

Quality assessment in the Italian mountain huts

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Abstract

Because of its intangibility, the evaluation of the quality in the lodging services is extremely complicated. In the last 30 years several studies have focused on the measurement of the quality in the tourist organisations, in order to define a methodology able to evaluate their performances. The paper contribution to the debate is focused on the quality of service in a specific kind of accommodation, the mountain hut, which operates in a fragile habitat. The study presents the results of an empirical analysis on the perception of quality in the mountain huts conducted by interviewing 372 guests in the Piedmont Region in the north-western Italian Alps. The analysis highlights the importance, on the one hand, of a correct communication of the activities conducted by managers of the mountain huts and, on the other hand, the substance of

avoiding a short-contact experience between guest and structure. Finally, the paper underlines how this experience was also useful in order to reason about the definition of a quality label specifically thought for mountain huts.

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