EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND SERVICE QUALITY IN ZIYORAT TOURISM HOTELS

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Abstract. *The rapid expansion of ziyorat tourism has led to increased demand for high-quality hospitality services that address the specific requirements of pilgrimage tourists. Within this context, effective hotel management is essential for maintaining service quality, optimizing staff performance, and achieving customer satisfaction. This study investigates emotional intelligence (EI) as a significant factor affecting service quality in hotels serving the ziyorat tourism sector. Drawing upon established EI theories and contemporary management research, the analysis considers how managers' emotional intelligence enhances service delivery through effective employee management and emotionally attuned interactions. The findings suggest that managers with emotional intelligence are better positioned to improve customer experiences, support staff, and uphold elevated service standards in pilgrimage- focused hospitality environments.*

Keywords: *emotional intelligence, hotel management, ziyorat tourism, service quality, hospitality*

1 Introduction

Tourism represents a strategic sector in Uzbekistan's economic development, with ziyorat tourism emerging as a rapidly expanding niche. Ziyorat tourism, which involves religious and spiritual travel, requires a specialized approach to hospitality management given the unique cultural, emotional, and behavioral characteristics of pilgrims. In contrast to conventional tourists, pilgrimage visitors typically have heightened expectations for respect, empathy, and culturally appropriate service. Hotel managers must ensure operational efficiency and manage complex emotional interactions between staff and guests. Emotional intelligence (EI), the ability to perceive, understand, regulate, and use emotions effectively, is increasingly recognized as critical to management and organizational performance [8, 2].

Although previous studies have examined emotional intelligence in management and hospitality, few have addressed its role in hotels serving ziyorat tourism. This paper provides a theoretical analysis of how emotional intelligence influences service quality in these environments.

2 Theoretical foundations of emotional intelligence

Salovey and Mayer introduced the concept of emotional intelligence, defining it as a form of social intelligence that involves monitoring one's own and others' emotions and using this information to guide thinking and behavior [8]. Goleman expanded on this concept by identifying key components of emotional intelligence, such as self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills [2].

Bar-On introduced a comprehensive model of emotional-social intelligence, highlighting emotional and social competencies that affect an individual's self-understanding, perception of others, and coping strategies for environmental challenges.

Within the management context, emotional intelligence is strongly associated with leadership effectiveness, communication, and adaptability. Managers with high emotional intelligence are more effective at managing stress, resolving conflict, and sustaining positive interpersonal relationships in organizations [3].

3 Emotional intelligence in management and organizational performance

A substantial body of research underscores the significance of emotional intelligence within organizational contexts. Managers with high emotional intelligence are more likely to foster cohesive teams and cultivate positive work environments.

Empirical studies demonstrate that emotional intelligence significantly contributes to various aspects of team effectiveness, such as performance, satisfaction, and team viability [7]. Additionally, emotional intelligence enhances transformational leadership, which, in turn, positively influences team outcomes [7].

Emotional intelligence is a significant factor in managerial decision-making. Managers with higher levels of emotional intelligence exhibit more adaptive and rational decision-making styles, which contribute to enhanced organizational performance [9].

Furthermore, emotional intelligence is critical for effective communication and conflict management. Studies indicate that individuals with higher emotional intelligence are more adept at resolving interpersonal conflicts and sustaining collaborative relationships within teams [4].

4 Emotional intelligence and service quality in ziyorat tourism hotels

The hospitality industry involves significant emotional labor, as employees must regulate their emotions during guest interactions. In these settings, managers' emotional competencies directly impact employee behavior and the customer experience.

Within the context of ziyorat tourism, emotional intelligence assumes heightened importance. Pilgrimage tourists typically expect respectful, empathetic, and culturally sensitive service. These expectations present additional challenges for hotel staff and require managers to foster a supportive, emotionally balanced work environment.

Managers with high emotional intelligence demonstrate a greater capacity to understand customer expectations, support employees, and maintain consistent service quality. Emotional intelligence correlates with improved job performance and positive work attitudes, both of which are critical for delivering high-quality service in hospitality settings [5].

Additionally, emotional intelligence promotes knowledge sharing and cooperation within organizations, thereby enhancing service quality and organizational effectiveness [6].

5 Conceptual framework

The literature review identifies emotional intelligence as a key factor influencing service quality in hotel operations in ziyorat tourism. Managers' emotional intelligence affects service quality both directly and indirectly through employee-related outcomes such as satisfaction, cooperation, and performance. Leadership style can further strengthen this relationship, particularly in emotionally demanding service environments [7]. Emotional intelligence, therefore, serves as an essential managerial resource that connects internal organizational processes with external service outcomes.

6 Conclusion

This paper provides a theoretical analysis of emotional intelligence as a critical factor in ensuring service quality in hotels operating within ziyorat tourism. The findings suggest that emotionally intelligent managers are better able to address the specific needs of pilgrimage tourists, support employees, and maintain high service standards.

Given the growing importance of ziyorat tourism in Uzbekistan, integrating emotional intelligence into hotel management practices may contribute to both organizational success and the broader development of the tourism sector.

Future research may focus on empirically validating these relationships and on practical approaches to developing emotional intelligence in hospitality management.

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