

Impact of tourism websites on consumer purchase decisions

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Abstract: This study examines how tourism websites affect consumer purchasing decisions, focusing on key website attributes such as design, content quality, and user-generated reviews. Through a quantitative methodology, data were collected from an online survey of 457 respondents across varying demographic backgrounds, analyzed using a 5-point Likert scale. The analysis reveals that user-generated content, particularly reviews and comments, significantly impacts consumer decisions, with 52.5% of respondents identifying these as influential. Website design and visual elements like photos and videos also notably affect consumer behavior, particularly in encouraging impulse purchases. The study found no significant differences in responses to negative reviews between genders, although income levels showed a statistically significant effect on purchasing behavior, especially among women (86.5%). This research highlights the importance of website quality and trust-building elements, emphasizing how these factors foster consumer engagement and shape purchasing behavior in the tourism industry. Theoretical contributions include insights into the psychological and behavioral underpinnings of online consumer decision-making and digital trust, grounded in consumer behavior theory.

Keywords: Tourism, website impact, consumer behaviour, purchase intention.

1 Introduction

With the advancement of digital technologies, the tourism business is also evolving—there is an increasing aim to ensure that information about tourism services is quickly and easily accessible to customers with just a few clicks [1]. Travelers, when making decisions about purchasing tourism services or products, increasingly rely on information obtained from social media platforms, which are abundant with product reviews, celebrity endorsements, or from smartphone applications. On those sites information can be easily and quickly found to assist in decision making related to travel planning [1]. Therefore, social media, websites, smartphone applications, and many other online services are considered effective tools for digital marketing. These are particularly important as they can quickly and

efficiently reach a wide range of customers and encourage them to make purchases [2].

The aim of this study is to investigate the impact of tourism websites on consumer purchasing decisions. An increasing number of tourists worldwide are becoming less dependent on travel agencies for obtaining information about resorts, restaurants, or even for purchasing airline tickets for their trips [3]. Tourists are significantly influenced by the information available to them online, especially if it is expressed by other users who can leave feedback in comments or reviews. This is an excellent digital marketing tool; however, not all websites offer such functionality [4]. The tourism industry uses various digital marketing tools, and the challenge for tourism marketing professionals is to understand how consumers best access information and which factors influence their purchasing decisions [5].

2 Literature Review

Internet technologies have fully integrated into all aspects of people's personal and professional lives today. Their rapid progress has brought unprecedented vitality and opportunities to the global economy, particularly in the development of e-commerce and online marketing [6]. A new method of shopping has emerged—online purchasing. This disrupts traditional goods trading by allowing resources to be exchanged freely worldwide, bringing significant economic and social benefits [7]. Traditional shopping has become unsuitable for many people, prompting consumers to opt for simpler and more convenient methods through the use of online websites [8].

The International Telecommunication Union reports that around 4.9 billion people worldwide, from both developed and developing countries, used the internet in 2021, a significant increase from about 2.2 billion a decade earlier. [9] indicates that, among the most frequently purchased goods and services online, travel services rank second. This includes not only the purchase of transportation tickets but also the booking of hotels and other services such as excursions, second only to clothing purchases in frequency. Online commerce in the tourism sector is growing rapidly, as evidenced by the increasing number of tourists organizing their trips through the internet [10].

Consumers increasingly desire advertising material to be more reliable and transparent, including information about product manufacturing, composition, and pricing, which would allow for a more realistic assessment of the product's true value [11]. Consumer behavior refers to how individuals or groups make decisions about buying or using products, services, ideas, or experiences to meet their needs. Early market behavior models, based on economic theory, suggested that people act rationally to maximize satisfaction when purchasing goods and services. However,

it is noted that consumers can also make impulsive purchases influenced by mood, circumstances, advertisements, and promotions. These two perspectives converge into a holistic model of consumer behavior, where both logical and emotional factors play a role in the decision making process [12]. Internet users represent a distinct consumer group, whose characteristics differ significantly from those of traditional market consumers. The primary factors influencing consumer behavior in the online space include subjective psychological elements and objective environmental factors [7]. To better capture the evolving landscape of digital marketing, recent theoretical insights into AI-driven recommendations, mobile applications, and personalized marketing are essential. These innovations have fundamentally altered consumer behavior, enabling tourism websites to cater to individual preferences more accurately and engage consumers in highly targeted ways, which has reshaped the consumer decision making process [13].

Thus, online shopping is a rapidly growing area that increasingly attracts consumer attention. The most frequently purchased goods and services online are related to tourism and travel, ranking second only to clothing purchases. The frequency of online purchases is influenced by consumers' psychological characteristics, which play a significant role in their decision-making when buying products online.

The Relationship Between Tourism Websites and Consumer Purchasing Decisions

Digital technologies enable companies to communicate with customers through advanced digital platforms without requiring significant resources. The internet allows people not only to interact with each other but also to share their favorite brands, locations, and experiences. With the advancement of the internet and digital technologies, tourism-related applications and websites have emerged, becoming key tools for attracting new customers and expanding businesses [14]. Today, thanks to digital resources, customers have access to a greater variety of opinions, reviews, and ratings from individuals rather than commercial sources.

Technology has driven tourists' need to instantly obtain what they are looking for, necessitating that they interact with companies capable of responding immediately and around the clock. Traditional travel agents were successful due to their ability to handle customer issues with honesty and friendliness, fostering authentic relationships with clients. However, their roles have shifted as organizations transitioned to the online domain, aiming to better connect with customers in the digital age [4].

The travel industry is more competitive than ever before, making it essential for this sector to apply strategies that align with consumer preferences and influence their decision making [15]. Consumer decision making behavior is an ongoing and dynamic process that involves identifying needs, shaping attitudes through the online shopping experience, making a purchase, and experiencing psychological and behavioral responses afterward. The online consumer decision making process

can be broken down into three stages: searching for the desired products or services, choosing the best option, and completing the payment [6].

Search for Desired Goods or Services. This initial stage focuses on gathering detailed and specific information about a product or service to make an informed decision [6] [16], consumer information search is considered one of the most significant factors in the purchasing decision making process. Nowadays, tourists can gather information from a wide variety of sources—traditional ones, such as friends, advertisements, or travel guides, as well as those provided by the latest technologies and the internet [17]. In traditional environments, consumers' access to information is restricted by various factors, leading to incomplete or sometimes inaccurate data. Due to geographical and spatial limitations, consumers often have to rely on a small amount of information about products or services. In contrast, the online space offers extensive, comprehensive information resources with rapid information transmission. With just a click, internet users can quickly access vast amounts of relevant details about goods or services [7].

Optimal Selection. The second stage involves performing a comparative evaluation. Consumers use different criteria to assess goods or services based on their preferences. In traditional settings, this process often includes analyzing a product's appearance and performance by physically observing and handling it in stores. Online consumers can similarly evaluate products by reading text descriptions, examining other users' comments, and viewing images of the product from various angles. Consumer decision making behavior is an ongoing, evolving process influenced by life needs, attitudes formed during online shopping, purchasing actions, and psychological and behavioral patterns that emerge after the purchase. Unlike traditional shopping, a key disadvantage of online shopping is that consumers cannot physically see or touch the product, limiting the sensory experience [18].

Payment. The third and final stage is the process in which consumers make decisions regarding the purchase and payment. For consumers seeking to purchase tourism-related goods or services, not only the product or service itself but also the website presenting it can significantly influence their decisions. [19] assert that the characteristics of hotel websites related to security, privacy, and functionality are crucial for consumer trust and significantly affect their online booking intentions. They conclude that hotels can use their official websites to foster trust-based relationships with customers that extend beyond mere pricing considerations. This aspect of the trust established between the client and the vendor has also been noted in the works of other authors [19].

Meanwhile, [20] examined four aspects of a website, including design, security and privacy factors, logistics and distribution, and post-sale service. The findings of her study reveal that website design has the greatest impact on purchasing decisions. Many authors have also investigated the importance of website loading speed as a measure of quality. [21] similarly highlighted the significance of web design. [22]

explored customer expectations regarding hotel website quality in their survey. The study found that respondents living in Korea and Australia regarded quick access to a website as the most important factor in assessing its quality. Navigation within a website is also a critical aspect of evaluating its quality. Visitors are likely to abandon their tasks if they become lost or feel confused while searching. In many cases, website quality is associated with effective and fast navigation.

It is important to note that online users often navigate without the assistance of a vendor, unlike in physical stores. Providing high-quality information is not sufficient to attract customers' attention if they experience frustration while navigating to understand or download content, feel insecure, or perceive that the services offered are not personalized [21]. Additionally, [23] found that browsing behavior is a direct predictor of online purchasing impulses. While most of studies builds on foundational research from 2010-2018, newer studies provide valuable insights into how AI and machine learning enhance consumer experience on tourism websites through personalized suggestions, dynamic content, and predictive analytics—key components that influence purchase intentions today [13]. The COVID-19 pandemic, inflationary pressures, and climate events have introduced new dimensions of consumer risk assessment in online purchases. Future research on tourism websites should consider how these crises impact consumer trust, value sensitivity, and prioritization of safety-related information [24]. The impacts of health crises and economic uncertainty, consumers may now place greater value on trust indicators, flexible booking policies, and transparent information regarding safety, sustainability, and ethical practices on tourism websites. These elements play a crucial role in rebuilding consumer confidence in the face of global challenges.

Consumers are no longer solely focused on the prices of goods and services; they also consider their quality, the purchasing experience, and the overall process. The services offered by tourism websites increasingly compete with one another, leading to a surge in innovations. Consequently, customers today have access to a greater number of opinions, reviews, and ratings from real clients rather than just commercial partners. Most buyers select products not only based on price but also on their perceived value, all in an effort to meet their needs. Online shopping provides the advantage of time for reflection and deliberation, allowing consumers to proceed at their own pace while enjoying convenience and a favorable price-to-quality ratio.

3 Methodology

The research object is the impact of tourism websites on consumer purchasing decisions. Research questions is how do different features of tourism websites (e.g., design, user-generated content) influence consumer purchasing decisions? To analyze this influence, an empirical quantitative study will be conducted using an online questionnaire. The quantitative research method chosen for this study is a survey consisting of 17 questions using a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 indicates “strongly disagree” and 5 indicates “strongly agree.” The questionnaire has been developed by the author of this work, drawing on the scientific contributions of other authors on similar topics [25,26]. The collected research data will be processed using IBM SPSS Statistics 22 software.

By assuming 95% confidence level and $\pm 5\%$ precision level, the number of population, a total of 457 respondents was surveyed. The sample comprised 71.3% women ($n=326$) and 28.7% men ($n=131$).

Selection criteria for respondents:

1. Individuals aged 18 years or older.
2. Individuals who voluntarily chose to participate in the study

The age distribution of the respondents was as follows: 14.7% ($n=67$) were aged 18-25, 20.4% ($n=93$) were aged 26-35, 22.1% ($n=101$) were aged 36-45, 27.4% ($n=125$) were aged 46-55, 11.4% ($n=52$) were aged 56-65, and 4.2% ($n=19$) were aged 66 and older. In terms of educational attainment, 28.4% of respondents ($n=130$) had a secondary education, 18.8% ($n=86$) had a higher vocational education, 15.1% ($n=69$) had a college degree, and 37.6% ($n=172$) had a university degree.

4 Results

According to the survey results, a significant majority of respondents reported high internet usage frequency, with 92.3% ($n=422$) indicating that they use the internet more than four times a week. Only 6.1% ($n=28$) stated that they use the internet 3-4 times a week, while the smallest group, 1.6% ($n=7$), reported using the internet infrequently (2 times a week or less). In terms of daily internet usage duration, respondents' answers were similarly distributed. The smallest group, 6.3% ($n=29$), indicated they spend less than 1 hour online each day. Meanwhile, 34.4% ($n=157$) reported spending between 1 and 2 hours online, 33.3% ($n=152$) spent between 3 and 4 hours, and finally, 26% ($n=119$) stated they spend 5 hours or more online each day.

When asked about the types of websites they visit most frequently, respondents provided a diverse range of answers, with each respondent allowed to choose more

than one option. The majority, 83.8% (n=383), indicated they often visit community websites like Facebook and Instagram. The second most common category, at 62.1% (n=284), was news portals. This was followed by commercial websites at 43.3% (n=198), entertainment websites at 34.4% (n=157), and finally, blogs at 12.5% (n=57).

The decision making process regarding purchasing products poses a common challenge for consumers. The survey results indicated that a significant portion of respondents, 54.3% (n=248), thoroughly consider their purchases in advance. In contrast, 17.9% (n=82) of respondents reported making spontaneous purchases. The remaining 27.8% (n=127) indicated they use a combined approach to purchasing. When comparing decision making behaviors between genders, a statistically significant difference was found ($p > 0.05$). Among women, 21.8% (n=71) reported making spontaneous purchases, while only 8.4% (n=11) of men indicated the same. There was no statistically significant difference noted in the planned purchase behaviors, with 51.8% (n=169) of women and 60.3% (n=79) of men indicating they plan purchases in advance, as well as 26.4% (n=86) of women and 31.3% (n=41) of men reporting a combined purchasing strategy. The study results revealed that among various factors influencing purchasing decisions, a substantial 52.5% (n=240) of respondents identified that reviews from other buyers significantly impact their decisions when purchasing tourism products and services. In contrast, a lower percentage, 26.7% (n=122), indicated that images/videos on social media are the main influencing factor. The least influential factors were online reviews/blogs at 12.5% (n=57) and advertisements on social networks at 8.3% (n=38).

The influence of negative reviews on the decision not to purchase showed a relatively similar percentage distribution between genders, with no statistically significant differences found. Both male and female respondents agreed with the statement that negative reviews impacted their decision not to buy, with 69.9% (n=228) of women and 73.3% (n=96) of men indicating this (see Table 1). The results indicated that there was no statistically significant difference ($p > 0.05$). Regarding the influence of delivery costs and time on the decision not to purchase, this criterion was not a popular choice among respondents. Only 35.3% (n=115) of women and 30.5% (n=40) of men agreed with this statement in the survey. Again, no statistically significant difference was found ($p > 0.05$). In terms of unclear product quality and visual presentation, 68.1% (n=222) of women and 63.4% (n=83) of men agreed that these factors influence their decision not to purchase tourism products or services online. This suggests that both genders are similarly affected by these aspects when considering online purchases.

Table 1
Percentage Distribution of Study Participants by Gender and Major Factors Influencing the
Decision Not to Purchase Tourism Products/Services Online

Gender	Influence of Negative Reviews (%)	Influence of Delivery Price and Time (%)	Influence of Unclear Product Quality and Presentation (%)	Influence of Fear of Receiving Defective Products/Uncertainty of Returns (%)	Influence of Complicated Ordering Procedures (%)
Women	69.9% (n=228)	69.9% (n=228)	69.9% (n=228)	69.9% (n=228)	69.9% (n=228)
Men	73.3% (n=96)	73.3% (n=96)	73.3% (n=96)	73.3% (n=96)	73.3% (n=96)

No statistically significant difference was found ($p > 0.05$). The fear of receiving a defective product and uncertainties regarding returns, when comparing genders, showed that 46.6% ($n=152$) of females and 51.1% ($n=67$) of males agree with the statement that this influences their decision not to purchase tourism products or services online. No statistically significant difference was found ($p > 0.05$). Regarding the complicated ordering procedure, the comparison between genders indicated that 35.3% ($n=115$) of females and 30.5% ($n=40$) of males agree that this factor influences their decision not to purchase tourism products or services online. No statistically significant difference was found ($p > 0.05$).

The distribution of respondents by age groups, compared to the factors that can have the greatest impact on the consumer's decision not to purchase tourism products or services online, showed that negative reviews have the greatest impact on the representatives of the age group 66 and older, with 84.2% ($n=16$), while the least influence, 65.4% ($n=34$), was found in the age group of 56 to 65 years. No statistically significant difference was found ($p > 0.05$). The price and delivery time of the product were not frequently chosen across all age groups, indicating that this factor does not have a significant impact on the decision not to purchase. This factor was selected most often by 40.6% ($n=41$) of respondents aged 36-45, while the least impact was found in the 56-65 age group at 28.8% ($n=15$). No statistically significant difference was found ($p > 0.05$). Unclear product quality and visual presentation had the greatest impact on the decision not to purchase for the representatives of the 56-65 age group at 82.7% ($n=43$), while the least impact was found in the 18-25 age group at 61.2% ($n=41$). A statistically significant difference was found ($p < 0.05$).

Table 2
Percentage Distribution of Study Participants by Age Group and Factors That May Have the Greatest Impact on Not Purchasing Tourism Products/Services Online

Factor	18-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	66 and more	P-value
Negative reviews	70,1 %	72,0 %	72,3 %	69,6 %	65,4 %	84,2 %	0,751
Product delivery price/time	29,9 %	29,0 %	40,6 %	36,8 %	28,8 %	31,6 %	0,467
Unclear product quality and visual presentation	61,2 %	62,4 %	62,4 %	67,2 %	82,7 %	84,2 %	0,048
Fear of receiving a defective product/uncertainties in returns	50,7 %	44,1 %	36,6 %	48,8 %	67,3 %	57,9 %	0,012
Complicated ordering procedure	41,8 %	25,8 %	31,7 %	36,0 %	36,5 %	36,8 %	0,382
Unattractive/complicated website menu	53,7 %	39,8 %	34,7 %	36,0 %	36,5 %	31,6 %	0,157
Don't know/cannot answer	7,5 %	1,1 %	5,0 %	8,0 %	1,9 %	0,00 %	0,129

Among age groups and the fear of receiving a defective product and uncertainties regarding returns, a statistically significant relationship was found ($p=0.012$), with the greatest impact on not purchasing identified in the 56-65 age group at 67.3% ($n=35$), while the lowest impact was 36.6% ($n=37$) in the 36-45 age group. Complicated ordering procedures had the most influence on 41.8% ($n=28$) of respondents aged 18-25, while the least influence was 25.8% ($n=24$) among those aged 26-35. No statistically significant difference was found ($p>0.05$).

As for unattractive and complicated website menus as an influencing factor, the largest percentage, 53.7% ($n=36$), was reported by respondents aged 18-25, while the smallest percentage, 31.6% ($n=6$), was noted by respondents aged 66 and older. No statistically significant difference was found ($p>0.05$). A statistically significant difference was found between respondents' education levels and decision making during purchases ($p<0.05$). The results showed that well-thought-out purchasing decisions are made by individuals with higher education—66.3%. Among those with a higher vocational education, 55.1% reported making well-thought-out purchases before buying products. The lowest percentages in this area were from respondents with secondary education at 50.8% and those with higher education at 50.6%.

Table 3
Percentage Distribution of Study Participants Comparing Education Level and Type of Decision-Making During Purchases

	Secondary	Higher Vocational	Higher education	Higher secondary education	P-value
Well-Thought-Out in Advance	50,8%	66,3%	55,1%	50,6%	0,030
Spontaneous	23,1%	12,8%	23,2%	14,5%	
Combined	26,2%	20,9%	21,7%	34,9%	

The percentage distribution of education level and spontaneous purchase decision was quite uniform. Spontaneous purchasing decisions were indicated by 23.1% of respondents with a secondary education, 23.2% with higher vocational education, 14.5% with higher education, and 12.8% with higher secondary education. The last criterion was presented as the possibility of a combined purchase decision. The results showed that the combined decision making for purchasing was greatest at 34.9% among respondents with higher education, followed by 26.2% with secondary education, 21.7% with higher vocational education, and 20.9% with higher secondary education.

Factors related to websites often have the greatest influence on the customer's decision to purchase. We compared the influence of these factors between men and women. The results revealed that images and visual materials on social media influence purchasing decisions equally, affecting 26.7% of both men ($n=35$) and women ($n=87$). Online reviews and blogs influence 10.1% ($n=33$) of women and 18.3% ($n=24$) of men.

Table 4
Percentage Distribution of Study Participants Comparing Genders and the Influence of Online Website Factors on Purchases

	Women	Men	P value
Photos/Videos on Social Media	26,7%	26,7%	0,034
Online Reviews/Blogs	10,1%	18,3%	
Reviews from Other Buyers in Comments	55,8%	44,3%	
Advertisements on Social Media	7,4%	10,7%	

Visual content, including photos and videos, strongly affects consumer behavior by encouraging impulse purchases, as indicated by 26.7% of respondents. A factor analysis of visual content impact and website design elements (e.g., layout, ease of navigation) revealed that these factors cluster closely together, suggesting an interdependent relationship. A multiple regression analysis confirmed this, showing that visual appeal ($\beta = .41$, $p < .01$) and navigation ease ($\beta = .33$, $p < .05$) significantly predict impulse purchasing tendencies. In addition, a t-test comparing male and female responses to visual stimuli found no significant gender difference ($t = -1.22$, $p > .05$), suggesting that visual impact on impulse buying is relatively

consistent across genders.

The ability to purchase goods and services without leaving home is currently an integral part of human life. Therefore, it was interesting to find out how important this criterion is for the respondents. Always important was chosen by 39.6% (n=181), often important by 25.6% (n=117), sometimes important by 21.4% (n=98), slightly important by 7.2% (n=33), and unimportant by 6.1% (n=28). The ability to shop leisurely online without feeling psychological pressure to make a purchase decision here and now was identified as always important by 44.2% (n=202), often important by 21.2% (n=97), sometimes important by 20.1% (n=92), slightly important by 9.4% (n=43), and unimportant by 5% (n=23) of respondents. When purchasing tourism products and services, as many as 82.1% (n=375) of all respondents noted that their decision making is influenced by their income. Comparing the impact of income between genders, the results showed that income influences purchasing decisions for 86.5% (n=282) of women and 71% (n=93) of men. A statistically significant difference was established ($p < 0.05$). This means that 29% (n=38) of men are not influenced by their income when making purchasing decisions, whereas for women, this figure is 13.5% (n=44).

By examining the Spearman correlation coefficient, correlations between different website factors were identified.

Table 5
Correlation Coefficients Among the Importance of Website Factors

Spearman Correlation Coefficients Between Website Factors						
	Website Design	Convenient Website Menu	Customer Service	Company Reliability	Brand Awareness	Quality of Provided Information
Website Design	X	X	X	X	X	X
Convenient Website Menu	0,448**	X	X	X	X	X
Customer Service	0,353**	0,542**	X	X	X	X
Company Reliability	0,276**	0,455**	0,542**	X	X	X
Brand Awareness	0,332**	0,213**	0,178**	0,302**	X	X
Quality of Provided Information	0,300**	0,446**	0,500**	0,597**	0,283**	X

All factors showed statistically significant differences ($p < 0.01$). A weak direct correlation was found between website design and all other mentioned website factors (ranging from 0.276 to 0.448). A moderate direct correlation (0.542) was established between a convenient website menu and customer service, indicating that as the convenience of the website menu increases, the level of customer service

also improves. A moderate direct correlation (0.542) was also found between customer service and company reliability, suggesting that as customer service improves, reliability increases. The strongest moderate direct correlation (0.597) was identified between company reliability and the quality of information provided. Thus, the better the quality of the information provided, the higher the reliability of the company.

In summary, the factors that most significantly influence the decision to make a purchase are the reviews and comments from other buyers, which have the strongest impact on online buying decisions, accounting for 52.5%. When comparing this aspect between genders, it was found that 55.8% of women consider this an important criterion, while only 44.3% of men do.

User-generated content (UGC) such as reviews and comments significantly influences consumer decision making, with 52.5% of respondents reporting UGC as a primary factor in their purchase decisions. Using a regression model, we tested the strength of UGC's impact across demographic segments, finding it particularly influential among younger consumers (ages 18-35). The model yielded a significant correlation ($r = .52$, $p < .001$), indicating that younger consumers are more likely to rely on reviews and feedback when making decisions. A one-way ANOVA further revealed that income also significantly moderates the effect of UGC, $F(3, 453) = 6.47$, $p < .01$, with higher-income respondents showing greater responsiveness to positive reviews.

Negative reviews were reported to deter purchases by both male and female respondents, with no significant gender difference detected ($p > .05$). However, using multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA), we found that income level significantly influences how respondents perceive negative reviews (Wilks' Lambda = .86, $F(3, 453) = 4.23$, $p < .05$). Specifically, higher-income respondents were more likely to consider and avoid products with negative reviews, whereas lower-income respondents showed a somewhat lower sensitivity, suggesting a moderating role of income on risk perception in online tourism purchases.

Trust-related factors, including website reliability, secure payment options, and quality of information, emerged as critical elements affecting consumer behavior. Using logistic regression, we examined the probability of purchase based on trust indicators, finding a significant association ($\chi^2 = 23.48$, $p < .001$). Trust indicators increased purchase likelihood, particularly among older respondents (ages 46 and above), who demonstrated a 35% higher propensity to make purchases when website reliability and security were perceived as strong. Factor analysis further highlighted that trust-related attributes closely align with information quality (loading factor = .67), underscoring their collective influence on purchase decisions.

Overall, the inferential analyses confirm the significant impact of UGC, visual content, trust factors, and demographic moderators on consumer purchasing decisions. The findings demonstrate that consumer responses to tourism website features vary substantially by demographic and psychological profiles, revealing

both broad trends and specific consumer segments. These insights can guide tourism marketers in tailoring their digital strategies to optimize consumer engagement and drive purchase conversions across diverse audiences.

Discussion

The results of this study underscore the profound impact of tourism websites on consumer purchase decisions, aligning with previous research [1,3]. With the majority of respondents (92.3%) indicating frequent internet usage, it is evident that online platforms play a critical role in shaping consumer behavior. This supports the argument by [2] that digital marketing strategies, including user reviews and social media content, are effective tools for influencing purchasing decisions.

One of the most significant findings is the role of user-generated content, such as reviews and comments, in shaping purchase decisions. This study found that 52.5% of respondents were heavily influenced by reviews, a result consistent with earlier studies that highlight the importance of user-generated feedback in tourism marketing [27]. The findings confirm the assertion that modern consumers seek not only information but trust and authenticity, a critical factor in their decision making process [4].

The data also reveal that visual content, including photos and videos on social media, significantly impacts 26.7% of respondents, particularly in promoting impulse purchases. This echoes findings by [18], who noted the power of visual content in online shopping experiences. However, reviews and comments were found to be a stronger influence on purchase decisions, highlighting a potential area for improvement in website design to enhance user experience and drive engagement.

Interestingly, there was no statistically significant difference between male and female respondents regarding the impact of negative reviews, with both genders citing these as major deterrents (69.9% for women and 73.3% for men). This indicates that negative online feedback is universally acknowledged as a powerful dissuading factor, further supported by the work of [27], which emphasizes the dynamic and evolving nature of consumer decision making in online environments. The study highlights that income levels have a statistically significant impact on purchasing decisions, with 86.5% of women and 71% of men indicating that their income influences their decision to purchase tourism products. This aligns with [11], who emphasize the role of economic factors in consumer decision making.

Recommendations

The study identified that 52.5% of respondents consider user-generated content, such as reviews and comments, as a primary influence on their purchasing decisions. This finding underscores the power of social proof and the need for tourism websites to leverage authentic feedback to build consumer trust. To capitalize on this, websites should:

Feature Verified Reviews and User-Submitted Visuals. Prominently display verified customer reviews and images on product pages and homepage banners. Including real photos and authentic comments allows potential buyers to see honest feedback from people with similar travel goals, which strengthens credibility.

Enable Filtered and Personalized Reviews. Adding filter options, such as reviews categorized by travel type (e.g., family, solo, adventure) or specific preferences (e.g., eco-friendly stays), helps potential consumers find content that aligns with their own travel needs. This additional layer of personalization can significantly improve the relevance of the information presented, addressing the specific expectations of varied consumer segments.

Encourage UGC Through Incentives. Offer incentives for customers to leave reviews or upload their travel photos, such as loyalty points, discount codes, or entry into prize drawings. This approach builds a rich base of user-generated content, which can continuously refresh the website and attract new consumers through a sense of community and engagement.

Conclusions

After analyzing the scientific literature, the benefits of purchasing tourism products and services online were identified. It was found that customers increasingly value the benefits they receive, which include time savings, the ability to shop at a leisurely pace without feeling pressured to make quick decisions, the opportunity to purchase at any time of the day, and the convenience of shopping from home—these were the most prominent among all factors.

When examining the factors of tourism websites that influence the consumer's decision to buy, it was determined that the most impactful factors are the company's reliability, the quality of the information provided, customer service, a user-friendly website menu, and the speed of the website. The least important factors identified were brand recognition and website design. Key website features include the security of information on the site, online service ordering, reservation and payment capabilities, the ability to gather detailed information about tourism products/services, and the capacity to tailor tourism products/services to one's needs.

It was also established that the greatest influence on the consumer's decision to purchase online comes from the reviews of other buyers in comments, customer photos/visual materials on social networks, as well as online reviews and ratings, and personalized promotional offers. The findings indicated that comments from other buyers had a greater influence on women's purchasing decisions than on men's. The most significant reasons for not purchasing were linked to the volume of negative reviews, unclear product quality, visual presentation, and confusion due to an overwhelming choice of products and services.

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