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**Service Delivery Standardisation and Customisation in the  
Hungarian Hotels**

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# SERVICE DELIVERY STANDARDISATION AND CUSTOMISATION IN THE HUNGARIAN HOTELS

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## Abstract

The goal of the research is to analyse the role and significance of standardisation and customisation in services in this case in the Hungarian hotel sector. The thesis aims to provide both theoretical and practical results and wants to support Hungarian hotel companies in optimising their processes and understanding the role and significance of standardisation and customisation in their everyday operation.

Thesis introduces the most important concepts which are needed to understand and later apply the ideas in practice. The theoretical background presents the service concepts and approaches as the foundation of hotel processes and continues by specifying the approaches about standardisation and customisation. Then the customer satisfaction and the applied performance indicators are being introduced.

During the research a questionnaire and an interview was made to be able to gather all the important data for proving the four hypotheses and four sub hypotheses. The data was further investigated by using statistical methods: Fisher-Cochren theorem, analysis of variance, correlation analysis, cross-tabulation analysis, principle component analysis and cluster analysis. These methods were applied to find relationships between different variables: standardisation, customisation, the hotel characteristics and the level of standardisation, among the performance indicators and to make groups of hotel according to their level of standardisation and customisation.

The empirical results supported the ideas in connection with standardisation and customisation, that they are not independent but strongly dependent from each other. They showed the role and significance of chain membership, Hotelstars Union membership, number of rooms and the star rating and the level of standardisation. With the analysis it the he most important processes and their effect for all the performance indicators were determined as well. It has also been proved that higher level of standardisation and customisation goes hand in hand together with higher level of performance indicators.

As the result of the research four theses and four sub theses were created.

Key words: *service, standardisation, customisation, performance indicators, hotels*

## Kivonat

### **A szolgáltatási folyamat sztenderdizálása és testreszabása a magyar szállodákban**

A kutatás célja szolgáltatások sztenderdizálásának és testreszabásának és ezek jelentőségének elemzése a magyar szálloda szektorban. A disszertáció mind elméleti, mind fontos gyakorlati eredményekkel is operál, és segítséget kíván nyújtani a magyar szállodák számára saját folyamataik optimalizálására és a sztenderdizálás és testreszabás megértésére és mindennapi alkalmazására vonatkozóan.

Az értekezés bemutatja a legfontosabb és leginkább szükséges fogalmakat, melyek a gyakorlati alkalmazáshoz is szükségesek. Az elméleti háttérben ismertetésre kerül a szolgáltatás fogalma és az ezzel kapcsolatos megközelítések, majd a sztenderdizálás és testreszabás témakörének bemutatására is sor kerül a különböző értelmezések tisztázása érdekében. Mivel a vendégelégedettség kiemelt figyelmet kap, mind a gyakorlati alkalmazás során, mind a kutatásban, ezért a témával kapcsolatos kutatások is ismertetésre kerülnek, ahogy a teljesítménymérés céljából alkalmazott indikátorok is. A kutatás során kérdőív és interjú is készült az adatok összegyűjtése céljából, és a felállított négy hipotézis és négy alhipotézis bizonyítására. Ezután különböző ökonometria és statisztikai elemzések kerültek végrehajtásra: szórásfelbontás, varianciaanalízis, korrelációelemzés, keresztábla elemzés, főkomponens analízis és klaszteranalízis. A felsorolt módszerek elsősorban a különböző változók közötti összefüggések feltárását célozták: sztenderdizálás és testreszabás között, a szállodai jellemzők és a sztenderdizáltság szintje között, a teljesítményindikátorok között. Emellett a szállodák csoportosítására is sor került a sztenderdizálás és testreszabás szintje alapján.

Az empirikus kutatás megerősítette az előzetes feltételezést a sztenderdizálás és testreszabás kapcsolatáról, mivel az elemzés szerint a kapcsolat nagyon erős. Szintén fontos eredményeket hozott a szállodalánc tagság, HotelStars Union tagság, a szobaszám és a csillagbesorolás valamint a sztenderdizáltság szintje tekintetében. Az elemzés segítségével a legfontosabb folyamatok is azonosíthatók, melyeknek a legnagyobb a teljesítménymutatókhoz való hozzájárulása, mikor sztenderdizáltak és testreszabottak is. Szintén bizonyításra került, hogy magasabb sztenderdizáltsággal és testreszabottsággal rendelkező szállodák teljesítménymutatói magasabbak.

**Kulcsszavak:** *szolgáltatás, sztenderdizálás, testreszabás, teljesítménymutatók, szálloda*

## Auszug

### **Standardisierung und Kundenanpassung der Dienstleistungen in der Ungarischen Hotels**

Das Ziel der Forschung ist die Standardisierung und Kundenanpassung der Dienstleistungen und das Analyse von deren Bedeutung in der ungarischen Hotelindustrie. Die Dissertation operiert sowohl mit den theorischen, als auch mit den praktischen Ergebnissen und versucht, für die ungarischen Hotels Hilfe zu geben, um ihre eigene Abläufe optimalisieren zu können und die Standardisierung und Kundenanpassung in Betreff auf der täglichen Nutzung gründlicher verstehen zu können. Die These stellt die wichtigsten benutzten Begriffe vor, die sogar bei der praktischen Benutzung wichtig sind. In dem theorischen Hintergrund wird das Begriff von der Dienstleistung und die damit verbundenden Absätzen beschrieben. Da auf die Zufriedenheit der Kunden sowohl in der praktischen Anwendung, als auch in der Vorschung in einer grossen Masse Rücksicht genommen wird, werden sogar die mit diesen Themen eng verbunden Vorschungen vorgestellt. Um während der Untersuchung entsprechende Daten zu sammeln und die vier Hypothesen zu beweisen, wurden Fragebogen und Interviews gefertigt. Danach wurden verschiedene ökonometrische und statistische Analysen gemacht: Streuungszerlegung, Varianzanalyse, Korrelation, Kreuztabellenanalyse, Hauptkomponentenanalyse, Klusteranalyse. Diese Methode sollten den Zusammenhang zwischen den verschiedenen Komponenten darstellen: zwischen den Standardisierung und Kundenanpassung, zwischen den Hotelcharakteristik und Standardisierungsstufe und zwischen den Leistungsindikatoren. Sogar die Hotels wurden nach der Stufe der Standardisierung und Kundenanpassung in verschiedenen Gruppen geteilt.

Die empirische Forschung bestätigte die vorherige Annahme von der Verbindung zwischen den Standardisierung und Kundenanpassung, da auf Grund der Analyse die Verbindung sehr stark ist. Die Forschung brachte wichtige, nutzbare Ergebnisse, wenn die Mitgliedschaft zu einer Hotelkette, zum HotelStars Union, die Zahl der Zimmer, die Sterneinstufung und die Standardisierungsstufe untersucht wurden. Mit dem Analyse können die wichtigsten Abläufen identifiziert werden, welche am größten Einfluss auf die Leistungsindexen haben, wann diese standardisiert und kundenangepasst sind. Es wurde auch bewiesen, dass die Hotels, die über höhere Standardisierung und Kundenanpassungsstufe verfügen, haben sogar höhere Leistungsindexe.

Stichworte: *die Dienstleistung, die Standardisierung, die Kundenanpassung, die Leistungsindexe, das Hotel*

## Acknowledgement

I have already started my research career when I began to think about my dissertation topic in my second year at the University of Pannonia. I tried to find solution to a different kind of service provider, although the problem was still the same: how to make the firm more creative, how to deliver better service which serves customer needs. I always wanted to be practical, to help companies to improve. I must thank my supervisor, Professor Zoltán Kovács to let me pursue this goal and make something which can be useful for real hotels. I thank him for all the help, the patience and the open-mindedness when I entered his office and shared all my new ideas and professional experience with him.

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I would like to dedicate this doctoral thesis to my grandmother who also thought me to be patient, hard working and never forget where I am from.

# **1 Introduction**

The topic of standardisation and customisation is an interesting issue which mixes the elements of service science, service marketing, service management and service quality. This frontier position explains that every field of science has an opinion or perspective about these two concepts. I think that all of these approaches are worth knowing and understanding but it is not compulsory to accept them, the way they are phrased or formed.

The significance of services and companies providing services has increased in the past decades. According to Teboul (2005) more than 70% of the GDP is added by services in the developed countries and this number is expected to grow in the future. The quality has to be assured in case of these services and considering many of them it is not an easy task to accomplish. Standardisation can be the solution for this 'problem' although it has to be considered that the service industry is very much customer centred and the guests want novelty and special treatment. The question is how this contradiction can be solved.

The object of the research is the Hungarian hotel sector. The Hungarian tourism industry is a very successful source of revenue for the Hungarian economy. In 2012 the balance of tourism exports and imports was 2,243 million euros, which could not have been accomplished without the Hungarian hotel sector as a significant factor within the tourism infrastructure. The role of hotels can be explained by the revenues produced by the Hungarian accommodations, which was 270.8 billion forints, and hotels contributed to this number by 242.3 billion forints which is 89.5% (HAH, 2012).

According to these facts it can be stated that the thesis analysis an important issue (standardisation and customisation) in a significant sector which is able to provide work places, revenue and it can contribute to the GDP as well.

## **1.1 The reasons for choosing the topic**

The topic of the thesis was not difficult to choose but not easy to phrase and put into a framework which fits the scientific requirements.

I started to think about the role of standardisation and customisation when I had to experience their practice as an employee of a chain member hotel. Using standards belonged to the everyday life and I had the chance to see how strict they are, how they are controlled and what advantages and disadvantages can be identified. At the hotel I began to believe that standards

make hotel operation much more predictable and the guest can always count on the quality they expect to receive. At the same time the role of customisation came to my mind when the flexibility of the hotel operation was the question and a lot of changes were not possible because of the lack of flexibility or the strictness of the standards. It was the time when I decided to prove that these two concepts can co-exist and maybe they can even strengthen each other and contribute to the performance of the hotel.

## **1.2 The goals of the research**

After summarising my practical experience and reviewing several authors' work, articles and books considering the concept of service as a base of hotel services and standardisation and customisation, the following research goals were formed.

- How can the level of standardisation and customisation be determined?
- What characteristics can influence the level of standardisation?
- Are there any connections between standardisation and customisation or are they independent as it is often suggested in the literature?
- Are some groups of standards more important than others?
- What kind of performance indicators are there in hotels? How their relations look?
- Is hotel chain membership the only factor which influences the level of standardisation?
- Do standardisation and customisation help hotels increase their performance?

These research goals are going to be answered at the end of the thesis.

## **1.3 The structure of the thesis**

The aim of the research is to be able to response to the above mentioned questions. To fulfil this goal both the theoretical background and empirical research are needed.

After the Introduction, the theoretical background – Literature review – is going to be introduced with the aim of presenting and analysing the most important theories related to the topic. The Definitions and interpretation for services subchapter describes the areas of different service ideas and highlights why services and products should not be dealt with

differently, so standardisation is also possible in case of services. Customisation is very close to the service sector as well. The next subchapter – Standardisation and customisation - introduces many concepts, theories and ideas of two themes and plenty of synonyms used to explain the same or similar meanings. This part contains the models which mix the two concepts together and the criticisms of them at the same time. After that the author's opinion and own model can be found which creates a new way of thinking about the topic. The following section emphasises the significance of Customer satisfaction in the whole service industry and hotels as well by introducing the important concepts of customer loyalty and word-of-mouth. Another subchapter determines and explains the Performance indicators which are applied in the empirical research. The last section of the theoretical background analyses the current situation of Hungarian hotels, their most important characteristics, statistics, indicators and problems.

The next subchapter describes the hypotheses, which starts with the research questions followed by the actual hypotheses.

The following chapter is based on the theoretical background and hypotheses and aims to show the research process, the sample characteristics and the research results. The structure of testing the hypotheses includes the hypotheses themselves, the presentation of the research methods, the results of testing and at the end the forming of the theses.

At the end of the document the Summary of research result can be found with the emphasis on the contribution to knowledge of the research and the collection of theses. The thesis is concluded with the introduction of suggestions for Further research.

## **2 Theoretical background**

In the literature review the theoretical background of the topic is introduced and argued. This chapter contains the most important theories and ideas in connection with the researched issues.

### **2.1 Definitions and interpretation for services**

The aim of the chapter is to review the different definitions of services to determine the origins of standardisation and customisation coming from the manufacturing-service industry distinctions and interpretations. The different characteristics, especially variability, called for the need to standardise and customise the different service processes (Kenesei and Kolos, 2007).

#### **2.1.1 The framework of the review**

Different eras of service and service management definitions and ideas of researchers are classified by two of the most important authors in the topic: Gummesson and Grönroos (2012). Although there are other grouping methods for example Johnston's (1999) which mostly considers operations management as the main topic (four stages), however the author of this thesis uses Gummesson and Grönroos' (2012) grouping criteria since it explains the nature and relationship of service and goods (although Johnston's stages are classified into the chosen categories):

- The goods paradigm (pre-1970s)
- The service versus goods paradigm concentrating on the differences (1970s-2000s)
- The service paradigm based on the integration and the interdependency of services and goods (2000s-).

(Gummesson and Grönroos, 2012 p.482)

The suggested dates of the different eras determined by the European founders of service management would exclude some important research and theories and therefore the year limitations are not being considered as relevant here. The groups will include every author's work that belongs to the era according to the content of their research. This method gives the chance to show that some of the theories are still alive and applied by different researchers even though their era passed.



The end of the chapter will propose a definition which will be used by the author in the considerations in the following chapters and topics. This definition will be the base of the quality standardisation and customisation discussions.

### **2.1.2 The Goods paradigm**

In service marketing, management and service quality there are two distinctive schools of researchers thinking absolutely differently about these topics. The border is between the United States of America and Europe, mostly the Scandinavian region. This era was dominated by American authors inventing and using the most taught and famous theory of the marketing mix (McVey, 1960; Bowman, McCormick, 1961; Willet, 1963; Groeneveld, 1964; Miracle, 1965; Webster, 1968; Penn, King, 1968). These theories mainly concerned manufacturing and product marketing, segmentation or consumer behaviour. The middle of the 1970s marked the change about considering service industry as a significant sector

### **2.1.3 The service versus goods paradigm concentrating on the differences**

After realising that services are worth analysing and researching because of their importance for the world economy. This is the period of time where Johnston's (1999) three stages of the development of operation can be put here. The first stage is 'service awakening' which is the beginning of this era when service was started to be recognised (Johnston, 1999). His second stage is called: 'breaking free from product-based roots' (Johnston, 1999 p. 108) which means similar to the statement which has been mentioned in the first sentence of this subchapter, that highlight was put on services and the difference between service and goods (Johnston, 1999). Besides the switch of the attention the main focus of the authors was to compare the characteristics to goods which were already known by the academic elite. At the same time Johnston's (1999) third stage can be classified into this category since it contained the integration of different disciplines for example marketing, human resource management and operations (Johnston, 1999). The testing of the theories started in this era and although service became the focus, it was really important to find good solutions in service which could be useful for production firms (Johnston, 1999).

Table 1 does not attempt to include every theory only those which are essential for this thesis. There are other characteristics and important issues discussed below the chart as well which relate to the topic.

The definitions created by the researchers in this era are summarised in Table 1.

<b>Author</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Definition for service</b>
<b>Judd</b>	<b>1964</b>	Marketed Services - A market transaction by an enterprise or entrepreneur where the object of the market transaction is other than the transfer of ownership (and title, if any) of a tangible commodity.
<b>Levitt</b>	<b>1972</b>	Service is presumed to be performed by individuals for other individuals, generally on a one-to-one basis. Service is performed 'out there in the field' by distant and loosely supervised people working under highly variable, and often volatile, conditions.
<b>Juran et al.</b>	<b>1974</b>	The terms are not standardised, the author only meant to define it to clarify its meaning. 'Service is a work performed by someone else. The recipient of the service may be a customer.' p. 47
<b>Lovelock and Young</b>	<b>1979</b>	Services involve the customer into production, are labour-intensive, and are time-bound, consumer behaviour.
<b>Quinn and Gagnon</b>	<b>1986</b>	All those economic activities in which the primary output is neither a product nor a construction. Value is added to this output by means that cannot be inventoried and the output is consumed when produced.
<b>Quinn</b>	<b>1988</b>	` The service sector includes activities whose output is not a product or construction, it is generally consumed at the time it is produced, and provides added value in forms (such as convenience, amusement, timeliness, comfort, or health) that are essentially intangible concerns of its purchaser.` p.328
<b>Payne</b>	<b>1993</b>	`A service is an activity which has some elements of intangibility associated with it, which involves some interaction with customers or with property in their possession, and does not result in a transfer of ownership. A change in condition may occur and production of the service may or may not be closely associated with a physical product.` p.6
<b>Bateson</b>	<b>1995</b>	Service is: `the extent that the benefits are delivered to the consumer by a service rather than a good.` p.8
<b>Zeithaml and Bitner</b>	<b>1996</b>	`Services are deeds, processes, performances.` Services are rather intangible instead of tangible. Services are provided by manufacturing companies as well as service companies.
<b>Hoffman and Bateson</b>	<b>1997</b>	They agree with the definition, where services are defined as deeds, effort or performances. The most important difference between goods and services is tangibility but it is highlighted that services and goods can both be called products.

<b>Rathmell</b>	<b>1997</b>	Good is a noun, service is a verb. Good is an object, a device and service is a deed, a performance or an effort.
<b>Kurtz and Clow</b>	<b>1998</b>	Services and goods are different in main characteristics and this is the reason their marketing is different. These main characteristics are: intangibility, perishability, inseparability, variability.
<b>Kasper et al</b>	<b>1999</b>	`Services are originally intangible and relatively quickly perishable activities whose buying takes place in an interaction process aimed at creating customer satisfaction but during this interactive consumption this does not always lead to material possession.` p.13
<b>Ruskin-Brown</b>	<b>2005</b>	The best way which helps describe service is to illustrate how different it is from a good.
<b>Bruhn and Georgi</b>	<b>2006</b>	Services are processes. Services are intangible, perishable and cannot be stored, cannot be transported, are consumed and produced simultaneously, heterogeneous. The major characteristic of the process is the participation of the customer as a co-producer of a service.
<b>Doyle and Stern</b>	<b>2006</b>	Services' most important feature is that they are intangible. 'A service is an act or benefit that does not result in the customer owning anything' p.349 The same characteristics are applied.
<b>Bauer et al.</b>	<b>2007</b>	In their definition they emphasise that service has to happen according to the customer needs. Service is a performance, a process which is not physical does not cause any change in ownership.
<b>Lovelock and Wirtz</b>	<b>2007</b>	They emphasise the concept `rent` in services because it is in all services and it helps understand the meaning of services differing from goods. Key words: economic activities, performances (time-based), desired results for the customers, who expect to obtain value, in exchange for their money, time and effort, and the value comes from access to a variety of value/creating elements rather than from transfer of ownership. p.15
<b>Veres</b>	<b>2009</b>	Service is a not physical solution in a service marketing perspective.
<b>Kotler and Armstrong</b>	<b>2010</b>	Services are not different from products, they are only intangibles. There are a lot of theories and practices which are valid for both, but there are some special needs for services.
<b>Solomon et al.</b>	<b>2012</b>	'Services are intangible products that are exchanged directly between the producer and the customer.' p.19

Table 1 Service definitions from the perspective of service vs. goods paradigm

When academics started to research services and the service industry or the service component of manufacturing company products, they had plenty of misconceptions and misunderstandings about its role and concept. Quinn (1988) argued that the added value in the case of services is not low but significant as opposed to different opinions. He proves otherwise, rebutting the low capital intensity myth and the 'service cannot produce wealth' point as well.

#### **2.1.3.1 Traditional service characteristics**

The most common theory in this era was the distinction of service and goods which became a popular philosophy (Woodruffe, 1995). Most authors define services as something new and different from goods on which the literature and research focused earlier. They determined four basic characteristics which are still taught and applied in the present: intangibility, perishability, inseparability, heterogeneity.

According to Rushton and Carson (1989) it is accepted that services and goods are different. The question is in what ways and to what extent they differ and if it is relevant. They state – as others do in this topic – that it is inappropriate to state that services are intangible and goods are tangible because they both contain elements from each group, only the ratio is the different. This proportion determines the necessary marketing and management practices.

The tangibility/ intangibility discussion is one of the most argued issues in the service literature. As the classification of service literature shows, the difference between goods and service in the intangibility/tangibility dimension is still relevant according to some researchers, including the recent account by Hellén and Gummerus (2012). However they think that the concept should be changed and modernised.

Hoffman and Bateson's (1997) concept of service includes that a product can be a service and goods as well. They still believe that there should be a difference made between goods and services and the most important characteristic is tangibility or intangibility, although the other characteristics are mentioned as well. It is actually true that in this sense intangibility can be the fundamental difference between these two concepts because some of the other characteristics for example perishability are the consequence of intangibility.

Zeithaml et al. (1985) also found intangibility to be the most important factor since it is mentioned by every author researching services. However, they admit that service companies can be very different

Despite the previously mentioned authors, Jan (2012) determined heterogeneity as the most important characteristic of service. This makes it difficult for service providers (in their research, financial service providers) to ensure quality and a standardised customer experience.

Moore et al. (2010) argue that services and products should not mean services and goods at the same time because in his research field – marketing – products and services behave differently and experts and managers need to emphasise how they display different characteristics and require different strategies. However, they do not go any further in their argument because as they say there is not enough space in their book to explain this phenomenon, so they call services and goods product as well as some other researchers they do not agree with.

Solomon et al. (2012) state that the most essential characteristics of services are intangibility and inseparability. These two factors are highlighted, and the relationship between the service provider and the customer is emphasised. They pay attention to customer satisfaction and the utility of the product. The other two characteristics of services appear as well, but the definition contains only the previously mentioned ones.

In 2013 there are still researchers accepting the same principles established in the 1970s. Brassington and Pettitt (2013) define services according to their differences from goods. They still see that there is good and service content in products and it is the right perspective to classify them according to this factor.

The differences between services and manufacturing appear in articles considering other topics as well, for example in Perrigot (2006), when the difference between services and retail chains is argued in the French franchising industry.

Ruskin and Brown (1995) added some other characteristics to the agreed four: Performed, People dominated, No ownership of resources used by the customer, Copyable, No second-hand resale value, Enabling, Impossible to sample, Open to 'inter-customer' influence. These new features contain people domination and give more emphasis to customers as well.

According to Rathmell (1997) it is useful to distinguish goods and services, but as his definition shows it does not have to be complicated. He concentrates on the intangibility characteristic of the services and that is the reason why he emphasises: when a good is bought

the customer purchases an asset contrary to getting a service when the buyer only notices the expense.

Levens (2013) defines services emphasising the benefits customers get when they buy and consume the service. Benefits are the products utility determined by the customer. They decide which product or package they choose according to the utility or the benefit. He still emphasises the products containing goods and services as well and the four above mentioned characteristics which differentiate goods and services (intangibility, inseparability, variability, perishability).

The following table (Table 2) contains the characteristics of service.

<b>Manufacturing/physical product</b>	<b>Service</b>
Tangible	Intangible
Inventories	Queues
Separated production and consumption process	Inseparable process
Can be more standardised	Can be more customised
Less random	More random (Heterogeneity)
Anywhere available	Less access point (Perishability) (Except IT services.)
Ownership	Only access to the service
Can be stockpiles	Cannot be stockpiled
Large region	Local needs
Weak connection with customer	Strong connection with customer
Rather complex	Rather simple
Human-machine system	Human-human system
Demand/need changes in long time	Demand/need changes in short time
Productivity can be measured easier	It is difficult to measure the productivity
Quality standards can be determined	Hard to describe the expected quality
Customer has well defined objectives	Customer not always know he/she wants
Process is given in advance	Process might change during service
Little personal contact	Intense personal contact
Commerce, trade, long supply chain	Direct connection with customer
Postponed/posterior feedback from customer	Immediate feedback from customer

Feedback after question	Feedback without question
More rational	More emotional
Tool intensive	Labour intensive
Change the ownership	No change in ownership
Can be sold further	Can be sold only once
Produced by only the produces	Produced in co-production
Production, then consumption	In time parallel production a consumption

Table 2 Comparison of physical production and services (Kovács and Uden, 2010)

### 2.1.3.2 Other characteristics and issues

Service is not only characterised by the traditional factors. There are several researchers who phrased different synonyms or elements of service.

Levitt (1972) stated that there is no such thing as service industries; there are only industries whose service components are greater or less than those of other industries. This theory is supported by Zeithaml and Bitner (1996) who used market examples to show the different characteristics of services in their article.

Payne (1993) sees products as packages, which provides value to companies' customers and goods and services are only subcategories, two types of product. His aim was to include every service in his definition, and that is the reason why he used a general definition.

Bateson (1995) started to use benefits as a key word in case of services and goods and defined them via a 'bundle of benefits' (p.8) to the customers.

Lovelock and Wirtz (2007) focuses on a concept which was actually mentioned by others but have not been put in an important context like this; they have seen 'rent' as a key in understanding the nature of services. Because when people use a service they are the owners only temporarily and that is why it is similar to rental. They wanted to define services in their own meaning not in connection with products and their differences. They present a diverse definition, with the most important key words summarised in the table.

Solomon et al. (2012) use three categories to group services:

1. Goods-dominated products: Those companies belong to this type which mostly sell tangible products and support services.

2. Equipment- or facility-based services: Those companies which sell a mixture of tangible and intangible elements in their products.
3. People-based services: Those companies which concentrate on unique and different services.

Services are not only significant in case of only service providers but they are incorporated more and more in manufacturing firms as well (Machuca et al., 2007). Servitisation is a method for manufacturing companies to turn to providing service for their customers which will mean an added value to the core product (Vandermerwe and Rada, 1988). The aim of this theory for manufacturing firms is to try to adapt the variable and complex customer needs (Baines et al., 2009). Demeter and Szász (2012) could support the idea determined by the international researchers as well that in case of Hungarian manufacturing firms servitisation is not a dominant phenomenon though more ‘servitised’ companies tend to sell their packages for higher prices. They were not able to provide significant evidence that the companies using servitisation are more profitable (Demeter and Szász, 2012). As servitisation showed there is a large need for production businesses to turn to services. One of the theories helping this cause is product-service integration which can very well implemented by technology according to Geum et al. (2011). The same integration is suggested by Demeter (2010) as well who provides recipes to avoid the pitfalls of servitisation.

When service is happening, it is similar to a drama, a theatrical performance. There are actors, audiences, settings and an overall performance (Grove et al., 1998).

Irons (2006) believes that there are packages consisting of service and good elements and their combination provides the product at the end. He emphasises the large role of services in the choice of customers as well. In contrast to other definitions he distinguishes seven characteristics of a service:

1. Transiency: services do not last; they have to be consumed then and there.
2. People: the service provider (person) and consumer (person) cannot be separated.
3. Perishability: services cannot be stored.
4. One-off action: difficult to standardise and control.
5. Unsupervised process: cannot be supervised easily and it depends on individual reactions.
6. Customer participation: customer has a direct and an indirect influence on the process.
7. Culture: the previous six assumes a service culture. (Irons, 2006)



Shostack (1977) argued that a lot of companies, even the service firms, are using manufacturing methods instead of innovative processes, procedures and practices designed and executed by service oriented companies.

Thinking differently and using the service concept can change the situation of any service and manufacturing companies. In Malcolm's (1990) article service management instead of resource management could alter the philosophy and operation of an entire sector (health system in New Zealand).

Kasper et al (1999) involved customer satisfaction in the service definition as well highlighting its importance and the customer's role in the process. Besides customer satisfaction, interaction appears as a key element. This definition contains the previous ones concentrating on the differences between goods and services, but also the new era with customer satisfaction and interactions.

#### **2.1.4 The service paradigm based on the integration and the interdependency of services and goods**

It would be almost impossible to determine when the next era started. Grönroos and Gummesson (2012) ascertained that the year of change was 2000 but it is easy to realise that this kind of change does not happen in any minute, it is a process, which started in the 1980s, when authors stopped emphasising the difference between service and goods and started to deal with them as integrated and interdependent concepts.

This era was called 'return to roots' by Johnston (1999) who emphasised that the traditional operational issues and approaches are still valid and has to be considered and applicable methods and tools has to be found out.

<b>Author</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Definition for service</b>
<b>Irons</b>	<b>1996</b>	`Service is a significant part of the expenditure, perceptions or reason for choice on the part of customers.` p.12
<b>Wright</b>	<b>1999</b>	‘A service organisation is when two or more people are engaged in a systematic effort to provide services to a customer, the objective being to serve a customer.` p.4
<b>Johns</b>	<b>1999</b>	Service can be defined very different ways by different researchers. It can be an industry, an offering or an output or a process. But a qualifying word needs to be used when researchers try to define service to make it more understandable.

<b>Demeter and Gelei</b>	<b>2002</b>	Service is a way of applying resources with the purpose of changing the condition of the consumer or a good and produce added value in the process.
<b>Gilmore</b>	<b>2003</b>	Service is described as an act, a process and a performance. Services are widely described as economic activities that create 'added value' and provide benefits for customers (consumers or organisations).
<b>Papp</b>	<b>2003</b>	Services are results of activities which enable the maintenance, transmission, storing, completion, development and transformation of a person, knowledge, an object or sometimes a process without changing its basic features.
<b>Fitzsimmons and Fitzsimmons</b>	<b>2006</b>	'A service is a time-perishable, intangible experience performed for customers acting in the role of co-producers.' p.4
<b>Kenesei and Kolos</b>	<b>2007</b>	Service is an intangible performance, series of acts, a process which does not cause any alteration in the ownership in most cases.
<b>Blythe</b>	<b>2008</b>	There are clearly products where the service element plays the major part of the cost. The difference between service marketing and the marketing of physical goods is negligible.
<b>Palmer</b>	<b>2011</b>	'The production of an essentially intangible benefit, either in its own right or as a significant element of a tangible product, which through some form of exchange, satisfies an identified need.' p.2
<b>Johnston et al.</b>	<b>2012</b>	A service is an activity – a process or set of steps (unlike a product which is a thing) – which involves the treatment of a customer (or user) or something belonging to them, where the customer is also involved, and performs some role (co-production), in the service process.
<b>Levens</b>	<b>2012</b>	'Services are activities that deliver benefits to consumers or businesses.' p.163
<b>Armstrong et al.</b>	<b>2012</b>	'Services are a form of products that consists of activities, benefits or satisfactions offered for sale that are essentially intangible and do not result in the ownership of anything.' p.227
<b>Harris</b>	<b>2013</b>	Customer service can be anything companies and people do for the customers that help increase their experience and satisfaction.

Table 3 Service definitions from the perspective of integration and interdependency

In 1986 Lockyer made a very unusual statement about services. He wanted to break out of the framework of determining the differences between goods and services. In his opinion it is not essential to make this distinction; the line should however be between financial profit making and non-financial profit making institutions (Lockyer, 1986).

Later Grönroos (1991) explained and analysed the Nordic School's accomplishments in his article. Their advantage lay with the fact that they did not have to fit into any paradigm, they had the chance to find out the new theory, which fundamentally changed everything.

According to Wright (1995) the fundamental differences between goods and services simplify the whole phenomenon of service. Services are heterogeneous which makes it difficult to formulate a marketing or management framework applicable for every service provider. The differences between goods and services became narrower and it is not easy to distinguish them anymore. Instead of examining the differences researchers should focus on the similarities between different types of service providers and manufacturing companies to group them and attempt to find marketing and management techniques to improve their operation and marketing.

According to Schmenner (1995) the line between service and manufacturing is blurred and is expected to blur more in the future. It is very hard to decide which company belongs to service and which belongs to manufacturing or agriculture. This theory is verified by Vargo and Lusch (2004) almost ten years later.

In his definition of the service organisation, Wright (1999) defines service as well, highlighting the meaning of service which is serving the customer. This statement contains the customer as well as the company which aim is to deliver a proper service for its customer. The author applies the intensity of interaction in the book, which characterises services and helps classify them into groups.

Johns (1999) researched and reviewed the different service theories and definitions and determined their differences. The 'tree' figure of Johns (1999) summarises the theories and puts them into a framework. He also thought that there is no hard distinction between manufacturing and service. His final conclusion is that: 'service, interaction, service quality and value are common to both the provider and the customer'. This thesis deals with interaction and service quality as two important elements.

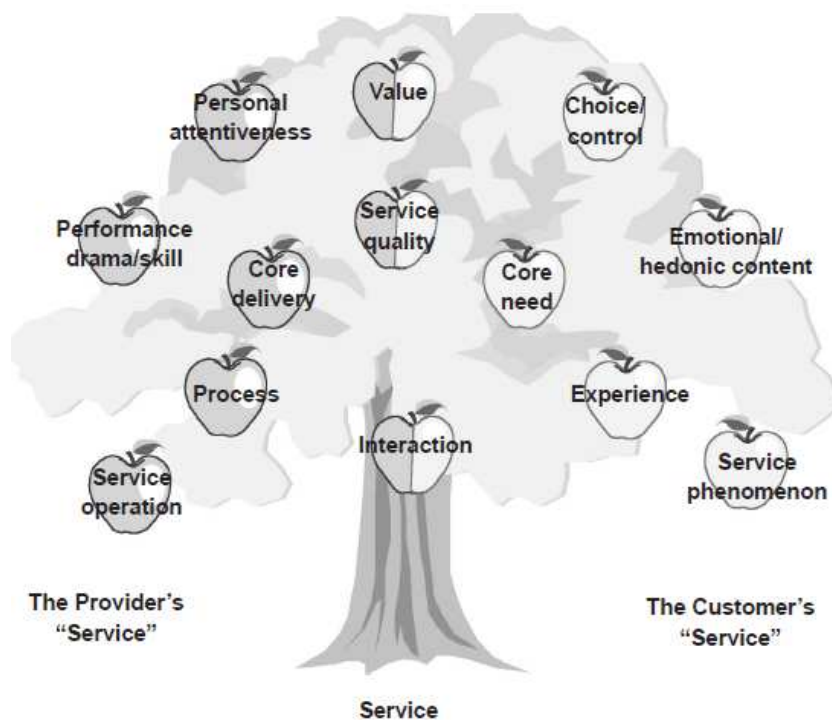


Figure 1 Tree figure of Johns (1999)

Fitzsimmons and Fitzsimmons (2006) emphasised the role of the customer as co-producer in their definition, which highlights the interesting issue of involving the customer in the process and makes the operation more cost-effective and customised at the same time.

Hoffman and Bateson (2006) explained the theory of Eiglier and Langeard (1987), which they called the Servuction model, which shows all the factors influencing the customer experience. Three elements of this model are visible (other customers, servicescape and the contact personnel, service providers) for the customer and one is hidden (invisible organisations and system). The model emphasises the important role of the physical environment, the front line employees, the invisible but influential organisations and systems. The model only considers the operational issues in the factors but in the middle only the customer can be found without any operational results. But the importance of the servuction model stands with the fact that all the factors are integrated in a model.

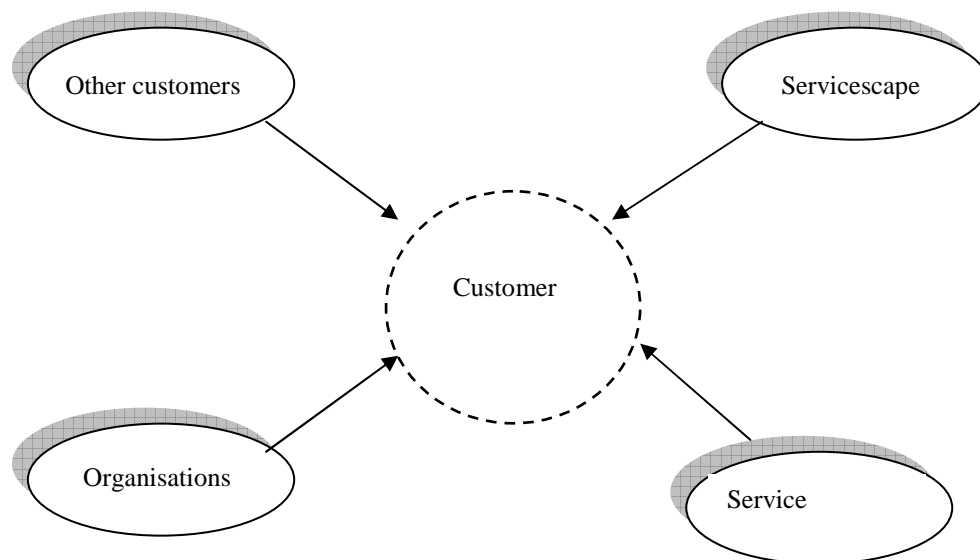


Figure 2 Servuction model (Eiglier and Langeard, 1987)

Palmer (2011) states in his definition that most products are mixtures of services and goods, sometimes they contain more good elements sometimes more service elements. The other factors that are emphasised in the definition are exchange and customer satisfaction which are not part of the traditional service definitions.

Armstrong et al (2012) defines services as products, and they concentrate on the ownership and intangibility criterion. However, the authors are still thinking about goods and services as two ends of a continuum, they recognise products as mixture of services and goods.

Despite 'Services are deeds, processes and performance' was a generally accepted definition for services, Kowalkowski (2011) argued a more holistic approach containing the service function in case of industrial firms which provide more than after sale services. The words performance and process appears in Kenesei and Kolos' (2007) definition as well. Although they use two of the traditional characteristics of service (lack of ownership and intangibility), they state that there is no difference between service and goods in case of company goals, they all want to satisfy customers' needs (Kenesei and Kolos, 2007).

Harris (2013) concentrates on customer service and customer satisfaction in her definition. She considers services in a customer oriented way. This opinion is very close to the perspective of this research because in the hotel industry everything has to happen with the goal of satisfying the customers' needs and enhancing their experience in the hotel.

Vargo and Lusch in their controversial article in 2004 argued that there is no need to determine the difference between service and goods because the whole aim and meaning of

marketing strategy should change. They emphasise that the firm needs to concentrate on its customer service instead of product making and sales, which increases the role of the customer in the service or manufacturing process. They also suggest that firms should outsource every manufacturing task and concentrate on services. Vargo and Lusch in their several articles (2006, 2007, 2008) declared that tangible goods only assist in the service provision, help the customer own or apply the service. Service-Dominant logic revolutionised the way of thinking about services. Although this theory does not cover the whole marketing area, it directed the focus on different company decision areas for example the issue of the mutual and commonly created added value (Veres, 2014). Until then it is used in different fields like tourism as well (FitzPatrick et al., 2012).

### **2.1.5 Conclusion**

As this critical review has demonstrated, the service literature is not unified or integrated. There is a chance to define different eras according to the different dominant theories but it is important to mention that all the theories used from the 1960s are still alive and applied by other authors and play significant roles in today's research as well.

The significance of defining services for this thesis was to find the hidden values in different theories and practices and determine where the approaches of the authors to standardisation and customisation differ. This chapter provided the distinct theories and concepts which are essential to consider before going on to the next chapter.

It is easy to see that in the goods paradigm era, standardisation was a commonly used concept and its application was popular among manufacturing firms which were the subject of research.

In the next era which concentrated more on the differences between goods and services, standardisation became a characteristic which it was argued could not be applied for services because of their intangibility, heterogeneity, perishability and inseparability. Because of the paradigm shift the authors in this period of time – sometimes even now – attempted to state what methods can be used in case of service and goods, however they do not have an interest trying to determine the different meanings of the same tools considering services. There were attempts to use 'goods techniques' in the service industry however there were no changes in the concepts or the application methods, their aim was only to industrialise service for more productivity.

Despite the previous era the latest one broke out of the product cage and started to consider services as the leading sector in the world which makes it compulsory to put forward. The most important authors – Grönroos, Gummesson, Vargo, Lusch etc. – came from the USA and Scandinavia with two similar paradigm concentrating on services as the way to satisfy the customer and as the one and only task of the firm. They suggested that the industrialisation of services has to be forgotten and every service needs to be customised according to the needs of the consumer. That is the reason why they emphasised the role of the customer in the ‘production’ process as well, they stated that the customer is the co-producer of the product and the value co-creation is inevitable (Vargo and Lusch, 2004, Vargo et al., 2008). The involvement of customers has been put into focus by Sampson and Froehle (2006) as well. They invented the Unified Services Theory which is based on the inputs coming from the customers (Sampson and Froehle, 2006). They actually state that this defines services and that is the reason why the managerial issues are special for services (Sampson and Froehle, 2006). In their own definition Demeter and Gelei (2002) also emphasise the involvement of consumers in the process, since they state that in services there is often a change in the consumers’ conditions and that fact generates added value. Frei (2008) writes that there is a big debate about the difference between production and service but it is important to see that the most essential issues are similar although in case of service the customer involvement as an option has emerged.

The author of this current thesis accepts the differences of the new logic of service and service management, marketing but suggests that not only the service concept should be evolved but other concepts related to or originating from production or service management as well. The author is presenting a new theory of standardisation and customisation in this thesis, using the definitions listed above concentrating on customer satisfaction, process, benefits, the activity characteristics and labour intensity which will function as basics.

Service is a labour intensive activity, a process where the aim is to provide benefit for the customer to satisfy their needs with involving them in the service process itself.

The definition highlights the most essential features of service for this thesis’ point of view. The author considers service as an activity or a process because the idea is that hotels and other service providers should concentrate more on the service process than the output itself because this is the way to improve the quality of the service through customer satisfaction which will be determined in the next chapters. Labour intensity in services are already

mentioned in definitions (Lovelock and Young, 1979) it is highly emphasised in tourism literature as well (Baum, 2007; Joppe, 2012).

This definition is being meant in the following chapters when the word ‘service’ is used.

## **2.2 Standardisation and customisation**

The aim of the following section is to define and explain the two concepts which are the main actors of this thesis. The two ideas are presented by their definition from different researchers who mostly phrased them differently and used other words trying to express the slight or more significant distinctions between the concepts.

### **2.2.1 The different concepts of standardisation and customisation**

This subchapter shows the authors different ideas in connection with standardisation and customisation. These researchers are experts in different topics for example marketing or management, because the concepts of standardisation and customisation can be essential in researching several problems.

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Standardisation</b>	<b>Customisation</b>
<b>Sasser</b>	<b>1978</b>	Mass production	Professional
<b>Surprenant, Solomon</b>	<b>1987</b>	Predictability	Personalization
<b>Juran</b>	<b>1988</b>	Meeting customer needs	Freedom from deficiencies
<b>Normann</b>	<b>1991</b>	Negative circle	Positive circle
<b>Kimes, Mutkoski</b>	<b>1991</b>	Procedural dimension	Conviviality dimension
<b>Lovelock</b>	<b>1992</b>	Operation	Marketing
<b>Baalbaki, Malhotra</b>	<b>1993</b>	Globalisation	Localisation
<b>Upton</b>	<b>1994</b>	Uniformity	Customization
<b>McCutcheon et al.</b>	<b>1994</b>	Responsiveness	Customization
<b>Lovelock</b>	<b>1995</b>	Cycle of Mediocrity	Cycle of Success



<b>Lampel, Mintzberg</b>	<b>1996</b>	Aggregation	Individualization
<b>Anderson et al.</b>	<b>1997</b>	Productivity	Customer satisfaction
<b>Silvestro et al.</b>	<b>1997</b>	Mass service	Professional service
<b>Irons</b>	<b>1997</b>	Threshold values	Incremental values
<b>Kurtz, Clow</b>	<b>1998</b>	Cost efficiency	Service quality
<b>Van Mesdag</b>	<b>1999</b>	Globalisation, standardisation	Adaptation
<b>Grönroos</b>	<b>2000</b>	Technical quality dimension	Functional quality dimension
<b>Ritzer</b>	<b>2001</b>	McDonaldization	Sneakerization
<b>Tether et al.</b>	<b>2001</b>	Economy of scale	Economy of scope
<b>Sundbo</b>	<b>2002</b>	Economics of productibility	Economics of expectations
<b>van Looy et al.</b>	<b>2003</b>	Execution	Diagnosis
<b>Cloninger, Swaidan</b>	<b>2007</b>	Homogeneous	Heterogeneous
<b>Veres</b>	<b>2009</b>	Undifferentiated market influence	Adaptation, one-to-one marketing
<b>Kotler</b>	<b>2010</b>	Productivity	Differentiation
<b>Heppel</b>	<b>2010</b>	Systemise!	Personalise!
<b>Nordin et al.</b>	<b>2011</b>	Transferability across markets	Specific benefits for individual end-users
<b>Johnston et al.</b>	<b>2012</b>	Inside-out	Outside in
<b>Johnston et al.</b>	<b>2012</b>	Commodity	Capability

Table 4 The different phrasing of standardisation and customisation

## **2.2.2 Definitions, advantages and disadvantages of standardisation and customisation**

This subchapter presents the different perspectives of standardisation and customisation using the ideas of the authors mentioned in Table 4. The approaches are going to be interpreted according to this thesis' perspective and the ideas are going to be debated.

### **2.2.2.1 The definition and synonyms of standardisation and customisation**

This part of the thesis is going to discuss the basic definitions of standardisation and customisation and some of their synonyms which were introduced in Table 4.

Standardisation is the situation where the service product is the same every time (like a McDonald's hamburger). Customisation means that the single customer receives individual service. Customisation is the situation where the service product is created in the concrete situation as an individual solution to the customer's specific problem ('tailor made', as when a carpenter comes to your house to repair the windows) (Sundbo, 2002). Bettencourt and Gwinner (1996) says that service offering adaptation refers to tailoring or creating a unique bundle of service attributes or benefits based on an individual consumer's needs. According to Sundbo (2002) standardisation is a mean of decreasing costs, thus increasing productivity and lowering prices. Standardisation can be explained in terms of classic economic logic, which may be characterised as an economy of productivity. Within this logic, only prices and quantities exist and consumers are supposed to assess the quality of a product and compare the price of it with the price of similar products. Individual customer care is useless because the customers themselves have the knowledge to classify the product (whether service or good) according to type and quality, and when they have done so, only price counts (Sundbo, 1994).

Standardisation implies high production volumes and relatively distant relations with the customer (since little information is required from the consumer to specify the product).

It is likely that standardised services tend to arise in price sensitive markets where there are economies of scale, and where production is routine, with high costs of adaptation, and which involve standard or inflexible technologies and a relatively low cost labour force (which is likely to be a labour force with a relatively low level of educational attainment) (Tether et al, 2001).

Customisation takes place within another economic logic, namely, the service management and marketing logic, which has created a special logic for service production. This logic is based on the axiom that a service product cannot be stored and therefore it must be consumed

in the moment of production and the consumer must be a co-producer. This tradition has emphasised the solving of the single customer's individual problem, and thus customisation. Whether this is a real individual service as produced by a tradesman or servant, or it is just an individualisation of a smaller detail of a standard service, is a little difficult to say. The customisation tendency is thus driven by this logic of service marketing, which economically is the logic of old-fashioned servants. This was not rational productivity logic, but a logic of luxury – servants did not produce much that was useful, but they were nice to have and the nobleman could afford this luxury. Contemporary western economies can be seen as luxury economies; there are large surpluses over what is needed just to survive. Therefore, buyers of services can afford, and will look for, quality and the kind of service over price (Sundbo, 1994). Customised services are more ambiguous. Their provision will depend on, amongst other things, economies of scope and the costs associated with customisation (and the existence and use of flexible technologies to reduce these), as well as the extent to which customers are prepared to pay (or can be persuaded to pay) different amounts for different variants. This permits discriminatory pricing. Consequently, when there are significant economies of scope, the cost of customisation is low and where customers are prepared to pay different amounts for the similar service variants, customised services will in general be provided. (Tether et al., 2001)

Kimes and Mustkoski (1991) analysed the customer contact in restaurants. In their study they distinguished two roles which exist in restaurant: one is the procedural dimension which can fit standardisation because its most important aim is efficiency and efficient service delivery. The other one is the conviviality dimension which - just like customisation - provides the extra value; make sure that the customer is comfortable and satisfied.

According to Normann (1991) there is a positive and a negative circle a company can find itself in. The positive circle suggests that when the turnover falls a service firm should improve employee care and through that, customer care, to increase the perceived service quality for the customer. The negative circle means that if the turnover falls the company starts cutting costs. The first one is closer to customisation because it makes more focus on customer care. The second one and standardisation were matched only because one of the most important aim of standardisation is cutting costs, but it not the only one as it could be seen in Sundbo's theory. As it is going to be suggested in the following research these two has to be mixed and both points should be paid attention.

Grönroos (2000) as one of the most important authors in service marketing and especially service quality has a quality model with two types of quality; one is technical quality, which is the quality of the core service delivered; another is the functional quality, which is the customer's perception of how the service is delivered (including extras, or peripheral services). This approach had a great impact on the development of theories and practical management in the late 1980s and early 90s. The technical quality of the outcome is what the customer is left with, when the service process and its buyer-seller interactions are over. This dimension can be measured relatively and objectively by customers, because of its characteristic as a technical solution to a problem. However, there are a lot of interactions between the service provider and the customer, including various series of moments of truth, the technical quality dimension will not count for the total quality which the customer perceives they have received. The customer will obviously also be influenced by the way in which the technical quality is transferred to him. So the customer is also influenced by how he receives the service and how he experiences the simultaneous production and consumption process. This is called the functional quality of the process. The functional process cannot be evaluated as objectively as the technical dimension, frequently it is perceived very subjectively (Grönroos, 2000). Because of the measurement and the objectivity technical quality was defined as standardisation and functional quality as customisation because of the interaction with the guests. Although it is important to mention that in the hotel industry, standards are widely used in guest interactions as well.

As Sasser *et al.* (1978) observe the mass-production firm has been understood as mainly serving private customers covering the category of consumers service above. But no exact identity between the two categories exists since business firms also buy mass services. The second type produces services which demand highly qualified personnel, typically professionals. The services are often complex answers to complicated needs, and the service is individual, formulated to satisfy the individual customer by solving his actual problem. Sasser *et al.* (1978) describe the organization in the professional type as loosely coupled, the production process as unsystematic, and management as a communicative and motivating management. The terms Sasser used are a complete match with standardisation and customisation.

Cloninger and Swaidan (2007) defined two concepts, which are similar to standardisation and customisation. Heterogeneity is conceptualized, and tested, as a continuum on which a firm's output, whether a service, a good, or more commonly, a combination of service and good, can

be ranked from highly homogeneous (standardized with very little adaptation or heterogeneity) to highly heterogeneous (partially or totally customized).

McDonaldization, first used by Ritzer (1997), can be a synonym for standardisation since these two terms both have the same meaning and principles. Although McDonalds was not the first company to standardise its products and processes, in case of services and the food industry it made the concept known and popular. The principles of McDonaldization are low price (due to low costs), low quality, fast service delivery and predictability all over the world. Ritzer (2001) states that sneakerization is the opposite of McDonaldization because it focuses on different perspectives of the production or service delivery process. Sneakerization does not believe that there is only one or few styles of sneakers, it concentrates more on hundreds of different styles which are produced for niche markets, which contains only few people who have special needs in sneakers or other kind of products or services. Weaver (2005) criticised Ritzer's theory stating that the theory itself is valid although there are some important questions missing such as the customers' experience and the employee satisfaction in a highly standardised environment.

Kotler and Armstrong (2010) saw differentiation as an opportunity, a breaking point, which leads the company out from the price competition. Today in the Hungarian hotel industry the prices are low and there is a very strong competition in the business (more information about the topic can be found in Chapter 2.5).

Achieving better productivity is another reachable situation for companies. They are able to do that in many ways, one of them is standardisation or industrialization of some parts of services (Kotler, Armstrong, 2010).

It is generally accepted that businesses would prefer to maximize the benefits from standardisation through globalisation, but that this desire is stymied by the need to develop products or services that will suit the foreign market (van Mesdag, 1999). Standardisation/customisation theories are commonly used in international perspectives. Schmid and Kotulla (2010) aimed to find the necessary factors determining the success of international standardisation and adaptation. Samiee et al. (2003) also considered international standardisation focusing on advertising. They stated that the standardisation of advertising is only possible when the two countries have a lot of similarities. The other criterion was the size of the company, they explained that bigger subsidiaries of multinational companies tend to standardise their advertising activities. Quester and Conduit (1996) also researched

multinational companies attempting to find any evidence of the positive relationship between standardisation and centralisation which was suggested in the literature. They actually found the opposite of that statement which has to make multinational companies' managers think about their strategies in the future.

According to Gilpin and Kalafatis (1995) argued using examples from the UK leisure industry that services can successfully be standardised if the company's positioning strategy is clear. They stated that standardisation in leisure firms helps assuring consistent quality and cost effectiveness at the same time.

Zeithaml and Bitner (1996) found out the methodology of Gaps where gap 2 considers standardisation as a key element. They want to analyse if the company understand the expectation of customers and worked out standards according to them. The authors state that many managers do not think that services can be standardised because they are intangible and hard to measure although there are a large number of routine tasks which are used in the service companies even in case of highly customised services. Routine exercises can be easily standardised and with this method made more effective (Zeithaml and Bitner,1996). They determined three forms of service standardisation: technological aspect, work method improvement and combination of the above mentioned two forms. The technological aspect is useful when the company want to substitute human involvement with a technology for example computerised check in, the work method improvement standardise the routine tasks of a service employee. This thesis focuses on the second form when the interactions and the routine tasks in a hotel are standardised. The author of this thesis accepts Zeithaml and Bitner's (1996) statement and opinion about standards, which are necessary and do not mean that the interaction with the customer is happening in a mechanical way. However this research does not contain the examination of the elaboration of the hotel process standards, it is important to add that these standards have to be established according to customer expectations. Two types of standards can be identified: Hard customer-defined standards and soft customer-defined standards. Hard customer-defined standards are easier to measure, control and audit from time to time. These type of standards operate in connection with the response time of the employee, the waiting time before service and the punctual delivery as well. It contains the flawless service delivery as well which means that Crosby's (1996) zero defect strategy is a key to the hard standards. Soft customer-defined standards are harder to measure since they depend on the opinion of the employee. The only way to use this very useful information is to talk to the front line staff.

Moore et al. (2010) supports the idea that companies have to find the right balance between standardisation and customisation (standardisation/adaptation) in their international marketing activities. Michell et al. (1998) dealt with this topic as well examining the standardisation of the marketing mix in different countries in case of standardising and adapting firms. They could not find any evidence that the marketing mix of an industrial product is more standardised than a consumer product. Although they found out the price and distribution policy of the marketing mix is more adapted than the advertising one.

#### **2.2.2.2 The advantages and disadvantages of standardisation and customisation**

The following subchapter aims to summarise the advantages of standardisation and customisation which needs to be concentrated on besides paying attention to the disadvantages at the same time.

<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Standardisation</b>	<b>Customisation</b>
<b>Customer satisfaction</b>	Expectations	Individual needs
<b>Quality assurance</b>	Zero failure	Perceived quality
<b>More profit</b>	Cost reduction	Higher prices
<b>Innovation</b>	Systemised	Customer-near

Table 5 Common advantages of standardisation and customisation (based on Sundbo, 1994)

As Table 5 shows standardisation and customisation have common advantages, which can be reached with the help of the two strategies although the tools can be different.

Customer satisfaction is considered to be an important goal in case of services (which is proved by the amount of articles related to customer satisfaction only recently: Shi et al, 2014, Rashid et al, 2014, Chopra, 2014, Terpstra and Verbeeten, 2014, Chow, 2014) as it can be seen in Chapter 2.3). This can be achieved by both concepts: standardisation can provide the product or service that they expect to get (Sundbo, 1994). At the same time customisation will make the company able to satisfy the individual needs.

Assuring quality is essential for service companies (Dimitriadis et al, 2014, Youngdahl and Kellogg, 1997, Chrysochou et al., 2012) and hotels as well (Nasution and Mavondo, 2008). Standardisation ensures quality through the zero failure strategy (Sundbo, 1994) developed by Crosby (1996). Standards make sure that the processes are regulated and if they are kept, no

mistakes can happen. In leisure firms especially, standardisation is able to help assuring consistant quality (Gilpin and Kalafatis, 1995). On the other hand customisation represents the customer side of quality and connects it to customer satisfaction emphasising the perception of the guests which is helped by the special treatment for each customers (Sundbo, 1994).

Both concepts are able to support the goal of the companies to earn profit and be successful. Standardisation can reduce costs (Sundbo, 1994) through controlling the processes and provide the same service to the guests. Gilpin and Kalafatis (1995) state that standardisation can assure cost effectiveness as well as providing consistent quality. Customisation however is able to increase the price of the product or service (Sundbo, 1994) since customers are willing to pay more for special treatments and outcomes (Sedmak and Mihalic, 2008). Sundbo (1994) also adds that with the help of customisation it is easy to expand the sold man-hours, because the task is rarely defined and the customer could always be served better.

The last common advantage is innovation which can be supported by standardisation and customisation as well. Innovation is needed in a service company according to Kotler and Armstrong who state that innovation in the service delivery has to concentrate on the ideal delivery process and the best people working there (Kotler and Armstrong, 2010). It has already been proved that innovation and standardisation do not exclude each other (Kondo, 2000), in a standardised company innovation is systematised (Sundbo, 1994), that is how the continuous improvement can be assured. Although it is a good method in a short run, it can cause problems related to the innovation potential later (Kotler and Armstrong, 2010). Innovation and standardisation and their connection appear in Williams and Shaw's (2011) article as well and they are both necessary for the successful internationalisation of a company. With customisation innovation can be customer-near, which means that new ideas come from the customers and that is a guarantee for success (Sundbo, 1994).

<b>Author</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Advantage of standardisation</b>
<b>Kimes and Mutkoski</b>	1991	Efficiency, efficient service delivery
<b>Sundbo</b>	1994	Increased productivity
<b>Ritzer</b>	2004	Efficiency, calculability, predictability, control through nonhuman technology
<b>Heppel</b>	2010	Fast, predictable, perfect service

Table 6 Other advantages of standardisation according to different authors



Table 6 shows other special advantages of applying standardisation in service firms.

Kimes and Mutkosky (1991) identified two important aims of standardisation when they analysed restaurant customer contacts: efficiency and efficient service delivery. They explained that these goals can be reached by standardisation or procedural dimension as it was previously explained. Efficiency is mentioned by Ritzer (2004) as well when he phrased the dimensions of the term McDonaldisation. This advantage is listed with others: calculability, predictability and control through nonhuman technology. Predictability which actually is the customer expectation is stated by Heppel (2010) as well who determined the advantages of standardisation as being able to provide a fast, predictable and perfect service for the customer which according to him are the most important issues in order to deliver high quality service. The last important advantage is productivity increase which has good possibility in a service firm if they are using standardisation (Sundbo, 1994). Bateson (1985) also mentions productivity as one of the most important goals of companies and adds that these firms have to consider the self-service option as well. Standardisation is essential for introducing and applying self-service in a hotel. Self-service can be implemented by using IT (Oh et al., 2013) which helps the following advantages of standardisation: effectiveness, higher productivity and customer satisfaction (Chathoth, 2006).

Although in case of standardisation some decisions occur that should be considered. With applying standardisation the organisation becomes a more rigid hierarchy (Sasser et al, 1978) which is not always the best solution in hotels mostly because the management style in that case is not consultative which would be more needed (Deery and Jago, 2001; Kara et al, 2013). That is the reason why Heppel (2010) suggests that only the routine processes can be standardised to reach the above mentioned advantages. Zeithaml and Bitner (1996) agree with him and add that those companies that are successful in their performance and known for high quality level are likely to establish operations standards to help their employees and guide them through their service providing activities (Zeithaml et al 2009). In my opinion Irons' (1997a) 'tending the orchard' theory is the answer to the debate and it could be used in hotels. He says that the aim is to get rid of strict and mechanistic standards and concentrate on the framework of the service company; and formulate a framework which reflects on customers' needs and founded on values and unambiguity. Kakavelakis (2010) agrees with this thinking since he also denies that standardisation needs to relate to a tight, bureaucratic control system and he states that using standardisation can help emphasise family as well which makes it suitable for small, family hotels.

Since customisation is variable, intangible and not easy to phrase either, Table 7 contains the advantages and at the same time the disadvantages of applying customisation.

<b>Advantages of customisation</b>	<b>Disadvantage of customisation</b>
Higher prices	More costs
Special needs	Only a few people
Added value	Higher operational risk
Less strategic and financial risk	

Table 7 The advantages and disadvantages of customisation

The customer is willing to pay more for the service if it provides something more for them Sedmak and Mihalic (2008). They analysed the authenticity of seaside resort and found if the authenticity is harmed the number of tourists decrease and those tourist interested in culture and nature could pay more for services although authenticity is equally important for all income segments. Although Heskett (1986) agrees with this statement he highlights the role of costs in using customisation. He also adds that customisation only costs a little and it is worth fitting to the customer needs and expectation. Other researchers like Nordin et al. (2011) mention the risk of high costs mostly because of the alteration of the characteristics from time to time. There is no argument in customisation being able to satisfy special customer needs and create added value to the customer with finding the exceptions and dealing with them differently (Heppel, 2010), although it is essential to add that only a few people are going to be interested in the special service (Ritzer, 2001). These thoughts suggest that customisation represents higher operational risk but less strategic and financial risk (Nordin et al. (2011).

### **2.2.2.3 Standards**

Service providers need to establish standards to provide satisfaction for guests. Service standards could include the time parameters, the script for a technically correct performance, and prescriptions for appropriate style and demeanour (Lovelock and Wirtz, 2007). Setting standards and using them as management control tools is very important in service and manufacturing firms as well according to Kulvém and Mattson (1994). They show the appropriate ways for employees and help managers measure their performance. Hard and soft standards, both used, but as the size of the company grows, standards are likely to be more formalised. Service quality and productivity are two sides of the same coin (Lovelock, Wirtz,

2007). They cannot focus on only productivity or quality because in this case operation and marketing are separated and there is no long term benefit in that strategy, they have to cooperate (Lovelock, Wright, 2002). Improving productivity means saving time and costs, although in the front stage it can cause large problems in the long run, if there are not enough employees processes are slower and not proper enough (Lovelock et al, 1996).

Quality standards were originally found out and used in manufacturing and production. They focused on the quality and the conformance of the product. Now assuring quality does not only contain operation and production but every other department for example marketing as well. The most important issue nowadays is to measure and control performance which is the reason why processes and procedures have to be standardised to make company managers able to decide and evaluate the success of the company and the employees (Woodruffe, 1995).

According to Blind and Hipp (2003) quality standards are appropriate for 'signalling the quality of products and services'. They state quality standards are highly needed in services because of two factors:

1. Intangibility of services
2. Information asymmetries between management and the service providers

They also explained that in service standardisation it is important to consider that the product almost always consists of processes. In this case if the company processes are standardised, the product is standardised.

Horovitz (2004) states that there should be no more than 50 standards in a company level which results about 1000-2000 lines for bigger and more complex service providers as a theme park. The more experienced the staff, the less standards they need, although for new employees they still function as great help. He called standards 'a safety net' which explains perfectly why they are needed at service companies as much as in manufacturing companies. Horovitz (2004) explained that the most important issues in the case of standards are that they need to be explicit, established by the best employees, everyone in the team needs to know them, they should be used in the induction process, should always have a role in internal communication and they need to be reviewed at least every two years.

Barrett (1994) suggested to companies that they should ask the question: 'Does the standard actually help firms manage the quality of their work effectively?' (Barrett, 1994 p.207). He says if the answer is no or undecided they should research and develop to be able to create important standards for the company and the customers.

According to Schmenner (1995) four types of standards can be identified. The first three are regulated by hotel standards as well and that is why an example was assigned to each.

<b>Type of standards</b>	<b>Definition, examples</b>
<b>Time</b>	Easy to measure, used in certain situations. A hotel example: Reservation confirmation must be delivered via email/fax no later than 24 hours following the reservation.
<b>Productivity</b>	Norm, which has to be ready or served or provided at the end of the day. A hotel example: standards help determining the number of rooms has to be cleaned by a room attendant.
<b>Quality</b>	More subjective, less measurable, the measurement method is audits, reviews. A hotel example: During the entire reservation process the associate must be friendly and spirited.
<b>Cost</b>	The amount of labour costs, inventories.
<b>Demand</b>	The number of customers in a period of time.

Table 8 Type of standards based on Schmenner (1995)

Liston`s (1999) book focused on the quality and standards in case of higher education but since education is one of the most important services, her statements could be applied in hotel businesses as well.

She classified standards into different groups (Table 9):

<b>Type of standards</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Norm-referenced</b>	A group of examiners set the norms or standards
<b>Task-referenced</b>	They are stated according to the objectives.
<b>Criterion-referenced</b>	The performance is playing an important role in this case.

Table 9 Type of standards based on Liston (1999)

Standards can be grouped into four types according to Nesheim (1990) who mainly concentrated on the organisational design and wanted to find the best coordination mechanism for different service firms. The four groups are (Table 10):

<b>Type of standards</b>	<b>Hotel example</b>
<b>Standardisation of work processes or output</b>	Room cleaning process and the number of rooms which needs to be done until the end of the day
<b>Standardisation of work processes</b>	Reservation process
<b>Standardisation of output</b>	The arrangement of the rooms when the guests arrive
<b>Cultural control</b>	The process of welcoming guests on arrival

Table 10 Type of standards based on Nesheim (1990)

In this research the second and the fourth categories are relevant. However, there can be a connection between the standardisation of processes and cultural control - which is the reason why they are not treated separately in this thesis -; cultural control means the standardisation of the norms and values in the company, which should be the base of standardisation of these processes.

Standards such as dress code standards can contribute to the marketing activity of the service firm (Easterling et al., 1992).

There are researchers emphasising that standards are not important anymore for example Bharadwaj et al. (2009) suggested that people (experts and customers in their article) have to choose standardisation or customisation and in this case they preferred customisation. There are other authors stating similar theories: Irons, 1997b, Lampel and Mintzberg, 1996. They sometimes forget that there are operational issues as well which have to be kept in the mind of the managers and that when customers want a clean hotel, they will not know how and by what steps the hotel became clean. They cannot know what kind of very specific standards assure that every room has the same cleanliness, scent and comfort.

#### **2.2.2.4 Customisation**

Gilmore and Pine (1997) state that customisation has four forms according to two factors: customisation of the product and the customisation of representation.

- Adaptive customisation: Low product and low representation customisation. It is a standard product which can be used in different ways by the customers themselves (choice).
- Transparent customisation: High product and low representation customisation. The product is altered according to researched customer needs but they most likely do not know about it only using it this way.
- Cosmetic customisation: Low product and high representation customisation. Only the product representation, for example the packaging, is changed according to the customers' need.
- Collaborative customisation: High product and representation customisation. Both factors are adjusted to customer needs with customer participation.

Although these are distinct categories, Gilmore and Pine (1997) think that companies can use more of them at the same time to find the fit with the customer and create a unique added value for them.

Reisinger and Steiner (2005) argue very strongly that authenticity (as a factor or synonym of customisation) is not relevant. Since different authors do not have a common ground in the topic, objective authenticity, cannot be a starting point for further research.

Jin et al. (2011) identified two categories of customisation analysing the product customisation in travel agencies: upgrading and downgrading. They determine that customisation influences loyalty and most customers choose upgrading because it starts with an economy package and continuously gets closer to the luxury package and they can stop in any phase they want to. It proves the price orientation of the customers. Additive and subtractive customisation (Park et al. 2000, Wang et al. 2013 ) or building up, scaling down processes (Levin et al, 2002) mean the same classification only using different names and they are not only applied for the travel agency industry. However, Levin's, 2002 results show that in case of pizza topping customers prefer the scaling down process which provides more revenue for the company as well.

Wang (1999) suggest the use of authenticity but the concept can explain a wider range of tourism than as it was defined before.

McCutcheon et al. (1994) states that customers need responsiveness and customisation. They define responsiveness as the speed of service delivery which is the reason why it became related to standardisation and customisation that makes the service delivery slower. They think that these concepts will exist at the same time at firms (they mostly analysed manufacturing companies) and managers need to prepare for that. This squeeze that they suggested was addressed by Trentin et al. (2011) in the computer industry by using product configurations.

According to Nordin et al. (2011) companies have to find the perfect balance between standardisation and customisation with their words 'transferability across markets and specific benefits for individual end-users' (Nordin et al., 2011 p.392). As a disadvantage of customisation they mentioned the risk of high costs mostly because of the alteration of the characteristics from time to time. They also analyse bundling as a good solution for mixing the advantages of standardisation and customisation. Their findings show that customisation represents higher operational risk but less strategic and financial risk, which illustrates how much customisation is needed and cannot be ignored in the long run.

As Huffman and Kahn (1998) suggested it can be a disadvantage for the company if it is too customised and there are too many choices customers have to consider. In this case they need attributes fitting their needs instead of all the options.

Bettencourt and Gwinner (1996) emphasised the role of frontline employees in customisation and highlighted the connection between customer satisfaction and customisation which was mentioned earlier by Solomon et al. (1995) and Thompson (1989).

The front line staff of hotels have to be mentioned in connection with empowerment as well. The level of customisation has a relationship with the level of empowerment (Lashley, 1998, Ueno, 2008) which makes it impossible not to mention this concept as well although it is not the exact topic of this thesis. Conger and Kanungo (1988) state that empowerment sometimes equals delegation in science and practice but the essence of the concept is to enable rather than delegate. It means that employees are enabled or authorised to decide in case of solving guest problems without having to ask for permission (Ro and Chen, 2011). According to the definition, it is easy to see that customisation cannot happen without empowerment. Of course the employees have to feel empowered not only know about it (Ro and Chen, 2011) and this is influenced by several factors for example the education of the employee (Jones and Davies,

1991), the nationality of the manager (Littrell, 2007), customer orientation of the employees (Ro and Chen, 2011).

### **2.2.3 ‘Mixing’ standardisation and customisation**

This subchapter presents the theories which may handle standardisation and customisation as independent ideas but they identified more categories mixing the two concepts.

Heskett (1986) realised that in the market (he used insurance as example) they started to use standardisation and customisation as well; if the customer wanted it they altered the service a little. He stated that customisation only costs a little and it is worth fitting the customer needs and expectation.

Liu et al. (2008) delivered an integrative service model, which puts processes and standardisation and customisation into a framework. This model emphasises the need of co-creation and the role of customer feedback in all the company processes and different places. Standardisation and customisation can be found in the process box and takes place in the middle of the model.

Kondo (2000) proved that standardisation and innovation do not exclude each other. He dealt with work standards and he stated that both standardisation and creativity is needed for employees to be able to work well and effectively. He mentions Herzberg’s theory of the two motivation factors: diminishing dissatisfiers and providing satisfiers, which is very close to the theory used by the author of this thesis. The same philosophy is used as a base by Mount and Mattila (2009) who researched the topic of reliability and recovery and their relationship with customer satisfaction and return intent. In their article reliability – establishing the basis of hotel operation - can fit this thesis’ standardisation and recovery – since it means a creative problem solving – means customisation. In their research it is obvious that the customers are satisfied and intend to go back to the hotel if these two values are high.

The idea of industrialisation can be transferred to the service sector but the techniques have to be altered to fit the different characteristics (Kurtz, Clow, 1998). The authors state that there are three operational positions where services can be classified into: cost efficiency, customisation and service quality. In this typology, cost efficiency means that the company wants to emphasise standardisation and its goal is to reduce the capital investments, labour and operation costs. Service quality means the superior level of service quality. Customisation on the other hand means that the design of the operation meets the individual customer’s



needs (Kurtz and Clow, 1998). This theory handles service quality as an independent dimension from customisation and standardisation and it does not consider many other factors which are parts of service quality as well. The operational point of view is very useful for this research although it deals with quality in a too simple way not considering the real meaning of service quality.

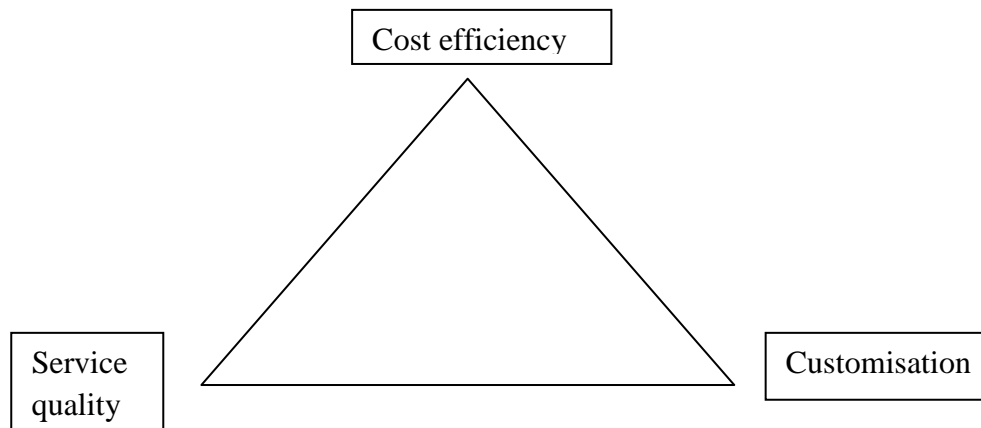


Figure 3 Kurtz and Clow's (1998) theory about standardisation, customisation and service quality

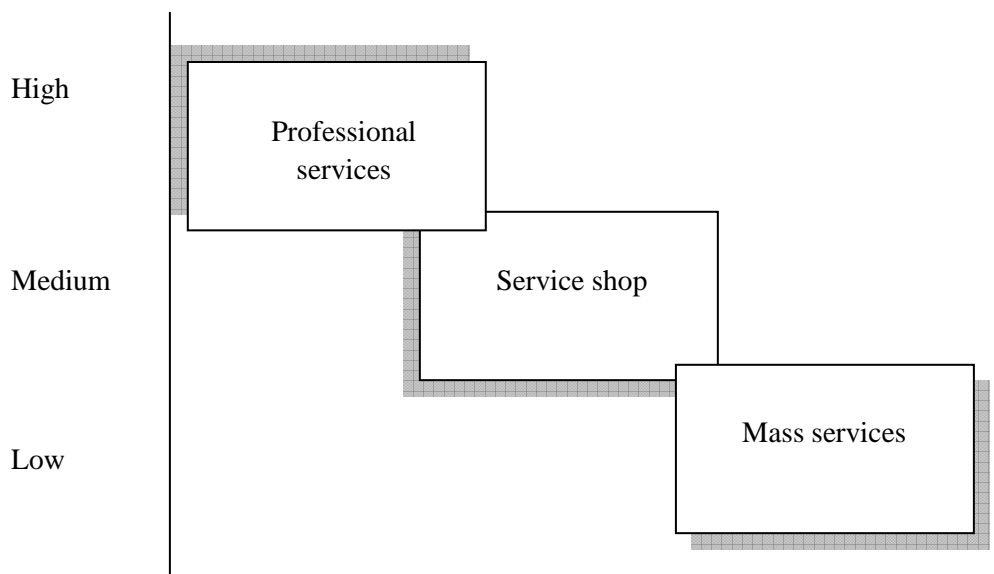


Figure 4 Number of customers processed by a typical unit per day (Silvestro et al, (1997))

Figure 4 shows the three groups Silvestro et al. (1997) classified the different services. The grouping happened based on six factors in the companies: People, Contact time, Customisation, Discretion, Front Office and Process. The theory considers standardisation (mass service) and customisation (professional service) as two different ends of a line or a

curve although it uses another category which mixes the two main concepts. Here it is called service shop and its position is in the middle of the figure showing that it consists the main two's characteristics in a moderate level.

Van Looy et al. (2003) quoted Maister (1996) and used health services as examples for standardised and customised processes. They thought that standardisation and customisation are independent dimensions and one more factor was used in their theory: the degree of client contact. According to these two dimensions (standardisation-customisation and low degree of client contact-high degree of client contact) they determined four categories:

1. Standardised process-low degree of client contact: this is a group identified by others as well, which emphasises the productive, cost efficient and quality assuring characteristics of this group.
2. Customised process-high degree of client contact: this group is mentioned by others as well. For solving complex problems customer involvement is necessary and to fit to customer needs the high contact with clients cannot be avoided.

Although these two groups represent the exact meanings of standardisation and customisation, they established two others.

3. Customised process-low degree of client contact: this category cannot exist in the hotel industry. Customisation of a hotel process cannot happen without the involvement of the customer and their opinion and needs.
4. Standardised process-high degree of client contact: this is the group this research focuses on. This category represents the phenomenon when a standardised process can be customised at the same time to the customers' needs.

Irons (1997b) does not support standards. He believes that in case of service companies standards hinder the customer oriented processes. He however writes about standards which represent threshold values for the customers and the company. If these values are not accomplished or followed, customers are not satisfied, although if these values are achieved, they will not be satisfied they will only be not unsatisfied. This can be the definition for standardisation in this research. On the other hand incremental values give the necessary added value to the customer, which is the exact definition for customisation. In addition these two concepts live together in Irons' (1997a) study and in this research as well.

Lampel and Mintzberg (1996) predicted the end of the standardisation era and the beginning of customisation as a corporate strategy. They applied aggregation which can be connected to

standardisation and individualization to customisation. The authors mostly used examples from manufacturing to support their idea. In aggregation the corporate processes are dealt as one as well as the group of customers; in case of individualization they segmented the consumers into groups and provided products and services for them differently. However, they emphasised other possibilities which mix the two extremes together and enhance the advantages. They determined five strategies:

1. Pure standardisation: In this case there is no choice between different types of products, the customers belong to one group and they all need the same product or service, although they are not able to give any feedback to the firm.
2. Segmented standardisation: However, the product is still standardised there are some variables possible for different customer groups even if they do not have any influence on the product itself.
3. Customised standardisation: This strategy provides customers the choice to assemble their own products from standardised elements. This opportunity makes it possible for customers to express their needs to the company.
4. Tailored customisation: The customers' feedback is the beginning of the process in this strategy. A prototype product is manufactured and altered to the customers' needs.
5. Pure customisation: This strategy means that customers and producers are partners and every process starts by considering the needs of the consumers and ends with it.

Although it is obvious that Lampel and Mintzberg (1996) considered only product standardisation and customisation, they stated different applications of the two strategies mixed together, which is the most important part in this thesis' point of view.

Standardisation and customisation can happen at the same time of service firms. According to Palmer and Cole (1995) there are companies where it is easier and more common to make quality control checks which allow assuring high level service. But in the service sector there is a big focus on customisation as well since in this sector the customer is usually part of the production process. The authors said that these two 'dimensions of variability' are interrelated (Palmer, Cole, 1995). However they have not gone into details in case of the examples they used for the different sections but they put hotel services into the box where standardisation and customisation are both high. It suggests that the operation of the hotel companies can be standardised and customised at the same time. On the other hand the university lecture is not on its right place according to the current author's theory. A university lecture according to its

content can be standardised in the topics which are discussed but can be customised as well in the style and behaviour of the lecturer. It should be in the middle of the figure.

This research supports the idea of process orientation, which explains the application of standardisation and customisation at the same time. Process-orientation according to Karlöf and Lövingsson (2005) focuses on the customer and the effectiveness of the service delivery as much as possible. In this definition the customer satisfaction and the effectiveness of the process is linked and both of them have to be improved.

Johns (1993) stated that hotels aim ergonomic efficiency for employees to make their work easier and more efficient which will mean less cost at the same time. Mixing the appropriate design which is desirable for the target segment and productivity mean the application of standardisation and customisation.

More researchers tried to find a solution to utilise the advantages of both. One solution is modularity introduced by Davis (1989) and applied by Sundbo (2002) for services. Modularity is a technique when the parts are standardised but the outcome is customised by the customer or guest themselves since they decide which elements they would like to use to actually produce the final product (Davis, 1989). The essence of modularity can be explained with the following sentence: 'Every buy is customized, every sale is standardized.' (Davis, 1989 p.18). Modularity is a very commonly used concept in theory and practice as well to mix the advantages of standardisation and customisation. However, according to Bask et al. (2010) the service applications are limited.

Frei's (2008) service model can be called a 'mixed category' since it integrates different functions, characteristics of service. He states that the four things which are essential to be taken care of are the offering, funding mechanism, employee management system and the customer management system (Frei, 2008). All of these topics are detailed in this thesis because of their contribution to the different topics, mostly standardisation and customisation. In the offering part Frei (2008) mentions the variability of the products and their fit to the customer needs which can refer to customisation. The funding mechanisms are important as much as the offering according to Frei (2008), he emphasises the need to develop those kinds of processes which contributes to operational savings and value-added services (Frei, 2008). The other two factors: employee and customer management systems are mostly cited in connection with quality and make it able for companies to assure quality and fit customer needs with controlling costs at the same time.

The other possibility is elaborated by Lehrer and Behman (2009) as programmability. This concept ‘reconciles standardization and adaptation by incorporating into products the ability to adapt to a multiplicity of market settings.’ (Lehrer Behman, 2009 p. 282)

<b>Author</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Theory</b>
<b>Heskett</b>	1986	Alteration of the product
<b>Hertzberg</b>	1987	Diminishing dissatisfiers and providing satisfiers
<b>Johns</b>	1993	Mixing the design and productivity
<b>Palmer and Cole</b>	1995	Being able to keep standards: high, being able to customise to the guests’ needs: high
<b>Maister</b>	1996	Customised process-low degree of client contact, standardised process-high degree of client contact
<b>Lampel and Mintzberg</b>	1996	Segmented standardisation, customised standardisation
<b>Silvestro et al.</b>	1997	Service shop
<b>Irons</b>	1997	Threshold values, incremental values
<b>Kondo</b>	2000	Standardisation and creativity in the employees work
<b>Sundbo</b>	2002	Modularity
<b>Frei</b>	2008	Service model
<b>Liu et al.</b>	2008	Standardisation and customisation in the middle
<b>Mount and Mattila</b>	2009	Reliability and recovery
<b>Lehrer and Behman</b>	2009	Programmability

Table 11 Summary of different ‘mix’ models

### 2.2.3.1 Mass customisation

Mass customisation revolutionised the thinking considering standardisation and customisation. This subchapter introduces this concept, strategy and tool since its aim is to mix the advantages of the two concepts and exploit the benefits, which is concentrated on by this thesis. Mass customisation became such an important topic, a subchapter is dedicated for the discussion.

According to the relevant literatures Kovács (2007) classifies the outcomes of production and service as Figure 5 shows. He emphasizes the importance of flexibility in the case of customised mass products.

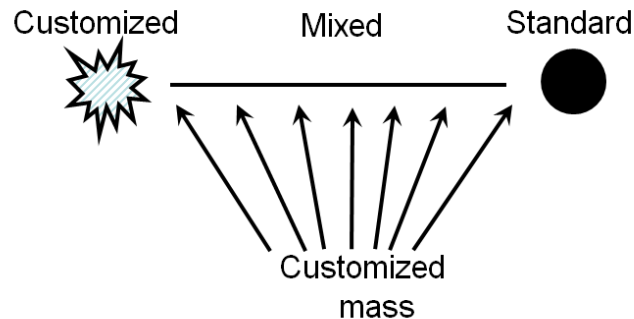


Figure 5 The appearance of customisation and standardisation (Kovács, 2007)

Mass customisation once was seen as an oxymoron (Radder and Louw, 1999, Duray, 2002) but Davis (1989) showed that it is not impossible to mix the two and change the direction of company strategies and planning systems. Fogliatto et al. (2012) define mass customisation as ‘a production strategy focused on the broad provision of personalized products and services mostly through modularized product/service design, flexible processes, and integration between supply chain members’ (p. 15).

Flexibility is a crucial factor in mass customisation (Hart, 1995, Radder and Louw, 1999, Kovács, 2007) which can be reached by advanced technology, mostly with computerised systems (Davis, 1989, Hart, 1995). Flexibility appears to be essential in Pine et al. (1993) as well. They also emphasise that besides flexibility quick responsiveness is needed in a highly changeable environment where the outcome has to be altered to fit customer needs (Pine et al., 1993). In the case of how to apply mass customisation he suggests that the commodity should be standardised but the service which surrounds it should be customised (Davis, 1989).

Hart (1995) defined mass customisation in two different ways. One of them is a more theoretical concept: ‘the ability to provide your customers with anything they want profitably, any time they want it, anywhere they want it, any way they want it.’ (p.1) The other definition is more achievable: ‘the use of flexible processes and organizational structures to produce varied and often individually customized products and services at the low cost of a standardized, mass production system.’ (p. 1) He says that mass customisation is for enlightened companies who almost always have a quality system.

<b>Point of customer involvement</b>	<b>Modularity type</b>			
	<b>Design</b>	<b>Fabrication</b>	<b>Assembly</b>	<b>Use</b>
<b>Design</b>	Fabricators		Involvers	
<b>Fabrication</b>				
<b>Assembly</b>	Modularizers		Assemblers	
<b>Use</b>				

Table 12 Type of mass customisers by Duray (2002)

Companies do not use mass customisation the same way. Duray (2002) defined different types of mass customisers (Table 12) according to two perspectives: the point of customer involvement and the type of modularity which is needed for mass customisation according to her. This classification fabricators and involvers represent a higher level of customisation since they involve customers in early stages and provide them choices as well. Modularizers and assemblers are more significant in manufacturing because they provide solutions (standard modules to choose from) for customers but they are only involved in later phases Duray (2002). Although this model was meant for use in manufacturing firms, I think the different attitudes can be applied to service providers as well.

#### 2.2.4 Conclusion

Summarising the two concepts is not an easy task considering the different phrasing and wording of the authors listed in Table 4 and presented in the whole chapter. Although there are common characteristics of both which are mentioned or understood by almost everybody.

In the case of standardisation the understanding of the concept is much more similar than in the case of customisation. Standardisation is a way of unifying the processes or the outcome or both (however, it is essential to mention that the thesis only deals with the standardisation of processes) which aims the assurance of quality, the reduction of costs and the increase of productivity. Customisation is harder to define but every author agreed that the role of the customer and their needs are significant in explaining the concept. In customisation flexibility is very important that is the reason why it is often called adaptation (to the circumstances or different needs).

The subchapter presented those ideas that strictly consider the two concepts as independent variables and those perspectives, which are already able to ‘mix’ the two and create new

categories, from these one of the most important is mass customisation. Table X contains the results of this category and this author's opinion and argument in connection with each.

This thesis is committed to a mixing approach and aims to prove the connection between the two concepts and the significant of the application of them at the same time at the same company, in this research: Hungarian hotels.



<b>Author</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
<b>Hertzberg</b>	1987	Diminishing dissatisfiers and providing satisfiers	This author agrees with Hertzberg's theory and aims to use this thinking in the research.
<b>Heskett</b>	1986	Alteration of the product	Changing the product is limited and it is true for manufacturing. In services processes should be considered and they should not be changed but a value should be added.
<b>Johns</b>	1993	Mixing the design and productivity	This theory only considers the design but there are other opportunities to customise although it is a good start.
<b>Palmer and Cole</b>	1995	Being able to keep standards: high, being able to customise to the guests' needs: high	Hotels are in the right place although it suggests that it is sometimes impossible to keep standards or customise the service which this author disagrees with.
<b>Maister</b>	1996	Customised process-low degree of client contact, standardised process-high degree of client contact	The second mixed category explains the theory of this thesis as well but the first one is impossible to deliver in a hotel.
<b>Lampel and Mintzberg</b>	1996	Segmented standardisation, customised standardisation	This theory is a good mixture although it refers to manufacturing more and only concentrates on the outcome (product) instead of the delivery.

<b>Silvestro et al.</b>	1997	Service shop	This concept contains standardisation and customisation as well but only in a moderate level. It cannot image both standardisation and customisation in a high level.
<b>Irons</b>	1997	Threshold values, incremental values	The author agrees with the classification but disagrees with the other statements of Irons when he explains that standardisation is not important any more.
<b>Kondo</b>	2000	Standardisation and creativity in the employees work	Making it possible for employees to be creative in their work is welcomed by this author although the standards should be kept.
<b>Davis Sundbo</b>	1989 2002	Modularity	The elements are highly standardised they cannot be changed, only their order is possible to alter by the customer.
<b>Frei</b>	2008	Service model	Very close to the author's point of view, although it uses four characteristics but they are all I connection with standardisation and customisation.
<b>Liu et al.</b>	2008	Standardisation and customisation in the middle	The two concepts are dealt with as processes although the relationship is not entirely clear.

<b>Mount and Mattila</b>	2009	Reliability and recovery	These two concepts are very close to this thesis', the problem is that recovery only concentrates on problem solving not giving added value.
<b>Lehrer and Behman</b>	2009	Programmability	Mostly true for products since they produce those kind of outcomes which themselves can adapt to different circumstances. It does not concern the delivery process.
<b>Davis</b>	1989	Mass customisation	Flexibility and technology are both essential in nowadays hotels, they can make the processes quicker although not every hotel and hotel guest is fond of technology. It is very good to have choices although they are limited and creativity cannot work that well.

Table 13 Summary and the argument of mixed categories

## 2.3 Developing the model

The previous section introduced the theories of standardisation and customisation and the critic of the different ideas are mentioned. Continuing this way of thinking this subchapter introduces the author's opinion how these two concepts actually work. The first section describes the traditional model of standardisation and customisation using the theories of Teboul. The next subchapter presents the theory this thesis is based on and is being researched.

### 2.3.1 The traditional model

The generally accepted approach of service standardisation and customisation (as it was described earlier in Chapter 2.2) can be presented using Teboul's work (Teboul, 2005). Traditionally standardisation and customisation are the extreme points of a continuum where they share the characteristics of processes and outcomes.

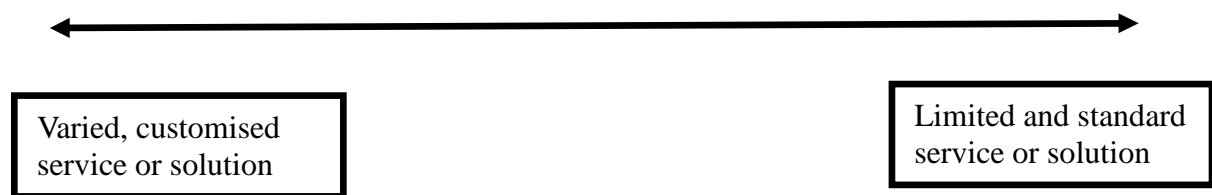


Figure 6 Standardisation and customisation continuum (Teboul, 2005)

According to Teboul, standardisation and customisation are the two ends of a continuum (Figure 6), which means that the service provider has to choose between standardisation and customisation; they cannot use both on the same level. It suggests that firms – their leaders, general managers - have to decide whether they commit themselves to standardisation or to customisation.

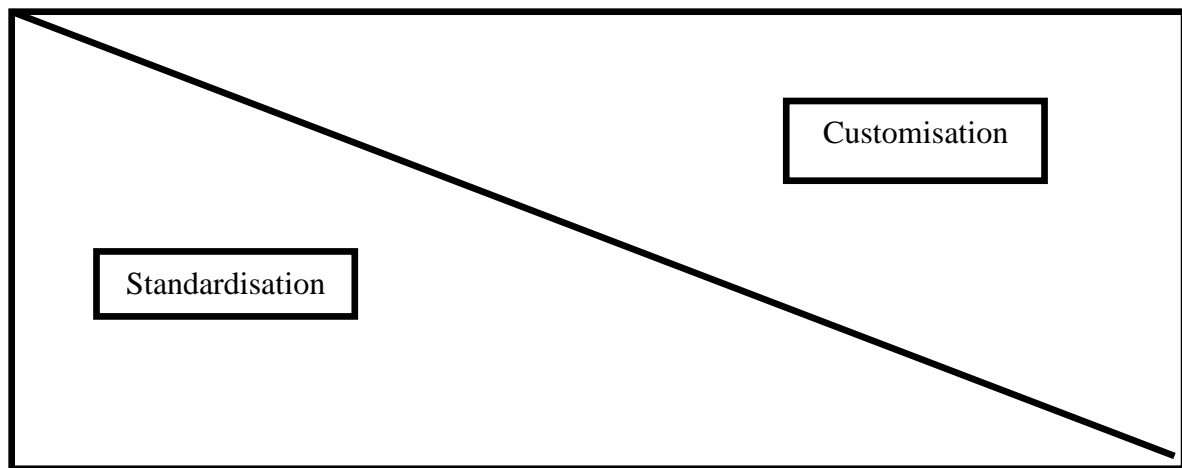


Figure 7 Standardisation and customisation illustrated another way

This figure (Figure 7) demonstrates that these two concepts are mutually exclusive, which means that standardisation and customisation are the opposite of each other; they cannot exist at the same time in case of a process.

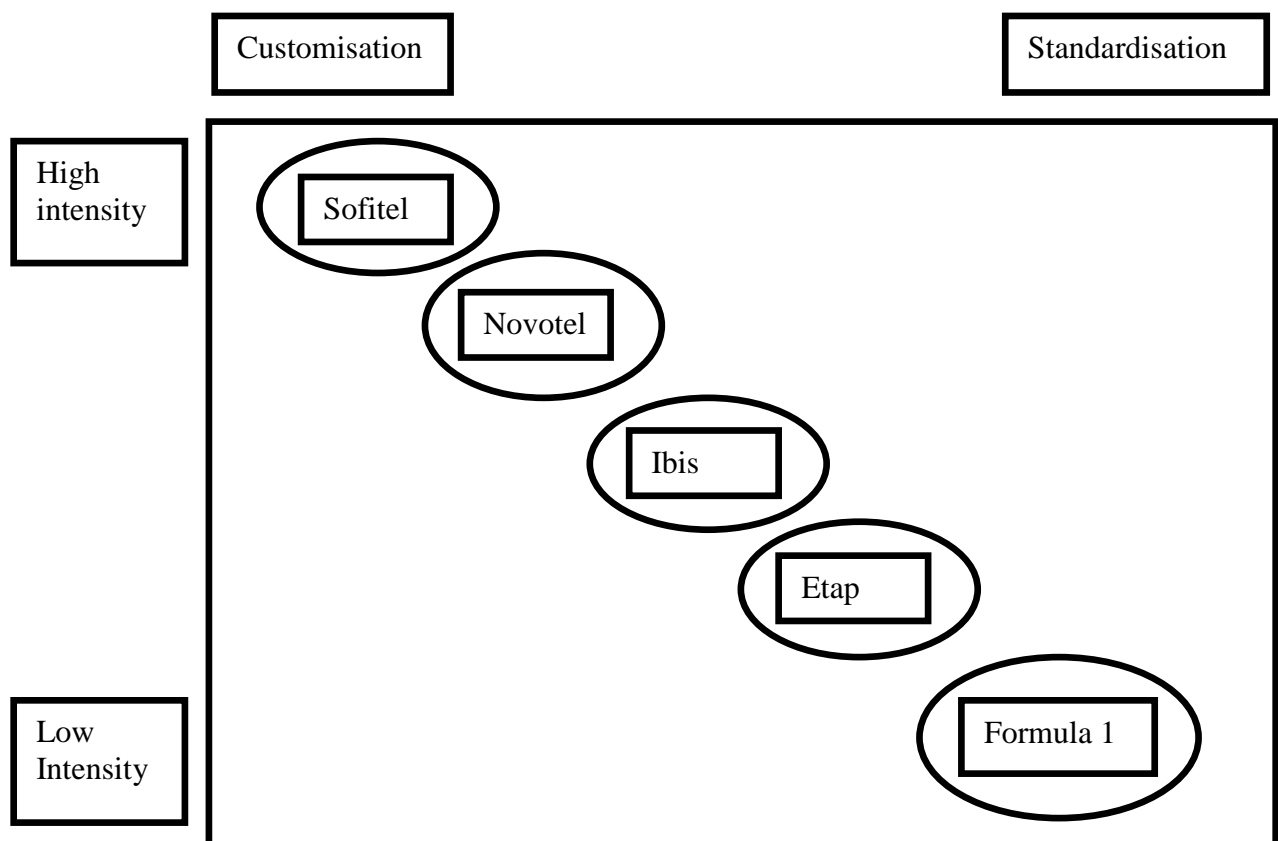


Figure 8 Service intensity matrix using the example of Accor (Teboul, 2005)

Figure 8 shows how to position a hotel company's hotel chains into a matrix. The author uses Accor hotels as an example which is the 6<sup>th</sup> biggest hotel group in the world with about 3500

establishments (<http://www.hotelnewsresource.com/article70429.html> 13/1/2013). In the model the horizontal continuum represents the above mentioned standardisation/customisation theory; the vertical one shows the intensity of interaction in these hotel chains. It says that Sofitel is wholly customised and there is no standardisation in case of this hotel chain. At the bottom of the matrix Formula 1 hotels are fully standardised, there is no place for customisation in their cases.

### **2.3.2 The new theory**

According to the approach proposed here, customisation and standardisation are not independent and not opposites. Hotels do not have to always choose between standardisation and customisation. Also the role of standardisation is not only to replace customisation or vice versa.

Figure 8 is not correct because it argues that standardisation and customisation are opposites but as is shown in Figure 9 the opposite of standardisation is no standardisation and nor does standardisation not equal customisation, because if the processes of a hotel are not standardised it does not mean it will operate according to the customers' needs. This way of thinking actually works in case of customisation as well. If the hotel processes are not customised it does not mean that they are standardised instead, they only do not meet the customers' needs. The result of no standardisation is insecurity and variance which means that the processes are not specified and the employees are trained to execute them properly so this unexpected service is going to be provided to the guests who are once served this way the other time another way. If there is no customisation and guests require the personal touch, they will surely be unsatisfied with the automatic service, which is not different from a machine serving them.

This kind of thinking requires a shift in the approach to the topic. If standardisation and customisation are seen in a quality perspective, it is easy to recognise that both of them are needed at the same time.

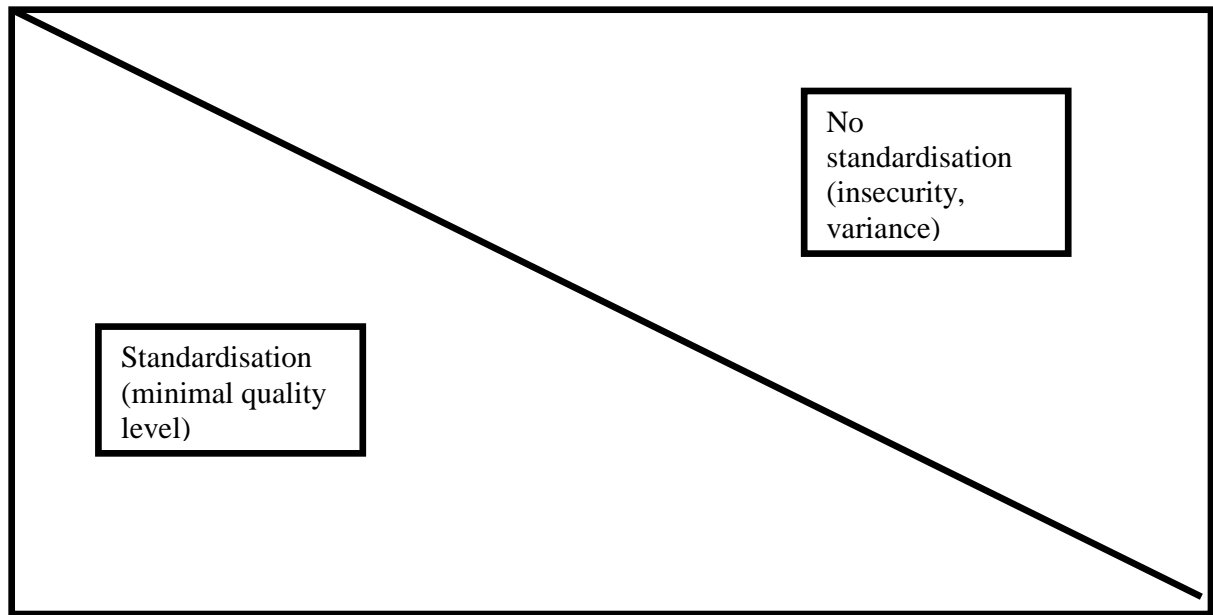


Figure 9 The opposite of standardisation is no standardisation

Standardisation in a quality context can provide a minimal quality level to the hotel but no standardisation on the other hand can only provide insecurity and variance as it was mentioned before. According to this theory standardisation is necessary for a hotel to be able to ensure a certain quality level and satisfy their guests' needs.

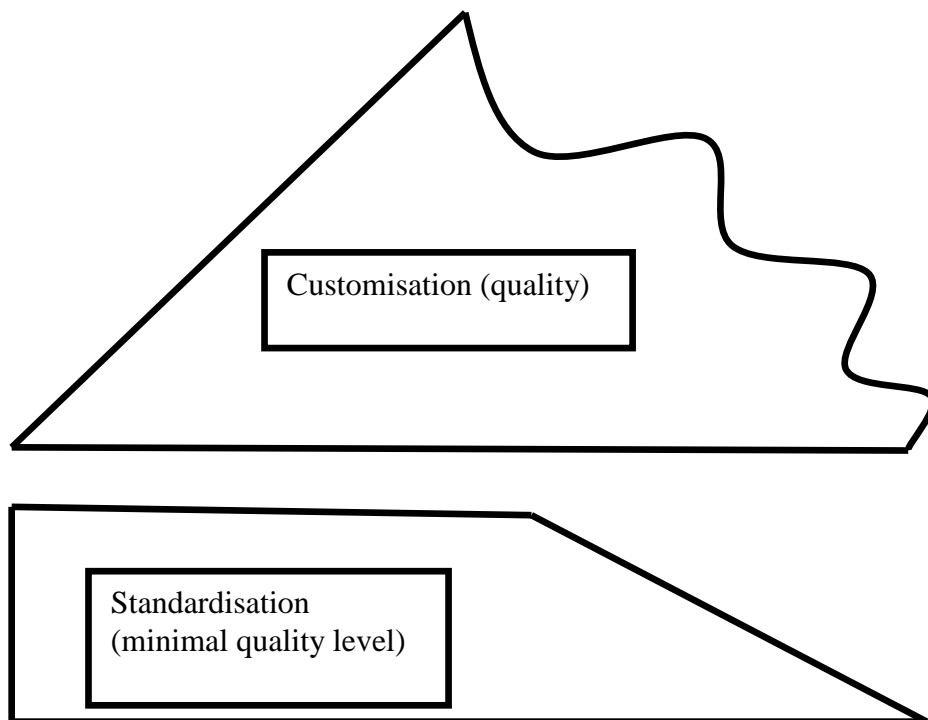


Figure 10 Customisation is based on standardisation

Customisation fits this theory because it represents the ‘real’ quality in this model. While standardisation stands for the minimal quality the hotel has to provide for the guests not to complain about the hotel service, customisation is something more than that, as the hotel already ensures that the customer is not dissatisfied, customisation is an added value which a hotel can offer to its guests to make them pleased, loyal and frequent visitors: satisfied guests.

As Figure 10 shows there is no customisation without standardisation in a successful firm. The minimal level of quality has to be assured first and then hotels can deal with customisation. It can mean that they need to organise their own operation before turning to the guests and satisfy their needs. In the figure it is easy to see that in the cases where the level of standardisation drops the reliability of customisation decreases at the same time. If a minimal level of quality, the basis of the service (standardisation), is not firm, it is not possible to go on to the next level (customisation).

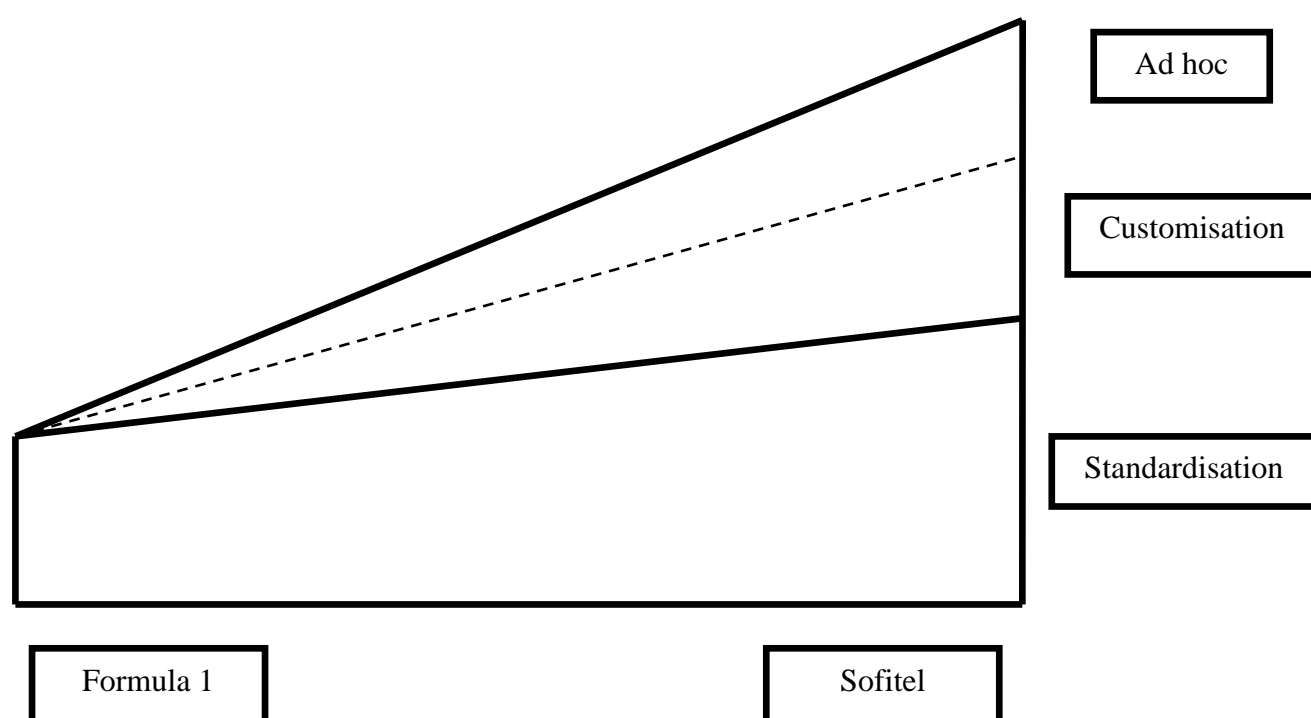


Figure 11 Presenting Accor brands according to the new theory

This theory requires another figure for the Accor brands which can be seen on Figure 11. In Sofitel it is clear that customisation has a bigger role than in Formula 1 hotels - given their different target segments - but standardisation is still needed and the amount of standardisation should be larger because these luxury hotels always have much more types of



services which should be standardised. It is actually true that in Formula 1 hotels customisation is not needed because of its budget hotel status – although there can be special requests - but it is not correct to think that a luxury hotel does not have to be standardised.

Ad hoc activity means incidental solutions with low awareness where customisation and standardisation questions are not raised. These are random events which do not aim to assure quality or provide customer satisfaction only happen because of the front staff's attitude or mood. This ad hoc section is not going to be examined in this thesis.

### **2.3.3 Conclusion**

As it can be seen in this subchapter the current author sees standardisation and customisation in a quality way. These concepts are considered to be necessary for service providers especially for hotels to make sure that the customer gets what they expected.

In Teboul's theory, the so-called 'traditional model' (named by the current author) standardisation and customisation are two end of a continuum which would mean that hotels should choose which they prefer. In this author's opinion they do not have to choose and they actually should not choose, they need to use both at the same time because they enhance each other and their strength. Since the aim of the mixed categories introduced in the previous subchapter (2.2) the aim of this way of thinking is the same, to exploit the advantages of both concepts.

## **2.4 Customer satisfaction**

As one of the aims of this thesis is to show the benefits of standardisation and customisation, one of the most important goals of the hotels has to be introduced and later examined; this is customer satisfaction, which can influence the image of the company as well. In this section the relationship between customer satisfaction and service quality, the role of customer retention (loyal guests) and the word-of mouth are being introduced. The last two concepts (and their values) are going to be used in the empirical research as indicators.

### **2.4.1 Customer satisfaction, service quality and customer retention**

However, the percent and the added value of the service industry to national economies have risen, there were significant service failures to deal with (Cina, 1989). He made the connection between customer satisfaction and customer retention, when he claimed if the customer gets more of what they 'paid' for, they will buy again. The author states that quality

is defined by the customers of the company and delivered by the employees, whose role is essential in this thesis as well. Cina (1989) mentions moments of truth as the contact between customers and employees and emphasises the role of empowerment in a service company since managers in these cases cannot solve the problems instantly. He distinguishes two types of quality concepts:

- Minimum requirements: these contain all the elements the customer see as necessary, these are the 'must' part of the service offering. It may vary by customers and industries but there is a core which can easily be determined. It is important to remember that satisfying this need does not make customer ultimately satisfied but does not make them unsatisfied (can be standardisation according to the categorisation of the previous chapter).
- Value-added services: the companies who cannot only provide the minimum but something more are able to have a competitive edge (can be considered customisation).

(Cina, 1989)

This article determines 5 steps to create an effective customer satisfaction program, which contains: customer satisfaction audits, service strategy development, employee relations, implementing tactics, maintenance and feedback. In these steps he highlights the management commitment and learning customer needs and opinions.

Customer satisfaction was always important for firms to measure. One way to execute this task is using artificial neural networks which are proved to be more efficient than multiple regressions (Gronholdt and Martensen, 2005).

Thinking about customer satisfaction the difference between customers often comes up. There are important indicators influencing satisfaction and one of them was the centre of Brady et al. (2001) researches: cultural differences. In their study they state that Latin-American customers placed more emphasis on satisfaction than North-Americans meaning that for the first group emotional judgement of customer satisfaction is more important than the actual value for the price. They highlight the fact that service quality is a strong determinant of customer satisfaction as well (Brady et al., 2001).

According to Cronin et al. (2000) quality is much more complex, than it was suggested by the previous authors. Besides customer satisfaction and service quality they suggest that consumer behavioural intention should be examined as well. These three factors need to be

analysed individually and altogether also (Cronin et al., 2000). However, this thesis does not concentrate on the guest behaviour and guest decision making, customer satisfaction and service quality play a great part. A similar examination was made by Saha and Theingi (2009) who wanted to find the answer to the financial loss of low cost airlines in Thailand. They saw that the cause – besides other factors influencing every player in every country for example increasing fuel prices – was not improving quality. In case of behavioural intentions they analysed word-of-mouth, feedback and repurchase intention. The authors found positive correlations except for the feedback factor. This study highlights the importance of quality in whole sectors and emphasises its role as a solution for companies' financial problems. There are different models explaining the factors influencing quality according to Brady (2005). The first model puts the value in the centre of the model and makes it the most influential factor of behavioural intention. The second one changes the place of service quality and satisfaction and that is the way they put service quality into the focus and determined its effect on behavioural intention. The third model switched back the places and concentrated on satisfaction. The last one is a complex model called the comprehensive model where almost every factor has an effect on behavioural intention except for sacrifice (Brady, 2005).

Frimpong and Wilson (2013) goal was to find connection between employee performance and satisfaction using the two factor theory (hygiene and motivation factors). They made their research among banks in a developing country. However, they could not significantly prove their hypothesis concerning these factors, but they found a slight connection between them.

Van Riel et al. (2012) examined one of the elements influencing customer satisfaction: waiting for service. They assumed that the satisfaction of consumers is directly and negatively affected by waiting. They were able to prove their hypothesis and suggested that the waiting time and the waiting environment should be managed which makes hotel standards in this topic necessary.

The connection between customer orientation emphasised by several researchers for a while (Mouritsen, 1997; Brady and Cronin, 2001; Korunka, 2007 ) and just recently (Grissemann et al., 2013; Lee et al., 2013; Khong et al., 2013; Chuang and Lin, 2013; Lee et al., 2012; Lee et al., 2011) and customer satisfaction was proved by Gazzoli et al. (2013) through internal quality. Their research was important because it used two variables to find and examine the connection. The significant role of the front line staff is emphasised by Yeh (2013) whose aim was to identify the factors influencing the satisfaction of employees working on the front line.

The author thinks that the front line staff have a crucial role in customer satisfaction because of the intensity of interaction which is an essential characteristic of services.

The other main topic considering customer satisfaction is the satisfaction of employees. This issue has been researched by many authors, including Bernhardt et al. (2000), Snipes et al. (2005), Chi and Gursoy (2009), Jung and Yoon (2013). Snipes et al. (2005) aimed to identify the most important factors influencing employee and customer satisfaction. They emphasise the role of empowerment in job satisfaction which is essential in any kind of service and raise the attention of managers to a more complex reward system for their employees. Chi and Gursoy (2009) highlighted that employee satisfaction has no direct influence on financial performance only indirect through customer satisfaction which is the same thing suggested by Bernhardt et al. (2000). The same mediator role of customer satisfaction is identified by Jung and Yoon (2013) when they proved that employee satisfaction has an indirect effect on customer loyalty through customer satisfaction. As a conclusion it is important to state that there is a strong relationship between employee and customer satisfaction.

Measuring customer satisfaction is usually happening via questionnaires in hotel. However, there are much more effective methods for example the American Customer Satisfaction Index used by Hsu, 2008; Yazdanpanah et al., 2013; Sun and Kim, 2013; Kim et al., 2013; Deng et al., 2013 etc. and Hotel Customer Satisfaction Index suggested by Deng et al., 2013 as a method which would be much better to use than the questionnaires.

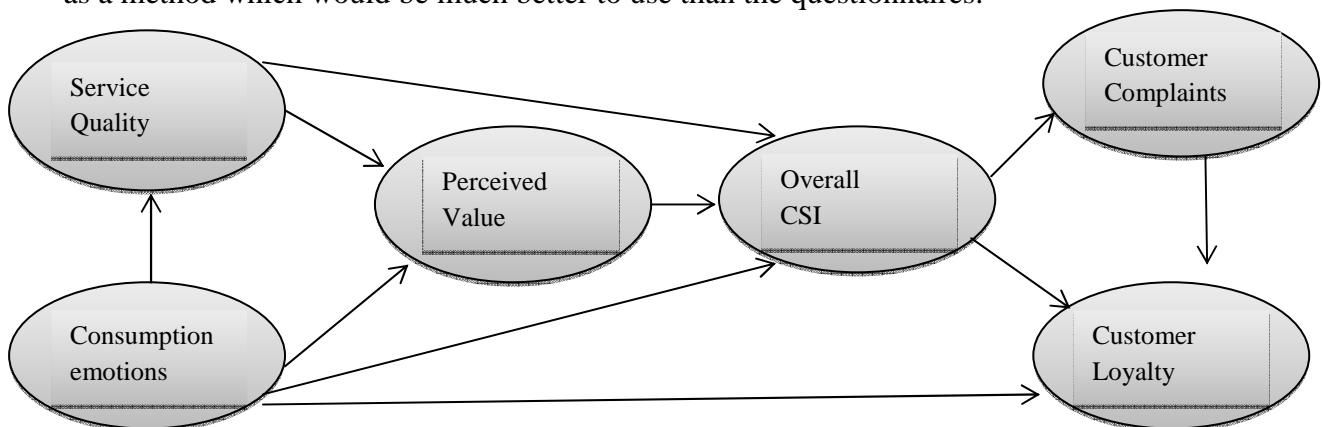


Figure 12 Modified customer satisfaction index (Deng et al., 2013)

All the correlations are positive according to the above mentioned researchers except for the relationship between customer complaints and overall ACSI where the correlation is negative (Figure 12). Deng et al. (2013) used Customer Satisfaction Index instead of the American Customer Satisfaction Index, the difference is that this model contains consumption emotions and not customer expectations and service quality instead of perceived quality. They believe

that emotions are crucial and influence customer behaviour which is essential in the process. The authors managed to find positive connection between consumption emotions and customer satisfaction as well as with customer loyalty. They highlighted the role of emotions in the hotel sector.

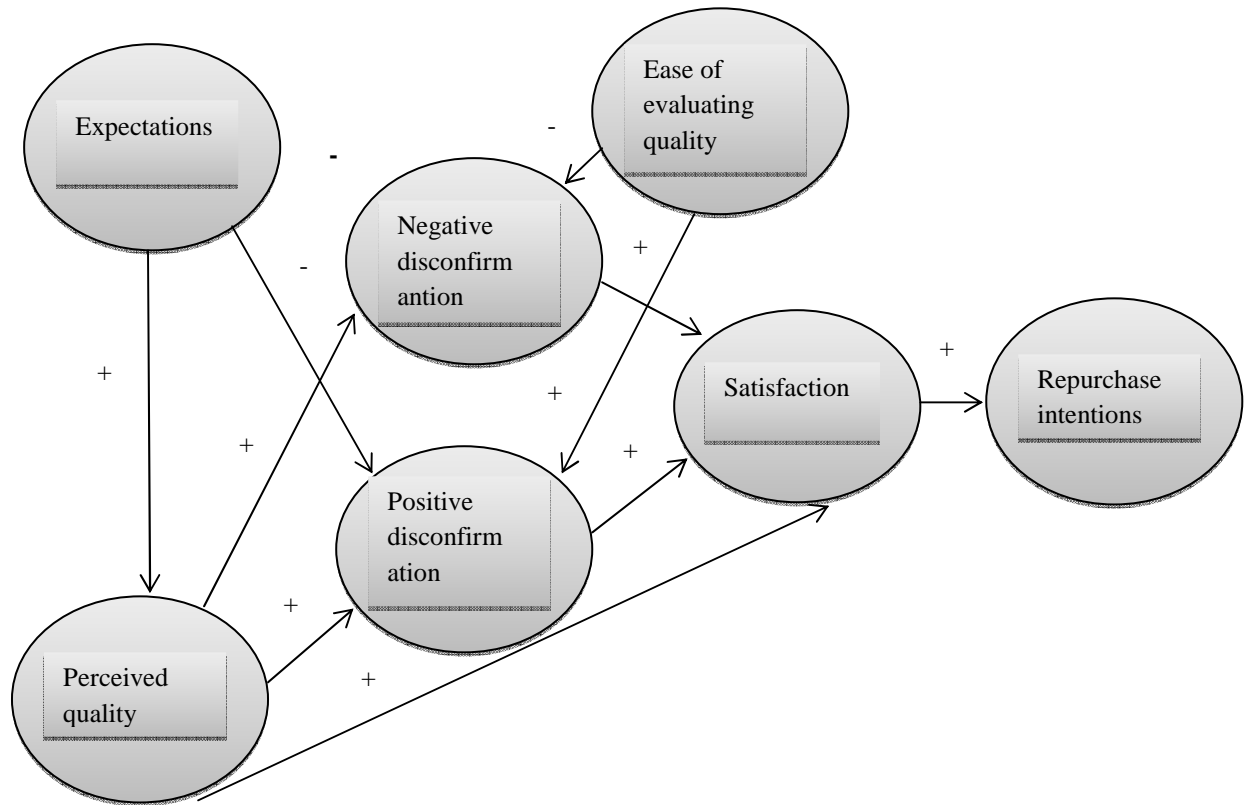


Figure 13 Anderson and Sullivan's model (1993)

Anderson and Sullivan (1993) created an analytical framework to be able to describe the different factors' effect to satisfaction and its further influence on repurchase intentions (Figure 13). They introduced a new mediator between perceived and expected quality and satisfaction: disconfirmation (positive or negative). They believe that expectations do not have a direct effect on satisfaction only through disconfirmation. The authors found evidence of the connection between the ease of evaluating quality and customer satisfaction through positive disconfirmation. They suggest if customers know the product and can evaluate it they will be more satisfied (Anderson and Sullivan, 1993). This theory contains a lot of new and special ideas containing the above mentioned positive and negative disconfirmation and the ease of evaluating quality which give guidelines to managers and raise attention to the importance to inform customers about the product and provide authentic information.

Customer satisfaction is not only important in tourism and hospitality service but in other service areas as well. Hospitals abroad have to concentrate on patients' satisfaction but the question is what the indicators of this satisfaction are. Khudair and Raza (2013) identified these features in the analysed hospitals: service promptness, attitude of the pharmacists, medical counselling, location and comfort of the waiting area. These factors are very important to mention because the standards used by hotel chains cover all these areas because they are aware of the effect on customer satisfaction.

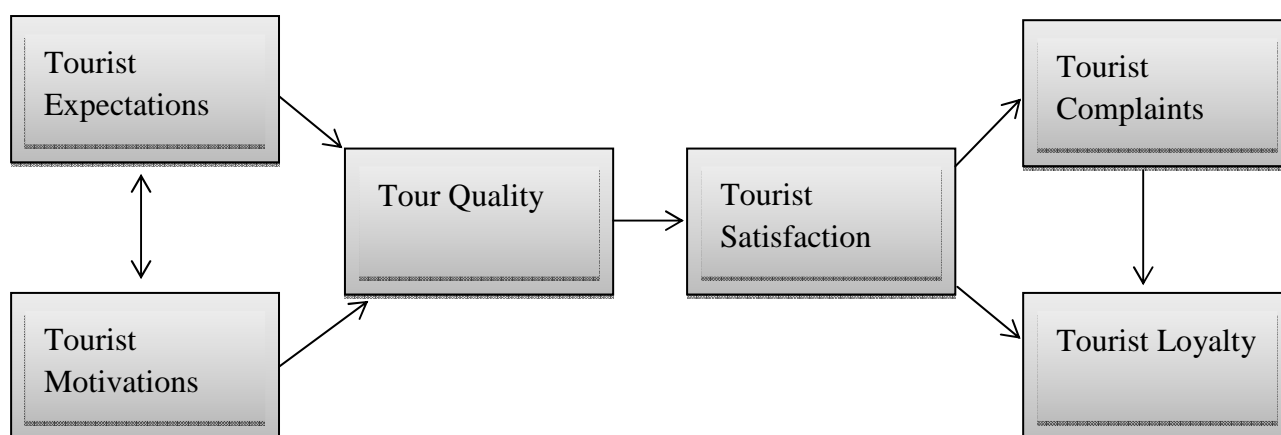


Figure 14 Research model by Lee et al. (2011)

In their research model Lee et al. (2011) managed to identify the positive connection between tourist satisfaction and loyalty as well as in the case of total quality and customer satisfaction (Figure 14). However they raised the attention on the fact that tourist expectations have a negative effect on the quality of the tour which has to make managers think of the communication of the product and quality.

The customer is always the focus of service quality and planning service processes. However, according to Nasution and Mavondo (2008) the perception of managers about customer value is not the same as the way that customers see the same topic. They examined the different perspectives of the two stakeholders in case of different hotel categories: prime, standard (medium level) and budget hotels. They suggest that hotels differ in case of quality, value and prestige and they support their theory by the analysed questionnaires as well. When they were examining the hotel types, they were able to find out that the managers' and customers' opinion is significantly more different in case of premium hotels than standard hotels. This means that in case of standard hotels it is easier to know what the managers and customers

can expect than in the extremes as premium or budget hotels. This makes hotel classification as a factor in customer satisfaction and expectation one of the key factors influencing the customers' opinion.

As the above discussion demonstrated there is an agreement about the connection between customer retention, customer satisfaction and service quality, the percentage of loyal guests in hotel could be a good indicator showing the satisfaction of the hotel guests.

#### **2.4.2 Word of mouth**

In recent years the number of complaints has grown rapidly which represent a new challenge for service employees (Wu, 2013). These complaints do not contain any physical contact only happen in the virtual world (Wu, 2013). Nowadays this phenomenon has entirely changed, satisfied and dissatisfied guests have the chance to express their ideas and problems immediately and other people will see their comments at once (Ekiz et al., 2012). Researches show that 70% of hotel prefers these sites where customers share their opinion instead of professional product introductions (Stringam and Gerdes, 2012). Melián-González et al (2013) suggests that firms should pay attention to online review sites, because they influence the consumer's decision of choosing a product. The influence of reviews to potential customers is higher when they are provided by a highly credible source (Bambauer-Sachse and Mangold, 2013). Park and Allen (2013) encourage hotel general managers to respond to the comments not only read them and apply them in the operation of the hotel. These statements are supported by Juhász (2011b) as well who researched the influence factors of the hotel choice. He found that hotel choice is affected by word of mouth or as he phrases personal recommendations by 66% which is the highest influencing factor (Juhász, 2011b).

However the significance and the usefulness of these sites are rising there are some limitations worth considering. These sites can easily be manipulated by the competitors or the employees of the hotel (Dellarocas, 2006). These evaluations are read by the customers but hopefully they are not able to alter the potential guests' opinion.

As it is obvious that almost every hotel measures customer satisfaction in different ways, there is no national summary of the results which could be used by researchers (Juhász, 2008). This is the reason why these two hotel evaluation websites were selected to be used as performance indicators in the current research. Both have different advantages why they were selected.

#### **2.4.2.1 Tripadvisor**

Tripadvisor reviews are commonly analysed by plenty of researchers in different field of studies (Vásquez, 2011; Jeacle and Carter, 2011, Kusumasondjaja, 2012). This is the world's largest travel site with more than 260 million visitors monthly and over 125 million reviews. The site contains more than 3.1 million accommodations, restaurants and attractions and operates sites in 34 countries ([http://www.tripadvisor.com/PressCenter-c6-About\\_Us.html](http://www.tripadvisor.com/PressCenter-c6-About_Us.html) 10/1/2014). This review site was selected for being the world biggest website, where every guest can share their opinion.

#### **2.4.2.2 Booking.com**

This site is the world leader in online booking of accommodation. More than 550000 rooms are reserved through this site every day by the business and leisure guests as well. Booking.com offers more than 418000 accommodations in 193 countries (<http://www.booking.com/content> 10/1/2014). The most important aim of this website is to make it easy and able for customers to book the accommodations online. The reviews on this site help them select the ideal service provider. Only the former guests – who had booking – can write a review about the hotel or other kind of accommodation. This website is available in Hungarian as well.

These two review sites (and their ratings) were chosen to complete the customer opinion section of the research and to define the level of customer satisfaction in the analysed Hungarian hotels.

#### **2.4.3 Conclusion**

The aim of this subchapter was to determine those important issues which consider service quality in hotels. The findings of the literature review suggest that different variables have to be investigated and measured later in the research part of the thesis. It has been proven by authors for example Anderson and Sullivan (1993) and Lee et al (2011) that service quality, customer satisfaction and customer retention have a relationship so they can influence each other. That is the reason why these concepts cannot be left out of the research. Customer satisfaction will be measured by the two site evaluations which are able to mediate the customer opinions (Booking.com and TripAdvisor). Customer retention is represented by the loyal guest percentage of the examined hotels.



## 2.5 Performance indicators

This subchapter contains the selected hotel performance indicators which are being measured and applied in the research and analysis.

### 2.5.1 RevPar

The revenue per available rooms is the most common tool of measuring the output of a hotel (Brown and Dev, 1999). Counting RevPar is very easy and it can show the performance of a hotel in a period of time.

The formula for revenue per available room is (Barrows and Powers, 2009):

RevPar = Rooms revenue/Available rooms or

RevPar = Paid Occupancy Percentage x ADR (Average Daily Rate)

RevPar is measured by most hotels and they are required to provide the data to the KSH (Hungarian Statistics Office).

According to Barrows and Powers (2009) for measuring hotel performance RevPar is the ideal tool, although they raise the attention to the need to analyse why RevPar increased. If it ascended due to the raise of the occupancy rate, it means that the costs increased as well. Because of this fact the goal of hotels is to raise ADR – the other component of RevPar – to get rid of the negative effects.

Although applying RevPar seems very popular in the hotel industry and considered to be a basic indicator, there are some limitations considering its value. It contains only the room revenue and does not consider the food and beverage revenue and it does not contain costs (Brown and Dev, 1999).

Oppose to the limitations, RevPar is usually applied as a key indicator of reducing investment risk in the hotel industry. Ismail et al. (2002) name this indicator as a good key factor in reducing investment risk. The reason for this is that since stock returns and other objective numbers – used and suggested by Zeithaml, 2000; Rust et al., 2002; Sun and Kim, 2013a – are not available for single hotels (in case they belong to a chain), RevPar can provide information about the hotel itself.

In Cruz's article the data provided by a hotel consulting firm to the hotel management at the end of each month contains RevPar, Occupancy rate, Average daily rate, sales by main

segments and seat turnover. This consulting firm uses the first three indicators to compare the performance of hotels and make analyses.

### **2.5.2 Occupancy rate**

According to Barrows and Powers (2009) the formula to count the occupancy rate is:

Occupancy percentage=Rooms sold/Total rooms available

As Orfila-Sintes and Mattsson (2009) state there are certain organisational factors influencing the performance of hotels. These indicators are additional services, customer bookings through tour operators, hotel chain membership and the hotel manager the same person as the hotel owner (Orfila-Sintes and Mattsson, 2009). Their study only examined the occupancy rate as a key performance indicator however there are other numbers worth considering since occupancy rate does not show the revenue of the company.

According to Tseng et al. (2008) hotel performance has to be measured via non financial indicators as well as financial ones. They supported the occupancy rate as an indicator but used sales growth as another one but included customer satisfaction as well into their model as an independent indicator.

### **2.5.3 ADR**

The formula of determining average daily rate is (Barrows and Powers, 2009):

Average rate=Dollar sales/Number of rooms sold

Average daily rate is an important indicator in the everyday operation of hotels. As it can be seen in the formula, the rate shows how much the hotel was able to sell its rooms and how much guests were willing to pay to stay at the hotel.

### **2.5.4 Star rating**

As Israeli (2002) states the star rating of hotels is well-known and has a tradition in Europe and as the authors proved stars are in connection with the price premium as well.

Juhász (2011b) claims that choosing a hotel can be influenced by several factors. He had the result that star rating influences the hotel choice by 40%, which is the second most important factor in finding the ideal hotel for the stay.

Núñez-Serrano et al. (2014) do not consider star rating a good quality measurement category because there many overlapping which mostly come from the fact that they examined the Spanish market where 17 different regulations relate to the rating of hotels. In Hungary the situation is better because there is only one organisation which can evaluate hotels and give star ratings, Hotelstars Union, which is going to be introduced in the next section.

### **2.5.5 Conclusion**

Besides these above mentioned and explained indicators (RevPar, OCC, ADR) other numbers can be used but it is important to remember that these data are considered confidential in a lot of hotels even though they have to provide the numbers to the Hungarian Statistics Office, so they are very hard to collect. The other reason these indicators were chosen was that they are known in the Hungarian hotel industry and they are measured by all hotels in the sample.

## **2.6 Hotel service in Hungary**

This chapter introduces hotels as the objects of this research. The definition and the most important characteristics of hotels are going to be introduced as well as the recent situation of Hungarian hotels and the issues effecting their operation.

### **2.6.1 Definition for hotels**

Hotels are part of the accommodation sector and can be determined as the largest group in it (the other members of the accommodation sector can be seen in Appendix 1). A simple definition for hotels says that these establishments serve accommodation and food and beverage services at the same time. (Hassanien et al, 2010) Hotels are very heterogeneous (Hassanien et al, 2010), they can be small and large and they can be classified by the following features:

- Type: from bed and breakfast hotel through airport hotels to conference centres (the type of hotels in Hungary is classified by the government with a regulation: 54/2003 GKM)
- Service levels: from budget hotels to full service hotels
- Brand Segmentation: from economy to premium luxury hotels

(Pizam and Holcomb, 2008)

Hotels are distinguished by ratings mostly determined by the government of the country they are situated. (Pizam and Holcomb, 2008) The star as a symbol is most commonly applied by these systems, although it is essential to mention that these rating standards are not globally harmonised. (Hassanien et al, 2010) In Hungary the stars are provided and controlled by the Hotelstars Union system in cooperation with the Hungarian Hotel & Restaurant Association. Hotelstars Union have 15 member countries where their standards are applied for the hotels. Hungary was one of the first countries to enter into this international system. In these countries the classification of hotels is harmonised and they use the common standards and procedures. This system is supported by HOTREC (Hotels, Restaurants and Cafés in Europe) and their aim is to deliver a unified standard for the European hotels and bring transparency and security for guests. (<http://www.hotelstars.eu/> 4/1/2014)

### **2.6.2 Hotel chains**

The Collins Dictionary provides the following definition for a hotel chain: ‘a group of hotels which belong to the same company or owner, or are associated in some way.’ (<http://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/hotel-chain> 4/1/2014) Brotherton, 2008 gives a more detailed definition for the same concept quoting Peng and Littlejohn, 1997: ‘Multi-unit service organizations; in which units operate under a system of decision-making permitting coherent policies and a common strategy through one or more decision-making centres, and where hotel units and corporate functions are linked to add value to each other by ownership or contractual relationships.’

Hotels have more possibilities to enter into a hotel chain:

- Licensing: buying the licence to produce the same ‘product’ in the licensee’s country for a so called licence fee
- Franchising: this form is not very different from licensing only franchising is a longer term agreement and the franchisor does not only determine what “product” the company produces but it will define how the company should work
- Joint ventures: when two companies own a company together mostly with 50-50% share
- Wholly owned subsidiaries: it happens when the parent company owns 100% of the subsidiary

(Hill and Jones, 2010)

More of the above mentioned strategies can be used in a hotel chain for example company owned and franchise units, which is called a plural organisation. (Brookes and Roper, 2012)

Joining hotel chains have several advantages identified and proved by O'Neill and Carlback (2011) among others. They compared the performance of independent and chain hotels – analysing 51000 hotel establishments - and found that the occupancy rate of chain hotels are higher than independent hotels and their ADR (Average Daily Rate and RevPar) are not much lower. Considering the amount of money chain members have to pay for the know-how and the licence these data suggest that their other indicators are higher or equal to the independent hotels. However in case of economic recession O'Neill and Carlback (2011) were able to prove that hotel chains are more successful than independent hotels.

### **2.6.3 Situation of Hotels in Hungary**

There were 3,175 commercial accommodations in Hungary according to the Hungarian Statistical Office in 2012. The number of these establishments increased in 2002 (3377) and 2003 (3517) and decreased from then. Most of these establishments are hotels or inns (can be called bed and breakfast as well), with 997 hotels and 1097 inns in 2012). It is important to mention however that the number of hotels are rising every year (in 2011-2012 from 993-997) These numbers show that there are more inns in Hungary than hotels however later it is going to be proved that the significance (most important performance indicators) of hotels are much more than in case of inns. Throughout the year most establishment (hotels) are open in august (1005 in 2012 and 1032 in 2013). The fact is the same in case of available rooms: 56132 in 2012 and 59509 in 2013. To overview of the situation of hotels in Hungary it is important to note that almost 29<sup>1</sup> percent (in February 2013) of these kinds of accommodation establishments are in the Budapest Region. As Table 14 presents the second in this rank is the West-Danubian Region and after that the Balaton Region.

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<sup>1</sup> The number was 25 percent in August 2013 due to the seasonal hotels.

	Buda- pest	Northern Hungary	Northern Hungarian Plains	Lake Tisza	Southern Hungarian Plains	Central Trans- Danubian	Lake Balaton	Southern Trans- Danubian	Western Trans- Danubian
<b>2012 January</b>	234	90	84	10	81	58	84	67	125
<b>2012 August</b>	246	103	94	14	88	68	185	74	133
<b>2013 February</b>	245	98	81	8	76	60	89	63	121
<b>2013 August</b>	259	109	98	15	91	67	188	75	130

Table 14 Number of Hotels in Different Hungarian Regions

Table 14 describes the best month from the peak season and the worst from the low season considering the open establishments. The Table 14 shows the level of seasonality as well in the different tourism regions. It can be easily noticed that the percentage of seasonal hotels is the highest in the Balaton Region and the lowest in the Budapest Region and the Western Trans-Danubian Region where the demand is the most stable.

	<b>Occupancy rate (%)</b>	<b>Occupancy rate by beds (%)</b>
<b>2008</b>	48.5	37.3
<b>2009</b>	43.5	33.6
<b>2010</b>	44.6	35.1
<b>2011</b>	45.9	34.5
<b>2012</b>	47.7	36
<b>2012 August</b>	63.3	52.9

Table 15 Occupancy rates of Hungarian hotels between 2008 and 2012

Table 15 shows that the occupancy rate of Hungarian hotels started to rise back to the level before the economic crisis. However it has not reached the same percentage, yet. For hotels the room occupancy is more important than the occupancy by beds because ‘double room for single use price’ makes up for the empty bed. Hotels’ aim is to sell their rooms not the beds because there are more costs in connection with the room not with the bed.

	<b>ADR (HUF)</b>	<b>RevPar (HUF)</b>	<b>Total Revenue (Thousand HUF)</b>
<b>2008</b>	14,935	7,237	121,740,549
<b>2009</b>	14,913	6,423	111,257,872
<b>2010</b>	14,231	6,344	112,668,861
<b>2011</b>	14,235	6,540	124,211,712
<b>2012</b>	14,631	6,975	135,631,936
<b>2012 August</b>	13,911	8,803	16,023,026

Table 16 Income indicators of Hungarian hotels

On Table 16 some chosen indicators of hotel income can be seen. Hungarian Central Statistical Office (KSH) collects the data for the average room rate, revenue per available room and total revenue from hotels besides other kinds of numbers considering the revenue originates from catering and other services provided by the accommodation establishment. This thesis does not concentrate on the food and beverage part of the operation, the author considers hotel as a whole firm where the aim is to sell the rooms with all the extra services together in a package. There are two other indicators measured by KSH which can be useful for researchers: accommodation fee per tourist and accommodation fee per tourist night. However it is important to mention that these numbers are not applied in the everyday operation and management of hotel as my experience and personal interviews suggest that is why they were not involved in Table 16.

Analysing Table 16 it becomes obvious that after the economic recession these essential income indicators decreased but they have started to rise back to the same level in 2011. Total revenue of the hotels in Hungary managed to reach and exceed the numbers which could be measured in 2008, although the ARR and RevPar indicators still fail to deliver the same results.

Although it is not illustrated in Table 16, it is important to note that the revenue coming from international guest is double than the income originates from domestic guests, which means (according to these data) that those hotels concentrating on foreign tourists have more revenue than the same hotels with Hungarian guests.

<b>2012</b>	<b>1 Star</b>	<b>2 Stars</b>	<b>3 Stars</b>	<b>4 Stars</b>	<b>5 Stars</b>
<b>Number of Hotels</b>	20	108	487	251	22
<b>Total revenue</b>	350,637	1,765,060	28,409,906	67,799,257	33,025,847
<b>Percentage of the total revenue</b>	0.26	1.30	21	50	24
<b>Average revenue per establishment</b>	17,532	16,343	58,337	270,117	1,501,175
<b>RevPar</b>	1540	1969	3953	7938	21302
<b>ADR</b>	7713	7216	9755	14455	32606

Table 17 Income indicators of Hungarian hotels by stars

Table 17 illustrates the difference between hotels according to their quality measured with stars mentioned in the previous subchapter. To show the different significance of hotels grouped by Hotelstars Union the percentage of their contribution to the total revenue hotels earned in 2012 was calculated. Then using the number of establishments the average revenue an establishment reached last year was determined. In Hungary most of the hotels belong to the 3 star category, after that the 4 star category. There is almost the same number of 5 star and 1 star hotels, although a lot of 1 star establishments were closed in the past 10 years. The data in Table 17 clearly shows that the significance of 3, 4 and 5 star hotels is much higher than 1 and 2 star hotels. If the average revenue per establishment is considered, it is easy to see that the number a 5 star hotel delivers is almost six times higher than a 4 star hotel and almost hundred times higher than a 2 or 1 star hotel. As it could be expected the lowest average daily rate and revenue per available room is reached by 1 star hotels and most significant numbers are earned by 5 star hotels in case of RevPar it is almost three times higher than four star hotels, in ADR the numbers are more than two times higher.

#### **2.6.4 Problems in the Hungarian hotel sector**

In this subchapter the most important challenges of the Hungarian hotel sector is listed and described.

According to Györfly (2010) the following categories can be identified as the most pressing matters in the Hungarian hotels sector.



## Prices

The prices of Hungarian hotels can be claimed to be low comparing all the costs in connection with operating a hotel. The low level of prices mean that there is a slight difference between the price of a 5 or 4 star hotel but guests expect higher quality in a 5 star establishment. The low level of rates aimed to increase the occupancy rate, although it is only about 50%. In the author's opinion the price issue can be noticed in case of 3 and 4 star hotels even more. The consequence of the decreased prices is that there is no money left for maintenance which results that hotels cannot provide quality equipment for the guests or work with any. It makes it even harder for the staff to satisfy the guest needs because they have to make up for the mistakes and deficiencies of the intangibles. (Györffy, 2010)

## Liabilities

The low price is not the only problem holding down the revenue flow and worsening the profit (if there is any) of hotels in Hungary. Hotels' working capital level is almost zero, they have to take more and more liabilities to be able to finance their operation but they have to pay the interests of these liabilities as well. (Györffy, 2010) This fact also leads to the lack of revenue in the hotel industry and puts hotels in a vicious circle, where they only concentrate on prices instead of the quality they need to provide for their guests.

## Cooperation

As this situation makes it hard for hotels to develop their service and innovate, it has to rely on its environment more than usual. The establishment needs to make the cooperation with the city government much tighter as well as with state and the destination. As it is known tourists tend to choose the destination first and then the hotel in the chosen city or village. (Györffy, 2010)

## Human Resource

The bigger role of the staff has already been mentioned before but it has to be emphasised again. The workers in the hotel – whatever jobs they do – need to know they all are sales and marketing people as Lavenson (1973) claimed as well among other important human resource innovations. Györffy (2010) also suggested that the staff has to be provided with a plan for the future to make it easier for them to accomplish the goals of the company. Nowadays there is a new trend among hotel managers: they keep as little contact with the guests as possible, which

worsens the atmosphere at the workplace. As Lavenson (1973) suggested the general manager has to make time to talk to their guests and listen to their complaints and opinions. Since hotels need to reduce their costs to be able to work, some of them use outsourcing as a tool, although this method can also have a negative effect on quality and atmosphere in the hotel.

### Marketing mix

Another significant problem - originates from the previously mentioned ones - is the lack of complex application of marketing mix. As it has already been mentioned before, hotels only concentrate on prices (the second P of the marketing mix). They want to compete with others only with low room rates; they do not optimise their sales channels (the ratio of direct sales is low) and communication channels Györffy (2010). The sales channel recently includes - sometimes only includes - the couponing websites. There are about 60 sites in Hungary and hotels use them as sales and communication channels as well. The role of these couponing companies has risen to be so significant that the Hungarian Hotel & Restaurant Association had to stand up and warn hotels about the dangers of using these sites as the main tool to sell their rooms. They emphasise that couponing only can be well used as a communication channel but they are not able to provide higher revenues for hotels.

(<http://www.hah.hu/aktualitasok/allasfoglalasok/ajanlasok-szallodak-reszere-a-kuponos-kedvezmenyes-portalokkal-k/> 8/1/2014)

As Györffy (2010) suggested there is a problem with the percentage of loyal guests in Hungarian hotels as well because it is mostly under 10% Györffy (2010). It can be seen as a quality or a revenue issue.

The above mentioned problems show that the current situation of hotels has to be altered or many of them are going to go bankrupt and be taken over by a bank or close. Hungarian hotels have to break out of the vicious circle of cost reduction and put the emphasis on quality improvements through the optimisation of their own operation and delivering services according to their guests' needs. As it has been illustrated in the analysis of the Hungarian statistics data the number of hotels has risen too much but considering the problems it did not include higher quality or a competitive edge.

([http://www.hah.hu/files/2213/5272/1421/Szallodaipar\\_helyzetertekelese\\_2007\\_2012.pdf](http://www.hah.hu/files/2213/5272/1421/Szallodaipar_helyzetertekelese_2007_2012.pdf) 8/1/2014)

These problems are essential however Juhász (2009) suggests that they are only the consequences of a larger issue: lack of market segmentation or bad segmentation. In his recent

article (Juhász, 2014), he raises the attention on the process which starts with wrong target segments, which is followed by guest dissatisfaction, less demand, less revenue and employee dissatisfaction which puts the operation of the hotel into a negative circle. As an example of bad market segmentation there can be seen to be a complete lack of recognition of young people as important segments (Juhász, 2011a). In his research he found out that the 31% of the sample (young people) use hotels as accommodation instead of youth hostels (8%) which are actually built on their demand. Of course this segment cannot be the main target segment although they could be counted on. (Juhász, 2011b)

Now if hotel managers want their hotel to operate in the future they have to change the paradigm mentioned in this subchapter and turn to quality. The aim of this thesis is to prove that the know-how to be able to use standardisation and customisation to reach their different goals.

#### **2.6.5 Conclusion**

The aim of this section was to introduce the special characteristics of the Hungarian hotel sector and highlight the problems which can be solved or helped by the theory which is being tested throughout this thesis. The analysis shows that the three-, four and five-star hotels are much more successful in every number than other. That is the reason why they have been chosen for sample in this current research. From this group it is still obvious according to the data that five-star hotels have the best occupancy rates and revenue as well. The problems of the Hungarian hotel sector do not make their situation as hard as in case of other hotels. The mentioned issues are all in connection with quality in the author's opinion and the method and theory of this thesis can help with dealing with these difficulties.

### **3 Research objectives and hypotheses**

The following chapter contains the research objectives and the hypotheses the author determined and undertook the research to examine and prove or reject them.

#### **3.1 Research objectives**

According to the previously mentioned logic the purpose of the research has been phrased:

- The aim of the research is to prove the relationship between standardisation and customisation and use this as a starting point for a new theory in the service management and service quality fields.
- At the same time it is important to identify those hotel characteristics which have an influence on the level of standardisation.
- The other goal is to determine the group of standards and customised processes which have a strong, moderate and weak relationship with the hotel performance indicators.
- Another aim is to determine the performance indicators which belong together.
- The other purpose of the research is to examine the effect of the membership of a hotel chain to the standardisation of the hotel or independent hotels can be standardised as well.
- The final goal of the research is to prove that those hotels which are standardised and customised in a high or medium level can reach better performance indicators than those which only choose between standardisation and customisation.

#### **3.2 Research questions**

The conceptual background of the research has been introduced and the theoretical literature has been reviewed which led to the following research questions.

Q1 Is there a relationship between standardisation and customisation? If so, how strongly are they connected?

Q2 Which hotel characteristics influence the level of standardisation in a hotel?

Q3 Which groups of standards have weak, medium and strong relationships with the performance indicators (RevPar, Occupancy rate, Average daily rate, Tripadvisor evaluation, Booking evaluation, Foreign guest percentage, Loyal guest percentage)?

Q4 Which performance indicators can be brought together to improve the analysis of hotels?  
What kind of performance groups can be identified?

Q5 Is there a relationship between the standardisation and customisation level of the hotel and the performance indicator it reaches?

### 3.3 Hypotheses

The hypotheses are built on the research questions and contain my assumptions about the phenomenon explored by the current thesis.

Hypothesis 1

There is a relationship between the different hotel characteristics and the level of standardisation in the Hungarian hotel industry.

Hypothesis 1a There is a relationship between chain membership and the level of standardisation.

Hypothesis 1b There is a relationship between Hotelstars Union membership and the level of standardisation.

Hypothesis 1c There is a relationship between the number of rooms in the hotel and the level of standardisation.

Hypothesis 1d There is a relationship between the star rating of the hotel and the level of standardisation.

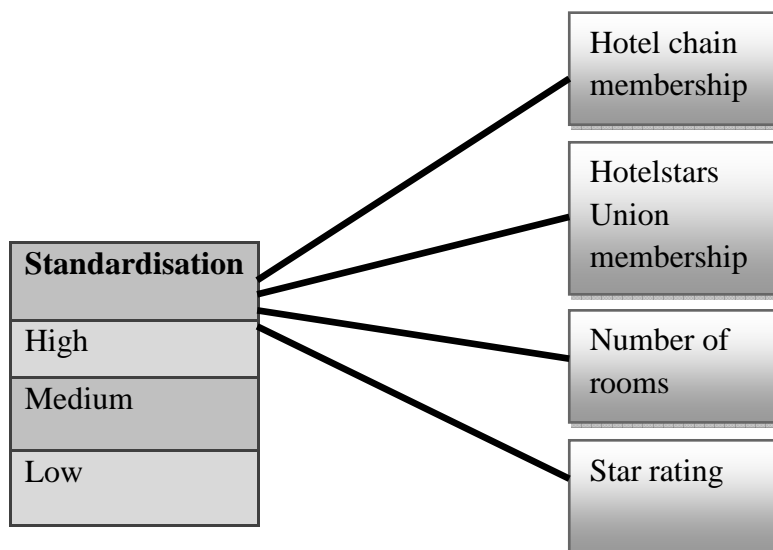


Figure 15 The illustration of Hypothesis 1

The first hypothesis aims to find out if there is a relationship between different hotel characteristics and the level of standardisation and the extent of the influence of hotel chain membership to the level of standardisation in case of Hungarian hotels. Since the author's experience and hotel standardisation documents (handled confidentially) proved that hotel chains assure quality through the standardisation of the service delivery which is supported by the hotel management books (Hayes and Ninemaier, 2003, Harris and Mongiello, 2006, Rutherford and O'Fallon, 2007,) as well and name it as a reason to enter into a hotel chain. This hypothesis aims to demonstrate that independent hotels can use the strategy of standardisation as well; it is not only a hotel chain member's characteristic. The hypothesis also assumes that those hotels which are already members of the Hotelstars Union organisation are more likely to have their own standards as well. For those hotels which have their own standard system can adapt easier to the Hotelstars Union requirement. The other aim of this hypothesis is to see if there is a difference between the level of standardisation in case of the different star rated hotels. The same issue is asked in case of the different size of the hotels. The author assumes that bigger hotels are more interested in standards and it is more obvious for them to use the standards than small hotels.

## Hypothesis 2

There is a relationship between standardisation and customisation in the Hungarian hotel sector.

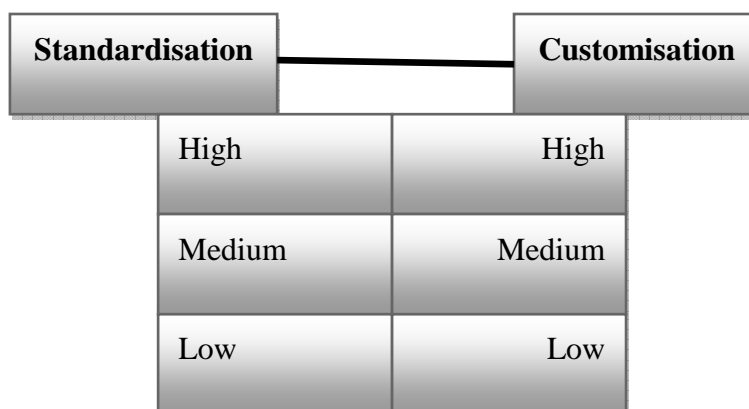


Figure 16 The illustration of Hypothesis 2

Most of the reviewed literatures (for example Cloninger and Swaidan, 2007, Ritzer, 1997, Schmid and Kotulla, 2010, Samiee et al., 2003, Bharadwaj et al., 2009) suggest that standardisation and customisation are two strategies to choose from; they do not suggest that

they should be mixed or used at the same time at the same firm, in this case a hotel, so general managers have to choose between the two strategies. Others mention a possibility to apply both at the same time but for different processes (for example Kimes and Mutkoski, 1991, Liu et al., 2008, Moore et al., 2010) but there are authors who consider dealing with standardisation and customisation at the same in case of the same process (for example Heskett, 1986, Kondo, 2000, Mount and Mattila, 2009). There were also researchers who started to develop new theories which somehow mix the two and create another category (for example Sundbo, 2002, Gilmore and Pine, 1997). As this topic is not agreed in the literature one of the most important aims of this thesis is to prove that there is a relationship between standardisation and customisation so they can exist besides each other which would mean that they both have their roles in the life of the company.

### Hypothesis 3

A group of processes/standard groups can be identified which have the most influence on the performance indicators when they are standardised and customised and at the same time when they are only standardised or customised.

One of the most important aims of the thesis is to help hotels optimise or create their own standardised, customised or standardised and customised processes. This hypothesis supports their process management and raise their attention to the most urgent and important topics to consider. The illustration of this hypothesis would be hard to see through because of the 44 standard groups and all their relations with the performance indicators.

### Hypothesis 4

The performance indicators (revenue per available room, occupancy rate, average daily rate, stars, foreign guest percentage, loyal guest percentage, booking evaluations, Tripadvisor evaluations) can be grouped into two factors: operation performance, guest performance.

<b>Operational performance</b>	<b>Guest performance</b>
RevPar	Frequent guests percentage
OCC	Foreign guest percentage
ARR	Tripadvisor
Stars	Booking

Figure 17 The illustration of Hypothesis 4

Hypothesis 4 is searching for grouping the variables and reducing their numbers. In this thesis the goal of grouping the variables and finding out their relations is more essential than reducing the number of variables. The logic suggests that the operational performance indicators belong together and guest performance indicators contain all the numbers coming from guest satisfaction and the number of foreign guests which role was introduced in Chapter 2.6.

#### Hypothesis 5

The average value of the performance indicators is higher in case of higher level of standardisation and customisation in Hungarian hotels.



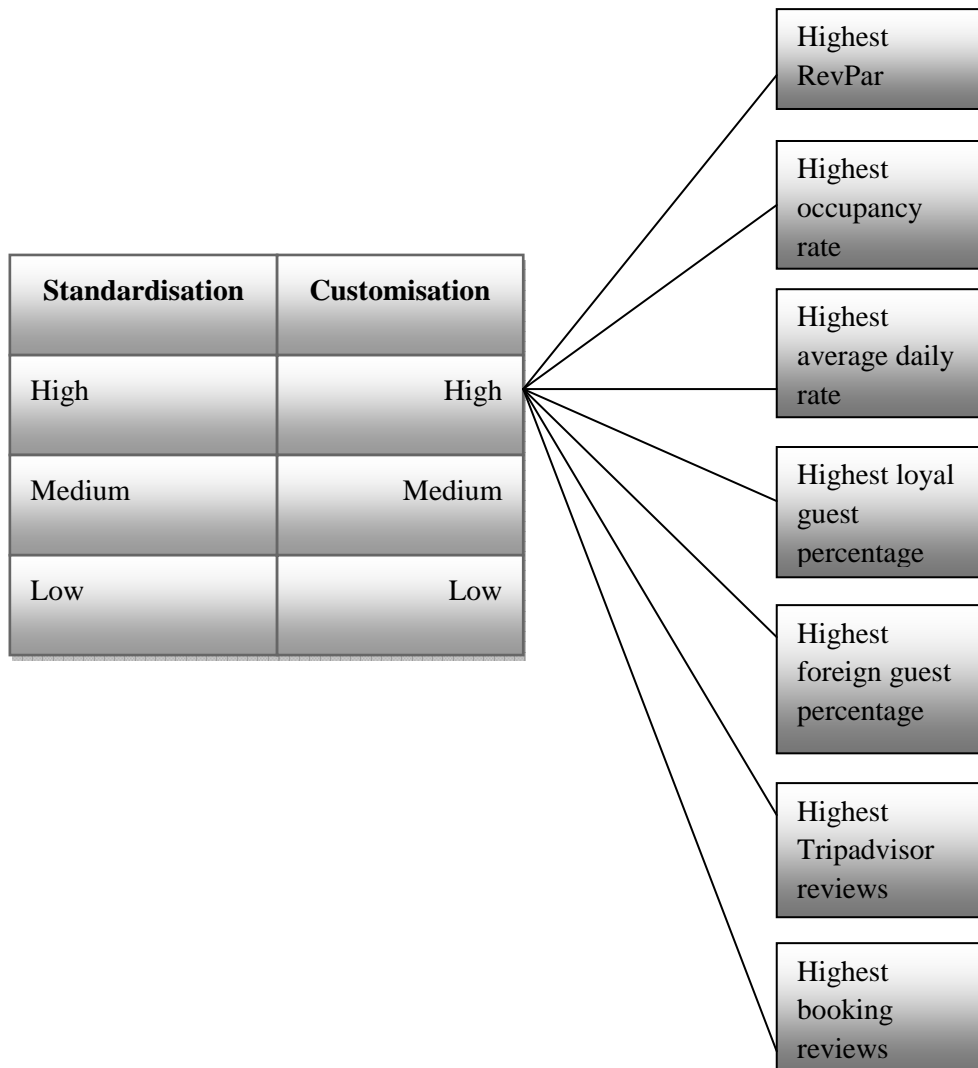


Figure 18 The illustration of Hypothesis 5

Hypothesis 5 is assuming that higher performance indicators can be detected in those hotels which have higher standardisation and customisation levels. This proof would be important to get because it could help convince hotel general managers about the significance of standardisation and customisation levels.

## **4 Empirical research**

The following chapter contains the empirical research in the topic of standardisation and customisation and the results of testing the hypotheses and the analysis of the research results.

### **4.1 The research process**

This chapter introduces the process of collecting the later analysed data from defining the population to different selection criteria and the methods used to get the data from appropriate sources for the research.

#### **4.1.1 Determining the population**

For the research it was essential to determine a group of hotels which could be analysed. The most important issue in connection with choosing these hotels is that they have to be comparable. The regulation aiming the classification of hotels is now clear although not all hotels in Hungary are categorised. This puts researchers into an uncomfortable situation when we are analysing statistics. Because of these reasons another common feature had to be found. Since there is an organisation in Hungary which represents hotels – MSZÉSZ or HAH (Hungarian Hotel & Restaurant Association) – their members have to be the right group of hotels because they are conscious about the situation of the hotel sector and want to be represented. HAH has a database containing the members' type, category and contacts which helps the research process. The 2012 database and the book from HAH which contains the most important data about member hotels was used. The database includes the organisation group hotels according to their quality level (measured by the stars) and the region they are located. The name of the hotels can be found on <http://www.hah.hu/tagjaink/szallodak>.

The next task was to decide if all hotels from the list should be asked to fill out the questionnaire. As it became obvious in the statistics the indicators (occupancy rate, RevPar, average daily rate) of three-, four- and five-star hotels are much higher than in case of one- or two-star hotels and their contribution to the gross revenue produced by hotels in Hungary. Furthermore the Hungarian Hotel & Restaurant Association database only contains 3 one-star hotels and 13 two-star hotels which would not have provided relevant data.

It was also essential to identify who was able to answer the questions. The topic of standardisation and customisation involves every part of the organisation although every department knows and uses different standards, has to concentrate on solving different kinds of problems. This means that a front desk clerk is aware of the check-in, check-out standards but does not know anything about the housekeeping standards. It is true for the department

managers (middle managers) as well, despite that they possess a significant position in the organisation and as Csepregi (2011) states they are close to the actual operation of a firm, but in this topic they are too much involved in their own department's tasks to be able to see the whole organisation. These reasons made it compulsory to ask hotel general or operation managers to fill out the questionnaire, which complicated the execution of the survey. Consequently the population is determined as the three-, four- and five-star hotels (through their general managers), which are members of the Hungarian Hotel & Restaurant Association, 366 establishments. The sample characteristics can be seen in Chapter 4.2.

#### **4.1.2 The interview and validation**

The interview had two important goals. One was the validation of the standard groups and the other was to find out if the standard groups have different values or weights.

##### **4.1.2.1 The sample**

To define the different importance of the standard groups and the weight of oral and written standardisation and to make the validation of the standard groups, 6 interviews were made to distinguish the processes according to the need to standardise them. The six interviews were organised with hotel general managers who met the following strict criteria. The chosen leader had to have the experience of managing a hotel which is a member of hotel chain using standards in its operation. As it has been mentioned 6 hotel general managers were selected who are still working as a hotel managers in significant hotel chain member hotels which have more than one unit in Hungary. To be suitable for the interview it did not matter if the hotel chain member hotel is affiliated with chain via franchise, owned or management contract, although the chosen hotels were connected to the centre via ownership or franchise.

##### **4.1.2.2 Validation**

The aim of the validation process was to ask the hotel professionals if they know what the different standard groups mean and what kind of actual standards can be listed below them. This process can be classified into the member checking type of validation (Creswell, 2007). This kind of validation makes it possible for researchers to show the participants preliminary examinations and ideas and they can share their opinions about the understanding of the topic and maybe what is missing from the list (Creswell, 2007). In this process the participants had to give examples to the given standard groups which made it clear for the author that they understood the content of the processes. It was not the aim of this investigation to list all the

standards belonging to the standard groups because the exact standards can be different in case of the different hotel chains or independent hotels. The goal was to identify what the groups mean and see if there is anything missing. Since the standard groups are transferred from actual hotel standardisation documentation, the processes covered the whole hotel operation, and the participants have not identified any more. There was a general manager who asked for the list because he realised that they have not standardised all the processes, yet. The standard groups, since they have a very significant name, did not make any difficulties for the chosen general managers, they could define all of them and give examples which fit the content of the process.

#### **4.1.2.3 The interview**

The interview can be classified as a structured interview because its aim was to collect quantitative data (Saunders et al., 2009), in this case to match weights to the standard groups and explore the different power of oral and written standardisation. Besides the weight values, the interview contained 7 open questions as can be seen in Appendix 2. The issues discussed there were used as the foundation for the preparation of the questionnaire and wanted to find out more about the standardisation and customisation practices of hotel chains.

The interviews were carried out personally and via telephone which made it possible to explain the aim of the research and mostly the concept of customisation because standardisation and standard groups were clear for the interviewee.

The weights of standard groups were measured by a Likert scale as well as the difference between oral and written standards.

#### **4.1.3 The questionnaire**

The following subchapter introduces the questionnaire applied for the research to be able to provide the data proving the hypotheses.

The questionnaire can be divided into three parts:

- General questions: this section contained the questions considering the size, the type and other characteristics of the hotel. This part of the questionnaire included the topics considering the performance of the company: RevPar, Occupancy rate, Average daily rate, the loyal guest percentage, Hungarian guest percentage.
- Standardisation questions: this part of the questionnaire aims to map the quality systems and certifications used by the hotels and ask if each process one by one is

regulated or not. If it is regulated, it is only a custom agreed by the staff and the managers or it is written down to a book of standards.

- Customisation questions: this section follows the order of the previous group of questions. It starts with some general issues about guest handling practices of the hotels for example early check-in and late check-out and finishes with examining the same processes mentioned earlier in the standardisation questions. The aim of this question was to find out how much the service can be formed according to the guests' needs.

The questionnaire includes closed and open questions. The closed questions aimed to collect all the quantitative information which was needed to be able to determine the different standardisation and customisation levels and make it possible to compare them to the performance indicators determined to prove the success of the company. The open questions want to find out the different practices and standardisation, customisation practices of the firm. Among the closed questions there were simpler yes/no questions and more complicated Likert-scale or ranking questions, although it was always a very important issue to phrase the tasks or questions as simple as possible and do not use very long and complicated sentences as it was suggested by Saris and Gallhofer (2007). The questionnaire can be seen in Appendix 11.

#### **4.1.3.1 Pilot questionnaire**

Before launching the final questionnaire it was necessary to test its reliability, validity and look for errors in it (Brace, 2008). The pilot testing was delivered in spring 2012. More forms of pilot testing were used: informal pilot, cognitive interviewing.

The informal pilot is usually carried out by asking a small number of colleagues (Brace, 2008), in this case the interviews were made with the help of two staff members at the University of Pannonia. In informal pilot colleagues either has to meet the criteria to be in the sample or pretend to be (Brace, 2008). The target respondents of this questionnaire were to be hotel general managers, so the staff members who were asked to take part in the pilot testing only could pretend to be general managers. Although it is important to mention that they both have a research topic considering hotels and had already had the chance to make interviews with hotel general managers before this test was carried out. The aim of the informal pilot was to determine the length of time the answers would need as well as identifying any wording and rooting errors. Besides this, the interviewees could add their experience and their advice as well; considering the way of questioning, the wording of the questions and the grouping of

the answers. This informal pilot phase resulted in slight changes in the questionnaire such as checking the spelling, wording and notes about those questions which needed to be explained more or phrased another way.

Cognitive testing was applied after the alterations carried out due to the results of the informal pilot. In this phase 22 interviews were made to analyse the understanding of the questions and reasons for giving the exact answers. In this test those hotel general managers were chosen who fall into the potential respondents' group. As Brace (2008) suggested this method makes it possible for the researcher to find out the 'uncomfortable' topics, the abstract questions, vocabulary problems and the order of the questions. The 'uncomfortable' questions were mostly in connection with the exact statistics data related to the performance of the hotel they run. It varied which data was considered to be 'confidential', the occupancy rate, the revenue per available room or the average daily rate. Trying to get rid of these issues the cover letter contained a section about the privacy policy and ethical behaviour about the data they share. To avoid vocabulary problems there were some word changes for example instead of standards, regulations was used as a synonym and customisation was put into a sentence which helped understand its meaning. Besides the obvious benefits of the cognitive testing, the respondents were able to eliminate two questions which were not relevant according to their judgement. These questions aimed to find difference between the need for standardisation in different departments and guest cycles. In the exact exercise hotel managers should have ranked the departments (Front Office, Housekeeping, Food and Beverage, Maintenance, Sales and Marketing, Spa and Kitchen) according to the importance of standardising them. The task would have been the same in case of the guest cycle (Pre-arrival, Arrival, Stay, and Departure). Hotel managers emphasised that this question puts them in an impossible situation because these categories are all very important and wide at the same time, quality has to be assured in all departments and guest cycles so it was thought to be unrealistic for them to decide the ranking. This statement helped to understand their point of view considering standards and proved that standardisation is a complex phenomenon and questions should be asked only to investigate the processes of the hotels.

#### **4.1.3.2 Collecting the sample**

After the pilot tests, the questionnaire was finalised and the actual survey started in June 2013 and closed in November. Approximately 20 percent of the questionnaires were answered by an interviewee personally. As Saris and Gallhofer (2007) claimed, it can be noted that these personal meetings made it possible to observe the non-verbal reactions of the interviewee and

they were more willing to make time to answer the questions this way. Unfortunately personal surveys have a disadvantage; they are very costly which made it impossible to get all the results personally. Due to this fact the online questionnaire was preferred. The link to the online questionnaire was sent to the email addresses of 366 hotel general managers (though the direct email addresses of every one of the general managers were not available). The covering letter which included the link informed the general managers about the purpose of the research and the ethical issues in connection with the data they were providing besides the personal contact they can use if they have any questions about the questions. Besides the printable version of the questionnaire was attached to the letter because as the pilot test revealed there are several hotel general manager who prefer a tangible document.

The research process was planned, tested and executed to be able to get good quality data and make it easier and faster for hotel general managers to complete the questionnaire and provide information. The main consequences from the interviews and the pilot testing helped a lot in amending the questionnaire and think about phrasing the hypotheses and providing important and useful methods and results for the hotel industry as well.

## 4.2 Sample characteristics

The following subchapter contains the characteristics of the collected sample. The tables in the section illustrate the exact numbers and percentages considering the most important features of hotels who answered to the questionnaire. The frequency tables from the applied SPSS program can be found in Appendix 3.

<b>Region</b>	<b>HAH</b>	<b>Percentage to all</b>	<b>Sample</b>	<b>Percentage to all</b>	<b>Percentage of HAH</b>
<b>Balaton</b>	54	14.75	18	22.22	33.33
<b>Budapest</b>	122	33.33	14	17.28	11.48
<b>Southern Hungarian Plains</b>	29	7.92	2	2.47	6.90
<b>Southern Transdanubian</b>	29	7.92	7	8.64	24.14
<b>Northern Region</b>	41	11.20	4	4.94	9.76
<b>Eastern Region</b>	35	9.56	6	7.41	17.14
<b>Western Region</b>	56	15.30	30	37.04	53.57

Table 18 The ratio of hotels in HAH database and in the sample according to the region

Table 18 shows the percentage of hotels in the Hungarian regions. The aim of the table is to compare the sample with the population and introducing the different shares of the regions in operating hotel capacity. HAH represents the Hungarian Hotel & Restaurant Association' database (2012) and the summarisation of the hotels belonging to the regions. The categories only contain three-, four- and five-star hotels. The second column shows the comparison between the number of all hotels (3, 4 and 5 star) belonging to the Hungarian Hotel & Restaurant Association and the hotels in each region. The fourth column illustrates the same issue only comparing the data in the sample. These two columns represent the differences between the ration of the hotels in the sample and in the original database. The numbers indicate that the following regions were stronger represented in the sample than in HAH database: Balaton and the Western Region; the next group of regions are approximately equally represented in the two databases: Southern Transdanubian and Eastern Region; the final group contains those regions where the percentage of hotels are less than in the original database: Budapest, Southern Hungarian Plains, and the Northern Region.

<b>Hotel type</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Apartment hotel	2	2.5
Boutique hotel	7	8.6
Budget hotel	0	0
Medical hotel	3	3.7
Medical and Spa hotel	13	16.0
Conference hotel	7	8.6
Conference and spa hotel	15	18.5
Airport hotel	1	1.2
Resort hotel	4	4.9
City hotel	20	24.7
Spa hotel	9	11.1

Table 19 Hotel types and their representation in the sample

Table 19 shows the different hotel types and their number in the sample. The table shows clearly that most of the hotels which data and information were used in the sample are city hotels. The second most represented group is conference and spa hotel and the third is medical and spa hotel. It has to be notes that although most hotel belong to the city hotel



group, if hotel with spa in their type added together (37), it becomes obvious that 45.6 percent of the hotels in the sample are somehow claim to be spa hotels. Unfortunately there was one category which was not chosen by any hotel general managers, budget hotels. However, it is important to note that the Hungarian phrase ‘Garnizálló’ which was translated here as budget hotel is not a preferred title in Hungary; it is not so popular among hotel general managers as budget hotel is in western countries.

<b>Stars</b>	<b>HAH</b>	<b>Percentage to all</b>	<b>Sample</b>	<b>Percentage to all</b>	<b>Percentage of HAH</b>
<b>3 star</b>	171	46.72	25	30.9	14.62
<b>4 star</b>	175	47.81	49	60.5	28
<b>5 star</b>	20	5.46	7	8.6	35

Table 20 The ratio of hotels in HAH database and in the sample according to their quality (stars)

Table 20 illustrates the number of hotels from different categories (stars) which data has been analysed. Most of the hotels belong to the four-star category in the Hungarian Hotel & Restaurant Association and it is the same in the sample, although their percentage is much higher in this research than in the database. In this sample the three-star hotels are less represented than in the HAH database which makes the other two more dominant. The last column shows the exact percentage of the different star hotels in the sample comparing to the number in the existing database. It can be seen that five-star hotels reached the highest percentage (35%) and the second is the four-star hotels comparing to the popularity given by the HAH.

<b>Year of opening</b>	<b>Number of hotels</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
<b>&gt;1980</b>	10	12.35
<b>1982-1992</b>	14	17.28
<b>1996-2000</b>	13	16.05
<b>2001-2005</b>	17	20.99
<b>2006-2012</b>	27	33.33

Table 21 The age split of hotels in the sample

The table (Table 21) shows the hotels and their opening years which are being analysed. It is clear from the results that most of the hotels in sample opened after 2001, more than 50% of

the establishments. It proves the fact that the number of competitors increased as it is said in the statistics chapter and the investments as well which makes the situation harder for hotels to have guests in their accommodation facility. This oversupply led to the low prices as well, although there are other strategies which can be applied. The most productive year in hotel opening - for these hotels in the sample – was 2008 when 8 hotels were launched, but 1996, 2001 and 2007 were significant years as well with 5 hotel openings.

<b>Hotelstars Union</b>	<b>Number of hotels</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
<b>Classified</b>	57	70.4
<b>Not classified</b>	24	29.6

Table 22 The number and ratio of hotels according to their Hotelstars Union membership

One would assume that those hotels who are members of the Hungarian Hotel & Restaurant Association have already been classified by the Hotelstars Union, because the system is highly supported by the organisation and their members – hotel general managers – take part in the evaluation as inspectors. The results show (Table 22) that more than two-third of the hotels are members of the Hotelstars Union as well, though the other less than one-third of them are not classified, yet. It is however important to add that the evaluation and classification is compulsory from June 2012 but hotels – hotel general managers and owners - can decide if they choose to be an unrated hotel, which does not allow using star, or they apply for an evaluation. According to my experience and survey which was carried out personally, most of these unevaluated hotels are already in the process of inspection and classification, which actually takes time to prepare for because it is very common that they do not have all supply to put them in the hotel rooms or they have to change or procure furniture or computers or any other elements. It also takes time to consider which category they want to belong to and which category they are ready to go and what they have to alter to belong to the desired category.

The subchapter contained the characteristics of the sample collected for this research. Most of the hotels which got into the sample are city or wellness hotels, the establishments are from the Balaton and Western Regions and most of them are four-star hotels which were opened after 2001 and more than 70% of them are classified by the Hotelstars Union.

## 4.3 Testing the hypotheses

### 4.3.1 The analysis of hotel characteristics and the level of standardisation (Hypotheses 1)

#### *Hypothesis 1*

*There is a relationship between the different hotel characteristics and the level of standardisation in the Hungarian hotel industry.*

*Hypothesis 1a There is a relationship between chain membership and the level of standardisation.*

*Hypothesis 1b There is a relationship between Hotelstars Union membership and the level of standardisation.*

*Hypothesis 1c There is a relationship between the number of rooms in the hotel and the level of standardisation.*

*Hypothesis 1d There is a relationship between the star rating of the hotel and the level of standardisation.*

For proving the hypothesis a methodology had to be developed. At first the standardisation level of the analysed hotel had to be identified. As this is a special type of research with a different aims than those mentioned in the literature review. These all explain the need for a new kind of approach.

#### 4.3.1.1 The weight of the standard groups

For the determination of the standardisation level a collection of standards was used which is found out and applied by one of the biggest international hotel chains – the exact name of the hotel chain cannot be mentioned because of the confidentiality of these documents. The ‘book’ contains all the standards referring to every activity which can happen in a hotel concentrating on processes in connection with the guests or only affect employees and their contact. I referred to these rules as a ‘book’ and this was not a coincidence considering the size of this document, so using it for research purposes, it had to be shortened. It is not a valid method to leave out some processes which is not considered important by the researcher, so a more professional strategy had to be applied. The standards fortunately were grouped into – as

I call them – standard groups, which represent the exact rules under the title of the different sections. In the questionnaire and the analysis these categories have been used as indicators by which the standardisation level of each hotel could be measured. The list of the standard groups can be seen in Appendix 12.

As it was stated before, my experience suggested that the importance of standards differ in case every standard groups, which made it compulsory to get to know the different weights of the standard groups. For finding out the exact numbers 6 interviews were made – as it has been mentioned in the previous chapter. These interviewees had to determine the importance of standardising the list of processes (standard groups) in Likert scale from 1 to 7. The results of these evaluations can be seen on Figure 19.

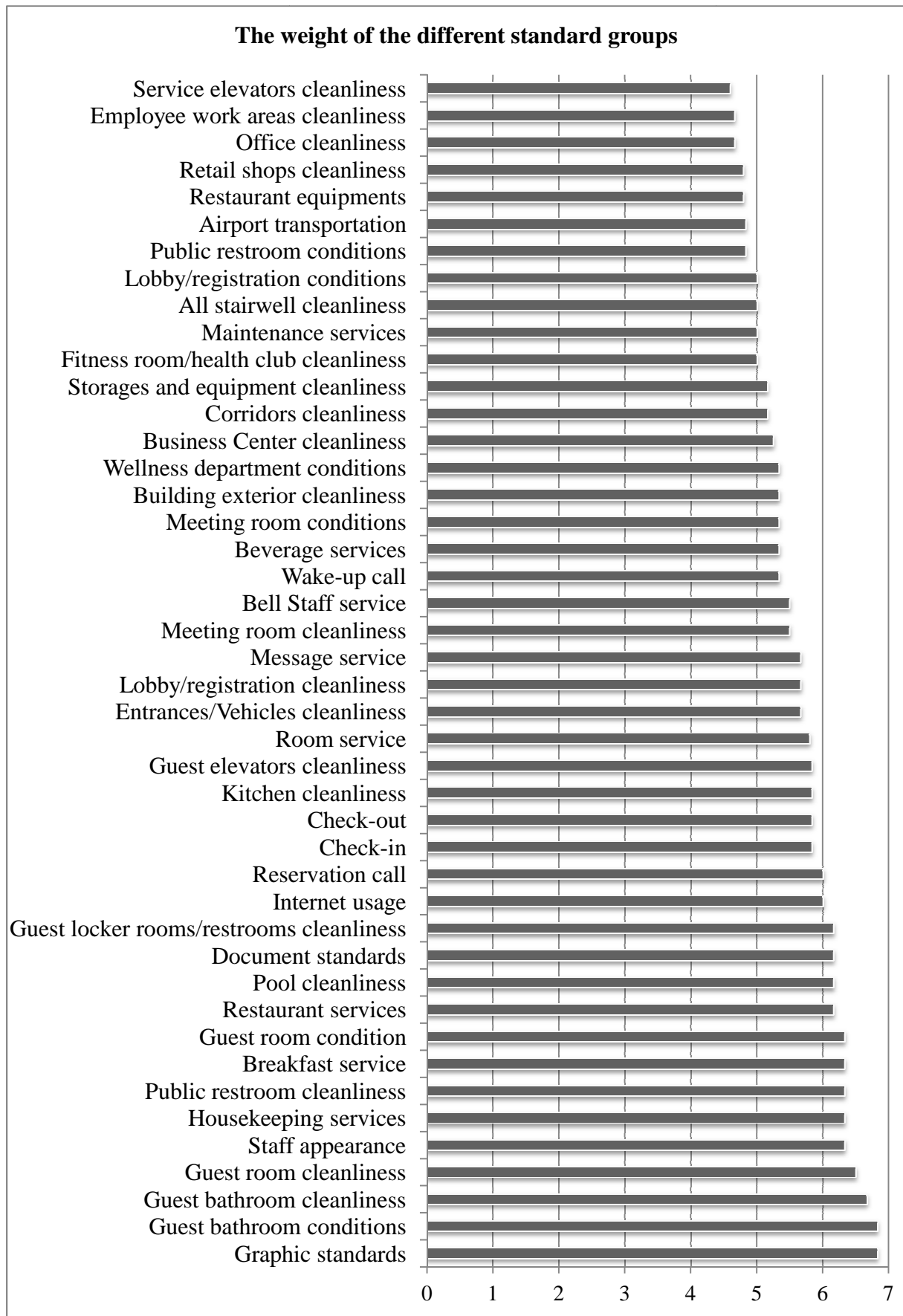


Figure 19 The weight of different standard groups

As it can be seen on Figure 19 the different standard groups are not weighted the same, there are some processes which are deemed more important to standardise than others. Figure 19 illustrates all the 44 standard groups.

The first five standard groups which are evaluated as essential to standardise contain three which can be classified as hygienic processes. However, it has to be mentioned that cleanliness occurs in case of several other standard group names, the hygiene and condition of the guest bathroom is a deal breaker according to the hotel experts. The other two standard groups ranked on the first and fifth place are graphic standards and staff appearances. The importance of graphic standards come from the fact that hotel chains strictly specify the rule considering the logo and the design of the documents, the way the name of the hotel is phrased and designed. These documents are monitored by the centre of the hotel chain through mystery shoppers (Williams and Buswell, 2003), and inspectors (Williams and Buswell, 2003).

The last five – the processes which are less important to standardise – standard groups contain mostly those processes and activities which are going on in the staff area and are not in connection with the guests. There is one exception from this, restaurant equipment can be in connection with the customers of the hotel. Although the opinions of the respondents suggest that the restaurant can work effectively and the staff can serve the guests even without the standardisation of the equipment.

These weights have been evaluated by the chosen hotel experts who have experience using standards in the everyday operation of the hotel they ran or are still running. These results then were used to help determine the level of standardisation in the hotels which are in the sample.

The coefficient of variation (CV) has been applied. The formula of CV compares the ratio of the standard deviation to the mean. The lower the number (percentage) is the smaller the difference between the points determined by the general managers (Barna and Molnár, 2005). This approach allowed the measurement of how much the interviewees agreed on the evaluation of the different standard groups and to determine an exact number for the above mentioned topic. The standard groups the hotel chain general managers most agreed on can be seen on Table 23, and those groups which are not that similarly evaluated can be found in Table 24.

<b>Standard groups (homogeneous)</b>	<b>CV</b>	<b>Rank</b>
<b>Graphic standards</b>	5.97	1
<b>Guest bathroom conditions</b>	5.97	2
<b>Room service</b>	6.9	20
<b>Guest bathroom cleanliness</b>	7.75	3
<b>Housekeeping services</b>	8.15	6
<b>Guest room cleanliness</b>	8.43	4
<b>Meeting room conditions</b>	9.68	24

Table 23 Standard groups with a coefficient of variation under 10%

<b>Standard groups (heterogeneous)</b>	<b>CV</b>	<b>Rank</b>
<b>Airport transportation</b>	30.45	39
<b>Wake-up call</b>	30.62	26
<b>Employee work areas cleanliness</b>	32.26	43
<b>Service elevators cleanliness</b>	32.97	44

Table 24 Standard groups with a coefficient of variation above 30%

The two tables (Table 23 and 24) show the extremes of the decisions made by the hotel chain general managers. According to Barna and Molnár (2005) these extremes are if the CV is under 10% meaning that they are homogeneous and above 30% when they are heterogeneous. The last column of the tables present the final ranking according to the means can be found. According to the percentages it can be easily seen that the interviewed general managers agreed on the most important (according to them) standard groups which need to be regulated. Although they highly argued on the last two items and two more which can be determined to be less essential to standardise.

#### **4.3.1.2 Written or not written?**

In independent hotels and in the case of some chain members as well it cannot be expected to have a standard 'book', or documentation containing all the rules or standards. It raises the question to determine if there is a difference between the efficiency of written and oral standards or regulations. The same hotel chain general managers had to evaluate the effect along a 1 to 7 Likert scale as well.

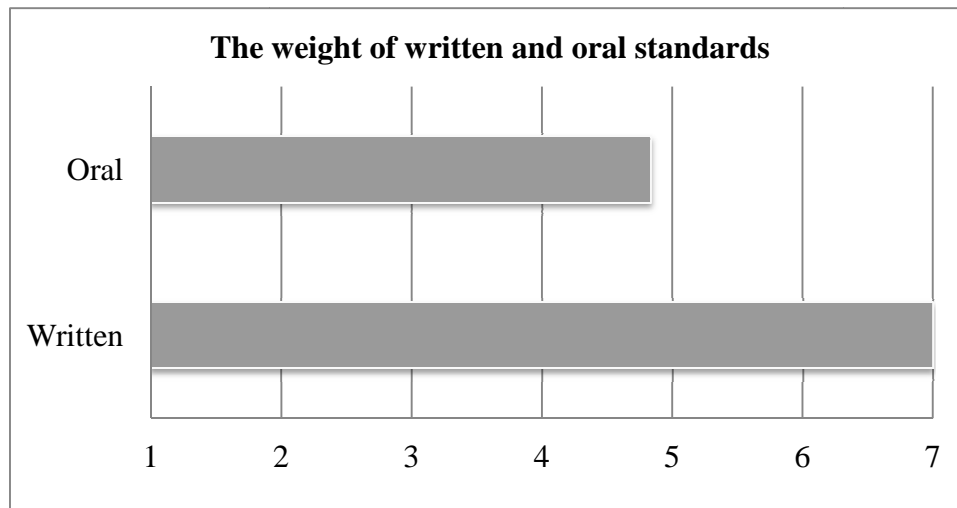


Figure 20 The efficiency evaluation of oral and written standards

Figure 20 shows the difference between the efficiency of the hotel standards if they are documented, written down and if they are customs or agreed but cannot be found in a book or a document. The hotel experts who evaluated the two ways compared the effect and the compliance of the specified regulations. As it can be seen in Figure 20 the difference in efficiency between the standard written down or only agreed and used is considerable. These weights were then used to determine the level of standardisation in the examined hotels together with the weights matched to the different standard groups. This method gives a complex assessment about a hotel's standardisation level and practices.

#### 4.3.1.3 Determining the level of standardisation

Although specifying the current situation of the hotels in the sample it had to be investigated whether the 44 processes/standard groups are standardised or not and if they are standardised the question was if the rules are set as the result of an agreement which becomes a custom or they are collected and written down as a 'book' of regulations. The questionnaire contains a table with the 44 standard groups and the hotel general managers – who fit the sampling criteria and were able to fill out the questionnaire – had to mark if they standardise those processes and if there are oral or written standards considering the processes.

After collecting the results, the analysis method has to be elaborated. For this reason an indicator has been developed. A number has been assigned to the different answer options, so if the hotel does not have a service or process mentioned by the 44 indicators, it got no number. An example for this is the business centre cleanliness, because it is obvious that examples where a hotel does not have any business centre the cleaning process of it is



impossible to standardise. If the hotel does have that service but is not standardised any way, it got the 1. If the standard group exists in the hotel and it standardised but not written down only agreed on, so it is standardised orally, it got the number 2. The highest category was the following: if the process existed in the hotel, so they provided that service and it was regulated and written down so documented, the hotel got a 3 for that standard group.

The numbers then were put into an excel table, where the vertical column contained the name of the standard groups listed below each other. The weights were put next to them to be able to match these two together. The numbers of the hotels were inserted in the horizontal lines so the different evaluations (1, 2 or 3) were listed under them to match the standard groups they belong to. The weights of written and oral standards were put below the large table containing the rest of the data. In Attachment 5 there is a picture of one piece of the excel table which could fit the page.

At first the point given to a standard group by the hotel general managers has been multiplied by the weight determined by the hotel experts in the previous interviews. This method is carried on for every standard group – all the 44 – one by one. The product firstly is defined by these two indicators. Then the different significance of the form of standards – oral or written – is used as an alteration, the formula is multiplied by the weight determined by the hotel experts for the compliance of the standard by the employees. After calculating every product for every standard group the formula sums up the products. Then the result had to be transformed into a percentage to be able to determine the level of standardisation for each hotels. Firstly the sum was divided by the sum of the weights and then the maximum of the written/oral weights which equals the evaluation matching the written standard. The result became a percentage which is able to describe the level of standardisation in the analysed hotels. This number makes it able to compare the different hotels with each other and allow further calculations. The result at the end can be seen as the percentage the hotel is standardised. These numbers are going to be used in testing Hypothesis 1 and the further hypotheses as the level of standardisation and its relationship with other factors and indicators which are being mentioned later.

#### **4.3.1.4 The method of testing Hypothesis 1**

The empirical method had to be chosen to fit the purpose of the research, the framing of the hypothesis and is able to deal with the data gathered by the survey.

As Hypothesis 1 suggests a relationship is searched for between the different characteristics of the standardisation level of the hotels. For analysing this topic different methods had to be applied.

#### *Hypothesis 1a*

Since this sub hypothesis deals with the relationship between chain membership and the level of standardisation, at first the chain member and the independent hotels had to be separated and their influence had to be determined by the applicable method.

The analysis of variance was chosen because this method is able to make ‘inferences about the mean values of a variety of random variables’ (Ross, 2010 p.503). From one or two-factor ANOVA, one-factor was picked, because it means that the variable depend on only one factor the mean of a variable depends on only a single factor, actually the sample which it belongs to (Ross, 2010).

For testing the hypothesis the aim was to be able to give a number which will say the exact contribution of chain membership to the level of standardisation in hotels. This aim explains that a special method of the analysis of variance had to be chosen, it was the Fisher-Cochran theorem. The method is a useful way to find out if different treatments or conditions might influence some continuous measurements or responses significantly (<http://www.math.bme.hu/~marib/tvgazd/tv7.pdf> 28/12/2013).

#### *Hypothesis 1b*

This hypothesis wants to find out the relationship between the Hotelstars Union membership and the level of standardisation in the Hungarian hotels. To determine the relationship the analysis of variance (one-way ANOVA) has been chosen. The method examines the influence of a factor to the dependent variable, in this case the Hotelstars Union membership to the level of standardisation (Huzsvai and Vincze, 2012).

#### *Hypothesis 1c*

This sub hypothesis searches for the relationship between the number of rooms the hotel has and the level of standardisation. To investigate the nature of the relationship, correlation analysis has been chosen. The value of the correlation coefficient can be between 1.00 and 0.00 although it can be negative and positive, where negative means that one of the variables

increases when the other decreases and positive means that both variables behave the same way (Norris et al, 2012).

#### *Hypothesis 1d*

The aim of the current hypothesis is to find to determine if there is a relationship between the star rating of the hotel and the level of standardisation. For finding out the expected relationship the analysis of variance has been applied, because it is able to compare ‘the means of a minimum of two (unrelated) groups but is most commonly used when there are three or more mean scores to compare’ (Norris et al, 2012 p.199) After the result a post hoc analysis has been applied to find out more about the differences between the groups.

#### **4.3.1.5 The results of analysing Hypothesis 1**

##### *Hypothesis 1a*

As it has already been mentioned the sample had to be separated to chain member and independent hotels. The level of standardisation (percent) was assigned to every hotel in the sample. Then chain member hotels got the number 1 and the independents number 2, which made it possible to organise them according to the numbers. After that the mean and the deviation of the two groups were counted. Then the mean of the whole sample had to be determined, where the means of the different groups were weighted by the number of hotels belonged to them (chain 19, not chain 62) and the whole product was divided by the number of all elements (81). The total mean of the groups is being used to count further and determine the two sub-variances with which help the variance ratio within and between groups will be able to be defined.

	<b>Chain member</b>	<b>Not a chain member</b>	<b>Altogether</b>
<b>Number of hotels</b>	19	62	81
<b>Variance ratio between groups</b>	5.0362447		
<b>Variance ratio within groups</b>	94.963755		
<b>Variance ratio (H)</b>	0.2244158		

Table 25 The results of testing Hypothesis 1

There is definitely a relationship 0.22 between chain membership and the level of standardisation of the hotels (Table 25). Although it is important to mention that the relationship can only be determined as weak, because the number is between 0.00 – 0.4 and

according to Barna and Molnár (2005) it can be called weak. The percentage of the standardisation level of hotels is explained by chain membership can be seen in the Variance ratio between groups section and it shows that 5% of the level of standardisation at a hotel can be explained by the chain membership. It suggests that 95% of the standardisation level is a consequence of other characteristics at the hotel. The importance of the finding is that independent hotels can be nearly as standardised as chain member hotels where standardisation and keeping the regulations is compulsory. It also follows that the general manager of independent hotels think that standardisation is important and worth using, although there can be some exceptions as well.

During the personal surveys I had the chance to talk more with the general managers and the information I got and the results of the analysis presented before make it unavoidable to make further research in the topic. It would be important to find out what other indicators (besides chain membership) contribute to the level of standardisation in a hotel. The interviews suggest that the personality, the experience and the age of the hotel general managers could be important indicators in the issue. However, the personal details of the hotel leaders were not the topic of this current thesis.

#### *Hypothesis 1b*

The members of the Hotelstars Union were given the number 1 and those who are not members got the number 2. For analysis one way ANOVA has been applied, where the dependent variable was the level of standardisation and factor was Hotelstars Union membership.

Since variance homogeneity is a precondition in this kind of method, a Levene test has been made at the same time (Huzsvai and Vincze, 2012).

Levene test

Test of Homogeneity of Variance			
Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
.726	1	79	.397

Table 26 Test of Homogeneity of Variance

The precondition of evaluating and explaining the results of the analysis of variance is the homogeneity of variance which is only valid if the Levene test is not significant (Table 26). In case of Hypothesis 1b this result is accomplished, so the analysis can be continued.

#### One-way ANOVA

ANOVA					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	493480.622	1	493480.622	7.963	.006
Within Groups	4896016.510	79	61974.893		
Total	5389497.132	80			

Table 27 The result of one-way ANOVA in case of Hypothesis 1b

The result shows (Table 27) that there is a difference between groups in case of the standardisation level, so it can be stated that Hotelstars Union membership have a relationship with the level of standardisation in Hungarian hotels.

#### *Hypothesis 1c*

To test Hypothesis 1c correlation analysis was applied.

#### Correlation analysis

Correlations			
		Level of standardisation	Number of rooms
Level of standardisation	Pearson Correlation	1	.330**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.003
	N	81	81
Number of rooms	Pearson Correlation	.330**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	
	N	81	81
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Table 28 The result of correlation analysis in case of Hypothesis 1c

The results show (Table 28) that there is a significant relationship between the number of rooms and the level of standardisation in the hotel. The relationship is significant because it is under 0.05 (0.03) and there is a weak relationship since the correlation coefficient is 0.33 which suggests an existing but weak relation (Barna and Molnár, 2005). Since the correlation is positive it can be stated that in case of bigger hotels, the level of standardisation is higher.

#### Hypothesis 1d

The last sub hypothesis, which belongs to Hypothesis 1, examines the relationship between the star rating of the hotel and the level of standardisation. A one-way ANOVA test was applied to find out if there is a difference between different star ratings.

#### Test of Homogeneity of Variance

Test of Homogeneity of Variance			
Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
.251	2	78	.779

Table 29 The test of homogeneity of variance in case of Hypothesis 1d

The Levene test shows the data is appropriate to use one-way ANOVA and the analysis can be continued (Table 29).

#### One-way ANOVA

ANOVA					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	451708.500	2	225854.250	3.568	.033
Within Groups	4937788.632	78	63304.982		
Total	5389497.132	80			

Table 30 The result of one-way ANOVA in case of Hypothesis 1d

The result of the analysis of variance can be seen on Table 30. The output shows that there is a significant difference between hotels with different star rating. To get to know which groups are responsible for the difference, the analysis had to be continued.

## Post hoc analysis

Multiple Comparisons								
LSD								
(I) Star rating		(J) Star rating		Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
							Lower Bound	Upper Bound
dimension2	3	dimension3	4	-107.034	61.840	.087	-230.15	16.08
			5	-273.305*	107.591	.013	-487.50	-59.11
	4	dimension3	3	107.034	61.840	.087	-16.08	230.15
			5	-166.271	101.664	.106	-368.67	36.13
	5	dimension3	3	273.305*	107.591	.013	59.11	487.50
			4	166.271	101.664	.106	-36.13	368.67
*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.								

Table 31 LSD analysis for Hypothesis 1d

The analysis Table 31 contains shows a significant difference between three and five star hotels in case of the level of standardisation.

### 4.3.1.6 Thesis 1

#### Thesis 1a

It has been confirmed that there is a weak relationship between hotel chain membership and the level of standardisation in the Hungarian hotel industry. It has also been stated that there are other possible factors affecting the standardisation level of a hotel.

#### Thesis 1b

It has been determined that there is a relationship between Hotelstars Union membership and the level of standardisation.

#### Thesis 1c

It has been proven that there is a positive, weak relationship between the number of rooms in the hotel and the level of standardisation.

It has been found that there is a relationship between the star rating of the hotel and the level of standardisation and the difference is between three-star and five-star hotels.

#### **4.3.2 Searching for the relationship between standardisation and customisation (Hypothesis 2)**

##### *Hypothesis 2*

*There is a relationship between the level of standardisation and customisation in Hungarian hotels.*

The aim of Hypothesis 2 is to find out if standardisation and customisation could happen at the same time in a hotel. The most important issue here is to prove that the two concepts are not independent and hotels are using all of them in their everyday operations. This issue is the conceptual basis of the whole thesis and one of the most important sources of the novelty the research will provide. The methodology applied to prove this hypothesis follows the previously mentioned one but uses other research methods and several forms of analysis to be able to examine the problem and support Hypothesis 2.

##### **4.3.2.1 Determining the level of customisation**

The level of standardisation is calculated according to the previously mentioned processes. Determining the level of customisation had to follow the logic created for standardisation to be able to compare them. That is the reason why a similar excel table was applied to define the level of customisation. The 44 standard groups or processes were listed in this table as well, since they include all the processes which can exist in a hotel, so it is able to provide a comprehensive result. The difference between the calculation of the level of standardisation and customisation is the weights which have already been detailed earlier in the previous subchapter. Since standardisation is proved to be used by hotel chain member hotels and known by their general managers (as it is written down and evaluated at least once a year by a mystery shopper or inspector), customisation is less ‘tangible’ and it cannot be definitely determined in which processes customisation is needed and that is why weights were not assigned to the 44 processes.

As customisation can work in a different way than standardisation, the question containing the written and oral regulation could not be used here. Since the approach of the subject was



altered, the question which is asked had to be changed as well. Although the answer options in the customisation topic contained an element which was common with the standardisation part, with the no service option. As it has been mentioned before it was important to distinguish if a hotel does not standardise a service or the process does not exist in the establishment. This issue also has a crucial role in case of customisation, so the answer option remained. The other opportunities are quite different from the standardisation section. The aim of the question was to find out if the hotel allows customisation and if they do only partially or the whole process can be changed according to the customer needs. So the other response opportunities in case of each process (44) were 'it is not possible to change the process at all', 'the process can only partially be customised to the guests' needs' and 'the process can entirely be altered if the guest wants to change them'.

Analysing the responses, numbers were assigned to the 44 processes similar to the standardisation section. If the hotel does not have the process/service a 1 is given to the listed indicator. If the hotel policy or the hotel general manager or any other regulation or customs do not allow customising the process according to the guests' needs at all, it got 2. If the customisation of the process is possible but only partially, it got a 3 and if the service/process could be fully customised to whatever need the customer has, a 4 was assigned. After coding the answers, the result was summarised, which determined the whole sum of customisation at the hotel. After that those processes and their value were excluded from the calculation, which do not exist in the hotel and the ratio of customisation could be identified. Then the whole product was divided by the maximum reachable value for defining the percentage/level of customisation in the hotel. The previous products can be used to compare the data, although the percentages are much easier to understand, deal with and compare.

#### **4.3.2.2 The method of testing Hypothesis 2**

As the results of the analysis spreadsheet, the level of standardisation and customisation are handled as categorical variables, the method of testing had to be chosen to fit this characteristic. This fact limited the options of possible methods. The other differential issue was that a certain type of analysis had to be selected which can determine not only the relationship between the two concept (level of significance) but the strength of the relationship as well. These facts led to the application of Cross Tabulations Analysis and Cramer's V statistics.

### *Cross-tabulation analysis*

The Cross tabulation analysis is one of the most popular and commonly used analytical tools in researches because it is easy to understand and explain for researchers and customers as well (Sajtos and Mitev, 2007). It is estimated that variable frequency analysis and cross – tabulation analysis appears and is used in more than 90% of all research analysis (<http://qualtrics.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Cross-Tabulation-Theory.pdf> 27/12/2013). With this analysis the researcher is able prove if there is a relationship between two or more variables and compare the results. Cross-tabulation analysis most often use categorical (nominal measurement scale) data. The researcher has a very important role in case of these analyses because the results will not show the direction of the relationship, it only proves the existence of the relationship, the researcher has to analyse it further and show the nature of the relationship and the meaning of it (Jánosa, 2011).

From the cross-tabulation analyses the Cramer's V statistics were chosen as the appropriate tool for investigating the issue. Cramer's V is based on chi-square and it is a very popular method to examine nominal associations because it gives a number as a result between 0 and 1 and it can be applied to any kind of cross tabs (Sajtos and Mitev, 2007).

### *Lambda*

Lambda is another cross-tabulation analysis tool which is able to provide an indication about the strength of the relationship between independent and dependent variables. The value of the indicator varies conditionally on which variable is considered to be the dependent one (Sajtos and Mitev, 2007). This method can not only determine the relationship between the variables but it is able to define the influence of the variables on each other and which could be the dependent variable. Lambda shows the strength of the relationship in a percentage which makes it very clear to investigate the correlation (Sajtos and Mitev, 2007).

### *Cluster analysis*

After determining the relationship between standardisation and customisation a cluster analysis is carried out. The aim of the method is to create homogeneous groups of hotels according to the two variables the level of standardisation and customisation. The hotels belonging to the same cluster should have common features but there are differences between those hotels which got into other clusters. There are two different approaches which the researcher can choose from: hierarchical methods and partitioning methods (Mooi and

Sarstedt, 2011). There are two types of hierarchical clustering which can be applied. The first one is the agglomerative and the second one is the divisive form. The difference between them is the way they start the process, agglomerative clustering begins by handling every object as an individual cluster and ends by every one of them belong to one cluster, the divisive mode turn the process upside down (Norusis, 2012). The aim here is to be able to identify the objects which belong together but according to the results and the graphs, the researcher has to decide where they stop. The other form of clustering which is going to be applied in this thesis is K-means clustering. It differs from the previously mentioned one, because the number of clusters has to be defined by the researcher before the whole process begins (Norusis, 2012). Although in case of larger samples hierarchical clustering can be hard to understand and see through (according to Jánosa, 2011 a 70-object sample can already be problematic in this context), this makes K-means clustering a good solution for this problem. As this sample contains 81 data the results of the K-means method was easier to analyse and explain. Four clusters were set to create because in case of two variables four clusters were meant to describe the whole phenomenon.

#### 4.3.2.3 The results of analysing Hypothesis 2

This hypothesis aimed to find the relationship between the two important concepts, standardisation and customisation; using an existing list of processes and the weights given by the experts and with these data determined the level of standardisation and customisation.

*Cramer V*

Case Processing Summary						
	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Custom * Standard	81	100.0%	0	.0%	81	100.0%

Table 32 Case Processing Summary

Table 32 shows the case processing summary which illustrates that there is no missing value in the analysis and all the responses are valid which makes the researcher able to evaluate the results of the method. The first column shows that the analysis took place between customisation and standardisation.

Symmetric Measures			
		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	8.097	.000
	Cramer's V	.954	.000
N of Valid Cases		81	

Table 33 The value of Cramer's V in case of standardisation and customisation

Table 33 illustrates that the result is significant, because it is under 0.05 and the correlation is very strong, since it is very close to 1. It means that the standardisation and customisation of processes in a hotel is related and they are significantly not independent. This finding suggests that theory of the relationship between standardisation and customisation stands and contradicts a lot of theories which were mentioned before (Chapter 2.2).

#### *Lambda*

The other test executed was a Lambda measure, which will help proving the correlation and the effect of the variables on each other; it is able to tell which one of them has a stronger influence on the other one.

Directional Measures						
			Value	Asymp. Std. Error <sup>a</sup>	Approx. T <sup>b</sup>	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Lambda	Symmetric	.907	.026	21.072	.000
		Custom Dependent	.907	.034	20.584	.000
		Standard Dependent	.907	.034	18.923	.000
	Goodman and Kruskal tau	Custom Dependent	.912	.000		.248 <sup>c</sup>
		Standard Dependent	.908	.007		.327 <sup>c</sup>

Table 34 The results of Lambda test

The results of the Lambda test illustrated in Table 34 supports the previously detailed idea which was already be proved by Cramer's V as well. These results in Table 34 show that the correlation between standardisation and customisation is very high, they have very strong relationship with each other since Lambda is measured in a 0-1 scale and the result is 0.907. The other aim of testing Lambda was to determine which variable has stronger influence on the other. The value of Lambda makes it clear that both of the variables have the same influence on each other which means according to Sajtos and Mitev (2007) that they both can be independent and dependent variables.

### *Cluster analysis*

To get to know and be able to explain the results a cluster analysis was performed. The aim of the cluster analysis was to determine groups of hotels according to the level of standardisation and customisation and observe how these two concepts exist next to each other.

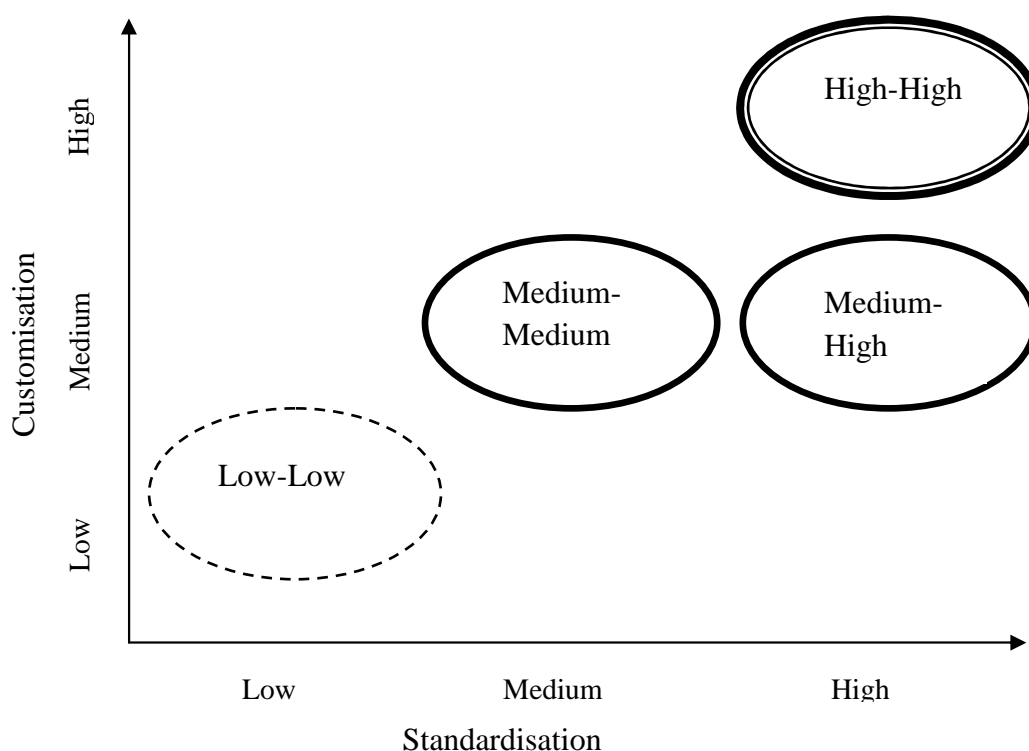
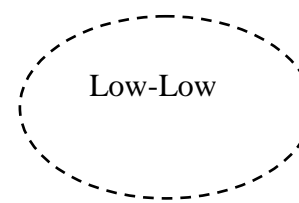
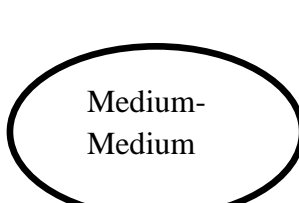
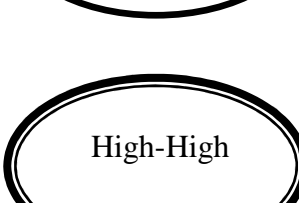
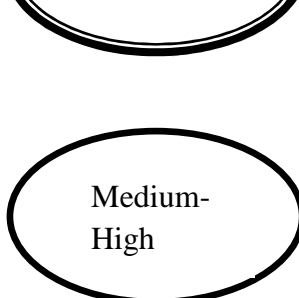


Figure 21 The illustration of cluster analysis results

Figure 21 presents the clusters provided by the K-means clustering method. The figure shows what kind of groups can be created from the analysed sample according to the variables, the level of standardisation and customisation. It is very clear on the picture that the level of standardisation and customisation exist together on the same level or similar level in the

hotels. In case of three of the four groups the value of the two variables are the same (low-low, medium-medium, high-high) and there is one where the difference between the levels made it a mixed category (medium-high). To explain and name the clusters the mean of the standardisation and customisation level were counted and compared to each other. The numbers are as follow:

	<p>The average level of standardisation is 0.64, the average level of customisation is 0.62, which made this category the low-low cluster compared to the others. Number of objects belonging to this group: 14</p>
	<p>The second category is the medium-medium cluster, where the average level of standardisation is 0.71, and the average level of customisation is 0.75. Number of objects belonging to this group: 16</p>
	<p>The third cluster, the final unmixed category is the high-high group, where the average level of standardisation is 0.89 and the average level of customisation is 0.91. Number of objects belonging to this group: 13</p>
	<p>Those objects belong to the last group which has a high level of standardisation (mean: 0.94) and a medium level of customisation (mean: 0.67). Number of objects belonging to this group: 38</p>

It can be stated according to the results that most of the elements belong to the medium-high group, so almost half of the hotels in the survey apply standardisation and customisation as well at the same time but the average level of customisation is lower than standardisation. Although it is important to add, that in case of more than half of the hotels the level of standardisation and customisation is the same or very similar.

#### 4.3.2.4 Thesis 2

It has been proved that there is a very strong correlation between the standardisation and customisation level of the Hungarian hotels. The two concepts are not independent from each other and they influence each other in the same high level.

### **4.3.3 Determining the most important standards**

#### *Hypothesis 3*

*A group of processes/standard groups can be identified which has the most influence on the performance indicators when they are standardised and customised and at the same time when they are only standardised or customised.*

The goal of the hypothesis is to determine those standard groups which have more influence on the different performance indicators when they are standardised or customised and standardised and customised. The most important issue in case of this hypothesis is to analyse the 44 processes or standard groups if they should be standardised or customised or standardised and customised at the same time to fulfil the hotel's business goal or goals.

#### **4.3.3.1 The method of testing Hypothesis 3**

For analysing Hypothesis 3 a method had to be applied which is able to compare two different scaled variables and can provide the information about the independent variable's influence on the dependent. This case the variables can easily be differentiated because the relationship is searched for between each processes/standard groups and the performance indicators.

The method which was chosen has already been used in analysing Hypothesis 1 and was able to determine the effect of chain membership to the level of standardisation. The task in testing the current hypothesis was similar, so the same method is being applied.

The analysis of variance, Fisher-Cochran theorem, was chosen to elaborate the relationship. As Barna and Molnár (2005) state, with calculating the variance ratio between groups the researcher is able to determine the influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable. After that the variance ratio  $H$  can be counted as well which helps identifying the strength of the relationship between the variables.

The analysis was carried out using only the information about the existence of standardisation and customisation, if the process or standard group was not standardised in the hotel it got a 1 and if it was standardised (in any way) it got a 2. The same method was used in case of customisation as well, so only that data mattered if the process or standard group was customised (2) or not (1).

In this hypothesis the relationship between all the processes or standard groups and performance indicators were measured, because it will provide more information for hotels

with different business plans and goals. The aim of this thesis was not to limit the number of variables but to examine them all and leave the choice to hotel general managers to decide which they think is most important for their hotels. Although it is important to realise that some of the dependent variables stick together and have a relationship with each other. This topic is going to be examined in Hypothesis 4.

#### 4.3.3.2 The results of analysing Hypothesis 3

The following section is introducing the results of the analysis using the method mentioned in the previous subchapter. The tables do not include the results for all 44 processes or standard groups, as they only contain those which have influence which is determined as having more than 1% result in the second column. The value in this column equals to the variance ratio between groups and can define the dependent variables. The first rows of the tables present those standard groups or processes which have influence on the analysed performance indicator even though they are standardised or customised. The next rows show those groups which have a relationship with standardisation and the last section introduces the processes which have effect on the performance indicators if they are customised.

##### *RevPar*

The first performance indicator which is being examined is revenue per available room as one of the most important hotel performance measurement tool.

<b>RevPar</b>	<b>Standardisation (variance ratio between groups)</b>	<b>Variance ratio (H)</b>	<b>Customisation (variance ratio between groups)</b>	<b>Variance ratio (H)</b>
<b>Bell staff service</b>	3.32	0.18	2.94	0.17
<b>Business centre cleanliness</b>	6.96	0.26	4.24	0.21
<b>Guest elevators cleanliness</b>	6.81	0.26	1.43	0.12
<b>Wake-up call</b>	1.3	0.11	5.9	0.24

Table 35 The effect of standardisation and customisation of these groups on RevPar



## Standardised and customised processes

The processes which have influence on revpar and when they are standardised and customised are all the groups of activities which are in connection with the guests but have a role in the company efficiency as well. The bell staff have a crucial role in satisfying the guests which is the reason why their work processes have to be standardised which makes it predictable and customised as well because the guests can have special requests or they need special care. This statement is also true for the wake-up call, which has a procedure although the implied customer needs can lead to a different way of providing the service. The business centre and the guest elevators are two places which are visited or even used by guests, so the cleanliness is important not only for the hygiene but the aesthetic point of view as well. Although the time of cleaning has to be determined according to the customers' needs so as not to disturb them and serve their satisfaction.

### Standardised processes

Among the groups which have influence on revpar when they are standardised 6 cleaning processes can be identified as it can be seen in Appendix 4. These processes contain guest areas but staff areas as well which means that revpar not only have a relationship with the front stage but the back stage as well. From the cleaning standard groups the locker rooms and the pool cleanliness have to be highlighted because their value is the highest and their standardisation has the strongest relationship with the value of revpar. As it has already been mentioned, most of the hotels in the sample were spa hotels where pools and guest lockers have significant roles, which can explain the numbers. The condition of the guest rooms and the wellness department are obviously critical in assuring quality and provide proper performance. The airport transportation however - which was translated as any transportation service the hotel provides for the guests – is not that obvious as it seems the standard group and revpar has a weak relationship. Graphic standards, which was the most important group to standardise by the interviewed hotel general managers has a slight influence according to this research as well.

### Customised processes

The processes which have a relationship with revpar when they are customised contain 6 cleaning groups as it can be seen in Appendix 4. This should be surprising however it is important to see that in those very basic and essential processes can be customised to the

guests' needs for example by timing. There are special requests from guests about the exact time of the room and bathroom cleaning or in case of conferences entrance, restaurant cleaning. These needs have to and can be fulfilled according to the results as well. In this list those processes can be also found which requires guest participation: beverage services, check-in, check-out, reservation, restaurant services and room service. These processes should be customised to the guests needs because they have an influence on revpar.

In case of the analysis it can easily be seen that the relations of these processes either they are standardised or customised or both have only weak relationship with revpar, although one by one they are only one little part of the operation of a complex organisation.

#### *Occupancy rate*

The next performance indicator is the occupancy rate which is reviewed by hotel managers in a daily basis and considered to be one of the most commonly used indicators, which is easy to measure and to understand.

<b>Occupancy rate</b>	<b>Standardisation</b>	<b>Variance ratio (H)</b>	<b>Customisation</b>	<b>Variance ratio (H)</b>
<b>Airport transportation</b>	5.25	0.23	3.07	0.18
<b>Beverage service</b>	3.43	0.19	4.36	0.21

Table 36 The effect of standardisation and customisation of these groups on occupancy rate

#### Standardised and customised processes

Two processes were determined to have influence on the occupancy rate when they are standardised and customised (Table 36). According to the results airport transportation and beverage service have relationships with the occupancy rate when they are standardised so there is a regular service with regulation as to how exactly it should happen but the customers can change the service or require another (new) kind of beverage or another type of car providing transportation.

#### Standardised processes

Appendix 5 the table shows 12 processes which have an influence on the occupancy rate which are in connection with the cleanliness and condition of different places and services in

the hotel. The role of cleanliness in hotels is crucial; this is the basic expectation of the guests to stay in a safe and clean room, where every device works, so not to dissatisfy them, these processes should be standardised. The graphic standards were mentioned in the case of revpar as well and it also has an influence on occupancy rate.

#### Customised processes

The customised processes which have influence on the occupancy rate of the hotel contain some cleaning procedures as it can be seen in Appendix 5. This means that the time and maybe even the cleaning material can be changed according to guest need, for example changing the scent in the room or bathroom. The other services involving the guests in the procedures can be altered on the spot and expanded according to the customers' request. The role of room service has to be emphasised because its effect – when it is customised - on the occupancy rate of the hotel is not weak but medium, so room service is worth reviewing and developing.

#### *Average daily rate*

The average daily rate measures the price the hotel sells the room and it indicates the success of the firm.

<b>Average daily rate</b>	<b>Standardisation</b>	<b>Variance ratio (H)</b>	<b>Customisation</b>	<b>Variance ratio (H)</b>
<b>Business centre cleanliness</b>	1.16	0.11	5.48	0.23
<b>Meeting room cleanliness</b>	1.31	0.11	1.86	0.14
<b>Wake-up call</b>	2.23	0.15	2.56	0.16

Table 37 The effect of standardisation and customisation of these groups on average daily rate

There are several common processes which were already mentioned in case of the influence on revpar and occupancy rate.

#### Standardised and customised processes

The standardisation and customisation of business centre cleanliness and wake-up call have already been explained in case of revpar, but there is another process which has a slight

influence on the average daily rate if it is standardised and customised. The meeting room cleanliness has to be assured but the banquet activity of hotels is a very unique activity and it can involve the customisation of even the cleaning process for example the time of cleaning or an environmental friendly cleaning material (Table 37).

#### Standardised processes

Apart from the almost usual airport transportation and graphic standards, the cleanliness and condition processes rule the category as it can be seen in Appendix 6. The standardisation of these standard groups has a stronger relationship with the average daily rate. The most crucial processes are the guest elevator cleanliness, which almost have a medium relationship with the average daily rate as well as the guest locker rooms/restrooms cleanliness. There is another significant process which shows a weak relationship but a greater number, this is the cleanliness of the laundry room which suggests that not only the front stage but the back has to be considered as influencing average daily rate.

#### Customised processes

The processes which have an influence on average daily rate if they are customised include only those services which the guests meet as Appendix 6 shows. Apart from the above mentioned cleanliness and condition groups the housekeeping and restaurant services appear. These processes are obviously able to be altered to customers' needs, which is actually their essence.

#### *Foreign guest percentage*

The next performance indicator is the foreign guest percentage, which can be an important aim of certain hotels to reach.

<b>Foreign guest percentage</b>	<b>Standardisation</b>	<b>Variance ratio (H)</b>	<b>Customisation</b>	<b>Variance ratio (H)</b>
<b>Guest room conditions</b>	4.93	0.22	1.57	0.13

Table 38 The effect of standardisation and customisation of these groups on foreign guest percentage

## Standardised and customised processes

It is obvious that the standardisation of guest room condition can be an important factor in foreign guest percentage but the results show that the customisation of the same process has an influence on the indicator as well. Although the strength of the relationship is higher in case of standardisation, the customisation approach has to be considered as well for example the bed linen could be chosen or if they need any more chairs in the room it could be managed (Table 38).

### Standardised processes

In case of this performance indicator, the already mentioned cleanliness processes and the condition of the guest bathrooms play important roles as well as in other performance indicators as it can be seen in Appendix 7. In the case of foreign guest percentage the most important standardised group is the bell staff service which has medium relationship with this performance indicator. The wake-up call, the breakfast service and the room service have slight influence as well.

### Customised processes

The customisation of two processes has an influence on foreign guest percentage: airport transportation and housekeeping services as Appendix 7 shows. These two groups should be formed according to the guests needs for example the transportation can happen with a driver and a translator or a guest relation specialist or putting bathrobes in the room every day.

### *Loyal guest percentage*

The next table (Table 39) contains those processes which have an influence on the loyal (satisfied) guest percentage in the hotels.

<b>Loyal guest percentage</b>	<b>Standardisation</b>	<b>Variance ratio (H)</b>	<b>Customisation</b>	<b>Variance ratio (H)</b>
<b>Breakfast service</b>	2.12	0.15	1.33	0.12
<b>Business centre cleanliness</b>	11	0.33	1.29	0.11
<b>Internet usage</b>	5.28	0.23	2.3	0.15

Table 39 The effect of standardisation and customisation of these groups on the loyal guest percentage

#### Standardised and customised processes

The loyal guest percentage is influenced by the standardised and customised breakfast service, business centre cleanliness and internet usage (Table 39). The breakfast service appeared in earlier tables but it is important to emphasise its role and the need to standardise it (for example the number of cereals) but it should be customised as well (for example cooking the guest's favourite dish for breakfast). The standardisation and customisation of the internet usage has an effect as well. The customisation of internet usage can be for example setting up parental control for families.

#### Standardised processes

The most influence on loyal guest percentage is delivered by the standardised guest elevator cleanliness and the room service, the bell staff service and the wake-up call as it can be seen in Appendix 8. These services have to be standardised to assure their quality for the loyal guests who already know what they can expect from the hotel. The others contain the cleanliness and condition processes, which naturally influence the loyal (satisfied) guest percentage.

#### Customised processes

The customised processes which have effect on loyal guest percentage contain front office processes like check-in, check-out, message service and reservation as Appendix 8 shows. Loyal guests are known at the company so their reservation process can be different from other guests in case of the tone, the length of the booking and the information given to the guest. The check-in, check-out can be much more flexible as well as the message service. The

housekeeping already knows the guest so the room is being prepared according to the guest need.

### *Booking evaluation*

This section contains those processes which standardisation or customisation or standardisation and customisation have an influence on the guest evaluation on booking.com.

<b>Booking</b>	<b>Standardisation</b>	<b>Variance ratio (H)</b>	<b>Customisation</b>	<b>Variance ratio (H)</b>
<b>Bell staff service</b>	1.01	0.1	1	0.1
<b>Business centre cleanliness</b>	1.12	0.11	1.58	0.13
<b>Guest locker rooms/restrooms cleanliness</b>	1.8	0.13	1.1	0.1

Table 40 The effect of standardisation and customisation of these groups on booking evaluations

### Standardised and customised processes

There are three processes influencing the evaluation on the website booking.com when they are standardised and customised at the same time. Although the effect of these groups on the booking evaluation is almost the minimum, it is suggested that they should be reviewed according to the results (Table 40).

### Standardised processes

It can be stated that the customisation of the processes have more influence on the evaluations because the standardisation is only measured in case of pool cleanliness which is surely a crucial process as it can be easily seen in Appendix 9.

### Customised processes

The biggest influence of the customised processes on booking evaluations is brought by the room service which customisation is understandable and obvious, the same as the message service (whose message should reach the guest sooner) and the breakfast service as Appendix 9 shows. The customisation of the cleanliness and condition processes has already been

mentioned. The beverage service, the housekeeping services and the internet usage can be easily customised with the examples presented before.

#### *Tripadvisor evaluation*

The following table contains the groups which have an influence (if they are standardised, customised or standardised and customised) on the guest evaluations on the international Tripadvisor website.

<b>Tripadvisor</b>	<b>Standardisation</b>	<b>Variance ratio (H)</b>	<b>Customisation</b>	<b>Variance ratio (H)</b>
<b>Beverage service</b>	8.51	0.29	1.33	0.12
<b>Internet usage</b>	4.83	0.22	1.06	0.1
<b>Message service</b>	1.05	0.1	5.56	0.24

Table 41 The effect of standardisation and customisation of these groups on Tripadvisor evaluations

#### Standardised and customised processes

The beverage service which was worth customising in the previous section considering the booking evaluations has an important influence on the Tripadvisor evaluations when it is standardised and a slight influence when it is customised. The internet usage has the same characteristics. The message service although has a bigger influence if it is customised but the standardisation is important to consider. (Table 41)

#### Standardised processes

The cleanliness and the condition of the different services play a significant role in the Tripadvisor evaluations and the bell staff and maintenance service are both worth standardising as well as it can be seen in Appendix 10.

#### Customised processes

Room service has the strongest effect on the Tripadvisor evaluations when it is customised, so the processes should be reviewed and altered according to the customers' need in hotels as Appendix 10. The other processes have already mentioned before with examples which can also stand here.



#### **4.3.3.3 Thesis 3**

A group of standards can be identified which has the most important influence on each performance indicators when they are standardised, customised or standardised and customised. The cleanliness and condition processes are not only standardised but customised as well. The guest participation services are not only customised but standardised as well.

#### **4.3.4 Grouping the performance indicators**

##### *Hypothesis 4*

*The performance indicators (revenue per available room, occupancy rate, average daily rate, stars, foreign guest percentage, loyal guest percentage, booking evaluations, Tripadvisor evaluations) can be grouped into two factors: operation performance, guest performance.*

The aim of this hypothesis is to classify the variables into two groups considering their relations with each other. The assumption is that one of the groups will contain those variables which measure the operational performance of hotel and the other one measures the performance of the company which directly in connection with their guests.

##### **4.3.4.1 The method of testing Hypothesis 4**

Since the aim of the hypothesis was to group the variables according to the relations with each other the application of principle component analysis was obvious. Factor analysis and principle component analysis can reduce the number of variables and explore their relations (Sajtos and Mitev, 2007) this method has been chosen. Principle component analysis is much more popular, explainable and supported by more researchers (Pallant, 2010) so this method is going to be applied.

##### **4.3.4.2 The results of analysing Hypothesis 4**

The result of the principle component analysis is being presented in this section.

##### **4.3.4.3 Finding relationship between the cluster membership and the performance indicators**

The result of principle component analysis is being introduced in this subchapter and the place of variables is going to be determined.

<b>KMO and Bartlett's Test</b>		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		,652
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	193,604
	df	28
	Sig.	,000

Table 42 The result of the KMO and Bartlett's test

Table 42 shows that the principal component analysis can be carried out and a good result can be expected. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin index needs to be above .6 (Pallant, 2010) and in case of the current sample it reaches the value .652. The Bartlett's test has to be significant so the significance level should be under .05 and in this case it is .00. These tests reached more than the minimum value of a good principal component analysis, so the testing can continue.

In the analysis only those variables were considered which eigenvalue was more than 1.0 (Kaiser's criterion). At first the analysis revealed 3 components but since the third one only contained one variable and the total variance explained was almost 55% after the second factor, the decision was made that only two factors are needed. These factors explain the 35.5% and the 19.6% of the variance. The two components together explain 55.1% of the total variance.

<b>Rotated Component Matrix</b>		
	Component	
	1	2
<b>RevPar</b>	,878	
<b>Average room rate</b>	,871	
<b>Stars</b>	,813	
<b>Occupancy rate</b>	,589	
<b>Tripadvisor</b>	,496	
<b>Foreign guests percentage</b>		,857
<b>Loyal guests</b>		,787
<b>Booking</b>		

Table 43 The results of principle component analysis and the place of variables

Table 43 shows that the variable, booking evaluations belongs to another component and could not be listed under either component. Although the other components had a number of strong loadings and the variables clearly belong to the groups they were put in.

Considering the hypothesis it can be easily seen that the results do not entirely support the phrased Hypothesis 4. According to the hypothesis the variables would have been shared in two components: operational performance and guest performance. The table (Table 43) however, presents another kind of relationship between the variables. It is important to note that the operational performance indicators (RevPar, ADR, Stars, Occupancy rate) have been put into the same factor but there is another variable which belong to them and this is the Tripadvisor evaluations. According to the results the Tripadvisor guest evaluations have a relationship with the important operational performance indicators. The consequence of this fact should make hotel general managers think about their operation and guest relation activities. According to this logic Booking evaluation should also have a relationship with the operational performance indicators but it was put into another component alone and it had a very weak relationship with the other two components. This result would suggest that the Tripadvisor evaluations are more useful for the hotels because of their relationship with the operational performance indicators than booking.com. The second component contains two variables the foreign guest percentage of the hotels and loyal guest percentage. This result suggests that there is a correlation between the percentages of foreign and loyal guests in the hotels and one variable influence the other. As it has already been mentioned in Chapter 2.6, there is a significant problem in Hungary, price reducing and couponing which does not result in loyal guests (<http://www.hah.hu/aktualitasok/allasfoglalasok/ajanlasok-szallodak-reszere-a-kuponos-kedvezmenyes-portalokkal-k/> 28/12/2013). These couponing sites are in Hungarian and provide service for Hungarian guests. Due to these facts the results of principle component analysis should raise attention to the role of raising the number of foreign guests in the hotels.

#### **4.3.4.4 Finding**

As the hypothesis could not be proved according to the results of principle component analysis, only a conclusion can be stated. According to the analysis, there can be two factors created one is dealing with the operational performance indicators and the Tripadvisor evaluations and the other one suggests a relationship between the percentages of loyal and foreign guests.

#### 4.3.5 The role of the level of standardisation and customisation and the performance indicators

##### *Hypothesis 5*

*The average value of the performance indicators is higher in case of higher level of standardisation and customisation in Hungarian hotels.*

The hypothesis wants to find out if a hotel has a higher customisation and standardisation level, it has better performance indicators as well. This statement can be a persuasive tool to motivate hotel general managers to standardise and customise their processes.

##### 4.3.5.1 The method of testing Hypothesis 5

To test the above presented hypothesis, the result of cluster analysis has to be further investigated.

##### 4.3.5.2 The results of analysing Hypothesis 5

As the result of the K-means cluster analysis four clusters could be created:

1. Low standardisation – Low customisation
2. High standardisation – High customisation
3. High standardisation – Medium customisation
4. Medium standardisation – Medium customisation

Now, the characteristics of these groups are being researched and the results are summarised in Table 44.

	<b>Low-Low</b>	<b>Medium-medium</b>	<b>High-High</b>	<b>Medium-high</b>
<b>RevPar</b>	9528	8102	7179	<b>9588</b>
<b>Loyal guest percentage</b>	0.22	0.27	<b>0.3</b>	0.24
<b>Booking</b>	8.29	7.67	8.22	<b>9.62</b>
<b>Occupancy</b>	0.54	0.56	<b>0.59</b>	0.57
<b>Tripadvisor</b>	73.62	62	<b>74.43</b>	68.81

<b>Foreign guest percentage</b>	0.63	0.53	0.6	<b>0.66</b>
<b>Average daily rate</b>	14297	14649	12300	<b>16562</b>
<b>Stars</b>	3.64	3.75	3.54	<b>3.92</b>

Table 44 Performance indicators in the different clusters

Table 44 shows the different performance indicators in the rows and the clusters in the column presented not according to the cluster number but more related to their meaning. The average value of performance indicators are listed in the middle of the table highlighted the highest numbers.

#### *RevPar*

Table 30 shows the average value of revpar in all four clusters and it can be determined that the highest value of revenue per available room can be measured in cluster 3: Medium customisation and high standardisation. It means that those hotels which belong to this cluster have the highest average revpar, although it has to be noted, that there is slight difference in the value of revpar between the low-low and the medium-high category.

#### *Loyal guest percentage*

The loyal guest percentage is the highest in case of hotels with high level of standardisation and high customisation. This means that those hotels belong to cluster 2 have the most loyal guests comparing to the number of all guests in average. This result does not show the number of the guests only the percentage of the loyal guests to all guests. However, it is important to mention that this number is only 27% of the guests which cannot be considered a high number in the hotel industry.

#### *Booking evaluation*

The value of Booking reviews can be seen in the next row. Those hotels which got the highest booking evaluation on average belong to cluster 3, where those hotels can be found where the level of customisation is medium and level of standardisation is high.

#### *Occupancy rate*

There are no big differences in the occupancy rates of the different clusters, but the highest occupancy rate belonged to cluster two, where the level of customisation and standardisation is high.

#### *Tripadvisor evaluation*

Tripadvisor evaluation is done on a 0-100 scale and the highest average reviews were given to hotels in cluster 2. These hotels have high level of standardisation and customisation as well.

#### *Foreign guest percentage*

The difference between the average percentages of foreign guests is not great between the clusters. The highest foreign guest percentage is delivered by cluster 3, where the level of customisation is medium and the level of standardisation is high.

#### *Average daily rate*

There is a bigger difference in case of the values of average daily rate, because the highest average values have been made by the hotels belonging to cluster 3 (medium customisation and high standardisation). This value is almost 2000 Ft higher than the number produced by group 3 (medium customisation and medium standardisation)

#### *Stars*

In case of stars the question is what level of customisation and standardisation results in more stars for the hotel. According to Table 30 those hotels which belong to cluster 3 (medium customisation and high standardisation) have more 'average stars' than hotels in other clusters.

According to the explained results, a thesis can be phrased.

#### **4.3.5.3 Thesis 5**

The average value of the performance indicators is higher in case of medium or high level of customisation and high level of standardisation.

## **5 Research result summary**

The research was able to present another perspective about standardisation and customisation and show new theoretical and practical applications for the above mentioned topic.

I made a methodology to measure the standardisation and customisation level of the hotels. Then the effect of hotel chain membership to the level of standardisation was able to be determined. Besides hotel chain membership other characteristics were tested and their relationship with the level of standardisation was stated. These features were the number of rooms, the Hotelstars Union membership and the star rating of the hotel.

I found a strong relationship between the concepts of standardisation and customisation in the practice of hotels and I could contradict several researches (Chapter 2.2) claiming that standardisation and customisation are independent from each other. After this I classified the hotels into different clusters and found out that in case of three groups of four similar level of standardisation and customisation can be observed and in case of the other cluster the level of customisation was medium and the level of standardisation was high.

In the next finding I wanted to support hotels in their standardisation customisation optimisation. I could identify those standard groups which have more effect on the different performance indicators when they are standardised or customised or standardised and customised.

The next result showed how variables are connected to each other and what groups can be made. I found that Tripadvisor had a relationship with the operational performance indicators, booking did not belong to either group and foreign guests are likely to be loyal guests.

In the last section I was able to compare the average performance indicators in all clusters and found out the highest performance indicators are produced by those hotels which have higher customisation and higher standardisation.

Summarising the research it can be stated that the topic is worth further researching in a theoretical and practical perspective as well and the results can be useful for hotels in optimising their processes.

## **5.1 Novelty of the research**

There are several aspects of the research which can be considered as novel. They are listed below:

- I determined the level of standardisation and customisation in hotels is not yet applied by anybody else. The methodology which made it able to identify the levels was carried out and tested by me.
- The relationship between standardisation and customisation was only a theoretical category before but I was able to prove empirically that these two concepts are related very strongly.
- I tested the relationship between the different hotel characteristics and the level of standardisation and found out that room number, hotel stars membership and the star rating influences the standardisation level of the hotel.
- I was able to identify the group of standards which hotels have to concentrate in order to improve their performance indicators which this way practically help hotel general managers to optimise their operations.
- I also put hotels into different categories according to their level of standardisation and customisation and could determine that higher level of both concepts goes hand in hand with high level of performance.

## **5.2 Collection of theses**

Thesis 1

Thesis 1a

It has been confirmed that there is a weak relationship between hotel chain membership and the level of standardisation in the Hungarian hotel industry. It has also been stated that there are other possible factors affecting the standardisation level of a hotel.

Thesis 1b

It has been determined that there is a relationship between Hotelstars Union membership and the level of standardisation.



### Thesis 1c

It has been proven that there is a positive, weak relationship between the number of rooms in the hotel and the level of standardisation.

### Thesis 1d

It has been found that there is a relationship between the star rating of the hotel and the level of standardisation and the difference is between three-star and five-star hotels.

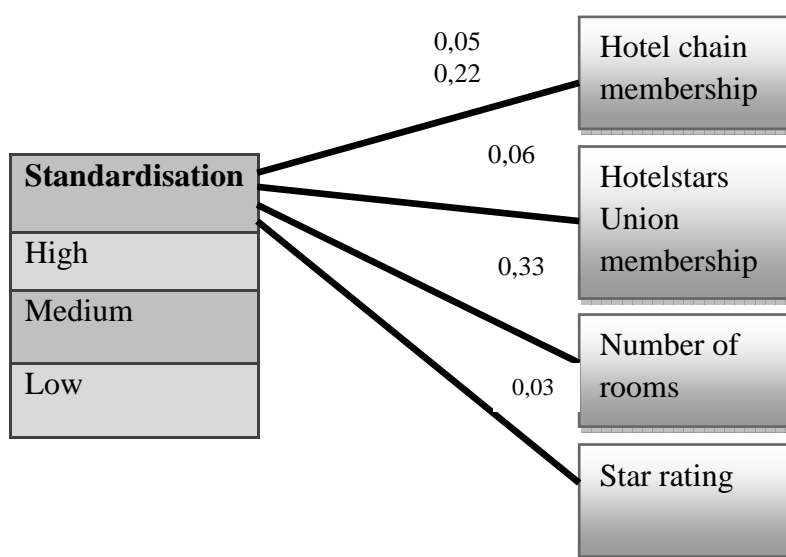


Figure 22 Illustration of Thesis 1

The thesis showed that not only the chain membership determines the level of standardisation (5%) but there are other factors (95%) which could have an influence on the standardisation level of a hotel.

### Thesis 2

It has been proved that there is a very strong correlation between the standardisation and customisation level of the Hungarian hotels. The two concepts are not independent from each other and they influence each other in the same high level.

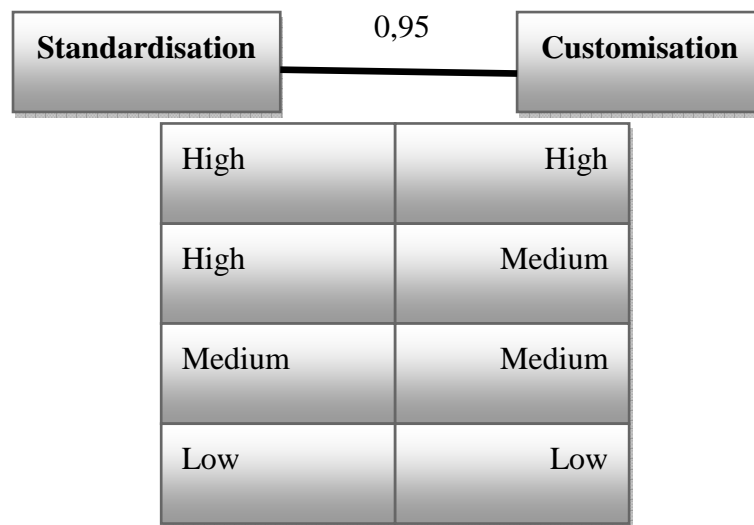


Figure 23 Illustration of Thesis 2

The thesis proved a very important issue that standardisation and customisation are strongly affecting each other and there are four clusters which can be created according to their level.

### Thesis 3

A group of standards can be identified which has the most important influence on each of the performance indicators when they are standardised, customised or standardised and customised. The cleanliness and condition processes are not only standardised but customised as well. The guest participation services are not only customised but standardised as well.

This thesis raise the attention to those processes which standardisation or customisation or standardisation and customisation has to be considered by the hotel because of their effect on the performance indicators.

### Finding 4

As the hypothesis could not be proved according to the results of principle component analysis, only a conclusion can be stated. According to the analysis, there can be two factors created one is dealing with the operational performance indicators and the Tripadvisor evaluations and the other one suggests a relationship between the percentages of loyal a foreign guests.

Operational performance	Guest performance
RevPar	Loyal guests percentage
OCC	Foreign guest percentage
ARR	
Stars	
Tripadvisor	

Figure 24 Illustration of Finding 4

This finding suggests that the contribution of Tripadvisor reviews to the performance indicators is worth considering and that frequent guests or loyal guest percentage is in relationship with the percentage of foreign guests in the hotel.

#### Thesis 5

The average value of the performance indicators is higher for medium or high level of customisation and high level of standardisation.

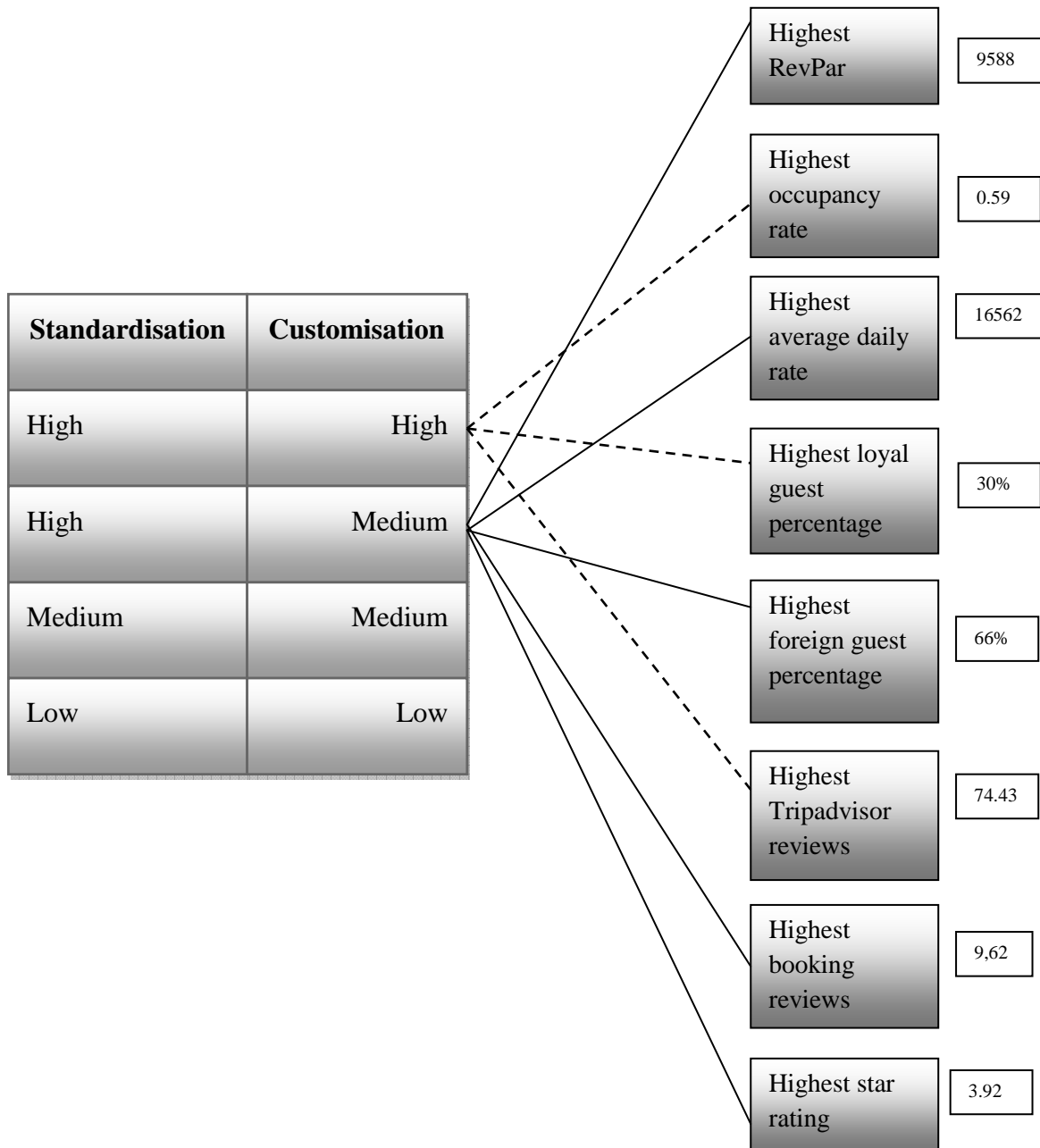


Figure 25 Illustration of Thesis 5

This thesis shows that those hotels which produce the highest performance indicators have a medium or high level of customisation and high level of standardisation.

### 5.3 Further research

The role and significance of standardisation and customisation can be measured – with the developed method – in other countries as well, the comparison between the results would provide valuable information for the researchers and hotels as well.

In further research it would be important to use this method in other service providers not only in hotels but in tourism or other service sectors.

My other aim is to be able to observe the usage of standardisation and customisation in hotels and determine which standards – not only the 44 groups but the whole book of standards – are easier or more difficult to keep and use.

I would like to research more about the role of employees in the success of standardisation and customisation and determine suggestions for hotels about what they should do to improve their processes and use the abilities the employees possess.

Considering hotels and the tourism sector it would be a benefit to ask customers what their perceptions are and if they can recognise the standards and which are more and less important for them.

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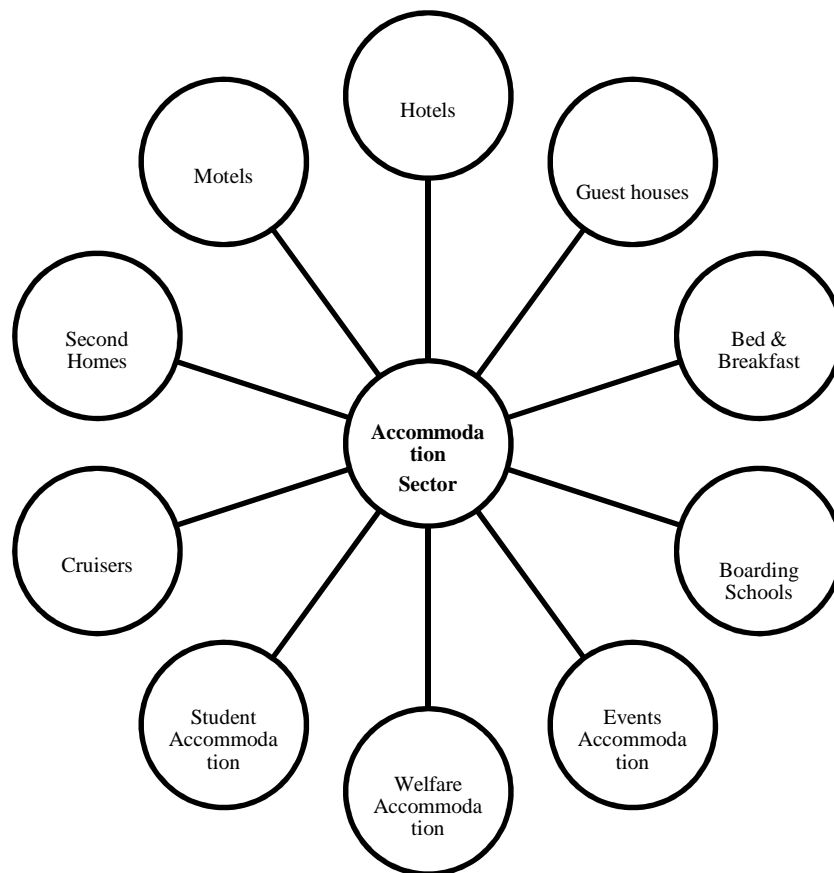
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## 7 Appendix

### Appendix 1 The accommodation sector (Hassanien et al., 2010)



## Appendix 2 The interview

### Interview: *Hotel standardisation and customisation*

Please score the importance of these activities standardisation in the operation of hotels. Score 1 means that they are not important at all, score 7 means it is necessary for the hotel to be able to operate.

Staff appearance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Entrances/Vehicles cleanliness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Business Centre cleanliness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Check-in	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Check-out	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Wake-up call	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Restaurant equipments	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Restaurant services	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Fitness room/health club cleanliness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Corridors cleanliness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Graphic standards	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Housekeeping services	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Internet usage	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Office cleanliness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Beverage services	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Maintenance services	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Meeting room cleanliness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Meeting room conditions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Kitchen cleanliness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Building exterior cleanliness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
All stairwell cleanliness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Guest elevators cleanliness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Lobby/registration conditions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Lobby/registration cleanliness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Bell Staff service	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Pool cleanliness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Public restroom conditions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Public restroom cleanliness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Storages and equipment cleanliness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Breakfast service	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Reservation call	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Retail shops cleanliness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Service elevators cleanliness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Employee work areas cleanliness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Room service	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Document standards	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Airport transportation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Message service	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Guest bathroom conditions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Guest bathroom cleanliness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Guest locker rooms/restrooms cleanliness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Guest room condition	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Guest room cleanliness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Wellness department conditions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Please score what kind of power oral and written standardisation has. Score 1 means that it does not matter to the employees, score 7 means that it is really strong and it must be followed.

Written standard	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Oral standard	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

On which functional fields service customisation happens in the hotel?

What kind of service is customised in the hotel?

How do you know/ how can you find customisation in hotels?

How often are standards reviewed?

What is the reason for the review?

Are the opinions of member hotels considered?

Has it ever happened that you initiated the change/review?

### Appendix 3 Frequency tables

Statistics						
		Region	Opening	Hotel type	Star rating	Hotelstars
N	Valid	81	81	81	81	81
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Percentiles	25	2,50	1989,50	5,00	3,00	1,00
	50	6,00	2001,00	7,00	4,00	1,00
	75	7,00	2007,00	10,00	4,00	2,00

Region					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	18	22,2	22,2	22,2
	2	2	2,5	2,5	24,7
	3	7	8,6	8,6	33,3
	4	6	7,4	7,4	40,7
	5	4	4,9	4,9	45,7
	6	16	19,8	19,8	65,4
	7	14	17,3	17,3	82,7
	8	14	17,3	17,3	100,0
Total		81	100,0	100,0	

		Opening			Cumulative Percent
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	
Valid	1894	1	1,2	1,2	1,2
	1904	1	1,2	1,2	2,5
	1929	1	1,2	1,2	3,7
	1963	1	1,2	1,2	4,9
	1965	1	1,2	1,2	6,2
	1969	2	2,5	2,5	8,6
	1971	1	1,2	1,2	9,9
	1978	1	1,2	1,2	11,1
	1980	1	1,2	1,2	12,3
	1982	1	1,2	1,2	13,6
	1983	2	2,5	2,5	16,0
	1984	1	1,2	1,2	17,3
	1985	1	1,2	1,2	18,5
	1986	1	1,2	1,2	19,8
	1988	2	2,5	2,5	22,2
	1989	2	2,5	2,5	24,7
	1990	3	3,7	3,7	28,4
	1992	1	1,2	1,2	29,6
	1996	5	6,2	6,2	35,8
	1997	3	3,7	3,7	39,5
	1998	1	1,2	1,2	40,7
	1999	2	2,5	2,5	43,2
	2000	2	2,5	2,5	45,7
	2001	5	6,2	6,2	51,9
	2002	3	3,7	3,7	55,6
	2003	1	1,2	1,2	56,8
	2004	4	4,9	4,9	61,7
	2005	4	4,9	4,9	66,7
	2006	3	3,7	3,7	70,4
	2007	5	6,2	6,2	76,5
	2008	8	9,9	9,9	86,4
	2009	4	4,9	4,9	91,4
	2010	2	2,5	2,5	93,8
	2011	2	2,5	2,5	96,3
	2012	3	3,7	3,7	100,0
	Total	81	100,0	100,0	



#### Hotel type

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	2	2,5	2,5	2,5
	2	7	8,6	8,6	11,1
	4	3	3,7	3,7	14,8
	5	13	16,0	16,0	30,9
	6	7	8,6	8,6	39,5
	7	15	18,5	18,5	58,0
	8	1	1,2	1,2	59,3
	9	4	4,9	4,9	64,2
	10	20	24,7	24,7	88,9
	11	9	11,1	11,1	100,0
	Total	81	100,0	100,0	

#### Star rating

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	3	25	30,9	30,9	30,9
	4	49	60,5	60,5	91,4
	5	7	8,6	8,6	100,0
	Total	81	100,0	100,0	

#### Hotelstars

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	57	70,4	70,4	70,4
	2	24	29,6	29,6	100,0
	Total	81	100,0	100,0	

### Appendix 4 Tables for Hypothesis 3: RevPar

<b>RevPar</b>	<b>Standardisation (variance ratio between groups)</b>	<b>Variance ratio (H)</b>
Airport transportation	7.3	0.27
Graphic standards	1.73	0.13
Guest bathroom conditions	3.35	0.18
Guest locker rooms/restrooms cleanliness	5.39	0.23
Guest room conditions	4.14	0.20
Laundry room cleanliness	4.53	0.21
Meeting room cleanliness	2.18	0.15
Pool cleanliness	9.43	0.31
Service elevators cleanliness	1.16	0.11
Storages and equipment cleanliness	1.14	0.11
Wellness department conditions	4.74	0.22

<b>RevPar</b>	<b>Customisation (variance ratio between groups)</b>	<b>Variance ratio (H)</b>
Beverage services	4	0.2
Check-in. Check-out	5.65	0.24
Entrances/Vehicles cleanliness	2.29	0.15
Fitness room/health club cleanliness	4.49	0.21
Guest bathroom cleanliness	4.12	0.2
Guest room cleanliness	5.21	0.23
Lobby/registration cleanliness	1.18	0.11
Maintenance services	2.06	0.14
Meeting room conditions	1.52	0.12
Reservation	2.65	0.16
Restaurant equipments	1.44	0.12
Restaurant services	5.59	0.24
Retail shops cleanliness	1.72	0.13
Room service	5.01	0.22

## Appendix 5 Tables for Hypothesis 3: Occupancy Rate

Occupancy rate	Standardisation	Variance ratio (H)
Fitness room/health club cleanliness	14.68	0.38
Graphic standards	2.74	0.17
Guest bathroom conditions	5.12	0.23
Guest locker rooms/restrooms cleanliness	1.8	0.13
Guest room conditions	6.31	0.25
Kitchen cleanliness	2.35	0.15
Laundry room cleanliness	12.89	0.36
Lobby/registration conditions	3.28	0.18
Meeting room cleanliness	10.21	0.32
Pool cleanliness	1.3	0.11
Retail shops cleanliness	7.55	0.27
Service elevator cleanliness	8.18	0.29
Storages and equipment cleanliness	1.62	0.13

Occupancy rate	Customisation	Variance ratio (H)
Breakfast service	1.34	0.12
Business centre cleanliness	1.2	0.11
Entrances/Vehicles cleanliness	1.59	0.13
Guest bathroom cleanliness	4.86	0.22
Guest room cleanliness	9.44	0.3
Message service	1.11	0.11
Restaurant service	5.5	0.23
Room service	17.89	0.42

### Appendix 6 Tables for Hypothesis 3: Average Daily Rate

Average daily rate	Standardisation	Variance ratio (H)
Airport transportation	10.39	0.32
Graphic standards	2.05	0.14
Guest elevators cleanliness	14.96	0.39
Guest locker rooms/restrooms cleanliness	13.92	0.37
Guest room conditions	2.37	0.15
Guest room conditions	2.95	0.17
Laundry room cleanliness	11.24	0.34
Pools cleanliness	13.14	0.36
Service elevator cleanliness	3.04	0.17
Storage and equipment cleanliness	1.26	0.11
Wellness department conditions	3.81	0.2

Average daily rate	Customisation	Variance ratio (H)
Beverage service	2.62	0.16
Entrances/Vehicles cleanliness	3.76	0.19
Fitness room/health club cleanliness	1.43	0.12
Guest bathroom cleanliness	4.37	0.21
Guest room cleanliness	2.88	0.17
Housekeeping service	2.11	0.15
Meeting room conditions	2.47	0.16
Restaurant services	11.32	0.34
Room service	2.22	0.15

## Appendix 6 Tables for Hypothesis 3: Foreign Guest Percentage

Foreign guest percentage	Standardisation	Variance ratio (H)
All stairwell cleanliness	1.18	0.11
Bell staff service	23.8	0.49
Breakfast service	3.8	0.19
Building exterior cleanliness	2.23	0.15
Guest bathroom conditions	3.98	0.2
Guest locker rooms/restrooms cleanliness	7.48	0.27
Meeting room cleanliness	1.36	0.12
Room service	1.13	0.11
Wake-up call	7.03	0.27

Foreign guest percentage	Customisation	Variance ratio (H)
Airport transportation	2.79	0.17
Housekeeping services	1.24	0.11

### Appendix 7 Tables for Hypothesis 3: Loyal Guest Percentage

Loyal guest percentage	Standardisation	Variance ratio (H)
Bell staff service	6	0.25
Beverage service	3.15	0.18
Guest bathroom condition	1.85	0.14
Guest elevator cleanliness	10.82	0.33
Guest locker rooms/restrooms cleanliness	2.27	0.15
Guest room conditions	2.3	0.15
Lobby/registration cleanliness	1.16	0.11
Maintenance service	1.84	0.14
Meeting room conditions	2.44	0.16
Room service	11.39	0.34
Wake-up call	4.1	0.2

Loyal guest percentage	Customisation	Variance ratio (H)
Airport transportation	1.33	0.12
Check-in. Check-out	1.05	0.1
Housekeeping services	1.85	0.14
Message service	1.55	0.12
Reservation	2.71	0.16

## Appendix 7 Tables for Hypothesis 3: Booking Evaluation

Booking	Standardisation	Variance ratio (H)
Pool cleanliness	1.4	0.12

Booking	Customisation	Variance ratio (H)
Beverage service	2.67	0.16
Breakfast service	4.69	0.22
Check in-Check out	1.75	0.13
Guest bathroom cleanliness	2.36	0.15
Guest room cleanliness	2.24	0.15
Housekeeping services	2.87	0.17
Internet usage	1.47	0.12
Meeting room cleanliness	1.05	0.1
Meeting room conditions	2.14	0.15
Message service	6.12	0.25
Reservation	2.7	0.16
Room service	7.16	0.27

### Appendix 8 Tables for Hypothesis 3: TripAdvisor Evaluation

<b>Tripadvisor</b>	<b>Standardisation</b>	<b>Variance ratio (H)</b>
Bell staff service	1.52	0.12
Breakfast service	1.82	0.13
Fitness room/health club cleanliness	6.23	0.25
Guest bathroom conditions	5.4	0.23
Guest elevator cleanliness	3.3	0.18
Guest room conditions	6.65	0.26
Maintenance service	2.39	0.15
Meeting room cleanliness	2.9	0.17

<b>Tripadvisor</b>	<b>Customisation</b>	<b>Variance ratio (H)</b>
Airport transportation	2.19	0.15
Guest bathroom cleanliness	3.03	0.17
Housekeeping service	2.15	0.15
Meeting room conditions	1.12	0.1
Reservation	1.97	0.14
Restaurant service	2.08	0.14
Room service	8.58	0.29
Wake-up call	2.82	0.17



**Appendix 11 The questionnaire**

**Appendix 12 Analysis spreadsheet**

# Kérdőív a szálloda sztenderdizálás, testreszabás és innovációról

Gyurácz-Németh Petra PhD hallgató vagyok, a Pannon Egyetem Turizmus Tanszékének munkatársa. Jelen kutatásom célja a szállodai szolgáltatások feltérképezése sztenderdizálás, testreszabás és innováció szempontjából. Köszönöm, hogy időt szán kutatásom segítésére!

68 kérdés van ebben a kérdőívben

## Általános kérdések

**1 Mi a szálloda elsődleges profilja? Milyen típusba tudná leginkább besorolni a szállodát? Amennyiben a szállodának összetett profilja van, kérem jelölje meg a megjegyzésben, hogy melyiket tartja erősebbnek. \***

Kérem, válasszon **egy**et az alábbiak közül:

- ☐ Apartmanhotel
- ☐ Boutique hotel
- ☐ Garniszálloda
- ☐ Gyógyszálloda
- ☐ Gyógy- és wellness szálloda
- ☐ Konferenciaszálloda
- ☐ Konferencia és wellness szálloda
- ☐ Repülőtéri szálloda
- ☐ Üdülő- és sportszálloda
- ☐ Városi szálloda
- ☐ Wellness szálloda

Az ön megjegyzése ehhez:

**2 Tagja-e szállodaláncnak? \***

Kérem, válasszon **egy**et az alábbiak közül:

- ☐ Igen
- ☐ Nem

**3****Kérem válassza ki a szállodaláncot, melynek tagja a szálloda!****Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

° Answer was 'Igen' at question '2 [Q2]' (Tagja-e szállodaláncnak?)

Kérem, válasszon **egy**et az alábbiak közül:

- ☐ Best Western
- ☐ Corinthia
- ☐ Danubius
- ☐ Four Seasons
- ☐ Hilton
- ☐ Holiday Inn
- ☐ Hunguest
- ☐ Ibis
- ☐ Intercontinental
- ☐ Kempinski
- ☐ Le Meridien
- ☐ Marriott
- ☐ Mellow Mood Group
- ☐ Mercure
- ☐ Novotel
- ☐ Radisson
- ☐ Ramada
- ☐ Sofitel
- ☐ Zara Hotels
- ☐ Egyéb

**4 Mennyire fontos az egyedi megjelenés (dizájn), egyedi stílus az Önök szállodájában? Kérem, osztályozza a dizájn fontosságát 1-7 skálán, ahol 1- legkevésbé sem fontos és 7- nagyon meghatározó. \***

Kérem, jelöljön meg egy megfelelő választ minden felsorolt elem számára:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A dizájn fontossága a szállodában	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**5 Az Önök szállodájánál hány százalékos volt 2012-ben az éves átlagos foglaltság? \***

Kérem, írja ide a választ:

**6 Mennyi volt a szállodában a magyar vendégek aránya 2012-ben (százalékban kifejezve)?**

Kérem, írja ide a választ:

**7 Kérem, adja meg százalékosan a törzsvendégek arányát az összes vendéghez viszonyítva! \***

Kérem, írja ide a választát:

**8 Kérem, adja meg alkalmazottainak aktuális számát! \***

Kérem, írja ide a választát:

**9 Kérem, adja meg a szálloda szobáinak számát! \***

Kérem, írja ide a választát:

**10 Kérem, jelölje be a szálloda minőségi besorolását! \***Kérem, válasszon **egy**et az alábbiak közül:

- ☐ \* és superior
- ☐ \*\* és superior
- ☐ \*\*\* és superior
- ☐ \*\*\*\* és superior
- ☐ \*\*\*\*\* és superior

**11 Kérem, jelölje be, hogy a szálloda megkapta-e már a Hotelstars Union szerinti besorolást?**Kérem, válasszon **egy**et az alábbiak közül:

- ☐ Igen
- ☐ Nem

**12 Kérem, adja meg a szálloda 2012 éves átlagárát! \***

Kérem, írja ide a választát:

**13****Kérem, adja meg a szálloda 2012 éves RevPar mutatószámát! \***

Kérem, írja ide a választát:

**14 Kérem, adja meg a szálloda 2012 éves TRevPar mutatóját!**

Kérem, írja ide a választát:

**15 Kérem, jelölje be, hogy melyik régióban található a szálloda! \***

Kérem, válasszon **egy**et az alábbiak közül:

- ☐ Balaton
- ☐ Dél-Alföld
- ☐ Dél-Dunántúl
- ☐ Észak-Alföld és Tisza-tó
- ☐ Észak-Magyarország
- ☐ Közép-Dunántúl
- ☐ Közép-Magyarország
- ☐ Nyugat-Dunántúl

**16 Kérem, adja meg a szálloda nyitásának évét!**

Kérem, írja ide a választ:

## Sztenderdizálással kapcsolatos kérdések

### 17 Rendelkezik-e az Önök szállodája formalizált minőségbiztosítási rendszerrel (ISO, HACCP stb.)? \*

Kérem, válasszon **egy**et az alábbiak közül:

- ☐ Igen
- ☐ Nem

### 18 Ha igen, milyennel (többet is felsorolhat)?

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

° Answer was 'Igen' at question '17 [Q3]' (Rendelkezik-e az Önök szállodája formalizált minőségbiztosítási rendszerrel (ISO, HACCP stb.)?)

Kérem, írja ide a választát:

### 19 Rendelkezik-e az Önök szállodája minőségbiztosítási tanúsítvánnyal (pl. TÜV)? \*

Kérem, válasszon **egy**et az alábbiak közül:

- ☐ Igen
- ☐ Nem

### 20 Ha igen, milyennel?

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

° Answer was 'Igen' at question '19 [Q4]' (Rendelkezik-e az Önök szállodája minőségbiztosítási tanúsítvánnyal (pl. TÜV)?)

Kérem, írja ide a választát:

**21 Rendelkezik-e az Ön szállodája sztenderdizációs dokumentummal? \***

Kérem, válasszon **egy**et az alábbiak közül:

- ☐ Igen
- ☐ Nem

**22 Milyen gyakran kerül sor a sztenderdek felülvizsgálatára? \***

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

° Answer was 'Igen' at question '21 [Q7]' (Rendelkezik-e az Ön szállodája sztenderdizációs dokumentummal?)

Kérem, válasszon **egy**et az alábbiak közül:

- ☐ Naponta
- ☐ Hetente
- ☐ Havonta
- ☐ Negyedévente
- ☐ Félévente
- ☐ Évente
- ☐ Ritkábban

**23 Sorolja fel az Ön szerint a napi működést befolyásoló legfontosabb szabványokat/szokásokat/sztenderdeket! (Maximum 3-at)**

Kérem, írja ide a választát:

**24****Milyen intézkedés követi az ezektől való eltérést? Van-e esetleg erre vonatkozó sztenderd/szabvány/házirend/szokás?**

Kérem, írja ide a választát:

**25 Kik hozzák/hozhatják létre és módosítják/módosíthatják a szabványokat a szállodában? \***

Kérem, írja ide a választát:

**26****Kérem jelölje be, hogy a következő szállodai tevékenységekre/szolgáltatásokra van-e szabály a szállodában? \***

Kérem, jelöljön meg egy megfelelő választ minden felsorolt elem számára:

	Igen, írásbeli szabály vonatkozik rá.	Igen, szóbeli utasítás vonatkozik rá.	Nincs.	Nincs ilyen szolgáltatásunk.
Alkalmazottak megjelenése	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bejáratok, járművek takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Business Center takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Check- in/bejelentkezés/regisztráció	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Check-out	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ébresztőszolgálat	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Étterem felszereltsége	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Éttermi szolgáltatások	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fitness termék takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Folyosók takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Grafika (pl. logo)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Housekeeping szolgáltatások	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Internet használat	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Irodák takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Italszolgáltatások	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Karbantartó szolgáltatások	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Konferencia- és báltermek takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Konferenciatermek felszereltsége	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Konyha takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Külső területek takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lépcsőházak takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Liftek takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lobby felszereltsége	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lobby takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Londineri szolgálat	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Medencék takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mosoda takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public területi mosdóhelyiségek takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Raktárak megléte és takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reggeliztetés	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Rezerváció	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Szállodában lévő boltok takarítás	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Személyzeti lift takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Személyzeti területek takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Szobaszeríz	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Szükséges dokumentumok megléte	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Transzfer szolgáltatások	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Üzenetfelvétel és átadás	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vendégfürdőszoba felszereltsége	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vendégfürdőszoba takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vendéglőtözők takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vendégszoba felszereltsége	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vendégszoba takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wellness részleg felszereltsége	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## 27 Kinek a feladata a szabályok/előírások felülvizsgálata? \*

Kérem, válasszon **egy**et az alábbiak közül:

- ☐ Quality menedzser (Minőségügyi vezető)
- ☐ Szállodaigazgató
- ☐ Egyéb

## 28 Milyen gyakran kerül sor a szabályok/előírások betartásának ellenőrzésére házon belül? \*

Kérem, válasszon **egy**et az alábbiak közül:

- ☐ Naponta
- ☐ Hetente
- ☐ Havonta
- ☐ Negyedévente
- ☐ Félévente
- ☐ Évente
- ☐ Ritkábban

## 29 Kinek a feladata a szabályok/előírások/sztenderdek betartásának ellenőrzése házon belül? \*

Kérem, válasszon **egy**et az alábbiak közül:

- ☐ Quality menedzser (Minőségügyi vezető)
- ☐ Szállodaigazgató
- ☐ Ügyeletes menedzser
- ☐ Egyéb

**30 Milyen módokon közvetítik a szabályokat/előírásokat/sztenderdeket az alkalmazottak felé?**

Kérem, válasszon ki **mindent**, ami érvényes:

- ☐ Betanítás
- ☐ Előadások
- ☐ Tréningek

☐ Egyéb:

## Testreszabás

### 58 Van-e a szállodában vendéglégedettségi kérdőív? \*

Kérem, válasszon **egy**et az alábbiak közül:

- ☐ Igen
- ☐ Nem

### 59 A tartózkodás során átlagosan hányszor kérdezik meg a vendéget arról, hogy elégedett-e (akár szóban, akár írásban)?

Kérem, írja ide a választ:

### 60 Van-e lehetőség előzetes szobaválasztásra (például konkrét szoba meghatározására 101 vagy a zöld szoba)? \*

Kérem, válasszon **egy**et az alábbiak közül:

- ☐ Igen
- ☐ Nem

### 61 Van-e lehetőség Late Check Out-ra? \*

Kérem, válasszon **egy**et az alábbiak közül:

- ☐ Igen
- ☐ Nem

### 62 Ha igen, mennyibe kerül (Ft)?

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

° Answer was 'Igen' at question '61 [T5]' (Van-e lehetőség Late Check Out-ra?)

Kérem, írja ide a választ:

### 63 Van-e lehetőség Early Check In-re? \*

Kérem, válasszon **egy**et az alábbiak közül:

- ☐ Igen
- ☐ Nem

### 64 Ha igen, mennyibe kerül (Ft)?

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

° Answer was 'Igen' at question '63 [T6]' (Van-e lehetőség Early Check In-re?)

Kérem, írja ide a választ:

**65 Van lehetősége a vendégnek szobacserére a szállodában? \***Kérem, válasszon **egy**et az alábbiak közül:

- ☐ Igen
- ☐ Nem

**66 Milyen esetekben van lehetőség szobacserére? \***

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

° Answer was 'Igen' at question '65 [T7]' ( Van lehetősége a vendégnek szobacserére a szállodában?)

Kérem, írja ide a választát:

**67 Milyen költségekkel jár a szobacsere a vendégnek? \***

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

° Answer was 'Igen' at question '65 [T7]' ( Van lehetősége a vendégnek szobacserére a szállodában?)

Kérem, írja ide a választát:

**68****Kérem jelölje be, hogy a következő szállodai tevékenységek/szolgáltatások esetében van-e lehetőség testreszabásra (a folyamatok/tevékenységek vendégkérések szerinti módosítására)? \***

Kérem, jelöljön meg egy megfelelő választ minden felsorolt elem számára:

	Igen, a vendég kérése szerint alakítunk mindent.	Igen, részben teljesítjük a vendég kéréseit.	Nem, a meghatározott folyamaton nem lehet változtatni.	Nincs ilyen szolgáltatásunk.
Alkalmazottak kinézete	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bejáratok, járművek takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Business Center takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Check-in/bejelentkezés/regisztráció	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Check-out	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ébresztőszolgálat	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Étterem felszereltsége	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Éttermi szolgáltatások	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fitness terem takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Folyosók takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Grafika (pl. logo)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Housekeeping szolgáltatások	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Internet használat	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Irodák takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Italszolgáltatások	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Karbantartó szolgáltatások	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Konferencia- és báltermek takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Konferenciatermek felszereltsége	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Konyha takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Külső területek takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lépcsőházak takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lifteket takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lobby felszereltsége	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lobby takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Londineri szolgálat	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Medencék takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mosoda takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public területi mosdóhelyiségek takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Raktárak megléte és takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reggeliztetés	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rezerváció	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Szállodában lévő boltok takarítás	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Személyzeti lift takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Személyzeti területek takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Szobaszervíz	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Szükséges dokumentumok megléte	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Transzfer szolgáltatások	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Üzenetfelvétel és átadás	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vendégfürdőszoba felszereltsége	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vendégfürdőszoba takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vendégöltözők takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vendégszoba felszereltsége	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vendégszoba takarítása	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wellness részleg felszereltsége	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2013.10.15.

LimeSurvey - Kérdőív a szálloda sztenderdizálás, testreszabás és innovációról

01.01.1970 – 01:00

Kérdőív elküldése

Köszönjük, hogy kitöltötte a kérdőívet.

Standard group	Hotels	1		2		3	
	Weight						
Staff appearance	6,25	3	42,1875	3	42,1875	2	28,125
Entrances/Vehicles cleanliness	5,75	3	38,8125	3	38,8125	3	38,8125
Business Center cleanliness	5,33	3	36		0	3	36
Check-in	6,13	2	27,5625	3	41,34375	3	41,34375
Check-out	6,13	2	27,5625	3	41,34375	3	41,34375
Wake-up call	5,13	2	23,0625	3	34,59375	2	23,0625
Restaurant equipments	5,14	3	34,71429	3	34,71429	3	34,71429
Restaurant services	6,13	3	41,34375	3	41,34375	3	41,34375
Fitness room/health club cleanliness	5,14	1	0	3	34,71429	3	34,71429
Corridors cleanliness	5,13	2	23,0625	3	34,59375	3	34,59375
Graphic standards	6,63	3	44,71875	3	44,71875	3	44,71875
Housekeeping services	6,38	3	43,03125	3	43,03125	3	43,03125
Internet usage	6,00	2	27	2	27	2	27
Office cleanliness	4,50	1	0	3	30,375	3	30,375
Beverage services	5,63	3	37,96875	3	37,96875	2	25,3125
Maintenance services	5,00	3	33,75	3	33,75	3	33,75
Meeting room cleanliness	5,50	2	24,75	3	37,125	1	0
Meeting room conditions	5,38	1	0	3	36,28125	2	24,1875
Kitchen cleanliness	6,13	3	41,34375	3	41,34375	3	41,34375
Building exterior cleanliness	5,25	2	23,625	3	35,4375	2	23,625
All stairwell cleanliness	4,88	2	21,9375	3	32,90625	3	32,90625
Guest elevators cleanliness	5,75	2	25,875		0	3	38,8125
Lobby/registration conditions	5,00	2	22,5	2	22,5	2	22,5
Lobby/registration cleanliness	5,75	2	25,875	3	38,8125	3	38,8125
Bell Staff service	5,50	1	0		0	1	0
Pool cleanliness	6,25	3	42,1875		0	3	42,1875
Public restroom conditions	5,13	2	23,0625		0	3	34,59375
Public restroom cleanliness	6,25	3	42,1875		0	3	42,1875
Storages and equipment cleanliness	5,13	3	34,59375	3	34,59375	3	34,59375
Breakfast service	6,25	3	42,1875	3	42,1875	3	42,1875
Reservation call	6,13	3	41,34375	3	41,34375	3	41,34375
Retail shops cleanliness	4,86	1	0		0	1	0
Service elevators cleanliness	4,43	1	0		0	1	0
Employee work areas cleanliness	4,63	1	0	3	31,21875	3	31,21875
Room service	5,71	3	38,57143	3	38,57143	1	0
Document standards	6,25	3	42,1875	3	42,1875	3	42,1875
Airport transportation	4,75	1	0		0	2	21,375
Message service	5,50	2	24,75	3	37,125	2	24,75
Guest bathroom conditions	6,75	3	45,5625	3	45,5625	3	45,5625
Guest bathroom cleanliness	6,75	2	30,375	3	45,5625	3	45,5625
Guest locker rooms/restrooms cleanliness	6,00	2	27		0	3	40,5
Guest room condition	6,38	3	43,03125	3	43,03125	3	43,03125
Guest room cleanliness	6,63	2	29,8125	3	44,71875	3	44,71875
Wellness department conditions	5,25	2	23,625	3	35,4375	3	35,4375
		248,494	1197,161	194,25	1286,438	248,494	1391,866
Not standardised	0		4,817664		6,622587		5,601205
Oral	4,5		0,713728		0,981124		0,829808
Written	6,75						