

# Research Regarding the Purchase Consumer Behaviour of Tourism Services

Simona Cristina Martin

*Banat's University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine "King Michael I of Romania" from Timisoara, Faculty of Agricultural Management, Calea Aradului, 119, Timisoara, Romania*

---

## Abstract

The service represents nonmaterial solution in solving consumer problems. From this kind of approach arise most features of product policy in provision of services filed. Service is always defined according with the needs and requirements of specific groups of consumers, respectively any offer of services which targets well defined consumer segments, previously established.

Per passing day tourism has an increasingly important role in the economy, reason for which it should be given a special importance of tourism services, which must be analysed through general features, especially specific ones, to their typology, because, according to these aspects, tourism service providers can provide tourist services that satisfies, at a higher level, consumption needs of the population.

**Keywords:** consumer demands; purchasing behaviour; services; services offer.

---

## 1. Introduction

Starting from the fact that most models of social efficiency rating is based on assessing the quality of services, namely the comparison of desired service consumer and the service received, the level of consumer satisfaction on the service will be, therefore, a particularly important component in measuring the social efficiency. Between the two concepts there is a relationship of mutual interdependence: the level of consumer satisfaction is the result of quality performance and quality of service is reflected in consumer satisfaction [1].

Achieving satisfaction depends mainly by the needs and expectations of the consumer. To identify customer needs, the provider is required to: develop a proper communication with beneficiaries, to act as a client of the firm, to actively study the market because most customers

do not express totally opinions, to analyse the causes that can lead to loss of customers [2].

Correct is to define service quality as the gap between customer expectations about the service provided and the perception of the quality after the service, in which case it is the ratio of the benefits actually achieved using the service and the hoped benefits [3].

We can talk about the quality when the service complies with or exceeds customer expectations. If the given quality meets customer expectations, they will be satisfied, becoming regulars, otherwise they look for other providers, winning the competition [4, 5].

## 2. Materials and methods

We used descriptive research, the method used was based on a questionnaire survey that captures reality as it presents itself at a time. The questionnaire was administered personally by the operators within the research area, represented by the city of Timisoara. The sample size was 500

---

\* Corresponding author: Simona Cristina Martin, [simi\\_con@yahoo.it](mailto:simi_con@yahoo.it)

people, their selection was realized randomly and data collection period was 21 to 28 April 2013, each sampling unit being questioned during this period. Data processing was performed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Science).

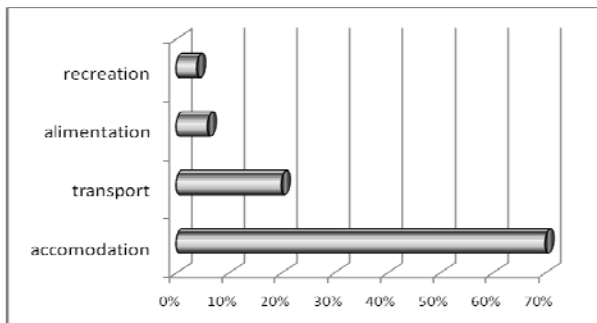
### 3. Results and discussion

#### 1. Univariate data analysis

All the respondents once travelled. Probably the most important decision to be taken is if the tourist guides for business or tourism. This is why the first question of the questionnaire sought to highlight the tourism interest of the respondents.

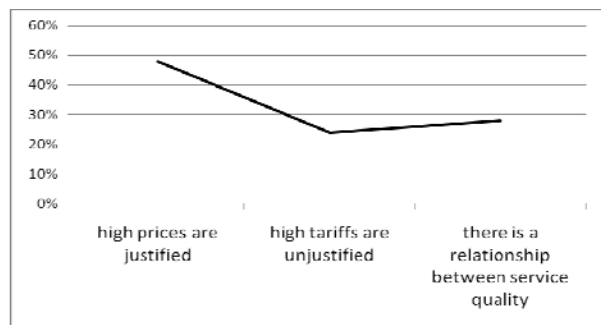
Tourist services presented were basic travel services, and among these, the most preferred by consumers are accommodation services, at 70%, given that the respondents were people aged between 18 and 34 years practicing tourism in order to discover the adventure.

It may be noted also that leisure services are preferred by consumers, meaning that they can manage on their own once they arrive to the desired destination and are not willing to pay to the travel agencies for some services which they can procure alone.



Source: author's data after processing the questionnaire  
**Figure 1.** Tourist services considered for holiday

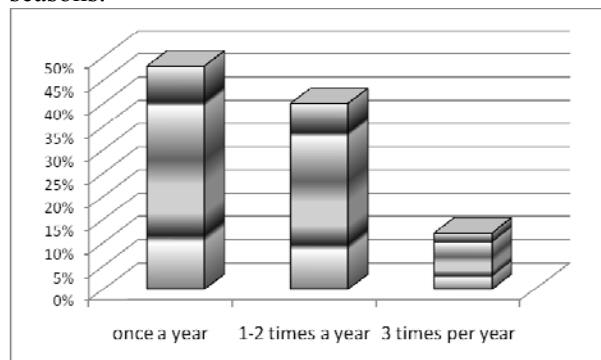
The survey results revealed that 28% of interviewed tourists said that there is a relation between quality of service and fair prices. A surprising result was the high percentage of people who believe that high prices are justified by the quality of service - 48%, and those who believe that tariffs are justified were in proportion of 24%. Although the situation regarding the satisfaction of tourists travel services indicated relative contentment, more than half of the respondents said that at a higher quality standard would spend more. Hence, it follows that the tourism product offered can be greatly improved.



Source: author's data after processing the questionnaire

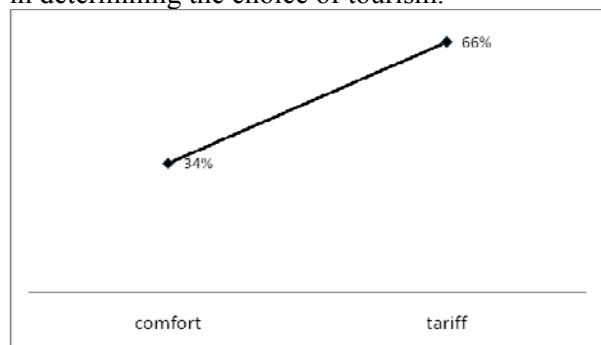
**Figure 2.** The appreciation of tariffs in relation to quality of services

Following the survey it resulted that 64% of those surveyed travel for tourist purposes once a year, during over ten days holiday, 24% of people twice a year, while only 6 persons traveling for tourism purposes three times per year. Tourism activities are practiced often in rest leave which is mostly conducted in summer and less in the other seasons.



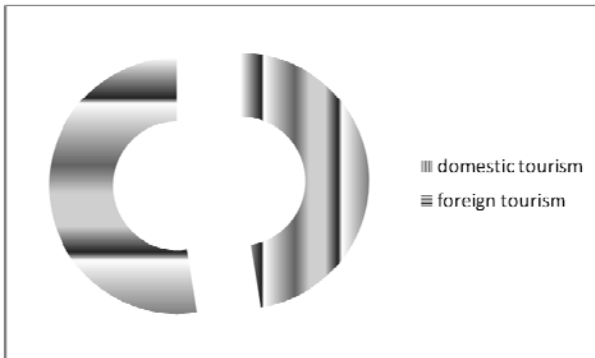
Source: author's data after processing the questionnaire  
**Figure 3.** Frequency of purchase of travel services

56% of people are influenced in deciding tourism, by the tariff, while a fairly large proportion ie 46% choose tourism services considering their quality, considering that this is the most important aspect in determining the choice of tourism.



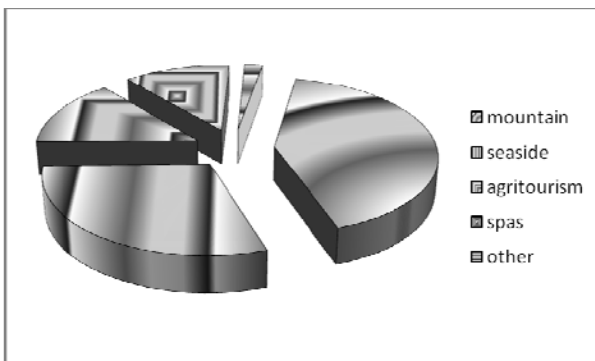
Source: author's data after processing the questionnaire  
**Figure 4.** Report comfort / price in determining the choice of tourism

Regarding the choice of destination, according to the answers given by the respondents, it can be seen that only 48% prefer domestic destinations for practicing tourism, while 52% would prefer foreign destinations. This is due, firstly, to the high quality offered by tourism service providers from abroad, the prices of these secondly and advertising of foreign destinations, travel agencies are increasingly promoting foreign destinations over those internal.



Source: author's data after processing the questionnaire  
**Figure 5.** Selecting tourist destination

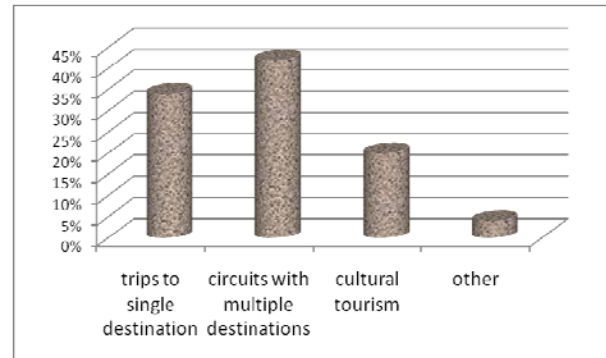
Orientation of tourists to mountain resorts indicates their main preference regarding domestic tourist destination. The second place is held by seaside, in a proportion of 30%. Agrotourism wins quite important ground, which is preferred by more and more tourists, offering increasing opportunities.



Source: author's data after processing the questionnaire  
**Figure 6.** Domestic tourist destination

As mentioned above, consumer preference for foreign tourism is increasing. Most of the people surveyed prefer external circuitry to multiple destinations - 42%, followed by those who prefer holidays with unique destination, 34%, and the

third position are those who prefer cultural tourism.



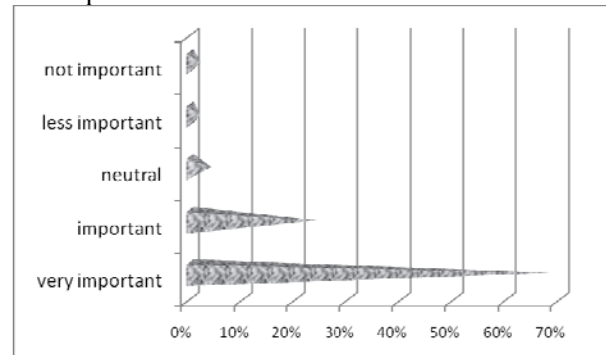
Source: author's data after processing the questionnaire  
**Figure 7.** Foreign destinations

Regarding the questions concerning the amount of money available to be spent for a holiday responses were:

- ❖ 64% of respondents allocated a relatively large sum for a vacation, most of this coming from salary savings, which is why it is desired a higher quality for tourist services.
- ❖ 22% allocated an average amount for a vacation.
- ❖ 14% allocated a relatively small amount.

Hence it can be concluded that in most cases, consumers are willing to spend money large enough for a holiday and also that they expect high quality of tourism services.

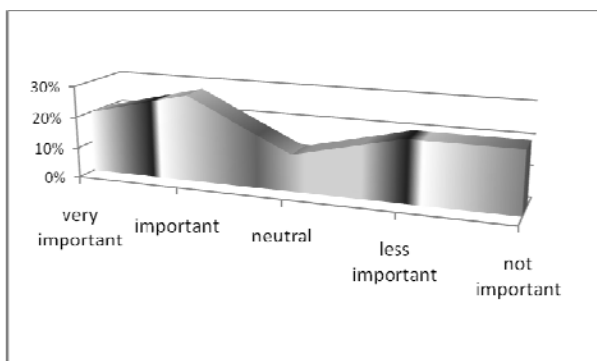
Quality of tourism services is one of the aspects that consumers consider most important for the decision to purchase, 68% of those who answered our questions considering this very important, 24% considered it important while only 2% did not consider the quality as the determining factor in the purchase of tourism services.



Source: author's data after processing the questionnaire  
**Figure 8.** The importance of quality in tourism services purchase decision

Due to the large share of the questions concerning the amount of money available for tourism, responses were varied and inhomogeneous. Thus, only 10% find tariff as very important for the acquisition of tourist services, followed by 14% who consider it important, and 10% put quality interest above.

Regarding the range of tourist services offer, this is an issue that consumers do not really count. They are satisfied if there are two or three deals falling into consumer preferences, putting more emphasis on quality and price. Thus, most of the respondents - namely 46% does not give almost no importance to the market offer.



Source: author's data after processing the questionnaire  
**Figure 9.** The role of the tariff in choosing travel

Most people interviewed preferred accommodation in hotels - 40%, but follow closely, by those opting increasingly for private accommodation - namely 38%. This is because they are given a very high degree of freedom, putting them available to the entire site with all facilities. Accommodation at the lodge was preferred by 8% of respondents.

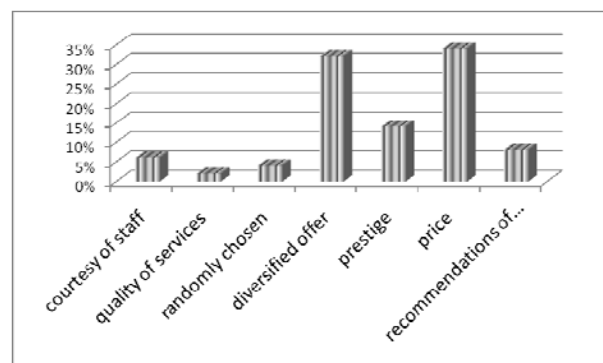
Regarding the means of transport used for the consumption of tourism services, road transport, ie car or coach is the most used means of transport in tourist activity, 54% of Romanian tourists using it more often. Those who preferred the train were 36%, quite a lot, especially youth, through lower costs of travel. Air transport was used only 10%. Even if reduced travel time is the main feature of this mode of transport is still quite expensive, consequently, suited especially the foreign tourist destinations.

Of those surveyed, 58% preferred to travel by a specialized operator (travel agency). It can be seen that a fairly large part have travelled on their own, ie 42%.

Most people who organizes tourist trip through a travel agency, belonging to the age group 30-49 years are 27% while those aged 18-29 years have opted for the tourist organization on their own.

In connection with the organization of the trip and tourist season raises the question of the degree to which the consumer wishes to ensure, from the outset, all services or only some of them. Although a significant proportion of respondents said that they organized tourist trip on their own, if they would call a travel agency, said it was preferable to have all services available from the beginning.

Criteria that were taken into account when you use the services of travel agents were the following: firstly agency prices - 34%. Then we analysed customer bid submitted - 24%. Thirdly it mattered the prestige of the travel agency, consumers trusting known tourism providers in the market. Also issues recommendations concerning of relatives had relatively high importance - 8%, but also diversified offer available to the Agency, staff courtesy. Only 4% of respondents said they randomly choose the travel agency.



Source: author's data after processing the questionnaire  
**Figure 10.** Decisive factors in choosing the travel agency

Most people who have used the services of a travel agency made it by convenience - 48%, having no time required for interrogation of accommodation or they simply wanted to do nothing and on vacation to be serve. Another criterion in the choice of tourism was the attractive offers - 34%.

Most of the respondents were satisfied with the attitude of employees of the travel agency they have turned to - 44% (total agreement) and 32% (agreement). Only 4% felt that they were not treated well and receiving not enough interest. Regarding service quality, customer agencies were

50% satisfied, wanting to resort to these agents in the future.

The sample of the research predominated women, men accumulating only 40%. Although for most of consumer goods, the sex of the people is an essential criterion for market segmentation, in the case of tourism services it is of much lower importance.

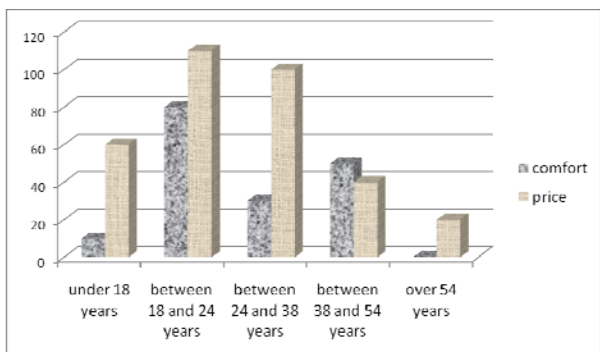
In the present research, people who have dominated in terms of age were those aged up to 25 years, with 52%, followed by those aged between 26 and 35 years, with 13% and in the area of origin, 90% of people were from urban areas, while only 10% were from rural areas.

Regarding the income, 46% responded that they had a average income, over 15% have a high income, while a significant part have low incomes. We conclude that the income, with age and sex, are some of the main elements to be considered when assessing consumer travel preferences, as females are more demanding, and care more about comfort and varied tourist than male. However, young people prefer locations with lower rates than those aged 35-65 years.

Regarding the occupation of the sample, most people were in the economic field - 44% followed by the industries - 26% and 20% in education.

2. Bivariate analysis of data

As it can be seen in figure 11, in terms of rate of tourism, 10 of the respondents aged between 24 and 34 years have considered as the main reason regarding consumer decision. People aged over 54 years have not considered the tariff as a primary factor in the purchase of travel services.



Source: author's data after processing the questionnaire  
**Figure 11.** The correlation between the quality of tourism services and age

Regarding tourism services quality, most people felt it was very important. People aged from 18 to

24 years rather preoccupy agreement forms of amusement than accommodation and food.

To see whether there is a significant link between the quality of tourism services (*comfort provided by them*) and age of the respondents was conducted bivariate descriptive analysis. Bivariate  $\chi^2$  test was used, which is one of possible variants which verify statistically significant association of a connection between two variables measured at the nominal level.

Step 1: Formulation of the null hypothesis and alternative.

H0: Between the variable "quality tourism" and the variable "age" there isn't a significant statistical relationship.

H1: Among the variable "quality of tourism services" and the variable "age" there is a relationship statistically significant.

Step 2: Choice of statistical test.

The use of  $\chi^2$  test bivariate as variables are measured at nominal level.

Step 3: The level of confidence (significance).

The desired confidence level is 0.05 ( $\alpha = 5\%$ ).

Step 4: Determination of  $\chi^2$  theoretical:

$$\alpha = 0.05 \Rightarrow P=1-\alpha=0.95$$

$$df = (r-1)(c-1) = (2-1)(5-1) = 1 \times 4 = 4$$

For a confidence level of 0.05 and a 4 degrees of freedom, the theoretical value of  $\chi^2$  statistic  $\chi^2$  is:

$$\chi^2_{0.05;4} = 9.488$$

Step 5: Determination of  $\chi^2$  statistics based on the data available.

$$\chi^2 \text{ calculated} = \sum_{i=1}^r \sum_{j=1}^k \frac{(Q_{ij} - \theta_{ij})^2}{\theta_{ij}}$$

$Q_{ij}$  - frequency of observations in the line  $i$  column  $j$ ;

$i=1 \quad j=1$

$\theta_{ij}$  - theoretical frequency in  $i$  column  $j$ ;

$r$  - number of lines;

$k$  - number of columns.

Using the above formula will calculate the statistics, the result being:

$$\chi^2 \text{ calc} = 25,33$$

In the table below will be written both the value of  $\chi^2$  calc and contingency coefficient as follows:

|                         | Values | Degrees of freedom |
|-------------------------|--------|--------------------|
| $\chi^2$ calculated     | 25,33  | 4                  |
| Valid responses         | 50     |                    |
| Contingency coefficient | 0,71   |                    |

Step 6:  $\chi^2$  calculated  $\gt;$   $\chi^2$  tabular  $\Rightarrow$  null hypothesis is rejected, the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

Among the variables "quality of tourism services" and "respondent's age" there is a relationship statistically significant, this conclusion is guaranteed with a probability of 95%. Contingency coefficient value helps to establish the intensity of the relationship between two variables, as the value is closer to 1 the stronger is the link. Thus, the value of the corresponding coefficient (0.71) shows that the two chosen variables there is a link strong enough.

#### 4. Conclusions

The buying decision is taken after a preliminary preparation, being influenced by many factors, of which knowledge is essential. In most cases, in decision making participate not only the actual consumer, but other people in his entourage, each participant assuming one or more roles in the act. It's about roles: the initiator (played by the one who suggests the opportunity to appeal to a set of tourist services - which can be a family member, a friend, a colleague, a travel agency or advertising) inciter (held by the person who brings the most arguments in favour of purchasing act - this can be consumer the wife or girlfriend, travel sales agent of the company), the decision-maker (which may be a collective role), the buyer (played by the one who purchase the travel tickets and stay) payer (assumed by the individual who has the financial resources intended for tourism) and the consumer or beneficiary of tourism services.

In this research we wanted to see how to take the buying decision namely:

- to discover which are the most important factors that influence the making of such a decision and what nature is their influence (positive or negative);
- to find out which are the most appropriate marketing actions to be used to influence the favourable purchase decision;
- to identify the major types and sources of information that must be used;
- to find the most appropriate criteria to be used to determine the optimal variant of the decision;

Thus, after the study carried out, the following results were obtained:

- Most people who organize their tourist trip through a travel agency, belonging to the age group 30-49 years are 27% while those aged from 18 to 29 years opts for organizing the tourist on their own;

- Everything related to the organization of the trip and tourist season raises the question of the degree to which the consumer wishes to ensure, from the outset, all services or only some of them. Although a significant proportion of respondents said that they organized tourist trip on their own if they call a travel agency believes it is better to have all services available from the beginning;

- Consumers are influenced in the choice of destination in most of the price, but many of them would be willing to pay more for higher quality services;

- Also, there is a growing inclination towards international tourism, 52% of respondents wanting this because of the high quality of tourism services, better conditions, courtesy of informational specialized agencies and tourism service providers and manufacturers;

- Another aspect observed in the research is the frequency of trips, most people leaving only once or maximum twice a year in travel. This category comprises workers, people with education, the main reason being that they have low incomes;

- It is also noted that, among the respondents, the majority were satisfied with the quality of tourism services and found that they would be willing to allocate a higher amount for an increased comfort.

#### References

1. Toqner, G., Langlois, M., Marketing des services. Le défi relationnel, Gaëtan Morin Editeur, Dunod, Paris, 1992
2. Martin, S. C., Ciolac, R., Stanciu, S., Dumitrescu, C., Palade, O., Research on the quality of service as expression of social efficiency in the agro-tourist field, The sixth international conference "Rural development 2013: Innovations and Sustainability", Faculty of Economics and Management, Aleksandras Stulginskis University, Universiteto g. 10, Akademija, LT – 53361, Kauno raj., Volume 6, Book 1, Published ASU Publishing Center, ISSN 1822-3230, E-ISSN 2345-0916, pg.241-246
3. Nistoreanu, P., Dinu, V., Nedelea, A., Producția și comercializarea serviciilor turistice, Editura Didactică

și Pedagogică, R.A.București, 2004

4. Ciolac, R., Petroman, C., Petroman, I., Rujescu, C., Stanciu, S., Martin, S., Tucudean, A. R., Research on agro-tourism stage and traditional products recovery through this activity in the Alps Mountain - Trento Province, The sixth international conference “Rural development 2013: Innovations and Sustainability”,

Faculty of Economics and Management, Aleksandras Stulginskis University, Universiteto g. 10, Akademija, LT – 53361, Kauno raj., Lithuania, pg. 74-79, Volume 6, Book 1, ISSN 2345-0916

5. Plumb, I. (colectiv), Reintegrarea serviciilor, Editura ASE, București, 2004