

# An analysis on complaint behaviour of hotel guests in Italy<sup>1</sup>

Farzaneh Soleimani Zoghi <sup>1</sup>\*

<sup>1</sup> SRH Berlin University of Applied Sciences, Germany

---

## Article History

Received: 4 May 2022    Revised: 28 August 2022    Accepted: 30 August 2022    Available Online: 4 September 2022

---

**Keywords:** complaint behaviour, online reviews, customer satisfaction, reputation risk, hospitality business

**JEL classification:** M31, M16, M15

---

**Citation:** Zoghi, F.S. (2022). An analysis on complaint behaviour of hotel guests in Italy, *Review of Socio-Economic Perspectives*, Vol 7(3), 19-25.

---

## Abstract

The main purpose of this study is to analyse the complaint behaviour of hotel guests based on their online reviews. Furthermore, the importance of hotel responses to complaints and its impact on reducing customer dissatisfaction will be highlighted. The study is designed as explorative and inductive. The methodological approach is a content analysis on secondary data and the data used in this research is scraped from Booking.com. Tableau Data Analytics (2020.4) has been used to analysis the large amount of data in the database. The findings of the study underline the importance of monitoring and responding online reviews, since it is the most common place for hotel guests to write their complaint or feedback. Furthermore, the results call hotel managers attention to measure reputation risk level from the online reviews and take necessary action when its threshold is exceeded in service related areas.

---

## 1. Introduction

Giving that the online travel reviews are emerging as a powerful source of information for tourists, a greater attention on compliant behaviour should be paid. Despite the growing body of evidence about the impact of online reviews on guests' purchase behaviour, majority of hotels do not respond to the customer complaints and negative comments in online reviews and there is a considerable variation in response strategies in different hotels. A research study done by Barsky and Frame (2009) shows that 85 % of hotels have no guidelines for monitoring and responding to online reviews and only 4% of negative reviews get a response from hotels (Barsky & Frame, 2009).

In this section, major concepts on complaint behaviour are explained: First, online reviews and their impact on hotel guests buying behaviour will be discussed. Second, guests' complaint behaviour and hotel managers' complain response strategies will be elaborated. Finally, reputation risk management and its impact on customer satisfaction will be discussed.

### 1.1. Online Reviews

The increasing popularity of online reviews and their significant impact on individual buying behaviour has attracted many researchers to focus this development. In a study, Schuckert et al. (2015) analysed 50 articles related to online reviews in tourism and hospitality published in academic journals between 2004 and 2013. By using content analysis, these articles were grouped into five topical clusters, including online reviews and online buying (i.e. The effect of number, valence and ratings of reviews on purchase intention, price and online sales), satisfaction and management (customer satisfaction, complaints behaviour and compliant response), opinion mining/sentiment analysis (i.e. valence or ratings, total number of reviews, content analysis), motivation (i.e. motivation to posting, reading, and sharing reviews online), and finally the role of reviews (i.e. reliability of

---

<sup>1</sup> **Acknowledgement:** An early version of this paper has been presented in EuroCHRIE 27-30 SEP 2021 in Aalborg-Denmark.

\* **E-mail:** [Farzaneh.SoleimaniZoghi@srh.de](mailto:Farzaneh.SoleimaniZoghi@srh.de) & **ORCID:** <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7718-546X>