

The Role of Online Guest Review Sites in the Hospitality Industry: Evidences from Managers' Perspectives

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Abstract

Consumers now rely heavily on online reviews as part of their decision-making process and as a primary source of information. The advancement of online review sites on the Internet has significantly changed the hospitality industry landscape. Hotel customers are increasingly turning to online review sites as a means of providing feedback on their stay. In this study we attempt to investigate the perceptions of the hotels' managers in a sample of Four and Five-star hotels in Greater Cairo towards guest review sites through, identifying to what extent the investigated hotels involved in the online guest review communities, and exploring the advantages and disadvantages of these sites to their properties. To do this, a questionnaire was distributed to a sample of managers in charge of managing and handling guest reviews in the hotels under investigation. A total of ٣٢ managers participated in the field study were selected conveniently. The study's findings show that the respondents believe that guest review sites play a

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significant role in the hospitality industry. Guest reviews and responding to them on time have always been a vital part of the hotel industry. Overall, the investigated respondents confirmed that they review and respond to guest reviews on a regular base which reflect their responsiveness to online guest reviews. Fake negative review is the main challenge that faces them. Upon the study findings, implications for hotel managers have been suggested.

Key words: e-WOM – Guest Review – Online Review Sites – TripAdvisor

1. Introduction

Recently, the Internet has transformed the nature and characteristics of the media and communications sector in unprecedented ways (Buhalis and Law 2008). The Internet, unlike any other medium, has given the corporate world a worldwide dimension and has become a unique universal source for information (Dellarocas, Zhang and Awad, 2007). Online customer reviews and social media comments have supplemented or perhaps completely replaced conventional sources of information (i.e., T.V, newspapers, and brochures). According to Racherla, Mandviwalla, & Connolly (2012), Consumer internet reviews were deemed more valuable by 9 percent of 9,000 BizRate customers than expert reviews. Furthermore, internet review sites affect purchasing decisions more than any other source of information, implying that social media plays a major role in marketing (DoubleClick, 2004).

Promotion-oriented customers are more attentive to reviews, such as the attractiveness of the hotel location, the number of recommended restaurants near the hotel, and the

availability of free coupons, when making hotel reservation decisions, in order to gain more benefits from hotel guests who have previously stayed at the same hotel. Meanwhile, prevention-minded customers have a strong desire to reduce risk, therefore they monitor unfavourable review remarks such as poor value for money, poor service quality, and bad location. For consumers who have never used a business before, online reviews from previous customers are valuable sources of information (Pan, MacLaurin, & Crotts, ٢٠٠٧).

Consumers now rely heavily on online reviews as part of their decision-making process and as a primary source of information (Molinillo, et al., ٢٠١٦). They also give a feedback mechanism for service providers to track guests' emotions and experiences, as well as any needed modifications. As a result, favourable or negative online reviews have the potential to help or hurt a hotel's image and reputation (Jeonga & Jang, ٢٠١١).

The success of popular websites like TripAdvisor and Booking.com shows that customers' online interaction for the purpose of travel is represented via online reviews (Vermeulen and Seegers, ٢٠٠٩ and Xiang and Gretzel, ٢٠١٠). Customer reviews, as well as review score and anecdotes, have the power to improve the reputation of the firm or destination (Sparks and Browning, ٢٠١١). Hotels can learn what customers like and dislike by monitoring comments on guest review sites. A more thorough investigation could also disclose what extras clients are ready to pay for. According to O'connor (٢٠١٠), such an examination could lead to a full understanding of customers' characteristics and behaviour patterns.

Several studies have looked at how online consumer reviews affect marketing techniques (Chen, Fay & Wang, ۲۰۱۱); Chevalier and Mayzlin, ۲۰۰۶), consumer decision making (Sen and Lerman ۲۰۰۷), and sales forecasting (Dhar and Chang, ۲۰۰۹). In order to close the gap in scientific knowledge that exists, this study seeks to investigate the perceptions of the hotels' managers in a sample of Four and Five-star hotels in Greater Cairo towards guest review sites through; identifying to what extent the investigated hotels involved in the online guest review communities, determining how hotel managers collect, handle and monitor guests' reviews and exploring the motivators to engage in guest review sites, and the advantages and disadvantages of these sites to their properties. Additionally, the study seeks to test the following hypothesis:

۱. There are no statistically significant differences between perceptions of the investigated respondents towards advantages & disadvantages of online guest review sites that refer to gender.
۲. There are no statistically significant differences between perceptions of the investigated respondents towards advantages & disadvantages of online guest review sites that refer to age.
۳. There are no statistically significant differences between perceptions of the investigated respondents towards advantages & disadvantages of online guest review sites that refer to level of education.
۴. There are no statistically significant differences between perceptions of the investigated respondents

towards advantages & disadvantages of online guest review sites that refer to length of work experience.

The current study is structured as follows: in addition to the current introduction, section ٢ presents the literature review regarding the concept of guest review sites in the hospitality industry. Section ٣ "Research methodology" concerns the method adopted for the development of the statistical study. Furthermore, the findings of the questionnaire form that have been developed and directed to the investigated managers have been presented and discussed in section ٤ (Results and Discussion). Finally, section ٥ pertains to the conclusion, and implications of the study.

٢. Literature Review

٢.١ *Guest Review Sites in the Hospitality Industry*

Online hotel reviews are gradually becoming the most popular trending instrument for customer behaviour research, with the potential to deliver a wealth of information about customers' thoughts and attitudes (Dellarocas, ٢٠٠٣). According to Filieri and McLeay (٢٠١٤), the travel industry views an online review (OR) as an electronic counterpart of conventional word-of-mouth (WOM), which consists of customer comments about their experiences with products, services, and brands. This online sharing of opinions is called e-WOM (electronic word of mouth) (Filieri, ٢٠١٥). E-WOM is described as "any good or negative statement made by future, actual, or past consumers about a product, service, or business, which is made available to a multitude of individuals and institutions over the Internet" and is a technical evolution from WOM (Filieri & McLeay, ٢٠١٣).

With regard to Tourism and hospitality industry, the online reviews posted by customers on guest review platforms (i.e., TripAdvisor) play important roles. Online reviews enable tourism and hospitality businesses to: shape customers' awareness, expectations, and perceptions; reach out and gain more customers at a low cost; predict and affect sales or revenues; effectively improve and develop new and current products or services; audit the company's image and reputation on the Internet; and build relationships with customers and facilitate consumer repurchase, analyse behavioural trends and respond to unfavourable reviews before they become widespread, enhance customer happiness by responding to consumer feedback, and provide feedback to employees (congratulate and reward after positive review or train after negative review) (Kim, Lim & Brymer, 2010; Molinillo, Fernández-Morales, Ximénez-de-Sandoval, & Coca-Stefaniak, 2016). According to experts, hotel guest reviews are becoming increasingly important and influential in the decision-making process and hotel selection for clients (Bulchand-Gidumal, Melián-González, & López-Valcárcel, 2011). Customers can use online reviews to pick where to go and what to buy because they are more independent and hence more reliable and up-to-date. These reviews assist customers in evaluating alternatives, reducing purchase uncertainty, increasing product awareness, providing travel ideas, assisting others in avoiding places, assisting others in imagining what a place will be like, and increasing the likelihood of consumers considering making a booking (O'Connor, 2010 and Gretzel & Yoo, 2008). Because of its considerable influence on customers' ultimate purchasing decisions, these online evaluations or recommendations

types of e-WOM have grown increasingly crucial. According to studies, online consumer reviews have a significant impact on product/service performance in the hotel industry (Cheng & Loi, ٢٠١٤). Consumers in the hospitality industry find it difficult to assess the quality of services before using them, thus they rely heavily on the perceived image and reputation (O'Connor, ٢٠١٠; Yang, Mueller, & Croes, ٢٠١٦). This distinct feature means that people have a great deal of ambiguity about their choices and, as a result, require a lot of knowledge to lower perceived risks and make well-informed judgments. The most crucial duty is to get customers to regularly post their experiences on social media, which keeps them coming back and informing others what a fantastic hotel/it is (Gu and Ye, ٢٠١٤).

Hotel reviews published on well-known internet travel communities are regarded as valuable and trustworthy, eliciting favourable or negative reactions to a hotel (Casalo, Flavian, Guinaliu, & Ekinici, ٢٠١٥). Both the number (volume) and the degree of positivity (valence) of online reviews have been shown to matter as a signal of hotel popularity and customer choice, which can influence normative behaviour ("follow the crowd") (Kwok, Xie, & Richards, ٢٠١٧).

The positive (benefits gained) or negative (benefits lost) product qualities are the focus of message valence. When it comes to product evaluations, consumers value negative information more than positive information. Furthermore, negative information spreads faster than positive information, as unhappy consumers are more inclined to talk about their experiences than satisfied customers. Positive reviews, in contrast to negative reviews, are

primarily concerned with glorifying a company's quality oriented, such as making recommendations to others (Brown, Barry, Dacin, & Gunst, 2009). Positive internet reviews are widely acknowledged as an effective tool for promoting a hotel's products and services. Strongly good ratings led to a large increase in product sales, according to Clemons, Gao, and Hitt (2006).

The successful operations of online markets necessitate the provision of accurate information to customers in a transparent manner. One of the greatest obstacles to the Consumer Protection Law on the Internet is fake reviews on digital platforms (Fiedler, M., & Kissling, 2020).

"Deceptive evaluations produced with the goal to mislead consumers in their purchase decision-making, frequently by reviewers with little or no actual expertise with the products or services being reviewed," according to the definition of fake reviews (Zhang, Zhou, Kehoe & Kilic, 2016, p. 407).

If there are bad reviews, purchase intent may be harmed since unfavourable comments might provide credence to the entire review, damaging the hotel's reputation (Liang, Ekinci, Occhiocupo, & Whyatt, 2013). A recent survey of the literature on online reviews in tourism and hospitality revealed two primary study priorities: (1) determining the impact of online reviews on visitors' purchasing decisions, and (2) determining how hospitality organisations should handle online reviews (Schuckert, Liu, X., & Law, 2015).

Managing guest online reviews posted on online communities as part of e-WOM tools is critical for hotels to improve and grow their competitiveness: it is the result of an integrated process in which information and interactions serve as both drivers and enablers. As a motivator, e-WOM encourages hotel managers to participate in market

intelligence gathering and information generation. Such information can be used to determine a hotel's strengths and shortcomings, the service elements that consumers value most, the competitive gaps that need to be filled in order to improve services, and the online reputation of competitors (Litvin, Goldsmith, & Pan, ٢٠٠٨). This information can also be utilised to aid decision-making by enabling new service development and improved segmentation (Sigala, Christou, & Gretzel, ٢٠١٢), adjusting pricing strategies, and maintaining more informative choices based on data monitoring (Sigala, Christou, & Gretzel, ٢٠١٢). (Levy, Duan & Boo, ٢٠١٣). As an enabler, e-WOM enables hotel managers to create dynamic connections with clients through interactive communication flows (Cantalops and Salvi, ٢٠١٤). This entails encouraging visitors to participate in online discussions, encouraging them to leave comments, and reacting to guest complaints in order to demonstrate that service failures and customers' issues are being addressed, as well as providing reassurance (Aureli and Supino, ٢٠١٧).

٣. Research Methodology

As mentioned previously, the current study aims to investigate the perceptions of the hotels' managers in a sample of Four and Five-star hotels in Greater Cairo towards guest review sites through, identifying to what extent the investigated hotels involving in the online guest review communities, and exploring the advantages and disadvantages of these sites to their properties.

٣.١ Study Population and Sample

The population of this study was composed of hospitality managers in charge of handling and managing online guest reviews in Four and Five-star hotels in Greater Cairo. According to the Egyptian Hotel Association (٢٠١٦), the total number of Four and Five-star hotels in Greater Cairo was ٥١ hotels (٢٢ Four-star and ٢٩ Five star). To fulfil the study's goal, a questionnaire was created and sent to the person in charge of handling and reacting to guest reviews posted on various guest review sites in the hotels under investigation. A sample of ٣٢ participants, representing ٦٣% of the total Four and Five-star hotels in Greater Cairo, was surveyed (Egyptian Hotel Association, ٢٠١٦).

The participants in the study were chosen using a convenience sampling approach, which is "a sort of non-probability sampling in which people are sampled solely because they are 'convenient' data sources for researchers" (Lavrakas, ٢٠٠٨). When randomization is not practicable due to a vast population or researchers' limited resources, time, or manpower, it is often utilised (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, ٢٠١٦). As a result of the researchers' limited time and manpower, they adopted a convenience sampling strategy in addition to those individuals who were more cooperative and eager to engage in the field study.

٣,٢ Questionnaire Form Structure

There were three sections to the questionnaire form. The first section of the survey asked participants to provide demographic information such as their gender, age, level of education, and work experience in the hotels under investigation. The second section sought to identify the repeatness of online guest review site visit, the most used guest review site, and the main reason which motivated the

investigated hotels to engage in online guest review sites. The third section was intended to reveal the perceptions of the investigated respondents towards advantages and disadvantages of guest review sites by utilizing a five-point Likert-type scale (strongly agree = ٥, agree = ٤, neutral = ٣, disagree = ٢ and strongly disagree = ١) to determine the levels of agreement with the statements investigated.

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version ٢٥,٠ for Windows was used to compute and analyse the data collected from the respondents. Frequency counts, percentage distributions, mean and standard deviation were calculated and analysed. Kolmogorov- Smirnova and Shapiro Wilk tests were used to identify the normality of participants' responses. To compare differences between the independent groups, the Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal-Wallis tests were utilised.

٤. Results and Discussion

٤,١ Respondents' Demographic Data

As shown in Table ١, the data collected from the investigated respondents (n = ٣٢) illustrated that, the majority of participants were males, constituting ٥٦,٣% (n = ١٨). With regard to respondents' ages, participants aged more than ٤٠ years were the higher category (٤٣,٧%), followed by those with an average age ranging from ٣٠ to ٤٠ years (٣٧,٥%), while the youngest, i.e., less than ٣٠ years, amounted only ١٨,٨%. In terms of the respondents' level of education, the highest category (٦٨,٨%, n = ٢٢) had university degrees. With regard to the respondents' job experience in the hotel industry, the higher percentage (٤٣,٧%) pertains to participants with an average work experience ranged from ٥ to ١٠ years.

Table 1: Respondents' demographic data

Dimension	Variable	Statistics	
		Freq.	%
Gender	Male	18	56,3
	Female	14	43,7
Age	Less than 30 years	6	18,8
	From 30 to 40 years	12	37,0
	More than 40 years	14	43,7
Level of Education	University degree	22	68,8
	Post-graduate degree	10	31,2
Work Experience	Less than 5 years	6	18,8
	From 5 to 10 years	14	43,7
	More than 10 years	12	37,0

ξ, 2 Repeatness of Online Guest Review Site Visit

This question aims at identifying to what extent the investigated respondents concern reviewing, analyzing, and responding to online guest reviews. All of the investigated respondents (100%) confirmed that they review and respond to guest reviews on a regular base which reflect their responsiveness to online guest reviews. This finding is in line with that of Baltescu (2016), who stated that timely online answers play a crucial role in enhancing customer satisfaction, particularly in the case of unfavourable evaluations. Customer dissatisfaction might be lessened by hotel management providing explanations and apologies in order to regain guests' trust, which would improve the company's financial performance.

ξ, 3 The Most Used Hotel Guest Review Site

This question aims to explore the most guest review site used by the investigated respondents to identify the guests'

perceptions towards the quality of their hotel experience. The investigated respondent asked to select only one site.

Table ٢: The most used hotel guest review site

Variable	Freq.	%
TripAdvisor.com	٢٥	٧٨,١
Google.com	٢	٦,٣
Booking.com	٥	١٥,٦
Expedia.com	-	-
Hotels.com	-	-
Other	-	-
Total	٣٢	١٠٠

As shown in Table ٢, the vast majority of the investigated respondents, constituting ٧٨,١% (n = ٢٥), mentioned that TripAdvisor is the most used hotel guest review site to identify the guests' perceptions towards the quality of their hotel experience, followed by Booking.com (١٥,٦%) and Google (٦,٣%) respectively. This finding is consistent with Xie, Zhang, and Zhang (٢٠١٤), who noted that when it comes to hotel managers' online presence, TripAdvisor is frequently the first port of contact. Moreover, TripAdvisor, according to Sayfuddin and Chen (٢٠٢١), is not only the pioneer of online travel intermediation but also a specialist in hotel booking. In terms of the number of unique users, the website has constantly been listed as the most popular website for hotel and restaurant reservations in the United States (Statista, ٢٠٢١).

٤,٣ Motivation for Engaging in Online Guest Review Sites

The goal of this question is to figure out what drove the hotels under investigation to use online guest review services. The responders were only allowed to choose one

explanation. As shown in Table 2, the main reason to handle guest reviews was increasing the hotel's image and reputation among customers and competitors, constituting 53,1% (n = 17). Hotels' commitment to customers' trustfulness, reducing hotel's advertising costs, increasing hotels' profits, as well as increasing hotel's market share represented 21,8%, 9,4%, 9,4% and 6,3%, respectively. This finding is in line with the findings of Yap, Soetarto, & Sweeney (2013), who concluded that the main reasons behind engaging in online guests' reviews was company's self enhancement through increasing the company's reputation and improving customer satisfaction about products and services provided.

Table 2: Motivation for engaging in online guest reviews sites

Variable	Freq.	%
Increasing the hotel's image and reputation among customers and competitors	17	53,1
Hotels' commitment to customers' trustfulness	7	21,8
Reducing hotel's advertising costs	3	9,4
Increasing hotel's market share	2	6,3
Increasing hotels' profits	3	9,4
Total	32	100

2.2 Perceptions of the Investigated Respondents towards Advantages Online Guest Review Sites

These questions were designed to demonstrate how the respondents felt about the benefits of online guest review sites. Using a five-point Likert-type scale (1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree), the respondents were asked to identify their perceptions of the researched variables. The

data gathered from the investigated respondents is shown in the table below.

Table ٣: Perceptions of the investigated respondents towards advantages of online guest review sites

Variable	Mean	SD.
Guest review sites.....		
١. Are valuable tools for distributing information and gathering data of customers' hotel experience.	٤,٥٠	٠,٦٢٢
٢. Are important to building relationship with customers and facilitate hotel-to-consumer interaction.	٣,٩٤	٠,٩٤٨
٣. Highlight areas for improvement in hotel's service process.	٤,٠٣	٠,٩٩٩
٤. Improve customer trust and confidence of hotel business.	٤,٤١	٠,٧١٢
٥. Improve search engine results.	٤,٠٩	٠,٨١٨
٦. Help hotel to collect and exchange market information through online dialogue with customers.	٤,٢٨	٠,٧٧٢
٧. Increase the customers' positive expectations of products and services that are provided in hotels.	٣,٩٧	٠,٧٨٢
٨. Support hotel's traditional	٤,١٣	٠,٦٠٩

commercial activities (e.g., Pricing information, customer services & facilities...etc).		
9. Reduce hotel's investment in other traditional advertising media like newspaper, TV advertising, and billboards.... etc.	£,31	0,738
10. Assist to avoid losing your market share to competitors who are already using them.	£,34	0,740
11. Are guiding guest to purchase and react.	£,20	0,803
12. Help to advertise hotel's products/services.	3,84	0,767
13. Provide quick initial response to your guest reviews and respond with clear and visible hotel's identity.	£,44	0,064
14. Participate effectively in handling guest complaints.	£,41	0,712
15. Build up the hotel reputation and global brand name.	£,38	0,660
16. Respond to market trends and competitive pressure.	£,38	0,707
Total	£,23	0,747

In terms of the researched respondents' perceptions of the benefits of online guest review sites, the data presented in Table ٤ reveal that overall, the investigated respondents strongly agreed that guest review sites play an important role in improving hotel performance and become a vital issue in hotel industry that should be considered. They strongly agreed on the majority of the surveyed variables (١٠ items out of ١٦) with an average mean ranged from $M=٤,٢٥$ to $M=٤,٥٠$ and agreed on the rest variables (٦ items of ١٦).

Results revealed that the highest advantage of online guest review sites is that guest review sites are valuable tools for distributing information and gathering data of customers' hotel experience ($M=٤,٥٠$, $SD = ٠,٦٢٢$). Additionally, more advantages, that arranged according to average mean, could be achieved as follows:

- Providing quick initial response to guest reviews and respond with clear and visible hotel's identity.
- Improving customer trust and confidence of hotel business.
- Participating effectively in handling guest complaints.
- Building up the hotel reputation and global brand name.
- Responding to market trends and competitive pressure.
- Assisting to avoid losing market share to competitors who are already using them.

- Reducing hotel's investment in other traditional advertising media like newspaper, TV advertisement and billboards.

On the other hand, the least advantage was (Helping to advertise hotel's products/services) with an average mean ($M= 3,84$, $SD= 0,767$), followed by being important to build relationship with customers and facilitate hotel-to-consumer interaction, and increase the customers' positive expectations of products and services that are provided in hotels with an average mean $3,94$ and $3,97$ respectively.

These findings match with the findings of different studies that addressed and explored the Pros of online guest review sites in the hospitality industry (Blal & Sturman, 2014; Zhao, Wang, Guo, & Law, 2010 and Amatulli, De Angelis & Stoppani, 2019). They mentioned that online customer reviews could help hotels achieve various benefits, such as a closer relationship with customers by allowing them to read reviews from a variety of customers, respond to both positive and negative reviews, handle customer complaints (if applicable), and demonstrate that they care about what customers have to say. The impact of internet visibility on gross and net profitability is greater for hotels with higher star ratings. Each review made online by a customer is a kind of free advertisement for the business. Increasing trust and confidence in new customers (reviews can increase the confidence of new consumers if a product has good ratings or can simply be reviewed).

4.0 Perceptions of the Investigated Respondents towards Disadvantages of Online Guest Review sites

This question aims at identifying the perceptions of the investigated respondents towards the disadvantages of

online guest review sites. A five-point Likert-type scale (1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree) was used. The data collected from the investigated respondents are illustrated in the following table.

Table ٤: Disadvantages of online guest reviews sites

Variable	Mean	SD.
Misusing or abusing from guests to decrease the hotel's rating or to ask for a discount.	٤,٢٥	٠,٧٦ ٢
Fake reviews (usually done by competitors and disgruntled employees).	٤,٣٤	٠,٧٤ ٥
Guests focus only on negative reviews.	٣,١٩	١,٢٨ ١
Outdated Reviews (Having reviews that are a year old can be hazardous).	٣,٩١	١,٢٧ ٩
Few negative reviews could be able to lose customers' confidence.	٤,٢٨	٠,٦٨ ٣

As mentioned in Table ٤, it could be noticed that the majority of the investigated respondents strongly agreed that fake reviews that usually were done by competitors and disgruntled employees is considered the highest disadvantage of online guest reviews (M= ٤,٣٤). Moreover, they strongly agreed that few negative reviews and misusing or abusing from guests to decrease the rating of the hotel online or to ask for a discount could be able to lose customers' confidence with an average mean ٤,٢٨ and ٤,٢٥ respectively. Meanwhile, they are neutral that guest focus only on negative reviews (M= ٣,١٩). These findings

are consistent with Hlee, Lee, Koo & Chung (2021) and Wu, Ngai, Wu & Wu (2020) who concluded that fake reviews by disgruntled employee or malicious individual or competitors who post these reviews to lower the business rating, affect negatively on business performance. Fake reviews, they claimed, reduce the usefulness, quality, and informativeness of online product reviews. Fake reviews also detract from the trustworthiness of reviews and reduce their usefulness.

Testing the Study Hypotheses

Before testing the study's hypotheses, the researchers used the Kolmogorov- Smirnova and Shapiro Wilk tests to identify the normality of participants' responses, if the responses of the investigated respondents towards the study variables concerning advantages and disadvantages of online guest review sites follow the normal distribution or not.

Table 2: Tests of normality

Dimension	Kolmogorov-Smirnova			Shapiro-Wilk		
	statistic	df	sig.	statistic	df	sig.
Advantages and disadvantages of online guest review sites	.104	32	.200	.977	32	.707

From data shown in Table 2, it could be concluded that the distribution of responses of the investigated respondents towards the study variables concerning advantages and

disadvantages of online guest review sites follow the normal distribution (parametric) where Kolmogorov-Smirnova and Shapiro-Wilk tests illustrated that there were no statistically significant differences $P > 0,05$.

H₁: There are no statistically significant differences between perceptions of the investigated respondents towards advantages & disadvantages of online guest review sites that refer to gender.

The independent t-test was performed to evaluate this hypothesis. The independent t-test is used to see if there's a statistically significant difference between two unrelated groups' means.

Table ٦: Differences between perceptions of the investigated respondents towards advantages & disadvantages of online guest review sites that refer to gender

Dimension	Variable	Mean	Std. deviation	t	Sig.
Advantages and disadvantages of online guest review sites	Male	٤,٠٩	.١٦٩	٠,٣٦٤	٠,٧١٩
	Female	٤,٠٧	.١٧١		

Significant at $P \leq 0,05$

The results of the statistical analysis presented in Table ٦ reveal that there are no statistically significant differences between the perceptions of the investigated respondents towards advantages & disadvantages of online guest review sites refers to gender, where $P > 0,05$. Consequently, the null hypotheses "There are no statistically significant

differences between the perceptions of the investigated respondents towards advantages & disadvantages of online guest review sites refers to gender" is supported in favor of the alternative hypothesis "There are statistically significant differences between perceptions of the investigated respondents towards advantages & disadvantages of online guest review sites refers to gender".

H_γ: There are no statistically significant differences between perceptions of the investigated respondents towards advantages & disadvantages of online guest review sites that refer to age.

The one-way ANOVA test was employed to evaluate this hypothesis. The one-way ANOVA test is performed to see if there are any statistically significant differences between three or more independent (unrelated) groups' means.

Table V: Differences between perceptions of the investigated respondents towards advantages & disadvantages of online guest review sites that refer to age

Variable		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Advantages and disadvantages of online guest review sites	Between Groups	.033	2	.017	.074	.069
	Within Groups	.830	29	.029		
	Total	.868	31			

Significant at $P \leq .05$

Data illustrated in Table V reveal that P -value = .686 is greater than the significance level ($P \leq .05$) which mean that null hypotheses "There are no statistically significant differences between perceptions of the investigated

respondents towards advantages & disadvantages of online guest review sites that refer to age" is supported in favor of the alternative hypothesis.

H₂: There are no statistically significant differences between perceptions of the investigated respondents towards advantages & disadvantages of online guest review sites that refer to level of education.

The independent t-test was performed to evaluate this hypothesis.

Table ٨: Differences between perceptions of the investigated respondents towards advantages & disadvantages of online guest review sites that refer to level of education

Dimension	Variable	Mean	Std. deviation	t	Sig.
Advantages and disadvantages of online guest review sites	University degree	٤,٠٧٢٣	.١٨٠	-	.٥٧٣
	Post-graduate degree	٤,١٠٩١	.١٤١		

Significant at $P \leq ٠,٠٥$

Table ٨ shows that there are no statistically significant variations between the perceptions of the investigated respondents regarding the advantages and disadvantages of online guest review sites when level of education is considered, with $P > ٠,٠٥$. Consequently, the null hypotheses "There are no statistically significant differences between the perceptions of the investigated respondents towards advantages & disadvantages of online

guest review sites that refer to level of education" is supported in favor of the alternative hypothesis".

H₄: There are no statistically significant differences between perceptions of the investigated respondents towards advantages & disadvantages of online guest review sites that refer to length of work experience.

The one-way ANOVA test was employed to evaluate this hypothesis.

Table 9: Differences between perceptions of the investigated respondents towards advantages & disadvantages of online guest review sites that refer to length of work experience

Variable		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Advantages and disadvantages of online guest review sites	Between Groups	.003	2	.002	.06	.940
	Within Groups	.897	29	.31		
	Total	.901	31			

The results of the statistical analysis presented in Table 9 reveal that there are no statistically significant differences between the perceptions of the investigated respondents towards advantages & disadvantages of online guest review sites refers to work experience, where $P > .05$. Consequently, the null hypotheses "There are no statistically significant differences between the perceptions of the investigated respondents towards advantages & disadvantages of online guest review sites refers to length

of work experience" is supported in favor of the alternative hypothesis.

• Conclusion and Implications of the study

To conclude, the present study indicates that the investigated respondents perceived that guest review sites play an important role in hospitality industry. Guest reviews and responding to them on time have always been a vital part of the hotel industry. With regard to advantages of GRS, they are a way for travelers to share their experiences with other potential hotel guests, and they can be used in gathering data of customers' hotel experience which may be a valuable tool to improve the quality of hospitality services provided, improve customer trust and confidence of hotel business, participate effectively in handling guest complaints, and building up the hotel reputation and global brand name. On the other hand, the highest disadvantage of online guest review sites was fake reviews that usually done by competitors and disgruntled employees, which affect negatively on hotel's image, reputation, and performance.

Overall, the investigated respondents confirmed that they review and respond to guest reviews on a regular base which reflect their responsiveness to online guest reviews. TripAdvisor.com and Booking.com were the most used hotel guest review sites to identify the guests' perceptions towards the quality of their hotel experience. With regard to the motivation to engage in reviewing online guest review sites, the findings of the study reveal that improving the hotel's image and reputation among customers and competitors was the main factor.

Finally, the study findings reveal that there are no statistically significant differences between perceptions of

the investigated respondents towards advantages & disadvantages of online guest review sites that refer to gender, age, level of education, and length of work experience which reflect the homogeneity of the investigated respondents towards advantages and disadvantages of online guest review sites, despite of their difference in gender, age, level of education, and length of work experience.

Upon the study findings, the study has several implications for hotel managers. Firstly, hoteliers should participate actively in online consumer communities and provide all relevant and full information about their hotels. Secondly, hotel operators should be more committed to increasing customer reviews, reviewing, and responding to them, especially the negative ones. Encouraging customers to participate in posting reviews about their hotel experience, will mitigate the demonstrably negative effects of negative reviews, and will allow them to approach their true average score more quickly. Thirdly, online reviews can be a valuable resource as hotel operators seek to improve their operational effectiveness. So, hotel managers should be considering the customers' reviews that lead to explore the areas that need recovering and improvement. Fourthly, a strategy for dealing with negative internet reviews should be included in a larger company strategy for assessing customer satisfaction and engagement. Fifthly, to stay on top of what guests are saying about you on review sites, blogs, and social media, employ social listening tools or a hotel reputation management system with real-time notifications. Finally, hotel managers should respond to customers' reviews as quickly as possible. When responding to a complaint, acknowledge the negative

experience, apologise, stress the improvements, and follow up.

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