Conference on Social Sciences and Humanities Research (CSSHR)
volume. 3 № 8
CSSHR
EYIB
EDUCATIONAL YIELD INSIGHTS & BREAKTHROUGHS
ISSN: 3060-4648



Factors Influencing Hotel Choice: The Role of Social Media, Online Reviews, Cleanliness, and Price

Klichova Mexribon Aminovna

Silk Road International University of Tourism and Cultural Heritage Tourism and Hospitality

Abstract: Choosing a hotel may appear to be a straightforward decision, yet most travellers weigh several factors before making a booking. An attractive hotel is not always the first choice, and a low price does not necessarily represent good value. This article examines four factors that can shape hotel choice: social media, online reviews, cleanliness, and price. The discussion draws on existing research, primarily Mojoodi et al. (2025), who analysed guest reviews from Booking.com to identify what matters when people select a hotel. Their findings are used to explore how these four factors shape guest expectations and final decisions. The central argument is that hotels must pay attention to their online image, but the actual stay experience matters equally. If hotels understand what guests expect, they can improve their service and encourage repeat visits.

Keywords: hotel choice, social media, online reviews, cleanliness, price, customer expectations, hospitality management

Introduction

Planning a trip usually begins with the destination, the transport, and the places one wants to see. The hotel often comes later, yet it matters more than it seems. A hotel is not merely a bed for the night; it affects how comfortable a guest feels, how much the trip is enjoyed, and what is remembered afterwards. Today there are numerous ways to find accommodation. People encounter hotels on social media, compare rates on booking sites, read what earlier guests have written, and scroll through photographs of the rooms. By the time they arrive, they already have a picture in their mind.

This raises the question of what makes someone choose one hotel over another. Consider a hotel with attractive Instagram photographs whose reviews repeatedly mention dirty rooms. Next to it, another hotel costs more but offers better facilities and more comfortable rooms. Guests in this position must decide what matters most to them. This topic is of particular interest to those pursuing a career in tourism and hospitality, since understanding customers is a central part of the profession. As a future hospitality professional, one wants to know not only what hotels offer but also how guests perceive it. This article examines four factors that may influence hotel choice: social media, online reviews, cleanliness, and price. It

also aims to show how these factors may work together and why hotel managers should keep them in mind when planning their services.

2.Literature Review

Researchers have examined many aspects of customer behaviour in the hotel industry. Before booking, guests may consider facilities, location, communication, price, and the overall experience. Online reviews are especially helpful in this context because they reveal what other travellers have already experienced. One relevant study is Mojoodi et al. (2025), "Perceptual Mapping and Key Factors Influencing Hotel Choices: A Web Mining Approach to Booking.com Reviews." The authors analysed guest comments to determine which factors affect hotel choice. They collected 17,446 reviews posted between November 2020 and November 2023 and processed them using Python and web scraping. They identified 40 variables, which they grouped into six clusters. Facility-related factors accounted for 33.98% of the reported cluster weights. Experiential factors came next with 23.88%, and communication factors followed closely at 23.85%. Location, sensory, and hotel smartification factors were also identified. In other words, reviews show quite clearly what guests notice and discuss.

Social media also deserves attention. Photographs, short videos, and travel tips can introduce guests to hotels they would never have searched for otherwise. However, what is seen online may not match the actual hotel, so many guests seek additional information before deciding. Reviews provide a different kind of information. Promotional posts usually present a hotel at its best, while reviews contain both good and bad experiences. Reading them helps travellers form more realistic expectations. Cleanliness matters as well. Guests expect clean rooms, bathrooms, and shared areas. If this expectation is not met, the overall impression can suffer, however good the hotel looks online. Price is the fourth factor.

Conclusion

The four factors discussed in this article—social media, online reviews, cleanliness, and price—do not operate in isolation. They interact to shape guest expectations and influence the final booking decision. Social media creates initial interest, online reviews provide a reality check, cleanliness determines the quality of the actual stay, and price frames the perceived value of the experience. The findings of Mojoodi et al. (2025) confirm that facility-related, experiential, and communication factors dominate guest reviews, which underscores the importance of maintaining both a strong online presence and high standards of service delivery. Hotels that understand these dynamics are better positioned to meet guest expectations, improve their offerings, and build lasting customer loyalty.