



THE EFFECT OF ONLINE REVIEWS ON HOTEL CHOICES OF TOURISTS IN DUMAGUETE CITY

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine the effect of online reviews on tourists' hotel choices in Dumaguete City. The research was conducted in selected hotels in Dumaguete City, with 50 local and foreign tourists serving as respondents. The respondents were selected using a purposive quota sampling technique. A descriptive-correlational research design was employed, utilizing a validated researcher-made questionnaire as the instrument for data collection. Data were analyzed using statistical tools such as mean, weighted mean and Pearson's Correlation Coefficient (r). The findings revealed that Facebook ranked as the most common source of online reviews consulted by tourists, followed by Booking.com and Google Reviews, while TripAdvisor was the least visited platform for obtaining hotel information. Moreover, credibility, content quality, rating scores, and review volume were found to have a very high influence on tourists' hotel booking decisions. A significant relationship was identified between online review attributes and hotel booking decisions, resulting in the rejection of the null hypothesis. The study concluded that online reviews play a significant role in influencing tourists' hotel choices in Dumaguete City. Credible and detailed reviews were found to enhance tourists' trust and confidence in selecting hotels.

Keywords: *Online reviews, Hotel booking decisions, Tourists, Credibility, Content quality*

INTRODUCTION

Online reviews have become a significant factor in influencing tourists' hotel selection and booking decisions worldwide. As a form of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), online

reviews are often considered more credible, accessible, and influential than traditional face-to-face recommendations because they provide immediate access to the experiences and opinions of other consumers through digital platforms. However, the growing dependence on online booking platforms has also created global concerns, particularly regarding the credibility of reviews, the presence of fake or biased feedback, and information overload, which make it difficult for travelers to distinguish reliable information from misleading content. These challenges can affect consumer trust and decision-making in the online booking process. Despite these issues, studies continue to show that online reviews strongly influence consumer behavior. International research has found that review quality, rating scores, and credibility positively affect consumer trust, which in turn shapes tourists' hotel booking decisions (Christin & Nugraha, 2022). Likewise, the Traveler Smarts Survey conducted by Agoda revealed that 80% of Filipino business travelers check online reviews before deciding where to stay, highlighting the growing global reliance on digital reviews in making accommodation choices.

In the Philippine, similar trends and challenges have been observed at the local level, where online reviews increasingly shape tourists' hotel booking behavior. Studies conducted in different regions of the country show that travelers heavily depend on online reviews when selecting accommodations. Elmedulan (2025) reported that hotels in Region X found review credibility and review quality to be major factors influencing consumers' booking decisions, particularly among DOT-accredited establishments. Similarly, Zapf and Esplanada (2023), in their study on apartment hotels in Metro Manila, revealed that Filipino travelers using booking platforms such as Agoda strongly consider online reviews related to service quality, customer experience, and hospitality when making reservations. However, local hotels also encounter challenges such as inconsistent feedback, fake reviews, and negative online comments, which may significantly influence customer perceptions and hotel booking decisions. These concerns reflect the growing importance of understanding how online reviews affect consumer choices in the Philippine tourism and hospitality industry.

Although previous studies have established that online reviews influence hotel booking decisions, most of these studies focused only on specific aspects such as overall ratings, review valence, customer trust, or booking intention. For example, Elmedulan and Javier (2025) concentrated on review credibility and customer trust among hotels in Region X, while Zapf and Esplanada (2023) focused on service-related feedback and customer satisfaction based on Agoda reviews in Metro Manila. Likewise, Christin and Nugraha (2022) examined the relationship between online reviews, trust, and booking intention. However, these studies did not comprehensively examine multiple online review attributes such as credibility, content quality, rating scores, and review volume and how these factors collectively influence tourists' hotel choices in Dumaguete City. Moreover, there is limited research specifically addressing this issue in the local tourism context of Dumaguete City, creating a research gap that warrants further investigation.

Given the increasing reliance of tourists on digital platforms for hotel booking, understanding the effect of online reviews has become essential for both consumers and hotel operators. This study is necessary because it provides empirical evidence on how

different online review attributes influence tourists 'hotel choices in Dumaguete City, an emerging tourism destination where online visibility and reputation significantly affect business performance. The findings of this study may help hotel managers improve their online reputation management strategies, enhance service quality, and strengthen consumer trust. Likewise, tourism stakeholders may use the results to develop better digital marketing practices and customer engagement strategies. Therefore, this study aims to determine the effect of online reviews on tourists 'hotel choices in Dumaguete City by identifying the review attributes that most influence booking decisions, determining the online platforms most commonly used by tourists, and generating insights that can contribute to the improvement of hotel marketing and service delivery in the local tourism industry.

Research Questions

This study aimed to examine the role of online reviews in shaping hotel guest booking decisions. It remains unclear which aspects of online reviews most strongly affect tourists hotel booking decisions this has not been extensively studied. In tourism and hospitality, these reviews act as virtual word-of-mouth that shape travelers perceptions and guide their choices of accommodation. Dumaguete City is a growing tourism hub, understanding these dynamics is essential for hotels in Dumaguete to adapt their marketing strategies, improve service delivery, and remain competitive in the digital tourism market. This study aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What are the common sources of online reviews consulted by tourists when booking hotels in Dumaguete City?
 1. TripAdvisor;
 2. Booking.com;
 3. Agoda;
 4. Google Reviews; and
 5. Facebook ?
2. To what extent do online review attributes influence hotel booking decisions?
 - 2.1 Credibility;
 - 2.2 Content quality;
 - 2.3 Rating scores; and
 - 2.4 Volume of reviews ?
3. What is the extent of importance of online reviews of tourists to book hotels in Dumaguete City of the following:
 - 3.1 Hotels credibility; and
 - 3.2 Service Quality ?
4. Is there a significant relationship between the extent to which online review attributes influence hotel booking decisions and the importance of hotel selection in Dumaguete based on the above indicators?

METHODOLOGY

Research design. This study utilized a descriptive-correlational research design to determine the relationship between online reviews and tourists' hotel preferences in selecting hotels in Dumaguete City. The primary purpose of this design was to describe and examine how online reviews influence tourists' decisions in choosing accommodation. The collected data were analyzed and interpreted to identify the relationship between online review attributes and tourists' hotel choices. This analysis aimed to provide meaningful insights into how online reviews affect tourist preferences, particularly in terms of credibility, usefulness, and reliability of information found on online platforms.

Research respondents. The respondents of this study were composed of local and foreign tourists who had experience booking and staying in hotels in Dumaguete City through online platforms. These respondents were selected because they have firsthand experience in using online reviews as a basis for hotel selection and booking decisions, making them suitable sources of relevant information for the study. The study employed a purposive quota sampling technique in selecting a total of 63 respondents. Purposive sampling was used to ensure that only individuals who met the inclusion criteria were selected, particularly those who had previously used online booking platforms and consulted online hotel reviews such as TripAdvisor, Google Reviews, Agoda, Booking.com, and Facebook. Quota sampling was also applied to ensure an appropriate representation of both local and foreign tourists within the study population. This sampling method ensured that the respondents were knowledgeable and capable of providing reliable and valid responses regarding the influence of online reviews on their hotel booking decisions in Dumaguete City.

Research environment. The study was conducted in selected hotels in Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental, a well-known tourist destination in the Central Visayas region of the Philippines. Dumaguete City attracts both domestic and foreign tourists due to its accessible location, diverse tourist attractions, and growing hospitality industry. The city is home to a wide range of accommodation establishments, including hotels, resorts, and other lodging facilities, many of which actively rely on online booking platforms such as TripAdvisor, Booking.com, Agoda, and Google Reviews for visibility and customer engagement.

Dumaguete City was chosen as the research setting because it is an ideal location where tourists frequently use digital platforms to search for, compare, and evaluate hotel options before making booking decisions. This environment provided the researchers with access to respondents who have actual experience in using online reviews as part of their decision-making process in selecting accommodations.

Furthermore, conducting the study in this setting allowed the researchers to gather relevant and authentic responses from tourists who directly engage with online review systems. This helped ensure that the findings accurately reflect how online information

such as ratings, reviews, and feedback influences tourists 'trust, preferences, and final hotel selection decisions in Dumaguete City.

Research instruments. The study utilized a validated researcher-made-questionnaire as the research instrument to gather data on how online reviews influence tourists 'hotel choices in Dumaguete City. The questionnaire was designed to collect relevant information from respondents regarding their preferences, perceptions, and decision-making processes in relation to online hotel reviews.

The instrument consisted of closed-ended questions, which allowed for the systematic collection of quantitative data on tourists 'evaluation of online review attributes and their impact on booking decisions. The questionnaire underwent expert validation to ensure content validity, clarity, and appropriateness of the items included.

To further ensure reliability, a pilot test was conducted with 20 participants who were not part of the actual study. The results of the pilot testing were analyzed using Cronbach's Alpha, which is a measure of internal consistency. The findings showed that all indicators obtained Cronbach's Alpha values higher than the acceptable threshold of 0.70, indicating that the instrument is reliable. Shown on the next page the Cronbach Alpha results.

Indicators	Chronbach Alpha Value
Credibility	0.81
Content quality	0.77
Rating scores	0.75
Volume of reviews	0.70
Accessibility	0.82
Hotel Credibility	0.90
Service Quality	0.90

RESULTS

Table 1
Common Sources of Online Reviews consulted by Tourists when Booking Hotels in Dumaguete City

Online Platforms	Frequency
TripAdvisor	5
Booking.com	19

Agoda	10
Google Reviews	11
Facebook	27

Table 1 presents the distribution of respondents according to the common sources of online reviews consulted when booking hotels in Dumaguete City. The findings reveal that Facebook obtained the highest frequency with 27 respondents, followed by Booking.com with 19 respondents, and Google Reviews with 11 respondents. This indicates that Facebook is the most commonly used platform among tourists when searching for hotel-related information and reviews. The results suggest that easily accessible and widely used platforms tend to dominate tourists' preferences when making hotel booking decisions.

Table 2.1
Extent of Online Review Attributes influencing Hotel Booking Decisions of Credibility

Credibility	<i>wx</i>	Verbal Description	Verbal Equipment
1. I tend to trust reviews more when the reviewer's profile appears authentic (e.g. reviewer has prior reviews).	4.24	Strongly Agree	Very High
2. I find online reviews more credible when the reviewer indicates that they actually stayed at the hotel.	4.36	Strongly Agree	Very High
3. Reviews from users whose travel style / preferences match mine seem more believable.	4.28	Strongly Agree	Very High
4. I consider whether a review appears balanced (mentions both positive and negative aspects) when judging its credibility.	4.32	Strongly Agree	Very High
5. I disregard reviews that appear fake or overly promotional in tone.	4.26	Strongly Agree	Very High
Composite	4.29	Strongly Agree	Very High

Legend: **Scale** **Verbal Description** **Equivalent**
 4.21 – 5.00 Strongly Agree Very High

3.41 – 4.20	Agree	High
2.61 – 3.40	Moderate	Moderately High
1.81 – 2.60	Disagree	Low
1.00 – 1.80	Strongly Disagree	Very Low

Table 2.1 presents the extent to which online review attributes influence hotel booking decisions of credibility. The results show a composite mean of 4.29, interpreted as very high extent indicating that credibility significantly influences booking decisions. The highest mean (4.36) reflects that reviews confirming actual hotel stays are considered most credible. This suggests that verification of experience is essential in building trust among tourists.

Table 2.2
Extent of Online Review Attributes influencing Hotel Booking Decisions of Content Quality

Content Quality	\bar{wx}	Verbal Description	Verbal Equipment
1. I prefer reviews that provide detailed descriptions (e.g. about room condition, staff behavior, amenities).	4.64	Strongly Agree	Very High
2. Reviews that include photos or images carry more weight in my decision.	4.58	Strongly Agree	Very High
3. Reviews that describe specific events (e.g. “on my third night, the aircon failed”) influence me more.	4.40	Strongly Agree	Very High
4. Reviews that demonstrate grammatical clarity, coherence, and proper structure seem more helpful.	4.40	Strongly Agree	Very High
5. I give more importance to reviews that comment on aspects I care about (e.g. cleanliness, safety, proximity).	4.46	Strongly Agree	Very High
Composite	4.50	Strongly Agree	Very High

Legend:	Scale	Verbal Description	Equivalent
	4.21 – 5.00	Strongly Agree	Very High
	3.41 – 4.20	Agree	High
	2.61 – 3.40	Moderate	Moderately High
	1.81 – 2.60	Disagree	Low
	1.00 – 1.80	Strongly Disagree	Very Low

Table 2.2 presents the influence of content quality on hotel booking decisions, with a composite mean of 4.50, interpreted as very high extent. This indicates that content quality is one of the most influential attributes of online reviews in affecting tourists' hotel booking decisions. The highest mean of 4.64 indicates that respondents highly value reviews that provide detailed descriptions of hotel experiences. This suggests that tourists prefer reviews that contain comprehensive, specific, and informative content, as these help them evaluate hotel options more effectively.

Table 2.3
Extent of Online Review Attributes influencing Hotel Booking Decisions of Rating Scores

Rating Scores	\bar{wx}	Verbal Description	Verbal Equivalent
1. I am more likely to choose a hotel with high overall star ratings (e.g. 4 to 5 stars).	4.44	Strongly Agree	Very High
2. I avoid hotels with many negative ratings even if some positive ratings are present.	4.44	Strongly Agree	Very High
3. I compare hotels based on their average rating when their price is similar.	4.48	Strongly Agree	Very High
4. I place high importance on the consistency of rating (i.e. few very low scores).	4.51	Strongly Agree	Very High
5. If a hotel's rating declines over time, I become less inclined to book it.	4.34	Strongly Agree	Very High
Composite	4.44	Strongly Agree	Very High

Legend:	Scale	Verbal Description	Equivalent
	4.21 – 5.00	Strongly Agree	Very High
	3.41 – 4.20	Agree	High
	2.61 – 3.40	Moderate	Moderately High
	1.81 – 2.60	Disagree	Low
	1.00 – 1.80	Strongly Disagree	Very Low

Table 2.3 presents the influence of rating scores on hotel booking decisions, with a composite mean of 4.44, interpreted as very high extent. This indicates that rating scores are a highly influential factor in tourists' hotel booking decision-making process. The highest mean of 4.51 highlights the importance of consistent ratings in influencing

respondents' choices. This suggests that tourists prefer hotels with stable, reliable, and consistently positive ratings because these provide assurance regarding the quality of accommodations and services.

Table 2.4
Extent of Online Review Attributes influencing Hotel Booking Decisions of Volume/Number of Reviews

Volume/Number of Reviews	\bar{wx}	Verbal Description	Verbal Equipment
1. Hotels with a large number of reviews make me more confident in my decision.	4.62	Strongly Agree	Very High
2. Even if a hotel has slightly lower rating, I may prefer it if it has many reviews.	3.90	Agree	High
3. I perceive a hotel with few reviews as risky or less established.	4.16	Agree	High
4. The greater the number of reviews (both positive and negative), the more I believe the rating is reliable.	4.48	Strongly Agree	Very High
5. I'm cautious about relying on reviews when there are very few of them.	4.34	Strongly Agree	Very High
Composite	4.30	Strongly Agree	Very High

Legend:	Scale	Verbal Description	Equivalent
	4.21 – 5.00	Strongly Agree	Very High
	3.41 – 4.20	Agree	High
	2.61 – 3.40	Moderate	Moderately High
	1.81 – 2.60	Disagree	Low
	1.00 – 1.80	Strongly Disagree	Very Low

Table 2.4 presents the influence of the volume or number of online reviews on hotel booking decisions, with a composite mean of 4.30, interpreted as very high extent. This indicates that the number of reviews significantly affects tourists' confidence in making hotel booking decisions. The highest mean of 4.62 shows that a large number of reviews increases respondents' confidence in booking a hotel. This suggests that tourists associate a high volume of reviews with greater reliability, credibility, and trustworthiness of hotel services.

Table 3.1
Extent of Emphasis of Online Reviews of Tourists to Book Hotels in Dumaguete City of Hotel's Credibility

Hotel's Credibility	\bar{w}_x	Verbal Description	Verbal Equipment
1. After reading positive online reviews, I feel the hotel is more trustworthy.	4.56	Strongly Agree	Very High
2. I am more likely to believe that the hotel is honest in advertising when reviews reflect real guest experiences.	4.62	Strongly Agree	Very High
3. Online reviews make me more confident that the hotel deliver what it promises (e.g. amenities, facilities).	4.50	Strongly Agree	Very High
4. A strong online reputation (via reviews) increases my intention to book a hotel.	4.46	Strongly Agree	Very High
5. I would feel safer booking a hotel with many credible reviews even if I don't know the brand.	4.42	Strongly Agree	Very High
6. Reading negative reviews questioning a hotel's legitimacy (e.g., "this review seem fake") lowers my intention to book.	4.49	Strongly Agree	Very High
Composite	4.51	Strongly Agree	Very High

Legend:	Scale	Verbal Description	Equivalent
	4.21 – 5.00	Strongly Agree	Very High
	3.41 – 4.20	Agree	High
	2.61 – 3.40	Moderate	Moderately High
	1.81 – 2.60	Disagree	Low
	1.00 – 1.80	Strongly Disagree	Very Low

Table 3.1 presents the extent of emphasis of online reviews on hotel credibility, with a composite mean of 4.51, interpreted as very high extent. This indicates that online reviews strongly influence tourists' perceptions of hotel credibility. The highest mean of 4.62 indicates that reviews reflecting real guest experiences increase respondents' trust in hotel advertising and promotional claims. This suggests that authenticity is a critical factor in building hotel credibility, as tourists tend to trust reviews that are based on actual experiences rather than promotional information alone.

Table 3.2
Extent of Emphasis of Online Reviews of Tourists to Book Hotels in Dumaguete City of Service Quality

Service Quality	<i>wx</i>	Verbal Description	Verbal Equivalent
1. If online reviews praise the hotel staff's responsiveness and professionalism, I'm more likely to choose it.	4.46	Strongly Agree	Very High
2. I trust hotels more when reviews confirm consistent high service quality (e.g. prompt check-in, room service, cleanliness).	4.62	Strongly Agree	Very High
3. Positive reviews about service quality increase my intention to book that hotel.	4.48	Strongly Agree	Very High
4. I rely on comments about staff behavior, responsiveness, and helpfulness in making my booking decision.	4.44	Strongly Agree	Very High
5. If reviews report poor service experiences, I likely avoid booking that hotel.	4.40	Strongly Agree	Very High
6. The more recent positive service-quality reviews I see, the more likely I book the hotel.	4.52	Strongly Agree	Very High
Composite	4.49	Strongly Agree	Very High

Legend:	Scale	Verbal Description	Equivalent
	4.21 – 5.00	Strongly Agree	Very High
	3.41 – 4.20	Agree	High
	2.61 – 3.40	Moderate	Moderately High
	1.81 – 2.60	Disagree	Low
	1.00 – 1.80	Strongly Disagree	Very Low

Table 3.2 presents the extent of emphasis placed on service quality in online reviews, with a composite mean of 4.49, interpreted as very high extent. This indicates that service quality highlighted in online reviews strongly influences tourists' hotel booking decisions. The highest mean of 4.62 shows that consistent positive feedback regarding service quality increases respondents' trust in hotels. This suggests that service-related feedback is a key factor considered by tourists when evaluating accommodation options.

Table 4
Significant Relationship between the Extent of Online Review Attributes influencing Hotel Booking Decisions and the Extent of Emphasis of Online Reviews of Tourists to Book Hotels in Dumaguete City

Variables Correlated	Pearsonr	p-value	Decision	Remark
Hotel's Credibility				
Credibility	0.754	0.001	Reject H _{o1}	Significant
Content Quality	0.837	0.001	Reject H _{o1}	Significant
Rating Scores	0.799	0.001	Reject H _{o1}	Significant
Volume/Number of Reviews	0.830	0.001	Reject H _{o1}	Significant
Service Quality				
Credibility	0.726	0.001	Reject H _{o1}	Significant
Content Quality	0.818	0.001	Reject H _{o1}	Significant
Rating Scores	0.785	0.001	Reject H _{o1}	Significant
Volume/Number of Reviews	0.832	0.001	Reject H _{o1}	Significant

Table 4 presents the significant relationship between online review attributes and the emphasis of online reviews in hotel booking decisions. The results reveal strong positive correlations, with Pearson r values ranging from 0.726 to 0.837 and p-values of 0.001, indicating statistically significant relationships between online review attributes and the dimensions of hotel credibility and service quality. Since all p-values are lower than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected in all cases. This means that online review attributes are significantly associated with the emphasis placed on online reviews in influencing hotel booking decisions.

DISCUSSION

The Effect of Online Reviews on Hotel Choices of Tourists in Dumaguete City

1 Common Sources of Online Reviews consulted by Tourists when Booking Hotels in Dumaguete City

Table 1 presents the distribution of respondents according to the common sources of online reviews consulted when booking hotels in Dumaguete City. The findings reveal that Facebook obtained the highest frequency with 27 respondents, followed by Booking.com with 19 respondents, and Google Reviews with 11 respondents. This indicates that Facebook is the most commonly used platform among tourists when searching for hotel-related information and reviews. The results suggest that easily accessible and widely used platforms tend to dominate tourists' preferences when making hotel booking decisions. Recent studies confirm this pattern: Lata and Rana (2021), who explained that travelers increasingly rely on online reviews as a basis for hotel booking decisions due to the credibility and usefulness of shared customer experiences, which assist consumers in making informed choices. Filieri and McLeay (2021) found that consumers highly value platforms such as Booking.com and Google Reviews because they provide credible, timely, and experience-based information that reduces uncertainty and strengthens booking confidence. Rasoolimanesh et al. (2021) further emphasized that leisure tourists heavily depend on online reviews and electronic word-of-mouth, as these sources help reduce uncertainty and allow travelers to evaluate service quality prior to making reservations. Lim et al. (2022) highlighted that both trust and volume of online reviews significantly influence hotel booking intentions. Their findings show that when potential guests perceive online reviews as trustworthy and observe a high number of reviews, they are more likely to feel confident in making a reservation. This underscores the importance of authenticity and review quantity in shaping consumer confidence and reducing perceived risk. Ismagilova et al. (2020) explained that social media platforms and online review websites significantly influence tourists' decision-making, as consumers increasingly rely on peer-generated information to assess hotel quality and credibility. Likewise, Filieri (2021) found that platforms such as Facebook, Booking.com, and Google Reviews strongly affect travelers' booking confidence due to the perceived trustworthiness and usefulness of user-generated content.

2.1 Extent of Online Review Attributes influencing Hotel Booking Decisions of Credibility

Table 2.1 presents the extent to which online review attributes influence hotel booking decisions of credibility. The results show a composite mean of 4.29, interpreted as very high extent indicating that credibility significantly influences booking decisions. The highest mean (4.36) reflects that reviews confirming actual hotel stays are considered most credible. This suggests that verification of experience is essential in building trust among tourists. The findings address the second research question on the influence of online review attributes. This finding aligns with the research conducted by Shukla and Mishra (2022), which demonstrates that review credibility significantly influences online

hotel booking intentions. Their study indicates that consumers depend on credible online reviews when assessing hotel services and accommodations. Filieri (2021) found that travelers visiting destinations for leisure or personal reasons are more influenced by review credibility, review quality, and customer experiences shared online, which significantly affect their booking decisions. Abdul Kareem and Pulidindi Venugopal (2023), which demonstrated that website quality, review ratings, and online reviews significantly influence consumers online booking intentions. Furthermore, their study indicated that travelers consider digital platforms to be reliable sources of information when selecting accommodations. Filieri et al. (2021) explained that consumers are more likely to trust and rely on reviews perceived as authentic, balanced, and experience-based because these reduce uncertainty and perceived risks in hotel bookings. Similarly, Prakash et al. (2022) found that review credibility, reviewer authenticity, and verified customer experiences strongly affect tourists' trust and booking intentions, particularly in online accommodation platforms.

2.2 Extent of Online Review Attributes influencing Hotel Booking Decisions of Content Quality

Table 2.2 presents the influence of content quality on hotel booking decisions, with a composite mean of 4.50, interpreted as very high extent. This indicates that content quality is one of the most influential attributes of online reviews in affecting tourists' hotel booking decisions. The highest mean of 4.64 indicates that respondents highly value reviews that provide detailed descriptions of hotel experiences. This suggests that tourists prefer reviews that contain comprehensive, specific, and informative content, as these help them evaluate hotel options more effectively. The findings directly address the second research question regarding the extent to which content quality influences hotel booking decisions. This finding is supported by the study of Ahmad and Sharma (2025), which found that information quality and service quality significantly influence online satisfaction and hotel booking intentions. Their study emphasized that accurate, relevant, and timely information provided through online booking platforms enhances customer trust and satisfaction, thereby increasing the likelihood of hotel reservations. The study further highlighted that responsive customer service and effective problem-resolution processes contribute to positive online experiences, which in turn strengthen customer loyalty and encourage repeat bookings. Filieri and McLeay (2021) explained that the quality, completeness, and relevance of online reviews significantly influence consumers' trust and hotel booking decisions because detailed reviews reduce uncertainty and improve confidence in selecting accommodations. Osei et al. (2023) found that visual content, detailed customer experiences, and clear review structures positively affect travelers' perceptions of hotel quality and increase booking intentions. These findings support the present study by emphasizing that high-quality review content plays a crucial role in influencing tourists' confidence and final booking decisions.

2.3 Extent of Online Review Attributes influencing Hotel Booking Decisions of Rating Scores

Table 2.3 presents the influence of rating scores on hotel booking decisions, with a composite mean of 4.44, interpreted as very high extent. This indicates that rating scores are a highly influential factor in tourists' hotel booking decision-making process. The highest mean of 4.51 highlights the importance of consistent ratings in influencing respondents' choices. This suggests that tourists prefer hotels with stable, reliable, and consistently positive ratings because these provide assurance regarding the quality of accommodations and services. The findings directly support the second research question regarding the extent to which rating scores influence hotel booking decisions. This finding is supported by Feng et al. (2022), who found that online reviews and external cues significantly influence consumers' hotel booking decisions. Their study revealed that review ratings affect tourists' perceptions and behavioral intentions toward accommodations, as ratings often serve as a basis for evaluating hotel quality before making reservations. Banerjee and Chua (2021) explained that hotel rating scores strongly influence consumers' perceptions of service quality, reliability, and overall hotel performance, because travelers often use ratings as a shortcut when evaluating accommodation options. Paulose and Shakeel (2022) found that consistent positive ratings increase travelers' trust and booking confidence, while fluctuating or negative ratings reduce purchase intentions and weaken perceived hotel credibility. These findings support the present study by emphasizing that rating scores play a crucial role in shaping tourists' confidence and final booking decisions.

Table 2.4 Extent of Online Review Attributes influencing Hotel Booking Decisions of Volume/Number of Reviews

Table 2.4 presents the influence of the volume or number of online reviews on hotel booking decisions, with a composite mean of 4.30, interpreted as very high extent. This indicates that the number of reviews significantly affects tourists' confidence in making hotel booking decisions. The highest mean of 4.62 shows that a large number of reviews increases respondents' confidence in booking a hotel. This suggests that tourists associate a high volume of reviews with greater reliability, credibility, and trustworthiness of hotel services. The findings directly support the second research question regarding the extent to which review volume influences hotel booking decisions. This finding is supported by research published in Wang and Liu (2026), which demonstrated that online review content and customer-generated photos significantly influence consumers' booking intentions and perceptions of hotels. The study emphasized that user-generated information enhances consumers' ability to evaluate hotel quality and make confident booking decisions. Ismagilova et al. (2020) explained that a high volume of online reviews positively affects consumers' trust because it signals popularity, credibility, and reliability of services. Likewise, Filieri and McLeay (2021) found that the quantity of reviews significantly influences hotel booking intentions, as consumers tend to perceive hotels with more reviews as safer, more dependable, and less risky choices. These findings support the present study by highlighting that the number of reviews plays a crucial role in strengthening tourists' confidence and influencing their final hotel booking decisions.

3.1 Extent of Emphasis of Online Reviews of Tourists to Book Hotels in Dumaguete City of Hotel's Credibility

Table 3.1 presents the extent of emphasis of online reviews on hotel credibility, with a composite mean of 4.51, interpreted as very high extent. This indicates that online reviews strongly influence tourists' perceptions of hotel credibility. The highest mean of 4.62 indicates that reviews reflecting real guest experiences increase respondents' trust in hotel advertising and promotional claims. This suggests that authenticity is a critical factor in building hotel credibility, as tourists tend to trust reviews that are based on actual experiences rather than promotional information alone. The findings directly address the third research question regarding the extent to which online reviews influence hotel credibility. This finding is supported by Amin et al. (2021), who found that online reviews and visual presentations significantly influence consumers' behavioral intentions toward online hotel booking. Their study emphasized that authentic customer feedback and visual representations help strengthen trust and affect consumers' willingness to make reservations. Filieri and McLeay (2021) explained that the perceived authenticity and trustworthiness of online reviews are key determinants of hotel credibility because travelers depend on user-generated content to validate hotel service claims. Likewise, Lu et al. (2020) found that review valence and credibility cues significantly influence tourists' trust in hotels, with authentic and experience-based reviews strengthening perceptions of hotel reliability. These findings support the present study by emphasizing that authentic online reviews play a crucial role in establishing hotel credibility and shaping tourists' booking decisions.

3.2 Extent of Emphasis of Online Reviews of Tourists to Book Hotels in Dumaguete City of Service Quality

Table 3.2 presents the extent of emphasis placed on service quality in online reviews, with a composite mean of 4.49, interpreted as very high extent. This indicates that service quality highlighted in online reviews strongly influences tourists' hotel booking decisions. The highest mean of 4.62 shows that consistent positive feedback regarding service quality increases respondents' trust in hotels. This suggests that service-related feedback is a key factor considered by tourists when evaluating accommodation options. The findings directly address the third research question regarding the extent to which service quality emphasized in online reviews affects hotel booking decisions. This finding is supported by a study by Salameh et al. (2022), which found that information quality, service quality, and system quality significantly predict consumers' intention to use online hotel booking platforms. The study emphasized that service quality plays a crucial role in shaping customer trust and booking behavior. Ahmad and Sharma (2025) emphasized that service quality and responsiveness enhance customer satisfaction, trust, and loyalty, which in turn increase booking intentions. Rahman et al. (2021) found that staff behavior, responsiveness, and perceived service consistency reflected in online reviews significantly influence tourists' booking intentions by shaping perceptions of hotel reliability and expected guest experience. These findings support the present study by highlighting that service quality emphasized in online reviews is a critical determinant of tourists' hotel booking decisions.

4 Significant Relationship between the Extent of Online Review Attributes influencing Hotel Booking Decisions and the Extent of Emphasis of Online Reviews of Tourists to Book Hotels in Dumaguete City

Table 4 presents the significant relationship between online review attributes and the emphasis of online reviews in hotel booking decisions. The results reveal strong positive correlations, with Pearson r values ranging from 0.726 to 0.837 and p -values of 0.001, indicating statistically significant relationships between online review attributes and the dimensions of hotel credibility and service quality. Since all p -values are lower than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected in all cases. This means that online review attributes are significantly associated with the emphasis placed on online reviews in influencing hotel booking decisions. These findings directly address the fourth research question of the study. This finding aligns with Kajornatthapol et al. (2024), who found that trust and perceived value significantly mediate the relationship between online reviews and consumers' hotel booking intentions. Their study revealed that positive and credible online reviews enhance tourists' confidence and increase the likelihood of hotel reservations.

Consequently, online reviews become one of the most influential factors shaping tourist decision-making and hotel selection behavior. Ismagilova et al. (2020) explained that electronic word-of-mouth attributes, such as review quality, quantity, and credibility, are strongly interrelated and significantly influence consumer decision-making, particularly in service industries such as hospitality. López and Sicilia (2021) found that the combined effect of review content, ratings, and review volume creates a stronger influence on perceived trust and purchase intention than any single attribute alone, highlighting the synergistic effect of online review factors. Zhang et al. (2021) found that key online review characteristics significantly affect hotel booking behavior because consumers use review information as a basis for assessing hotel quality, reliability, and service performance before making reservations. The study emphasized that credible and informative reviews shape consumer perceptions and directly influence hotel choice by helping travelers compare alternatives and reduce perceived risks. Shukla and Mishra (2022) reported that review credibility, review valence, and review quality significantly influence consumers' online hotel booking intentions. Their findings showed that travelers are more likely to choose hotels when review information is perceived as trustworthy, detailed, and relevant to their accommodation needs. These findings support the present study by emphasizing that multiple online review attributes work together in influencing tourists' confidence, trust, and final hotel booking decisions.

Conclusions

Online reviews play a critical role in shaping tourists' hotel booking decisions in Dumaguete City, particularly among digitally active travelers. Tourists rely heavily on multiple online platforms, with Facebook emerging as the most commonly used source of online reviews. This highlights the importance of both social media platforms and structured review websites in influencing hotel selection and booking behavior. Among the different online review attributes, content quality and credibility are the most influential

factors in tourists' decision-making. This indicates that tourists prefer detailed, authentic, and relevant information when evaluating hotel options. In addition, rating scores and review volume also significantly influence booking decisions, as they provide quick evaluations of hotel performance and reinforce perceptions of reliability and trustworthiness. Overall, online reviews strongly influence tourists' perceptions of hotel credibility and service quality, which directly affect their intention to book accommodations. The study also confirms that there is a significant relationship between online review attributes and hotel booking decisions. This suggests that improving the quality, quantity, and authenticity of online reviews can enhance hotel attractiveness and increase the likelihood of positive booking decision.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are offered:

Tourists or Travelers. They are encouraged to critically evaluate online reviews before making hotel booking decisions by checking the credibility, consistency, and relevance of information across multiple platforms. This helps minimize the risk of relying on biased, exaggerated, or misleading reviews.

Hotel Owners and Managers. May actively monitor and manage their online reputation by addressing negative reviews promptly and improving service quality issues highlighted by guests. This helps prevent repeated negative feedback and strengthens overall customer trust.

Front Desk Personnel. They should consistently improve customer service delivery, particularly in responsiveness, professionalism, and guest handling, as these are commonly reflected in online reviews. Addressing service-related complaints immediately can help reduce negative reviews and improve overall ratings.

Future Researchers. They are encouraged to explore other factors not covered in this study, such as pricing, location, and promotional strategies, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of what influences tourists' hotel booking decisions alongside online reviews.

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