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# Systematic Literature Review on the Profile of Tourists in Four- and Five-star Hotels Based on Online Reviews

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**Abstract:** This systematic literature review analyses included peer-reviewed journals published from 1 January 2008 to 31 May 2022, using 19 keywords related to content shared by tourists and the hotel sector, in the *Biblioteca do Conhecimento Online* (B-on) and the Web of Science (Wos). The 39 articles considered for this analysis were classified according to the name of the journal in which they appeared and their respective year of publication, the location of the hotels analysed, the booking and opinion platform used, as well as the number of reviews and hotels studied. In addition to contributing to the existing literature on online reviews, this study provides theoretical input that hoteliers can use to aid their business performance and enable the development of further research by scholars. Although several studies analyse online reviews, these are still being little-used in the hotel industry in order to profile tourists. In this respect, this work intends to fill this research gap.

**Keywords:** online reviews; hotel management; four- and five-star hotels; tourists' profile; systematic literature review

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## 1 Introduction

Online reviews have become increasingly important for the hospitality industry. As they are opinions and recommendations shared by consumers on social media, blogs, booking and opinion platforms, among others, they represent a powerful source of information not only for decision-making by potential tourists but also for companies, giving them the opportunity to improve their business and get to know their customers better (Ahani et al., 2019; Berezina et al., 2016; Oliveira et al., 2020).

In recent years there has been an increase in the number of studies examining online reviews through booking and opinion platforms, revealing a growing interest in the area, and it has been proven that guests have higher levels of satisfaction in four- and five-star hotels (Ahn et al., 2017; Li et al., 2020a; Li et al., 2013; Pacheco, 2016). Since knowing the customer is considered a key point in hotel management (Talón-Ballesterero et al., 2018), and given that the analysis of online reviews is still being little-used in the hotel industry in order to define tourist profiles, this systematic literature review aims to verify the state of the art regarding the definition of tourist profiles in four- and five-star hotels based on online reviews. In addition, this work intends to understand and summarise what previous studies point out as the main implications of hoteliers and the hotel industry in general concerning having knowledge about guests' profiles based on the analysis of online reviews posted by them on booking and opinion platforms. Besides contributing to the existing literature by expanding the current research on the use of online reviews in the hotel industry, this research provides hoteliers with theoretical inputs that could be useful for their business performance and paves the way for the development of future research by scholars.

The study is divided into five sections. Firstly, the introduction clarifies the aim of this work. Secondly, a literature

review is carried out on the subject under study. Next, the methodology used to select the studies and the procedures followed to analyse them are explained. The fourth section deals with the presentation and discussion of the results. Finally, the main conclusions of the research are presented, as well as its limitations and recommendations for future work.

## 2 Literature review

With the rapid development of information technology, the way users browse and share information has changed, providing new forms of communication that allow users to share their opinions and recommendations with other users on various platforms, such as social networks, blogs, and review sites (Berezina et al., 2016; Pacheco, 2016). This information, known as user-generated content (UGC), has become increasingly important for the hotel industry as it is a crucial source of information for potential customers and hotel companies (Oliveira et al., 2020; Serra Cantallops & Salvi, 2014).

Firstly, online reviews have the power to influence the decision-making process of potential customers when looking for hotels, as they allow consumers to receive a large volume of information and evaluate hotel offers more quickly, enabling a reduction in the risk associated with the process of purchasing certain products and services (Serra Cantallops & Salvi, 2014).

Secondly, online reviews allow hoteliers to get to know their customers better and improve hotel performance (Berezina et al., 2016). Since knowing the customer is considered a key point in hotel management, and since this sector is characterised by a heterogeneous set of customers with different expectations, needs and perceptions of service, it is important to segment the market and understand the differences between customers (Ahani et al., 2019; Francesco & Roberta, 2019; Talón-Ballesteros et al., 2018). In this sense, in addition to the textual component of online reviews, it is also vital to consider the metadata of the reviews (such as the age of the guests, the purpose of the trip, the language and the hotel category), which have the potential to enable hoteliers to evaluate guest behaviour and allows them to receive global factors that affect the generation of reviews to be evaluated (Oliveira et al., 2022). In this way, by analysing the online reviews provided by their customers, hoteliers can obtain relevant information about the overall performance of their hotels, consumer

behaviour, the precise needs to improve in the products/services offered and the demands of the market (Oliveira et al., 2020).

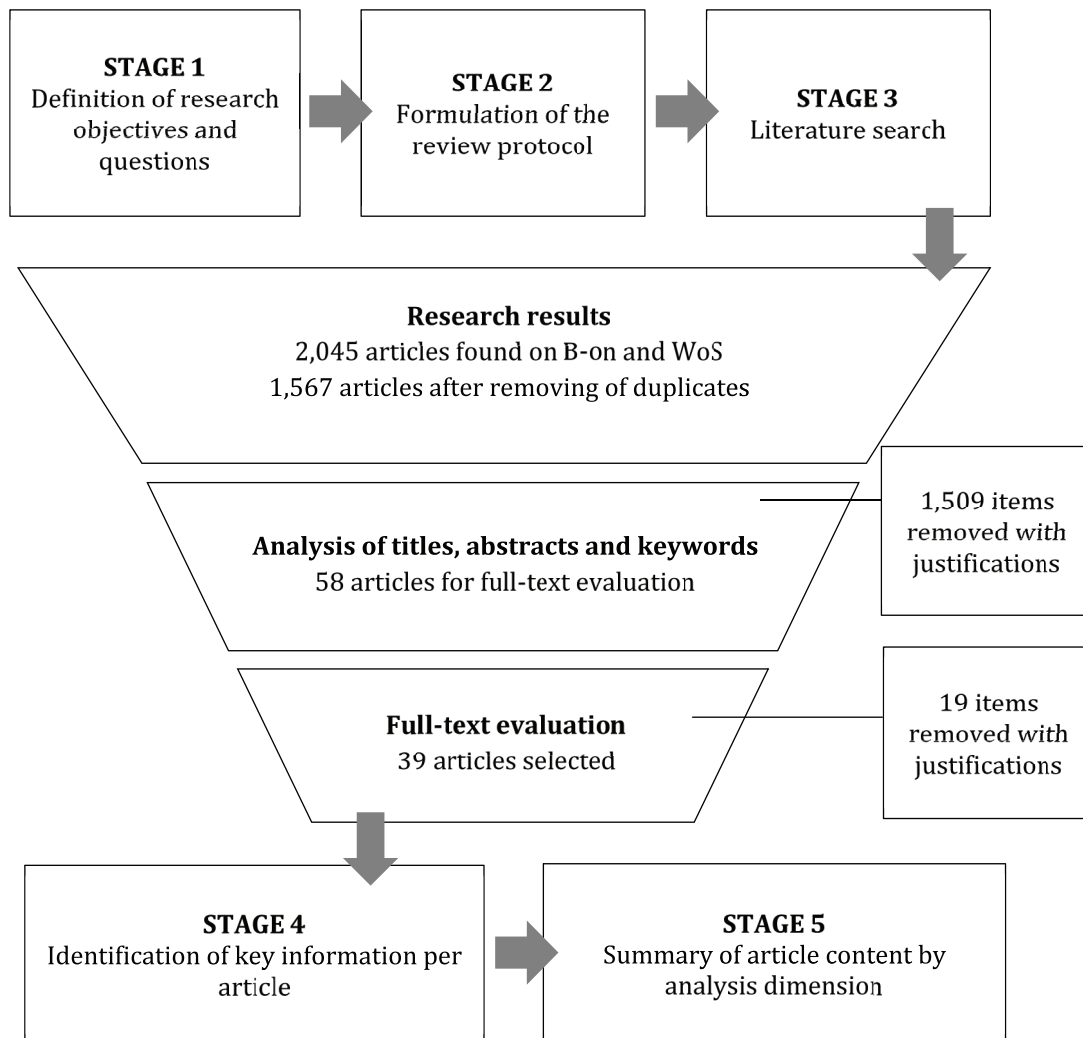
In this way, since it has been proven that guests have higher levels of satisfaction in four- and five-star hotels (Ahn et al., 2017; Li et al., 2020a; Li et al., 2013; Pacheco, 2016), this systematic literature review aims to verify the state of the art regarding the definition of tourist profiles in four- and five-star hotels based on online reviews.

## 3 Methodology

This systematic literature review is based on the studies by Le et al. (2019) and Oliveira et al. (2020). It is divided into five important stages that ensure that the research, extraction, and synthesis of the explored content is consistent and transparent, as can be seen in Figure 1.

The study aims to verify the state of the art regarding the definition of the tourist profile in four- and five-star hotels based on online reviews, and, given the main management implications pointed out in the investigated studies, to identify the benefits for hoteliers regarding their knowledge of customers through online review analysis. In this respect, the following research questions were formulated: 1) What is the profile of tourists in four- and five-star hotels identified in studies based on online reviews? 2) What benefits for hoteliers are identified in the studies, regarding the knowledge of tourists through online review analysis?

After outlining the objectives and defining the research questions, a systematic literature review protocol was created, in which key terms related to the content shared by tourists and the hotel sector were identified and combined with Boolean operators “OR” and “AND,” as shown in Table 1. The literature search was conducted in two databases, the Biblioteca do Conhecimento Online (B-on) and the Web of Science (Wos), to identify articles that contained the identified key terms as subjects (SU) or topics (Topic) (Table 1). These databases were chosen for this study because they combine results from numerous renowned databases, such as: Scopus; Academic Search Complete; Business Source Complete; Supplemental Index; Library, Information Science & Technology Abstracts; ScienceDirect; Directory of Open Access Journals; IEEE Xplore Digital Library; Emerald; Taylor & Francis; SciELO; among others. The total number of articles resulting from this search is presented in the same table in the “Results without filters” column.



**Figure 1:** Systematic literature review process

Source: Adapted from Le et al. (2019)

**Table 1:** Databases, key terms and Boolean operators used in the search and number of results obtained

Databases	Key terms and Boolean operators	Results without filters	Results with filters
<b>B-on</b>	SU (online reviews OR tourists reviews OR travelers reviews OR user generated reviews OR consumer generated reviews OR online ratings OR tourists ratings OR travellers ratings OR user generated ratings OR consumer generated ratings OR user generated content OR consumer generated content OR eWOM OR electronic word of mouth) AND SU (hotel management OR hotel sector OR hospitality and tourism OR hotel data analysis OR hotel text analysis)	1,142	1,074
<b>Wos</b>	online reviews OR tourists reviews OR travelers reviews OR user generated reviews OR consumer generated reviews OR online ratings OR tourists ratings OR travellers ratings OR user generated ratings OR consumer generated ratings OR user generated content OR consumer generated content OR eWOM OR electronic word of mouth (Topic) AND hotel management OR hotel sector OR hospitality and tourism OR hotel data analysis OR hotel text analysis (Topic)	1,502	971

Source: Own work

**Table 2:** Filters applied in the search

Filters	Databases	
	B-on	Wos
<b>Review period</b>	Starts on 1 January 2008. Based on the study by Oliveira et al. (2020).	
<b>Types of sources/ Documents</b>	Peer-reviewed academic journals.	Articles and review articles.
<b>Disciplines/ Categories</b>	Library and Information Science; Social Sciences and Humanities; Sports and Leisure; Business and Management.	Information Science, Library Science; Social Sciences Interdisciplinary; Hospitality, Leisure, Sports, Tourism; Management; Business.
<b>Language</b>	English, Spanish and Portuguese.	

Source: Own work

Filters were applied to the search for the inclusion and exclusion of articles, leading to a decrease in the number of results, displayed in Table 1 as “Results with filters”. Table 2 presents the filters considered in the search.

On 31 May 2022, the search resulted in a total of 2,045 articles that met the established criteria and were imported into Mendeley, a reference management software. After excluding 478 duplicate records, 1,567 documents remained, as shown in Figure 1. Then, the title, abstract and keywords of these articles were read, leading to the exclusion of 1,509 articles because their content did not fit the purpose of this study and did not allow for answering the research questions. After this process, 58 articles were left for full-text evaluation.

After careful reading and complete evaluation of the text, 19 articles were excluded for the following reasons: the data had been obtained through a questionnaire, without collecting or analysing online reviews (Spoerr, 2021); the analysis referred to the tourism sector and not to the hotel sector, as online reviews were collected not only from hotels but also from restaurants and attractions of the destination (Fazzolari & Petrocchi, 2018); the main objective was to demonstrate the usefulness, validate or develop a model related to online reviews (Aakash & Gupta Aggarwal, 2022; Chang et al., 2019; Li et al., 2020b; Manolitzas et al., 2022; Moro et al., 2017; Nguyen et al., 2021); data from a single hotel unit had been collected and examined (Pokryshevskaya & Antipov, 2017; Rhee & Yang, 2015); they did not show results related to four- and five-star hotels, and the information presented did not enrich the present work (Ban et al., 2019; Glaveli et al., 2022; Lee et al., 2020; Radojevic et al., 2015); and finally, some articles were presented in the form of systematic literature reviews (Bore et al., 2017; Oliveira et al., 2020;

Sann et al., 2021; Serra Cantallops & Salvi, 2014; Zarezadeh et al., 2022).

Thus, 39 investigations were considered for this study, and their main information was compiled into an Excel spreadsheet, including title, authors, name of the journal in which they appeared and the respective year of publication, the location of the analysed hotels, the booking and opinion platform used, as well as the number of online reviews and hotels studied. In addition, the results of the studies and their management implications were analysed. Therefore, it was possible to obtain the results presented below.

## 4 Findings and discussion

### 4.1 Overview of selected papers

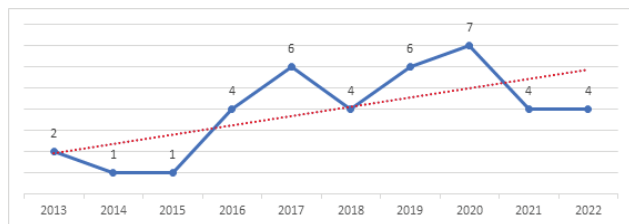
Considering the articles selected for this study, three journals stand out as they represent 41% of the total publications (Table 3). Taking into account the Tourism, Leisure and Hospitality Management category of Scimago Journal & Country Rank, the International Journal of Hospitality Management, Tourism Management and International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management are ranked 5th, 1st and 7th, respectively, in the year 2021.

More than half of the articles were published in the last five years, with 2020 showing the highest number of publications (Figure 2). From 2013, the year of the oldest publication, to 2022, there has been a remarkable growth in the number of studies that included the extraction and analysis of online reviews written by tourists in the hospitality sector.

**Table 3:** Number of articles per scientific journal

Journal name	No. of articles	%	Journal ranking
International Journal of Hospitality Management	7	18%	5th
Tourism Management	5	13%	1st
International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management	4	10%	7th
Information Technology & Tourism	2	5%	24th
Journal of Hospitality Marketing and Management	2	5%	10th
Journal of Vacation Marketing	2	5%	27th
Others	17	44%	-

Source: Own work



**Figure 2:** Number of articles by year of publication

Source: Own work

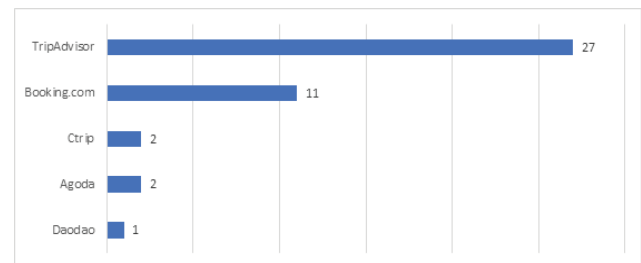
Most of the articles collected online reviews from hotels located in the United States of America, followed by hotels located in China and Portugal. It is important to note that, in one study, the authors selected hotels located in 20 tourist destinations evenly distributed across four geographic regions – the Americas, Asia-Pacific, Europe, and Middle East/Africa (Banerjee & Chua, 2016), while, in another article, hotels from four countries in the same regions mentioned above were considered (Francesco & Roberta, 2019), and a further study covered hotels located in two European countries and one Eurasian country (Mariani et al., 2020).

In 27 studies, data were extracted from TripAdvisor (Figure 3), the largest online hotel review platform in the world and widely investigated by the academic community (Banerjee & Chua, 2016; Hu et al., 2019), and in 11 investigations the Booking.com platform was selected, and it was indicated as a suitable source to ensure the authenticity of the extracted data, since only customers

who book through Booking.com can publish reviews after their stay (Xu et al., 2017).

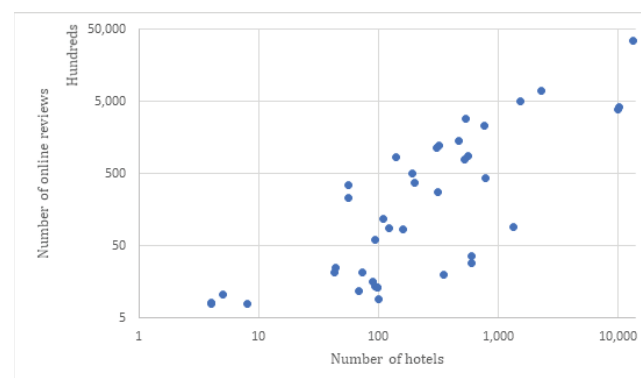
It is worth mentioning that, in two articles, TripAdvisor and Booking.com were used simultaneously, confirming the possibility of combining online reviews from various sources, possessing different textual components and rating scales (Antonio et al., 2018; Phillips et al., 2020). On the other hand, the TripAdvisor platform was used in conjunction with the Ctrip platform in two studies (Alemán Carreón et al., 2021; Liang et al., 2017). Finally, two articles selected the Agoda platform (Wu et al., 2017; Zhou et al., 2014) and one investigation chose the Daodao platform for data collection (Li et al., 2013). Thus, Figure 3 presents a total number of results higher than the number of selected articles.

In the majority of the studies, online reviews from more than ten hotels were collected (Figure 4), with three investigations standing out for having collected data from over 10,000 hotel units (Li et al., 2020a; Liu et al., 2017; Radojevic et al., 2018). Conversely, four articles stood out for including data from less than ten hotels (Padma & Ahn, 2020; Sann & Lai, 2021; Tsiotsou, 2019). Regarding the number of online reviews, it can be noted that all studies analysed more than 500 reviews; however, one study stands out for investigating nearly 5,000,000 online reviews (Radojevic et al., 2018).



**Figure 3:** Number of studies by booking and opinion platform used

Source: Own work



**Figure 4:** Number of hotels and number of online reviews per article

Source: Own work

## 4.2 The profile of tourists in four- and five-star hotels based on online reviews

Investigating user preferences and behavioural patterns through online reviews available on booking and opinion platforms, such as Booking.com and TripAdvisor, is a valuable source of information for the hotel industry, and can assist managers in their decision-making and hotel performance, as well as in obtaining knowledge about customers (Ahani et al., 2019; Berezina et al., 2016).

Certain authors have valued the personal data of users who write online reviews, and several studies have been conducted that contribute to obtaining knowledge about customers in the hotel industry. Examples are the investigations of Moro et al. (2022), Tsiotsou (2019, 2022), Wu et al. (2017) and Zhou et al. (2014), in which the country of origin of users was analysed to establish behavioural patterns related to travellers' cultural differences and their predisposition to express satisfaction regarding their hotel experiences, revealing that satisfaction varies according to the country of origin of the users.

Based on the analysis of online reviews of four- and five-star hotels located in Hangzhou, China, Zhou et al. (2014) drew conclusions about the satisfaction of customers from five market origins. Thus, the authors identified that tourists from Oceania were the most satisfied, followed by Chinese and American tourists, and the markets of Western Europe and Southeast Asia were the least satisfied. In addition, it was recognised that the public areas (lounge, lobby, pool and fitness centre) were the attributes that contributed most to customer satisfaction, while their dissatisfaction was related to aspects associated with the physical environment of the rooms (size and cleanliness) and the hotel (dated quality of facilities and noise level), as well as the value for money (room price), the location (close to attractions and accessibility with public transport) and the staff (language skills and efficiency in solving problems). The advice to hotel managers was that they should improve the aspects identified as negative for guest satisfaction.

Later, the results of the Zhou et al. (2014) study were partially corroborated by the findings of Wu et al. (2017), who discovered, when analysing online reviews of five-star hotels in Shanghai, China, that tourists from Oceania and North America were the most satisfied and that staff and service were the attributes that contributed the most to this feeling. In contrast, Japanese and Korean tourists were the least satisfied, and their concerns were primarily related to tangible aspects of the hotels. In this respect, the authors emphasise the importance of staff delivering high-quality service to their customers.

Alternatively, Tsiotsou (2019) studied the differences in the evaluation of European guests by exploring online reviews of four- and five-star hotels in Greece, and concluded that the ranking by tourists descends in the order of Northern, Eastern, Western, and Southern Europeans, that is, Northern Europeans were the most generous in evaluating hotels, while Southern Europeans were the least generous. In this respect, Tsiotsou (2019) suggests that hoteliers should encourage Northern European guests to leave online reviews, as they were the ones who rated the hotels the best.

Later, when investigating online reviews of five-star hotels in Northern Greece, the same author recognised that Northern Europeans valued the staff, Eastern Europeans appreciated the hotel's physical attributes/environment, Western Europeans focused mainly on basic products, such as the room and food, and Southern Europeans were concerned with services (Tsiotsou, 2022). With this study, the author concluded that guests' cultural differences should be considered when interpreting online reviews, so that hotel managers can tailor their services and develop effective marketing and promotion strategies. The findings of Tsiotsou (2022) corroborate and expand the results of the previous study by Kitsios et al. (2021), which, through the analysis of online reviews of five-star hotels in Thessaloniki, Greece, indicated that factors significantly affecting customer satisfaction are related to location, staff, rooms and services. However, it is important to highlight that, in this study (Kitsios et al., 2021), the country of origin of the online review users was not considered.

In order to understand the influence of culture on tourists' perception of hotel attributes, Moro et al. (2022) analysed online reviews from foreign guests and concluded that, regardless of cultural origin, location and price were the attributes that most and least satisfied customers, respectively, in four- and five-star hotels in New York. These findings partially corroborate the results of a previous study by Kim et al. (2016), who found that location was the attribute that most satisfied customers in four- and five-star hotels in New York. Like the study by Kitsios et al. (2021), the study by Kim et al. (2016) did not consider the country of origin of the users of online reviews.

In addition to analysing the country of origin of users, research has also been conducted examining the language of online reviews to investigate guest evaluation behaviour considering linguistic differences (Alemán Carreón et al., 2021; Antonio et al., 2018; Li et al., 2020a; Liu et al., 2017; Mariani et al., 2019; Pacheco, 2016; Schuckert et al., 2015). The results indicate that customer satisfaction varies depending on the language in which the online reviews are written. Most studies have focused on four- and five-star hotels.

In order to compare the satisfaction behaviour of English and non-English-speaking guests, Schuckert *et al.* (2015) analysed the language of online reviews written by hotel customers in Hong Kong, China, and found that customers who wrote in English were the most satisfied and the most likely to stay in four- and five-star hotels. In contrast, guests who did not write online reviews in English were less satisfied with four- and five-star hotels because they had high expectations, while guests who wrote in English enjoyed their stay without being very demanding.

Expanding on the Schuckert *et al.* (2015) research, Pacheco (2016) investigated the distribution and difference in classification behaviour of hotel guests in Porto, Portugal, based on the language of online reviews written in English, Portuguese, Spanish, French and Brazilian Portuguese. The author found that guests who wrote in Brazilian Portuguese were the ones who gave the highest ratings to four- and five-star hotels, while guests who wrote in Spanish and French gave the lowest ratings. Later, in another study, the same author revealed that room and service were the predictor attributes of guest satisfaction in four- and five-star hotels in Portugal, based on the analysis of online reviews written by hotel customers located in Lisbon, Algarve, Porto and Madeira Island (Pacheco, 2017). In this study the language of the online reviews was not considered.

In another approach, Liu *et al.* (2017) emphasised the importance of segmenting customers based on hotel categories, by comparing the satisfaction of domestic and international tourists through the language of online reviews from hotels in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Hangzhou and Sanya, China. Thus, it was possible to ascertain that most guests who wrote in international languages (English, German, French, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, Japanese and Russian), as well as in Chinese (domestic customers), rated five-star hotels positively. However, several four-star hotels were highly rated by guests writing in international languages but received a lower score from domestic customers.

Extending the results of studies by Schuckert *et al.* (2015), Pacheco (2016), Liu *et al.* (2017), and Antonio *et al.* (2018) examined online comments written in English, Spanish and Portuguese, in combination with hotel sales data in Portugal, and revealed that four- and five-star hotels obtained higher ratings in reviews written in English in comparison to reviews written in Spanish and Portuguese. Furthermore, the authors found that customers who wrote reviews in Portuguese and Spanish opted to share online reviews on the Booking.com platform and the majority of guests who commented in English chose the TripAdvisor platform, highlighting the

importance of research being developed through more than one data source.

In another study, having analysed online reviews from Italian, American and Chinese travellers staying in hotels located in Hong Kong, London, New York and Dubai, Francesco & Roberta (2019) found that people from different countries perceive and emphasise hotel attributes differently. Thus, they observed that the attribute most emphasised by Italian tourists in four- and five-star hotels was location, and American and Chinese clients highlighted cleanliness and service attitude, respectively, in five-star hotels. The results of this study may help hotel managers determine the optimal allocation of scarce financial resources, considering customer satisfaction criteria (Francesco & Roberta, 2019). For this analysis, the authors considered not only the language in which the online reviews were written (English, Chinese and Italian), but also the users' country of origin (USA, China and Italy), a method also used by other authors in their research (Gunasekar *et al.*, 2021; Mariani *et al.*, 2020; Oliveira *et al.*, 2022; Phillips *et al.*, 2020; Sann & Lai, 2021).

In recent years, several studies have been developed examining customer preferences through online reviews, and it has been proven that guests show higher satisfaction levels in four- and five-star hotels (Ahn *et al.*, 2017; Li *et al.*, 2020a; Li *et al.*, 2013; Liu *et al.*, 2017; Pacheco, 2016, 2017; Phillips *et al.*, 2020; Tsiotsou, 2019; Uslu Cibere *et al.*, 2020; Wong *et al.*, 2020; Zhou *et al.*, 2014). However, after examining online reviews of hotels located in the top 100 cities in the United States, these results were not verified in the study by Xu *et al.* (2017), as it was found that guests in four- and five-star hotels showed less satisfaction with hotel attributes and services compared to customers staying in lower categories. The authors justify this by the fact that guests have higher expectations regarding products and services in higher category hotels, since the cost is higher. The previous study by Li *et al.* (2013) also addressed this issue, as it was found, when investigating online reviews of hotels located in Beijing, China, that some factors that guests consider important when booking four- and five-star hotels, such as the bed, the room and reception services, did not meet their expectations.

Later, the investigation by Padma & Ahn (2020) confirmed the conclusions of Xu *et al.* (2017) by verifying that guests in five-star hotels have much higher expectations compared to those staying in lower-rated hotels, based on the investigation of online hotel reviews in Malaysia. Therefore, the study by Li *et al.* (2020a) may clarify this fact by finding, through the analysis of online reviews of hotels located in Sanya, Beijing, Guangzhou, Shanghai and Hangzhou in China, that the cleanliness, location, room, service and value are

basic factors for customer satisfaction in four- and five-star hotels, and if the performance of these attributes falls short of guests' expectations, they will be dissatisfied.

Customer dissatisfaction can lead to complaints, and there is evidence that online complaint behaviour is influenced by hotel category (Fernandes & Fernandes, 2018; Hu et al., 2019; Sann et al., 2020). Fernandes & Fernandes (2018) analysed online reviews with negative statements regarding hotels located in Porto, Portugal, and found that guests in four- and five-star hotels expressed greater dissatisfaction with the service, particularly customer care, location, and value. Service and value were also the factors with the most complaints made by customers in four- and five-star hotels in the investigations by Hu et al. (2019) and Sann et al. (2020), based on the examination of reviews of hotels in New York and the United Kingdom, respectively. In this respect, the authors suggested hoteliers should ensure that the high-quality standards expected by customers are provided, or even exceeded (Fernandes & Fernandes, 2018), and that the space for shortfalls that cause dissatisfaction be reduced (Sann et al., 2020). In addition, through the analysis of online reviews, hoteliers have an excellent opportunity to understand the causes of guest dissatisfaction, allowing the re-evaluation of strategies and the direction of limited financial resources towards improving negative factors (Fernandes & Fernandes, 2018).

Furthermore, through the analysis of online reviews, it is possible to know if the tourist travelled alone, as a couple, with family, friends or for business. It has been

proven that, when placed in different group compositions, travelers present dissimilar expectations and preferences towards hotel attributes and services, and that the determinants and levels of guest satisfaction, as well as their rating patterns, depend on who they are traveling with (Ahn et al., 2017; Banerjee & Chua, 2016; Liu et al., 2013; Xu, 2018; Yadav & Roychoudhury, 2019). The studies by Ahani et al. (2019) and Tsiotsou (2019) confirmed these findings, as it was identified, based on the analysis of online reviews of hotels located in the Canary Islands (Spain) and Greece, respectively, that guests who travelled with family and as a couple were those who expressed greater satisfaction in four- and five-star hotels.

On the other hand, there is evidence that guests traveling for business report lower levels of satisfaction than those travelling for leisure (Banerjee & Chua, 2016; Kim et al., 2022; Liang et al., 2017; Radojevic et al., 2018). These findings were also confirmed in four- and five-star hotels, according to the studies by Wu et al. (2017) and Ahn et al. (2017), as it was verified, based on the observation of online reviews of hotels located in Shanghai and New York, respectively, that business travellers presented lower satisfaction compared to other travellers. Wu et al. (2017) found that guests travelling for business presented specific concerns related to business-oriented services and recommended that, to increase the satisfaction of these customers, hoteliers should inform guests at check-in about all the business facilities and services offered by the hotels. Table 4 summarises the above studies.

**Table 4:** The profile of tourists in four- and five-star hotels based on previous studies that used online reviews

Source	Purpose	Geography/ Category/ No. of reviews	Key findings
Zhou et al. (2014)	Provide comparative and benchmarking insights about customer satisfaction.	Hangzhou (China) 4 and 5 stars 1,345	Tourists from Oceania, China and the United States expressed greater satisfaction, in contrast to the Western European and Southeast Asian markets.
Wu et al. (2017)	Evaluate the experiences of international clients.	Shanghai (China) 5 stars 2,000	Tourists from Oceania and North America expressed greater satisfaction, while customers from North-East Asia showed less satisfaction.
Tsiotsou (2019)	Identify cross-cultural differences in the evaluations of tourists from Central, Eastern, Northern and Southern Europe.	Greece 4 and 5 stars 1,055	The ranking of tourists goes down in order of Northern, Eastern, Western, and Southern Europeans.
Tsiotsou (2022)	Identify critical value-creation elements of luxury services and examine cross-cultural differences of customers from four European regions (East, North, South and West).	Northern Greece 5 stars 838	Northern, Eastern, Western and Southern Europeans valued the staff, the hotel's physical attributes/environment, the basic products (room and food) and the services, respectively.
Kitsios et al. (2021)	Examine and compare aspects of guest satisfaction and dissatisfaction.	Thessaloniki (Greece) 5 stars 2,595	Customer satisfaction is significantly affected by factors related to location, staff, rooms and services.

**Table 4:** (Continued)

Source	Purpose	Geography/ Category/ No. of reviews	Key findings
Moro et al. (2022)	Understand how countries of origin and respective embedded cultures influence tourists' perceptions.	New York 1 to 5 stars 115,297	Regardless of cultural origin, location and price were the attributes that satisfied the most and the least customers, in order, in four- and five-star hotels.
Kim et al. (2016)	Identify and compare factors known as satisfiers and dissatisfiers.	New York 1 to 5 stars 919	Location was the attribute that satisfied the most customers in four- and five-star hotels.
Schuckert et al. (2015)	Explore the distribution and difference in the rating behaviour of English-speaking and non-English-speaking guests.	Hong Kong (China) 1 to 5 stars 86,000	Customers who wrote in English were the most satisfied and the most likely to stay in four- and five-star hotels.
Pacheco (2016)	Explore the distribution and differences in rating behaviour of English, Portuguese, Spanish, French and Brazilian guests.	Porto (Portugal) 2 to 5 stars 2,150	Customers who wrote in Brazilian Portuguese were the ones who gave the highest ratings to four- and five-star hotels. In contrast, guests who wrote in Spanish and French gave the lowest ratings.
Pacheco (2017)	Study the impact of specific satisfaction attributes on overall satisfaction.	Lisbon, Algarve, Porto and Madeira Island (Portugal) 2 to 5 stars 285,000	Room and service were the predictor attributes of guest satisfaction in four- and five-star hotels.
Liu et al. (2017)	Offer new insights into the determinants of hotel customer satisfaction by differentiating customers by language group.	Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Hangzhou and Sanya (China) 0 to 5 stars 412,784	Guests rated positively the five-star hotels. Several four-star hotels were rated very highly by international guests, but received a lower rating from national guests.
Antonio et al. (2018)	Understand how guests from different origins and different international destinations evaluate hotels.	Portugal 2 to 5 stars 23,322	Reviews written in English obtained higher ratings in four- and five-star hotels when compared to reviews written in Spanish and Portuguese.
Francesco & Roberta (2019)	Investigate whether there are differences in the way Italians, Americans and Chinese travellers perceive and emphasise several hotel attributes.	Hong Kong, London, New York and Dubai 1 to 5 stars 9,000	Location was the attribute most emphasised by Italian tourists in four- and five-star hotels, while American and Chinese customers highlighted cleanliness and service attitude, respectively, in five-star hotels.
Xu et al. (2017)	Examine customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction toward attributes of hotel products and services.	USA 0 to 5 stars 3,596	Guests at four- and five-star hotels showed less satisfaction with hotel attributes and services compared to customers staying in lower categories.
Li et al. (2013)	Illustrate that online hotel reviews can be used to systematically identify customer satisfaction factors.	Beijing (China) 2 to 5 stars 42,668	Some factors that guests consider important when booking four- and five-star hotels, such as the bed, the room and reception services, did not meet their expectations.
Padma & Ahn (2020)	Understand the attributes of luxury hotels that contribute to guest satisfaction and dissatisfaction.	Malaysia 5 stars 800	Guests in five-star hotels have much higher expectations compared to those staying in lower-rated hotels.
Li et al. (2020)	Unravel how the role of hotel attributes can differ in accordance with different hotel star ratings and distinct customer segments.	Sanya, Beijing, Guangzhou, Shanghai and Hangzhou (China) 0 to 5 stars 412,784	Cleanliness, location, rooms, service and value are basic factors for customer satisfaction in four- and five-star hotels.
Fernandes & Fernandes (2018)	Characterise complainers' profile and online complaints and determine which factors may impact them.	Porto (Portugal) 2 to 5 stars 1,191	Guests in four- and five-star hotels expressed greater dissatisfaction with the service, particularly customer care, location and value.

Table 4: (Continued)

Source	Purpose	Geography/ Category/ No. of reviews	Key findings
Hu et al. (2019)	Investigate how customer complaints vary across different hotels grades.	New York 1 to 5 stars 27,864	Service and value were the factors with the most complaints in the four- and five-star hotels.
Sann et al. (2020)	Investigate the online complaint behaviour targeting six different hotel attributes.	United Kingdom 2 to 5 stars 2,020	
Ahani et al. (2019)	Identify the important factors for hotel selection.	Canary Islands (Spain) 4 and 5 stars 9,128	Guests who travelled with family and as a couple were those who expressed greater satisfaction in four- and five-star hotels.
Tsiotsou (2019)	Identify cross-cultural differences in the evaluations of tourists from Central, Eastern, Northern and Southern Europe.	Greece 4 and 5 stars 1,055	
Wu et al. (2017)	Evaluate the experiences of international clients.	Shanghai (China) 5 stars 2,000	Business travellers presented lower satisfaction compared to other travellers in four- and five-star hotels.
Ahn et al. (2017)	Demonstrate how different compositions of group members can influence people's travelling experiences.	New York 2 to 5 stars 125,076	

Source: Own work

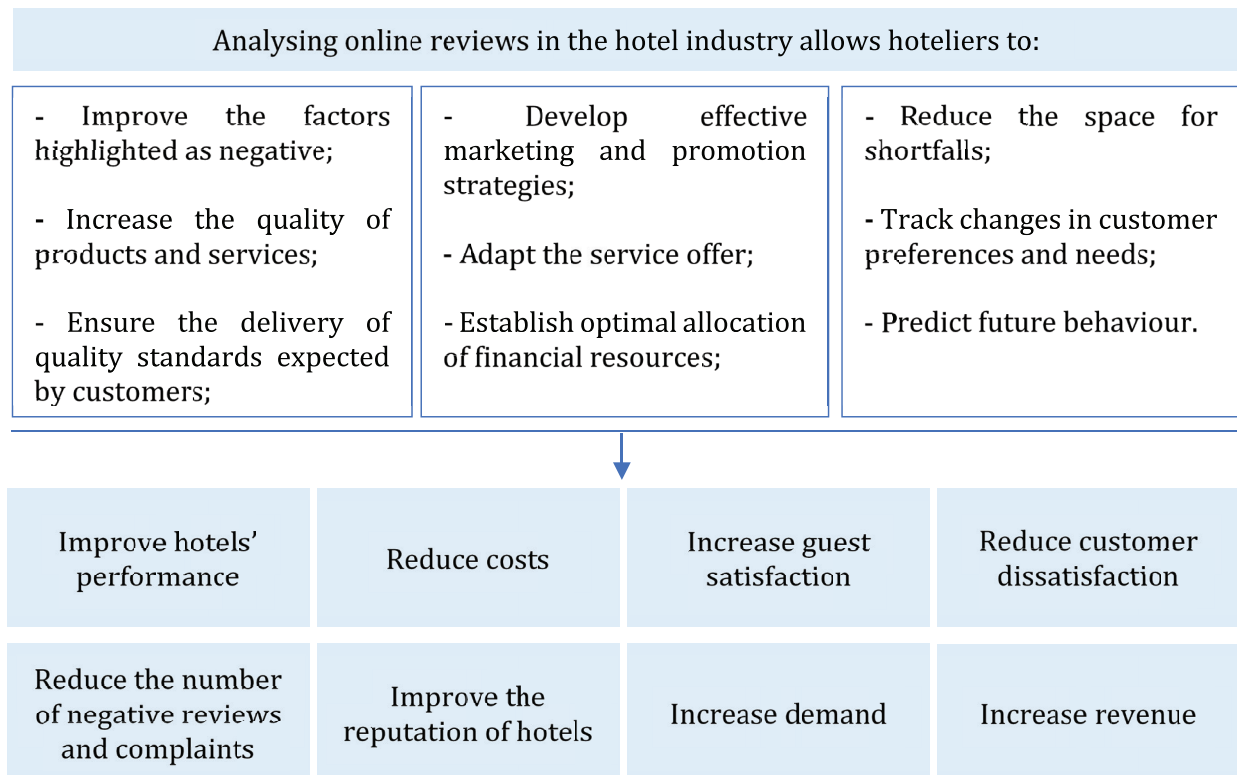


Figure 5: Benefits of hoteliers getting to know their customers by analysing online reviews.

Source: Based on the results of studies by Ahani et al. (2019), Ahn et al. (2017), Antonio et al. (2018), Fernandes & Fernandes (2018), Francesco & Roberta (2019), Hu et al. (2019), Kitsios et al. (2021), Li et al. (2013), Liu et al. (2017), Moro et al. (2022), Padma & Ahn (2020), Sann et al. (2020), Schuckert et al. (2015), Tsiotsou (2019, 2022), Xu et al. (2017) and Zhou et al. (2014).

### 4.3 The benefits of hoteliers knowing their customers through online review analysis

Due to its open structure, the analysis of consumer-generated content provides the opportunity to produce more accurate reports on customer experiences compared to traditional research methods such as interviews (Kitsios *et al.*, 2021). In this respect, hoteliers should be aware of how this content can add value to their businesses and how it can be used to improve performance and business success (Kitsios *et al.*, 2021). Through the key management implications provided by the studies considered for this review, it was possible to synthesise the benefits of hoteliers knowing their customers through online review analysis, as presented in Figure 5.

Indeed, analysing online reviews allows hoteliers to better understand their customers and benefit from a series of advantages that contribute to improving hotel performance. However, in order for hoteliers to take advantage of the information freely provided by customers, the use of suitable software for collection and analysis becomes indispensable, as well as the allocation of workers to regularly monitor it (Wu *et al.*, 2017).

## 5 Conclusions

The present systematic literature review aimed to verify the state of the art regarding the definition of tourist profiles in four- and five-star hotels based on online reviews and, through the main management implications pointed out in the investigated studies, sought to understand the benefits for hoteliers associated with knowledge of their customers through the analysis of online reviews. The objectives were achieved through a rigorous analysis of 39 articles published between 2013 and 2022, organised by the name of the journal in which they appeared and the respective year of publication, the location of the analysed hotels, the booking and opinion platform used, as well as the number of hotels and online reviews included in the studies. Additionally, the results of the articles considered for this review and their main management implications were investigated.

Conclusions suggest that the behaviour of tourists in four- and five-star hotels is influenced by their profiles. Factors such as tourists' country of origin, the language in which online reviews are written, the type of traveller, and the purpose of the trip influence their evaluations and should be considered when analysing

online reviews in order to construct detailed behavioural patterns. In addition, the hotel category also affects the experience and expectations of customers. It is proven that guests' satisfaction levels and expectations for hotel products and services are higher in four- and five-star hotels. Therefore, it is important for hoteliers to provide the expected quality standards in order to achieve guest satisfaction.

Indeed, when used to its full advantage, the analysis of online reviews constitutes an important tool for obtaining knowledge about customers. This allows hoteliers to enjoy a range of advantages capable of creating value for companies and improving their performance. However, the use of appropriate software for data collection and analysis, as well as the allocation of workers to frequently monitor online reviews, is essential.

This study provides theoretical contributions that allow us to better understand the tourists who frequent four- and five-star hotels and can be applied by hoteliers as an aid in business management, improving their performance. On the other hand, this study stands out from the others because it is an innovative contribution and different from existing studies on online reviews, enriching scientific production in this field of research and paving the way for future complementary research.

Study limitations include the research approach, which considered articles in English, Spanish and Portuguese published between 1 January 2008 and 31 May 2022, and related to the following disciplines: Library Science; Information Science; Interdisciplinary Social Sciences; Social and Humanistic Sciences; Hospitality, Leisure, Sports and Tourism; Management and Business. Thus, future studies could consider the analysis of other material. Furthermore, since only the management implications pointed out in the investigated studies were considered, the benefits for hoteliers associated with knowledge of their customers through the analysis of online reviews were not studied in depth. Thus, this matter could be further explored in future works. Alternatively, it would be of interest to complement the theme addressed in this study by investigating tourist profiles for other hotel categories, as well as other types of accommodation. In addition, studies could be conducted on tourist profiles considering different types of management, full and limited-service hotels, or luxury, mid-range, and budget hotels.

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