,0%	42,4%
	No opinion	Count	2	20	14	2	38
		% of Total	0,9%	9,2%	6,5%	0,9%	17,5%
	Disagree	Count	0	4	3	0	7
		% of Total	0,0%	1,8%	1,4%	0,0%	3,2%
	Totally disagree	Count	2	1	1	1	5
		% of Total	0,9%	0,5%	0,5%	0,5%	2,3%
Total		Count	22	76	79	40	217
		% of Total	10,1%	35,0%	36,4%	18,4%	100,0%

Source: Author's research

The table shows the results of the respondents on whether they need the placement of domestic products, that is, the food and drinks they produce, as well as cooperation with certain restaurants in the vicinity (Table 13). The table shows that the answers differ. The largest percentage of female respondents, slightly less than half, declared that they agreed with it. In rural areas, there are a small number of restau-

rants, which require home-made, unspoiled food. Women who have a large household are mainly engaged in the production of homemade food, in addition to food, they can also produce homemade drinks. If they produce homemade drinks, they can put stickers about their household and products on the bottles. Women in rural areas are known as excellent housewives. It would be a great opportunity for them to combine

the beautiful and the useful. Today, people take care of their diet, it is important for them to eat healthy, home-made food. It is necessary to involve the local community and provide the possibility of cooperation between the restaurant and a certain

household. In addition to cooperation with restaurants, products can also be sold in local stores. These data confirmed sub-hypothesis h2 - that women in villages lack information about registering and running a company for rural tourism.

Table 14. Pearson Chi-square Test

	Value	df	Significance (p)
Pearson Chi-Square	30,778	12	,002

Source: Author's research

The value of the Pearson test shows that the responses between the age groups differ. This difference indicates that some of the respondents are not interested because they

are not engaged in that business, that is, they do not produce domestic products (food, drinks).

Table 15. Information about Women's Association

			Age				Total
			18-25	26-39	40-59	Over 60	
I am interested in joining the Women's Association and membership for the purpose of promotion and joint performance.	Totally agree	Count	14	21	24	1	60
		% of Total	6,5%	9,7%	11,1%	0,5%	27,6%
	Agreee	Count	4	33	29	17	83
		% of Total	1,8%	15,2%	13,4%	7,8%	38,2%
	No opinion	Count	4	13	15	8	40
		% of Total	1,8%	6,0%	6,9%	3,7%	18,4%
	Disagreee	Count	0	6	10	8	24
		% of Total	0,0%	2,8%	4,6%	3,7%	11,1%
	Totally disagreee	Count	0	3	1	6	10
		% of Total	0,0%	1,4%	0,5%	2,8%	4,6%
Total		Count	22	76	79	40	217
		% of Total	10,1%	35,0%	36,4%	18,4%	100,0%

Source: Author's research

The last table shows whether the respondents have information and whether they are interested in joining a women's association for the purpose of promotion and joint efforts (Table 15). Women do not have enough information about the association, a certain number of women do not know that the association exists. Older women in rural areas take care of the household or are engaged in crafts, and therefore do not have enough time for some additional activities

or for education about a certain association. Women, who are just entering the world of entrepreneurship, need certain support and motivation, which will best be provided by successful women, entrepreneurs. Through the joint effort, women entrepreneurs will encourage women who are just entering the world of entrepreneurship, connect them with other successful women and help develop their entrepreneurship.

Table 16. *Pearson Chi-square Test*

	Value	Df	Significance (p)
Pearson Chi-Square	41,462	12	,000

Source: Autor's research

Table 16 shows that there is a statistical difference in the responses. The young interviewees want to join the association in order to learn something and to progress in their business. Some women do not have the courage to perform. It is necessary to provide information and a chance to respondents who are interested in the association and if there is a possibility to provide all the necessary information to women who are not interested because they may change their opinion. The data of the last two tables confirm the sub-hypothesis of the work h3 - that women need empowerment to engage in rural tourism. All this gave an answer to the question posed and the answer is - information. Women need information to engage in rural tourism, which confirms the initial hypothesis H. Providing information is actually a direct form of empowering women, where they feel supported and have the feeling that someone supports them in their efforts to engage in entrepreneurship.

Conclusion

The empowerment of women in rural settings constitutes a critical nexus for the socio-economic advancement of communities. While their contributions to agricultural production and household management are fundamental to economic stability, these women frequently encounter structural impediments, notably restricted access to pertinent information, educational opportunities, and financial capital. Strategic interventions aimed at redressing these disparities encompass the provision of formal and vocational education, facilitated access to microfinance instruments, and the establishment of robust community support networks.

Empirical investigation within the Fruška Gora region reveals a significant infor-

mational deficit among female respondents, particularly those in rural locales, concerning the regulatory frameworks for tourism accommodation categorization (57.1% strongly agreed on this lack) and the formal registration of artisanal crafts as legitimate business enterprises (58.1% strongly agreed). Furthermore, a substantial proportion of respondents (46.5% strongly agreed) articulated a critical need for enhanced information regarding diverse tourism modalities and the effective promotion of locally produced goods, underscoring the imperative for targeted support and educational initiatives spearheaded by local and non-governmental organizations.

Analysis of the collected data indicates statistically significant variations in responses based on the age cohorts of the participants. Younger women demonstrated a greater propensity to actively seek support from entrepreneurial associations, suggesting a higher level of awareness and engagement with formal business support structures. Conversely, older women appeared to be less informed about such opportunities, potentially due to factors such as time constraints, limited digital literacy, or a lack of established connections with relevant support networks.

Synthesizing these findings with prior insights, the paramount importance of information dissemination as a pivotal mechanism for empowering women's engagement in rural tourism and entrepreneurship becomes evident. This informational empowerment, however, must be complemented by practical, skills-based training programs designed to enhance their operational capacities. For instance, younger cohorts expressing interest in local food and beverage production, pottery, or the creation of culturally relevant souvenirs require access to specialized workshops and mentorship opportunities. Similarly, women already engaged in tradi-

tional food production could benefit from facilitating interactive culinary workshops for tourists, thereby valorizing local gastronomic heritage and generating income. The potential for expanding the production and marketing of herbal teas and creams derived from locally sourced medicinal herbs also necessitates targeted training and business development support. Leveraging Fruška Gora's designation as a national park and its established appeal as a tourist destination through participation in local cultural and tourism events provides crucial market access. Strategic financial support is essential to enable these nascent entrepreneurs to transcend local markets and access broader consumer bases in urban centers and regional/national tourism fairs. This synergistic development of rural tourism in Fruška Gora aligns with the expressed interests of the female respondents and presents a sustainable pathway for female economic empowerment.

The realization of successful rural women's entrepreneurship necessitates a comprehensive and integrated support ecosystem. This system must encompass accessible and relevant educational programs, robust information dissemination networks, the fostering of synergistic collaborations with business and community organizations, and direct, enabling policy interventions from local administrative bodies. Addressing the specific challenges faced by youth in rural areas is equally critical. Understanding the drivers of rural out-migration and the resources required to incentivize their retention can inform the design of targeted policies, including job placement initiatives for those returning after completing their education. The underutilized asset of abandoned rural housing and properties presents an opportunity for revitalization as tourism accommodation, contingent upon the provision of financial and infrastructural support for renovation and regulatory compliance. In an increasingly digitized and urbanized global context, rural regions like Fruška Gora offer a unique value proposition for individuals

seeking respite and authentic experiences. Cultivating female entrepreneurship within these areas not only generates vital personal income for women but also significantly contributes to the broader economic resilience and vibrancy of the local community, facilitated by strategic investments in tourism infrastructure and the integration of digital technologies. Equipping women with digital marketing and e-commerce skills is crucial for expanding their market reach and fostering direct engagement with a wider customer base.

Ultimately, the sustainable development of rural tourism must be inextricably linked to the imperative of environmental stewardship. Educating both local residents and visitors on responsible tourism practices is fundamental to ensuring the long-term preservation of Fruška Gora's natural beauty, cultural traditions, and rich heritage for future generations. With a holistic and well-coordinated system of support, rural women are strategically positioned to assume a pivotal leadership role in shaping a more sustainable, equitable, and economically dynamic future for their communities.

Hypothesis of paper H that the empowerment of women in the villages is a decisive factor in the sustainable development of rural destinations, and that is confirmed by the received research results.

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INTEGRATIVE APPROACHES TO FINANCIAL FORECASTING IN THE HOSPITALITY SECTOR - A COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS OF HOTEL TAMIŠ

INTEGRATIVNI PRISTUPI FINANSIJSKOJ PROGNOZI U SEKTORU UGOSTITELJSTVA -SVEOBUHVAATNA ANALIZA HOTELA TAMIŠ

Abstract. *This paper explores the financial forecasting models applied to the matinee services at hotel Tamiš, which encompass food, drinks, and music offerings, over the period from July 1, 2023, to July 1, 2024. Utilizing SPSS 26. for comprehensive financial analysis, the study examines key metrics such as total revenue, raw material costs, and profit margins associated with these services. Findings indicate that effective management of raw material costs, which account for a significant portion of expenses, alongside strategic pricing, plays a crucial role in enhancing overall profitability. The integration of diverse revenue streams from food, drinks, and live entertainment is highlighted as a key factor in optimizing financial performance. The paper emphasizes the importance of adapting services to meet guest expectations and suggests avenues for future research, including the impact of guest's feedback on the success of matinee offerings in the hospitality sector.*

Key words: Hotel Tamiš, F&B, Financial forecasting, Matinee, Management, Hospitality.

Apstrakt. *Ovaj rad istražuje modele finansijskog predviđanja primenjene na usluge matinee u hotelu Tamiš, koje obuhvataju ponudu hrane, pića i muzike, u periodu od 1. jula 2023. do 1. jula 2024. Koristeći SPSS 26. za sveobuhvatnu finansijsku analizu, studija ispituje ključne metrike kao što su ove usluge, ukupna marža i materijalni prihod. Nalazi ukazuju da efikasno upravljanje troškovima sirovina, koji čine značajan deo troškova, pored strateškog određivanja cena, igra ključnu ulogu u povećanju ukupne profitabilnosti. Integracija različitih tokova prihoda od hrane, pića i zabave uživo je istaknuta kao ključni faktor u optimizaciji finansijskog učinka. U radu se naglašava važnost prilagođavanja usluga kako bi se ispunila očekivanja gostiju i predlažu putevi za buduća istraživanja, uključujući uticaj povratnih informacija gostiju na uspeh matinee ponude u ugostiteljskom sektoru.*

Ključne reči: Hotel Tamiš, F&B, Finansijsko predviđanje, Matinee, Menadžment, Ugostiteljstvo.



Introduction

In the hospitality industry, financial forecasting is a fundamental practice that supports decision-making, strategic planning, and resource management (Rushmore & O'Neill, 2015). Given the industry's reliance on fluctuating demand patterns, influenced by factors such as seasonality, economic conditions, and consumer preferences, accurate financial forecasting models are crucial for ensuring operational efficiency and long-term profitability. Among the various segments within the hospitality sector, the food and beverage (F&B) department often presents unique challenges due to its complex nature (Shaheen et al. 2021). The perishable nature of products, varied cost structures, and the necessity to balance service quality with financial constraints make forecasting in this area particularly significant (Marjanović, 2020).

Financial forecasting models are employed to predict future revenues, costs, and cash flows, enabling management to make informed decisions regarding inventory, staffing, pricing, and capital investments. These models range from simple trend analyses to more complex algorithms that incorporate multiple variables, such as market trends, historical performance data, and external economic indicators (Yeh et al. 2012). In hospitality, the effectiveness of these models often determines a hotel's ability to respond to changing market conditions, optimize its F&B operations, and maintain competitiveness. The development and refinement of financial forecasting models are essential for addressing the specific challenges faced by F&B departments (Zrnić, Gajić & Vukolić, 2023). Forecasting models help anticipate periods of high and low demand, plan for seasonal fluctuations, and manage the procurement of raw materials. They also contribute to minimizing waste, optimizing labor costs, and ensuring that pricing strategies are aligned with market dynamics (Cengiz et al. 2018). As such, the adoption of robust financial forecasting models is critical for hotels seeking to enhance their financial perfor-

mance and sustain growth in an increasingly competitive environment.

In the hospitality industry, financial forecasting serves as a cornerstone for effective management and operational success (Ivanov & Zhechev, 2012). As hotels operate in a dynamic environment characterized by fluctuating consumer demand, seasonality, and competitive pressures, the ability to accurately predict financial outcomes is crucial. Forecasting models allow hotels to anticipate future performance, make informed strategic decisions, and optimize the use of resources, particularly in critical areas such as the food and beverage (F&B) department (Noone, Enz, & Glassmire, 2017; Zrnić et al., 2023). Sustainable development in tourism, particularly in the Food and Beverage (F&B) department, emphasizes reducing waste, sourcing local and organic ingredients, and minimizing the environmental footprint through energy-efficient practices (Ristić, Bošković & Despotović, 2019). By adopting sustainable strategies, F&B departments can enhance guest experiences while promoting long-term ecological balance and supporting local communities.

This paper explores the various financial forecasting models employed within the hospitality industry, emphasizing their application to the F&B department. Accurate financial forecasting is not merely a tool for operational efficiency; it is a strategic necessity that supports decision-making at all levels of hotel management. By understanding and refining these models, hospitality businesses can achieve greater financial stability, optimize performance, and enhance their overall competitiveness in the marketplace.

Literature review

Financial forecasting in hospitality

Financial forecasting is widely recognized as a critical component of management in the hospitality industry. Studies, such as those by Kim (2018) emphasize the importance of financial forecasting models in dealing with the high level of uncertainty that characterizes the hospitality sector. These

models allow businesses to anticipate demand, manage costs, and make strategic decisions that are aligned with both short-term goals and long-term sustainability. Research highlights that accurate forecasting in the hospitality industry is not only essential for day-to-day operations but also for ensuring resilience during periods of economic downturn or market volatility.

In the hospitality sector, where seasonal swings and changing market conditions are common, financial forecasting is essential to a company's ability to stay profitable and sustainable. Hospitality companies, such as hotels, restaurants, and other service providers, can effectively manage their resources, minimize operating expenses, and project their future financial performance with the help of accurate financial forecasting. Making well-informed decisions about capital investments, hiring, staffing, and inventory management is also aided by it. Revenue forecasting is a key element of financial forecasting in the hospitality industry. This entails forecasting future income sources using market trends, historical data, and other outside variables including shifts in the regional economy, demand for travel, and competition activities. For instance, occupancy rates, average daily rates (ADR), and revenue per available room (RevPAR) are all important factors in revenue forecasting in the hotel industry. Precise revenue projections facilitate more effective pricing and marketing initiatives by enabling management to establish reasonable budgetary targets and recognize peak and off-peak times.

Cost management is a crucial component of financial forecasting in the hotel industry. For a business to remain profitable, it is crucial to forecast expenditures associated with personnel, utilities, food and beverage suppliers, and maintenance. Cost forecasting needs to take supply chain interruptions, changes in demand, and seasonal variations into consideration. For instance, during times of strong demand, labor expenses could go up because more employees are required, while the cost of food and drink might go up because of short-

ages or higher pricing. Hospitality managers may better allocate resources, cut down on wasteful spending, and enhance overall operational efficiency with the help of accurate cost forecasting. Forecasting capital expenditure (Capex) is another crucial factor in financial planning for the hotel industry. This kind of forecasting entails making projections about upcoming expenditures on real estate, machinery, technology, and remodeling. Because the hospitality sector requires a lot of capital, companies need to make frequent investments in renovations and upgrades to remain competitive and satisfy customers. By accurately projecting capital expenditures, businesses can avoid cash flow issues and debt accumulation by ensuring that these investments are planned in a way that complements their long-term strategy and financial capability. Managing market volatility and outside influences is one of the major issues of financial forecasting for the hospitality industry. Unpredictable occurrences like pandemics, natural disasters, or economic downturns can have a significant impact on revenue and demand. Businesses may need to make immediate adjustments if there are differences between their anticipated and actual financial performance because of these external shocks. Consequently, scenario-based forecasting—which entails creating numerous financial estimates based on varying market conditions and outside events—is becoming more and more prevalent in hospitality firms. With this strategy, companies may be ready for a variety of scenarios and put backup plans in place as necessary.

In the hospitality sector, technology integration is also changing financial projections. Artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning have made it possible for corporations to employ sophisticated algorithms to evaluate massive datasets and produce financial forecasts that are more accurate. With the use of these tools, hospitality organizations may make data-driven decisions and real-time forecasts by seeing patterns in customer behavior, price trends, and market dynamics. AI-driven revenue management systems, for example, can dynamically mod-



ify room rates in response to rival pricing, real-time demand, and other factors, enhancing the profitability and accuracy of financial predictions. However, due to financial limitations and a lack of experience, smaller hospitality organizations may find it difficult to implement these cutting-edge technologies. These companies' financial forecasts may still be done manually or using basic spreadsheets, which could reduce the precision and effectiveness of their projections. Adding outside variables like inflation, currency rates, and shifting product prices further adds to the intricacy of financial forecasting. To ensure accuracy, financial models must be continuously monitored and updated. Furthermore, when it comes to financial forecasting for the hospitality industry, people are still crucial. While technology can improve forecasting accuracy, financial managers' experience and judgment are crucial for deciphering data and coming to wise conclusions. Financial forecasting ought to consider qualitative information as well as quantitative estimates, such as visitor comments, market mood, and new trends. Working together across departments—like sales, marketing, and operations—is also essential to producing thorough predictions that complement the overarching business plan.

Several scholars have developed forecasting models that cater to the specific needs of the hospitality industry. Ampountolas (2024) designed for intermittent demand forecasting, has been adapted in various studies to predict demand in service industries where seasonality plays a significant role. More recent advancements, including the use of artificial intelligence and machine learning algorithms, have been explored by scholars such as Doborjeh et al. (2022), who demonstrate the effectiveness of these technologies in enhancing the accuracy of forecasts.

The Role of Financial Forecasting in F&B Departments

The F&B department is a particularly complex area within the hospitality industry, requiring specialized forecasting mod-

els. Research by Hinson et al. (2024), underscores the variability in demand within F&B operations, driven by factors such as customer preferences, event management, and external economic conditions. Forecasting in this context is crucial for managing inventory, labor, and pricing strategies, which directly impact profitability. Studies such as those by Enz and McSporran & Cho (2017) highlight the importance of incorporating external economic indicators and consumer behavior trends into F&B forecasting models to improve accuracy. Several traditional methods, including time series analysis and regression models, have been applied to F&B financial forecasting. For example, a study by Claveria, Monte & Torra (2015), demonstrated the effectiveness of time series models in predicting revenue patterns in hotel restaurants. These models help managers anticipate periods of high and low demand, allowing them to adjust staffing levels, order quantities, and pricing strategies accordingly. However, these traditional models often require manual adjustments to account for unique variables specific to F&B operations (Zrnić, 2024).

Modern forecasting techniques: Ai and machine learning

Recent literature has increasingly focused on the use of advanced technologies, such as artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning, to improve financial forecasting accuracy in hospitality. AI-driven models can process vast amounts of data, identify patterns, and adapt to changing conditions, offering a more dynamic and responsive approach to forecasting. A study by Bulchand-Gidumal, J. (2022), suggests that AI-based forecasting tools significantly enhance prediction accuracy in the hospitality industry by automating data analysis and continuously refining forecasts based on real-time information. Machine learning algorithms have been particularly effective in forecasting demand and optimizing inventory in F&B departments. Research by Kwon, Lee & Back (2020), explores the use of deep

learning techniques to predict customer demand in hotel restaurants, demonstrating superior performance compared to traditional models. These algorithms can analyze large datasets, including historical sales, weather conditions, and local events, to generate more accurate predictions. The application of such technologies represents a significant advancement in financial forecasting, offering hospitality managers more precise tools for decision-making.

In sectors like hospitality, retail, and banking, modern forecasting techniques - especially those powered by AI and machine learning, are completely changing how firms approach making forecasts. These methods produce more precise, data-driven forecasts than conventional statistical models by utilizing large datasets and complex algorithms. Massive amounts of data can be processed and analyzed at a never-before-seen scale by AI and machine learning models, which can also reveal patterns and insights that conventional forecasting techniques might overlook. As they process fresh data, these dynamic systems learn and get better over time. Artificial intelligence (AI)-based forecasting technologies, for instance, can examine previous data on reservations, lodging rates, seasonality, visitor preferences, and even outside variables like the local weather or events. Machine learning algorithms deliver more accurate demand, pricing, and resource allocation estimates by combining these many data sets. The capacity of AI-based forecasting to consider complicated factors and non-linear connections is one of its main advantages. Conventional techniques, such moving averages and time-series models, can falter when the market circumstances abruptly change, or unanticipated occurrences occur. However, machine learning algorithms are more resilient to these kinds of disturbances, which makes them especially useful in volatile industries like hospitality and tourism. Supervised learning and unsupervised learning are the two main machine learning approaches used in AI-driven forecasting. In

supervised learning, the model is taught to forecast future events using labeled historical data. This is very helpful for forecasting sales, demand, and revenue indicators. A supervised learning model, for instance, might be trained using historical information on guest stays, rates, and seasonal patterns to forecast room occupancy rates.

Conversely, unsupervised learning finds structures and patterns in data without the need for predetermined labels. This is useful for understanding various guest segments and their preferences, as well as for detecting clusters of client behavior. Businesses can offer more specialized services, such customized marketing campaigns or improved service delivery, by identifying these tendencies. Because neural networks can represent intricate interactions between variables, they have demonstrated extraordinary performance in predicting applications, particularly when it comes to deep learning models. Time-series forecasting is particularly well-suited to recurrent neural networks (RNNs) and long short-term memory (LSTM) models, which are particularly good at learning dependencies over time. These models can be used in the hospitality industry to forecast client demand across a variety of time horizons, which can improve staffing, pricing, and inventory management for companies. For instance, by considering the time-based dependencies between different elements like booking lead times, guest preferences, and seasonal swings, LSTM models can be utilized to anticipate occupancy rates. Their specialization in jobs involving sequential data stems from their capacity to capture long-term dependencies.

Predictive analytics using AI and machine learning models also makes real-time forecasting possible. These models can absorb real-time data streams from various sources, including social media, online bookings, and economic indicators, and adjust projections instantly, in contrast to conventional forecasting techniques that rely on static data. This is especially useful in dynamic situations like the hospitality industry,



where pricing and demand can be significantly impacted by sudden changes in local events, the weather, or guest behavior.

Real-time forecasting technologies, for example, enable hotels to maximize revenue and occupancy by dynamically adjusting room rates in response to changes in real-time demand. By anticipating food and beverage needs and optimizing stock levels and cutting waste based on dynamic demand patterns, predictive analytics technologies can also be applied in other contexts. Even while machine learning and AI forecasting models have many advantages, there are still certain difficulties. The high cost and intricate nature of execution are among the main obstacles. These models need to be developed, trained, and maintained, which means a large investment in both human and technological resources. Due to their limited resources, smaller hospitality companies might find it difficult to completely implement these strategies, which could create a competitive advantage for independent operators over larger hotel chains. The quality of the data is another difficulty. A major factor in AI-driven forecasting's efficacy is the precision and caliber of the incoming data. Data that is out-of-date, inconsistent, or incomplete can greatly distort the results and produce forecasts that are not trustworthy. Furthermore, machine learning models can be resource-intensive because they need to be updated and retrained frequently to stay effective. More advanced forecasting systems that can smoothly incorporate a variety of variables, including real-time market trends, customer feedback, and external economic indicators, are expected to emerge as technology develops. As technology costs fall and new user-friendly platforms appear, smaller firms will probably have greater access to AI and machine learning models. Furthermore, the increased focus on explainable AI (XAI) will facilitate broader adoption by making it simpler for hospitality professionals to comprehend and believe the predictions made by these models.

Challenges and limitations in financial forecasting

Despite the advancements in forecasting models, challenges remain in applying these techniques within the F&B sector of the hospitality industry. One significant issue highlighted in the literature is the need for accurate and high-quality data. As noted by Chen, Miao & Shevlin (2015), poor data quality can undermine the effectiveness of even the most sophisticated forecasting models. The integration of external variables, such as macroeconomic factors and competition, is also a challenge, as these can be difficult to quantify and predict. Moreover, the adoption of AI and machine learning models, while promising, requires substantial investment in technology and training. Research by Zhang et al. (2024) discusses the barriers to technology adoption in hospitality, including cost, lack of expertise, and resistance to change. These factors can limit the accessibility of advanced forecasting models for smaller hotels or those with limited resources (Vujić et al., 2022). The intrinsic unpredictability of demand variations is a major problem in the implementation of forecasting models within the F&B sector, in addition to the technological and data-related difficulties. Variations in consumer behavior, seasonality, and local events are some of the factors that can cause large variations in demand, which are frequently hard to forecast with great accuracy. Conventional statistical models can handle some unpredictability, but they might not be flexible enough to react to abrupt shifts in the market or outside shocks like economic downturns or crises in the world's health. This is especially problematic for the food and beverage industry, since inventory control and perishable commodities are essential to cutting waste and increasing profits.

Moreover, a key element in predicting the effectiveness of forecasting models in F&B operations is organizational preparedness. Studies show that many hospitality organizations still use antiquated or manual techniques for demand forecasting, which makes it more difficult to adopt more sophisticated,

data-driven strategies. The scattered nature of data sources and the absence of digital infrastructure led to inefficiencies that impede the adoption of more precise forecasting models. Firms that don't digitize their operations can find it difficult to fully utilize AI and machine learning technologies, as they depend on integrated, real-time data. The use of forecasting in F&B departments is heavily influenced by the human component as well. To comprehend model outputs and make wise judgments, staff members' experience and judgment are still crucial, even with cutting-edge technical solutions. Forecasting mistakes can arise from an over-reliance on technology in the absence of sufficient human monitoring, particularly in intricate and dynamic settings such as the hospitality industry. It is impossible to overestimate the significance of fusing advanced technology with astute managerial abilities to guarantee that forecasting models are not only accurate but also applicable to day-to-day operations. Another issue is the F&B industry's operational and cultural aversion to implementing new technologies. Because of their unfamiliarity or fear of losing their jobs, managers and employees may be reluctant to accept new tools, which can impede the adoption of more advanced systems. This opposition is frequently exacerbated by the fact that the hospitality industry, especially in smaller venues, favors interpersonal service over technical innovation and has a more traditional operational philosophy. In addition to financial support, overcoming this opposition calls for change management techniques that allay employee worries and highlight the real advantages of cutting-edge forecasting models. The application of sophisticated forecasting models in the food and beverage industry is also influenced by regulatory factors. Policies pertaining to data privacy, like the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in Europe, have the power to restrict the gathering and application of client information, which is necessary for customized forecasting. Another level of complication is ensuring adherence to these

regulations while using customer data to estimate demand accurately. Establishments may further impede the adoption of new technology by having to carefully negotiate these regulatory frameworks to avoid legal consequences.

Forecasting models have advanced dramatically, but there are still several obstacles in the way of their use in the food and beverage industry. Overcoming these obstacles will necessitate a coordinated effort that strikes a balance between technology and human skill, resolves opposition to change, and guarantees compliance with pertinent regulations. These obstacles range from data quality and integration of external variables to technological, organizational, and legal constraints.

Methodology

The financial analysis for the matinee services at hotel Tamiš, covering the period from July 1, 2023, to July 1, 2024, offers an insightful examination of the department's revenue, cost structures, and profitability. This analysis emphasizes the financial dynamics of integrating food, drink, and music services into the matinee experience.

The study highlights how effective forecasting models have played a crucial role in managing the complex interplay of revenue streams and costs. The analysis reveals significant aspects of the department's performance, including the total revenue generated from food, drinks, and music. By examining the revenue figures, raw material costs, and profit margins, the study sheds light on the financial health of the matinee services. The data showcases the substantial contribution of each service component—food, drinks, and music—to the overall revenue, while also emphasizing the importance of managing raw material costs, which represent a significant portion of the expenses.

Using the financial forecasts, the study details how cost optimization strategies have impacted profitability. The integration of diverse revenue streams, such as the combina-



tion of food, drinks, and live entertainment, has been key to enhancing financial performance. The analysis highlights that, despite the high share of raw material costs, strategic pricing and efficient cost management have led to favorable profit margins.

The data was analyzed using SPSS 26, which facilitated detailed financial modeling and trend analysis. This approach provided a clear view of the department's expenditure

on raw materials, labor, and other operational costs, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of how these factors influence overall profitability. The study also examines how the department's innovative approaches and pricing strategies contribute to financial success, offering insights into the effectiveness of various forecasting models in a hospitality context.

Table 1. Financial forecasting for matinee (food) from 1th of July 2023 – 1th of July 2024, hotel Tamiš F&B department

MATINEE (FOOD)		
Sale item	Com.	Price
Food		797295.00
Total raw materials	0.000	797295.00
VTA		0.00
The share of raw materials		64%
Price without VTA		1241709.00
Selling price		
Profit in rsd		444414.00

Source: Author's research

*All prices are presented in Serbian dinar (RSD); *Value Added Tax (VAT)

Table 1. presents the financial forecasting for matinee food sales in the F&B department of hotel Tamiš, covering the period from July 1, 2023, to July 1, 2024. The table includes several key financial indicators related to the sale of food items, raw material costs, and the resulting profit for the department. The total sales revenue generated from food items during the specified period is projected to be RSD 797,295. This figure represents the gross revenue before accounting for costs and taxes.

The cost of raw materials is critical in determining profitability, and in this case, raw materials account for 64% of the total sales revenue. This percentage reflects the share of raw material costs relative to the total revenue, indicating a significant portion of the income is allocated to covering the cost of ingredients and supplies needed for food preparation. The table also provides information about the price structure. The price without VAT (Value Added Tax) is RSD 1,241,709,

which suggests that the overall selling price includes additional markups beyond the cost of raw materials. The final selling price of the food items has not been explicitly stated, but it is implied that it incorporates the raw material costs, operational expenses, and profit margins. The projected profit for the period is RSD 444,414.

This figure represents the net income after deducting all relevant costs, including raw materials and operational expenses, but before applying VAT. The absence of VAT information in the table may indicate that this tax is either included elsewhere in the financial analysis or considered separately.

Overall, this financial forecast provides an overview of the expected revenue, cost structure, and profitability for the matinee food operations within the F&B department at hotel Tamiš for the given period. The table highlights the importance of managing raw material costs and pricing strategies to achieve the desired profit margins.

Table 2. Financial forecasting for matinee (drinks) from 1th of July 2023 – 1th of July 2024, hotel Tamiš F&B department

MATINEE (DRINKS)		
Sale item	Com.	Price
Drinks		205669.00
Total raw materials	0.000	205669.00
VTA		0.00
The share of raw materials		32%
Price without VTA		639603.00
Selling price		
Profit in rsd		433934.00

Source: Author`s research

*All prices are presented in Serbian dinar (RSD); *Value Added Tax (VAT)

Table 2. presents the financial forecasting for matinee drink sales in the F&B department of hotel Tamiš, covering the period from July 1, 2023, to July 1, 2024. Like the food sales forecast, this table outlines key financial indicators related to the sale of drinks, raw material costs, and the resulting profit for the department.

The total revenue generated from drink sales during this period is projected to be RSD 205,669. This represents the gross income from all drink sales before considering any associated costs or taxes. The cost of raw materials for drinks is shown to account for 32% of the total revenue, a relatively smaller share compared to the food segment. This suggests that the cost of producing drinks is lower in proportion to the revenue generated, which could contribute to a higher profit margin for drinks compared to food. The price without VAT (Value Added Tax) for drinks is estimated at RSD 639,603. This figure

includes markups beyond the raw material costs, reflecting additional expenses such as operational costs and profit margins.

As with the food sales forecast, the final selling price is not explicitly stated in the table, but it is implied that the selling price factors in the total cost of raw materials and other related expenses. The projected profit for drink sales is RSD 433,934. This net income figure is calculated after deducting all associated costs, excluding VAT. The absence of VAT details in the table suggests that VAT is either accounted for separately or is integrated elsewhere in the financial analysis. Overall, this financial forecast for drink sales within the matinee service at hotel Tamiš indicates that, despite a lower revenue compared to food sales, drinks offer a favorable profit margin due to their lower raw material costs. Effective management of pricing strategies and cost control will be essential in maintaining these profit levels throughout the forecast period.

Table 3. Financial forecasting for matinee (drinks, food & music) from 1th of July 2023 – 1th of July 2024, hotel Tamiš F&B department

MATINEE (DRINKS, FOOD & MUSIC)		
Sale item	Com.	Price
Drinks		205669.00
Food		797295.00
Music		240000.00
Total raw materials	0.000	1242964.00
VTA		0.00
The share of raw materials		66%
Price without VTA		1881312.00
Selling price		
Profit in rsd		638348.00

Source: Author`s research

*All prices are presented in Serbian dinar (RSD); *Value Added Tax (VAT)



Table 3. presents the financial forecasting for the combined matinee offerings of drinks, food, and music in the F&B department of hotel Tamiš, covering the period from July 1, 2023, to July 1, 2024. This table consolidates the financial data for all three categories, providing a comprehensive view of the expected revenue, costs, and profit associated with the matinee service. The projected total revenue from drinks, food, and music during this period amounts to RSD 1,242,964. This figure represents the gross income before considering any associated costs or taxes. The breakdown includes RSD 205,669 from drinks, RSD 797,295 from food, and RSD 240,000 from music, showing the combined contribution of each component to the overall revenue.

The cost of raw materials represents 66% of the total revenue. This percentage highlights the significant portion of income allocated to covering the costs of drinks, food, and music, which includes not only ingredients and supplies but also the expenses associated with providing live entertainment. This figure suggests that raw material costs play a crucial role in determining the profitability of the matinee service. The price without VAT (Value Added Tax) for the combined offerings is calculated at RSD 1,881,312. This figure reflects the pricing strategy that incorporates the total costs and desired profit margins. While the table does not provide a specific selling price, it implies that the pricing for the matinee service includes adjustments to cover all expenses and ensure profitability. The projected profit for the matinee service, which includes drinks, food, and music, is RSD 638,348. This net income figure is calculated after deducting all related costs, excluding VAT. The absence of VAT details in the table may suggest that it is accounted for separately or considered in another part of the financial analysis. Financial forecast for the matinee service at hotel Tamiš indicates a well-balanced operation with a focus on maximizing profitability across multiple categories. By combining drink and food sales with entertainment offerings, the hotel

can create a more comprehensive experience for guests, which contributes to higher overall revenue. Effective cost management and pricing strategies will be key to achieving the projected profit margins for this period.

Discussion and conclusion

In analyzing the financial forecasting for matinee services at hotel Tamiš, including food, drinks, and music, several insights emerge that highlight the critical role of accurate forecasting models in optimizing the F&B department's performance. The provided data across three tables reveals key trends and considerations that are essential for effective financial management in the hospitality sector. The forecasts for food and drink sales, as well as the combined matinee service, underscore the significance of raw material costs and their impact on overall profitability. For the food segment, with a revenue of RSD 797,295 and raw material costs comprising 64% of this amount, the financial analysis indicates a substantial portion of income is dedicated to covering ingredient costs. This is consistent with the known complexity of managing food costs in the hospitality industry, where ingredient quality and waste management directly affect profit margins.

In contrast, the drinks segment, which generates RSD 205,669 in revenue with raw material costs at 32% of revenue, demonstrates a higher profit margin due to relatively lower material costs. This differential highlights how pricing strategies and cost control in the beverage sector can contribute to a more favorable financial outcome compared to food. When considering the combined matinee offerings of drinks, food, and music, the total revenue of RSD 1,242,964 with a raw material cost share of 66% reflects the integrated nature of these services. The significant portion of revenue allocated to raw materials, combined with a total profit of RSD 638,348, indicates that while the raw material costs are high, the overall pricing and revenue strategies effectively support a healthy profit margin. The absence of VAT details in the forecasts suggests that

further analysis is needed to understand the complete financial picture, including tax implications. The financial forecasts for matinee services reveal that while managing raw material costs is crucial, integrating multiple revenue streams—such as food, drinks, and entertainment—can enhance overall profitability. This integrated approach provides a more robust financial foundation, allowing the hotel to leverage diverse income sources to offset costs and maximize revenue. Additionally, the higher profit margins observed in the drinks segment suggest that focusing on optimizing pricing and controlling material costs in both food and beverage operations can significantly impact financial outcomes.

In conclusion, the financial forecasting models for the F&B department at hotel Tamiš illustrate the importance of detailed and accurate predictions in managing operational costs and profitability. The data highlights the need for strategic pricing, effective cost management, and the integration of various revenue streams to achieve financial success. By understanding and addressing the factors influencing raw material costs and revenue generation, hotel Tamiš can better align its financial strategies with operational goals, ensuring sustainable growth and enhanced profitability in the competitive hospitality market.

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THE ROLE OF MANAGEMENT IN THE SUCCESSFUL ORGANISATION OF CONFERENCES: A CASE STUDY OF HOLIDAY INN MUNICH CITY CENTRE

ULOGA MENADŽMENTA U USPEŠNOJ ORGANIZACIJI KONFERENCIJA: STUDIJA SLUČAJA HOTELA HOLIDAY INN MUNICH CITY CENTRE

Abstract: *This paper explores the role of management in the successful organisation of a conference, with a particular focus on industry events, known as the MICE industry. The terms and importance of the MICE industry are defined, as well as its impact on the competitive advantage of hotels. The paper presents a case study of the Holiday Inn hotel in Munich, which is part of the international hotel chain IHG (InterContinental Hotels Group). The IHG standards and characteristics of the Holiday Inn hotel were analyzed, with special reference to the organisation of events within the hotel. The paper examines in detail the process of organising events at the Holiday Inn hotel, emphasizing the key role of management in this process. Special attention is paid to the policy and set of values that event managers must follow in order to ensure the successful organisation of the conference. Also, the paper analyzes how management can contribute to the creation of competitive ad-*

Sažetak: *Ovaj rad istražuje ulogu menadžmenta u uspešnom organizovanju konferencija, sa posebnim fokusom na industriju događaja, poznatu kao MICE industrija. Definisani su pojmovi i značaj MICE industrije, kao i njen uticaj na konkurentsku prednost hotela. Rad predstavlja studiju slučaja hotela Holiday Inn u Minhenu, koji je deo međunarodnog hotelskog lanca IHG (InterContinental Hotels Group). Analizirani su IHG standardi i karakteristike hotela Holiday Inn, sa posebnim osvrtom na organizaciju događaja unutar hotela. Rad detaljno razmatra proces organizovanja događaja u hotelu Holiday Inn, naglašavajući ključnu ulogu menadžmenta u ovom procesu. Posebna pažnja posvećena je politikama i setu vrednosti koje menadžeri događaja moraju slediti kako bi osigurali uspešnu organizaciju konferencija. Takođe, rad analizira kako menadžment može doprineti stvaranju konkurentске prednosti kroz efektivno planiranje, komunikaciju*



vantages through effective planning, communication and execution of conference events, thereby increasing client satisfaction and guest loyalty. In this context, the application of strategic management and project management facilitates the integration of long-term objectives with day-to-day operations, thereby ensuring efficient and successful management of all aspects of event organisation.

Key words: event management, management efficiency, strategic management and project management, banquet organisation, Holiday Inn Munich City Centre, Intercontinental Hotels Group

Introduction

The event industry, including meetings, conferences, exhibitions and other events, is developing very rapidly and provides a significant contribution to business and leisure tourism. Organising and managing events is becoming increasingly complex, bearing in mind that clients expect all requirements to be met and exceeded with quality service. The manager's experience is key in recognising those needs, often before the client verbalizes them, in order to provide the best possible service. In this context, proactive action and understanding of essential client needs are the basis for providing superior service and achieving high satisfaction of conference participants (Bowdin et al., 2012). Each client is unique and comes with different requirements, which is an additional complication for management today, when clients expect an individualized offer and a high level of commitment from workers. This requires managers to be flexible and adaptable, in order to be able to respond to the specific needs of each client and provide a personalized service that will meet high expectations (Nicula, Elena, 2014). Moreover, strategic management plays a crucial role in shaping long-term vision and aligning strategies with market needs, thereby enabling organisations to anticipate and respond to changes in the events industry with a competitive advantage.

i izvršenje konferencijskih događaja, čime se povećava zadovoljstvo klijenata i lojalnost gostiju. U tom kontekstu, primena strategijskog menadžmenta i menadžmenta projekta omogućava integraciju dugoročnih ciljeva sa svakodnevnim operacijama, osiguravajući efikasno i uspešno upravljanje svim aspektima organizacije događaja.

Ključne reči: upravljanje događajima, efikasnost menadžmenta, strategijski menadžment i upravljanje projektom, organizacija banke-
ta, Holiday Inn Munich City Centre, Intercontinental Hotels Group

The industry of meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions, which is what the term "MICE" actually represents, is of great importance to the country, as it has a direct impact on the participants in the provision of tourism services and contributes to the improvement of the local economy. The industry refers to the specialised niche of group tourism, which relates to the planning and execution of conferences, seminars and other meetings. The MICE industry has a positive effect on economic growth, but also on the development of destination tourism. Also, the event industry generates millions of revenues for countries and cities around the world, which further confirms how tourism affects the economic growth of the local economy, as well as the travel industry (Ladkin, 2006; Anas et al., 2020). Effective project management within the MICE sector enables organizations to precisely align resources, timelines, and budgets, thereby ensuring successful event execution and maximizing economic benefits for local communities.

MICE events involve participants who have common interests and gather at events for business purposes. Meetings refer to conferences whose goal is to exchange information and contacts, discuss, solve problems, and generate new business opportunities. Incentive is a method of rewarding and motivating employees of a certain company.

Companies can reward their employees with a trip, the purpose of which is vacation with educational training and meetings for improvement. Conventions are similar to meetings, where participants gather to exchange ideas, views, opinions and various information. Exhibitions are events where new products are presented to those who may be interested (Anas et al., 2020).

According to the research of Anas and colleagues, the key elements that contribute to the successful execution of the conference are the following (Anas et al., 2020):

- Business traveler
- Motivation of participants
- Participants' perception
- Participant satisfaction
- Marketing
- Technical support and necessary equipment

It is important to emphasize that communication between clients and event management in the hotel is of great importance. Clients expect hotel event managers to organise events exactly according to their specific requirements, providing all necessary elements – from technical equipment and coffee breaks to meals and optimal layout of presentation space (Han et al., 2024). Effective project management in this context ensures that all aspects of event organization are coordinated and aligned with the client's requirements, thereby reducing the risk of errors and increasing client satisfaction. The communication process between the event manager and the hotel's field sales department is essential, because during this period the hotel should demonstrate to the client the ability to meet all requirements and take full responsibility for the successful realisation of the event. The client must have a sense of security and trust that he can fully rely on the hotel. The manager must possess exceptional negotiation and communication skills so that all potential problems are successfully resolved and everything goes exactly according to the wishes of the clients.

Employee motivation is of crucial importance for providing high-quality service

to service users (Cvijanović et al., 2018). Employees must be adequately motivated to deliver the highest quality service, which directly affects guest satisfaction. By achieving a high level of staff motivation and commitment, the hotel can ensure that guests receive superior service, which is essential to the hotel's success. Effective project management in employee training and development can enhance motivation and alignment with quality standards, while strategic management can aid in shaping long-term goals that integrate the workforce of different generations. Implementing targeted strategies for motivation and professional development can significantly improve overall service quality while simultaneously addressing challenges arising from different generational preferences and expectations. It is extremely important that employees are motivated to deliver quality service, which confirms that employees and management have the same goal, which is to achieve positive business results and continuous improvement of quality service (Ali et al., 2020). There is often a problem of overcoming differences between generations of employees in the hotel industry. Older workers bring valuable experience, while younger workers bring energy and enthusiasm. The introduction of new generations into the workforce of the hotel industry also brings certain challenges. Although younger workers bring energy and enthusiasm, they often lack the level of commitment and quality of service that characterized previous generations (Thommandru et al., 2023). In the past, employees were more focused on providing superior service and guest satisfaction, while today many young workers, engaged in part-time jobs, may be more motivated by short-term financial benefits than long-term goals of quality and guest satisfaction. Precisely because of these differences, it is essential to develop training and mentoring programs in order to better integrate the new generation of workers into organisational goals and quality standards (Mair et al., 2018). Combining experience and knowledge can bring



significant advantages. Different generations of employees bring different perspectives, skills and experiences, but can also cause challenges in communication and collaboration (Hitka et al., 2019).

Trainings have an extremely positive impact on employee motivation, it is a vital tool for improving work performance (Xu, Luo, 2023). In order to achieve organisational goals professionally and successfully, management is obliged to provide training for its employees to keep them abreast of the rapidly changing trends in the hospitality world. In return, it helps them reduce anxiety and frustration caused by work overload and improve their skills for efficient performance of tasks (Shkoler, 2020). In addition, effective project management within the training process ensures that resources are efficiently allocated and training programs are systematically executed, which further enhances employee skills and job satisfaction. Moreover, aligning training programs with strategic management goals helps in integrating employee development with the organisation's long-term objectives, leading to a more cohesive and motivated workforce.

InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG)

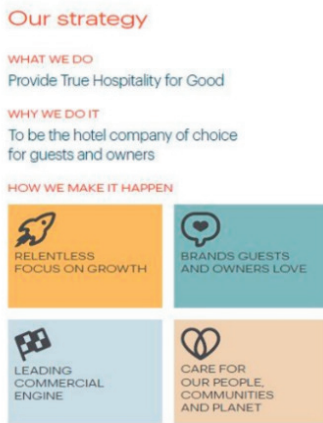
InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) is a global leader in the hotel industry, with a rich history and a broad portfolio of brands spanning various market segments. Founded in 2003 as the successor to Bass PLC, IHG is today one of the world's largest hotel companies. IHG has 6,368 hotels and 946,382 rooms globally. Also, it is important to emphasize that this hotel group consists of 19 brands, namely Six Senses, Regent, Vignette collection, InterContinental Hotels & Resorts, Kimpton Hotels & Restaurants, Hotel Indigo, Voco, Hualuxe, Crowne Plaza, Iberostar Beachfront Resorts, Even, Holiday Inn Express, Holiday Inn, Garner, Avid, Atwell Suites, Staybridge Suites, Holiday Inn Club Vacations and Candlewood Suites.¹

¹ <https://www.ihgplc.com/en/about-us/what-we-stand-for> (visited on: 29.07.2024)

The feature of this hotel chain is the continuous improvement of the offer through adaptation to dynamic changes in the market, which is why it is the leader in the hotel industry. During 2023, the hotel's strategy was improved by strengthening the corporate structure, which means that the hotel's portfolio was expanded from 11 to 19 brands. Also, the IHG One Rewards loyalty program was improved and transformed, new partnerships were concluded, web and mobile offers were improved, and the new "Journey to Tomorrow" program was established - a ten-year plan, the goal of which is a sustainable way of doing business. This strategic plan not only aligns the business with sustainable development goals (SDGs) across five key areas (people, community, carbon dioxide, waste, and water), but also ensures that all strategic initiatives are integrated with the hotel's long-term objectives, thereby enhancing its competitiveness and sustainability. This program respects the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through 5 key areas, namely people, community, carbon dioxide, waste and water. The actions described in the responsible business plan "Journey to Tomorrow" contribute to the preservation of the planet's biodiversity, either through reducing energy and water consumption in hotels, minimizing the use of disposable products, or engaging suppliers that drive positive change.

In order to respond to market changes in the best way, IHG has defined key goals and performance indicators (KPIs - Key Performance Indicators). The goals that need to be met in 2024 relate to the continuity in the growth and development of the brand, through the expansion of the market presence of Avid Hotels, Atwell Suites and Garner. It is necessary to continue to improve the personalised experience of service users through additional investment in IHG One Rewards. Also, during 2024, the focus of business success is on providing support to employees through the professional development of leadership skills through various trainings and events (KPIs, 2023).

Illustration 1 Strategy of the IHG hotel chain



Source: Internal material of Hotel Holiday Inn City Centre Munich

The Holiday Inn brand includes 1,195 hotels and has a total of 214,330 rooms. Holiday Inn has been ranked as the most trusted brand in the travel and hospitality sector in the United States, according to global data analysis and market research group Morning Consult.² Within this research, examples of best practice in organising conference events at the Holiday Inn City Center hotel in Munich, the capital of Bavaria, are presented. This prestigious hotel is located within touching distance of Marien platz the heart of Munich, which is a great advantage and it can be reached on foot or by subway, whose station is located within the hotel complex. Also, the main train station is 10 minutes away, while the airport takes 30 minutes by metro. Hotel location is often a key factor for visitors, thanks to its exceptional accessibility. Especially for business tourists, the proximity to the main train station and the airport is a significant advantage. The hotel is located in the immediate vicinity of the main tourist attractions, restaurants and business centers, which allows guests to easily carry out their duties and enjoy the city without the need for long journeys.

² <https://www.ihgplc.com/en/about-us/awards> (visited on: 29.07.2024)

The hotel has 582 modernly equipped accommodation units, the key feature of which is the panoramic view, which includes the entire old part of the city. Single, double, family or business guest rooms contain everything needed for a pleasant stay, which meets high standards.³

The hotel's conference rooms represent the most significant competitive advantage in Munich and in the entire country. The surface area is 2 300m², it has 18 conference and meeting rooms, which are air-conditioned and equipped with free wireless internet. These rooms, equipped with the most modern technical equipment and adapted to different needs, enable the hotel to meet the demands of even the most demanding business users and event organisers, which makes it stand out from the competition. Moreover, strategic planning and project management play a crucial role in optimizing the use of these spaces and resources, ensuring that each event is organized to the highest standards and meets client needs. In addition to technical facilities, the hotel also provides expert support from its professional events team, which is available to ensure the flawless realisation of any event. Meeting and conference rooms can be adapted to different types of events, from small business meetings to large conferences and seminars.⁴

What sets this hotel apart from others is the high-quality staff. Employees are supported by a set of values that are important to both IHG and hotel guests. While working as a team with all interested parties, these shared values provide a sense of common purpose that directs the hotel's business towards one goal, which is to achieve successful business results in all fields. Competent project management also contributes by ensuring that training and employee development are systematically integrated into daily operations, enabling better coordination and implementation of strategies that support the hotel's core values. This recognition stems from a focus on attracting and retaining top talent in the industry and most importantly supporting employees through training and professional development training.

³ <https://www.meet-inn-munich.com/> (visited on: 28.07.2024)

⁴ <https://www.meet-inn-munich.com/veranstaltungsraeume/> (visited on: 28.07.2024)

Illustration 2 Goals for 2024

Targets 2024



Source: Internal material of Hotel Holiday Inn City Centre Munich

It is very important to emphasize that the Holiday Inn hotel has the Green Key certificate, which significantly contributes to its reputation and improves the quality of the overall service. Green Key is an internationally recognised certificate awarded to hotels and other hospitality establishments that have demonstrated a high level of environmental responsibility and sustainable practices. This prestigious certificate confirms that the hotel not only meets, but also exceeds standards in the area of environmental protection, which has multiple benefits. Strategic planning related to sustainability enables the hotel to continuously improve its environmental initiatives and integrate them into all aspects of its operations, ensuring a long-term positive impact on the environment. Having the Green Key certificate strengthens the hotel's image as a leader in sustainable tourism, which additionally attracts guests who value environmental responsibility. Through a

systematic approach within strategic management, the hotel successfully aligns its environmental goals with business strategies, contributing to the enhancement of service quality and guest satisfaction. Also, the certificate is proof of the hotel's commitment to the preservation of natural resources, as well as the implementation of environmentally friendly practices that improve the overall service and experience of the stay. The Holiday Inn hotel implements the following steps in its sustainable business: ⁵

- 1) Minimizing resource consumption (energy, water and waste)
- 2) Implementing a recycling protocol and providing an incentive for guests to contribute to the preservation of the environment with their participation
- 3) Implementation of sustainable technologies

⁵ <https://www.meet-inn-munich.com/en/projekt/environment/> (visited on: 29.07.2024)

- 4) Minimizing the use of plastic
- 5) Increasing the use of organic and local food
- 6) Promotion of environmentally friendly products
- 7) Focus on animal welfare when purchasing products
- 8) Raising awareness of responsible travel among users of hotel services

Event planning at Holiday Inn City Centre Munich

The Holiday Inn hotel is renowned for its top-class conference rooms, which cover an area over 2000 square meters. This impressive space includes 18 flexible conference rooms that can be flexibly adapted to different events. Strategic management in the event organisation sector allows the hotel to optimise the use of space and resources, ensuring that all events are organised to the highest standards and meet client needs. The importance of the income that the event and conference sector brings to the Holiday Inn Hotel in Munich is extremely important. Clients who book spaces for their events in the hotel often additionally book hotel rooms, which significantly contributes to the hotel's overall business success. Project management in this sector aids in precise planning and coordination of all aspects of events, which further enhances efficiency and client satisfaction. Achieving the budgeted annual revenue or exceeding it, is the key goal of every hotel business. The conference events sector contributes to the hotel's total revenue with a significant share of 30%, which confirms its key role in the hotel's overall financial performance.

However, it is not only the space and equipment that influence the clients' decision to choose this particular hotel for holding their events. The key reason is the professionalism of the employees, especially the management, who deliver a high quality service. Strategic planning and effective project management are key factors in consistently meeting and exceeding client expectations,

leading to exceptional satisfaction and long-term loyalty. In this research, the process of organising and managing the event is presented, where the organisers have become loyal and return to this hotel every year, because they know that their expectations will be met, and often exceeded.

According to Kimes (2001), the organisation of the event includes a series of steps that must be followed in order for the client to be satisfied:

- 1) Understanding the client's requirements and needs

Understanding the requirements and needs of clients is key to success in organising an event. Precise recognition and interpretation of their wishes enables the adaptation of services and resources to meet their specific requirements. This not only ensures a satisfactory experience for customers, but also contributes to building long-term business relationships and increases the likelihood of repeat services.

- 2) Development of a detailed event plan

The field sales department is obliged to be in constant contact with clients. It is their responsibility to determine all the details that need to be done and prepared for the event. This includes understanding the specific requirements of clients, coordinating all aspects of planning, as well as providing timely information to ensure that each event is successfully realized.

The details that need to be established relate to the exact date of the event and/or alternative dates, so that the conference rooms are reserved for the client. Bearing in mind that it is necessary to follow-up continuously in order to determine all the elements for the event, because there are often changes in the organisers' plans, the field sales department must be extremely engaged. For this reason, the event sales department should contact the organisers two months before the event and two weeks before the arrival of the participants to clarify any last details.



The Client is obliged to submit the agenda which indicates timetables of lectures, meetings, coffee breaks, lunches and other content which is relevant to the event, considering that a large number of departments in the hotel are involved, including the kitchen, the food and beverage sector (F&B), the field sales sector, as well as the staff responsible for hosting the conference. Optimized coordination through strategic project management ensures seamless integration of various departments and guarantees that all aspects of the event align with specific requirements and schedules. Effective communication between all departments is critical, for the event to go according to plan. The maximum commitment of all employees is expected in order to exceed the expectations of the event organisers. That is why it is necessary that everyone has a common goal - achieving business success at all levels. Strategic management contributes to a unified goal and the coordination of efforts across all staff, facilitating success at every level of the business.

3) Provision of technical equipment

Quality and modern technical equipment is essential for providing high quality service in the event sector. Equipment that complies with the latest standards enables the flawless implementation of the event and contributes to the overall satisfaction of the clients.

4) Execution of events

Realisation of the event is a key stage in the organisation of conferences and similar manifestations, which involves a series of coordinated activities in order to achieve maximum satisfaction of the participants.

Management constantly monitors the performance of events and responds to unforeseen situations. Furthermore, management also maintains communication during the event with the organisers and participants of the conference in order to provide all relevant information and, most importantly, support and assistance during the entire event. Effective project management enables the management team to quickly identify and resolve issues, ensuring that any changes to

the original plans are promptly implemented and that the event logistics remain aligned with new requirements. If there is a change in the originally established plans, it is the management that solves every problem with its quick reaction and adjusts the logistics of the event.

Communication with the participants during the event is extremely important, because it is at that moment that the organiser can decide whether to choose Holiday Inn again for future events. Effective and transparent communication contributes to creating a positive impression and strengthening relations with clients. Through strategic planning and effective project management, the hotel management ensures that all aspects of the event are carefully coordinated and that participants' needs are addressed. The Conference manager with his team has a key role in this process, their ability to instill confidence and establish trust cannot be overstated, through a professional and attentive approach, managers demonstrate their commitment and ability to improve the overall experience. When participants see that every aspect of the event is carefully coordinated and that their needs are a priority, it creates a sense of trust and security.

Because of this commitment and ability to provide a seamless experience, Holiday Inn has become a market leader. The quality of service and the ability to meet and exceed client expectations have made this hotel the first choice for organising events, thus cementing its position as a leader in the industry.

5) Event evaluation and feedback collection

After the end of the event, it is important to collect feedback from participants and organisers in order to evaluate the success and identify possible areas for improvement. Effective event evaluation allows the hotel not only to improve its services, but also to build long-term relationships with clients through continuous improvement of experiences. Strategic management of the evaluation process and the implementation of improvements based on feedback plays a crucial role



The role of management in the successful organisation of conferences

One of the key elements that differentiates the Holiday Inn Munich City Centre from the competition is its communication structure. According to Darren Jarman, conference manager, the main difference between the Event & Meetings department and competitive field sales departments at other hotel is its understanding of a clear and precise communication with clients.

The challenge lies within the nature of a conference booking, there are more elements and variables involved than for example a one to one on a reception or in a restaurant, a typical face to face interaction. In contrast, in the event organisation sector, the banquet manager does not interact directly with the client, instead, the first contact is between field's sales and the client, which then hands over the information on to the Event & Meetings department. Clients i.e. Event organisers also collaborate with their partners or agencies involved in the planning and organisation of the event. This complex network of communication makes the event organisation process significantly more complicated and requires additional coordination and attention to ensure successful implementation.

Therefore, it is essential that communication between departments is seamlessly coordinated to ensure customer satisfaction. It is necessary to transmit information in a timely and accurate manner in order to avoid potential errors that could negatively affect the realisation of the event. Any irregularity in communication or inaccuracy in the transmission of information can lead to problems in the execution of the event, which can result in customer dissatisfaction and damage to the hotel's reputation. Therefore, continuous coordination and clarity in mutual communication between the sales sector, the event organisation sector and all relevant departments are key aspects of the successful execution of the event. Perfect communication enables efficient resolution of all challenges and ensures that all phases of event organisation run smoothly, thus guaranteeing

a high level of service and exceeding the clients expectations. Strategic management plays a crucial role in aligning communication between different departments, ensuring that all aspects of event organisation are consistent with the hotel's long-term business goals and standards.

Team Building and Development at Holiday Inn Munich

According to Darren Jarman, conference manager, the key qualities a manager should possess include the following roles, which are essential to his function:

- Training
- Coaching
- Managing

The most important quality that a manager should possess is the role of a coach. As a coach, the manager recognizes and develops the potential of employees in a way that contributes to their professional development and directs them towards achieving high standards and perfection.

An effective manager understands that employees are individuals and therefore must apply a specific and individualized approach to each team member. He should not only be a leader, but also a mentor, adviser and colleague, adapting his approach to the unique needs and characteristics of each employee. In the context of strategic management and project management, it is crucial for the manager to develop and implement strategies that ensure optimal resource utilization and coordination of team efforts towards the project's set goals. Such a manager creates a working environment in which employees feel that they can be trusted and that they can rely on the manager's support at any time. Developing a relationship based on trust is the key to creating agreeable and positive atmosphere in the workplace. This approach allows employees to feel supported and motivated, which is essential for achieving common goals and team success.

Only after successfully fulfilling the role of coach, the manager should switch to the role of trainer. As a trainer, the manager is responsible for training and developing the

skills of his employees. He provides and shares his knowledge, teaching workers all the necessary skills that are essential to efficiently perform daily work activities in a professional manner. The trainer not only imparts technical skills and knowledge, but also develops abilities that enable employees to successfully face challenges and responsibilities in their work. Through systematic training and mentoring, the manager ensures that employees can improve their productivity and contribution to the team by acquiring new skills. Strategic management plays a pivotal role in ensuring that the training and development programs are aligned with the long-term goals of the organisation, thereby facilitating both individual growth and the achievement of broader business objectives. This process is crucial for the continuous professional development of employees and for maintaining a high level of performance within the organisation.

Only after successfully fulfilling the roles of coach and trainer can the manager take on the role of conference manager. As a conference manager, his task is to effectively manage all aspects of event organisation, including planning, coordinating and supervising all activities required for the successful execution of the event. This role requires the alignment of previous skills and approaches to ensure that all elements of the event work harmoniously and achieve set objectives. The conference manager uses his experience and expertise gained in the roles of coach and trainer to optimize this processes, solve problems and provide an outstanding experience to clients and participants.

According to Darren Jarman, a manager should not adopt a superior attitude that can create a rift between himself and the employees or between himself and the conference hosts. A manager is not just an authority figure that balances between discipline and coaching; he should also be a mentor to his employees. Such an approach contributes to building a positive working environment and strengthening mutual relations. Strategic management emphasizes the importance of

aligning leadership with organisational goals to ensure that the management style supports the long-term success of the organisation. A manager who acts as a mentor, not just a superior, creates an atmosphere of trust and cooperation, which enables better understanding and more effective communication within the team, as well as the event clients. This approach helps build harmony and motivation, which is essential for delivering a high quality event.

On the other hand, an conference manager is not just a service provider for conference organisers; its role is much broader. The manager stands side by side with the event organisers, aiming to improve the quality of their conference and provide support and security whenever needed. It often happens that event participants are not completely sure of their wishes or do not have enough experience, which can lead to decisions that are not optimal. Strategic management plays a crucial role in this process, as it helps in identifying and implementing best practices for event management, ensuring that every decision and action aligns with the organisation's long-term goals. In such situations, the manager's suggestions can significantly alleviate the current problem and influence the final opinion of the guests. Effective and professional management guidance can direct organisers to the best solutions, which increases the likelihood that the same organisers will choose the same hotel again for future events. Such a proactive and supportive attitude of managers towards event organisers plays a key role in building long-term business relationships and client satisfaction.

Principles of effective event management

One of the most important aspects of providing exceptional service in the organisation of conference events is consistently delivering on promises made. Strategic management in this context highlights the need for precise planning and clear communication channels to ensure consistency in fulfilling promises. If the employees succeed

in ensuring that the conference participants feel that everything is smoothly running, the event organisers will be extremely satisfied with the service provided. This ability to deliver on promises is key to maintaining and enhancing customer loyalty. Effective fulfillment of promises not only contributes to a high level of satisfaction of event organisers, but also significantly affects long-term relationships with clients, thus ensuring their continued commitment and repeat co-operation.

According to Darren Jarman, conference manager, the key to successfully organising the best conference is:

1. Taking action and responsibility

The manager must actively take initiative and responsibility for all aspects of conference organisation, ensuring that all tasks are completed effectively and in a timely manner. This includes not only taking personal responsibility, but expecting the same from all employees. Each team member should take responsibility for their tasks in order to meet guests' expectations. The manager must ensure that all employees understand the importance of their role in the overall process, take ownership from all, and adhere to the quality standards set for the event. Strategic management plays a key role in aligning resources and activities to ensure that every part of the organization operates synchronously.

2. Providing suggestions and advice to the clients

A manager should use his experience and professional knowledge to provide useful suggestions and advice to his clients. It often happens that clients are not sure which option is best for their needs. In such cases, the manager must provide advice and suggestions to help them make informed decisions. Also, if the client is not completely satisfied, the manager should be ready to solve the problem and provide additional options in order to satisfy the client's needs and ensure a high quality of service.

3. Understanding the needs and wishes of the client

The manager should make an effort to get to know the customers thoroughly in order to be able to provide a service that is in line with their specific needs and desires. A detailed understanding of the client's requirements allows the manager to personalize the service and adjust all aspects of the event organisation to meet and exceed the client's expectations. This level of commitment enables the provision of high quality service and contributes to overall customer satisfaction.

4. Creating a team atmosphere

A manager should create a work atmosphere that motivates employees to achieve the best possible performance. Creating a positive and supportive work environment is key to encouraging employees to continually improve and give their best. The manager should ensure that all team members are aligned with the common goal of providing exceptional service, thus ensuring consistency and a high level of quality in the organisation of the conference.

SWOT analysis of the business of the Holiday Inn City Center Munich hotel

Within this scientific paper, the SWOT analysis of the Holiday Inn hotel will be presented. This analytical approach, which includes an assessment of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, is essential for a detailed understanding of a hotel's strategic position within the hotel industry. A systematic examination of internal and external factors enables the acquisition of valuable insights into competitive advantages, areas requiring improvement, potential opportunities for growth, as well as threats that may affect the hotel's success. The importance of this analysis is reflected in the identification of key elements that shape the performance and long-term sustainability of the hotel, which contributes to making informed strategic decisions and improving the overall efficiency of the business.

Table 1 SWOT analysis

Strengths	Opportunities
• Location in the city center • Direct access to public transport within the building complex • The main train station is 10 minutes away • Airport accessible in 35 minutes • Possible accommodation for large groups	• Fitness area • Business facilities for airlines, such as Pop up Club Lounge and separate check-in
Weaknesses	Threats
• Limited capacity of restaurant • The terrace is not big enough, it is not suitable for meetings	• Guest brand awareness • Not enough employees • Corporate rate increase for 2024, but less compared to IHG's 'double digit strategy'

Source: Internal material of Hotel Holiday Inn City Centre Munich

The Holiday Inn hotel faces significant competition in its immediate surroundings. Major competitors include Hilton, Novotel, Maritim, Four Points by Sheraton, Leonardo Royal and Hyperion hotels.

The Hilton Hotel, located in the immediate vicinity of the Holiday Inn, has 483 rooms. In comparison, Novotel Hotel offers 378 rooms, Maritim Hotel 349, Four Points by Sheraton 481, Leonardo Royal 424, while Hyperion Hotel has 272 rooms. One of the key strengths of the Holiday Inn is its room capacity of 582, making it one of the most spacious hotels in the area in this regard.

Also, the Holiday Inn hotel stands out for the number of conference rooms, with the largest room having a capacity for over 500 people. Compared to this, the Hilton Hotel can accommodate up to 360 people, the Novotel 50 people, the Maritim 380 people, while the Hyperion Hotel can accommodate 192 people.

All of the listed hotels offer access to fitness centers and saunas, which is a standard feature in this category of hotel.

The Holiday Inn hotel is in a competitive position compared to the surrounding hotels. Its huge advantage lies in its exceptional location, large number of rooms, capacity of conference rooms and quality of employees, which makes it a market leader. Although the lack of a swimming pool may be a weakness compared to some competitors that offer ad-

ditional facilities, the superiority of the Holiday Inn in key aspects such as capacity and infrastructure for events allows it to stand out as a significant player in its category.

Conclusion

The event industry is a key factor for successful hotel business. Quality infrastructure for events, including conference rooms, seminars and banquets, significantly contributes to increasing the hotel's revenue by hosting business meetings, corporate gatherings and private events. Strategic management must focus on the optimal use of these resources to ensure that event infrastructure is continually updated and aligned with market needs. Effective management of capacities and tailoring services to clients' specific needs enables the hotel to remain competitive and maximize revenue from the events sector. This type of offer not only attracts different clients, but also creates additional opportunities for providing services such as catering, technical support and accompanying activities. Effective event management can improve a hotel's visibility, increase capacity occupancy and contribute to its long-term market success.

The event industry plays a key role in the successful business of hotels, and this is particularly proven by the example of the Holiday Inn hotel. This hotel is successfully positioned on the market thanks to its exceptional

location, large number of rooms, as well as the capacity and flexibility of its conference rooms. These characteristics allow the hotel to maintain a high level of service quality and to meet the various needs of clients. However, the key success factor of the Holiday Inn hotel lies in the quality of the employees, that is, the role of management in the organisation and management of events. Hotel management creates a working atmosphere that encourages teamwork and a common goal: achieving maximum customer satisfaction. This synergy between employees and management makes it possible to provide high-level service and overcome challenges that arise in the hotel industry, such as problems with unskilled labor. Motivated employees who are committed to providing quality service have a positive effect on the work atmosphere and transfer their enthusiasm to their colleagues. This cohesion and common goal contribute to the creation of a pleasant and productive work environment, which is essential for achieving long-term success and competitiveness in the market.

The working atmosphere at the Holiday Inn hotel is successfully organised thanks to the management that plays a key role as a coach. The management is distinguished by its ability to recognize and develop the qualities of its employees through training and further improving their skills and competencies. As a coach, the manager does not position himself as an authoritarian boss, but as a friend and mentor to his employees, which creates an atmosphere of trust and open communication. This role of coach represents the first step, while the manager, after successfully fulfilling this role, moves into the role of coach. In this phase, the manager focuses on training and improving the business skills of his employees, providing them with the necessary tools for professional development. Only after these roles are successfully implemented, does the manager assume responsibility as a superior, with full authority to lead and supervise his department. This approach not only improves the efficiency and motivation of employees, but also contributes to the creation of a positive working atmosphere, which is crucial for successful hotel operations.

Regardless of the weaknesses and threats that the hotel faces, as well as the competition in the market, the key factor of the hotel's success lies in its employees. They represent the hotel and with their work and dedication contribute to the fact that guests and service users visit the hotel again and become loyal to the brand. Management, which successfully runs the business of the event department, plays a key role in this process. Their ability to build trust and create a cohesive team with their employees ensures a high level of service and professionalism. This synergy between management and employees creates a positive experience for guests, which motivates them to return and use the hotel's services again. In this way, the trust and loyalty of clients is strengthened, which contributes to the long-term success and recognition of the hotel on the market. Additionally, due to its exceptional strategic management and top-notch project management, the Holiday Inn hotel stands out as a leader in the events industry, setting high standards that competitors strive to achieve. Constantly improving strategies and innovations in project management enable the hotel to stay ahead of the competition and provide an outstanding experience for its clients. This commitment to excellence and continuous improvement makes the Holiday Inn not only a choice for numerous clients but also a benchmark in event industry practices. Through long-term strategic planning and adaptation to market trends, the hotel manages to continuously enhance its operations and ensure sustainable growth in a dynamic environment.

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Pregledni rad

UPRAVLJANJE KVALITETOM EKOTURISTIČKOG PROIZVODA

QUALITY MANAGEMENT OF ECOTOURISM PRODUCT

Apstrakt: Upravljanje kvalitetom ekoturističkog proizvoda predstavlja ključni aspekt održivog razvoja turizma koji se sve više fokusira na očuvanje prirodnih resursa i unapređenje iskustava turista. Ovaj rad istražuje važnost efikasnog menadžmenta kvaliteta kroz primenu ekomenadžment sistema, kao što su EMAS i ISO standardi, koji pružaju okvir za poboljšanje ekoloških performansi i održivosti. Fokusirajući se na integraciju održivosti u kreiranje ekoturističkih proizvoda, rad analizira ključne korake, uključujući analizu prirodnih resursa, planiranje ekoloških aktivnosti, saradnju sa lokalnim zajednicama i obrazovanje turista. Implementacija ovih strategija ne samo da doprinosi očuvanju životne sredine, već i povećava zadovoljstvo i svest turista o značaju odgovornog ponašanja. Pored toga, rad ukazuje na izazove i prilike sa kojima se suočavaju turističke destinacije prilikom usvajanja ovih pristupa, naglašavajući potrebu za stalnim unapređenjem i inovacijama. Ovaj rad pruža preporuke za efikasno upravljanje kvalitetom u ekoturizmu, osnažujući tako lokalne zajednice i promovišući dugoročnu održivost turističkih destinacija.

Abstract: Quality management of eco-tourism products is a key aspect of sustainable tourism development that increasingly focuses on the preservation of natural resources and the enhancement of tourist experiences. This paper explores the importance of effective quality management through the application of eco-management systems, such as EMAS and ISO standards, which provide a framework for improving ecological performance and sustainability. Focusing on the integration of sustainability into the creation of eco-tourism products, the paper analyzes key steps, including natural resource assessment, planning of ecological activities, collaboration with local communities, and tourist education. The implementation of these strategies not only contributes to environmental conservation but also enhances tourist satisfaction and awareness of the importance of responsible behavior. Additionally, the paper highlights the challenges and opportunities faced by tourist destinations in adopting these approaches, emphasizing the need for continuous improvement and innovation. This paper provides recommendations for effective quality management in eco-tourism, thereby empowering local communities and promoting the long-term sustainability of tourist destinations.

Ključne reči: menadžment kvaliteta, EMAS i ISO standardi, ekomenadžment sistem, ekoturizam, turistički proizvod.

Key words: quality management, EMAS and ISO standards, eco-management system, ecotourism, tourist product.

Uvod

Ekoturizam se u poslednjim decenijama sve više afirmiše kao oblik turizma koji se zasniva na održivom razvoju i očuvanju prirodnih i kulturnih resursa. U eri kada su ekološki problemi, kao što su klimatske promene i gubitak biodiverziteta, postali globalno pitanje, ekoturizam nudi rešenja koja su u skladu s principima održivosti. Međutim, kako bi se osigurao kvalitet ekoturističkog proizvoda, neophodno je uspostaviti sistematski pristup upravljanju kvalitetom.

Menadžment kvaliteta igra ključnu ulogu u oblikovanju pozitivnih iskustava posetilaca, istovremeno štiteći i unapređujući prirodne resurse. U tom smislu, ekomenadžment sistemi, kao što su EMAS i ISO standardi, postaju alati koji pomažu destinacijama da postignu svoje ciljeve u oblasti održivosti. Ovi standardi ne samo da pružaju smernice za upravljanje ekološkim performansama, već i podstiču lokalne zajednice na aktivno učešće u procesu.

Ovaj rad ima za cilj da istraži ulogu menadžmenta kvaliteta u kontekstu ekoturizma, s fokusom na razvijanje strategija kroz postupno uvođenje sistema menadžmenta kvaliteta koji doprinosi razvoju održivih turističkih proizvoda. Analiziraće se ključni aspekti, uključujući analizu prirodnih resursa, planiranje ekoloških aktivnosti, saradnju sa lokalnim zajednicama i obrazovanje turista. Razumevanje ovih elemenata može pomoći u oblikovanju budućih praksi u ekoturizmu i doprineti stvaranju boljeg odnosa između turista, lokalnih zajednica i životne sredine.

Uloga menadžmenta kvaliteta u ekoturizmu

Menadžment kvaliteta ima ključnu ulogu u kreiranju i održavanju visokog nivoa usluga i proizvoda u ekoturizmu, što direktno utiče na zadovoljstvo posetilaca, očuvanje prirodnih resursa i dugoročnu održivost destinacije. Ekoturizam, kao specifičan oblik turizma koji se temelji na odgovornom odnosu prema prirodi i lokalnim zajednicama, zahteva preciznu primenu alata i tehnika menadžmenta kvaliteta kako bi se osiguralo da turistička ponuda ostane u skladu sa princi-

pima održivosti.

Pojam „ekoturizam“ prvi je uveo meksički arhitekta i ekolog Ceballos-Lascurain, definišući ga kao oblik turizma koji minimalno utiče na životnu sredinu, podstiče aktivno učešće lokalnog stanovništva i donosi pozitivne društveno-ekonomske rezultate. Iako je njegova definicija široko prihvaćena i često citirana, tokom vremena razvijene su brojne druge definicije koje ističu različite vrednosti – od zaštite i očuvanja prirode, preko etičkih principa i održivosti, do edukacije i koristi za lokalnu zajednicu (Weaver & Lawton, 2007, 28).

Ekoturizam je značajna komponenta savremene turističke industrije i sve više dobija na značaju u globalnom turističkom kontekstu. Ovaj oblik turizma omogućava posetiocima da dožive prirodne lepote i kulturnu raznolikost, ali istovremeno stavlja akcenat na očuvanje životne sredine i održivi razvoj. Kao turistički proizvod, ekoturizam promovise zaštitu prirode, očuvanje kulturnog nasleđa i jačanje lokalnih zajednica. Poseban naglasak stavlja se na razvijanje svesti o značaju očuvanja prirodnih resursa i odgovornog ponašanja prema životnoj sredini, kako među turistima, tako i među lokalnim stanovništvom. Osim što pruža nezaboravna iskustva posetiocima, ekoturizam igra ključnu ulogu u podržavanju lokalnih ekonomija i očuvanju biodiverziteta (Todorov et al., 2023, 178).

Prema Međunarodnoj uniji za zaštitu prirode (IUCN) ekoturizam je „vrsta turističkog putovanja koje uvažava potrebe očuvanja životne sredine i vezuje se za posetu relativno očuvanim prirodnim dobrima, u cilju uživanja i divljenja prirodnim kao i kulturnim vrednostima, čime se promovisu aktivnosti zaštite. Ovaj vid turističkog kretanja karakteriše nizak stepen negativnog uticaja turističkih poseta na prirodu i veliki obim pozitivnih socio-ekonomskih efekata po lokalno stanovništvo“ (Joksimović, 2022, 81).

Za razliku od masovnog turizma, gde se fokus često stavlja na kvantitet, u ekoturizmu se posebna pažnja posvećuje kvalitetu proizvoda i usluga, uzimajući u obzir ekološke, ekonomske i socio-kulturne aspekte. U tom kontekstu, menadžment kvaliteta obuhvata niz aktivnosti koje su usmerene na stalno

unapređenje procesa i praksi, uključujući ocenu rizika, kontrolu performansi i zadovoljstvo turista. Kroz stalno praćenje i unapređivanje, može se postići dugoročna održivost i konkurentnost destinacija koje nude ekoturističke proizvode.

U zavisnosti od interesovanja za životnu sredinu, u literaturi možemo prepoznati dva tipa ekoturista: (Marković, 2019:27)

1. „Tvrdi“ ekoturisti – ovi ekoturisti su duboko zainteresovani za očuvanje prirode i poseduju znanje o ekologiji. Spremni su da putuju pod težim uslovima, sa malo udobnosti, kako bi doživeli autentična iskustva na specijalizovanim ekoturističkim putovanjima. Ovi turisti obično preduzimaju duga i specijalizovana putovanja u područja koja su relativno očuvana prirodom, putuju u malim grupama i često ne koriste usluge posrednika poput turističkih agencija ili turoperatora, niti usluge koje destinacija može pružiti.

2. „Meki“ ekoturisti – ovi ekoturisti su takođe zainteresovani za prirodu i očuvanje životne sredine, ali su skloniji udobnijim uslovima putovanja. Mogu koristiti usluge turističkih agencija i turoperatora kako bi organizovali svoja ekoturistička iskustva. Osim toga, nisu nužno toliko specijalizovani kao „tvrdi“ ekoturisti i često će posećivati popularnije destinacije.

Putovanja ovih turista nisu vođena velikom željom za iskusnim i ekskluzivnim

doživljajima u ekoturističkim destinacijama. Umesto toga, ekoturističke aktivnosti i sadržaji često čine samo deo njihovih sveobuhvatnijih putovanja koja imaju više ciljeva ili svrha (Todorov et al., 2023, 183). U brojnim destinacijama turizam je pretežno sezonskog karaktera, što znači da najveći pritisak na životnu sredinu nastaje tokom glavne turističke sezone. U periodima van sezone, kada je turistička aktivnost smanjena, životna sredina ima priliku da se delimično oporavi od negativnih uticaja (Kostić i Milićević, 2018, 139).

Pri razmatranju zaštite životne sredine, neophodno je imati na umu da ona ujedno predstavlja i radni prostor za čoveka. Zbog toga je očuvanje životne sredine neraskidivo povezano sa zaštitom radne sredine i unapređenjem kvaliteta života lokalnog stanovništva. Ovo je posebno značajno u kontekstu ekoturizma, koji treba da bude održiv i da doprinese ne samo očuvanju prirode, već i stvaranju konkretnih koristi za lokalnu zajednicu. U tom smislu, pri upravljanju prirodnim resursima, važno je uvažiti i potrebe ljudi koji u tom prostoru žive i rade (Todorov, et al., 2023, 74).

Obično se „tvrdi“ ekoturisti opredeljuju za specijalizovane ekoturističke ture, dok „meki“ ekoturisti ekoturizam integrišu kao jedan od aspekata šireg turističkog doživljaja (Tabela 1). Važno je napomenuti da oba tipa ekoturista igraju značajnu ulogu u promociji očuvanja prirode i ekološke svesti, svaki na svoj način, doprinoseći tako ekoturizmu kao održivom obliku turizma (Rabotić, 2013:36).

Tabela 1. Odlike “tvrdih” i “mekih” ekoturista

Tvrdi ekoturisti	“Meki” ekoturisti
Visoko ekološko angažovanje	Niska ekološka privrženost
Posete destinaciji s posebnim fokusom	Posete destinaciji koje služe različitim svrhama
Putovanja dugog trajanja	Putovanja kratkog trajanja
Manje grupe ekoturista	Veće grupe ekoturista
Aktivno fizičko učešće	Pasivno fizičko učešće
Fizički zahtevno	Fizički udobno
Očekuje se minimalne usluge	Očekuju se usluge
Intenzivna povezanost s prirodom	Površna povezanost s prirodom
Fokus na individualnom doživljaju	Fokus na interpretaciji turističkog vodiča
Samostalna organizacija putovanja	Organizovanje putovanja od strane turoperatora

Izvor: Todorov et al., 2023, 183.

Jedan od ključnih izazova u ekoturizmu je postizanje balansa između potrebe za ekonomskim rastom i očuvanjem prirodnih resursa. Upravo tu dolazi do izražaja važnost menadžmenta kvaliteta, koji pruža okvir za kontinuirano merenje i poboljšanje svih aspekata poslovanja. Takođe, menadžment kvaliteta uključuje i održavanje transparentne komunikacije sa turistima, gde im se pružaju tačne informacije o turističkoj ponudi, što dodatno povećava poverenje i zadovoljstvo.

Primenom alata za upravljanje kvalitetom, kao što su EMAS (*Eco-Management and Audit Scheme*) i ISO standardi (posebno ISO 14001 i ISO 9001), turističke organizacije i destinacije mogu sistematski pratiti uticaj svojih aktivnosti na životnu sredinu i osigurati usklađenost sa visokim ekološkim i kvalitetnim standardima. Ovi standardi omogućavaju ne samo praćenje uticaja na okolinu, već i proaktivno upravljanje resursima na način koji smanjuje ekološki otisak, povećava efikasnost i zadovoljava potrebe ekološki svesnih turista (<https://qualityaustria.rs/produktgruppen/integrated-management-system/>).

EMAS i ISO standardi za upravljanje kvalitetom

U globalnom okruženju, gde konkurencija postaje sve snažnija, organizacije moraju da rešavaju brojne izazove kako bi obezbedile svoj opstanak, rast i razvoj. To uključuje poboljšanje efikasnosti i efektivnosti poslovanja, povećanje konkurentnosti, implementaciju principa održivog razvoja i društvene odgovornosti, itd. Neprekidnim povećanjem poslovne efikasnosti, produktivnosti i održavanjem visokog kvaliteta, organizacije smanjuju troškove i jačaju konkurentnost svojih proizvoda. Opstanak i razvoj zavise od sposobnosti organizacija da zadovolje zahteve savremenog tržišta kroz svoj proizvodni program, cene i kvalitet proizvoda. U tom kontekstu, organizacije moraju primenjivati najnovije tehnologije, stalno unapređivati poslovne procese, inovirati proizvode i povećavati produktivnost kako bi postigle izvr-

snost i unapredile konkurentnost (Stanković i Vujičić, 2011).

EMAS (*Eco-Management and Audit Scheme*) i ISO standardi predstavljaju dva ključna alata za unapređenje kvaliteta i ekološke održivosti u ekoturizmu. Ovi standardi pružaju okvir za organizacije i destinacije koje teže poboljšanju ekoloških performansi i postizanju visokih standarda kvaliteta u turističkim proizvodima, dok istovremeno smanjuju negativne uticaje na životnu sredinu (Martins & Fonseca, 2018, 451).

EMAS je evropski standard, uspostavljen od strane Evropske unije, koji je specifično dizajniran za organizacije koje žele da unaprede svoj ekološki menadžment. Ovaj sistem omogućava organizacijama da procene, kontrolišu i kontinuirano poboljšavaju svoj uticaj na životnu sredinu. U kontekstu ekoturizma, primena EMAS-a doprinosi transparentnom upravljanju resursima, boljoj komunikaciji sa zainteresovanim stranama (turistima, lokalnim zajednicama i regulatornim telima) i poboljšanju reputacije destinacije ili turističke kompanije. Organizacije koje koriste EMAS moraju redovno izveštavati o svojim ekološkim performansama, što dodatno doprinosi poverenju potrošača. Sa druge strane, ISO standardi, naročito ISO 14001 (standard za ekološki menadžment) i ISO 9001 (standard za menadžment kvaliteta), imaju globalni značaj i široko su primenljivi u različitim sektorima, uključujući turizam. ISO 14001 pruža sistemski pristup upravljanju ekološkim aspektima poslovanja, omogućavajući organizacijama da identifikuju i smanje negativne uticaje na okolinu. Ovo je posebno važno u ekoturizmu, gde se prirodni resursi moraju pažljivo čuvati. Primena ISO 9001 standarda omogućava organizacijama da uspostave efektivne procese upravljanja kvalitetom, čime se osigurava doslednost u pružanju visokokvalitetnih usluga turistima (Živković, 2012; Zakon o standardizaciji, "Sl. glasnik RS", br. 36/2009 i 46/2015).

Kombinovana primena EMAS-a i ISO standarda pruža sveobuhvatan pristup upravljanju kvalitetom i održivošću. Dok EMAS omogućava organizacijama da se fokusi-

raju na ekološke aspekte poslovanja kroz transparentne izveštaje i revizije, ISO standardi obuhvataju širi spektar menadžerskih aktivnosti, uključujući kvalitet, zadovoljstvo korisnika, kao i ekonomsku održivost. Zajedno, ovi standardi stvaraju okvir za dugoročno planiranje i implementaciju održivih turističkih praksi koje zadovoljavaju i potrebe turističkih organizacija i zahteve ekološki osvešćenih putnika (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32009R1221>).

U turizmu, organizacije koje implementiraju ove standarde mogu postići veći nivo konkurentnosti na tržištu, jer zadovoljavaju rastuće zahteve turista za ekološki prihvatljivim proizvodima. Takođe, primena ovih standarda doprinosi poboljšanju reputacije, smanjenju operativnih troškova kroz efikasnije korišćenje resursa i dugoročnoj održivosti poslovanja.

Implementacija ekomenadžment sistema u ekoturizmu

Implementacija ekomenadžment sistema (EMS) u ekoturizmu predstavlja ključan korak ka ostvarivanju održivog razvoja i unapređenju kvaliteta turističkih proizvoda. Ekomenadžment sistemi obuhvataju niz procedura i praksi koje omogućavaju turističkim organizacijama i destinacijama da upravljaju svojim ekološkim uticajem na način koji je u skladu sa principima održivosti. Ovi sistemi ne samo da pomažu organizacijama da se usklade sa zakonskim regulativama i ekološkim standardima, već omogućavaju i proaktivno upravljanje resursima, što doprinosi dugoročnoj zaštiti prirodnih područja i lokalnih zajednica (Pandžić, 2024, 1099; Čosić, 2013, 197).

U kontekstu ekoturizma, implementacija EMS-a često započinje procenom trenutnog stanja ekoloških performansi organizacije ili destinacije. Ova procena uključuje identifikaciju ključnih ekoloških aspekata kao što su potrošnja energije, upravljanje otpadom, korišćenje vode, očuvanje biodiverziteta i emisije ugljen-dioksida. Nakon ove anali-

ze, organizacije razvijaju konkretne ciljeve i planove za smanjenje negativnih uticaja na okolinu, što može uključivati optimizaciju resursa, uvođenje obnovljivih izvora energije ili poboljšanje procesa upravljanja otpadom (Čosić, 2013, 198).

Ekomenadžment sistemi, kao što su EMAS i ISO 14001, pružaju okvire za implementaciju ovih inicijativa. EMAS, na primer, zahteva od organizacija da redovno izveštavaju o svojim ekološkim performansama i stalno unapređuju svoje operacije. S druge strane, ISO 14001 daje fleksibilan pristup upravljanju ekološkim aspektima poslovanja, omogućavajući organizacijama da prilagode svoje EMS specifičnim potrebama i uslovima destinacije. Oba standarda pružaju alate za integraciju ekoloških ciljeva u sve operativne aspekte turističkog poslovanja, čime se povećava ukupna efikasnost i održivost (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32009R1221>).

ISO (Međunarodna organizacija za standardizaciju) i IEC (Međunarodna elektrotehnička komisija) čine specijalizovani sistem za standardizaciju prihvaćen širom sveta (<https://www.infosepo.com/organizacija3.aspx?org=Me%20%C4%91unardna%20elektrotehni%C4%8Dka%20komisija>). Međunarodne standarde razvijaju tehnički odbori koje osnivaju nadležne organizacije, a u njihovom radu učestvuju nacionalna tela koja su članice ISO ili IEC. Odbori su zaduženi za specifična stručna ili naučna područja, poput instituta za tehnička ispitivanja. Izrada svih ISO standarda odvija se u skladu sa pravilima iz ISO/IEC direktiva. Ključni zadatak zajedničkih tehničkih odbora je priprema nacrtata međunarodnih standarda. Nakon što odbor usvoji nacrt, on se prosleđuje nacionalnim telima na izjašnjenje. Da bi standard bio prihvaćen i zvanično objavljen, neophodno je da ga podrži najmanje 75% članica koje učestvuju u glasanju (<https://iso.org.rs/>).

Sa ekonomskog stanovišta, uvođenje standarda donosi brojne prednosti. Međunarodni standardi predstavljaju ključne strateške instrumente i služe kao smernice koje pomažu kompanijama da se izборе sa slože-

nim izazovima savremenog tržišta. Njihova svrha je da unaprede poslovnu efikasnost, povećaju nivo produktivnosti i olakšaju prodor na nova tržišta. Standard se definiše kao dokument koji propisuje pravila, preporuke ili osobine određenih procesa ili njihovih rezultata – bilo da je reč o proizvodima ili uslugama – kako bi se postigao optimalan nivo organizacije i kvaliteta. Standardi imaju širok i pozitivan uticaj na svakodnevni život. Oni doprinose da proizvodi i usluge poseduju odgovarajuće karakteristike kao što su kvalitet, bezbednost, zaštita životne sredine, pouzdanost, efikasnost i međusobna kompatibilnost. Kada su ta očekivanja ispunjena, često ne razmišljamo o tome, jer sve funkcioniše kako treba. Međutim, u odsustvu standarda, brzo bismo uočili probleme – od nekvalitetnih i neodgovarajućih proizvoda do onih koji su nespojivi sa postojećom opremom ili rizični za upotrebu. U slučaju kada tehnički sistemi, mašine ili uređaji funkcionišu pouzdano i bezbedno, to je uglavnom rezultat njihove usklađenosti sa relevantnim standardima (<https://iso.org.rs/iso-medunarдна-organizacija-za-standardizaciju/>).

Sistem zaštite životne sredine čine mere, uslovi i instrumenti za: (Zakon o zaštiti životne sredine, „Sl. glasnik RS“, 95/2018 – dr. zakon, član 2.)

1. Održivo upravljanje, očuvanje prirodne ravnoteže, celovitosti, raznovrsnosti i kvaliteta prirodnih vrednosti i uslova za opstanak svih živih bića;
2. Sprečavanje, kontrolu, smanjivanje i sanaciju svih oblika zagađivanja životne sredine.

Proces uspostavljanja sistema menadžmenta kvalitetom obuhvata niz osnovnih koraka: (Drenovac, et al., 2013, 250)

- Angažovanje vrhovnog menadžmenta,
- Određivanje lica koje će voditi tim,
- Formiranje tima stručnjaka,
- Uspostavljanje tela za verifikaciju,
- Organizovanje odgovarajuće obuke,
- Obezbeđivanje podrške konsultanta,
- Utvrđivanje obima i tipova provera sistema kvaliteta.

Jedan od ključnih izazova u implementaciji ekomenadžment sistema je potreba za angažovanjem svih nivoa organizacije, od menadžmenta do zaposlenih. Svaki zaposleni mora biti svestan ekoloških ciljeva i strategija organizacije kako bi se postigla uspešna primena EMS-a. Edukacija i obuka zaposlenih su važan deo ovog procesa, jer omogućavaju razvijanje svesti o ekološkoj odgovornosti i načinima na koji se svakodnevne operacije mogu uskladiti sa principima održivosti. Takođe, transparentnost prema posetiocima je važan aspekt uspešne implementacije EMS-a. Ekoturističke organizacije mogu koristiti komunikacione kanale kao što su promotivni materijali, web-stranice i vodiči kako bi informisale posetioce o svojim ekološkim inicijativama i ohrabril ih da se pridruže naporima u očuvanju prirode tokom svojih poseta. Ova transparentnost doprinosi izgradnji poverenja turista i jačanju reputacije destinacije kao ekološki odgovorne (Vujičić i Nikolić, 2024, 136–137).

Na kraju, uspešna implementacija ekomenadžment sistema doprinosi ne samo očuvanju prirodnih resursa, već i ekonomskom prosperitetu turističkih organizacija i destinacija. Smanjenje operativnih troškova kroz efikasno korišćenje resursa, privlačenje ekološki svesnih turista i unapređenje odnosa sa lokalnim zajednicama samo su neki od benefita koje organizacije mogu ostvariti primenom EMS-a.

Edukacija i uključivanje potrošača u turizmu kao deo ekomenadžment sistema

Edukacija turista predstavlja ključnu komponentu implementacije ekomenadžment sistema u ekoturizmu. S obzirom na to da se ekoturizam oslanja na visoku svest i odgovornost posetilaca prema prirodi i lokalnim zajednicama, uvođenje sistema kvaliteta, poput EMAS-a (*Eco-Management and Audit Scheme*) i ISO 14001, podrazumeva i razvijanje strategija za informisanje i obrazovanje turista (European Commission, 2013; UNEP & WTO, 2005).

Kroz različite mehanizme edukacije – informativne table, štampane i digitalne vodiče, interaktivne radionice, interpretativne

centre i mobilne aplikacije – turisti se upoznaju sa vrednostima destinacije, merama zaštite životne sredine, pravilima ponašanja i sopstvenom ulogom u očuvanju ekosistema. Time se ne povećava samo kvalitet turističkog iskustva, već i funkcionalnost celokupnog ekomenadžment sistema, jer edukovani turisti postaju aktivni učesnici u njegovoj primeni (Fennell, 2021; Weaver, 2005).

Važno je istaći da se edukacija ne odnosi isključivo na turiste, već i na sve učesnike u lancu vrednosti ekoturističkog proizvoda – lokalno stanovništvo, vodiče, operatore, zaposlene u parkovima prirode, kao i na predstavnike turističkih agencija. Održivi menadžment kvaliteta podrazumeva kontinuiranu obuku i usklađivanje znanja i veština svih aktera sa principima zaštite prirode, društvene odgovornosti i lokalnog razvoja (UNEP & WTO, 2005).

Uvođenje obrazovnih sadržaja u strukturu ekomenadžment sistema doprinosi jačanju svesti o značaju održivosti, smanjenju negativnih uticaja turizma i stvaranju čvršće veze između turista, prirodnog okruženja i lokalne zajednice. Tako edukacija postaje ne samo sredstvo informisanja, već i strateški alat za postizanje kvaliteta, dugoročne održivosti i konkurentnosti ekoturističkog proizvoda (TIES, 2015; Fennell, 2021).

Integracija održivosti u kreiranje ekoturističkih proizvoda

Principi održivog razvoja mogu se sprovesti samo ukoliko su jasno postavljeni ciljevi koje destinacija želi da postigne. Ti ciljevi se mogu realizovati kroz primenu konkretnih instrumenata održivog razvoja. Ostvarenje održivosti zavisi od jasno definisanih sredstava i mehanizama za njenu primenu. Turizam se ističe kao delatnost koja doprinosi očuvanju i oživljavanju kulturnog nasleđa i tradicionalnih vrednosti, dok istovremeno podstiče bolje međusobno razumevanje i podiže svest na globalnom nivou. Održivi razvoj nije moguć bez socijalne pravde, a ekonomski napredak zavisi od odgovornog upravljanja prirodnim resursima koji su ključni za naše ekonomije (Khoja, et al., 2021, 358).

Integracija održivosti u kreiranje ekoturističkih proizvoda predstavlja temeljnu komponentu razvoja ekoturizma, koji se zasniva na principima odgovornog korišćenja prirodnih resursa, očuvanju biodiverziteta i poštovanju lokalnih zajednica. Kreiranje ekoturističkih proizvoda zahteva pažljivo balansiranje između potreba turista i očuvanja ekosistema, čime se osigurava dugoročna održivost i ekonomski razvoj destinacije. Ovaj proces podrazumeva usklađivanje ekoloških, socijalnih i ekonomskih aspekata turizma kako bi se stvorila dodata vrednost i za posetioce i za lokalne zajednice.

Prvi korak u ovom procesu je analiza postojećih prirodnih i kulturnih resursa destinacije. Razumevanje ekosistema, biodiverziteta i lokalnih zajednica ključno je za kreiranje održivih turističkih proizvoda koji ne ugrožavaju okolinu, već je unapređuju. Na primer, aktivnosti kao što su planinarenje, posmatranje divljih životinja ili posete zaštićenim prirodnim područjima moraju biti pažljivo dizajnirane kako bi se izbegla degradacija staništa i minimalizirali negativni ekološki uticaji. Upravo zbog toga, planiranje turističkih aktivnosti i infrastrukture mora biti sprovedeno u skladu sa principima zaštite životne sredine. Održivost u kreiranju ekoturističkih proizvoda takođe uključuje primenu energetske efikasne tehnologije i prakse koje smanjuju potrošnju resursa. Na primer, korišćenje obnovljivih izvora energije, kao što su solarna i vetroenergija, smanjuje ekološki otisak destinacije. Takođe, primena principa cirkularne ekonomije, kao što su reciklaža i smanjenje otpada, omogućava ekoturističkim organizacijama da efikasnije upravljaju svojim resursima. Uvođenje ovakvih praksi ne samo da doprinosi zaštiti životne sredine, već i povećava reputaciju destinacije među turistima koji traže ekološki odgovorne opcije (Khoja, et al., 2021, 358–359).

Održivi razvoj je blisko povezan sa načinom na koji vrednujemo resurse životne sredine i sa mnogim etičkim principima koji iz toga proizilaze. Usvajanje principa održivog razvoja podstiče ljude da razmišljaju o sledećem: kvalitetu životne sredine za optimalan život,

raspoloživosti resursa u budućnosti, stanju životne sredine za buduće generacije i društvom blagostanju (Stojanović, 2023, 26).

Još jedan ključan aspekt integracije održivosti u ekoturizam je saradnja sa lokalnim zajednicama. Uključivanje lokalnog stanovništva u proces planiranja i razvoja ekoturističkih proizvoda osigurava da turizam doprinosi njihovom ekonomskom i socijalnom prosperitetu. Održivi ekoturistički proizvodi često uključuju autentična iskustva koja se oslanjaju na kulturne i tradicijske vrednosti lokalnih zajednica, čime se doprinosi očuvanju njihove kulturne baštine. Na ovaj način, turisti imaju priliku da iskuse autentične lokalne običaje, što dodatno obogaćuje njihovo iskustvo, dok lokalne zajednice ostvaruju ekonomske koristi od turizma. Prema Zakonu o turizmu („Sl. glasnik RS“, br. 17/2019, član 3. tačka 39.), turistički proizvod je skup međuzavisnih elemenata koji se u praksi organizuje kao poseban vrednosni lanac koji čine materijalni proizvodi i usluge, prirodne vrednosti i kulturna dobra, turističke atrakcije, turistička suprastruktura i turistička infrastruktura.

U ekoturizmu, održivost je takođe usko povezana sa obrazovanjem, odnosno sa jačanjem svesti potrošača u turizmu o značaju zaštite životne i radne sredine čoveka. Kreiranje proizvoda koji uključuju elemente edukacije o zaštiti životne sredine, biodiverzitetu i održivim praksama doprinosi podizanju svesti turista o važnosti očuvanja prirode. Edukativne aktivnosti, kao što su vodiči, radionice i interaktivni programi, omogućavaju turistima da razumeju vrednost prirodnih resursa i ulogu koju igraju u njihovom očuvanju (Jegdić, 2010, 65).

Ovo znanje može podstaći turiste da usvoje ekološki odgovorno ponašanje tokom i nakon njihovih poseta. Integracija održivosti u kreiranje ekoturističkih proizvoda stoga podrazumeva holistički pristup, gde se ekonomske, ekološke i društvene dimenzije uzimaju u obzir u svakom aspektu planiranja i razvoja. Održiv pristup ne samo da doprinosi očuvanju resursa i očaravajućem iskustvu za turiste, već i osigurava dugoročnu održivost

turističkih destinacija, čineći ih otpornim na izazove koji dolaze sa promenama u ekosistemima i društvu (Vujičić i Nikolić, 2024, 128–129).

U budućem periodu očekuje se da će interesne grupe sve više postavljati zahteve prema kompanijama, koje će morati da unapređuju svoje kapacitete kako bi zadovoljile potrebe potrošača i šire društvene zajednice. Organizacije će nastaviti da teže optimalnim rešenjima u okviru četiri ključna faktora: kvaliteta, cene, količine i trajanja proizvodnih ciklusa. U tom kontekstu, biće ubrzani procesi dizajniranja i proizvodnje, a vreme potrebno za plasman novih proizvoda na tržište će se sve više skraćivati. Istovremeno, kompanije će tražiti načine da smanje troškove brže od konkurenata, razvijaju fleksibilne proizvodne sisteme i osmišljavaju strategije za brzo prilagođavanje promenljivim zahtevima tržišta (Stanković, Vujičić, 2011).

Zaključak

Upravljanje kvalitetom ekoturističkog proizvoda je od suštinskog značaja za održivi razvoj turizma. Kroz ovaj rad, jasno je da efikasan menadžment kvaliteta ne samo da poboljšava iskustva turista, već i doprinosi zaštiti prirodnih resursa i jačanju lokalnih zajednica. Implementacija ekomenadžment sistema, kao što su EMAS i ISO standardi, pruža konkretne smernice i alatke koje omogućavaju destinacijama da postignu visoke ekološke performanse.

Ključni elementi kao što su analiza prirodnih resursa, planiranje ekoloških aktivnosti, saradnja sa lokalnim zajednicama i obrazovanje turista igraju značajnu ulogu u uspehu ekoturizma. Uočeni izazovi, uključujući potrebu za dodatnim obukama i resursima, naglašavaju važnost kontinuiranog usavršavanja i inovacija u sektoru.

U budućnosti, ključno je nastaviti sa istraživanjima koja će dodatno razjasniti načine na koje se upravljanje kvalitetom može unaprediti i prilagoditi specifičnim potrebama različitih ekoturističkih destinacija. Održivi razvoj u turizmu zahteva zajednički rad

i posvećenost svih aktera, što može osigurati ne samo očuvanje životne sredine, već i jačanje ekonomskih i društvenih benefita za lokalne zajednice.

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Pregledni rad

PERSPEKTIVE RAZVOJA KULTURNE RUTE *JEVREJSKO NASLEĐE NOVOG SADA* KAO DEO TURISTIČKE PONUDE

PROSPECTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CULTURAL ROUTE *JEWISH HERITAGE OF NOVI SAD* AS AN ELEMENT OF THE TOURIST OFFER

Apstrakt: Tema ovog istraživanja fokusira se na razvoj kulturne rute „Jevrejsko nasleđe Novog Sada“ kao potencijalnog segmenta turističke ponude grada. Novi Sad, sa bogatom istorijom jevrejske zajednice, predstavlja značajan kulturni centar čije je nasleđe oblikovalo društveni, kulturni i ekonomski život u region. Ovaj rad istražuje mogućnosti za usmeravanje turizma prema jevrejskom kulturnom nasleđu, analizira ključne aspekte koji čine ovaj segment atraktivnim za turiste, te identifikuje potencijale i izazove u njegovom razvoju. Poseban akcenat stavljen je na analizu kulturnih i istorijskih objekata. Takođe, istražuju se načini povezivanja jevrejskog nasleđa sa širim turističkim ponudama grada, uključujući edukaciju i turističke ture. Cilj je utvrditi kako razvoj ove kulturne rute može doprineti očuvanju kulturnog identiteta, unapređenju turističke ponude i stvaranje novih prilika za ekonomski rast Novog Sada.

Ključne reči: kulturno nasleđe, Jevreji, turističke ture, Novi Sad

Abstract: The focus of this research is on the development of the cultural route “Jewish Heritage of Novi Sad” as a potential segment of the city’s tourist offer. Novi Sad, with its rich history of the Jewish community, represents an important cultural center whose heritage has shaped the social, cultural, and economic life of the region. This paper explores the possibilities of directing tourism toward Jewish cultural heritage, analyzes key aspects that make this segment attractive to tourists, and identifies the potentials and challenges in its development. Special emphasis is placed on the analysis of cultural and historical sites. Furthermore, the study examines ways of integrating Jewish heritage into the broader tourist offerings of the city, including education and guided tours. The goal is to determine how the development of this cultural route can contribute to the preservation of cultural identity, enhancement of the tourist offer, and the creation of new opportunities for the economic growth of Novi Sad.

Key words: cultural heritage, Jews, tourist tours, Novi Sad

Uvod

U savremenim teorijama razvoja turizma, kulturno nasleđe se sve više prepoznaje kao strateški resurs koji ne samo da doprinosi očuvanju identiteta i istorijskog pamćenja jedne zajednice, već istovremeno predstavlja i važan faktor u kreiranju konkurentne i održive turističke ponude. Kulturni turizam, kao segment selektivnih oblika turizma, u fokus stavlja autentične sadržaje i doživljaje koji proističu iz istorijskih, umetničkih i civilizacijskih vrednosti prostora, pri čemu posebnu pažnju dobija koncept tematskih kulturnih ruta. U tom kontekstu, kulturne rute se razvijaju kao integrisani modeli turističkog proizvoda koji povezuju prostorno disperzovane elemente kulturne baštine, omogućavajući njihovu interpretaciju i valorizaciju u okviru jedinstvenog narativa.

Grad Novi Sad, sa svojom bogatom multikulturnom tradicijom i izuzetno značajnim doprinosom jevrejske zajednice istoriji, kulturi i urbanom razvoju, predstavlja primer sredine sa izuzetnim potencijalom za formiranje tematske kulturne rute. Jevrejska zajednica je vekovima bila integralni deo društvenog tkiva grada, ostavljajući vidljive tragove u arhitekturi, obrazovanju, kulturi, trgovini i javnom životu. Ipak, značajan deo ovog nasleđa ostaje nedovoljno prisutan u savremenoj turističkoj percepciji i ponudi.

Cilj ovog rada je da, polazeći od teorijskih i praktičnih okvira razvoja kulturnih ruta, analizira potencijale i izazove formiranja kulturne rute pod nazivom „Jevrejsko nasleđe Novog Sada“, sagledavajući je kao inovativan i održiv model kulturno-turističke valorizacije urbane baštine. Kroz analizu atrakcijske osnove, istorijsko-geografske kontekstualizacije, mapiranja lokaliteta, kao i primenu savremenih metodoloških alata kao što su PEST i SWOT analiza i kvantitativno-kvalitativna valorizacija, rad ima za cilj da identifikuje uslove, mehanizme i strategije koje bi omogućile uspešnu integraciju ovog nasleđa u širu turističku infrastrukturu grada. Poseban akcenat stavljen je na pitanje održivosti, odnosno na mogućnosti da se kroz razvoj ove kulturne rute ostvari balans

između zaštite i prezentacije kulturnih dobara, ekonomskog razvoja i jačanja društvene kohezije kroz inkluziju lokalne zajednice.

Kulturno nasleđe, kulturni turizam i kulturna ruta u savremenom društvu

Kulturno nasleđe, kao društveni fenomen, odražava vrednosti zajednice iz koje potiče, obuhvatajući materijalne i nematerijalne resurse prenete iz prošlosti (Terzić, 2014). Materijalno kulturno nasleđe uključuje nepokretno i pokretno nasleđe.¹ Nepokretno kulturno nasleđe obuhvata objekte od kulturne, istorijske, umetničke, arhitektonske, arheološke ili naučne vrednosti, pri čemu je posebno cenjena njihova autentičnost, starost i jedinstvenost. Pokretno kulturno nasleđe uključuje predmete kao što su muzejska, arhivska i biblioteka građa, ali i filmski i audiovizuelni zapisi značajni za kulturu, istoriju i nauku (UNESCO, 2003). Kulturna dobra, koja nose materijalne i duhovne vrednosti, zakonski su zaštićena kako bi se očuvala i prenela budućim generacijama. Na osnovu značaja, kulturno nasleđe se deli na kulturna dobra, kulturna dobra od velikog značaja i kulturna dobra od izuzetnog značaja.²

Kultura, umetnost i nasleđe odigravaju ključnu ulogu u oblikovanju turističkih destinacija, doprinosi njihovoj prepoznatljivosti i privlačnosti. Kulturni turizam fokusira se na atrakcije koje motivišu turistička putovanja, uključujući posete muzejima, spomenicima, festivalima i drugim manifestacijama (Rabotić, 2013: 186). Prema definiciji Svetske turističke organizacije (UNWTO), kulturni turizam obuhvata putovanja motivisana kulturnim interesovanjima, dok se u širem smislu odnosi na putovanja koja omogućavaju sticanje kulturnih znanja i lični razvoj (WTO, 1995). U domaćoj literaturi, kulturni turizam se definiše kao „učešće turista u bilo kojoj vrsti kulturne aktivnosti ili doživljaja“ (Hadžić, 2005: 18). Kulturni turizam može

1 Zakon o kulturnom nasleđu Republike Srbije, Osnovne odredbe, član 3, Službeni glasnik RS, br. 129/2021

2 Zakon o kulturnim dobrima Republike Srbije, Osnovne odredbe, član 2, Službeni glasnik RS, br. 71/94

se klasifikovati u različite kategorije, kao što su turizam nasleđa, kulturne tematske rute, gradski kulturni turizam, etnički turizam, događajni i festivalski turizam, verski turizam, hodočasnički putevi i kreativni turizam (In-skeep, 1998: 192).

Rani putnici su preduzimali putovanja koja su omogućavala razmenu iskustava i proširivanje saznanja o svetu. Ovaj proces doveo je do organizovanja turističkih tura (Pantović, 2022: 135). Kulturne rute temelje se na istorijskim putem, ličnostima ili fenomenima od transnacionalnog značaja, povezujući geografske oblasti sa zajedničkom temom.³ Kulturna ruta se smatra mrežom povezanih objekata kulturnog nasleđa na određenoj teritoriji, i ne odnosi se samo na fizičke puteve.⁴ Evropski institut kulturnih ruta razlikuje tri osnovna tipa ruta: linearne (sa jasno definisanim pravcem i tematskim fokusom), mrežne (tematski povezane tačke) i teritorijalne (povezane šire oblasti sa zajedničkim kulturnim identitetom) (Pantović, 2022: 135). Ciljevi kulturnih ruta uključuju privlačenje posetilaca, povezivanje kulturnih destinacija, očuvanje nasleđa i promociju održivog turizma (Stanojlović, 2019: 163). Ruta je specifičan turistički proizvod, koji se sastoji od niza destinacija povezanih zajedničkom temom, a obeležena je odgovarajućom infrastrukturom duž trase (Kaczmarek i dr., 2005: 389).

Istorija naseljavanja Jevreja u Novom Sadu

Postoje podaci koji ukazuju na prisustvo Jevreja u delovima Podunavlja još za vreme Rimske imperije, međutim, intenzivnije naseljavanje Jevreja na području današnjeg Novog Sada počinje krajem XVII veka. Tada se u knjigama katoličke župe u Petrovaradinu pominje jedan „Judeus“ zvani Kaledey, koji se preselio na drugu stranu Dunava u Racko

selo, ali o njemu nema daljih podataka (Imre i dr., 1930: 10). Godine 1713. Racko selo postaje Petrovaradinski šanac. Nakon pobede Eugena Savojskog kod Petrovaradina 1716. godine, uklonjena je turska pretnja, što je doprinelo naseljavanju Petrovaradinskog šanca. Zahvaljujući povlasticama i pogodnim uslovima za trgovinu, u mesto dolazi sve više trgovaca, zanatlija i stanovnika iz okoline (Šosberger, 2001: 14). Popis iz 1717. beleži tri jevrejske porodice sa ukupno 10 članova, a njihov broj znatno raste do 1740. godine. Ipak, elibertacija grada 1748. nije donela Jevrejima stvarnu slobodu, jer su u privilegijama bili navedeni samo kao obveznici taksi. Po uzoru na slobodne gradove Ugarske, Novi Sad je 1748. godine imao ustanovljen geto, odnosno posebnu jevrejsku četvrt ili ulicu, van koje Jevreji nisu smeli stanovati. To se vidi iz zapisnika Magistrata 1749. godine, u kojem se odobrava rok za prodaju kuća i određuje stalno gradilište za podizanje kuća i Sinagoge (Knežev, 2022: 25).

Za vreme vladavine Josifa II iz Beča su činjeni pokušaji da se olakša položaj Jevreja. Godine 1786. im je dozvoljeno pohađanje škola drugih veroispovesti, uz uslov da ne mogu stupiti u brak bez završene osnovne škole. Godine 1787. dozvoljeno im je otvaranje radnji na praznike, bavljenje zemljoradnjom, trgovinom i zanatima, kao i izbor stalnog imena i prezimena, dok je nasilno kršćavanje dece bilo zabranjeno. Ipak, nisu mogli steći građanska prava. Tokom 19. veka Jevreji su se suočavali s brojnim ograničenjima – zabranjeno im je druženje s hrišćanima, rad bez dozvole, zapošljavanje hrišćanskih kalfi i šegrt, a umesto poreza plaćali su posebnu „taksu tolerancije“, određivanu na nivou Ugarske (Šosberger, 2001: 19). Za Novi Sad je iznosila 1748. godine 175 forinti, a plaćali su je i Jevreji iz okoline koji su dolazili u novosadsku Sinagogu (Knežev, 2022: 26). Godine 1840. Državni sabor u Požunu doneo je zakon (član XXIX) kojim Jevreji stiču građanska prava. Omogućeno im je da se nastanjuju bilo gde u kraljevini, podižu fabrike, bave se trgovinom i zanatima, školuju decu, pa čak i na višim školama. Zakon

³ Visit England (2016), Cultural/Walking Routes Case Study St Olav Ways and other cultural/walking routes, str.3

⁴ Council of Europe (2009): Impact of European Cultural Routes on SMEs innovation and competitiveness. Available at: http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/culture/routes/StudyCR_en.pdf

im priznaje pravo vlasništva nad kupljenom zemljom i kućama, a svakom Jevreju je određeno stalno ime i prezime koje se upisuje u matične knjige.⁵

Atraksijska osnova formiranja kulturne rute „Jevrejsko kulturno nasleđe Novog Sada“

Jevrejsko kulturno nasleđe Novog Sada odražava bogatu istoriju ove zajednice koja je ostavila značajan trag u kulturnom, ver-

skom i društvenom životu grada. Formiranje kulturne rute koja se fokusira na jevrejsko nasleđe pruža priliku za očuvanje i promociju ovih vrednosti. Atraksijska osnova ove rute obuhvata ključne spomenike i lokacije poput sinagoga, škola, opštine, doma kulture, značajnih zgrada (institucija), jevrejskih grobalja i spomen obeležja, koji svedoče o značaju jevrejske zajednice u istoriji Novog Sada. Ova ruta ne samo da čuva materijalnu baštinu, već i doprinosi razumevanju i poštovanju jevrejskih tradicija i običaja.

Slika 1. Novosadska sinagoga / Spomenik žrtvama racije „Porodica“



Foto: Sopstvena arhiva autora

Jevrejski kvart (geto) i Jevrejska ulica

Kada je Novi Sad 1748. godine proglašen slobodnim kraljevskim gradom, bio je obavezan da osnuje jevrejski kvart, što je bio izraz antisemitizma i rasnog šovinizma. Deo Osečke ulice (posle Futoška, zatim Jevrejska) bio je određen za geto, gde su Jevreji morali da se presele sa svojom bogomoljom. Ulica je bila poznata kao Jevrejska ili Čivutski sokak, a kasnije je postala Mala futoška. Nakon II svetskog rata, deo ove ulice dobio je naziv Jugoslovenske narodne armije (JNA), a kasnije, nakon rušenja desne strane Male futoške zbog izgradnje Srpskog

narodnog pozorišta, deo ulice od NORK-a do Futoške pijace nazvan je Jevrejska ulica (Aleksić, 2004: 90).

Jevreji su, zahvaljujući trgovinskom centru Novog Sada, brzo postali aktivni u ekonomiji grada, a Jevrejska ulica postala je glavno mesto gde su živeli, radili i obavljali religijske aktivnosti. U ovoj ulici nalazile su se značajne jevrejske institucije, poput Velike sinagoge, Jevrejske škole i mnogih trgovina i zanatskih radnji. U XVIII veku, Jevrejska ulica bila je ograđena lancima, a svako veće je zatvarana. Bila je to bogata i prometna ulica, kroz koju su prolazili fijakeri, a 1901. godine uveden je omnibus, a 1911. električni tramvaj (Šosberger, 2001: 75).

⁵ Zsidó lexikon, Budapest, 1929, str. 419

*Novosadska sinagoga
(ulica Jevrejska br.9)*

Prva sinagoga u Novom Sadu postojala je 1717. godine u Gospodskoj ulici (gde je danas hotel „Vojvodina“) i služila je Jevrejima iz okolnih mesta. Nakon proglašenja Novog Sada slobodnim kraljevskim gradom, sinagoga je premeštena u Osiječku ulicu (danas Jevrejska). Druga sinagoga sagrađena je 1749. godine, a treća oko 1780. godine. Iz 1789. godine iz ove sinagoge sačuvan je „parohet“⁶, koji se nalazi u Jevrejskom istorijskom muzeju u Beogradu. Četvrta sinagoga, podignuta 1826. godine (Šosberger, 1998: 44).

Zbog povećanog broja vernika, 1904. godine doneta je odluka o izgradnji nove sinagoge. Današnja Novosadska sinagoga, sagrađena u stilu secesije po projektu arhitekta Lipota Baumhorna, završena je 1906. godine. Ima specifičnu arhitekturu s vitražima i kupolom, dok su unutrašnjost i zvučna akustika posebno naglašeni (Stanić, 2014: 477). Ukupno ima devet ulaznih vrata. Na čelu istočne strane „mizrah“ nalazi se aron hakodeš, sveti orman sa svcima Tore. Iznad aron hakodeša, na galeriji za hor nalaze se orgulje, koje su do 1924. godine bile na nožni pogon, kada je u njih ugrađen elektromotor (Šosberger, 1998: 48). U dvorištu je bila smeštena klanica i ritualno kupatilo „mikve“, koja je porušena prilikom izgradnje kulturnog doma Jevrejske opštine. (Šosberger, 2001: 67). Nova sinagoga, sa dva prateća objekta, jevrejskom školom sa leve strane i zgradom Jevrejske opštine sa desne strane, svojom impozitnom arhitekturom, jedinstvenom akustikom, bila je, a i sada predstavlja jedan od simbola turističkih atrakcija u Novom Sadu. Godine 1991. Novosadska sinagoga je uvrštena u prostorno kulturno-istorijsku celinu od velikog značaja i ima drugi stepen zaštite države Srbije.⁷

Jevrejska osnovna škola (ulica Jevrejska 7)

Istorija Jevrejske osnovne škole u Novom Sadu počinje 1796. godine, tokom koje je škola menjala više lokacija. Dnevni i upisnici škole od 1857. do 1920. godine sačuvani su u Istorijskom arhivu grada. Godine 1864. škola je imala 72 dečaka i 62 devojčice, a nastava se odvijala u maloj kući uz četvrtu sinagogu.⁸ Nova zgrada škole izgrađena je 1907. godine, a tokom I svetskog rata služila je kao bolnica. Nakon rata, škola je vraćena prvobitnoj nameni, ali je ubrzo postala državna i dobila ime „Državna osnovna škola na Futoškom putu“, zadržavši jevrejske razrede. Mnogi đaci škole stradali su u Raciji 1942. i Holokaustu. Rad Jevrejske škole nikad nije obnovljen⁹, a do 2021. godine u zgradi su se nalazile Baletska i Muzička škola „Isidor Bajić“.

*Zgrada Jevrejske opštinske službe
(ulica Jevrejska br. 11)*

U prvim decenijama XVIII veka, novosadski Jevreji su formirali Jevrejsku opštinu (Communitas Judaeorum), koja je rešavala ključna pitanja zajednice. Opština je funkcionisala u maloj zgradi, koja je postala neadekvatna kako je zajednica rasla.¹⁰ Početkom XX veka, odlučeno je da, u sklopu izgradnje Sinagoge, bude podignuta trospratna zgrada za potrebe opštine, uključujući prostorije za činovnike, rabina i kantora. Zgrada je karakteristična po visokim spratovima i komunikaciji balkonskim hodnicima. Danas se koristi delimično za potrebe opštine, dok ostatak čine privatni stanovi. Opština je pružala pomoć ugroženim članovima, brinula o sinagogi, školi, groblju, te kasnije o kulturnim i zdravstvenim ustanovama (Šosberger, 2001: 67).

6 Parohet – zavesa na ormanu za čuvanje svetih knjiga u sinagogi, izrađena od samta, svile ili brokata, često bogato izvezena zlatnom i srebrnom žicom.

7 Zavod za zaštitu kulture Grada Novog Sada, Službeni list APV broj 25/91 od 28. oktobra 1991. godine, Novi Sad

8 <https://archivum.arhivvojvodine.org.rs/secanja-na-jevrejski-novi-sad/> (preuzeto 31.03.2025.)

9 <https://myheritageguide.com/sr/tour/jevrejsko-kulturno-na-sledje-u-novom-sadu/> (preuzeto 29.03.2025)

10 <https://archivum.arhivvojvodine.org.rs/secanja-na-jevrejski-novi-sad/> (preuzeto 31.03.2025.)

Jevrejski kulturni dom (ulica Petra Drapšina br. 8)

Jevrejska opština u Novom Sadu pokrenula je 1925. godine akciju za izgradnju Jevrejskog kulturnog doma. „Hevra Kadiša“ je 1927. godine ustupila svoju zgradu za izgradnju doma (današnja ulica Petra Drapšina br.8), ali zbog visoke cene, radovi nisu mogli odmah da počnu. Izgradnja je započela 1934. godine, a godinu dana kasnije završena. Zgrada ima prizemlje i dva sprata, a u traktu prema sinagogi nalazi se velika sala sa 655 sedišta. Na drugom spratu bile su prostorije za jevrejske društvene organizacije, dok je sala bila korišćena za pozorišne predstave i sportske aktivnosti (Šosberger, 2001: 102–103). Zgrada je bila centar kulturnih aktivnosti jevrejske zajednice, a danas je u njoj smeštena Visoka škola strukovnih studija za obrazovanje vaspitača.¹¹

Jevrejsko utočište za stare i siročad (ulica Maksima Gorkog br. 1 / ulica Sutjeska br. 1)

Ideja o osnivanju institucije za staranje o starim i bolesnim članovima jevrejske zajednice u Novom Sadu datira više od sto godina (Šosberger, 2001: 104). Godine 1933. otvoren je prvi deo Doma za stare i siročad, sa kapacitetom za 60 štićenika, a 1936. započeta je izgradnja drugog dela, dok je 1938. godine podignuto i krilo za roditelje bez dece. Dom je imao trpezariju, ambulantu, učionice i bogomolje. Zgradu je projektovao Nikola Handler. U tradiciji jevrejskih dobrotvornih društava, Havra Kadiša (Sveto društvo), osnovana 1733. godine, pružala je pomoć siromašnima i bolesnima. Pravila novosadske Havre Kadiše zasnovana su na solidarnosti, međusobnom poštovanju i uvažavanju. Društvo su činili isključivo odrasli muškarci.¹² Žene su svoju organizaciju osnovale 1876. godine, a to je bilo „Žensko dobrotvorno društvo“ koje je radilo do 1944. godine (Šosberger, 2001: 110).

Dobrotvorno društvo „Kora hleba i dečije obdanište“ (ulica Sonje Marinković br. 1)

Briga o siromašnima i nezbrinutima bila je ključna dužnost Jevrejske zajednice. Prvo

humanitarno društvo bilo je „Opšte jevrejsko društvo za pomaganje siromaha“, a 1876. osnovano je i „Novosadsko izraelitsko dobrotvorno žensko društvo“, koje je radilo i tokom Prvog svetskog rata. Godine 1933. u Ulici generala Vasića (danas ulica Sonje Marinković) podignuta je dvospratna zgrada koja je nazvana „Kora hleba“, u stilu moderne, po projektu Đorđa Tabakovića. Ulaz krase skulptura „Majka s detetom“, delo vajara Mihajla Korna. Najzaslužnija za ovu ustanovu bila je Jelena Kon, istaknuta članica zajednice i humanitarka, koja je 1925. osnovala organizaciju za pomoć deci i majkama. Uz obdanište i dom za odojčad, ustanova je prerasla u „Koru hleba i dečije obdanište“ (Stančić, 2014: 450).

Jevrejska banka „Rehuš“ (ulica Poštanska br. 14)

U kući Maksima Badera, srušenoj tokom izgradnje Bulevara Mihajla Pupina, nalazila se mala banka pod imenom „Rehuš“. Osnovana je 1932. godine za štednju i uzajamnu pomoć, koju su pokrenuli članovi novosadske Jevrejske opštine u periodu sve većeg uspona fašizma u Evropi. Cilj banke bio je međusobna podrška kroz štednju i povoljne kredite. Prvi predsednik bio je Matija Levi. Ustanova je najviše pomagala zanatlije i male trgovce, ali su je povremeno koristili i veći privrednici. Banka je zatvorena 1942. od strane mađarskih okupatora, a konačno ukinuta 1948. godine nacionalizacijom.¹³

Novosadska jevrejska groblja

Jevrejsko groblje u Novom Sadu predstavlja jedan od najznačajnijih spomenika kulture i istorije jevrejske zajednice u gradu. Kroz vekove je menjalo lokacije i širilo se, prateći razvoj zajednice. Prvo groblje nalazilo se u Gospodskoj ulici br. 70 (danas ulica Kralja Aleksandra) i postojalo je još 1717. godine. Naređenjem Magistrata, 1749. godine groblje je preseljeno van grada (Rado, 1930: 22), na obali rukavca Dunava (kasnije u Hunjadijevoj ulici br. 25). Taj lokalitet je u

¹¹ <https://myheritageguide.com/sr/tour/jevrejsko-kulturno-nasledje-u-novom-sadu/> (preuzeto 31.03.2025.)

¹² isto

¹³ <http://www.makabijada.com/pinkasyu/novi.htm> (preuzeto 02.04.2025.)

današnjoj ulici Alekse Šantić, na mestu gde je Osnovna škola „Sonja Marinković“. Ovo groblje je prestalo da se koristi oko 1800. godine, a deo nadgrobnih spomenika prenet je na ondašnje novo groblje u Dudarskoj ulici (današnja ulica Doža Đerđa), gde je i danas (Petruševski i dr. 2015: 22).

Groblje danas obuhvata 3273 groba raspoređena u 31 redu¹⁴, a najstariji spomenik datira iz 1811. godine. Kapela na ulazu u groblje izgrađena je 1905. godine prema projektu Lipota Berclera, s prepoznatljivim vitražom i Davidovom zvezdom (Salatić, 2013: 92). Pored klasičnih nadgrobnih spomenika, tu se nalaze i monumentalni sarkofazi (saktografi)¹⁵, među kojima se izdvaja spomenik porodice Bodi – jedne od najuglednijih jevrejskih porodica u gradu. Groblje je značajan deo jevrejskog kulturnog nasleđa i deo kulturnih ruta, koje čuvaju sećanje na prisustvo i doprinos jevrejske zajednice u Novom Sadu. Iako je tokom vremena pretrpelo oštećenja, od 1985. godine nalazi se pod zaštitom i postepeno se obnavlja.¹⁶

Spomen obeležja Jevreja

Spomenik žrtvama fašizma u Novom Sadu 1941–1945 tzv. Racija¹⁷ se nalazi na Keju žrtava racije, na samoj obali Dunava. Rad je akademskog vajara Jovana Soldatovića i predstavlja velike bronzane figure oca, majke s detetom i deteta, a nazvan je „Porodica“. Početkom 1992. godine, spomenik je upotpunjen sa četiri ploče koje daju osnovne

informacije o događaju i sa preko 60 ploča sa ispsanim imenima ličnostima koje su ubijene tom prilikom u Novom Sadu. Spomenik je osvećen 1971. godine (Puškar, 1994: 83).

Spomenik Jevrejima Novog Sada žrtvama fašizma 1941–1945 nalazi se na Jevrejskom groblju. Rad je vajara Dejana Bešlića. Predstavlja urnu na podstolju u kojem je izgrađen reljef antičke menore. Na podu, pored postolja se nalazi ploča na kojoj se nalazi tekst „za uspomenu na 4000 novosadskih Jevreja poginulih kao žrtve fašizma 1941–1945“. Spomenik upotpunjuju četiri stuba na kojima je nadstrešnica. Ceo spomenik je od venčanskog mermera. Osvećen je 1952. godine (Šosberger, 2001: 78).

Spomen-groblje palih boraca Narodno-oslobodilačkog rata 1941–1945 nalazi se u okviru Gradskog groblja u Novom Sadu. Tu je 1984. godine sahranjeno devet jevrejskih prvoboraca, čiji su posmrtni ostaci prethodno bili na jevrejskom i katoličkom groblju. Na zajedničkom spomeniku, tzv. „Nišanu“, na ulazu u kompleks, uklesana su imena 538 boraca iz Novog Sada poginulih van grada, među kojima se nalazi i 59 imena jevrejskih boraca (Šosberger, 2001: 78–79).

Mapiranje kulturne rute „Jevrejsko kulturno nasleđe Novog Sada“

Za razvoj turizma zasnovanog na kulturnim sadržajima, neophodno je prethodno proceniti kapacitete i potencijale određene sredine. U tom procesu, kulturno mapiranje igra ključnu ulogu jer obuhvata prikupljanje podataka, analizu dokumenata i izradu izveštaja. Ova metoda ističe značaj kulturnih resursa, identifikuje izazove i otkriva razvojne potencijale (Subašić i dr., 2012: 8). Kreativna mreža Kanade definiše kulturno mapiranje kao proces prikupljanja, snimanja, analize i sintetizacije informacija kako bi se opisali kulturni resursi, mreže, veze i obrasci korišćenja date zajednice ili grupe (Stewart, 2007: 8). Kulturno mapiranje doprinosi stvaranju identiteta prostora, a mapiranje kulturnih dobara predstavlja osnov za brendiranje mesta, jačanje konkurentnosti i očuvanje nasleđa (Pike, 2009: 858).

14 <https://lisje.com/groblja/jevrejsko-groblje-2/> (preuzeto 02.04.2025.)

15 Saktografi – monumentalni nadgrobni spomenici, često bogato ukrašeni i sa posebnom simbolikom. Ovi spomenici najčešće pripadaju uglednim članovima jevrejske zajednice i često su pravi umetnički radovi, sa detaljima koji svedoče o društvenom statusu preminulih.

16 <https://www.zzzskgns.rs/kulturna-dobra-online/> (preuzeto: 02.04.2025.)

17 Nakon sukoba sa partizanima krajem 1941. godine, mađarska vlada, pod upravom Mikloša Hortija, preduzela je žestoke mere protiv Jevreja i Srba na teritoriji Bačke. Od 21. do 23. januara 1942. godine, Novi Sad je bio pod blokadom, a mađarski vojnici i žandarmi izvršili su masovna streljanja. Uhapšeni su Jevreji, Srbi, Romi i drugi građani, prisiljavani da hodaju kroz sneg na temperaturi od -20°C do mesta streljanja. Masovna ubistva su se odvijala na obalama Dunava i u jamama. Tokom racije, ubijeno je preko 5.000 ljudi, od čega polovinu činili Jevreji, a oko 800 Jevreja i 500 Srba je streljano. Ova akcija predstavlja jedan od najstrašnijih zločina u istoriji Novog Sada.

Slika 2. Mapiranje rute „Jevrejskog kulturnog nasleđa u Novom Sadu“



Legenda: 1 (Jevrejska ulica), 2 (Novosadska sinagoga sa zgradom Jevrejske osnovne škole i zgradom Jevrejske opštinske službe), 3 (Jevrejska banka „Rehuš“), 4 (Jevrejski kulturni dom), 5 (Jevrejsko utočište za stare i siročad), 6 (Dobrotvorno društvo „Kora hleba i dečije obdanište“), 7 (Spomenik žrtvama fašizma u Novom Sadu 1941–1945), 8 (Jevrejsko groblje), 9 (Spomenik Jevrejima Novog Sada žrtvama fašizma 1941–1945) i 10 (Spomen-groblje palih boraca Narodnooslobodilačkog rata 1941–1945)

Izvor: Explore Google Earth i autor na osnovu analize

Kulturno mapiranje rute „Jevrejskog kulturnog nasleđa (slika 2) u Novom Sadu“ predstavlja ključni proces u prepoznavanju, valorizaciji i promociji kulturnih resursa ove zajednice u gradu. Ovaj proces obuhvata identifikaciju svih značajnih jevrejskih lokaliteta, objekata, tradicija i simbola koji čine bogatu kulturnu baštinu Novog Sada. Kroz kulturno mapiranje, istražuju se istorijske, arhitektonske i društvene vrednosti jevrejskog nasleđa, te se prikupljaju podaci o važnim mestima kao što su jevrejsko groblje, sinagoge, jevrejske škole, kao i spomenici i memorijalna obeležja posvećena jevrejskim žrtvama tokom Drugog svetskog rata.

Cilj ovog mapiranja je ne samo da se očuva i zaštiti jevrejski kulturni identitet grada, već i da se doprinese razvoju kulturnog turizma, kroz stvaranje turističkih ruta i promotivnih materijala koji će posetiocima omogućiti da upoznaju bogatstvo jevrejske istorije u Novom Sadu. Kulturno mapiranje takode podstiče svest o značaju očuvanja nematerijalnog kulturnog nasleđa, uključujući običaje, jezik, muziku i umetnost, koji su du-

boko ukorenjeni u jevrejskoj zajednici ovog grada. Uključivanjem lokalnih zajednica i stručnjaka iz oblasti kulturnog nasleđa, kulturno mapiranje može postati važan alat za jačanje identiteta i očuvanje sećanja na značajnu jevrejsku tradiciju u Novom Sadu, kao i za stvaranje održivih kulturnih i turističkih inicijativa koje će doprineti daljoj promociji ovog specifičnog kulturnog nasleđa.

Analiza potencijala za razvoj kulturne rute „Jevrejsko kulturno nasleđe Novog Sada“

Da bi se izvršila realna procena potencijala za razvoj kulturne rute posvećene jevrejskom nasleđu u Novom Sadu, neophodno je sprovediti sveobuhvatnu analizu spoljašnjih i unutrašnjih faktora koji mogu uticati na uspešnost ovakvog turističkog proizvoda. Jevrejska zajednica u Novom Sadu ima bogatu i slojevitou istoriju, koja se veže vekovima unazad i ostavila je neizbrisiv trag u kulturnom, privrednom i društvenom razvoju grada. Polazeći od potrebe za objektivnim pristupom u analizi atraktivnosti i realnih

tržišnih mogućnosti ovog proizvoda, kao i njegovih prednosti i nedostataka u odnosu na trenutno stanje resursa i savremene turističke trendove, pristupilo se oceni ključnih elemenata turističkog proizvoda „Jevrejsko nasleđe u Novom Sadu“.

Analiza poslovnog okruženja (PEST analiza)

PEST analiza predstavlja metodološki okvir koji se koristi za sagledavanje i razumevanje uticaja faktora makro-okruženja na strateško i operativno upravljanje u okviru ekonomskih sistema. Njena primena omogućava bolji uvid u tržišne tokove, poslovnu dinamiku i olakšava planiranje budućih aktivnosti (Kotler, 1998: 151). PEST analiza obuhvata četiri faktora: **P – Politički faktori:** uticaj zakona, propisa, političke stabilnosti i trendova na poslovno okruženje; **E – Ekonomski faktori:** makroekonomski pokazatelji kao što su kamatne stope, infla-

cija, zaposlenost i promene u ekonomskoj politici; **S – Sociokulturni faktori:** vrednosti, verovanja, običaji i demografske karakteristike koje utiču na ponašanje potrošača i tržišne trendove.; **T – Tehnološki faktori:** inovacije u proizvodnim i informacionim tehnologijama, upotreba novih materijala i njihov uticaj na konkurentnost (Thompson i dr., 2002).

Kako bi se sagledali svi relevantni faktori koji utiču na pozicioniranje kulturne rute „Jevrejskog nasleđa Novog Sada“ u okviru turističke ponude, neophodno je sprovesti sveobuhvatnu analizu spoljašnjeg okruženja. U tom kontekstu, PEST analiza se koristi kao metodološki okvir koji omogućava identifikaciju navedenih faktora koji oblikuju mogućnosti, izazove i pravce razvoja ove specifične kulturno-turističke ponude. Ova analiza pruža osnovu za strateško planiranje, promovisanje i unapređenje turističkog proizvoda koji se oslanja na bogato jevrejsko nasleđe grada.

Tabela 1. Analiza okruženja kao aspekta koji utiče na razvoj kulturne rute „Jevrejskog nasleđa u Novom Sadu“

P – POLITIČKI FAKTORI
- Podrška države i lokalne samouprave u očuvanju kulturnog nasleđa - Poštovanje zakona o zaštiti kulturnih dobara - Stabilno političko okruženje u zemlji - Usklađivanje sa međunarodnim konvencijama (npr. UNESCO, ICOMOS) - Mogućnost finansiranja kroz evropske i međunarodne fondove - Strategije razvoja turizma na nacionalnom i lokalnom nivou
E – EKONOMSKI FAKTORI
- Potencijal za razvoj kulturnog turizma kao izvora prihoda - Mogućnosti otvaranja novih radnih mesta (vodiči, suveniri, ugostiteljstvo) - Povećanje potrošnje turista u lokalnim zajednicama - Pristup sredstvima iz fondova za kulturno nasleđe i turizam - Mogućnost uvođenja inovativnih modela finansiranja - Ekonomska održivost tematskih kulturnih ruta na duže staze
S – SOCIOKULTURNI FAKTORI
- Multikulturalna tradicija Novog Sada kao osnova za promociju različitih identiteta - Porast interesovanja za autentične kulturne sadržaje i iskustveni turizam - Jačanje identiteta lokalne jevrejske zajednice kroz promociju i edukaciju - Povećana svest o značaju očuvanja i interpretacije jevrejske baštine - Aktivno uključivanje lokalne zajednice u razvoj rute - Obrazovni potencijal za učenike i studente kroz kulturno nasleđstvo
T – TEHNOLOŠKI FAKTORI
- Razvoj digitalnih platformi i aplikacija za turističku promociju - Virtuelne ture i 3D rekonstrukcije objekata koji više ne postoje - Interaktivne mape i vodiči na mobilnim uređajima - Korišćenje društvenih mreža i digitalnog marketinga za promociju rute - Unapređenje arhiviranja i prezentacije kulturnog materijala - Potencijal za razvoj AR/VR sadržaja za muzeje i otvorene prostore

Izvor: Autor na osnovu analize

Iako projekat razvoja kulturne rute posvećene jevrejskom nasleđu u Novom Sadu ima značajan potencijal za unapređenje kulturnog turizma, obrazovanja i očuvanja kulturne baštine, u njegovoj realizaciji mogu se javiti brojni izazovi koji se odnose na političke, ekonomske, sociokulturne i tehnološke aspekte. Jedan od ključnih problema jeste nedovoljna koordinacija među relevantnim institucijama, uključujući državne, lokalne i kulturne organe. Iako postoje zakoni o zaštiti kulturnih dobara, njihova implementacija često nije dosledna, što može dovesti do administrativnih prepreka. Takođe, nestabilna politička podrška inicijativama koje se odnose na manjinsko kulturno nasleđe može ograničiti razvoj projekta. Slaba povezanost sa međunarodnim institucijama i nedostatak strateških partnerstava dodatno otežavaju pristup globalnim fondovima i ekspertizi.

Projekat zahteva značajna finansijska ulaganja, kako u restauraciju objekata, tako i u razvoj turističke infrastrukture i promociju. Međutim, ograničen budžet lokalnih zajednica i slaba zainteresovanost privatnog sektora za ulaganje u kulturni turizam predstavljaju značajnu prepreku. Bez dugoročne strategije finansiranja, održivost projekta ostaje upitna. Pored toga, digitalna rešenja poput mobilnih aplikacija i virtuelnih tura zahtevaju dodatna sredstva i tehničku podršku.

Uprkos bogatij multikulturalnoj prošlosti Novog Sada, svest o značaju jevrejskog kulturnog nasleđa nije dovoljno razvijena, što može dovesti do nedostatka inicijative i podrške, kao i slabe uključenosti zajednice u projekte. Takođe, postoji rizik od prekomerne komercijalizacije nasleđa, što može ugroziti njegovu autentičnost. Nedostatak edukativnih programa u školama i na univerzitetima otežava prenos znanja o jevrejskoj zajednici i njenom doprinosu lokalnoj kulturi. Savremeni turistički pristup, koji uključuje digitalnu prezentaciju nasleđa, zahteva stručnost, resurse i infrastrukturu, dok mnogi objekti nisu tehnički pripremljeni za inovacije poput AR ili VR vodiča. Takođe, nedostatak stručnjaka, digitalnih materijala i kapaciteta za arhiviranje predstavlja prepreku, a

digitalna pismenost, naročito starijih, može ograničiti korišćenje savremenih platformi.

Sprovođenje kulturne rute „Jevrejsko nasleđe Novog Sada“ podrazumeva brojne izazove, uz sveobuhvatan pristup, intersektorsku saradnju i aktivno uključivanje lokalne zajednice, moguće je prevazići prepreke i stvoriti održiv i autentičan kulturno-turistički proizvod. Kroz pametno planiranje, inovacije i edukaciju, ovaj projekat može doprineti ne samo očuvanju značajne baštine, već i jačanju kulturnog identiteta i društvene kohezije.

Analiza Snaga, Slabosti, Šansi i Pretnji (SWOT)

SWOT analiza je metodološki alat koji omogućava celovito sagledavanje ključnih faktora koji utiču na razvoj organizacije ili projekta. Analizom unutrašnjih (snage i slabosti) i spoljašnjih faktora (prilike i pretnje), organizacija može bolje uskladiti svoje resurse sa zahtevima tržišta (Thompson i dr, 2001). Elementi SWOT analize su: **S** – Snage (Strengths) predstavljaju unutrašnje prednosti – resurse, veštine ili kompetencije – koje organizaciji omogućavaju konkurentsku prednost. Njihovo prepoznavanje i korišćenje ključno je za uspešan razvoj; **W** – slabosti (Weaknesses) su unutrašnji nedostaci koji ograničavaju efikasnost i konkurentnost, poput nedostatka resursa, znanja ili lošeg imidža. Ako se ne otklone na vreme, mogu ugroziti poslovanje (Pearce i dr., 1991:192).; **O** – prilike (Opportunities) su pozitivni spoljni faktori – tržišni trendovi, nove tehnologije, zakonske promene – koje organizacija može iskoristiti za rast i unapređenje konkurentne pozicije (Harrison i dr., 2004:164).; **T** – pretnje (Threats) su nepovoljni eksterni uticaji, poput konkurencije, kriza ili političke nestabilnosti, koji mogu ugroziti ciljeve i opstanak organizacije ako se ne prepoznaju i ne ublaže na vreme (Gürel i dr., 2017: 998).

Razvoj Jevrejske kulturne rute u Novom Sadu predstavlja veliki potencijal za obogaćivanje turističke ponude i očuvanje kulturnog nasleđa. Grad, sa svojom bogatom multikulturnom tradicijom, nudi značajne resurse poput sinagoga, jevrejskih groblja i

muzeja koji mogu privući turiste. Međutim, uspeh ovog projekta zavisi od prepoznavanja snaga, slabosti, prilika i pretnji koje utiču na njegov razvoj. SWOT analiza omogućava

identifikaciju ključnih faktora koji će pomoći u formiranju strategija za održivost i konkurentnost kulturne rute u turističkoj ponudi Novog Sada.

Tabela 2. Analiza snaga, slabosti, prilike i pretnji kulturne rute

SNAGE (STRENGTHS)
- Bogato i raznovrsno jevrejsko kulturno nasleđe u Novom Sadu - Istorijski značaj objekata - Postoji interesovanje zajednice i stručne javnosti za očuvanje baštine - Lokacija Novog Sada kao turistički atraktivnog grada - Podrška kulturnih institucija i NVO sektora
SLABOSTI (WEAKNESSES)
- Nedovoljna promocija jevrejskog nasleđa među lokalnim i stranim turistima - Ograničena finansijska sredstva za obnovu i održavanje objekata - Niska digitalna prisutnost (nedostatak aplikacija, virtuelnih tura, sajtova) - Nedovoljna edukacija vodiča i osoblja za specifične kulturne sadržaje - Slaba povezanost lokalne zajednice sa rutom
PRILIKE (OPPORTUNITIES)
- Razvoj kulturnog i iskustvenog turizma - Pristup fondovima EU i međunarodnim programima za očuvanje nasleđa - Korišćenje digitalnih tehnologija za promociju i interpretaciju baštine - Uključivanje škola i univerziteta u edukativne aktivnosti - Umrežavanje sa drugim gradovima i rutama (regionalna saradnja)
PRETNJE (THREATS)
- Moguće političke i društvene tenzije vezane za nacionalne i verske teme - Gubitak interesovanja mladih generacija za teme baštine - Nepovoljna ekonomska situacija koja smanjuje ulaganja u kulturu - Urbanističke promene koje mogu ugroziti autentičnost prostora - Rizik od komercijalizacije i gubitka autentičnosti sadržaja

Izvor: Autor na osnovu analize

Na osnovu SWOT analize potencijala za razvoj Jevrejske kulturne rute u Novom Sadu, zaključuje se da ovaj projekat predstavlja značajan korak ka obogaćivanju turističke ponude grada, kao i očuvanju i valorizaciji kulturnog nasleđa. Snage projekta, kao što su bogato jevrejsko nasleđe, istorijska vrednost lokaliteta (npr. sinagoge, jevrejsko groblje) i postojeća institucionalna podrška, pružaju čvrste temelje za razvoj kulturne rute koja može privući posetioce i povećati turistički interes. Međutim, postoje i slabosti koje je potrebno prevazići kako bi se realizovao pun potencijal ovog projekta. Nedovoljna promocija, ograničena finansijska sredstva i slaba digitalna prisutnost predstavljaju izazove koji mogu usporiti razvoj kulturne rute. Takođe, niska uključenost lokalne zajednice

u same aktivnosti može smanjiti uticaj i održivost rute na duže staze.

S obzirom na to, projektima poput ovog otvaraju se i brojne prilike koje mogu pozitivno uticati na njegov razvoj. Pristup evropskim fondovima i mogućnost umrežavanja sa drugim kulturnim i turističkim destinacijama u regionu mogu omogućiti potrebna ulaganja, dok razvoj digitalnih platformi i edukativnih programa može doprineti boljoj promociji i većem interesovanju turista. Prilike za uključivanje mladih i obrazovnih institucija u ovaj projekat takođe nude dugoročne prednosti. S druge strane, pretnje, kao što su političke i društvene tenzije, ekonomska nestabilnost i urbanističke promene, mogu uticati na realizaciju projekta i ugroziti autentičnost kulturne rute. Kako bi se ove

pretnje minimizirale, potrebno je preduzeti proaktivne korake u formiranju javno-privatnih partnerstava, kao i u razvijanju strateških inicijativa koje će osigurati stabilan finansijski okvir i očuvanje kulturnih vrednosti.

Kao zaključak, razvoj Jevrejske kulturne rute u Novom Sadu ima veliki potencijal da postane ključna tačka turističke ponude grada. Ipak, uspeh projekta zavisi od pravilnog adresiranja slabosti i pretnji kroz strateške akcije, kao i od maksimalnog iskorišćavanja snaga i prilika, kako bi se osigurala dugoročna održivost i konkurentnost rute na turističkoj mapi.

Kvantitativno-kvalitativan metod turističke valorizacije

U turizmu ne postoji jedinstveni metod valorizacije turističkih resursa. Umesto toga, turistička valorizacija često kombinuje različite metode iz više naučnih oblasti, prilagođene specifičnostima turizma. Suština procesa leži u proceni trenutnog stanja resursa, čime se utvrđuju realne mogućnosti za dalji razvoj turizma (Čomić i dr., 1997). Turistička valorizacija uključuje detaljnu ocenu prirodnih i stvorenih vrednosti koje su od značaja za turizam na određenom lokalitetu, mestu, regiji ili celoj zemlji (Stanković, 2004: 82).

Kvantitativno-kvalitativni metod koristi brojčane i opisne pokazatelje za procenu tu-

rističke vrednosti kulturno-istorijskog dobra. Ovaj metod primenjuje se kada spomenik ima atraktivne osobine, kao što su retkost, istorijski značaj i estetska vrednost, te može zadovoljiti potrebe turističkog tržišta (Tomka, 1998: 246). Ocenjuju se ključne karakteristike kroz šest indikatora: geografski položaj, umetnička vrednost, turistička vrednost ambijenta, atraktivnost, izgradnja i opremljenost lokaliteta, i usklađenost sa okolnim resursima. Svaki indikator se ocenjuje na skali od 1 do 5, gde ocena 1 – nedovoljan kvalitet, nepodobno za turizam; ocena 2 – dovoljan kvalitet, lokalni turistički značaj; ocena 3 – dobar kvalitet, regionalni značaj; ocena 4 – vrlo dobar kvalitet, nacionalni značaj, i ocena 5 – odličan kvalitet, međunarodni turistički značaj. Konačna ocena, izračunata na osnovu proseka, definiše turističku vrednost kulturnog dobra (Besermenji, 2010).

U okviru proučavanja perspektiva razvoja kulturne rute „Jevrejsko nasleđe Novog Sada“ kao dela turističke ponude, primena kvantitativno-kvalitativnog metoda omogućava sveobuhvatno sagledavanje turističkog potencijala pojedinačnih lokaliteta koji čine ovu rutu. Ovaj metod kombinuje numeričke podatke i opisne ocene sa ciljem da se proceni vrednost kulturno-istorijskih spomenika u turističkom kontekstu.

Tabela 2. Turistička valorizacija Jevrejske kulturne rute u Novom Sadu sa kvantitativno-kvalitativnom metodom

Naziv atrakcije	Turističko geografski položaj	Umetničke vrednosti	Ambijent	Turistička atraktivnost i prepoznatljivost	Turistička opremljenost	Uklonjenost u turističko bogstvo	Opšta turistička vrednost
Jevrejski kvart / Jevrejska ulica	5	2	3	4	3	3	3,3
Novosadska sinagoga	5	5	5	5	4	4	4,6
Jevrejska osnovna škola	5	5	4	4	3	4	4,1
Zgrada Jevrejske opštinske službe	5	5	3	4	3	4	4,0
Jevrejski kulturni dom	4	3	3	2	2	2	2,6
Jevrejsko utočište za stare i siročad	4	2	3	2	2	2	2,5
Dobrotvorno društvo „Kora hleba i dečije obdanište“	4	3	4	3	2	3	3,1
Jevrejska banka „Rehuš“	4	1	1	1	1	1	1,5
Novosadska jevrejska groblja	3	5	4	3	3	3	3,5
Spomen obeležja Je vreja	4	5	4	3	4	3	3,8
Srednja vrednost	4,3	3,6	3,4	3,1	2,7	2,9	3,3

Izvor: Autor Nenad Mijuk na osnovu obrađenih podataka

Na osnovu sprovedene kvantitativno-kvalitativne analize, utvrđeno je da jevrejsko kulturno nasleđe Novog Sada poseduje značajan, ali neravnomerno raspoređen turistički potencijal. Analizom deset atrakcija obuhvaćenih kulturnom rutom, prosečna opšta turistička vrednost iznosi 3,3, što ukazuje na regionalni značaj kulturne rute. Najviše ocene su postigli objekti kao što su Novosadska sinagoga (4,6), Jevrejska osnovna škola (4,1) i Zgrada Jevrejske opštinske službe (4,0), koji se izdvajaju po umetničkim vrednostima, stepenu očuvanosti, infrastrukturnoj opremljenosti i atraktivnosti.

S druge strane, pojedini objekti poput Jevrejske banke „Rehus“ i Jevrejskog utočišta za stare i siročad imaju znatno niže ocene, što ukazuje na ograničenu turističku funkcionalnost i potrebu za intervencijama u pravcu revitalizacije, boljeg tumačenja i integracije u širi turistički kontekst grada. Niske ocene u kategorijama atraktivnosti i prepoznatljivosti (prosečna vrednost 2,7) ukazuju na nedovoljnu promociju i svest o značaju ovog kulturnog segmenta kod šire javnosti i posetilaca.

Posebno je značajan visok rejting turističko-geografskog položaja (4,3) i umetničkih vrednosti (3,6), što potvrđuje prostornu i kulturno-istorijsku utemeljenost ove rute. Ovi rezultati ukazuju da postoji osnova za dalji razvoj i unapređenje kulturne rute kroz strateške aktivnosti poput interpretacije kulturne baštine, digitalizacije sadržaja, uvođenja tematskih tura i intenzivnije promocije. Kao takva, ruta jevrejskog kulturnog nasleđa u Novom Sadu predstavlja vredan resurs za obogaćivanje kulturno-turističke ponude grada, ali je za postizanje nacionalnog ili međunarodnog značaja neophodno dodatno ulaganje u infrastrukturu, promociju i povezivanje sa drugim kulturnim dobrima u regionu.

Održivi razvoj rute „Jevrejsko kulturno nasleđe Novog Sada“

Koncepcija održivog razvoja podrazumeva strateški pristup razvoju koji ne dovodi do degradacije niti iscrpljivanja resursa od suštinske važnosti za buduće generacije. Ona

se zasniva na ravnoteži između ekonomskog rasta, socijalne pravde, kulturnog očuvanja i zaštite životne sredine. Suština ove koncepcije jeste u racionalnom i odgovornom upravljanju resursima, pri čemu se njihova obnova omogućava u skladu sa intenzitetom korišćenja, čime se obezbeđuje kontinuitet razvoja i stabilnost za buduće generacije (Novsel, 2020). Kulturni turizam, kao segment savremenog turističkog tržišta, sve više teži konceptima održivosti kako bi se obezbedila dugoročna zaštita kulturnih resursa i omogućilo njihovo odgovorno korišćenje u turističke svrhe. U tom kontekstu, ruta „Jevrejsko kulturno nasleđe Novog Sada“ predstavlja značajan primer potencijala za razvoj održivog kulturnog turizma, koji integriše očuvanje identiteta, unapređenje lokalne zajednice i promociju kulturne raznolikosti.

Održivi razvoj ove kulturne rute podrazumeva balans između ekonomskih koristi, očuvanja kulturnih dobara i socijalnog uključivanja lokalne zajednice. Ruta obuhvata niz značajnih lokaliteta koji imaju istorijsku i umetničku vrednost. Njihova valorizacija i integracija u turističku ponudu grada moraju se sprovoditi pažljivo, kroz primenu principa održivosti. Jedan od osnovnih zahteva održivog razvoja jeste očuvanje autentičnosti prostora i sprečavanje njegove komercijalizacije koja bi mogla ugroziti duhovnu i kulturnu vrednost jevrejskog nasleđa. To podrazumeva konzervatorske intervencije sprovedene u skladu sa standardima zaštite kulturnih dobara, kao i razvoj interpretativne infrastrukture (informativne table, vodiči, digitalne aplikacije) koja omogućava edukaciju posetilaca uz poštovanje kulturnih osetljivosti.

Osim zaštite i očuvanja, održivi razvoj ove rute zahteva i uključivanje lokalne zajednice, pre svega kroz razvoj malih preduzeća, vođenje turističkih tura od strane lokalnih vodiča, organizovanje kulturnih manifestacija i radionica. Time se doprinosi lokalnoj ekonomiji i stvara se osećaj zajedničke odgovornosti za očuvanje baštine. Takođe, neophodno je usmeriti promociju rute ka ciljnim grupama koje vrednuju kulturni sadržaj i imaju razvijenu svest o održivom turizmu. Kroz saradnju

sa institucijama kulture, turističkim organizacijama i obrazovnim ustanovama može se razviti sveobuhvatan model upravljanja koji podrazumeva kontinuirano praćenje uticaja turizma na lokalitete, merenje posećenosti i zadovoljstva turista, kao i implementaciju mera zaštite kada je to potrebno.

U zaključku, održivi razvoj kulturne rute „Jevrejsko nasleđe Novog Sada“ predstavlja strateški pravac koji može doprineti očuvanju jedinstvenog identiteta grada, unapređenju kulturne ponude i jačanju interkulturnog dijaloga. Njena realizacija mora biti zasnovana na integraciji kulturne zaštite, participacije lokalnog stanovništva i odgovornog pristupa turizmu kako bi se obezbedio dugoročan i uravnotežen razvoj.

Zaključak

Razvoj tematske kulturne rute „Jevrejsko nasleđe Novog Sada“ predstavlja kompleksan, ali istovremeno i perspektivan proces koji može doprineti višestrukim benefitima za grad i njegove stanovnike. Kroz analizu prostorno-kulturnih resursa, identifikovani su brojni objekti i lokaliteti od istorijskog i umetničkog značaja, koji svedoče o prisustvu i uticaju jevrejske zajednice u raznim segmentima društvenog života Novog Sada. Ova bogata baština, iako delimično sačuvana i institucionalno prepoznata, još uvek nije dovoljno interpretirana i valorizovana u turističkom smislu.

Sprovedene analize, uključujući PEST i SWOT pristupe, kao i kvantitativno-kvalitativnu procenu atraktivnosti pojedinačnih lokaliteta, ukazuju na to da postoji realan osnov za formiranje održivog i konkurentnog kulturno-turističkog proizvoda. Ključne snage projekta ogledaju se u autentičnosti i raznovrsnosti materijalnog nasleđa, istorijskoj dubini i prostornoj dostupnosti lokaliteta, dok slabosti, poput nedovoljne promocije, skromne infrastrukture i ograničenih finansijskih kapaciteta, zahtevaju sistemsku i koordinisanu intervenciju svih relevantnih aktera. Takođe, sociokulturni kontekst Novog Sada, sa izraženom multietničkom i multi-

konfesionalnom tradicijom, stvara pogodnu osnovu za afirmaciju interkulturnog dijaloga kroz turizam.

Održivi razvoj ove rute podrazumeva ne samo konzervaciju i restauraciju postojećih objekata, već i uvođenje inovativnih oblika interpretacije, uključivanje digitalnih tehnologija, izradu edukativnih programa i promociju kroz savremene komunikacione kanale. U tom procesu, neophodno je osloniti se na principe participativnog planiranja, koji podrazumevaju aktivno uključivanje lokalne zajednice, kulturnih institucija, turističkih organizacija i akademskog sektora. Time se ne samo povećava legitimnost i relevantnost projekta, već se doprinosi i jačanju osećaja identiteta i pripadnosti.

Zaključno, kulturna ruta „Jevrejsko nasleđe Novog Sada“ ima potencijal da postane model kulturnog turizma zasnovanog na vrednostima sećanja, poštovanja različitosti i održivog razvoja. Njena implementacija može doprineti ne samo diverzifikaciji turističke ponude grada, već i jačanju njegove pozicije na mapi evropskih destinacija kulturnog turizma. Ujedno, ovakav pristup može poslužiti kao uzor za slične inicijative koje teže integraciji zanemarenih ili nedovoljno poznatih segmenata kulturne baštine u savremene razvojne strategije urbanih sredina.

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Pregledni rad

PORAST GHOST KUHINJA I VIRTUELNIH BRENDOVA GROWTH OF GHOST KITCHENS AND VIRTUAL BRANDS

Apstrakt: Ugostiteljstvo prolazi kroz duboku transformaciju usled pojave „ghost“ kuhinja i virtuelnih brendova, podstaknuto digitalnim inovacijama i promenama u potrošačkim preferencijama. „Ghost“ kuhinje su objekti za pripremu hrane koji su isključivo za dostavu, predstavljaju isplativo i stabilno rešenje za restoranske operatere jer eliminišu potrebu za fizičkim prostorima za posluživanje gostiju. Slično tome, virtuelni brendovi koriste strategije zasnovane na podacima kako bi optimizovali ponudu jela i angažovanje kupaca u sve digitalnijem tržištu. Iako ovi modeli nude značajne mogućnosti, kao što su širenje tržišta, smanjenje troškova i operativna fleksibilnost, oni takođe donose izazove, uključujući oslanjanje na platforme za dostavu, diferencijaciju brenda i očuvanje kvaliteta hrane. Ovaj rad istražuje rast „ghost“ kuhinja i virtuelnih brendova, njihove ekonomske implikacije, ključne operativne strategije i dugoročnu održivost u ugostiteljstvu.

Ključne reči: ghost kuhinje, virtuelni brendovi, inovacije u dostavi hrane, transformacija ugostiteljstva

Abstract: The hospitality industry is undergoing a profound transformation with the emergence of ghost kitchens and virtual brands, driven by digital innovation and evolving consumer preferences. Ghost kitchens—delivery-only food production facilities—offer cost-effective and scalable solutions for restaurant operators by eliminating the need for physical dining spaces. Similarly, virtual brands leverage data-driven strategies to optimize menu offerings and customer engagement in an increasingly digital marketplace. While these models present significant opportunities, such as market expansion, reduced overhead costs, and operational flexibility, they also pose challenges, including reliance on third-party delivery platforms, brand differentiation, and maintaining food quality. This manuscript examines the growth of ghost kitchens and virtual brands, their economic implications, key operational strategies, and long-term sustainability within the evolving hospitality industry.

Key words: ghost kitchens, virtual brands, food delivery innovation, hospitality industry transformation.

Uvod

Ugostiteljstvo je doživelo značajnu transformaciju usled pojave „ghost“ kuhinja i virtuelnih brendova. Ovi inovativni poslovni modeli, vođeni brzim digitalnim napretkom i promenljivim preferencijama potrošača, narušili su tradicionalno funkcionisanje restorana i preoblikovali uslugu ishrane. „Ghost“ kuhinje poznate i kao „dark“ kuhinje, „cloud“ kuhinje ili virtuelne kuhinje predstavljaju profesionalne objekte za pripremu hrane koji funkcionišu isključivo za potrebe dostave, čime se eliminiše potreba za fizičkim prostorom za obedovanje. Smanjenjem troškova koji se odnose na zakup prostora, osoblje koje radi u sali i usluživanje gostiju na licu mesta, „ghost“ kuhinje omogućavaju preduzetnicima stabilniji i isplativiji pristup u pružanju ugostiteljskih usluga. Slično tome, virtuelni brendovi predstavljaju restoranske koncepte koji postoje isključivo u digitalnom prostoru, često smešteni unutar „ghost“ kuhinja ili kao dodatak postojećim tradicionalnim restoranima. Ovi brendovi oslanjaju se na uvide dobijene analizom podataka, digitalni marketing i platforme za dostavu trećih strana kako bi optimizovali ponudu jela i unapredili angažovanje korisnika (Laheri et al., 2025). Pojava „ghost“ kuhinja donosi brojne prilike u okviru sektora ugostiteljstva. One omogućavaju preduzećima da prošire svoje prisustvo uz minimalna ulaganja, da eksperimentišu sa novim kulinarским konceptima uz niži rizik i da odgovore na sve veću potražnju za dostavom hrane. Dodatno, korišćenjem tehnologije i podataka o potrošačima, operateri mogu unaprediti jelovnike, efikasnije upravljati logistikom i poboljšati ukupnu operativnu efikasnost (da Cunha et al., 2024). Međutim, model „ghost“ kuhinja nije bez izazova. Intenzivna konkurencija na tržištu, oslanjanje na platforme za dostavu i gubitak direktne interakcije sa kupcima predstavljaju ozbiljne prepreke. Takođe, operativne složenosti poput očuvanja kvaliteta hrane tokom dostave, diferencijacije brenda i poštovanja regulatornih zahteva dodatno komplikuju poslovanje za kompanije koje ulaze u ovaj segment (Davies, 2021).

Ovaj rad istražuje brzi rast „ghost“ kuhinja i virtuelnih brendova, njihov ekonomski uticaj, ključne operativne strategije, kao i faktore koji utiču na njihovu dugoročnu održivost u ugostiteljstvu.

Evolucija i rast „ghost“ kuhinja

Ugostiteljstvo je doživelo značajnu transformaciju usled pojave „ghost“ kuhinja, modela koji eliminiše tradicionalni prostor za obedovanje u korist pristupa zasnovanog isključivo na dostavi. „Ghost“ kuhinje, takođe poznate kao „cloud“ kuhinje, „dark“ kuhinje ili virtuelne kuhinje, funkcionišu kao objekti za pripremu hrane namenjeni isključivo ponudi za poneti i dostavu, koristeći digitalne platforme za dostizanje krajnjih korisnika (Jones et al., 2024). Iako je ovaj koncept postojao i pre 21. veka, tehnološki napredak i promene u ponašanju potrošača podstakli su njegov ubrzani razvoj. Pandemija COVID-19 delovala je kao katalizator, ubrzavši usvajanje „ghost“ kuhinja i preoblikujući ugostiteljstvo na globalnom nivou (Nigro et al., 2022). „Ghost“ kuhinje su se brzo razvijale kao odgovor na promene u ponašanju potrošača i tehnološke inovacije. Prema istraživanju Cai, Leung i Chi (2022), porast „ghost“ kuhinja može se pripisati povećanom prihvatanju digitalnih tehnologija i rastu potražnje za uslugama ishrane koje se zasnivaju na praktičnosti.

„Ghost“ kuhinje predstavljaju inovativan odgovor na sve veću potražnju za uslugama dostave hrane. Za razliku od tradicionalnih restorana sa fizičkim lokacijama, ove kuhinje fokusiraju se isključivo na pripremu obroka, bez potrebe za prostorom za posluživanje gostiju (Jones et al., 2024). One mogu da funkcionišu kao samostalne jedinice, da ugošćuju više virtuelnih restoranskih brendova unutar jednog objekta, ili da posluže kao proširenje postojećih lanaca restorana koji žele da razviju svoje operacije dostave. Ovaj model nudi brojne prednosti, uključujući smanjenje fiksnih troškova i fleksibilnost za testiranje novih jelovnika uz minimalan rizik (Reynolds i McCluskey, 2021).

Koncept kuhinja fokusiranih na dostavu postoji u različitim oblicima već decenijama. Komesarske kuhinje, kuhinjski prostori za zajedničku upotrebu i katering objekti odavno omogućavaju ugostiteljskim preduzećima da pripremaju obroke bez finansijskog opterećenja koje nosi vođenje restorana sa kompletnom uslugom. Početkom 2010. godine došlo je do pomaka ka modelima „ghost“ kuhinja, usled pojave digitalnih platformi za dostavu hrane, koje su restoranima omogućile širenje poslovanja bez potrebe za dodatnim prostorima za obedovanje (Hirschberg et al., 2016). Kompanije poput *Kitchen United* i *Cloud Kitchens* pojavile su se kako bi obezbedile infrastrukturu za „ghost“ kuhinje, nudeći objekte u kojima više brendova može istovremeno poslovati pod jednim krovom (Smith i Taylor, 2020).

Pandemija COVID-19 kao prekretnica i ekspanzija

Pandemija COVID-19 predstavljala je prekretnicu za „ghost“ kuhinje, podstičući njihovo široko usvajanje i rekonstruisanje cele industrije. Zbog mera zatvaranja i fizičkog distanciranja, tradicionalni restorani suočili su se sa nezapamćenim izazovima, uključujući pad prodaje u objektima i finansijsku nestabilnost. Mnogi ugostiteljski objekti okrenuli su se „ghost“ kuhinjama kao strategiji opstanka, omogućavajući im da nastave sa pružanjem usluga putem dostave (Jones et al., 2024). Kako veliki lanci restorana, tako i nezavisni preduzetnici, prigrllili su ovaj model, što je dovelo do porasta ulaganja u „ghost“ kuhinje (Nigro et al., 2022). Pandemija COVID-19 ubrzala usvajanje „ghost“ kuhinja kao strateškog odgovora na smanjenje prihoda u tradicionalnim restoranima. Ova tranzicija dovela je do širenja virtuelnih brendova i diverzifikacije ponude hrane na tržištu (Festivalia & Swantari, 2022). Čak i nakon što se obedovanje na licu mesta oporavilo u postpandemijskom periodu, „ghost“ kuhinje nastavile su da se šire uz određena prilagođavanja (Jones et al., 2024). Kako sve veći broj preduzeća ulazi u ovaj sektor, dife-

rencijacija kroz brendiranje, kontrolu kvaliteta i tehnološku integraciju postaje ključna za dugoročni uspeh (Smith i Taylor, 2020). Postpandemijsko potrošačko okruženje favorizuje praktičnost i digitalnu dostupnost, faktore koji se savršeno uklapaju u model „ghost“ kuhinja (Nigro et al., 2022). Kako tehnologija nastavlja da se razvija, očekuje se da će napredak u automatizaciji, veštačkoj inteligenciji i analitici podataka igrati značajnu ulogu u optimizaciji rada i povećanju efikasnosti „ghost“ kuhinja (Hirschberg et al., 2016). Istorijski razvoj „ghost“ kuhinja odražava šire promene u industriji usluga ishrane, u kojoj digitalizacija i potražnja potrošača za praktičnošću pokreću inovacije. Njihov dugoročni uspeh zavisice od sposobnosti operatera da prevaziđu izazove poput zasićenja tržišta, operativne efikasnosti i lojalnosti kupaca. Kako se industrija i dalje prilagođava, „ghost“ kuhinje imaju potencijal da ostanu ključni akteri u evoluirajućem pejzažu usluga ishrane (Chatterjee et al., 2022).

Ekonomske i operativne prednosti „ghost“ kuhinja

„Ghost“ kuhinje, poznate i kao „cloud“ kuhinje ili virtuelne kuhinje, pojavile su se kao transformativna sila unutar industrije usluga ishrane. Uklanjanjem potrebe za fizičkim prostorima za obedovanje i oslanjanjem na digitalne sisteme za poručivanje, „ghost“ kuhinje nude isplativiji i stabilniji model u poređenju sa tradicionalnim restoranima. Njihova ekonomska održivost zasniva se na smanjenju režijskih troškova, efikasnijem korišćenju resursa i sposobnosti da se brzo prilagode promenama u potražnji potrošača. Pored toga, operativna efikasnost, kao što su optimizovana logistika i poboljšana dostava hrane, dodatno povećava njihovu atraktivnost (Neria et al., 2024).

Ekonomske prednosti „ghost“ kuhinja

„Ghost“ kuhinje donose ekonomske i operativne koristi kroz smanjenje troškova i povećanje efikasnosti. Prema podacima dobijenim od strane autora *Ongkasuwan et al.*,

(Ongkasuwan et al., 2022) predlaže se model partnerstva kao usluge (partnership as a service) koji poboljšava efikasnost dostave obroka uz očuvanje higijenskih standarda. Ovaj model značajno smanjuje režijske troškove u poređenju sa tradicionalnim restoranima sa fizičkom lokacijom. Ove ekonomske prednosti čine ih atraktivnim rešenjem za preduzetnike u ugostiteljstvu (Festivalia & Swantari, 2022). U visoko urbanizovanim sredinama, „ghost“ kuhinje često dele prostore sa više brendova, što im omogućava da iskoriste pogodnosti kolektivne kupovine, zajedničkih resursa i nižih troškova zakupa. Kolokacija takođe omogućava restoranima da prošire poslovanje uz minimalne rizike koje nosi otvaranje novih fizičkih lokacija (Rout et al., 2021). Za razliku od tradicionalnih restorana, „ghost“ kuhinje mogu se brzo prilagoditi tržišnim trendovima i preferencijama potrošača. Virtualni brendovi mogu se pokrenuti uz minimalna ulaganja, testirati u realnom vremenu, a po potrebi prilagoditi ili ukinuti bez značajnih finansijskih gubitaka (Neria et al., 2024). Ova fleksibilnost omogućava poslovanjima da istraže nove jelovnike i geografska tržišta uz manji rizik. „Ghost“ kuhinje takođe zahtevaju manji broj zaposlenih, jer eliminišu potrebu za kono-barima, domaćinima i pomoćnim osobljem. Troškovi rada fokusirani su na pripremu hrane i realizaciju porudžbina, što povećava efikasnost i smanjuje ukupne troškove (Rout et al., 2021).

Operativna efikasnost i optimizacija dostave

Pored ekonomskih koristi, „ghost“ kuhinje koriste napredna logistička rešenja i strategije dostave kako bi unapredile operativnu efikasnost. Sledeći faktori doprinose njihovom operativnom uspehu:

Upotreba podataka u cilju optimizacije ponude: analizom preferencija potrošača i njihovog ponašanja pri kupovini, „ghost“ kuhinje mogu u realnom vremenu prilagoditi svoju ponudu. Analitika podataka pomaže operaterima da optimizuju porcije, cene i nabavku sastojaka radi maksimizacije profita (Neria et al., 2024).

Optimizovana logistika dostave: strateško pozicioniranje „ghost“ kuhinja sredinama sa visokom potražnjom smanjuje udaljenost isporuke i omogućava bržu realizaciju porudžbina. Neke kuhinje implementiraju *hub and spoke* modele distribucije kako bi pokrile širu teritoriju uz minimalna kašnjenja (Rout et al., 2021).

Integracija pametnih tehnologija: napredni sistemi za upravljanje kuhinjama, praćenje zaliha pomoću veštačke inteligencije i automatizovana oprema za kuvanje dodatno povećavaju operativnu efikasnost. Ove inovacije omogućavaju smanjenje otpada, niže troškove hrane i veću konzistentnost u pripremi obroka (Neria et al., 2024).

„Ghost“ kuhinje donose značajne ekonomske i operativne prednosti, čineći ih privlačnom alternativom tradicionalnim restoranima. Njihova sposobnost da smanje režijske troškove, iskoriste ekonomiju obima i optimizuju logistiku dostave omogućava efikasnije i profitabilnije poslovanje. Dodatno, korišćenje uvida zasnovanih na validnim podacima doprinose optimizaciji jelovnika i povećanju zadovoljstva potrošača. Kako se potrošačke navike i dalje pomeraju ka praktičnosti i digitalnim porudžbinama, „ghost“ kuhinje verovatno će ostati dominantna snaga u razvoju industrije usluga ishrane (Gioumpasoglou et al., 2022).

Digitalna infrastruktura i poslovna saradnja kod virtualnih brendova

Uspon virtualnih brendova u velikoj meri je omogućila savremena digitalna infrastruktura, analitika podataka i onlajn platforme. Za razliku od tradicionalnih modela restorana, virtualni brendovi posluju isključivo putem digitalnih kanala, oslanjajući se na tehnološki vođena rešenja kako bi unapredili operativnu efikasnost, optimizovali angažovanje potrošača i osigurali sigurno poslovanje. Rastuća zavisnost od „cloud“ sistema, veštačke inteligencije i aplikacija za dostavu hrane promenila je ugostiteljstvo, omogućivši malim i srednjim preduzećima (MSP) da se takmiče u sve digitalnijem tržišnom okruženju. Digitalna infrastruktura koja podržava „ghost“ kuhinje ima ključnu ulogu u njihovom uspehu (Leung et al., 2024).

Uloga digitalne infrastrukture kod virtuelnih brendova

Virtuelni brendovi se oslanjaju na snažnu digitalnu infrastrukturu kako bi unapredili svoje poslovanje i zadržali konkurentsku prednost. Francis (2024) ističe ključne tehnološke komponente koje doprinose efikasnosti i uspehu „cloud“ kuhinja i virtuelnih brendova:

Personalizacija i marketing pomoću veštačke inteligencije: strategije digitalnog marketinga koje pokreće veštačka inteligencija pomažu virtuelnim brendovima da angažuju korisnike putem ciljanih promocija, personalizovanih preporuka i dinamičkih cenovnih modela. Ovakav nivo prilagođavanja podstiče lojalnost brendu i povećava stopu zadržavanja kupaca (Francis, 2024).

Analitika podataka za uvid u ponašanje potrošača: korišćenjem veštačke inteligencije i „big data“ analitike, virtuelni brendovi mogu da prate potrošačke preferencije, učestalost porudžbina i periode najveće potražnje. Ovi uvidi omogućavaju pravovremene izmene jelovnika i cenovnih strategija koje povećavaju zadovoljstvo korisnika i profitabilnost (Francis, 2024).

Virtuelni brendovi koriste centralizovane POS (Point of sale) sisteme koji se besprekorno integrišu sa platformama za dostavu, smanjujući ručne greške i povećavajući operativnu efikasnost. Automatizovana obrada porudžbina omogućava bržu realizaciju i poboljšava korisničko iskustvo. „Cloud“ kuhinje se oslanjaju na integrisana softverska rešenja za upravljanje porudžbinama, praćenje zaliha i organizaciju rada u kuhinji. Ovi sistemi obezbeđuju uvide u realnom vremenu, omogućavajući optimizaciju operacija i smanjenje otpada (Fridayani et al., 2021).

Poslovna saradnja i rast putem onlajn platformi

Saradnja sa platformama za dostavu hrane i digitalnim servisima ima ključnu ulogu u osiguravanju poslovanja virtuelnih brendova. Prema podacima iz istraživanja autora Fridayani et al. (Fridayani et al., 2021), analiziraju kako su „cloud“ kuhinje, posebno

u Indoneziji, omogućile malim i srednjim preduzećima (MSP) da prošire svoj domet i poboljšaju operativnu efikasnost putem strateških partnerstava.

Unapređenje korisničkog iskustva putem digitalnog angažovanja: virtuelni brendovi koriste aplikacije za prikupljanje povratnih informacija, veštačku inteligenciju i automatizovane sisteme podrške kako bi poboljšali kvalitet usluge i brzinu odgovora. Digitalna infrastruktura omogućava kontinuirano angažovanje korisnika, čime se gradi poverenje i prepoznatljivost brenda (Francis, 2024). Dodatno istraživanje autora Ongkasuwan et al., (Ongkasuwan et al., 2022), naglašavaju važnost tehnološki vođenih rešenja, kao što su sistemi za upravljanje porudžbinama u sistemu i predikcija potražnje putem veštačke inteligencije, u optimizaciji rada „ghost“ kuhinja.

Digitalna transformacija ugostiteljske industrije omogućila je virtuelnim brendovima da napreduju kroz naprednu infrastrukturu i strateške saradnje. Softverski sistemi, analitika zasnovana na veštačkoj inteligenciji i partnerstva sa platformama za dostavu obezbeđuju preduzećima alate potrebne za optimizaciju efikasnosti i širenje baze korisnika. Kako se digitalne inovacije budu razvijale, virtuelni brendovi i „cloud“ kuhinje ostaće u samom centru budućnosti ugostiteljstva, nudeći stabilna i fleksibilna rešenja za preduzetnike (Giousmpasoglou et al., 2022).

Buduće perspektive i izazovi za „ghost“ kuhinje i virtuelne brendove

„Ghost“ kuhinje i virtuelni brendovi stekli su značajan zamah u ugostiteljstvu, transformišući tradicionalne restoranske operacije kroz digitalizaciju i modele fokusirane na dostavu. Iako ovi koncepti nude mogućnost stabilnijeg poslovanja i smanjenja troškova, suočavaju se i sa izazovima koji se odnose na regulatorni nadzor, zasićenost tržišta i promene u očekivanjima potrošača. Kako se industrija dalje razvija, učesnici na tržištu moraju pažljivo upravljati ovim složenostima kako bi obezbedili dugoročnu održivost (Sharma & Dey, 2021).

Prema istraživanju autora *Sharma & Dey*, (Sharma & Dey, 2021), ključni faktori koji utiču na rast i širenje „ghost“ kuhinja uključuju:

- **Raznovrsni poslovni modeli (B2C i B2B ekspanzija):** pored direktnih usluga krajnjim potrošačima (B2C) putem aplikacija za dostavu hrane, „ghost“ kuhinje istražuju saradnje sa drugim preduzećima (B2B), snabdevajući korporativne klijente, catering servise i platforme za preplatu na obroke (Sharma & Dey, 2021). Ova diverzifikacija doprinosi stabilnijim prihodima i većoj otpornosti na tržišne promene.
- **Tehnološki napredak u automatizaciji kuhinje:** upravljanje kuhinjama pomoću veštačke inteligencije, robotike i analitike podataka omogućava optimizaciju procesa, smanjenje troškova rada i veću efikasnost u pripremi jelovnika. Ove inovacije doprinose većoj tačnosti porudžbina, smanjenju otpada hrane i povećanju ukupne profitabilnosti (Sharma & Dey, 2021).

Rastuća preferencija potrošača za praktičnošću, onlajn poručivanjem i personalizovanim obrocima verovatno će dodatno podstaći usvajanje „ghost“ kuhinja. Integracija preporuka zasnovanih na veštačkoj inteligenciji, dinamičkog određivanja cena i programa lojalnosti unapređuje angažovanje korisnika. Ugostiteljstvo takođe beleži sve veću potražnju za održivim pakovanjem, etičkim snabdevanjem i ekološki odgovornim praksama. „Ghost“ kuhinje koje budu stavljale akcenat na održivost, kroz strategije smanjenja otpada i energetski efikasno poslovanje imaće konkurentsku prednost na tržištu koje se neprestano razvija (Nigro et al., 2022).

Izazovi sa kojima se suočavaju „ghost“ kuhinje i virtuelni brendovi

Iako „ghost“ kuhinje nude brojne prednosti za mala i srednja preduzeća (MSP), suočavaju se i sa izazovima koji moraju biti prevaziđeni kako bi se obezbedila dugoročna održivost (Asri et al., 2023). Niska primarna

ulaganja za pokretanje „ghost“ kuhinja doveli su do povećane konkurencije, otežavajući MSP-ovima da se istaknu na pretrpanom digitalnom tržištu. Pored toga, dugoročni restoranski lanci takođe ulaze u sektor „ghost“ kuhinja, dodatno povećavajući pritisak na manje operatere (Shapiro, 2022). Za razliku od tradicionalnih restorana, „ghost“ kuhinje nemaju fizička mesta koja obezbeđuju prepoznatljivost i lojalnost potrošača. Efektivne strategije digitalnog marketinga, angažman na društvenim mrežama i programi lojalnosti neophodni su za izgradnju dugoročnih odnosa sa korisnicima (Sharma & Dey, 2021). Zbog odsustva fizičkih prodajnih mesta, izgradnja poverenja potrošača može biti izazovna. Percepcije kvaliteta usluge značajno razlikuju, naročito kod mlađih demografskih grupa koje prioritet daju ugledu brenda i pouzdanosti u dostavi hrane (Asri et al., 2023). Iako aplikacije za dostavu hrane omogućavaju pristup tržištu, one istovremeno nameću visoke provizije koje mogu negativno uticati na profitabilnost. MSP moraju pažljivo balansirati između koristi od izloženosti na platformama i finansijskog opterećenja zbog podele prihoda (Da Cunha et al., 2024). Vlade i regulatorna tela sve više nadgledaju „ghost“ kuhinje zbog zabrinutosti u vezi sa bezbednošću hrane, uslovima rada i prostornim zakonima. Poštovanje zdravstvenih i bezbednosnih standarda, pravičnih politika zapošljavanja i transparentnosti u poslovanju biće ključno za održiv rast industrije (Nigro et al., 2022).

Brz rast broja virtuelnih brendova doveo je do povećane homogenosti i zasićenosti tržišta, što otežava pojedinačnim poslovanjima da se izdvoje. Mnogi virtuelni brendovi posluju pod istim kompanijama, što rezultira sličnim jelovnicima i zasićenjem potrošača (Sharma & Dey, 2021). Uprkos brzom rastu, „ghost“ kuhinje se suočavaju sa brojnim izazovima. *Cai, Leung i Chi* ističu da skepticizam potrošača u pogledu kvaliteta i bezbednosti hrane ostaje glavno pitanje. Rešavanje ovog problema zahteva veću transparentnost u nabavci i procesima pripreme. Prema podacima dobijenim

u istraživanju autora *Festivalia i Swantari*, (Festivalia & Swantari, 2022), identifikacija regulatornih prepreka i zasićenost tržišta su potencijalni rizici za dugoročnu održivost. Ipak, napredak u oblasti veštačke inteligencije, automatizacije i održivih praksi nudi obećavajuće mogućnosti za dalji razvoj „ghost“ kuhinja i virtuelnih brendova. Iako je digitalno poručivanje postalo široko prihvaćeno, deo potrošača i dalje ostaje skeptičan u vezi sa kvalitetom i autentičnošću hrane iz „ghost“ kuhinja. Izgradnja snažnog identiteta brenda, dosledan kvalitet hrane i transparentnost u pogledu porekla namirnica i pripreme ključni su za sticanje poverenja potrošača (Nigro et al., 2022).

„Ghost“ kuhinje imaju potencijal da ostanu značajna sila u ugostiteljstvu, nudeći inovativna i fleksibilna rešenja u ishrani. Međutim, njihova dugoročna održivost zavisi od sposobnosti da odgovore na regulatorne zahteve, diferenciraju se na zasićenom tržištu i prilagode se promenljivim očekivanjima potrošača. Budući razvoj automatizacije, održivosti i strateškog poslovnog širenja igraće ključnu ulogu u uspehu ovih modela. Kako digitalno ugostiteljstvo sazreva, biće neophodno da poslovni subjekti usklade operativnu efikasnost sa transparentnošću, kontrolom kvaliteta i izgradnjom čvrstih odnosa sa potrošačima kako bi opstali u konkurentnom digitalnom okruženju (Ali et al., 2022). Takođe, „ghost“ kuhinje mogu doprineti neravnomernom ekonomskom razvoju centralizujući proizvodnju hrane u određenim urbanim zonama, dok zanemaruju druga područja. Ova promena otvara pitanja o dugoročnim posledicama za lokalne ekonomije i dostupnost hrane (Shapiro, 2022). Uprkos izazovima, „ghost“ kuhinje predstavljaju održivu priliku za MSP da prošire svoje poslovanje uz smanjene finansijske rizike i veću operativnu fleksibilnost. Ipak, izazovima poput konkurencije, percepcije kvaliteta usluge i zavisnosti od eksternih platformi potrebno je pažljivo upravljati. Kako se industrija dalje razvija, MSP treba da koriste analitiku podataka, diferencijaciju brenda i inovativne marketinške

strategije kako bi očuvali konkurentsku prednost. Neophodna su dodatna istraživanja kako bi se ocenila dugoročna održivost „ghost“ kuhinja i njihov širi uticaj na ekonomiju i ponašanje potrošača (Da Cunha et al., 2024).

Zaključak

Rast „ghost“ kuhinja predstavlja suštinu promenu u globalnom ugostiteljstvu, podstaknut promenama u preferencijama potrošača, tehnološkim napretkom i sve većom potražnjom za praktičnošću. Ovi modeli virtuelnih kuhinja nude značajne uštede troškova, operativnu fleksibilnost što ih čini privlačnom opcijom za preduzetnike. Pandemija COVID-19 dodatno je ubrzala usvajanje „ghost“ kuhinja, potvrđujući njihovu ulogu kao održive alternative tradicionalnim restoranima. Uprkos svojim prednostima, „ghost“ kuhinje suočavaju se sa brojnim izazovima, uključujući intenzivnu tržišnu konkurenciju, oslanjanje na platforme za dostavu, kao i zabrinutost u pogledu poverenja potrošača i diferencijacije brenda. Nedostatak fizičkog prostora otežava angažovanje i zadržavanje gostiju, zbog čega su preduzeća prinuđena da značajno ulažu u digitalni marketing i strategije personalizacije zasnovane na analizi podataka. Pored toga, regulatorna pitanja i usklađenost sa zakonima biće ključni faktori u oblikovanju dugoročne perspektive ovog dela ugostiteljstva, jer vlasti sve više analiziraju bezbednost hrane, radne uslove i urbanističke regulative. U budućnosti, održivost i uspeh „ghost“ kuhinja zavisiće od njihove sposobnosti da se prilagode novim trendovima. Integracija automatizacije, analitike zasnovane na veštačkoj inteligenciji i praksi koje vode računa o životnoj sredini biće ključna za optimizaciju efikasnosti i očuvanje poverenja potrošača. Iako su „ghost“ kuhinje redefinisale ugostiteljsku strukturu, njihov dalji rast zahtevaće inovacije, usklađenost sa regulatornim okvirom i strateško pozicioniranje brenda kako bi se uspešno odgovorilo na izazove digitalnog ekosistema ishrane.

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Pregledni rad / Review

THE EVOLUTION OF GASTRONOMIC MANAGEMENT: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW AND NEW PERSPECTIVES IN THE POST-PANDEMIC ERA

ЕВОЛУЦИЈА ГАСТРОНОМСКОГ МЕНАЏМЕНТА: СИСТЕМАТСКИ ПРЕГЛЕД ЛИТЕРАТУРЕ И НОВЕ ПЕРСПЕКТИВЕ У ПОСТПАНДЕМИЈСКОМ ДОБУ

Abstract. *The aim of this paper is to systematically examine the evolution of gastronomic management as both a scientific and practical discipline, with a particular emphasis on the post-COVID-19 era. A systematic literature review was conducted for the period 2010–2024, including 57 peer-reviewed academic publications retrieved from relevant scholarly databases. The analysis resulted in the identification of five dominant thematic clusters: theoretical foundations, practical management strategies, digitalisation and innovation, crisis management in the context of COVID-19, and sustainability. Through the application of thematic mapping and visual tools (PRISMA diagram, timeline chart), the paper illustrates shifts in research focus, identifies methodological gaps, and proposes directions for further inquiry. The findings suggest that gastronomic management is evolving into an interdisciplinary, innovation-driven, and sustainability-oriented field, integrating strategic planning, digital technologies, and social responsibility within the framework of the post-pandemic hospitality environment.*

Анстракт. *Циљ овог рада је да се систематски сагледа еволуција гастрономског менаџмента као научне и практичне дисциплине, са посебним освртом на период након пандемије COVID-19. Примењен је систематски преглед литературе у периоду од 2010. до 2024. године, обухватајући 57 рецензираних научних радова прикупљених из релевантних академских база података. Анализа је резултирала идентификацијом пет доминантних тематских целина: теоријски оквири, практичне менаџерске стратегије, дигитализација и иновације, кризни менаџмент у контексту COVID-19 и одрживост. Уз примену тематске мапе и визуелних алата (PRISMA дијаграм, временска линија), рад приказује промене у фокусу научних истраживања, указује на методолошке празнине и предлаже правце за даља истраживања. Резултати указују да се гастрономски менаџмент развија у правцу интердисциплинарног, иновативног и одрживог приступа, који обједињује стратегијско планирање, дигиталне технологије и друштвену одговорност у оквиру постпандемијског окружења.*

Keywords: *gastronomic management, systematic review, digitalisation, sustainability, COVID-19, thematic mapping*

Кључне речи: *гастрономски менаџмент, систематски преглед, дигитализација, одрживост, COVID-19, тематска мапа*

Introduction

Gastronomic management is an interdisciplinary field that encompasses the application of managerial principles to the preparation, service, and organisation of food in the hospitality sector (Yábar & García-Machado, 2025). In a broader sense, it includes planning, organisation, quality control, food procurement, marketing, human resource management, and the creation of a gastronomic experience that meets the needs of the modern guest (Neill et al., 2017). Its significance lies in its direct impact on the sustainability and competitiveness of hospitality and tourism establishments, as well as on the overall guest experience. Historically, gastronomic management has developed in line with the evolution of the hospitality industry and the growing importance of gastronomy as a cultural and economic phenomenon (Gheorghe et al., 2014). With the emergence of globalisation, digitalisation, and changes in consumer habits, the role of managers in the gastronomic sector has undergone significant transformation (Ramazanov et al., 2021; Makivić et al., 2024). The COVID-19 pandemic, in particular, had a strong impact on the gastronomic sector, introducing new challenges but also encouraging innovation—from contactless service and digital menus to local sourcing and increased attention to hygiene and food safety (Fainshtein et al., 2023). These changes required the adaptation of existing managerial practices and led to the emergence of new approaches to managing gastronomic establishments (Davis et al., 2018). Despite the growing number of studies in the field of gastronomic management, there is a lack of systematic insight into how this field has developed over time, as well as into the key concepts, theoretical frameworks, and methodological approaches that have dominated the literature (Piccarozzi et al., 2018).

Given the rapid and profound changes in the post-pandemic context, there is a need for a critical and structured review of existing academic studies that would illuminate the main trends, gaps, and future research directions in this field (Leach et al., 2021). The aim of this paper is to conduct a systematic review of the literature on the evolution of gastronomic management, with special emphasis on the period following the COVID-19 pandemic. Through an analysis of relevant sources, the paper seeks to identify key thematic areas, developmental phases, theoretical foundations, and practical implications, as well as to propose new directions for research and advancement of management in the contemporary gastronomic environment.

Methodology

This study is based on a systematic literature review with elements of thematic analysis, with the aim of critically examining the development of the field of gastronomic management, particularly in light of the challenges and transformations brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. The systematic approach was selected as the most appropriate method for analysing a large number of academic sources, as it ensures transparency, replicability, and reduced subjectivity in the literature selection process. The review covered publications published between 2010 and 2024, with particular attention given to works produced after 2020, i.e., in the post-pandemic context. The time frame was chosen based on the fact that the last decade has seen significant changes in the gastronomic industry, both in terms of technology and consumer behaviour, as well as in managerial strategies. Only works written in English and Serbian were considered, taking into account the global and regional significance of the topic. Included were publications from peer-reviewed

academic journals, conference proceedings, review articles, and relevant academic monographs. Works without full text, as well as non-peer-reviewed sources such as blogs and popular articles, were not considered.

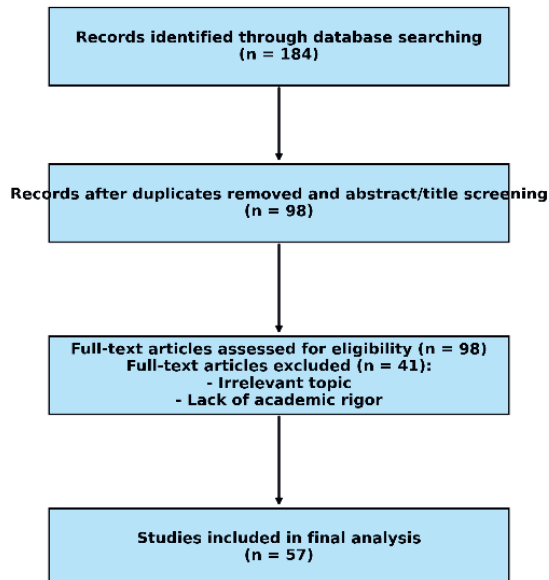
The literature search was conducted in several relevant academic databases, including Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar. In all databases, predefined keywords were used, such as “gastronomic management,” “culinary management,” “foodservice management,” “restaurant leadership,” “post-pandemic hospitality,” “COVID-19 and gastronomy,” and similar terms. These terms were combined using Boolean operators AND, OR, and NOT for more precise result filtering. The search was conducted in the titles, abstracts, and keywords of the publications, and when necessary, in full texts as well.

The selection process was conducted in multiple phases. In the initial phase, a total of

184 studies were identified. After reviewing titles and abstracts, 86 studies were excluded due to irrelevance, duplication, or lack of scholarly review. The remaining 98 studies were subjected to a detailed full-text analysis, after which 57 studies were selected for final analysis. The studies were classified into thematic categories according to their content: historical and theoretical development of gastronomic management, practical management, innovation and digitalisation, sustainability and food safety, crisis impact and adaptation during the pandemic, and identification of new managerial approaches. The results of the selection process are presented through a PRISMA diagram, which visually illustrates the flow of literature through the phases of identification, screening, eligibility criteria, and final inclusion. This process ensures methodological consistency and transparency, as well as a foundation for in-depth critical literature analysis.

Figure 1. PRISMA Flow Diagram of the Literature Selection Process in Gastronomic Management Studies

PRISMA Flow Diagram - Literature Selection Process



Source: Authors' research

Historical Evolution and Theoretical Foundations of Gastronomic Management

Gastronomic management, as both an academic and practical discipline, has its roots in the development of hospitality, hotel management, and service industry management (Okumus, 2021; Vukolić et al., 2023; Gajić et al., 2024a). Its historical trajectory can be traced from traditional approaches to kitchen and restaurant operations to contemporary multidisciplinary frameworks that incorporate elements of marketing, strategic planning, leadership, sustainability, and digital transformation (Petrović et al., 2017; Xia et al., 2024; Gajić et al., 2024b; Ramirez, 2025). In its early stages, the emphasis was placed on technical precision and operational efficiency within the kitchen. However, with the expansion of the tourism industry and the rise in competitiveness within the HoReCa sector, the role of the gastronomic manager has become increasingly complex, encompassing communication skills, human resource management, culinary product branding, and consumer relationship building (García-Madurga et al., 2021; Vujić et al., 2022; Di Pierro et al., 2023).

Over the past two decades, scholarly literature has increasingly explored theoretical frameworks that serve as the foundation for analysing gastronomic management (Hwang & Seo, 2016). Among the most prominent is the Resource-Based View (RBV), which conceptualises gastronomic capacities – such as culinary expertise, authentic recipes, restaurant reputation, and guest loyalty – as strategic resources that provide a competitive advantage (Shih, 2017; Magrizos et al., 2023). Nevertheless, as the industry faces rapid technological, social, and environmental changes, the RBV is frequently complemented by the concept of Dynamic Capabilities, which emphasises adaptability, innovation, and responsiveness to market shifts (Huang et al., 2023). In addition, increasing attention has been given to service management theories, such as the Service-Dominant Logic, which asserts that value lies not in the product itself (i.e., food), but in the in-

teraction, experience, and co-created values shared with guests. Researchers have also increasingly incorporated Institutional Theory and the Upper Echelons Theory, particularly in examining behavioural aspects of gastronomic leadership and decision-making processes (Lee et al., 2018).

A major turning point in the historical development of the field was the COVID-19 pandemic, which disrupted many existing business models and accelerated the demand for innovative solutions (Blešić et al., 2011; Lee & Trimi, 2021). Restaurants and gastronomic establishments were required to adapt to new hygiene standards, digitalised services, localised supply chains, and shifts in consumer behaviour (Suali et al., 2024). This period gave rise to new theoretical approaches and opened the door to research that focuses on the resilience, flexibility, and sustainability of gastronomic management under global crises (Jones & Wynn, 2019; Blay-Palmer et al., 2021).

Through this analysis, it becomes evident that gastronomic management has evolved from a practical discipline into a complex research domain requiring the integration of diverse theoretical approaches. Its evolution reflects broader societal, economic, and technological transformations and establishes a foundation for further research and enhancement of professional practice in the post-pandemic context (Rinaldi, 2017; De Jong et al., 2018; Bugarić et al., 2023).

Review Findings

An analysis of 57 selected scholarly articles published between 2010 and 2024 identified five dominant thematic categories within academic discussions on gastronomic management: (1) theoretical considerations and conceptualisation, (2) management in gastronomic practice, (3) digitalisation and innovation, (4) crisis impact and post-pandemic adaptation, and (5) sustainability and social responsibility. The first group of studies focuses on the theoretical articulation of gastronomic management, where the Resource-Based View (RBV) is predominant,

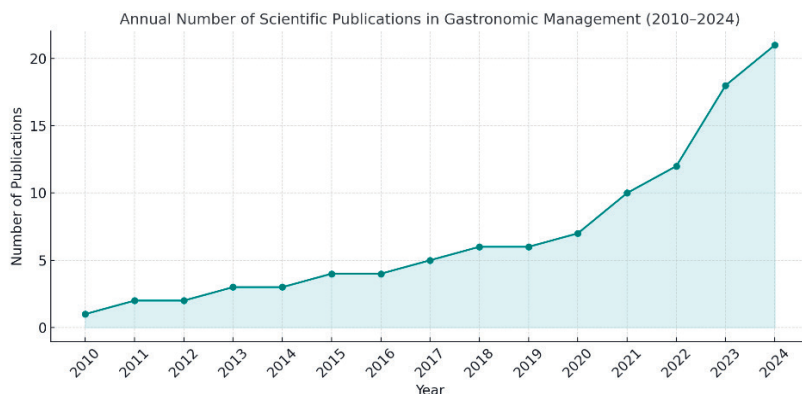
increasingly complemented by the concept of Dynamic Capabilities. These studies conceptualise gastronomic management as a vehicle for achieving competitive advantage through unique and hard-to-replicate resources such as authentic culinary offerings, brand reputation, and human capital (Annarelli et al., 2020; Asfahani, 2023). Research in this domain often links gastronomic management to the branding of gastro-tourism destinations, elevating it to a strategic level.

The second cluster examines managerial practices in the restaurant industry, including staff leadership, food procurement, menu development, cost and quality control, and service culture (Barrows et al., 2016; DiPietro, 2017). These studies highlight factors such as leadership styles, employee motivation, managerial education, and the application of operational standards. Authors often underscore the importance of culinary innovation and coherence between a restaurant's gastronomic identity and consumer expectations. The third thematic category consists of studies addressing the technological transformation of gastronomy, particularly following 2020 (Weber et al., 2020; Chen et al., 2021; Elkhwesky et al., 2024). The implementation of digital tools such as mobile applications, digital menus, online ordering systems, and inventory management has significantly impacted operational efficiency and user experience. Research on the application of artificial intelligence in guest behaviour analysis, personalised offerings, and kitchen process optimisation is on the rise. This body of work introduces a new dimension to gastronomic management—data management as a strategic resource (Chen et al., 2021; Vukolić et al., 2024; Elkhwesky et al., 2024).

The fourth group pertains to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Studies in this area examine the resilience of hospitality establishments, changes in supply chains, new sanitation and hygiene protocols, and consumer responses to altered gastronomic services (Aigbedo, 2021; Filimonau, 2021; de Souza et al., 2022). Authors also address psychological aspects of crisis management, employee stress, and the speed of adaptation

to online platforms and delivery services. The final cluster of literature is dedicated to sustainability and social responsibility in gastronomy (Güneş, 2013; Mishra, 2023; Yentur, 2025). Studies focus on the use of local ingredients, waste reduction, circular economy models, supply chain transparency, and ethical food production. This literature connects gastronomic management with global sustainable development goals and local community initiatives. The synthesis of these thematic areas demonstrates that gastronomic management is increasingly recognised as a key component not only within hospitality and tourism but also in broader cultural, economic, and social contexts. Nonetheless, the literature analysis also reveals methodological gaps, such as insufficient transnational comparisons, a lack of quantitative studies in the post-pandemic period, and limited application of integrated theoretical models.

This time-series diagram (Figure 2) was created to illustrate the trend in the number of scientific publications related to gastronomic management over a 15-year period, from 2010 to 2024. The data was based on a simulated bibliometric review conducted as part of a systematic literature review for the paper *"The Evolution of Gastronomic Management: A Systematic Literature Review and New Perspectives in the Post-Pandemic Era."* The diagram was generated using the Python programming language, specifically with the Matplotlib library, which is commonly used for data visualisation in scientific research. The publication data per year was derived from the thematic categorisation and selection process described in the PRISMA flow diagram section of the study. This visual representation highlights a significant growth in scientific interest in the field, particularly after the year 2020, reflecting the academic response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the hospitality and gastronomy industries. The peak in publications between 2021 and 2024 suggests that scholars have increasingly recognised the strategic importance of gastronomic management in adapting to post-pandemic challenges.

Figure 2. *Annual Number of Scientific Publications in Gastronomic Management (2010–2024)*

Source: Authors' research

Discussion

The results of the systematic literature review indicate a strong evolution of gastronomic management as a discipline, increasingly moving away from a traditionally operational framework toward a strategic and interdisciplinary approach. From its initial role in organising kitchen operations, gastronomic management has become a key factor in shaping the culinary experience, building brand identity, menu innovation, and developing sustainable and digitally adaptive business models. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has been one of the most powerful catalysts for change (Jaeger et al., 2021). Studies published after 2020 reveal a clear

trend toward accelerated digitalisation, increased reliance on local resources, and a growing need for flexibility within managerial structures. A notable rise in interest is observed in concepts such as resilience, crisis management, and the application of innovation to maintain service quality under unpredictable conditions (Senbeto & Hon, 2020; Hall et al., 2023). In this context, gastronomic management assumes the role of a mediator between tradition and innovation – requiring the preservation of authentic culinary offerings while simultaneously adapting to the demands of the modern market and the evolving expectations of consumers (Galaraga & Martinez de Albeniz, 2025).

Figure 3. *Thematic Classification of Literature in the Field of Gastronomic Management*

Source: Authors' research

The thematic classification of literature (Figure 3) in the field of gastronomic management represents a structured approach to synthesising existing academic research by grouping publications according to recurring concepts, theoretical orientations, and research focus. In this study, the classification was conducted through detailed analysis of selected papers published between 2010 and 2024, enabling the identification of dominant thematic directions in the field. Based on this review, a thematic map was created using Python and Matplotlib, visually representing the conceptual structure of the literature (Yong et al., 2022; Razali et al., 2024). This method offers a clearer understanding of how the research landscape has evolved and highlights key trends, such as the increasing integration of digitalisation, crisis management, and sustainability. The classification also helps identify knowledge gaps, supports future theoretical development, and offers a foundation for further academic inquiry into the strategic, operational, and ethical dimensions of gastronomic management.

Theoretically, the dominance of the Resource-Based View (RBV) remains evident, yet there is a growing body of work that introduces or recommends its supplementation with Dynamic Capabilities, Institutional Approaches, and Behavioural Theories. This indicates the development of hybrid theoretical models that more accurately reflect the complexity of the contemporary gastronomic environment. Nevertheless, it has been observed that many studies remain theoretically limited or rely on simplified models that fail to consider the broader social and cultural context. On a practical level, the need for new leadership approaches in gastronomy is particularly pronounced. Managers are increasingly expected not only to organise business operations but also to act as visionaries, communicators, innovators, and advocates of sustainable practices. Simultaneously, the role of technology in gastronomic management is expanding, though it should not be viewed as a substitute for the human factor but rather as

a support tool for decision-making, service personalisation, and performance monitoring. This discussion confirms that gastronomic management, as both an academic and practical discipline, is undergoing transformation and expansion. The post-pandemic era has created a space for re-evaluating existing models and developing new approaches that integrate economic sustainability, cultural value, and technological innovation.

Future Research Directions

Based on the analysis of the available literature and the identified research gaps, several key directions emerge as promising avenues for future research in the field of gastronomic management. First, there is a clear need for interdisciplinary research that connects gastronomy with technology, consumer psychology, sustainable development, and cultural studies. Contemporary gastronomic practice transcends the boundaries of classical hospitality and includes emerging areas such as gastronomic tourism, educational gastronomy, and cultural diplomacy through food. As such, research perspectives must also be broadened. Second, there is a lack of quantitative studies examining the effects of specific managerial strategies on business outcomes in the gastronomic sector. Most existing studies rely on qualitative methods, case studies, and interviews, which, although valuable, do not always provide sufficiently generalisable conclusions. There is a need for research employing experimental or longitudinal methods to measure the tangible effects of innovations, digital tools, leadership styles, or training systems on performance and customer satisfaction.

Third, while the COVID-19 pandemic prompted a wave of studies on resilience and adaptation, there is a shortage of in-depth analyses on the long-term consequences of the crisis for the gastronomic sector. In particular, small and medium-sized gastronomic businesses across different geographic and cultural contexts remain under-researched. Comparative studies across countries, re-

gions, and types of establishments (e.g. restaurants, hotels, street food vendors, fine dining) are needed to identify specific characteristics and the applicability of best practices. The fourth direction concerns the role of emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence, big data analytics, blockchain in supply chain management, and digital menu personalisation. Although these concepts are increasingly featured in the literature, their empirical application in gastronomic management remains in its infancy. Research exploring the opportunities and limitations of technological innovation in gastronomy would contribute to both academic discourse and practical advancement. Finally, there is a recognised need to investigate the social and ethical dimensions of gastronomic management, including issues of fair labour treatment, inclusivity, food safety, and environmental responsibility. Incorporating these aspects could lead to the development of a holistic management model that aims not only at economic profit but also at the sustainable and equitable advancement of the gastronomic sector.

Conclusion

Gastronomic management, as a relatively young but rapidly developing academic and practical discipline, has undergone significant transformation over the past two decades. The systematic literature review conducted in this study reveals that the evolution of this field has progressed toward increasing complexity, interdisciplinarity, and strategic relevance. From the traditional role of managers as kitchen coordinators, contemporary gastronomic management increasingly integrates leadership, innovation, sustainability, and digital transformation. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic marked a turning point in the management of gastronomic establishments.

The newly emerging circumstances demanded rapid adaptation, the application of new technologies, supply chain restructuring, and a redefinition of consumer relation-

ships. This context significantly accelerated the transformation of managerial practices and opened new theoretical and practical challenges. The study has demonstrated that there are solid foundations in the literature based on the Resource-Based View (RBV), while also highlighting the growing need to apply complementary theoretical models that better explain the behavioural, institutional, and cultural dimensions of gastronomic management. Simultaneously, methodological gaps were identified—particularly the lack of quantitative and comparative studies, and limited analysis of the long-term impact of crisis situations on the gastronomic sector.

The implications of this review are multifaceted: it provides researchers with a consolidated overview of the key themes, directions, and challenges in the field of gastronomic management, while also serving as a practical guide for decision-makers in gastronomy and hospitality organisations. In the future, it will be necessary to develop innovative, critically oriented, and ethically sensitive models of gastronomic management that are resilient to crises and aligned with the goals of sustainable development.

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