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Nonverbal Communication in Romanian Tourism: Media and Ritual Hospitality Practices

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Abstract: *The authors of this paper investigate nonverbal communication / cues in tourism and their main functions (building trust and comfort, creating a welcome atmosphere, enhancing service quality, overcoming language barriers, and understanding and adapting to other cultures). Based on this investigation, they go further and analyse nonverbal cues in Romanian tourism media (facial expressions, gestural language, paralanguage and tone, posture, and symbolic visuals) and nonverbal cues in Romanian ritual hospitality practices (escorting to the gate / road, greeting by raising one’s hat, or standing to greet, kissing the hand or touching the cheek, and offering / presenting a round loaf of bread with a small dish of salt) in an attempt to build up the portrait of nonverbal communication in Romanian tourism.*

• Introduction

Nonverbal communication is essential in tourism, where interactions involve cultural differences, emotional expectations, and language barriers. It helps bridge cultural gaps, build trust, and enhance guest experiences by shaping perceptions and interactions. Its main functions include building trust and comfort, creating a welcoming atmosphere, enhancing service quality, overcoming language barriers, and facilitating adaptation to different cultural norms.

• Materials and methods

The material used in this paper consists in articles and books on nonverbal communication in Romanian tourism, with concrete references to media and ritual hospitality practices. The research method used is the bibliographical one.



• Research results

The analysis identified two main contexts in which nonverbal communication influences Romanian tourism: tourism media and ritual hospitality practices.

Tourism Media
Romanian tourism media uses facial expressions, gestures, tone, posture, and symbolic visuals to convey authenticity, hospitality, cultural pride, and emotional warmth. Folk costumes, traditional dances, bread and salt, and rural landscapes reinforce Romanian cultural identity through visual and emotional storytelling.

Ritual Hospitality Practices
Traditional hospitality uses greetings, hand-kissing, guest escorting, and the offering of bread and salt to express respect, trust, belonging, and warmth. These practices reinforce cultural continuity, emotional expression, ritual significance, and social hierarchy.

Overall, nonverbal communication connects tourism promotion with traditional hospitality and Romanian cultural identity.

• Conclusions

Romanian tourism relies strongly on nonverbal communication, particularly gestures, tone, and visual cues, especially in rural and traditional settings. Tourism media transforms these cues into emotionally engaging narratives, combining folkloric authenticity with contemporary visual techniques. Strategically integrating nonverbal communication into hospitality, service environments, and tourism marketing can enhance guest satisfaction, reduce misunderstandings, and reinforce Romania’s distinctive tourism identity.