

THE INFLUENCE OF WOMEN ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BULGARIAN TOURIST REGIONS THROUGH MANAGEMENT OF LUXURY HOTELS

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Abstract: The contemporary development of the tourism industry in Bulgaria is exceptionally dynamic and oriented towards the creation of new and competitively effective tourism products and services. This situation is a good prerequisite for positioning the country on the European and world tourism market. For this purpose, the Ministry of Tourism has developed a new tourism zoning to support the specialization and proper positioning of the regions that have focused their development in tourism industry. Luxury tourism, as part of the current trends in the global tourism, also finds its application in the specialization of some of the newly created tourism areas. The influence of women, taking part of the management in some of the luxury hotels in the country, has its impact on the development of tourist areas, through the personal views and principles used in the creation of an innovative and sustainable tourism policy that satisfies and attracts more and more wealthy tourists.

Key words: women, Bulgaria, development, tourism regions, management, luxury hotels

INTRODUCTION

The development of the modern tourism industry in Bulgaria requires the implementation of different strategies and approaches that will provide the country with an advantage in the extremely diverse and highly competitive tourism market. Because of this need a new tourism zoning was developed in the country. It aims at achieving results that meet the needs determined by the contemporary development of the Bulgarian tourist market. Yaneva (2019) suggest that "the reasons for this are objective and are due to the existing need for a common vision and strategy for the development of tourist destinations, as well as the increasing problems with the resource provision of individual areas and regions."

In the period February-July 2014, the National Centre for Territorial Development (NCTD) developed the present "Concept for Tourism Zoning of Bulgaria, 2015". The proposed concept aims to "...develop a concept for the tourist zoning of Bulgaria in accordance with the requirements of the " Bulgarian Law of Tourism ", which should be used in the marketing of destinations at the regional level and as a basis for the formation of destination management organizations (tourist area management organizations)". This concept is embedded in the priorities of the Ministry of Tourism. The highlighted issues are industry related. The tourism government (2019) has shown that the tourism industry is designated as the structure-defining sector of the Bulgarian economy and together with its related economic activities, forms gross domestic product worth over BGN 11.6 billion, which is almost 15% of the total indicator for the country in 2019. During this period, employees in the sector and related industries were 393 thousand people, which is almost 13% of all employed in Bulgaria.

The contemporary tourism industry in Bulgaria is developing in an extremely dynamic and competitive environment, which determines the need to introduce and apply innovative

approaches in the implementation of specialized types of tourism. The aim is to prove that having a destination management policy will help to develop the tourism business as well as determine the appearance of the area and its potential visitors. Luxury tourism, which is part of this factors, creates prerequisites for the emergence of marketing strategies based on the newly created tourist zoning of the country. The face of this new and intriguing type of tourism in Bulgaria are the high-class hotels that will provide the highest levels of service, as well as the highest quality of the tourist products and attention offered. In our country, only 5-star hotels have the capacity to fulfil the requirements of tourists preferring luxury tourism as an expression of their high financial capabilities and priorities during the tourist experience. For these reasons this study will reveal the role of female managers, leading most of the 5star hotels in Bulgaria. Their sense of luxury, quality of services, exclusivity, attention to detail, personalization of the offered products and services, forms the present-day appearance of the luxury tourism proposed by the Bulgarian tourist market.

World practice shows that all tourist destinations are competing for a share of the global tourism market, this competition is extremely high and offering new and specialized forms of tourism, such as luxury tourism which provide the necessary market advantage. But it should also be considered that it is not enough for a tourist destination to offer a certain type of tourism. It is necessary to create and implement a comprehensive concept for managing, applying and offering this type of tourism, and finally, sustainability in all stages and processes related to its development. This combination of factors will let the tourists to associate luxury tourism with the destination, in this case with Bulgaria. It is reasonable to be said that female managers take precedence over male managers in the hotel industry of the country, providing the necessary positive image and sustainable policy in the field of luxury tourism.

Luxury tourism is an extremely specific segment of the tourism industry that combines both the provision of expensive, innovative and high-tech tourism products and services, as well as peace, security, and seclusion, combined with specific feelings and personal satisfaction. The specificity of experiences and, above all, limited access due to the high financial parameters of the tourism products and services offered, determines the specific nature of this new type of tourism. The Earlier study of Tsonev and Kaleychev (2018) showed that luxury tourism gives a sense of belonging to the elite class, enables the use of various and hard to reach tourism products and services and motivates tourists in their preferences when choosing a certain luxury tourist destination. According to the CBI Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2018), in 2016 About 54 million tourist trips were made to luxury tourism, representing 7% of international travel during this period. The specificity of this type of tourism, which is largely due to the high prices of the products and services offered (nights - an average of 500 euros per night), accumulates 20% of the travel expenses in 2016. Between 2014 and 2016, luxury tourism increased twice (18%) faster than standard international travel for the period. About three quarters of these trips are made for recreational purposes, such as tourists' holidays. During the study form (Statista, 2019), In 2019. luxury travel is worth \$ 831bn, growing at a steady pace compared to traditional travel. The luxury tourism market is booming, becoming a particularly interesting tourist segment, which carries with it a specific image and messages for tourist destinations that are geared towards its development. In this research will be justified the role of women managing luxury hotels and being the leading force of the development of luxury tourism in new tourism regions of Bulgaria.

METHODS

A methodological apparatus was used to achieve the objectives of this report, including a set of methods such as observation, comparative analysis and synthesis, analogy and counting. In their entirety, they are the subject of an inductive-deductive and systematic approach to the issues of tourism zoning, and the impact of women managers on luxury tourism and its development in the Bulgarian tourism industry. Also, the logic of exploring and researching of luxury tourism as a prospect for tourism development and to a large extent, as one of the factors for tourist zoning in the country, may also include a multi-attribute approach for identifying its impacts of modelling innovative methods for the provision of specialized tourism types.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The exceptional dynamics of the tourism market in Bulgaria determines the sustainable orientation of tourism enterprises to the provision of luxury products and services that will attract more wealthy tourists and establish their name in the exclusive tourism market. Yaneva (2019) suggest that the dynamic evolution of global economic markets, as well as the quick development of information and communication technologies, make the business identification the basis for executing a successful competitive strategy for any business organization or tourist destination. Due to the nature of the offered luxury products and services, associated mainly with high prices and quality, luxury tourism is an increasingly preferred form of tourism for the development of the Bulgarian tourist market. For these reasons, the owners of five star hotels in Bulgaria have many questions related to marketing and management strategies that would promote their hotels as a symbol of luxury and elitism and make them a preferred choice by tourists seeking this type of service in our country. It is noteworthy that in the last few years there has been a strong shift in management strategies towards the preference of women for general managers in most of the five-star hotels in the country. Although there are no studies proving this in Bulgaria, it can be obtained from the 40th annual Gallup Global Survey published in 2017, which can be considered relevant to the situation in our country. The Gallup report (Shneider, 2017) is based on surveys over four decades, including an analysis of the responses of 27 million employees and according to it, female managers take advantage over the male managers, especially in terms of employee engagement factor. According to Fitch and Agrawal (2014), Gallup data indicates that employees working for female managers are on average more engaged than those working for male managers (33% to 27%, respectively). Female employees working for female managers are the most engaged - 35%, male employees who work for male managers are the least engaged - 25% (Figure 1).

Gallup defines committed employees as that part of all company employees who are enthusiastic and deeply committed to their workplace and the work they do.

A year-long study shows that, regarding the day-to-day work processes and situations, if the workforce reports to a female manager, they are more likely to respond positively to the following statements:

"There is someone in the business who is encouraging my development."

"In the last six months, someone has been telling me about my progress."

"In the last seven days, I have received recognition or praise for my good work."

According to Shneider (2017), these facts are extremely important because 87 percent of employees worldwide report that they are not involved in the workflow of the companies they work for. On the other hand, companies that have engaged employees in work and management decisions outperform their competitors by 147 percent in earnings per share, and it can be argued that the first group of companies have extremely unspoken potential.

The Gallup study presented above identifies four major components of employee engagement that give women managers an edge over their male colleagues:

1. Set basic expectations.

Practice shows that one of the fastest ways to create confusion and limit productivity is to be ambiguous about what a manager should expect. A leading indicator of an engaged employee is responsibility in relation to the tasks assigned, and it is extremely difficult for him or her to carry out his / her activity without being given the expected parameters. By this indicator, women managers perform better than men.

2. Building relationships.

Women leaders manage to establish more fair relationship with the work team more than their male colleagues. Some of the key features defining these relationships are:

- Trust: empowering employees to be open, honest and dedicated.
- Mutual respect: When the ideas and contributions of each employee are valued, a much greater commitment of employees towards the set goals is achieved.
- Responsibility: expressed in actions, words, emotions and their impact on employees.
- Promotion of ideas: expressed with respect and encouragement of different opinions and ideas as a resource for making better management decisions.
- Communicative: Good communication with employees leads to more successful exchange of managerial ideas and views to the manager.

3. Promoting a positive work environment.

The modern development of all types of industries is aimed at automation and digitization of work processes, but still nothing can replace leadership skills and the creation of a positive work environment that motivates staff to achieve their goals. Quality of work, responsibility, loyalty, dedication and, above all, commitment are factoring that good managers create, through the work environment, to achieve the set production parameters.

4. 4. Providing career opportunities.

Career development opportunities and investment in staff in the form of various trainings, motivate many quality employees to remain loyal to the company. The Gallup report proves that higher levels of engagement create teams of higher performing employees.

The hotel owners in Bulgaria who aim to develop luxury tourism, are aware of the fact that involvement of the entire staff is necessary to meet the desired high levels of service and quality of the offered tourist products and services. A large number of modern luxury hotel managers realize that luxury is not just about offering luxury products and services. It is also about service, the environment, attitude, understanding, security, personal experiences and interests, and last but not least, meeting all kinds of needs that modern tourists have in order to experience this elite form of tourism. For these reasons, and not least because of the specific personal skills possessed by women managers today, they manage to create and model management strategies in the luxury tourist segment of our country. In recent years, an increasing number of tourists in Bulgaria are choosing accommodation offering high quality services. In 2017, overnight stays in 4- and 5-star establishments were over 3.7 million, which is 32 percent more than in 2014. The number of nights spent in this period increased, as well as in 2017 are over BGN 919 million - almost 49% growth over 2014 according to the Economy.bg (2018) internet site. This was stated by the Minister of Tourism Nikolina Angelkova at the opening of the third international "Hotel & Tourism investment forum"

The Bulgarian Minister of Tourism also announced that beds in 4- and 5-star accommodation places have increased for the period 2014-2017 from about 121 thousand to about 150 thousand, which is around 24% growth. The 4- and 5-star hotels were 369 in 2014 and 418 in 2017. These are the places and beds that are most quickly exhausted in the time of booking. As a share of the total number of 4 and 5-star hotels, about 43 per cent of the beds in accommodation places with at least 10 beds in Bulgaria, with a tendency for a steady increase.

Considering the new concept for the tourist zoning of Bulgaria, it becomes clear that based on Order №T-RD-14-63 / 15.05.2015 of the Minister of Tourism, ref. in the NP. 56 of 24.07.2015, the following centers of the respective tourist regions have been designated:

1. „Danube tourist region “with center city of Ruse and main specialization - Cultural and Cruise tourism.
2. „Stara Planina tourist region “with center city of Veliko Tarnovo and main specialization - Mountain and Cultural tourism.
3. „Sofia tourist region “with center city of Sofia and main specialization - Business and Cultural tourism.
4. „Thracian tourist region “with center city of Plovdiv and main specialization - Cultural and Wine tourism.
5. „ Tourist region The Valley of the Roses “with its center in city of Kazanlak and its main specialization is Health and Cultural Tourism.
6. „ Rila - Pirin tourist region “with center city of Blagoevgrad and main specialization - Mountain and Religious tourism.
7. „ Rhodope tourist region “with center city of Smolyan and main specialization - Mountain and Rural tourism.
8. „Varna Black Sea tourist region “with center city of Varna and main specialization - Sea and Sport tourism.

9. „ Bourgas Black Sea tourist region “with center city of Bourgas and main specialization - Sea and Cultural tourism.

The specific nature of luxury tourism, focused on offering new, innovative and technologically expensive tourist products and services, was limited to a certain range of consumers. It leads to the conclusion that the personal satisfaction and uniqueness of the tourist experience, form a prerequisite for the realization of luxury tourism in some part of the newly created tourist regions of Bulgaria.

For the purposes of this study, information will be provided for the number of 5-star hotels in part of the newly created tourist regions that offer the specific type of luxury tourism services. Also, will be shown the percentage ratio of men and women managers managing 5-star hotels in the studied tourist regions. Once the statistical information is presented, the data will be analysed, and specific conclusions drawn. As mentioned above, the specifics of a woman as a person and a manager can be identified and perceived as a major competitive advantage over other hotels developing and offering luxury tourist products and services.

During the analysing the information of the number and location of 5-star hotels within the boundaries of the newly created tourist regions in Bulgaria, it is clear that only four regions out of nine are of interest to this study, namely:

- Burgas Black Sea tourist region with center city of Burgas and main specialization - Sea and Cultural tourism.
- Varna Black Sea tourist region with center city of Varna and main specialization - Sea and Sport tourism.
- Sofia tourist area with center city of Sofia and main specialization - Business and Cultural tourism.
- Rila - Pirin tourist area with center city of Blagoevgrad and main specialization - Mountain and Religious tourism.

In this study, these tourism regions will be analysed, hence 76 of a total 86 hotels are categorized with five stars according to the Bulgarian legislation. It should be noted that there are 5-star hotels in the other newly created tourist regions, but their number is within 1 or 2, which is not enough to form stable conclusions, related to the objectives of this study.

The tourist area with the largest number of five-star hotels in the country is the „**Bourgas Black Sea Tourist Region** “with center city of Bourgas and main specialization of Sea and Cultural Tourism. The region includes the tourist sub-regions of „Bourgas Black Sea “and „Strandzha Black Sea “. The main specialization of the region is related to sea and cultural tourism. On the other hand, extended specialization is related to:

1. Sea recreational tourism
2. Cultural tourism (all types)
3. Adventure and Ecotourism
4. Health tourism (all types)
5. Rural tourism

6. Religious and pilgrimage tourism

There are 13 municipalities in the region from the administrative division of the country and their overall economic development is influenced by sea recreational tourism. The „Burgas Black Sea region “can be defined as the center of luxury tourism in the country. There are 26, five-star hotels built and operating in the area and satisfying all needs and interests of tourists aiming at the consuming of luxury tourism products and services (Figure 2). “Sunny Beach Resort” is the main tourism center in the area, attracting most of international tourists who have visited the country. With its strategic location, natural resources and infrastructure the resort is taking the leading position in Bulgarian tourism market. The development of the complex has also an impact on the neighbouring cities, such as Nessebar, Sveti Vlas, Ravda and Pomorie. All together they form an entire tourism area, offering mainly sea tourism and attracting many international tourists. Also, can be find significant opportunities for development of luxury tourism in the cities of Burgas and Sozopol. Both cities have a rich cultural and historical heritage, famous night life, excellent climate and location, the combination of all these factors attract a large number of elite tourists.

From the information provided in figure 2, the total number of 5-star hotels is 26. Out of the total hotels number, 9 of them are in “Sunny Beach resort”, which is the main tourist center of the region. The city of Sveti Vlas is one of fastest development tourism destinations with 5 five-star hotels and becoming the second most important luxury tourism destination in the region. Third in importance is the city of Sozopol, which houses 3 five-star hotels offering luxury tourist products and services. After them are 4 tourism destinations with 2, five-star hotels, they are smaller in size, which does not give them opportunities to develop more successfully luxury tourism infrastructure. And lastly is the town of Nessebar, which is a city with great cultural and historical importance for the country, with only 1 five-star hotel, but the spirit of the city contributes to elite and luxury atmosphere. For the region is specific the fact that the tourist destinations Sunny Beach, Sveti Vlas, Nessebar and Ravda form a complete tourist conglomerate, which attracts a significant part of the international and local flow of tourists heading to the Bulgarian Black Sea coast.

Of interest to this study is also the percentage of women and men managers operating 5-star hotels in the area (Figure 3). From the statistics information provided in “Figure 3”, female managers dominate over male managers. The percentage is 54% to 46%.

The second most important tourist region in terms of the number of 5-star hotels is the **“Varna Black Sea Tourist Region”** with center city of Varna and main specialization of Sea and Sport Tourism. The region includes the tourist sub-regions “Varna Black Sea” and “Dobrudzha Black Sea”. The main specialization of the newly created region is related to sea and sports tourism, while the extended specialization of the region includes:

1. Sea recreational tourism
2. Sport tourism
3. Cultural, historical and festival tourism
4. Business Tourism (MICE)
5. Health tourism (all types)
6. Ecotourism

The region is one of the most developed in the field of tourism and its strongest side is the sea recreational tourism, which is the leading one and creating its overall development. There

are 25 municipalities in the region, most of them located on the coast, which in turn is important for the direction of their economic development. For this reason, there are 17, five-star hotels in the region (Figure 4), which offer to the tourists' various luxury tourism opportunities. One of the most famous and world-renowned sea resorts such as: Albena, Golden Sands and St. St. Constantine and Helena are situated in the area. City of Varna as the administrative center of the region in the same time is a well-known name in the tourism industry of Bulgaria, attracting a significant part of tourists preferring to practice summer recreational tourism. Opportunities in terms of natural resources and facilities for the development of luxury tourism are at a high level, and it can be argued that the area is one of the symbols of luxury tourism in Bulgaria.

After analysing the statistics in "Figure 4", the number of 5-star hotels is 17. The largest number - 5 hotels are in the "Golden sands resort", which is the main tourist center of the region. After that, six tourist destinations having two 5-stars hotels each and contribute to the supply of luxury tourist products and services in the area. The specificity of the region is the fact that it houses 3 of the largest and most important resorts in the country: "Golden sands", "Albena" and "St. St. Constantine and Helena". The city of Varna is the third largest city in Bulgaria, known by the nickname the „sea capital “of Bulgaria. It is interesting that together with the above-mentioned resorts, they are one of the symbols of the tourism industry in the country.

Of interest to the present study is the percentage of female and male managers operating 5-star hotels in the area (Figure 5). From the analysis of information data in "Figure 5", female managers are more than male managers of 5-star hotels in the tourist region. The percentage is 53% to 47%.

The third most important of the newly established tourist regions in the country with a relatively large number of 5-star hotels is the "**Sofia Tourist Region**". It is with centre city of Sofia and its main specialization is Business and Cultural Tourism. In the region is located the capital of Bulgaria - Sofia, which is one of the leading tourist destinations in terms of development and supply of luxury tourism products and services. The region includes the tourist sub-regions of "Sofia" and "Kraishte". The main tourist specialization of the region is related to business and cultural tourism, while the extended specialization covers:

1. Business Tourism (MICE)
2. Cultural tourism (all types)
3. Hiking (all types)
4. Health tourism (all types)
5. Religious and pilgrimage tourism
6. Adventure and Ecotourism

Sofia region is one of the leading in the field of luxury tourism, as it houses 13, five-star hotels (Figure 6). It should be considered that most of them are representatives of international hotel chains and offer extremely high standards of tourist products and services, as well as in determining factors such as service, quality and variety. Sofia as the capital of the country is a major tourism center for international tourists seeking personal satisfaction and memorable experiences. The city also has abundant mineral water resources, which are an excellent prerequisite for the development of SPA tourism, one of more preferred factors by tourists looking for luxurious tourist experiences. Due to the fact that the main specialization is business and cultural tourism, the 5-star hotels in Sofia attract a large number of international tourists

with contemporary design, luxury atmosphere, amenities and innovations, also exhibits of world art and high standards of service for tourists preferring luxury tourism service.

The analysis of the information about this newly created tourism region shows that there are 13, five-star hotels located and operating in it (Figure 6). Specific is the fact that all of them are in the administrative center of the region – city of Sofia. In 2016 city of Sofia is ranked in the “Top 3” of the European cities with the highest growth of foreign tourists for the period 2009-2016. This trend continues over the years and into 2019 is reported an 82% increase in tourists for the period 2009-2019. The fact is that business travellers who practice MICE tourism and those who prefer weekend trips are most interested in visiting the capital of Bulgaria. At the same time, according to internet site Sofia.bg (2019), it is reported that the largest number of tourists come from countries such as: Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Italy, Israel and France.

It is interesting to note that Sofia is one of the oldest cities in Bulgaria, and since the time of Roman Empire it has been an attractive SPA center through its rich sources of warm mineral water. It can be said that the capital of Bulgaria is one of the symbols of the tourism industry of the country.

Of interest to the present study is the percentage of female and male managers operating 5-star hotels in the area (Figure 7). From the information presented in “Figure 7”, in this newly created tourism region, female managers are more dominant than male managers. The data show a percentage ratio of 54% to 46%.

The last of the newly created tourist regions according to the number of 5-star hotels in the country, selected for the present study, is the “**Rila - Pirin tourism region**” with center city of Blagoevgrad and main specialization - Mountain and religious tourism. The region includes two sub-regions: “Rila sub-region” and “Pirin sub-region”. The main specialization is related to mountain and religious tourism. While extended specialization covers:

1. Mountain tourism (all types - skiing, hiking, recreational)
2. Religious and pilgrimage tourism
3. Adventure and Ecotourism
4. Balneo tourism, SPA and wellness tourism
5. Cultural, historical and festival tourism
6. Wine tourism

There are 23 municipalities within the boundaries of the region, their specificity being the fact that they mostly occupy mountainous areas from the territory of the country. It can be said that this is one of the most developed regions in terms of luxury tourism in Bulgaria, with its main specialization being the provision of luxury products and services oriented mainly to winter tourism. Bansko mountain resort, which is the leader among the winter resorts in the country and within the boundaries of the region, offers a considerable variety of luxury products and services to tourists who visit it. Stankova (2014) suggested that due to the nature of its territorial and climatic location, the resort is focused mainly on winter sports and winter tourism development opportunities. Thanks to the excellent natural sources, Bansko has gained worldwide fame in recent years and has become a symbol of Bulgarian winter tourism. It should be noted that in the region is located the second most important winter tourist center of the country, the winter resort “Borovet”, which together with Bansko and “Pamporovo” are the main tourist centers offering winter tourism experiences. This newly created tourist area offers

tourist products and services typical for luxury tourism, which are widely available in 10, five-star hotels located on the territory of the resort (Figure 8).

After analyzing the statistics in “Figure 8”, the number of 5-star hotels in the surveyed tourist region is 10. The largest number of them – 6, are in the most developed ski resort in Bulgaria - Bansko, which is also the main tourist center attracting large number of Bulgarian and international tourists. The rest of the 5-star hotels are in the other major tourist centers located in the study area - tourism resort of Borovets and the city of Sandanski, they house 2 five-star hotels each and offering luxury tourist products and services. The peculiarity of the region is the fact that it houses 2 of the largest and most important winter tourist resorts in the country: Bansko and Borovets. The third most important tourist destination in the area offering luxury tourism is the city of Sandanski. It is known for its warm mineral waters and favourable climate for tourist activities. It should be noted that all three major tourist destinations for luxury tourism in the newly established tourism region are some of the symbols with long-standing traditions in the tourism industry of Bulgaria.

Of interest to the present study is the percentage ratio of female and male managers managing 5-star hotels in the study region (Figure 9). From the information presented in “Figure 9”, in this newly created tourism region, female managers are more dominant than male managers. The data show a percentage ratio of 60% to 40%.

From the information presented so far, the newly created tourism regions can be identified as leading in the development of luxury tourism in Bulgaria. It is noteworthy that they contain 90% of all five-star hotels in the country, which is an indicator of their importance from an economic, social and tourism point of view. The potential of the Bulgarian tourism industry to offer such high quality and expensive tourism also shows the real position of Bulgaria on the world tourist map. It is a fact that contemporary tourist destinations are focusing their efforts precisely on the development of luxury tourism, since it is associated with high financial revenues on the one hand, and on the other hand the number of tourists is not large, which avoids the burden and depreciation of the destinations.

As mentioned above, an extremely important role for the proper management of luxury hotels, which affect the tourism areas and countries, have women managers. Pandzherova and Krastev,(2019) suggested that their way of thinking, attitude to details, understanding of the importance of personal relationship, personal satisfaction, the importance of unforgettable experiences is set of skills that have always been more developed than men. The overall appearance of a tourist destination is a collection of all tourist companies operating in it. Because of that it is necessary to consider the influence and impact that the women of the hotel and tourist industry in Bulgaria have. The overall analysis of the information presented above shows that, regarding luxury tourism in Bulgaria, female managers are more than male managers operating luxury 5-star hotels in the newly created tourism regions in our country (Figure 10).

Analysing the information shown in “Figure 10”, female managers are dominating over male managers by a percentage of 54% to 46% in the studied 4 newly created tourist regions in Bulgaria.

It can be said that the present study confirms the above stated, that female managers are the better and preferred choice by the owners of 5-stars hotels in Bulgaria.

CONCLUSION

The present study of four of the newly established tourist regions in Bulgaria offering luxury tourism products and services prove that female managers of 5-stars hotels in our country are one of the reasons for the successful supply and development of luxury tourism. Their personal skills, good organizational skills, attitude to details, personal experiences, understanding the importance of personalization services and finally, their attitude towards tourists are only a small part of their competitive advantages over male managers. As stated above, the successful development and management of luxury hotels will also lead to formation of an image and high level of services that define Bulgaria as a tourist destination offering and developing truly luxury tourism. A destination that will become the preferred choice for tourists with high financial capacity, satisfying all their interests and needs and become a synonym for luxury and elitism. The newly created tourism zoning is only a small part of the common and purposeful tourism policy that should be developed in our country. But at this stage, it is extremely important to identify the competitive and determining advantages that create the desired image of the country as a destination for luxury tourism. It can be rightly argued that women managers today are launching the future development of the Bulgarian tourism industry aimed at attracting wealthiest and elite tourists to create the new tourist image of Bulgaria.

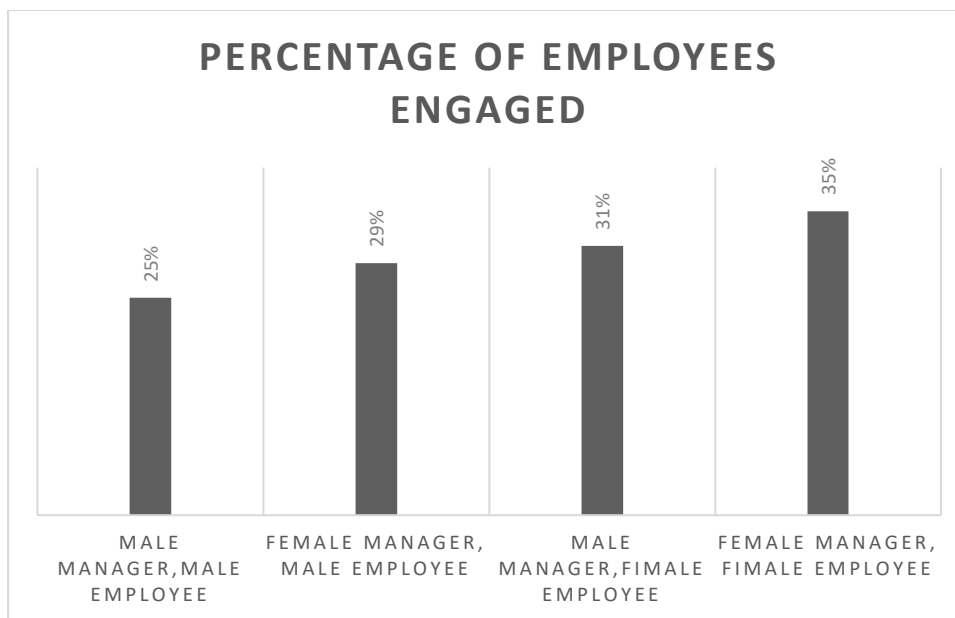
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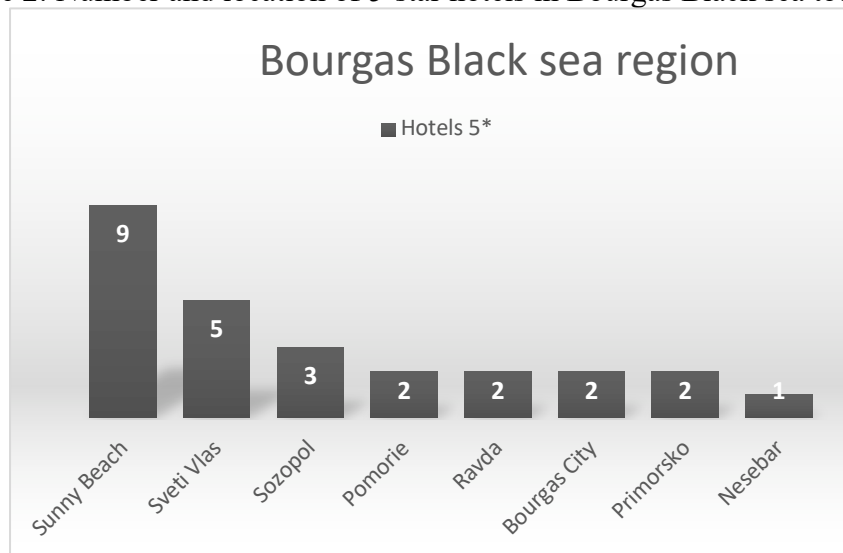
FIGURES

Figure 1: Percentage of employees engaged



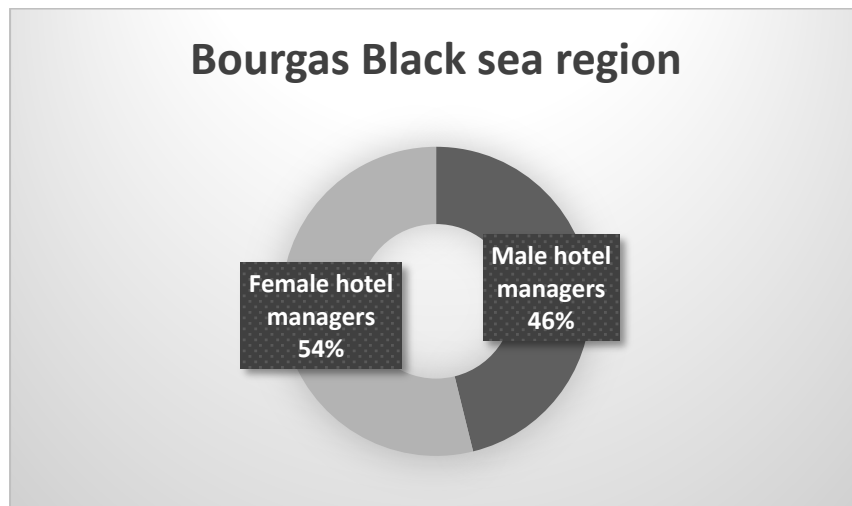
Source: <https://news.gallup.com/businessjournal/178541/why-women-better-managers-men.aspx>

Figure 2: Number and location of 5-star hotels in Bourgas Black sea tourist region



Source: Kaleychev, 2020

Figure 3: Percentage ratio of male and female managers of 5-star hotels in Bourgas Black sea tourist region



Source: Kaleychev,2020

Figure 4: Number and location of 5-star hotels in Varna Black sea cost tourist region



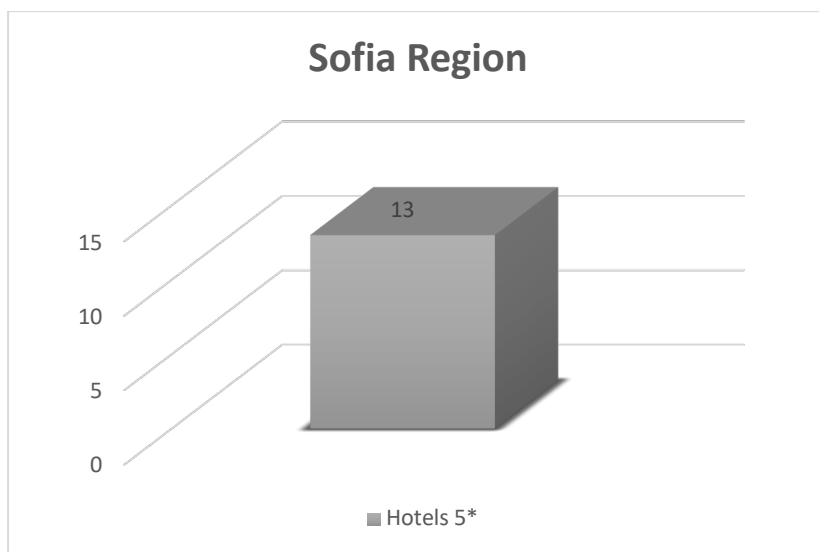
Source: Kaleychev,2020

Figure 5: Percentage ratio of male and female managers of 5-star hotels in Varna Black sea coast tourist region



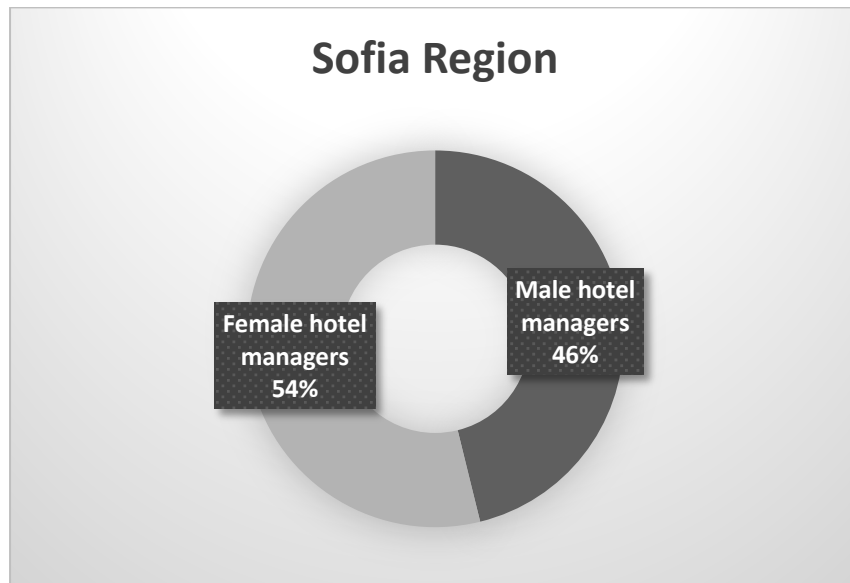
Source: Kaleychev,2020

Figure 6: Number and location of 5-star hotels in Sofia tourist region



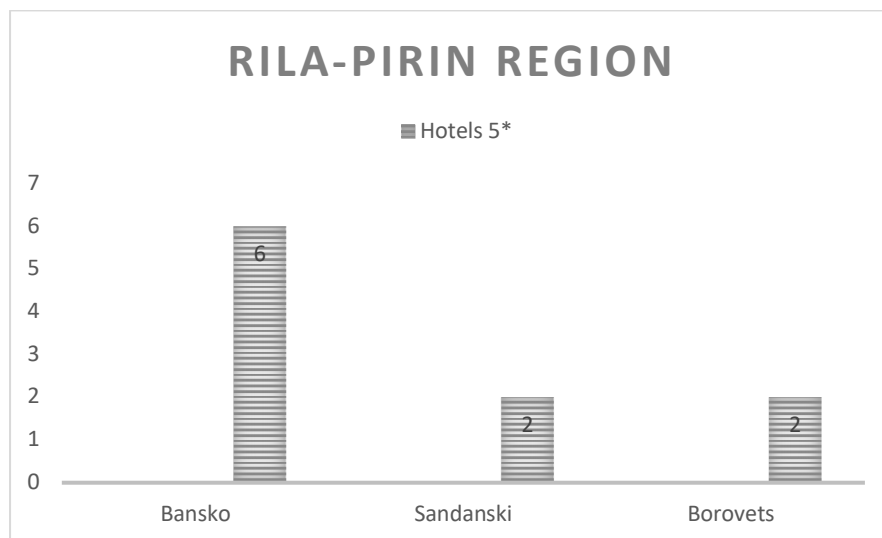
Source: Kaleychev,2020

Figure 7: Percentage ratio of male and female managers of 5-star hotels in Sofia tourist region



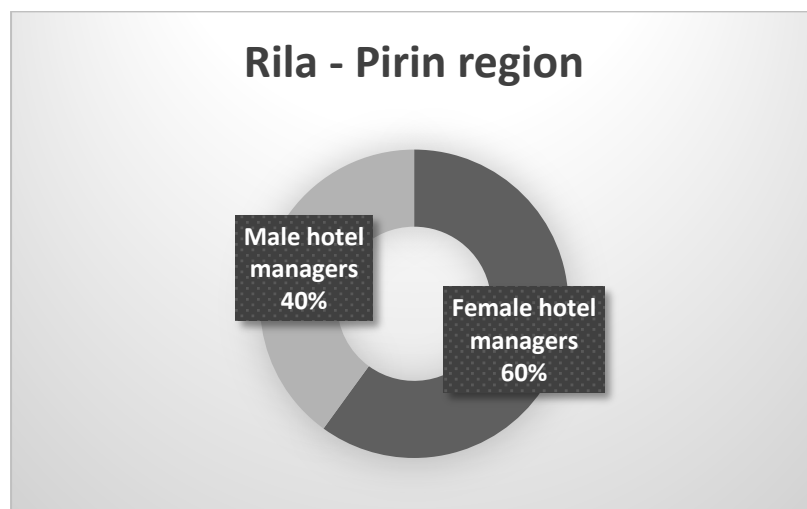
Source: Kaleychev,2020

Figure 8: Number and location of 5-star hotels in Rila - Pirin tourist region



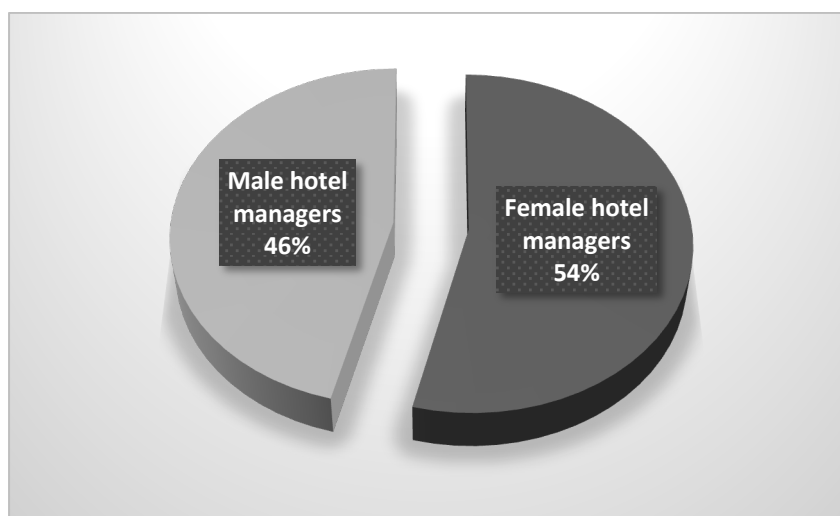
Source: Kaleychev,2020

Figure 9: Percentage ratio of male and female managers of 5-star hotels in Rila - Pirin tourist region.



Source: Kaleychev,2020

Figure 10: Percentage ratio of male and female managers of 5-star hotels in the represented 4 newly created tourist regions of Bulgaria.



Source: Kaleychev,2020