



# IQTISODIYOT & TARAQQIYOT

*Ijtimoiy, iqtisodiy, texnologik, ilmiy, ommabop jurnal*

**2026-YIL / IYUN/6-SON,  
VI-QISM**



INTERNATIONAL  
STANDARD  
SERIAL  
NUMBER  
INTERNATIONAL CENTRE



ISSN: 2992-8982

<https://yashil-iqtisodiyot-taraqqiyot.uz/>



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*Elektron nashr. 2026-yil, iyun.  
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**Muassis:** "Ma'rifat-print-media" MChJ

**Hamkorlarimiz:** Toshkent davlat iqtisodiyot universiteti,  
O'zbekiston Respublikasi Bosh prokuraturasi huzuridagi Iqtisodiy  
jinoyatlarga qarshi kurashish departamenti

### Jurnalning ilmiyligi:

“Yashil” iqtisodiyot va  
taraqqiyot” jurnali

O'zbekiston Respublikasi  
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2023-yil 1-apreldagi  
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# COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF TOURISTS' HOTEL SELECTION PREFERENCES IN THE MAJOR TOURISM REGIONS OF UZBEKISTAN

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**Abstract.** The hotel industry plays a crucial role in the development of tourism destinations, while the study of tourists' accommodation preferences is essential for improving service quality and strengthening competitiveness. This research provides a comparative analysis of tourists' hotel selection preferences across the major tourism regions of Uzbekistan, including Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara, Khiva, and the Fergana Valley. The purpose of the study is to identify the key factors influencing hotel choice and to determine regional differences in tourists' expectations and decision-making behavior. The research is based on quantitative and qualitative methods, including surveys of domestic and international tourists, statistical analysis, and comparative evaluation of hotel selection criteria. The findings indicate that price, location, service quality, cleanliness, safety, online reviews, and the availability of digital services are the most significant determinants of hotel choice. However, the relative importance of these factors varies considerably across regions due to differences in tourism infrastructure, cultural attractions, and visitor profiles. The results contribute to a deeper understanding of consumer behavior in Uzbekistan's hospitality sector and provide practical recommendations for hotel managers and tourism policymakers aimed at improving customer satisfaction and enhancing regional tourism competitiveness.

**Keywords:** hotel selection preferences, tourist behavior, hospitality industry, hotel choice factors, tourism regions, service quality, customer satisfaction, tourism development, accommodation preferences.

**Аннотация.** Гостиничная индустрия играет важную роль в развитии туристических направлений, а изучение предпочтений туристов при выборе средств размещения является необходимым условием повышения качества услуг и укрепления конкурентоспособности. В исследовании представлен сравнительный анализ предпочтений туристов при выборе гостиниц в основных туристических регионах Узбекистана, включая Ташкент, Самарканд, Бухару, Хиву и Ферганскую долину. Цель исследования заключается в выявлении ключевых факторов, влияющих на выбор гостиницы, а также в определении региональных различий в ожиданиях и поведении туристов при принятии решений. Исследование основано на количественных и качественных методах, включая анкетирование отечественных и иностранных туристов, статистический анализ и сравнительную оценку критериев выбора гостиниц. Результаты показывают, что наиболее значимыми факторами являются цена, местоположение, качество обслуживания, чистота, безопасность, онлайн-отзывы и наличие цифровых сервисов. Вместе с тем степень влияния данных факторов существенно различается между регионами в зависимости от уровня развития туристической инфраструктуры, особенностей культурных достопримечательностей и структуры туристического потока. Полученные результаты расширяют понимание потребительского поведения в гостиничном секторе Узбекистана и позволяют сформулировать практические рекомендации для гостиничных предприятий и органов управления туризмом, направленные на повышение удовлетворенности клиентов и укрепление конкурентоспособности туристических регионов.

**Ключевые слова:** предпочтения туристов, выбор гостиницы, гостиничная индустрия, факторы выбора отеля, туристические регионы, качество обслуживания, удовлетворенность клиентов, развитие туризма, средства размещения.

**Аннотация.** Mehmonxona sanoati turistik destinatsiyalar rivojlanishida muhim o'rin tutadi, turistlarning joylashtirish vositalarini tanlashdagi afzalliklarini o'rganish esa xizmatlar sifati va raqobatbardoshlikni oshirishning muhim sharti hisoblanadi. Tadqiqotda O'zbekistonning asosiy turistik hududlari — Toshkent, Samarqand, Buxoro, Xiva va Farg'ona vodiysida turistlarning mehmonxona tanlash afzalliklari qiyosiy



tahlil qilinadi. Tadqiqotning maqsadi mehmonxona tanloviga ta'sir etuvchi asosiy omillarni aniqlash hamda turistlarning kutishlari va qaror qabul qilish jarayonidagi hududiy farqlarni baholashdan iborat. Tadqiqotda mahalliy va xorijiy turistlar o'rtasida so'rovnomaga o'tkazish, statistik tahlil va mehmonxona tanlash mezonlarini qiyosiy baholash usullaridan foydalanilgan. Natijalarga ko'ra, narx, joylashuv, xizmat sifati, tozalik, xavfsizlik, onlayn sharhlar hamda raqamli xizmatlarning mavjudligi mehmonxona tanloviga eng kuchli ta'sir ko'rsatuvchi omillar hisoblanadi. Shu bilan birga, ushbu omillarning ahamiyati hududlar kesimida turistik infratuzilmaning rivojlanish darajasi, madaniy meros obyektlari va turistlar tarkibidagi farqlar sababli o'zgarib boradi. Tadqiqot natijalari O'zbekiston mehmondo'stlik sanoatida iste'molchilar xulq-atvorini chuqurroq tushunishga xizmat qiladi hamda mehmonxona menejerlari va turizm siyosatini ishlab chiquvchilar uchun mijozlar qoniqishini oshirish va hududiy turizm raqobatbardoshligini mustahkamlashga qaratilgan amaliy tavsiyalarni shakllantirish imkonini beradi.

**Kalit so'zlar:** turistlar afzalliklari, mehmonxona tanlovi, mehmondo'stlik sanoati, mehmonxona tanlash omillari, turistik hududlar, xizmat sifati, mijozlar qoniqishi, turizmni rivojlantirish, joylashtirish vositalari.

## INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry has become one of the fastest-growing sectors of the global economy, making a significant contribution to economic development, employment generation, and regional competitiveness. As international tourism continues to expand, the hospitality sector plays a central role in shaping tourists' experiences and perceptions of destinations<sup>1</sup>. Hotels are not only providers of accommodation services but also key elements influencing visitor satisfaction, destination image, and tourists' intention to revisit a destination<sup>2</sup>.

In recent years, tourists have become increasingly selective in their accommodation choices due to the rapid development of digital technologies, online booking platforms, and review systems. Modern travelers evaluate hotels based on a wide range of criteria, including price, location, service quality, cleanliness, safety, comfort, sustainability practices, and customer reviews<sup>3</sup>. The growing availability of information has transformed consumer decision-making processes and intensified competition among hospitality enterprises. Consequently, understanding the factors that influence hotel selection has become a strategic priority for both hotel managers and tourism policymakers.

Numerous studies have examined tourists' hotel selection behavior in different countries and tourism destinations. Previous research indicates that service quality, price-value perception, accessibility, brand reputation, and online reviews are among the most influential determinants of hotel choice<sup>4</sup>. However, the relative importance of these factors often varies according to tourists' demographic characteristics, travel purposes, cultural backgrounds, and destination-specific conditions<sup>5</sup>. Therefore, comparative regional studies are essential for identifying location-based differences in tourists' preferences and expectations<sup>6</sup>.

Uzbekistan has emerged as one of the most attractive tourism destinations in Central Asia due to its rich cultural heritage, historic cities, and strategic location along the Silk Road<sup>7</sup>. Over the past decade, the country has implemented comprehensive reforms aimed at improving tourism infrastructure, simplifying visa procedures, encouraging private investment, and expanding hospitality services<sup>8</sup>. Major tourism regions, including Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara, Khiva, and the Fergana Valley, attract different categories of tourists and offer diverse tourism products. As a result, tourists' hotel selection preferences may vary considerably across these regions<sup>9</sup>.

Despite the growing importance of tourism in Uzbekistan, comparatively limited academic attention has been devoted to the analysis of hotel selection preferences across the country's major tourism regions<sup>10</sup>. Most existing studies primarily focus on general tourism development or specific aspects of hotel management, while opportunities remain for a more comprehensive examination of regional differences in tourists' accommodation decision-making processes. This highlights the relevance of further research in this area.

1 UN Tourism (2024). *World Tourism Barometer*

2 World Travel & Tourism Council (2024). *Economic Impact Research*

3 Buhalis, Dimitrios & Law, Rob (2008). *Progress in Information Technology and Tourism Management*

4 Kandampully, Jay et al. (2018). *Hospitality Management and Service Quality*.

5 Xiang, Zheng et al. (2017). *Role of Social Media in Travel Planning*

6 Filieri, Raffaele et al. (2021). *Online Reviews and Consumer Decision-Making*

7 Lockyer, Tim (2005). *The Perceived Importance of Hotel Attributes*.

8 Dolnicar, Sara & Otter, Thomas (2003). *Which Hotel Attributes Matter?*

9 Sohrabi, Bahareh et al. (2012). *Hotel Selection Factors*.

10 Ramanathan, Usha & Ramanathan, Ramakrishnan (2016). *Hotel Customer Satisfaction and Choice*.



The purpose of this study is to conduct a comparative analysis of tourists' hotel selection preferences in the major tourism regions of Uzbekistan<sup>11</sup>. Specifically, the research seeks to identify the most influential hotel selection factors, compare their relative importance across regions, and provide practical recommendations for improving the competitiveness of hotel enterprises. The findings are expected to contribute to the literature on consumer behavior in tourism and hospitality while offering valuable insights for destination managers, hotel operators, and policymakers involved in tourism development<sup>12</sup>.

The study contributes to both theory and practice by providing empirical evidence on regional variations in accommodation preferences within an emerging tourism destination. Understanding these variations can assist hospitality businesses in designing more effective marketing strategies, improving service quality, and aligning their service offerings more closely with the expectations of both domestic and international tourists.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The study of tourists' hotel selection preferences has attracted considerable attention in tourism and hospitality research due to its direct influence on customer satisfaction, hotel competitiveness, and destination development. Understanding the factors that determine accommodation choices enables hospitality enterprises to develop effective marketing strategies and enhance service quality.

One of the earliest streams of research focused on identifying the attributes that tourists consider when selecting hotels. According to Dolnicar and Otter<sup>13</sup>, travelers evaluate accommodation alternatives based on a combination of functional and psychological factors, including price, location, room quality, cleanliness, and service standards. Similarly, Lockyer<sup>14</sup> found that hotel location and room cleanliness are among the most important determinants of hotel choice, regardless of traveler segment.

As competition within the hospitality industry intensified, researchers increasingly examined the role of service quality in tourists' decision-making processes. Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry introduced the SERVQUAL model, which has become one of the most widely used frameworks for measuring perceived service quality<sup>15</sup>. Subsequent studies demonstrated that reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles significantly affect customer satisfaction and hotel selection behavior<sup>16</sup>.

The rapid development of information and communication technologies has substantially transformed tourists' hotel booking behavior. Xiang et al. emphasize that online travel agencies, social media platforms, and digital review systems have become primary sources of information for travelers. Electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) significantly influences tourists' perceptions of hotel quality and trustworthiness. Filieri et al. argue that positive online reviews increase booking intentions, whereas negative reviews may reduce consumers' confidence in hotel services<sup>17</sup>.

Another important research direction concerns the relationship between price and perceived value. According to Sohrabi et al., tourists frequently compare hotel prices with expected service quality before making accommodation decisions<sup>18</sup>. Price sensitivity varies across tourist categories depending on income level, travel purpose, and destination characteristics. Ramanathan and Ramanathan found that perceived value often has a stronger effect on customer satisfaction than absolute price levels<sup>19</sup>.

Recent studies have also highlighted the growing importance of sustainability and environmental responsibility in hotel selection. Environmentally conscious travelers increasingly prefer hotels that implement green practices, such as energy efficiency, waste reduction, and water conservation programs<sup>20</sup>. Sustainable hospitality management is becoming an important source of competitive advantage, particularly among international tourists from developed countries.

Researchers have further emphasized that hotel selection preferences differ across destinations and regions. Factors such as tourism infrastructure, accessibility, cultural attractions, safety conditions, and destination image influence tourists' expectations and accommodation choices. Comparative regional analyses have demonstrated that tourists visiting heritage destinations often prioritize location and cultural authenticity, whereas business travelers tend to focus on accessibility, digital services, and convenience.

11 Kim, J. et al. (2023). Hotel Selection Criteria in the Digital Era.

12 Molina-Azorin, J.F. et al. (2015). Hotel Competitiveness and Customer Preferences.

13 Dolnicar, S., & Otter, T. (2003). Which Hotel Attributes Matter? A Review of Previous and a Framework for Future Research.

14 Lockyer, T. (2005). Understanding the Dynamics of the Hotel Accommodation Purchase Decision.

15 Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V.A., & Berry, L.L. (1988). SERVQUAL: A Multiple-Item Scale for Measuring Consumer Perceptions of Service Quality.

16 Han, H., Yu, J., & Kim, W. (2019). Environmental Responsibility and Green Hotel Choice.

17 Xiang, Z., Magnini, V., & Fesenmaier, D. (2017). Information Technology and Consumer Behavior in Travel and Tourism.

18 Sohrabi, B., Vanani, I.R., Tahmasebipour, K., & Fazli, S. (2012). An Exploratory Analysis of Hotel Selection Factors.

19 Ramanathan, U., & Ramanathan, R. (2016). Guests' Perceptions on Factors Influencing Hotel Choice.

20 Filieri, R., McLeay, F., Tsui, B., & Lin, Z. (2021). Consumer Perceptions of Online Reviews.



In the context of emerging tourism destinations, several studies have investigated hotel selection behavior in developing countries. These studies indicate that infrastructure quality, service reliability, and destination image play particularly significant roles in shaping tourists' accommodation decisions. At the same time, opportunities remain to expand the empirical evidence for many Central Asian countries, including Uzbekistan<sup>21</sup>.

The tourism sector of Uzbekistan has experienced substantial growth following government reforms aimed at improving tourism infrastructure and attracting international visitors. Existing research mainly focuses on tourism development, destination branding, cultural heritage management, and hospitality service quality. Nevertheless, there remains an opportunity for more comprehensive studies examining tourists' hotel selection preferences across different tourism regions of the country<sup>22</sup>.

Therefore, the existing literature reveals an important research opportunity. While numerous studies have investigated hotel selection factors in various international contexts, comparatively limited attention has been devoted to regional comparative analyses within Uzbekistan. This study seeks to contribute to the existing body of knowledge by examining the differences and similarities in tourists' hotel selection preferences across the major tourism regions of Uzbekistan and by identifying the factors that most strongly influence accommodation decisions<sup>23</sup>.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a quantitative research approach to examine tourists' hotel selection preferences across the major tourism regions of Uzbekistan, including Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara, Khiva, and the Fergana Valley. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire distributed among domestic and international tourists<sup>24</sup>. The questionnaire consisted of two sections: demographic characteristics of the respondents and factors influencing hotel selection, including price, location, service quality, cleanliness, safety, online reviews, hotel reputation, and digital services. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale<sup>25</sup>. A total of 300 valid questionnaires were analyzed<sup>26</sup>. Descriptive statistics, comparative analysis, and one-way ANOVA were conducted using SPSS software to identify significant differences in hotel selection preferences across the tourism regions. The findings provide a basis for evaluating regional variations in tourists' accommodation preferences and for developing recommendations to improve the competitiveness of hotel enterprises in Uzbekistan.

## ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

To identify the most important hotel selection factors, respondents were asked to evaluate various criteria using a five-point Likert scale (1 = not important, 5 = very important). The results are presented in **Table 1**.

Table 1.  
Importance of Hotel Selection Factors among Tourists in Uzbekistan<sup>27</sup>

No	Hotel Selection Factor	Mean Score	Rank
1	Cleanliness	4.72	1
2	Service Quality	4.65	2
3	Safety and Security	4.58	3
4	Location	4.47	4
5	Online Reviews	4.35	5
6	Price	4.29	6
7	Digital Services (Wi-Fi, Online Booking)	4.21	7
8	Hotel Reputation	4.13	8
9	Sustainability Practices	3.74	9

- 21 Tuxliev, I. S. (2022). *Tourism development and hospitality management in Uzbekistan*. Tashkent: Economics Publishing House.  
 22 Rakhmatullaev, A. (2020). Tourism development trends and opportunities in Uzbekistan. *Journal of Tourism and Services*, 11(21), 56–69.  
 23 World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC). (2024). *Economic Impact Report 2024*. London: WTTC.  
 24 Creswell, J.W. (2018). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. Sage Publications.  
 25 Field, A. (2018). *Discovering Statistics Using IBM SPSS Statistics*. Sage Publications  
 26 Hair et al. (2022). *Multivariate Data Analysis*. Pearson.  
 27 Author's calculations based on survey results.



The findings indicate that cleanliness, service quality, and safety are the most influential factors affecting tourists' hotel selection decisions. Although price remains an important consideration, respondents place greater emphasis on service-related attributes, suggesting a shift toward value-oriented decision-making. To examine regional differences, the average importance scores of selected hotel attributes were compared across the major tourism regions of Uzbekistan (Table 2).

Table 2.  
Regional Differences in Hotel Selection Preferences<sup>28</sup>

No	Factor	Tashkent	Samarkand	Bukhara	Khiva	Fergana Valley
1	Price	4.10	4.25	4.38	4.42	4.31
2	Location	4.60	4.51	4.43	4.32	4.49
3	Service Quality	4.71	4.63	4.59	4.55	4.60
4	Cleanliness	4.78	4.73	4.69	4.66	4.72
5	Online Reviews	4.48	4.37	4.29	4.21	4.34
6	Digital Services	4.55	4.18	4.02	3.95	4.11

Tourists visiting Tashkent demonstrate a stronger preference for digital services and convenient location, reflecting the city's role as a business and transportation hub. In contrast, visitors to historical destinations such as Bukhara and Khiva place relatively greater emphasis on price and cultural experience, while tourists in all regions consistently value cleanliness and service quality. To determine whether the observed differences are statistically significant, a one-way ANOVA was conducted (Table 3).

Table 3.  
ANOVA Results for Regional Differences in Hotel Selection Factors<sup>29</sup>

No	Factor	F-value	Significance (p-value)
1	Price	3.87	0.005
2	Location	4.22	0.002
3	Service Quality	1.54	0.187
4	Cleanliness	1.12	0.344
5	Online Reviews	3.45	0.009
6	Digital Services	5.31	0.001

The ANOVA results reveal statistically significant regional differences in price, location, online reviews, and digital services ( $p < 0.05$ ). However, no statistically significant regional differences were observed for service quality and cleanliness, indicating that these attributes are consistently important across all tourism regions.

Overall, the results confirm that tourists' hotel selection preferences vary according to destination characteristics. While traditional factors such as cleanliness and service quality remain fundamental determinants of hotel choice, contemporary factors, including online reviews and digital services, are becoming increasingly influential. These findings support previous studies emphasizing the growing role of technology and customer experience in hospitality management. For hotel managers, the results suggest that marketing and service strategies should be adapted to the specific characteristics of each tourism region. Enhancing digital services in urban destinations while maintaining high standards of cleanliness and service quality across all regions can significantly improve tourist satisfaction and competitiveness.

The analysis demonstrates that tourists in Uzbekistan prioritize cleanliness, service quality, and safety when selecting hotels. At the same time, significant regional differences exist regarding price sensitivity, location preferences, online reviews, and digital services. The findings indicate that hotel enterprises should adopt region-specific management and marketing strategies while maintaining consistently high service standards across all destinations. Such an approach can enhance customer satisfaction, strengthen destination competitiveness, and contribute to the sustainable development of Uzbekistan's tourism industry.

To obtain a deeper understanding of tourists' accommodation preferences, a structured survey was conducted among domestic and international tourists visiting the major tourism regions of Uzbekistan. The sample included respondents representing different national backgrounds and travel purposes. The survey

<sup>28</sup> Author's calculations based on survey results.

<sup>29</sup> Author's calculations based on survey results.



aimed to identify not only the general factors influencing hotel selection but also the differences associated with tourists' nationalities and destination-specific contexts.

The results confirm that tourists are not a homogeneous group; instead, their hotel selection behavior varies significantly depending on nationality, travel motivation, and cultural expectations. Based on the collected data, four main tourist segments were identified: European tourists (Germany and France), tourists from the CIS countries (mainly Russia), Chinese tourists, and tourists from Arab countries. In addition, notable regional differences were observed across Uzbekistan's major tourism destinations, including Samarkand, Bukhara, and Tashkent (Table 4).

Table 4.  
Segmentation of Tourists' Hotel Preferences by Nationality<sup>30</sup>

No	Tourist Segment	Key Hotel Preferences	Behavioral Characteristics
1	Germany and France	Authenticity, historical atmosphere, boutique hotels, eco-friendly practices, quiet environment	Prefer cultural immersion and experience-based tourism; demonstrate low tolerance for mass tourism
2	Russia and CIS countries	Price-quality ratio, breakfast included, large rooms, central location	Highly price-sensitive; value comfort and convenience
3	China	Group travel services, fast check-in, multilingual staff, digital payment systems	Strong preference for efficiency and technology-enabled services
4	Arab countries	Family rooms, halal food, privacy, high service standards	Strong preference for comfort, privacy, and family-oriented services

The findings demonstrate significant heterogeneity in hotel selection behavior across international tourist segments. European tourists prioritize experiential and sustainable tourism attributes, whereas tourists from the CIS countries focus primarily on economic value and accessibility. Chinese tourists demonstrate a strong orientation toward digitalization and operational efficiency, while tourists from Arab countries emphasize comfort, cultural compatibility, and family-oriented services (Table 5).

Table 5.  
Segmentation of tourists' hotel preferences by nationality<sup>31</sup>

No	Destination	Dominant Tourist Purpose	Preferred Hotel Type	Key Demand Factors
1	Samarkand	Cultural and historical tourism	Boutique and heritage hotels	Proximity to historical sites, authenticity, boutique experience
2	Bukhara	Cultural immersion tourism	Traditional and heritage-style hotels	Local atmosphere, architectural identity, cultural experience
3	Tashkent	Business, MICE, and transit tourism	International chain hotels	Business facilities, conference services, modern standards

The results show that the structure of tourism demand varies significantly by destination. Samarkand and Bukhara are primarily cultural tourism destinations, where authenticity and heritage experiences dominate hotel selection criteria. In contrast, Tashkent functions as a business and transit hub, where international standards, operational efficiency, and professional services are of greater importance.

The findings strongly support the assumption that a one-size-fits-all approach to hotel services in Uzbekistan is no longer effective. Instead, tourists demonstrate highly segmented preferences based on their cultural background and destination type. This observation is consistent with the international tourism literature, which emphasizes that hotel selection behavior is multidimensional and strongly influenced by cultural factors.

The results highlight an important managerial implication: hotels in Uzbekistan should adopt a segmented marketing strategy rather than offering standardized services. For example, boutique and eco-oriented hotels may perform better in heritage cities such as Samarkand and Bukhara, while international chain hotels and business-oriented services are more suitable for Tashkent. Additionally, investments in digital infrastructure and multilingual services are essential for attracting tourists from Asian and Middle Eastern markets. Overall, the

30 Author's survey data.

31 Author's survey data.

study confirms that understanding cultural and regional heterogeneity is a key factor in improving competitiveness within the hospitality industry of emerging tourism destinations such as Uzbekistan (Table 6).

Table 6. Detailed Structure of the Survey Instrument<sup>32</sup>

Section	Variable / Construct	Measurement items	Scale type	Purpose
Section 1: Demographics	Nationality	Country of origin (Germany, France, Russia, China, Arab countries, others)	Nominal	To identify cultural background of tourists
	Age	<18, 18–25, 26–35, 36–50, 51+	Ordinal	To analyze generational differences
	Gender	Male / Female / Other	Nominal	Sample profiling
	Purpose of visit	Leisure, Business, Cultural tourism, Transit, MICE	Nominal	To identify travel motivation
	Travel type	Individual / Group / Family	Nominal	Behavioral segmentation
Section 2: Hotel Selection Factors	Price	Affordability and value for money	Likert (1–5)	To measure economic sensitivity
	Location	Proximity to attractions / city center	Likert (1–5)	To evaluate accessibility importance
	Cleanliness	Hygiene and room condition	Likert (1–5)	To assess basic service quality
	Service quality	Staff behavior, responsiveness, professionalism	Likert (1–5)	To measure service performance perception
	Safety & security	Personal safety, hotel security systems	Likert (1–5)	To evaluate perceived risk
	Online reviews	Influence of ratings and feedback	Likert (1–5)	To assess digital decision-making
	Digital services	Wi-Fi, online booking, mobile payment	Likert (1–5)	To measure technology adoption
	Hotel reputation	Brand image and trust	Likert (1–5)	To assess brand influence
	Sustainability	Eco-friendly practices	Likert (1–5)	To evaluate green tourism awareness
Section 3: Preference Orientation	Hotel type preference	Budget, Boutique, Luxury, Chain, Heritage	Nominal	To identify accommodation segmentation
	Cultural authenticity	Importance of local experience	Likert (1–5)	To measure cultural motivation
	Digital convenience	Importance of automation and speed	Likert (1–5)	To evaluate tech-driven expectations
	Family/privacy orientation	Need for privacy and family services	Likert (1–5)	To identify cultural lifestyle needs

The survey instrument was designed to capture a comprehensive picture of tourists' hotel selection behavior by integrating demographic, behavioral, and perceptual dimensions. The use of a structured Likert-scale measurement enabled the quantification of respondents' subjective perceptions regarding hotel attributes, while categorical variables allowed for the precise segmentation of respondents. The instrument ensured both content validity and construct relevance by covering all key determinants identified in previous hospitality research, including price sensitivity, service quality, digital transformation, sustainability, and cultural preferences. This multidimensional approach enabled a detailed comparative analysis of different tourist groups and tourism regions. Overall, the survey design provides a robust empirical foundation for analyzing heterogeneity in hotel selection behavior and supports the reliability of the study's statistical findings.

32 Author's elaboration.



## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study examined tourists' hotel selection preferences across the major tourism regions of Uzbekistan, including Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara, Khiva, and the Fergana Valley. The findings demonstrate that hotel selection decisions are influenced by a combination of service-related, economic, and technological factors. Among all the evaluated attributes, cleanliness, service quality, and safety emerged as the most important determinants of hotel choice, highlighting the critical role of customer experience in the hospitality industry.

The comparative analysis revealed notable regional differences in tourists' preferences. Visitors to Tashkent placed greater importance on location convenience and digital services, whereas tourists visiting historical destinations such as Bukhara and Khiva showed greater sensitivity to price-related factors. Nevertheless, cleanliness and service quality were consistently rated as essential across all regions, indicating their universal importance regardless of destination characteristics.

The study contributes to the existing literature by providing empirical evidence on regional variations in hotel selection behavior within an emerging tourism destination. The results confirm that tourists' accommodation preferences are influenced not only by individual characteristics but also by destination-specific factors, including tourism infrastructure, accessibility, and service availability.

From a practical perspective, hotel managers should focus on maintaining high standards of cleanliness, service quality, and safety while adapting marketing and operational strategies to regional market conditions. Investments in digital technologies, online booking systems, customer relationship management, and reputation management can further enhance competitiveness and customer satisfaction. Tourism authorities should continue supporting infrastructure development and quality improvement initiatives to strengthen Uzbekistan's position in the international tourism market.

The scope of the study was defined by the selected sample and the focus on the major tourism regions of Uzbekistan. Future research may expand the geographical coverage, compare domestic and international tourists separately, and investigate the impact of sustainability practices, smart tourism technologies, and evolving consumer behavior on hotel selection decisions. Overall, the findings suggest that a deeper understanding of tourists' hotel preferences can support more effective management decisions, improve service quality, and contribute to the sustainable development of Uzbekistan's hospitality and tourism sectors.

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## IQTISODIYOT & TARAQQIYOT

*Ijtimoiy, iqtisodiy, texnologik, ilmiy, ommabop jurnal*

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**2026. № 6/6**

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"Yashil" iqtisodiyot va taraqqiyot" jurnali 03.11.2022-yildan O'zbekiston Respublikasi Prezidenti Adminstratsiyasi huzuridagi Axborot va ommaviy kommunikatsiyalar agentligi tomonidan №566955 reyestr raqami tartibi bo'yicha ro'yxatdan o'tkazilgan.  
**Litsenziya raqami:** №046523. PNFL: 30407832680027

**Manzilimiz:** Toshkent shahar, Mirzo Ulug'bek tumani  
Kumushkon ko'chasi, 26-uy.



Jurnal sayti: <https://yashil-iqtisodiyot-taraqqiyot.uz>