UNIVERSITY OF LIFE SCIENCES "KING MIHAI I" FROM TIMISOARA
"YOUNG PEOPLE AND MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH IN APPLIED LIFE SCIENCES"

05-06 November 2026



THE IMPACT OF ONLINE REVIEWS ON THE CHOICE OF TOURIST SERVICES

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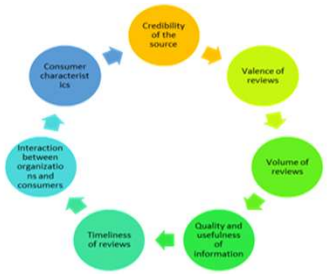
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Abstract: *In this research, we aimed to analyze the impact of online reviews on consumer behavior and on the decision-making process of choosing tourist services, highlighting the role of other users' opinions and experiences in forming preferences and in substantiating booking decisions. The study is based on quantitative research, conducted by applying a questionnaire to a sample of 200 respondents from the municipality of Timişoara, during the period February–April 2026. The results obtained highlight the role of online reviews as tools for informing, evaluating and reducing the perceived risk in choosing tourist services. The study provides relevant information for the development of digital marketing strategies, online reputation management and improving service quality, contributing to the understanding of consumer behavior in contemporary tourism.*

Introduction

Online reviews are one of the most important sources of information used by consumers in the process of choosing tourism services. However, their impact on consumer behavior is not uniform, being influenced by a number of factors that determine the degree of trust, usefulness and relevance of the information presented.



Source: own creation

Factors that determine the influence of online reviews



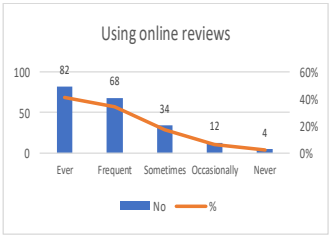
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Categories of travel review platforms

Material and method

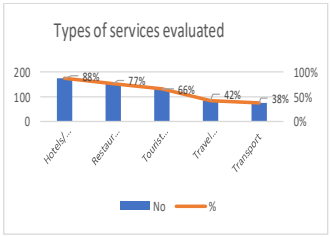
The research material was represented by a structured questionnaire, consisting of 20 questions. The research instrument included closed questions, with single or multiple answers, questions formulated on rating scales, as well as items referring to the opinions and recommendations of the respondents.

Results and discussions



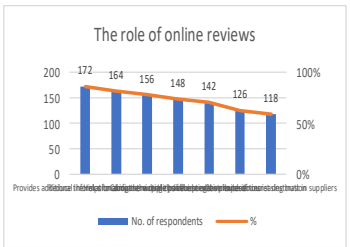
Source: data processed after interpreting the questionnaire

Using online reviews



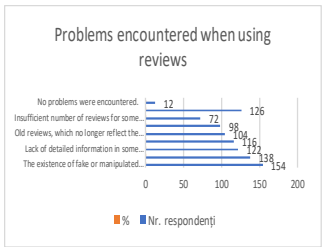
Source: data processed after interpreting the questionnaire

Types of services evaluated



Source: data processed after interpreting the questionnaire

The role of online reviews



Source: data processed after interpreting the questionnaire

Problems using reviews

Conclusions

The research confirms that online reviews are an essential element in the process of informing and making tourist decisions. Most respondents frequently or always consult reviews before choosing a tourist service, which demonstrates their integration into the consumption behavior of contemporary tourists.