Application of ISO standards in hospitality industry and challenges of Georgia

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Abstract.
The United Nations Global Compact (hereinafter referred to as the UN Global Compact) obliges countries to create a sustainable and inclusive business economy. Today, the tourism and hospitality industry accounts for 30-35% of world service exports. The reliability of the hotel sector, proper functioning, and strength of development depend on the implementation of the best practices of international standards in practice. Quality standards of the International Organization for Standardization (hereinafter ISO) help the tourism sector to introduce high-quality services and create an image of sustainability. The main goal of the topic is to study and investigate the problematic issues of the introduction of ISO standards for the service management system of Georgian hotels, the importance of standardization of services in the hotel business in the face of global changes, the lack of consideration, the existing negative indicators and the search for solutions in the service industry.

Keywords:
quality standards
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**Introduction.** Improving the management system of tourist service providers, tourist hotel facilities and continuous development according to modern standards is an important issue in the 21st century. Billions of dollars are spent every year to improve the quality of service in tourist facilities around the world. Acquiring a new customer is many times more expensive than retaining an existing customer. The key to hotel business success is guest satisfaction and retention. Also, good customer service and providing the right service is the basis for the growth and development of the tourism business.

The old management and malpractices in the hotel are causing various negative issues. Ignorance of hotel service and its many details as an important issue, for example disregarding international standards, damages the country's economic sector and presents it in a negative light on the international market. Negative evaluations of hotel services have become a subject of criticism for foreign guests [1].

Taking into account the world's widely recognized quality management systems, which include ISO standards and their importance in the development of the Georgian hospitality industry, is a challenge today. Our paper talks about the need to introduce the development of a modern management system instead of outdated stereotypes and the corresponding certification.

We evaluated sustainable innovative management services of hotel facilities in different countries. The paper is based on the evaluation of well-known international hotels as well as the data of different categories of local hotels. Recommendations were formulated, the implementation of which will strengthen the quality issues of the service industry.

**Aim of research.** The purpose of the research is to identify modern trends in the hotel industry, evaluate the specifics of management, and identify gaps in the development of the service market. Determining the positive impact of international standardization in the field of services. Studying the characteristics of sustainable management of hotel services, sustainable services. Determination of the positive factor of hotel service quality ISO to improve the results of the organization's activities.
Methodology. The research uses: comparative analysis, qualitative research methods, the research is based on complex and interdisciplinary approaches. Verbal interviews with representatives of various tax organizations were used in the research. A wide range of practical and theoretical material, special and fundamental works, as well as a global network were used in the research process. Conclusion and recommendations are based on qualitative analysis.

Literature review. The study of the bibliographic material surrounding the issue we studied reveals that research in the field of services in the field of hospitality is a rarity in Georgia in relation to international standards. There are only separate works, in the works of Georgian and foreign researchers: Barkalaya, Faresashvili, the mentioned problem is discussed unilaterally, from an interesting angle. From the foreign researchers, the issue was discussed by Victoria Levkulich and Alexander Momoti, Deepak Eldo Babu, Archinder Kaur, Chandrasek Rajendar, Matloub Hussain, A.S. Kuskov, Benny Chan, Schulz Don, and others. Among the foreign researchers, Victoria Levkulich and Alexander Momoti's paper "Using ISO standards in the hospitality industry: a comparative analysis of European clusters" stands out. Their opinion confirms the hypothesis that the more active ISO 9001 standards are in European countries, the higher the implementation level for other ISO standards management systems in the hospitality industry (ISO 14001, ISO 45001, etc.).

In the conclusion of the work of Victoria Levkulich and Alexander Momoti, it is noted that "The countries of the world and Europe have seen a slow decline in the number of ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 certifications issued between 2015 and 2019, while new ISO 27001, ISO 22000, ISO 45001, ISO 50001, ISO 22301, ISO 28000, ISO 39001 certificates have increased, including those used in the hospitality industry. The study has confirmed the hypothesis that the more actively ISO 9001 standards are distributed in the countries, the higher their level of implementation in the hospitality industry and other ISO standards for management systems. It can be explained by the fact that the organization executives have developed a psychological readiness and acceptance of certain competitive
advantages that can be brought by ISO MSS certification. The degree of ISO standards distribution can be regarded as an informal criterion of the degree of population's involvement in the technological, technical, organizational culture of society” [2].

Scientists are increasingly proving that ISO standards have an impact on the sustainable development of society and are related to the growth of well-being with such indicators as GDP per capita, the Human Development Index and others. Consequently, the researchers' opinion is to observe the growing role of ISO certifications in the global hospitality industry, which affects not only the ability to improve the efficiency of the industry, but also to provide means of survival in the face of increasing competition.

**Discussion and Results.** International Organization for Standardization ISO International Organization for Standardization (hereinafter - ISO) is an independent private company, which was established in 1947 and provides services in the field, inspection, testing, training, technical consulting throughout the world. ISO standards define high-quality services, the issue of standardization at the international level. In the tourism and hospitality sector, ISO standards with valid international characteristics were prepared in 2003. International standards represent best practices agreed upon by the tourism industry worldwide. The standard has become a valuable tool and a useful source of knowledge for tourism service providers [3]. Today, ISO 9001 is used in more than 170 countries, which is a universal internationally recognized quality management system standard. The quality management system ISO 9001 is a powerful tool for business improvement and provides support for sustainable and continuous business development. With the introduction of the mentioned system, working conditions are improved, competitiveness is increased, the strengthening of trust and attraction of partners is facilitated, standardization increases awareness, helps the enterprise to reveal the strengths of the manager [4].

The boom in tourism and hospitality has created millions of new jobs and created an economic boom in countries around the world. When describing a phenomenon such as the
hospitality industry, it is difficult to accurately define its performance in relation to sustainability. Managing a hotel in the twenty-first century is a challenging task. Welcoming and caring for guests from different backgrounds, offering food and shelter is constantly in demand and growing. Today's modern hotelier needs in-depth knowledge of operations, finance, marketing, customer relations. Branding, media, communication, stakeholder relations, knowledge of environmental management, ethics and social responsibility. Many hotels consist of multiple departments, including restaurants, bars, clubs, entertainment facilities, spas and recreational facilities that operate 365 days a year and therefore have a relatively high environmental impact. The tourism industry sector shows that it has the highest negative impact. The environmental impact of all commercial buildings, pollution, waste, greenhouse gases and other hazards do not necessarily arise when considering the hospitality and tourism industry.

The development of the hotel business in the world in the context of global changes refers to the improvement of service quality, green management, environmental protection and sustainable infrastructure, security quality, green investments, attracting qualified staff in the service industry, retraining, etc. Sh. ISO standard activity in tourism is a confirmation that the customer receives quality services, in terms of safety, environmental protection, food safety, social responsibility, provision of green energy. The hotel quality management system (hereinafter HOTEQ 500) certification process is a comprehensive standard in hotel management [5]. It includes upgrading the management system and aims to provide customers with high quality service as well as healthy food safety service preference. Standard HOTEQ 500 developed by ISO is a guarantee of quality service for customers. It is a quality management system that helps to establish relationships between businesses and customers in the sector and establishes certain criteria [6]. HOTEQ 500 service standard, intended for the customer and aimed at the hotel's obligations to fulfill all requirements to satisfy the customer.

The quality management system of the hotel is the only perfect standard. Customer service, health and food safety
are performed in accordance with the principle of ecologically clean enterprises. ISO 22483: 2020 standard - offers measurements, benchmarks, measurement of service quality and customer satisfaction that contribute to business development both qualitatively and quantitatively [7].

The World Business Council on Sustainable Development (hereinafter WBCSD) notes that sustainable development is development forms of progress that meet the needs of the present without compromising the demands and needs of future generations [8]. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (hereinafter UNWTO), “the principles of sustainability refer to the aspects of ecological, economic and socio-cultural development, and an appropriate balance must be established between these three dimensions to ensure its long-term sustainability. What sustainable hospitality means is a hospitality operation that manages its resources so that economic, social and environmental benefits are maximized to meet the needs of today's generation [9]. For more clarity, this statement requires the following questions to be answered: The fact that service quality is the main challenge in the hotel business of Georgia was clearly shown in the government program of economic policy, which mentions the need to improve service quality. “For the sustainable development of the tourism industry and the increase of the service level, in line with the directive of the European Parliament, the formation of the legal framework for tourism will be implemented taking into account the best European practices. A high standard of travel safety and protection of consumers' rights will be introduced through the aforementioned legal framework. Moreover, with the formation of the legislative base, national and regional policy coordination will be strengthened” [10].

In the future development of the industry, there is still no internationally recognized rating system that will differentiate hotels according to various ISO parameters. The development of the hotel business in the world in the context of global changes refers to the improvement of service quality, green management, environmental protection and sustainable infrastructure, security quality, green investments, attracting qualified staff in the service
With the beginning of the tourist season, we surveyed all active and accordingly rated hotel facilities in Georgia. What is the quality of service, activities according to ISO standards. We investigated the following hotel facilities: Holiday Inn Tbilisi, Paragraph Hotel, Tbilisi Inn, Gori Inn, Radisson Blu, Coliseum, Georgia Palace, Borjomi Palace, Gold Hotel, Crown Palace, etc. The survey of respondents was conducted using specially prepared questionnaires.

The positions of the interviewees were distributed according to the hotel's organizational structure: 30% were hotel directors, 47.5% were managers, 16.8% were administrators, receptionists, operators and others. Most of the respondents - 68.3% answer that they are familiar with ISO standards, 31.7% - do not know. When asked whether they believe that the introduction of international standards will improve the quality of services, 85.1% believe that the introduction of standards will improve the quality, 14.9% do not. When asked whether they offer services according to ISO standards, 43.6% answer that they offer services according to international standards, 56.4% do not offer services according to international standards. 60% of respondents consider sustainability principles in management issues, 40% do not. It was found that 39% of enterprises do not consider urban ecology, care about the development of sustainable buildings and structures, 49% positively evaluate urban ecology and take into account, 10% have a negative attitude towards sustainable ecological hotel buildings and structures. For 59% of the surveyed respondents, partnership is important for achieving sustainability goals, 31% neutrally assess the contribution to achieving sustainability goals, 8.9% neutrally view the solution to this issue. We can conclude that 53.5% of the surveyed respondents consider green investment promising, 37.6% are neutral, 8.9% are unacceptable.

Our research has identified problems that need to be addressed. The hotel sector does not have a well-formed policy, a strategy that will facilitate the practical implementation of ISO standards in Georgia. In the survey, the opinion and desire about sustainable development,
attraction of green investments, development of urban green economy, production of ecological products prevails, although we believe that the goals are not aimed at future sustainable development, we believe that the following issues should be noted: with the help of relevant services, consultations should be held in production ISO international on the introduction of standards. In a global environment, the management vector must be directed towards the solution of quality management, environmental protection, safety, food safety, green development goals and objectives, all of which provide the best service to customers.

Sustainable hospitality industry must take environmental and social responsibility, implement sustainable business operations, and care about the image perceived by customers, suppliers and other stakeholders. The legitimacy of the company's environmental positioning, sustainable products and services for customers is important.

Acknowledged by the United Nations as the World’s First ‘Climate Positive’ Hotel Brand, Inkaterra is a Peruvian organization 100% Carbono Neutral that is celebrating 47 years of experience in sustainable tourism initiatives. Each year Inkaterra hosts more than 200,000 travellers providing authentic nature experiences in Peru, while rescuing, presenting and showcasing Peru’s culture and nature for the world [11]. Incaterra's mission is to create an extensive sustainability policy based on the following:

1. Determination and respect of authentic cultural, social and environmental values;
2. Encouraging professional development opportunities;
3. An ideal working environment that provides better living conditions than those stipulated by the labor legislation;
4. Encouraging the development of local communities, their environment and culture;
5. Environmentally friendly products and good communication;
6. Continuous improvement of management and process control by minimizing negative impacts. Interesting;
7. Invests more than $300,000 annually in conservation. All employees undergo in-depth training in social and
environmental issues.

**Conclusion and recommendations.** The study of the problems of standardization of the ISO system of hotel service quality, sustainable management allowed us to draw a conclusion and formulate recommendations based on the opinions of scientists and the results of our survey. In this regard, the following conclusions and recommendations were made:

- The development of a sustainable management strategy should become a priority for the development of the Georgian hotel service market;
- Introduction of new standards is voluntary, although it is recommended, use of ISO standards will bring better results, increase market value, service quality, sustainable management, environmental protection, health and safety;
- The lack of necessary infrastructure of hotel facilities was identified, this refers to violations in the field of green hotel construction; Today, the priority of the modern market is to give hotel buildings a green and sustainable status. International standards of quality service performance in accommodation facilities are perfected;
- It is recommended that hotel organization "individualism" as a priority approach of green management style of management. Hotel facilities that maintain similar services and approaches to the guest determined by the international ISO standard receive much more income than hotels that operate using sustainable services.

**References:**
