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***The Influence of Online-User  
Generated Reviews on Portuguese  
Travellers'  
Decision-Making Process***

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# ABSTRACT

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**Title:** The Influence of Online-User Generated Reviews on Portuguese Travellers' Decision-Making Process

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The diffusion of new communication tools, such as Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM), facilitated the engagement with online content. One of its forms, online reviews, is mainly used to inform customers, being particularly relevant concerning travellers' decision-making process, as proven by previous research.

In this dissertation, Portuguese travellers were targeted to understand how their behaviours change when exposed to differently valenced reviews. In order to address the Research Questions (RQs), an experimental design was implemented: the participants were exposed to predominantly positive (PPR) or predominantly negative reviews (PNR). The data was analysed for the effects on attitude towards a hotel (ATH) and booking intentions (BI), considering the influence of individuals' conformity along different travel planning moments: Initial Stage (IS) and Later Stage (LS).

In total, 302 answers were analysed. It was concluded that PPR and PNR differently influence travellers' ATH and BI, considering distinct travel planning moments. At both moments, the effect of valence was more influential concerning individuals that were high in conformity.

The findings are relevant to touristic companies, particularly to hotels, since they evince the benefits and the damages eWOM may generate on their performance.

Limitations are explained and suggestions for future research are indicated.

**KeyWords:** Online User-Generated Reviews, Valence, Conformity, Booking Intentions, Attitude towards a Hotel, Decision-Making Process, Tourism

# SUMÁRIO

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**Título:** A Influência de Comentários Gerados Online no Processo de Tomada de Decisão dos Turistas Portugueses

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A difusão de novas ferramentas de comunicação, como o Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM), facilitou a interação com conteúdo online. Os comentários online, uma das suas formas, são maioritariamente utilizados para informar consumidores, sendo particularmente relevantes em tomadas de decisão turística, como provado por investigações prévias.

Nesta dissertação, centrámo-nos em turistas Portugueses para perceber a influência de comentários com diferente valência no seu comportamento. Adereçando as questões iniciais (RQs), foi desenvolvido um design experimental: os participantes foram expostos a comentários predominantemente positivos (PPR) ou predominantemente negativos (PNR). Os dados analisados focaram o efeito na atitude relativamente a um hotel (ATH) e intenções de reserva (BI), considerando a influência da conformidade dos indivíduos ao longo de diferentes momentos de planeamento turístico: Fase Inicial (IS) e Fase Tardia (LS).

No total, foram analisadas 302 respostas. Concluiu-se que os PPR e PNR influenciam diferentemente a ATH e BI dos turistas, considerando momentos distintos de planeamento turístico. Em ambos os momentos, o efeito da valência demonstrou-se mais influente em indivíduos com elevado nível de conformidade.

Os resultados são relevantes para empresas turísticas, principalmente hotéis, pois evidenciam os benefícios e as consequências que o eWOM pode ter na sua performance.

Limitações são explicadas e sugestões para investigação futura são indicadas.

**Palavras-Chave:** Comentários Gerados por Utilizadores Online, Valência, Conformidade, Intenções de Reserva, Atitude relativamente a um Hotel, Turismo, Processo de Tomada de Decisão

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

<b>Abstract.....</b>	<b>II</b>
<b>Sumário.....</b>	<b>III</b>
<b>Acknowledgements.....</b>	<b>IV</b>
<b>Table of Contents.....</b>	<b>V</b>
<b>Table of Tables.....</b>	<b>VIII</b>
<b>Table of Appendices.....</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>List of Abbreviations.....</b>	<b>XI</b>
<b>Chapter 1 – Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Research Context.....	1
1.2 Relevance, Aim and Research Questions.....	2
1.3 Structure.....	3
<b>Chapter 2 - Literature Review.....</b>	<b>4</b>
2. 1. Hospitality and Tourism Industry.....	4
2. 1. 1. Hospitality and Tourism Industry's relevance.....	4
2. 1. 2. Destination Management.....	5
2. 2. Portuguese Travellers' Characteristics.....	5
2. 3. Social Media.....	5
2. 3. 1. Importance of Social Media.....	5
2. 3. 2. Social Media in the Tourism and Hospitality Industry.....	6
2. 4. Electronic Word-of-Mouth.....	7

2. 4. 1. Definition and Distinctive Characteristics.....	7
2. 4. 2. eWOM in Tourism.....	7
2. 5. User-Generated Content.....	8
2. 5. 1. Online User-Generated Reviews.....	8
2. 6. Travellers' Decision-Making Process.....	9
2. 7. Attitude towards a destination.....	10
2. 8. Booking Intentions.....	11
2. 9. The role of travellers' conformity.....	12
<b>Chapter 3 - Methodology.....</b>	<b>15</b>
3. 1. Research Objectives.....	15
3. 2. Research Approach.....	15
3. 3. Data Collection.....	16
3. 3. 1. Data Analysis.....	19
<b>Chapter 4 - Results.....</b>	<b>21</b>
4. 1. Sample Description.....	21
4. 1. 1. Demographics.....	21
4. 1. 2. Profile of the sample in terms of travelling.....	23
4. 1. 3. Travellers' use of online travel reviews.....	25
4. 2. Survey Validation.....	26
4. 2. 1. Reliability.....	26
4. 2. 2. Validity.....	27
4. 3. Normality Test.....	29
4. 4. Sample Validation.....	32

4. 4. 1. Demographical questions.....	32
4. 4. 2. Use of online reviews' when planning a trip.....	33
4. 4. 3. Attitude towards a hotel before reviews' exposure.....	33
4. 4. 4. Reviews' valence perception.....	34
4. 5. Hypotheses Analysis.....	34
<b>Chapter 5 - Conclusions, Limitations and Future Research.....</b>	<b>42</b>
5. 1. Academic Implications.....	43
5. 2. Limitations and Future Research.....	44
<b>Chapter 6 - Reference List.....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>Appendices.....</b>	<b>55</b>

# TABLE OF TABLES

---

Table 1: Experimental Design Groups' Characterization.....	17
Table 2: Scale Items.....	19
Table 3: Number of Participants per Research Group.....	21
Table 4: Gender.....	21
Table 5: Age.....	22
Table 6: Education Level.....	22
Table 7: Current Occupation.....	22
Table 8: Monthly Household Income .....	23
Table 9: Frequency of travelling during the past year.....	23
Table 10: Frequency of use of different informational means .....	24
Table 11: Internet Use.....	24
Table 12: Conformity Tables.....	25
Table 13: Use of other travellers' reviews.....	26
Table 14: Cronbach's Alphas.....	26
Table 15: PCA.....	29
Table 16: Kolmogorov-Smirnov test.....	32
Table 17: Demographical questions.....	33
Table 18: Use of online reviews.....	33
Table 19: ATH before reviews' exposure.....	33
Table 20: Reviews' valence perception.....	34
Table 21: Mann – Whitney U test: BI.....	35



Table 22: Means: BI.....	35
Table 23: Correlations between valence and BI.....	35
Table 24: Mann – Whitney U test: ATH after reviews’ exposure.....	37
Table 25: Correlations between valence and ATH after reviews’ exposure.....	37
Table 26: Wilcoxon Sign Rank test: ATH before and after reviews’ exposure.....	37
Table 27: Means: ATH.....	37
Table 28: Mann – Whitney U test: BI after reviews’ exposure.....	38
Table 29: Means: Conformists and Non – Conformists valence perceptions and BI.....	39
Table 30: Kruskal – Wallis test: BI and ATH after reviews’ exposure.....	40
Table 31: Means: BI and ATH after reviews’ exposure.....	41

# TABLE OF APPENDICES

---

Appendix 1: Survey: English and Portuguese versions.....55

Appendix 2: Results of the Pre – Test.....76

Appendix 3: Conformity Tables.....80

Appendix 4: Principal Component Analysis.....82

Appendix 5: Chi – Square test: Gender.....82

Appendix 6: Chi – Square test: Current Occupation.....83

Appendix 7: Sample Validation Means.....84

Appendix 8: Sample’s Division.....84

Appendix 9: Summary Table of Hypotheses.....85

# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

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ATH – Attitude towards a hotel

BI – Booking Intentions

eWOM – Electronic Word-of-Mouth

IS – Initial Stage

KMO – Kolmogorov- Smirnov

K-S - Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin

LS – Later Stage

PCA – Principal Component Analysis

PPR – Predominantly Positive Reviews

PNR – Predominantly Negative Reviews

RQ – Research Question

UGC – User-Generated Content

WOM – Word-of-Mouth

# CHAPTER 1 - Introduction

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## 1.1 Research Context

The progress made with the transition from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0 was characterized by an astonishing increase in the number of Internet users, which led to an extended use of social media (Zainal *et al.*, 2017).

Nowadays, it is easier than it has ever been to share personal thoughts with a large online audience (Dellarocas, 2003) and, consequently, many companies, from different industries, have been accompanying the latest trends in social media and making use of more interactive and engaging marketing strategies (Amersdorffer *et al.*, 2012; Khan, 2012). The tourism industry is no exception: companies use online mediums to foment demand and travellers use them to provide feedback, further influencing others' decisions (Wang *et al.*, 2012).

Thus, as the emergence of Web 2.0 has disrupted the use of the Internet, by allowing users to engage with each other, a new concept was born in the travel industry: Travel 2.0, a tourism model which enables the access, discussion, publication and share of touristic content (Hernández-Méndez *et al.*, 2015). Moreover, the content is created by users who interact with others (Filgueira, 2008) and distributed through several mediums, known as Travel 2.0 applications, such as blogs, social networks (e.g. Facebook, Instagram), virtual communities (e.g. Booking, TripAdvisor) and others (Hernández-Méndez *et al.*, 2015).

In this context, the content can be denominated as User-Generated Content (UGC) or Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) (Burgess *et al.*, 2011; Ayeh *et al.*, 2013) and consists of positively or negatively valenced statements, made by travellers, about touristic products and services (Sparks and Browning, 2011), which are posteriorly available to others. Furthermore, it performs a relevant role on travellers' decision-making process, since it contributes to reduce the risk attached with purchasing intangible touristic goods (Luo and Zhong, 2015).

Therefore, it seems relevant to further investigate on this topic, since there is little investigation concerning eWOM's impact on consumer behaviour and purchase intentions, considering national and cultural differences (Serra Cantallops and Salvi, 2014).

In this dissertation, the focus will be on reviews' valence (PPR vs PNR) influence on Portuguese travellers' decision-making process, considering the effect of conformity, which

refers to act and think aiming to acquire group approval and meet its expectations (Bearden *et al.*, 1989).

Despite the existence of few studies addressing conformity's relevance to eWOM, previous research evinced that individuals tend to behave according to the decisions of the groups they belong to (Papyrina, 2012), assume to be influenced by their beliefs and to perform differently when they are present (Venkatesan, 1966 as cited in Papyrina, 2012). Nonetheless, there are conflicting theories based on contradictory findings, which emphasize that people conform in some situations and seek to differentiate in others (Papyrina, 2012).

However, in the Tourism and Hospitality industry, a greater agreement exists concerning the importance of this construct on decision-making processes, considering that conformists are more easily persuaded by eWOM and make their hotel bookings according to the expectations of a certain group (Deutsch and Gerard, 1955 as cited in Tsao *et al.*, 2015). Thus, the lack of scientific studies on conformity, aligned with its already highlighted influence on behaviours is considered as the basis to investigate, in this dissertation, its effect on touristic decisions.

## **1.2 Relevance, Aim and Research Questions**

The technological advancements concerning the use, production and share of online information are the main reason behind the increasing importance social media and, more concretely, eWOM are gaining. The consequent empowerment of consumers, by taking advantage of positively or negatively comment on a consumption experience (Sparks and Browning, 2011), incentivized companies to develop strategies not only based on traditional marketing tools.

The role of eWOM is enhanced among touristic products and services, since it contributes to decrease the level of risk perceived previous to their experience (Zarrad and Debabi, 2015). The study of reviews' influence on travellers' decision-making process can be extremely valuable for touristic companies, so that they can better ensure services are continuously being satisfied, consequently preventing the dissemination of online complaints. Moreover, it might be also relevant for marketers, since the tourism industry is far behind others regarding developing strategies to deal with customers' online presence and interaction (Litvin *et al.*, 2008).

Additionally, by providing insights on some of the aspects that most influence Portuguese travellers' decision-making process, national and international companies will better understand that eWOM not only impacts their image, but also customers' loyalty levels (Gruen *et al.*, 2005).

Considering time constraints, the complexity of the dissertation topic and the lack of studies addressing the role of conformity on decision-making processes, the focus will be on the effect of reviews' valence at different stages of trip planning.

Therefore, in order to determine the influence of reviews on Portuguese travellers' decision-making process, the following Research Questions (RQs) are proposed:

**RQ1:** What are the effects of differently valenced reviews on Portuguese travellers' BI?

**RQ2:** Does individuals' level of conformity influence the effects of reviews' valence on BI?

**RQ3:** What are the effects of differently valenced reviews on Portuguese travellers' ATH?

**RQ4:** Do these effects differ between different planning stages, namely, IS and LS?

Thus, this research is centred on the impact of valence on Portuguese travellers' ATH and BI, which will be treated as dependent variables. Conformity's effect on the relationship between valence and BI will also be assessed.

### 1.3 Structure

This dissertation will be composed of 6 chapters. The first chapter will be dedicated to its context, in which some of the most relevant topics to consider will be briefly addressed. Furthermore, the relevance and aim of this dissertation will be presented, stressing the most important Research Questions. In the second chapter, a literature review concerning the most prominent researches and theories on this topic will be summarized, to better frame the Research Problem. Further, the methodology used and the data collection process will be described, as well as the statistical analysis and results obtained. In the fifth chapter, the conclusions reached will be presented and the limitations found during the research process will be highlighted, thus demonstrating some interesting directions for future research. In the last chapter, the references used in this dissertation will be listed.

# CHAPTER 2 - Literature Review

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In this chapter, a synopsis will be presented on some of the most relevant theories and researches dedicated to the topics that will be explored in this dissertation. This is a theoretical chapter organized in 9 main sections, with some of the most important ones divided into one or more subsections.

## **2. 1. Hospitality and Tourism Industry**

### *2.1.1 Hospitality and Tourism Industry's relevance*

Considering tourism's current role on societies' dynamics, it can be thought as a relevant area of activity, which generates social, political and economical effects on countries. Nowadays, tourism is considered as a unique and independent division of economy (Bunghez, 2016) that includes several subsets of activities, like hospitality related ones. Additionally, according to the UNWTO Tourism Highlights report from 2019, tourism has a pivotal role on the growth and modernization of societies: international tourists' arrivals augmented 5% in 2018, which was possible due to the emergency of new technologies and business models, but also to the global economy's conditions. Furthermore, in 2017, this industry generated more than 8 trillion dollars, with a predictable growth of 25% in 2025 (Jobs, 2019).

Although the relevance of this industry cannot be considered the same for all nations, it is undoubtedly one of the major sources of strength for economical growth, considering, for example, the export earnings produced by it in 2018 (1.7 trillion dollars), but also the opportunities created in terms of job offerings, that consequently incentivize innovation and entrepreneurship (UNWTO Tourism Highlights, 2019).

There are other benefits associated with it, with regard to the taxes and fees paid by companies to State, but also with local products' exportation, being considered that 15% to 20% of total travellers' expenditures are spent on clothing, souvenirs and gifts (Bunghez, 2016). Nonetheless, it also contributes to the development and improvement of infrastructures, since the more touristic a place becomes, the more tourists it attracts, making their status a primary concern (Sehba, 2016). Moreover, touristic activities generate a higher respect towards other cultures and enhance societal progress, as it incentivises travellers to learn more about the history and traditions of other nations (Sehba, 2016).

### *2.1.2 Destination Management*

Given this industry's recent growth, the effective management of a destination, centred on superior marketing efforts, is a priority, since companies need to better adapt to market changes and remain competitive (UNWTO Tourism Highlights, 2019). Therefore, it is important to pay attention to the new trends appearing in the market, more concretely in terms of innovation and digitalization, where social media and artificial intelligence are playing an increasingly important role.

## **2. 2. Portuguese Travellers' Characteristics**

Portuguese travellers' characteristics have been an interesting object of research, like one of the most recent studies of INE (2019) denounces. According to it, Portuguese are choosing international destinations more often, for holidays or leisure, and have been using the Internet more frequently to make bookings. At the end of 2018, the overall number of trips performed by Portuguese increased 6.3%, when compared with the third trimester of the same year, with domestic trips continuing to represent the highest percentage of the total amount of trips performed (87.9%).

Furthermore, the Internet is their preferred option to make travelling arrangements, especially concerning international trips, considering that 62.5% of those were booked online. Although less significant, the importance of the Internet to domestic trips' planning is also relevant, since 20.4% of those were booked through this medium (INE, 2019).

## **2. 3. Social Media**

### *2.3.1 Importance of Social Media*

The facilitated access to the Internet aligned with users' capacity to engage with online content emphasized the communicational importance of social media, not only among teenagers, but also among Generation X, who is becoming more present on online platforms (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010).

Despite social media's rising importance, there still exist some misunderstandings concerning its definition. According to Blackshaw (2006), social media can be defined as Internet-based applications that include "media impressions created by consumers, typically informed by relevant experience and archived or shared online for easy access by other impressionable consumers" (as cited in Xiang and Gretzel, 2010). Furthermore, it can assume



several forms (blogs, social networking sites, content communities, collaborative projects, etc.) and contribute to satisfy the different needs of its flexible and adaptable users (Xiang and Gretzel, 2010; Živković *et al.*, 2014).

Since social media refers to all Internet platforms that offer users the necessary tools to socially interact and exchange information (Ladhari and Michaud, 2015), it is closely related with two concepts: Web 2.0, which can be considered as a platform essential for social media's evolution and UGC, which refers to social media's different ways of use (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010).

Thus, companies should be aware of social media's influence on decision-making processes, considering how easy it is, nowadays, to access online content, but also the informational enrichment obtained from it, when compared to that obtained from official websites and traditional sources of information (Papathanassis and Knolle, 2011 as cited in Ladhari and Michaud, 2015). Furthermore, its advantages to companies are endless, considering the relatively low-cost of reaching and engaging with customers, but also its higher communicational efficiency (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010).

### *2.3.2 Social Media in the Tourism and Hospitality Industry*

Considering social media's convenience and ease-of-use (Litvin *et al.*, 2008; Sigala *et al.*, 2001), more consumers have been using it to make travelling arrangements and have consequently become practically autonomous concerning travelling research, due to the several Travel 2.0 applications available. However, there is still lack of research concerning the use of Travel 2.0 applications and the Internet in general for destination choice purposes (Hernández-Méndez *et al.*, 2015).

Furthermore, social media obligated tourism companies to make an effective use of Travel 2.0 applications, in order to better capture demand (Zainal *et al.*, 2017). Nowadays, these companies' strategies are more centred on innovative, interactive and cost-less social tools, rather than on traditional and expensive approaches (Amersdorffer *et al.*, 2012; Khan, 2012).

The advantages provided by social media to travellers, which essentially rely on reducing the perceived level of risk associated with purchasing tourism services, on providing useful information and on supporting them at different stages of planning (Gretzel and Yoo, 2008), induced a change in their online behaviour (Yu *et al.*, 2014).

Considering social media's influence on travellers' decision-making process (Hernández-Méndez *et al.*, 2015), the relevance of its study can provide valuable insights to hospitality managers, in terms of better understanding customers' needs, building trustworthy relationships and avoiding a decrease in the number of bookings.

## **2. 4. Electronic Word-of-Mouth**

### *2.4.1 Definition and Distinctive Characteristics*

According to Litvin *et al.* (2008), eWOM can be defined as “all informal communications directed at consumers through Internet-based technology related to the usage or characteristics of particular goods and services, or their sellers”, thus differing on some dimensions from traditional word-of-mouth (WOM) (Tham *et al.*, 2013).

eWOM refers to when consumers share and discuss products and services' attributes online, subsequently providing insights to their peers. Furthermore, it enables the access to information not only from known people, but also from a considerable group of unknown individuals, consequently overcoming one of WOM's limitations (Jalilvand *et al.*, 2011).

According to Serra Cantallops and Salvi (2014), the distinctive eWOM's dimensions reside on its influential power and on the speed of interaction between customers. However, there are several challenges brought by eWOM, which are related with the loss or misinterpretation of personal cues, resulting in a reduced level of credibility associated to it (Tham *et al.*, 2013). Moreover, the easy and low-cost access to the Internet might result on an overwhelming share of content between users, increasing the difficulty of controlling everything that is published online (Dellarocas, 2003).

### *2.4.2 eWOM in Tourism*

The importance of eWOM is emphasized among experience goods, like destinations and hotel bookings, in which customers' first impressions can be developed online. Therefore, customers have been attributing a rising level of importance to online information, which is collected across different platforms (Tsao *et al.*, 2015), consequently leading to a considerable growth in the number of available online accommodation search and review engines (Pitta and Fowler, 2005 as cited in Tsao *et al.*, 2015).

eWOM has a fundamental informational function for travellers, in terms of narrowing down their alternatives and in reducing the risk associated with purchasing touristic products

and services (Sparks and Browning, 2011). Moreover, a research conducted by eMarketer (2013), suggested that travellers enjoy obtaining online information to get inspired and to develop plans concerning future trips, reinforcing the relevant role of third-party travel intermediaries (like TripAdvisor) as their preferred source of information.

Despite friends and family being recognized as one of the most credible sources of information for travellers (Murphy *et al.*, 2007), the correct management of eWOM is crucial, since it might impact, for example, hotels' BI, branding and perceived level of quality (Dellarocas, 2003).

## 2. 5. User-Generated Content

UGC “can be individually or collaboratively created, modified, shared and consumed, and it is deemed as the sum of all means by which consumers exploit social media” (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). It can assume different formats, from posts on social networks, like Facebook or Twitter, to online reviews (Smith *et al.*, 2012) and allows users to interact in a more meaningful way, through information sharing (Tsao *et al.*, 2015).

Moreover, UGC's importance to tourism has become a relevant topic of investigation, especially due to its impact on companies' performance: the content produced by users can embody several topics (destination, attractions and others) and, as a result, influence the overall image of a product or service (Yu *et al.*, 2014). Furthermore, according to Gretzel and Yoo (2008), the majority of users trust online opinions and, sometimes, more value is given to these than to those of professionals (Akehurst, 2009; Mack *et al.*, 2008).

### 2.5.1 Online User-Generated Reviews

According to Gretzel (2006), UGC is “content that encompasses a variety of media forms and types of Web sites” (as cited in Gretzel and Yoo, 2008), being one of those formats consumer reviews. Consumer reviews are used to inform customers about products and services, acting, sometimes, as recommendations (Park *et al.*, 2007).

Fang *et al.* (2016) considered that consumer reviews can be constituted by several elements, among which the most relevant are customers' descriptive comments and numerical ratings (as cited in Chan *et al.*, 2017). These elements refer to reviews' valence, which can be defined as “the positive or negative orientation of information about an object or situation” (Buttle, 1998, as cited in Chan *et al.*, 2017). Thus, positive valence refers to sharing the enjoyable aspects of an experience, whilst negative valence refers to sharing disappointment,

in a form of complaint (Anderson, 1998; Sparks and Browning, 2011). It can also be neutral, but it is less likely, since generally an experience is either pleasant or unpleasant.

Regarding the Tourism and Hospitality Industry, while positive reviews can contribute to improve the general impression towards touristic products and services, leading to higher BI (Ye *et al.*, 2009), negative reviews can influence, in an accentuated negative degree, the image of those (Fiske, 1993, as cited in Sparks and Browning, 2011).

According to Pan *et al.* (2007), reviews are becoming increasingly useful as a touristic source of information, especially when travellers aim to make a decision about a destination or aim to compare different alternatives (as cited in Ye *et al.*, 2011). Therefore, most of times, reviews are found more trust-worthy and updated than official informational sources (Gretzel and Yoo, 2008), since they are written from a customer's perspective, enabling potential travellers to look at an experience through the lenses of someone they identify with (Bickart and Schindler, 2001). However, reviews can also be perceived as having less credibility than traditional WOM, since there are little source cues online (Dellarocas, 2003; Smith *et al.*, 2005 as cited in Ye *et al.*, 2011).

## **2. 6. Travellers' Decision-Making Process**

The recent advancements in technology enabled users to easily interact with online content, thus making reviews a reliable source to base decisions concerned with destinations and hotels (Sparks and Browning, 2011; Ye *et al.*, 2011; Xie *et al.*, 2011 as cited in Ladhari and Michaud, 2015) and highlighting the influence of tourism websites, such as TripAdvisor (O'Connor, 2008 as cited in Ladhari and Michaud, 2015), and social networks, like Facebook or Twitter (Ladhari and Michaud, 2015), on decision-making processes.

Nonetheless, the authenticity of reviews' authors can be doubted (Shan, 2016 as cited in Chan *et al.*, 2017). Travellers attach a level of reliability and credibility to reviews considering the available information about their authors, therefore making the value attributed to the information shared by different reviewers not equal (Forman *et al.*, 2008; Liu and Park, 2015).

Furthermore, the exposition to differently valenced reviews can produce distinct outcomes: whilst the exposure to positive reviews might positively influence travellers' behaviours, leading to superior BI (Ladhari and Michaud, 2015; Vermeulen and Seegers, 2009; Ye *et al.*, 2009), the exposure to negative reviews can generate poor perceptions

regarding touristic companies (Sparks *et al.*, 2016). Therefore, regardless of being positively or negatively valenced, reviews can influence travellers' decision-making process (Tsao *et al.*, 2015; Vermeulen and Seegers, 2009) and, consequently, affect companies' performance (Kim *et al.*, 2015; Xie *et al.*, 2014; Ye *et al.*, 2009).

The influence of reviews on decision-making processes has been an object of study for many researchers, but, curiously, there is lack of research concerning their function at particular stages. According to Gretzel and Yoo (2008), the two phases at which travellers most use reviews are the IS, to get inspired and reduce destinations' alternatives, and the LS, to confirm already taken decisions. Moreover, according to Yu *et al.* (2014), reviews have the ability to influence travelling arrangements, being particularly relevant at an IS of planning. The relevancy of reviews at a LS was also validated by a study conducted by eMarketer (2007), according to which 25% of infrequent and 33% of frequent travellers changed an already taken accommodation decision, based on other travellers' reviews. Additionally, while PPR might be more positively influential at an IS (Zarrad and Debabi, 2015), PNR are the opposite (Vermeulen and Seegers, 2009), particularly at a LS.

Regardless of eWOM's relevance to travellers, WOM from friends and family is generally used to inform decisions before they take place, but also to confirm a previously taken decision (Beiger and Laesser, 2004). However, it is important to note that during travellers' decision-making process, different types of information should be provided, since their needs vary along the course (Murphy *et al.*, 2007).

## **2.7 Attitude towards a destination**

According to Zarrad and Debabi (2015), attitude refers to "the degree to which a person has a favourable or unfavourable evaluation or appraisal of the behaviour in question". Therefore, as the attitude towards that behaviour becomes more positive, the intentions to adopt it become more solid.

Thus, in the Tourism and Hospitality industry, travellers' attitude towards a destination result of their beliefs and impressions, which are shaped by cultural and economical factors, but also by eWOM's exposure (Yu *et al.*, 2014). Additionally, attitude is considered as a construct that significantly impacts the intention to travel (Albarq, 2014), being eWOM's interaction an aspect that generates an increased level of awareness towards a destination (Vermeulen and Seegers, 2009).

Furthermore, consumers' attitude is strongly impacted by reviews' valence (Serra Cantallops and Salvi, 2014): it was found that travellers attribute more weight to PNR (Sparks and Browning, 2011) and, as the number of negative reviews increases, their negative attitude towards a destination increases accordingly (Lee *et al.*, 2008). Additionally, PPR reviews translate into more pleasant impressions (Sparks and Browning, 2011) and can generate a positive change in attitude towards a destination, while PNR can induce the contrary (Vermeulen and Seegers, 2009).

Moreover, in comparison to a situation in which customers are not exposed to eWOM, the exposition to extremely positive reviews generates a more optimistic attitude, but negative comments, moderate or severe, generate the opposite (Ladhari and Michaud, 2015).

Therefore, in this dissertation, one of the main focuses will be on determining the influence of reviews' valence on travellers' ATH, which will be assessed before and after reviews' exposure. This analysis will stress the need of managers to be aware of the implications of online content, especially in terms of the image that can be formed about an accommodation.

## **2. 8. Booking Intentions**

Nowadays, travellers benefit of a wider offer of information sources, namely online reviews, which perform an important role during travellers' process of collecting information (Sparks and Browning, 2011), further influencing hotels' bookings. Their influence on decision-making processes was emphasized on a survey conducted by Channel Advisors (2010), according to which 92% of participants revealed reading reviews and 83% considered that their decisions were influenced by them (as cited in Yu *et al.*, 2014).

Considering touristic products and services' nature, travellers tend to rely on the opinions of people who have already experienced them to reduce their level of uncertainty (Murray, 1991), diminish the lack of information regarding a future experience (Mauri and Minnazi, 2013) and reduce the cognitive efforts when searching for information (Ghose and Ipeirotis, 2006, as cited in Yu *et al.*, 2014). Furthermore, online reviews provide an indirect hospitality experience, in which travellers can support their overall quality's belief (Sparks and Browning, 2011).

In this dissertation, the influence of reviews' valence on BI will be approached, considering that it can contribute to augment products' sales, despite of being positive or

negative (Mitchell and Khazanchi, 2010 as cited in Ladhari and Michaud, 2015), since the mere exposition to it can positively affect the likelihood of booking a room (Vermeulen and Seegers, 2009).

However, some authors have different opinions and state that negative reviews have a more significant impact on sales than positive ones (Park and Lee, 2009) or that valence does not produce any variation in sales (Liu, 2006, as cited in Ladhari and Michaud, 2015).

Nonetheless, several studies have validated the influence of valence on touristic activities, reporting that positive reviews significantly increase BI (Ye *et al.*, 2009). Thus, in the prevalence of PPR, BI increase, occurring the opposite when PNR prevail (Mauri and Minazzi, 2013).

As a result, it is important to understand the effects that valence has on BI, bearing in mind that the proper management of reviews can contribute to a better hotel performance (Kim *et al.*, 2015, as cited in Ladhari and Michaud, 2015).

**H1<sub>A</sub>:** *The effect of predominantly positive reviews is significantly distinct from the effect of predominantly negative reviews on Portuguese travellers' BI.*

**H1<sub>B</sub>:** *Predominantly positive reviews have a significant and positive influence on Portuguese travellers' BI.*

**H2<sub>A</sub>:** *The effect of predominantly positive reviews is significantly distinct from the effect of predominantly negative reviews on Portuguese travellers' ATH.*

**H2<sub>B</sub>:** *Predominantly positive reviews have a significant and positive influence on Portuguese travellers' ATH.*

**H2<sub>C</sub>:** *Predominantly positive reviews can generate a significant positive change in Portuguese travellers' ATH, when compared pre and post exposure.*

**H2<sub>D</sub>:** *Predominantly negative reviews can generate a significant negative change in Portuguese travellers' ATH, when compared pre and post exposure.*

## **2. 9. The role of travellers' conformity**

Travellers read reviews for several reasons: to gain knowledge about touristic products and services, to reduce the number of considered options, to reduce the risk associated with choosing a touristic service and to be provided with new ideas. Furthermore, reviews can turn

decisions more efficient, since the probability of regretting a decision, after reading them, is lower (Gretzel and Yoo, 2008). However, the persuasiveness of their content can be affected by several aspects, such as conformity (Deutsch and Gerard, 1955; Lascu and Zinkhan, 1999 as cited in Tsao *et al.*, 2015).

Conformity can be defined as tendencies related with obtaining general approval from a group and meeting their expectations (Bearden *et al.*, 1989). Therefore, conformists behave aiming to satisfy groups' expectations; even if they are conscious those behaviours are not acceptable (Allen, 1965 as cited in Tsao *et al.*, 2015).

This concept can be divided into two dimensions: informational, which refers to accept information from others and normative, which refers to comply with others' expectations (Deutsch and Gerard, 1995, as cited in Tsao *et al.*, 2015). Additionally, there are two theories in which it is based on: the attribution and the cognitive dissonance theories (Huang and Chen, 2006). While attribution refers to “means by which individuals explain and interpret their own changes in behaviour, after observing the behaviour of others”, cognitive dissonance happens when individuals are forced to change their own beliefs to go along with those of a group (Tsao *et al.*, 2015).

Regarding tourism, conformity can be considered as a pertinent construct, since travellers who are high in conformity are more easily convinced by reviews' content and, consequently, make their decisions in accordance with it (Lascu and Zinkhan, 1999). Furthermore, according to Kelman (1961), consumers, particularly conformists, consider others' insights a pertinent external source of information, which can further influence their BI (Tsao *et al.*, 2015). As a result and regardless of being positively or negatively valenced, from previous research, it is possible to infer that reviews produce a greater impact on conformists than on non-conformists' behaviours.

Moreover, the role of conformity on decision-making processes is enhanced among collectivist societies, like the Portuguese (Hofstede Insights, n.d.). In collectivist cultures, groups exert a more powerful influence over individuals' behaviours, rather than in individualistic cultures (Lee and Green, 1991; Triandis *et al.*, 1990, as cited in Tsao *et al.*, 2015).

Despite its relevancy on decision-making processes, little research concerning conformity's significance has already been conducted (Lee *et al.*, 2007; Awad and Ragowsky,



2008, as cited in Tsao *et al.*, 2015), which represents an opportunity to explore further on this topic, so that managerial insights can be provided to hospitality managers, considering that conformists are more inclined towards changing their initial thoughts, just with the aim of obtaining group approval.

**H3<sub>A</sub>**: *The influence of predominantly positive reviews on bookings is significantly higher for individuals high in conformism than for individuals low in conformism.*

**H3<sub>B</sub>**: *The influence of predominantly negative reviews on bookings is significantly higher for individuals high in conformism than for individuals low in conformism.*

**H4<sub>A</sub>**: *Predominantly positive reviews are more influential at an Initial Stage of planning than at a Later Stage of planning.*

**H4<sub>B</sub>**: *Predominantly positive reviews are more influential at an Initial Stage of planning than at a Later Stage of planning, especially among conformist individuals.*

**H5<sub>A</sub>**: *Predominantly negative reviews are more influential at a Later Stage of planning than at an Initial Stage of planning.*

**H5<sub>B</sub>**: *Predominantly negative reviews are more influential at a Later Stage of planning than at an Initial Stage of planning, especially among conformist individuals.*

# CHAPTER 3 – Methodology

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This dissertation's chapter is dedicated to the methodology applied and emphasizes the processes used to collect and analyse the data. In order to collect the data, an online survey was conducted. Its creation and distribution are also mentioned in this chapter.

## 3.1 Research Objectives

In this dissertation, the main focus is on analyzing the influence of reviews' valence (independent variable) on Portuguese travellers' ATH and BI (dependent variables), to understand if there are significant differences between an IS and a LS of planning, considering the relationship between those variables.

Another variable related with the level of conformity embodied by Portuguese people was introduced, so that it would be possible to determine if it significantly affects the relationship between valence and BI.

## 3.2 Research Approach

Considering the purpose of the research, it is necessary to allocate the most appropriate strategies to the investigation, in order to address the initial Research Problem (Saunders *et al.*, 2009), whose clear definition is fundamental to start any project (Trochim and Donnelly, 2002).

This dissertation initiates with an exploratory study, developed in the course of a comprehensive literature review, to narrow the initial Research Problem, better clarify and frame it, further evidencing the research's viability. Then, a descriptive study was conducted to clearly understand the subjects on which it would be necessary to collect the data. Finally, an explanatory study was developed to comprehend the relationship between variables.

Thus, the chosen research strategy was an online survey, which included its design and distribution. This strategy allowed an economical collection of quantitative data from a considerable population, consequently evidencing certain relationships between variables (Saunders *et al.*, 2009).

The methodology implemented can be described as a 2 (review's valence: PPR vs PNR) x 2 (moment of trip planning: IS vs LS) experiment, in which an analysis between groups was performed on 2 constructs: ATH and BI. Furthermore, an analysis within groups

was also conducted on ATH, before and after reviews' exposure. Therefore, in the final survey (Appendix 1) respondents could be allocated to 1 out of 4 groups, which were designed considering different planning moments (IS, in which research was still occurring and LS, in which a booking had already occurred), but also differently valenced reviews, which were created after the results obtained on the survey's pre-test (Appendix 2). In the pre-test 61 participants were exposed to 6 PPR or PNR, from TripAdvisor (n.d.), to understand how to properly develop the *stimuli*. From its results, it was possible to improve the final survey's *stimuli*. In the pre-test and in the final survey, we targeted Portuguese respondents that travelled within the last 12 months.

### 3.3 Data Collection

To collect data, an online survey developed on the platform Qualtrics was distributed. Therefore, the quantitative primary data was obtained through this mean, so that the hypotheses could be tested. The survey's distribution was done by social media, especially Facebook, but also by email, to reach a representative number of answers and to guarantee, as well, their randomness. Considering financial and timing limitations, these alternatives were considered the less-costly and in which it was most likely to achieve the necessary number of answers, in the least period of time.

The survey is divided into different sections and its target is centred on Portuguese travellers. However, 3 screening questions were asked to filter it: the first question was made to confirm respondents' nationality and the second aimed to assess if participants took a trip during the past 12 months. To avoid biased answers, a question concerning if participants work on activities related with research, advertising, marketing, media or public relations or live with someone who is was asked.

The questionnaire's first part examined the profile of the sample in terms of travelling. Thus, respondents' travel frequency (Gretzel and Yoo, 2008), use of informational sources and conformity level (adapted from Tsao *et al.* (2015), in reference to Bearden *et al.* (1989), being used a 7 point Likert scale, in which 1 = "Totally Disagree" and 7 = "Totally Agree") were assessed. Then, travellers' frequency of use of online reviews, when planning a trip, was investigated.

Afterwards, the respondents were randomly allocated to 1 out of 4 groups (Table 1) and it was asked questions according to the planning phase they, imaginatively, were in: IS or LS. Therefore, some participants were at an IS, still conducting their travel search and

analyzing different alternatives, while others were at a LS, making use of reviews to confirm already taken decisions.

The respondents were presented to the “Danubius River Hotel”, a fictitious 3-star hotel in Budapest. This destination was chosen because it was elected the best European destination in 2019 (Ribeiro, 2019), but also because Portuguese are travelling more abroad, consequently using the Internet to make the majority of their international bookings (INE, 2019). Moreover, considering the wide accommodation offer in Budapest, the decision of creating a fictitious hotel refers to the fact that reviews can influence, in a greater extent, the attitude towards lesser known hotels (Vermeulen and Seegers, 2009).

<b>Group</b>	<b>Phase</b>	<b>Stimuli</b>
1	IS	6 PPR
2	IS	6 PNR
3	LS	6 PPR
4	LS	6 PNR

*Table 1 - Experimental Design Groups' Characterization | Author Elaboration*

A 3-star hotel was chosen, since this type of accommodation is characterized by its balance between quality and price (Widener, 2019), being considered a favourable option for European trips (Karnaghan, 2014). Also, according to the Hungarian Tourism Agency (2016), in 2016, the number of nights spent at 3-star hotels in Hungary, by international travellers, increased 9.4% when compared with the previous year: a growth higher than the one presented by 4-star hotels (6.4%) and 5-star hotels, which exhibited a decrease of 12.5%. Moreover, according to the Colliers International Hotel Market Report (2018), Budapest 3-star hotels' occupancy rate, in 2018, was superior than 76% and, in the same year, 564 new rooms became available, which is considerably higher than what was verified on 4 (142 new rooms) and 5-star hotels (0 new rooms).

The two scenarios (IS vs LS) differed on some aspects: at the IS, participants have never been at or heard of the hotel; whilst at the LS, participants have already booked a room at the accommodation, since it was highly recommended by a trusted friend, but before the actual departure, decide to go online to gather more information and confirm the decision. In both scenarios, information and pictures of the hotel (Trends, n.d.; Fuzeti, 2017; TripAdvisor, n.d.) were provided, since afterwards respondents had to evaluate their ATH by using a 7 point scale, being 1 = “Very Bad”/“Very Worthless”/“Very Unpleasant” and 7 = “Very Good”/“Very Valuable”/“Very Pleasant” (adapted from Zarrad and Debabi, 2015).

Then, participants were randomly exposed to 6 PPR (including 4 positive reviews, 1 neutral and 1 negative review) or 6 PNR (including 4 negative reviews, 1 neutral and 1 positive review) (adapted from Chan *et al.*, 2017) adapted from TripAdvisor. TripAdvisor was chosen as the travelling website for this dissertation since, among the currently available alternatives, it is considered the most successful in terms of content and use (Gretzel and Yoo, 2008). Moreover, according to Rokou (2012), 87% of the respondents who participated in an independent study, conducted in 2011 by PhoCusWright, considered TripAdvisor's reviews useful and almost all participants (98%) believed that its reviews were accurate.

Furthermore, according to Tsao *et al.* (2015), 6 reviews are considered ideal for most readers and, additionally, they usually pay more attention to the first 3 to 5 lines of each review. Thus, the created reviews contained 3 to 5 lines each and focused on several aspects, such as the evaluation of the staff, the room, hotel's location and service in general (adapted from Ladhari and Michaud, 2015). These aspects were selected because, according to Ögüta and Cezara (2012), they can be found as some of quality's subjective dimensions that most impact travellers' satisfaction and dissatisfaction regarding a hotel.

As TripAdvisor allows to rate a hotel from 1 to 5, the created positive reviews matched positive comments with ratings of 4 or above, negative reviews matched negative comments with ratings of 2 or below and neutral reviews matched neutral comments with a rating of 3 (adapted from Chan *et al.*, 2017).

After being exposed to each one of the reviews, respondents were asked to evaluate their perceptions concerning the valence of the review they had just read, according to a 7 point scale, being 1= "Extremely Negative" and 7 ="Extremely Positive" (adapted from Sparks and Browning, 2011).

After reading all 6 reviews, participants were, once again, asked to share their ATH by using the same scale adapted from Zarrad and Debabi (2015). This method allowed a better understanding concerning the influence of valence on ATH, before and after reviews' exposure.

Finally, respondents were asked to evaluate their BI, considering the scenario to which they were initially allocated. This construct was evaluated according to a 3 item metrics proposed by Dodds *et al.* (1991) and used by Tsao *et al.* (2015), measured through a 7 point

scale, being 1 = “Very Low” and 7 = “Very High”, in order to analyse the influence of reviews’ valence on BI.

It is important to emphasize that the questions asked were the same in both scenarios and that the only thing that differed was the moment of planning in which the respondents had to imagine they were in.

The ending of the survey referred to demographical questions related with the gender, age, level of education, current occupation and income of respondents.

The scale items used to develop the constructs into measurable forms, in the final survey, are presented below.

Construct	Items
Conformity	<p><b>1:</b> I rarely book rooms at the newest hotels, until I am sure my friends approve of them.</p> <p><b>2:</b> It is important that the others like the hotel I choose to stay at.</p> <p><b>3:</b> When selecting a hotel to stay at, I generally select hotels that I think the others will approve of.</p> <p><b>4:</b> When selecting a hotel to stay at, I generally select hotels recommended by friends.</p> <p><b>5:</b> I like to know what hotels make good impressions on others.</p> <p><b>6:</b> To make sure I select the right hotel, I often observe the hotels others have stayed at as well as their lodging experiences.</p>
ATH	<b>1/2/3:</b> Evaluate your attitude towards the hotel as a potential accommodation...
Valence	<b>1:</b> Overall, I felt the review was...
BI	<p><b>1:</b> My willingness to book (IS)/ to continue with a room booked (LS) at this hotel is...</p> <p><b>2:</b> The likelihood of booking (IS)/ of continuing with a room booked (LS) at this hotel is...</p> <p><b>3:</b> The probability that I would consider to book (IS)/ to continue with a room booked (LS) at this hotel is...</p>

*Table 2 - Scale Items | Author Elaboration*

### 3.3.1 Data Analysis

The gathered data was analysed through the use of *IBM® Statistics SPSS® version 25*. This program enabled a quantitative measure of the constructs considered in this dissertation, further highlighting the differences between an IS and a LS of planning a trip. Thereby, it was possible to test the hypotheses and understand how online reviews influence Portuguese travellers’ decision-making process.

Initially, a descriptive analysis was conducted on the demographic questions asked on the survey, with regard to gender, age, level of education, occupation and level of income. It was also performed on questions concerned with the profile of the sample in terms of travelling and its use and perception of online travel reviews.

Furthermore, considering the need to verify the questionnaire's scales reliability, Cronbach's alpha was used to understand if they consistently exhibited the constructs being measured (Field, 2009). Then, the Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was performed to recognize the existing linear components within the data (Field, 2009) and it was extracted the same number of factors as the constructs considered in the analysis. This procedure certified the survey's validity, which refers to the fact that it actually measures what is supposed to (Field, 2009), through its application on 12 items with rotation varimax.

In order to test the hypotheses, the Kolmogorov- Smirnov (K-S) test was conducted to verify if the distribution of the sample was normal (Field, 2009). Depending on the results, parametric or non-parametric tests would be better suited to continue the analysis. The results demonstrated that the population is not normally distributed, which led to the use of non-parametric tests to analyse the hypotheses.

In all performed tests, it was considered a confidence level of 95%, which signifies that the null-hypotheses were rejected when the p-values were lower than 0.05.

# CHAPTER 4 – Results

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In this chapter, the data collected and the results of its analysis will be presented, considering the methodology described previously. The analysis was performed to attain conclusions regarding the initial RQs, through hypotheses testing.

## 4.1 Sample Description

### 4.1.1 Demographics

The survey's distribution resulted in 302 complete answers and an additional 126 that did not meet some requirements. Moreover, since the participants were randomly allocated to 1 out of 4 groups, it was possible to guarantee their homogeneity, since each one gathered nearly 25% of the total sample (Table 3).

Group	Phase	Stimuli	No. Participants
1	IS	6 PPR	74
2	IS	6 PNR	79
3	LS	6 PPR	78
4	LS	6 PNR	71

*Table 3 - Number of Participants per Research Group | Author Elaboration*

The analysis demonstrated that 43.4% of the participants are male and 56.6% are female, meaning that the questionnaire was fully answered by 131 men and 171 women (Table 4).

Gender			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Male	131	43,4
	Female	171	56,6
	Total	302	100

*Table 4 – Gender | Author Elaboration*

The age ranges were established according to those presented on a study conducted by INE/ PORDATA (2019) about the characterization of the travelling Portuguese population by age group. Given this, the most representative age range is 15-24 (42.7%) and the least significant refers to individuals who are less than 15 years old (0.3%) (Table 5).



Age			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	< 15 years old	1	,3
	15 - 24 years old	129	42,7
	25 - 44 years old	81	26,8
	45 - 64 years old	73	24,2
	> = 65 years old	18	6,0
	Total	302	100

Table 5 – Age | Author Elaboration

The majority of the respondents have a Bachelor Degree (53.6%) and the least representative categories are the ones which refer to individuals whose highest level of education is a Doctoral Degree and the 4<sup>th</sup> Grade (0.3%) (Table 6).

Education Level			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	4th Grade	1	,3
	9th Grade	5	1,7
	12th Grade	81	26,8
	Bachelor	162	53,6
	Master	52	17,2
	PhD	1	,3
	Total	302	100

Table 6 - Education Level | Author Elaboration

48.7% of the respondents are workers, followed by those who are students (31.8%), as demonstrated below.

Current Occupation			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Student	96	31,8
	Worker	147	48,7
	Student - Worker	23	7,6
	Unemployed	12	4,0
	Retired	24	7,9
	Total	302	100

Table 7 - Current Occupation | Author Elaboration

Additionally, 41.7% of the respondents have a monthly income between 1000€ and 2000€. 14.9% have a monthly income equal or higher than 3001€ and 12.3% have a monthly income bellow 1000€ (Table 8).

<b>Monthly Household Income</b>			
		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Valid</b>	<b>&lt; 1000€</b>	37	12,3
	<b>1000€ - 2000€</b>	126	41,7
	<b>2001€ - 3000€</b>	94	31,1
	<b>&gt; = 3001€</b>	45	14,9
	<b>Total</b>	302	100

*Table 8 - Monthly Household Income | Author Elaboration*

#### 4.1.2 Profile of the sample in terms of travelling

In the questionnaire, at this point, 110 participants had already been automatically excluded, since they did not meet the target requirements, resulting in a population of 318 individuals. Most of the participants (54.1%) took between 1 and 2 trips during the past year (Table 9).

<b>During the last 12 months, how many trips have you taken?</b>			
		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Valid</b>	<b>1 - 2</b>	172	54,1
	<b>3 - 4</b>	102	32,1
	<b>&gt; = 5</b>	44	13,8
	<b>Total</b>	318	100

*Table 9 - Frequency of travelling during the past year | Author Elaboration*

Furthermore, the means revealed a low use of traditional means (3.16); a frequent use of friends and family's opinions (4.69) and travel websites (4.77). Both travel blogs (4.12) and social media (4.08) are only sometimes used and travel websites are used more frequently by travellers (5.54) (Table 10).

		Traditional Means		Friends and Family		Official Destination and Hotel Websites	
Valid		Frequency	Mean	Frequency	Mean	Frequency	Mean
	1 - Never	57	3,16	5	4,69	10	4,77
	2	61		13		12	
	3	60		16		23	
	4 - Sometimes	80		92		64	
	5	40		129		121	
	6	15		42		63	
	7 - Always	5		21		25	
		Travel Blogs		Travel Websites		Social Media	
Valid		Frequency	Mean	Frequency	Mean	Frequency	Mean
	1 - Never	34	4,12	9	5,54	27	4,08
	2	29		11		33	
	3	36		10		54	
	4 - Sometimes	74		28		73	
	5	71		67		67	
	6	59		96		34	
	7 - Always	15		97		30	
Total		318				318	

Table 10 - Frequency of use of different informational means | Author Elaboration

Concerning participants' frequency of use of the Internet when planning a trip, 309 responses were considered, since 9 individuals stated never using travel websites, thus being automatically excluded. Most of the participants (62.1%) always use the Internet when planning a trip, as demonstrated below.

How often do you use the Internet, when you decide to plan a trip?			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Never	2	,6
	Almost Never	0	0
	Rarely	0	0
	Sometimes	14	4,5
	Frequently	43	13,9
	Almost Always	58	18,8
	Always	192	62,1
	Total	309	100

Table 11- Internet Use | Author Elaboration

At conformity's assessment (Table 12), the means revealed a high level of agreement regarding generally selecting hotels recommended by friends, liking to stay at hotels that make a good impression on others and observing which hotels are selected by others, as well

as their lodging experiences. In this analysis, 307 participants were considered, since 2 of them revealed not using the Internet when making travelling arrangements, being excluded from the questionnaire.

For further details on this construct, consult appendix 3.

<b>When selecting a hotel to stay at, I generally select hotels recommended by friends</b>			
		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Mean</b>
<b>Valid</b>	<b>1 – Totally Disagree</b>	7	5,05
	<b>2</b>	24	
	<b>3</b>	17	
	<b>4 – Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	38	
	<b>5</b>	79	
	<b>6</b>	96	
	<b>7 – Totally Agree</b>	46	
	Total	307	
<b>I like to know what hotels make good impressions on others</b>			
<b>Valid</b>	<b>1 – Totally Disagree</b>	27	5,10
	<b>2</b>	19	
	<b>3</b>	12	
	<b>4 – Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	19	
	<b>5</b>	48	
	<b>6</b>	126	
	<b>7 – Totally Agree</b>	56	
	Total	307	
<b>To make sure I select the right hotel, I often observe the hotels others have stayed at as well as their lodging experiences</b>			
<b>Valid</b>	<b>1 – Totally Disagree</b>	14	5,31
	<b>2</b>	19	
	<b>3</b>	11	
	<b>4 – Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	24	
	<b>5</b>	57	
	<b>6</b>	109	
	<b>7 – Totally Agree</b>	73	
	Total	307	

*Table 12 - Conformity Tables | Author Elaboration*

#### *4.1.3 Travellers' use of online travel reviews*

Additionally, it was found that 35.2% of the participants always read online reviews when planning a trip. 1.6% never read online reviews and the same percentage of participants just does it rarely (Table 13).

When you use the Internet to plan your trips, how often do you read other travellers' reviews?			
Valid		Frequency	Percent
	Never	5	1,6
	Almost Never	1	,3
	Rarely	5	1,6
	Sometimes	35	11,4
	Frequently	75	24,4
	Almost Always	78	25,4
	Always	108	35,2
	Total	307	100

Table 13 - Use of other travellers' reviews | Author Elaboration

## 4.2 Survey Validation

According to Tsang *et al.* (2017), validating a questionnaire is critical to certify that it is “psychometrically sound”. Therefore, to demonstrate the validity and reliability of the questionnaire, it is important to conduct validation processes, in which a representative sample is used. These measures will express that the data obtained is consistent, but also that it measures what is intended to (Tsang *et al.*, 2017). In this process, a sample of N = 302 will be considered.

### 4.2.1. Reliability

Considering that the research instrument is constituted by several Likert scales, the necessity of confirming their reliability arose. Thus, Cronbach’s alpha was used to verify each construct’s internal consistency. The Cronbach’s alpha found from the first to the last considered construct was 0.888, 0.907, 0.981 and 0.982, respectively.

The results demonstrate high reliability between the data, especially concerning the second, the third and the fourth constructs (Table 14).

Cronbach’s Alphas		
Dimension	Number of Items	$\alpha$
1 <sup>st</sup> Construct: Conformity	6	0,888
2 <sup>nd</sup> Construct: ATH before reviews' exposure	3	0,907
3 <sup>rd</sup> Construct: ATH after reviews' exposure	3	0,981
4 <sup>th</sup> Construct: BI	3	0,982

Table 14 - Cronbach's Alphas | Author Elaboration

Previous researchers stated that alphas lower than 0.6 are not acceptable (van Griethuijsen *et al.*, 2015). In this case, all alphas are higher than 0.6, revealing general reliability of the scales used (Field, 2009).

#### 4.2.2 Validity

With the intention of understanding if the research instrument was fulfilling its purpose, the PCA was conducted. This analysis aimed to reduce the set of variables considered in the questionnaire, as to identify the components that account for most of their original variance (Laerd Statistics, n.d.). In this analysis 12 components were considered, since the constructs “ATH after reviews’ exposure” and “Valence” were not included. From its results, it was possible to conclude that 3 factors were extracted, which explain 77.429% of variance. The first factor – Conformity – explains 33.293% of variance, the second – ATH before reviews’ exposure – explains 23.933% and the last – BI – explains 19.574%. In the table below, the extraction values of each item are presented, which refer to the proportion that is explained by the principal components.

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value revealed that the sample is valid (KMO = 0.811) (Field, 2009). The previous conclusions are summarized on table 15.

After finishing the PCA and in order to perform the normality test and remaining analysis, the items which assessed the variables were summed and then divided by their total number, thus making new ones. These were then used to perform the remaining analysis in this dissertation.

PCA			
KMO = 0,811			
Component			
	1	2	3
Conformity (6 items)			
a. I rarely book rooms at the newest hotels, until I am sure my friends approve of them.	0,661		
b. It is important the others like the hotels I choose to stay at.	0,760		
c. When selecting a hotel to stay at, I generally select hotels that I think the others will approve of.	0,796		
d. When selecting a hotel to stay at, I generally select hotels recommended by friends.	0,586		
e. I like to know what hotels make good impressions on others.	0,640		
f. To make sure I select the right hotel, I often observe the hotels others have stayed at as well as their lodging	0,635		

experiences.				
<b>ATH before reviews' exposure (3 items)</b>				
Very Bad – Very Good		0,864		
Very Worthless – Very Valuable		0,758		
Very Unpleasant – Very Pleasant		0,723		
<b>BI (3 items)</b>				
My willingness to...			0,946	
The likelihood of...			0,967	
The probability that...			0,955	
				<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>% Variance Explained</b>	33,293%	23,933%	19,574%	77,429%

*Table 15 – PCA | Author Elaboration*

Please consult appendix 4 for further details on this analysis.

### 4.3 Normality Test

To analyse the hypotheses, a normality test was conducted to verify if the population followed a normal distribution. If a normal distribution is followed, parametric tests can be used, otherwise, non-parametric tests must be performed. Thus, a K-S test was conducted to check one of most statistical tests' requirements.

To perform the test, the hypotheses were analysed separately to observe if each construct followed a normal distribution. By observing the results below, it is not possible to believe that the constructs follow a normal distribution, being rejected the null hypothesis of the K-S test (p-values  $\leq 0.05$ ). As a result, non-parametric tests will be used to examine the hypotheses.



Normality Tests				
Hypothesis	Construct		Kolmogorov-Smirnov test <sup>a</sup>	
		Group	Statistic	Sig
H1 <sub>A</sub> /H1 <sub>B</sub>	Valence	PPR	,329	,001
H1 <sub>A</sub> /H1 <sub>B</sub>	Valence	PNR	,346	,000
H1 <sub>A</sub> /H1 <sub>B</sub>	BI	PPR	,294	,002
H1 <sub>A</sub> /H1 <sub>B</sub>	BI	PNR	,282	,000
H2 <sub>A</sub> /H2 <sub>B</sub> /H2 <sub>C</sub>	Valence	PPR	,329	,005
H2 <sub>A</sub> /H2 <sub>B</sub> /H2 <sub>D</sub>	Valence	PNR	,346	,001
H2 <sub>A</sub> /H2 <sub>B</sub> /H2 <sub>C</sub> /H2 <sub>D</sub>	ATH before reviews' exposure	PPR	,246	,000
H2 <sub>C</sub> /H2 <sub>D</sub>	ATH after reviews' exposure	PNR	,237	,000
H3 <sub>A</sub>	Valence	Conformists (PPR)	,370	,000
H3 <sub>A</sub>	Valence	Non – Conformists (PPR)	,341	,000
H3 <sub>B</sub>	Valence	Conformists (PNR)	,378	,000
H3 <sub>B</sub>	Valence	Non – Conformists (PNR)	,299	,002
H3 <sub>A</sub>	Conformity	Conformists (PPR)	,236	,000
H3 <sub>A</sub>	Conformity	Non – Conformists (PPR)	,214	,000
H3 <sub>B</sub>	Conformity	Conformists (PNR)	,250	,001
H3 <sub>B</sub>	Conformity	Non – Conformists (PNR)	,258	,000
H3 <sub>A</sub>	BI	Conformists (PPR)	,300	,000
H3 <sub>A</sub>	BI	Non - Conformists (PPR)	,275	,000
H3 <sub>B</sub>	BI	Conformists (PNR)	,299	,000
H3 <sub>B</sub>	BI	Non – Conformists (PNR)	,283	,005
H4 <sub>A</sub> /H5 <sub>A</sub>	Valence	IS (PPR)	,333	,000
H4 <sub>A</sub> /H5 <sub>A</sub>	Valence	IS (PNR)	,341	,000
H4 <sub>A</sub> /H5 <sub>A</sub>	Valence	LS (PPR)	,330	,000
H4 <sub>A</sub> /H5 <sub>A</sub>	Valence	LS (PPR)	,361	,000
H4 <sub>A</sub> /H5 <sub>A</sub>	ATH after reviews' exposure	IS (PPR)	,264	,002
H4 <sub>A</sub> /H5 <sub>A</sub>	ATH after reviews' exposure	IS (PNR)	,190	,000
H4 <sub>A</sub> /H5 <sub>A</sub>	ATH after reviews' exposure	LS (PPR)	,274	,000
H4 <sub>A</sub> /H5 <sub>A</sub>	ATH after	LS (PNR)	,186	,000

	reviews' exposure			
H4 <sub>A</sub> /H5 <sub>A</sub>	BI	IS (PPR)	,299	,000
H4 <sub>A</sub> /H5 <sub>A</sub>	BI	IS (PNR)	,302	,000
H4 <sub>A</sub> /H5 <sub>A</sub>	BI	LS (PPR)	,289	,001
H4 <sub>A</sub> /H5 <sub>A</sub>	BI	LS (PNR)	,261	,000
H4 <sub>B</sub> /H5 <sub>B</sub>	Valence	IS (PPR/Conformists)	,386	,000
H4 <sub>B</sub> /H5 <sub>B</sub>	Valence	IS (PPR/Non - Conformists)	,316	,005
H4 <sub>B</sub> /H5 <sub>B</sub>	Valence	LS (PPR/Conformists)	,357	,000
H4 <sub>B</sub> /H5 <sub>B</sub>	Valence	LS (PPR/Non – Conformists)	,400	,000
H4 <sub>B</sub> /H5 <sub>B</sub>	Valence	IS (PNR/Conformists)	,402	,000
H4 <sub>B</sub> /H5 <sub>B</sub>	Valence	IS (PNR/Non - Conformists)	,302	,000
H4 <sub>B</sub> /H5 <sub>B</sub>	Valence	LS (PNR/Conformists)	,429	,000
H4 <sub>B</sub> /H5 <sub>B</sub>	Valence	LS (PNR/Non – Conformists)	,318	,000
H4 <sub>B</sub> /H5 <sub>B</sub>	ATH after reviews' exposure	IS (PPR/Conformists)	,280	,001
H4 <sub>B</sub> /H5 <sub>B</sub>	ATH after reviews' exposure	IS (PPR/Non - Conformists)	,276	,000
H4 <sub>B</sub> /H5 <sub>B</sub>	ATH after reviews' exposure	LS (PPR/Conformists)	,275	,001
H4 <sub>B</sub> /H5 <sub>B</sub>	ATH after reviews' exposure	LS (PPR/Non – Conformists)	,217	,000
H4 <sub>B</sub> /H5 <sub>B</sub>	ATH after reviews' exposure	IS (PNR/Conformists)	,262	,002
H4 <sub>B</sub> /H5 <sub>B</sub>	ATH after reviews' exposure	IS (PNR/Non - Conformists)	,242	,000
H4 <sub>B</sub> /H5 <sub>B</sub>	ATH after reviews' exposure	LS (PNR/Conformists)	,244	,000
H4 <sub>B</sub> /H5 <sub>B</sub>	ATH after reviews' exposure	LS (PNR/Non – Conformists)	,203	,001
H4 <sub>B</sub> /H5 <sub>B</sub>	BI	IS (PPR/Conformists)	,308	,000
H4 <sub>B</sub> /H5 <sub>B</sub>	BI	IS (PPR/Non - Conformists)	,272	,000
H4 <sub>B</sub> /H5 <sub>B</sub>	BI	LS (PPR/Conformists)	,292	,000
H4 <sub>B</sub> /H5 <sub>B</sub>	BI	LS (PPR/Non – Conformists)	,278	,000

H4 <sub>B</sub> /H5 <sub>B</sub>	BI	IS (PNR/Conformists)	,315	,000
H4 <sub>B</sub> /H5 <sub>B</sub>	BI	IS (PNR/Non - Conformists)	,296	,005
H4 <sub>B</sub> /H5 <sub>B</sub>	BI	LS (PNR/Conformists)	,286	,000
H4 <sub>B</sub> /H5 <sub>B</sub>	BI	LS (PNR/Non – Conformists)	,255	,000
H4 <sub>B</sub> /H5 <sub>B</sub>	Conformity	IS (PPR/Conformists)	,242	,005
H4 <sub>B</sub> /H5 <sub>B</sub>	Conformity	IS (PPR/Non - Conformists)	,219	,000
H4 <sub>B</sub> /H5 <sub>B</sub>	Conformity	LS (PPR/Conformists)	,243	,001
H4 <sub>B</sub> /H5 <sub>B</sub>	Conformity	LS (PPR/Non – Conformists)	,232	,000
H4 <sub>B</sub> /H5 <sub>B</sub>	Conformity	IS (PNR/Conformists)	,261	,000
H4 <sub>B</sub> /H5 <sub>B</sub>	Conformity	IS (PNR/Non - Conformists)	,287	,001
H4 <sub>B</sub> /H5 <sub>B</sub>	Conformity	LS (PNR/Conformists)	,241	,000
H4 <sub>B</sub> /H5 <sub>B</sub>	Conformity	LS (PNR/Non – Conformists)	,240	,000

<sup>a</sup>Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 16 - Kolmogorov – Smirnov test | Author Elaboration

#### 4.4 Sample Validation

Considering that, in the survey, the respondents were randomly allocated to 1 out of 4 groups, it was mandatory to verify if those were comparable in demographical terms, use of online reviews and ATH, before reviews' exposure. Moreover, it was necessary to verify if the reviews were perceived as significantly different between groups (individuals exposed to PPR vs exposed PNR), further guaranteeing that the *stimuli* were properly developed.

##### 4.4.1 Demographical questions

Primarily, it was verified if the groups were demographically comparable: the variables “Age”, “Education Level” and “Monthly Household Income” were analysed through One-way ANOVA. It was concluded that the differences in “Age”, “Education Level” and “Monthly Household Income” were not statistically significant between groups (p-values > 0.05), thus making them comparable (Table 17).

The variables “Gender” and “Current Occupation” were measured through a nominal scale. Therefore, the Chi-Square test was performed to analyse if there were significant differences between the groups (Field, 2009). The results obtained highlighted that the groups were similar (p-values > 0.05) (Table 17).

Conclusion	Sig.	Decision
The groups are comparable regarding Age.	0,354	Do not reject the null hypothesis.
The groups are comparable regarding Education Level.	0,763	Do not reject the null hypothesis.
The groups are comparable regarding Monthly Household Income.	0,947	Do not reject the null hypothesis.
The groups are comparable regarding Gender.	0,422	Do not reject the null hypothesis.
The groups are comparable regarding Current Occupation.	0,984	Do not reject the null hypothesis.

Table 17 - Demographical questions | Author Elaboration

For further details regarding the tests performed on “Gender” and “Current Occupation”, consult the information provided on appendices 5 and 6, respectively.

#### 4.4.2 Use of online reviews when planning a trip

The use of online reviews was assessed through the performance of One-way ANOVA. The results highlighted that the groups were similar ( $p\text{-value} = 0.890 > 0.05$ ), thus making them comparable (Table 18).

Conclusion	Sig.	Decision
The groups are comparable regarding use of online reviews.	0,890	Do not reject the null hypothesis.

Table 18 - Use of online reviews | Author Elaboration

#### 4.4.3 Attitude towards a hotel before reviews' exposure

In this case, the construct was observed as a whole, resulting of the mean of the 3 items which assessed it. Through the performance of One-way ANOVA, it was concluded that the groups were comparable concerning ATH before reviews' exposure ( $p\text{-value} = 0.143 > 0.05$ ) (Table 19).

Conclusion	Sig.	Decision
The groups are comparable regarding ATH before reviews' exposure.	0,143	Do not reject the null hypothesis.

Table 19 - ATH before reviews' exposure | Author Elaboration

#### 4.4.4 Reviews' valence perception

The Mann-Whitney U test was performed to assess if the reviews in the predominantly positive scenario were perceived as significantly different from those presented on the predominantly negative scenario. Therefore, the responses regarding participants' perceptions on reviews' valence were compared between independent groups (individuals exposed to PPR vs individuals exposed to PNR). It was concluded that the reviews were perceived as significantly different between groups (p-value = 0 < 0.05) (Table 20).

Conclusion	Sig.	Decision
The groups are significantly different regarding their perceptions on reviews' valence.	,000	Reject the null hypothesis.

Table 20 - Reviews' valence perception | Author Elaboration

After verifying the groups' similarity, the phase of analysing the relationship between the constructs mentioned on the RQs has been reached, so that the hypotheses can be tested. For further details on the variables' means compared on the previous tests, consult appendix 7.

#### 4.5 Hypotheses Analysis

##### *H1<sub>A</sub> and H1<sub>B</sub>*

To test both hypotheses, it was created a variable which consisted of the mean of the items which assessed BI.

**H1<sub>A</sub>**: *The effect of predominantly positive reviews is significantly distinct from the effect of predominantly negative reviews on Portuguese travellers' BI.*

Regarding **H1<sub>A</sub>**, the Mann –Whitney U test was performed to compare 2 groups: individuals exposed to PPR and PNR, concerning their BI (Appendix 8).

**H1<sub>A</sub>**: The null hypothesis of the test was rejected (p-value < 0.05), being concluded that the BI's means are significantly different when compared between groups (Table 21), which is also highlighted on the descriptive analysis (Table 22): after exposed to PPR, travellers' BI are significantly higher (5.65), than when exposed to PNR (2.32). Thus, **H1<sub>A</sub>** is accepted.

**H1<sub>B</sub>:** *Predominantly positive reviews have a significant correlation with Portuguese travellers' BI.*

To test **H1<sub>B</sub>**, Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation was conducted to assess if there was an association between review's valence and BI, being both variables measured through a 7 point scale. Through this test, it was possible to understand the relationship's direction and strength.

**H1<sub>B</sub>:** When the relationship between reviews' valence and BI was tested, the null hypothesis that states that there is not a statistically significant association between variables was rejected ( $p$ -value < 0.05). Moreover, the direction of the relationship is positive, meaning that the more positive the reviews, the higher the BI and the more negative the reviews, the lower the BI. Thus, it is possible to accept **H1<sub>B</sub>** (Table 23).

Mann-Whitney U test – BI	
Asympt. Sig (2-tailed)	,000

*Table 21 – Mann-Whitney U test: BI | Author Elaboration*

Report (BI)		
Group	Mean	Std. Deviation
PPR	5,65	1,16
PNR	2,32	1,27

*Table 22 - Means: BI | Author Elaboration*

Correlations			
Spearman's rho	Valence		,204
	PPR	Correlation Coefficient	
		Sig (2 – tailed)	

*Table 23 – Correlations between valence and BI | Author Elaboration*

*H2<sub>A</sub>; H2<sub>B</sub>; H2<sub>C</sub> and H2<sub>D</sub>*

The sample was divided into 2 groups to analyse these hypotheses: individuals exposed to PPR vs individuals exposed to PNR (Appendix 8) and it were created variables which consisted of the mean of the items which assessed ATH.

**H2<sub>A</sub>:** *The effect of predominantly positive reviews is significantly distinct from the effect of predominantly negative reviews on Portuguese travellers' ATH.*

To examine **H2<sub>A</sub>**, the Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to verify if ATH, after reviews' exposure, differed significantly between groups.

**H2<sub>A</sub>:** The null hypothesis of the test was rejected (p-value < 0.05), being concluded that the ATH's means, after reviews' exposure, are significantly different when compared between groups (Table 24), which is also evinced on Table 27. Thus, **H2<sub>A</sub>** is accepted.

**H2<sub>B</sub>:** *Predominantly positive reviews have a significant correlation with Portuguese travellers' ATH.*

Regarding **H2<sub>B</sub>**, Spearman's Rank Order Correlation was performed to assess the association between valence and ATH, considering that both were measured through an ordinal scale.

**H2<sub>B</sub>:** The null hypothesis of the test was rejected, meaning that there is a statistically significant association between variables (p-value < 0.05). The direction of the relationship is positive, so the more positive the reviews, the better the ATH, whilst the more negative the reviews, the worse the ATH. Thus, it is possible to accept **H2<sub>B</sub>** (Table 25).

**H2<sub>C</sub>:** *Predominantly positive reviews can generate a significant positive change in Portuguese travellers' ATH, when compared pre and post exposure.*

**H2<sub>D</sub>:** *Predominantly negative reviews can generate a significant negative change in Portuguese travellers' ATH, when compared pre and post exposure.*

To test **H2<sub>C</sub>** and **H2<sub>D</sub>**, an analysis within groups was performed, being run the Wilcoxon Sign Rank test to verify if those differed significantly concerning their ATH, before and after reviews' exposure. Further conclusions were taken through a descriptive analysis.

**H2<sub>C</sub>** and **H2<sub>D</sub>:** The results demonstrate that individuals exposed to PNR significantly changed their initial ATH (p-value < 0.05), which did not happen to those exposed to PPR (p – value > 0.05) (Table 26). The descriptive analysis revealed that travellers' initial ATH was positive, since its mean was close to 6. When the means regarding both constructs were compared, it was concluded that after being exposed to PPR, travellers' attitude became slightly better. The

opposite scenario occurred when travellers were exposed to PNR: their attitude got worse, in an accentuated degree (Table 27). Thus, PPR can favourably change the general ATH, but not significantly, while PNR can negatively change it, significantly. Therefore, **H2<sub>C</sub>** is rejected and **H2<sub>D</sub>** is accepted.

Mann-Whitney U test – ATH after reviews' exposure	
Asympt. Sig (2-tailed)	,000

Table 24 - Mann Whitney U test: ATH after reviews' exposure | Author Elaboration

Correlations			
Spearman's rho	Valence		,388
	PPR	Correlation Coefficient	
		Sig (2 – tailed)	

Table 25- Correlations between valence and ATH after reviews' exposure | Author Elaboration

Wilcoxon Sign Rank test – ATH before vs after reviews' exposure	
PPR	
Asympt. Sig (2-tailed)	,316
PNR	
Asympt. Sig (2-tailed)	,000

Table 26 – Wilcoxon Sign Rank test: ATH before and after reviews' exposure | Author Elaboration

Descriptives (ATH before reviews' exposure)			
Mean	5,94	Std. Deviation	1,05
Report (ATH after reviews' exposure)			
Group	Mean	Std. Deviation	
PPR	6	1,07	
PNR	2,64	1,33	

Table 27 - Means: ATH | Author Elaboration



### *H3<sub>A</sub> and H3<sub>B</sub>*

**H3<sub>A</sub>:** *The influence of predominantly positive reviews on bookings is significantly higher for individuals high in conformism than for individuals low in conformism.*

**H3<sub>B</sub>:** *The influence of predominantly negative reviews on bookings is significantly higher for individuals high in conformism than for individuals low in conformism.*

To test these hypotheses, it was necessary to divide the sample into individuals exposed to PPR vs individuals exposed to PNR. Then, those 2 groups were split according to individuals' conformity level (Appendix 8): it was computed the mean of the questions which assessed reviews' valence (Table 29), which were then categorized according to participants' conformity level, being that determined through the calculation of the conformity questions' mean (Table 29). Participants whose means were higher than 4 were considered conformists, while the non-conformists were the ones whose means were lower than 4. In the survey, there were no individuals whose means were equal to 4, demonstrating that the participants were either conformists or non-conformists.

The Mann-Whitney U test was performed, so that the influence of valence (PPR vs PNR) on BI could be compared among groups: individuals high vs individuals low in conformity. Further conclusions were taken from a descriptive analysis.

**H3<sub>A</sub>:** The null hypothesis was rejected (p-values < 0.05), meaning that the BI' means of conformists and non-conformists, exposed to PPR, are significantly different (Table 28). The descriptive analysis led to the conclusion that the exposure to PPR translates into higher BI, especially concerning conformists (Table 29). Therefore, **H3<sub>A</sub>** can be accepted.

**H3<sub>B</sub>:** The null hypothesis was rejected (p-value < 0.05), highlighting that the BI' means of conformists and non-conformists, exposed to PNR, are significantly different (Table 28). The descriptive analysis emphasized that the exposure to PNR is more damaging concerning the BI of conformists (Table 29). Thus, **H3<sub>B</sub>** is accepted.

<b>Mann-Whitney U test – BI after PPR exposure</b>	
<b>Asympt. Sig (2-tailed)</b>	,004
<b>Mann-Whitney U test – BI after PNR exposure</b>	
<b>Asympt. Sig (2-tailed)</b>	0,014

*Table 28 – Mann-Whitney U test: BI after reviews' exposure | Author Elaboration*

Report (Valence)			Report (BI)	
Group	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Conformists (PPR)	5,57	,34	5,99	,96
Non-Conformists (PPR)	5,40	,52	5,69	1,07
Conformists (PNR)	2,14	,43	2,05	1,36
Non-Conformists (PNR)	2,43	,67	2,52	1,10

*Table 29 - Means: Conformists and Non - Conformists valence perceptions and BI | Author Elaboration*

*H4<sub>A</sub>; H4<sub>B</sub>; H5<sub>A</sub> and H5<sub>B</sub>*

**H4<sub>A</sub>:** *Predominantly positive reviews are more influential at an Initial Stage of planning than at a Later Stage of planning.*

**H5<sub>A</sub>:** *Predominantly negative reviews are more influential at a Later Stage of planning than at an Initial Stage of planning.*

To analyze H4<sub>A</sub> and H5<sub>A</sub>, the Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted to verify if there were significant differences in travellers' BI and ATH, after reviews' exposure (it were created variables which consisted of the mean of the items which assessed them), considering distinct planning phases (Appendix 8).

**H4<sub>A</sub>:** The null hypothesis of the test was rejected (p-values < 0.05); consequently proving the influence of valence and phase of planning on both constructs (Table 30). The descriptive analysis highlighted that PPR are more influential on the BI of those who are at a LS, but generate a better ATH at an IS (Table 31). **H4<sub>A</sub>** is rejected concerning the influence of PPR on BI, but accepted regarding its influence on ATH.

**H5<sub>A</sub>:** The null hypothesis of the test was rejected (p-values < 0.05), meaning that ATH and BI are significantly different, considering the type of reviews and planning phase to which travellers' are exposed to (Table 30). The descriptive analysis highlighted that PNR are more negatively influential at a LS, regarding both constructs (Table 31). Thus, **H5<sub>A</sub>** is accepted.

**H4<sub>B</sub>**: *Predominantly positive reviews are more influential at an Initial Stage of planning than at a Later Stage of planning, especially among conformist individuals.*

**H5<sub>B</sub>**: *Predominantly negative reviews are more influential at a Later Stage of planning than at an Initial Stage of planning, especially among conformist individuals.*

The same procedure was used regarding H4<sub>B</sub> and H5<sub>B</sub>. In this case, the sample was initially divided into 2 scenarios (PPR vs PNR), then split according to the planning phase to which individuals were exposed (IS vs LS) and finally divided according to respondents' conformity level (high vs low), thus making 8 groups (Appendix 8). Further conclusions were taken through a descriptive analysis.

**H4<sub>B</sub>** and **H5<sub>B</sub>**: The null hypothesis of the test was rejected (p-values < 0.05), which means that conformity also affects travellers' ATH and BI (Table 30). The descriptive analysis highlighted that PPR and PNR are more influential on conformists' ATH and BI than on those of non-conformists: PPR lead to higher BI at a LS, but generate a better ATH at an IS. However, PNR are more negatively influential at a LS, concerning both constructs (Table 31). Thus, **H4<sub>B</sub>** is rejected concerning the influence of PPR on BI, but accepted regarding its influence on ATH, while **H5<sub>B</sub>** is accepted.

A summary table is presented on appendix 9, in which it is listed if the tests performed let to the acceptance or rejection of the hypotheses presented in this dissertation.

<b>Kruskal – Wallis test</b>	
<b>H4<sub>A</sub> and H5<sub>A</sub></b>	<b>BI</b>
Asymp. Sig	,000
	<b>ATH</b>
Asymp. Sig	,000
<b>H4<sub>B</sub> and H5<sub>B</sub></b>	<b>BI</b>
Asymp. Sig	,000
	<b>ATH</b>
Asymp. Sig	,000

*Table 30 - Kruskal - Wallis test: BI and ATH after reviews' exposure | Author Elaboration*

Report (BI)			Report (ATH)	
H4 <sub>A</sub> and H5 <sub>A</sub>				
Group	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
IS + PPR	5,71	1,03	6,03	,95
IS + PNR	2,20	1,27	2,63	1,31
LS + PPR	6,07	1,10	6,02	1,04
LS + PNR	2,16	1,34	2,62	1,36
H4 <sub>B</sub> and H5 <sub>B</sub>	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Conformists + PPR (IS)	5,89	,99	6,12	1,20
Conformists + PPR (LS)	6,09	1,08	6	,81
Conformists + PNR (IS)	2,23	1,34	2,34	1,30
Conformists + PNR (LS)	1,86	1,12	2,23	1,06
Non – Conformists + PPR (IS)	5,30	,96	5,87	,87
Non – Conformists + PPR (LS)	6,08	,54	5,83	,46
Non – Conformists + PNR (IS)	2,61	1,45	3,33	1,40
Non – Conformists + PNR (LS)	2,42	1,36	3,23	1,29

Table 31 - Means: BI and ATH after reviews' exposure | Author Elaboration

# CHAPTER 5 – Conclusions, Limitations and Future Research

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In this chapter, it will be exhibited the final conclusions of the present research, as well as its limitations, considering the influence of reviews on Portuguese travellers' decision-making process. Furthermore, it will be suggested some indications for future research.

## Conclusions

The focus of this dissertation was on determining the influence of reviews' valence on Portuguese travellers' decision-making process, considering how the level of conformity embodied by them could affect their touristic perceptions and choices. Therefore, the findings were centred on the impact valence exerts on ATH and BI, at different planning stages.

It was concluded that the more positive the reviews to which travellers are exposed to, the better their ATH and the higher their BI. These findings reinforced the conclusions of Mauri and Minnazi (2013), according to whom PPR can positively affect travellers' BI, whilst the exposure to PNR produces the contrary. Accordingly, the conclusions reached regarding the relationship between valence and ATH are in agreement with those of Sparks and Browning (2011) and Vermeulen and Seegers (2009), since PPR have the ability to generate a better attitude towards a destination, whilst PNR origin the opposite outcome.

Moreover, Gretzel and Yoo (2008) had already proven the phases at which travellers consider reviews more useful: IS, in which touristic research is still being conducted and LS, in which travellers resort to eWOM to check their previous decisions. However, it was found that the degree to which valence affects BI and ATH is not the same at both stages. Additionally, regarding tourism, conformity had already been demonstrated as a significant construct, given that conformists are more easily persuaded by reviews' content and make their choices according to the information they have read (Deutsch and Gerard, 1955; Lascu and Zinkhan, 1999 as cited in Tsao *et al.*, 2015). The results found are aligned with the conclusions just presented, since the influence of valence is stronger regarding conformists' decision-making process, either at an IS or LS of planning.

In this dissertation, 4 RQs were proposed. The first and the second RQs were established within the same scope, in which it was aimed to determine the effect of valence on Portuguese travellers' BI, further analyzing if conformity significantly influences that

relationship. Vermeulen and Seegers (2009) had already demonstrated the impact that one variable has on the other, proving that reviews' valence, positive or negative, affects touristic decisions. The analysis performed revealed that valence has a significantly distinct effect on travellers' BI, depending on the type of reviews to which they are exposed to (H1<sub>A</sub>), since the more positive the reviews, the higher the BI and the more negative, the lower the BI (H1<sub>B</sub>). Furthermore, it was also found that the influence of valence on BI is significantly higher among conformists (H3<sub>A</sub> and H3<sub>B</sub>). This finding relies on the conclusions of Papyrina (2012): conformists behave according to other travellers' opinions, which means that when exposed to PPR, their BI tend to be higher than those of non-conformists (H3<sub>A</sub>), whilst the exposure to PNR generates the opposite effect (H3<sub>B</sub>).

The third RQ focused on determining the effect of valence on travellers' ATH. It was revealed that PPR and PNR have a significantly different effect on ATH (H2<sub>A</sub>), once the more positive the reviews, the higher travellers' ATH and the more negative, the lower their ATH (H2<sub>B</sub>). The analysis **within groups** demonstrated that the exposure to PNR can significantly change travellers' ATH, for worse (H2<sub>D</sub>), while the exposure to PPR can favourably change it, but not in a significant degree (H2<sub>C</sub>). The fourth RQ was related with aspects investigated in the previous questions: ATH and BI were investigated **between groups**. As a result, it was demonstrated that PPR are more influential at an IS regarding travellers' ATH, but lead to higher BI at a LS (H4<sub>A</sub>). This particular conclusion is not in agreement with that of Zarrad and Debabi (2015), according to whom positive reviews lead to higher BI, at an IS. Additionally, PNR were found to be more damaging towards both constructs at a LS (H5<sub>A</sub>), as proven by Vermeulen and Seegers (2009).

Finally, it was demonstrated that PPR and PNR are more influential regarding conformists' decision-making process, when compared to that of non-conformists: PPR lead to a better ATH, at an IS, but provoke higher BI at a LS (H4<sub>B</sub>). PNR, however, more easily persuade conformists' BI and ATH, at a LS (H5<sub>B</sub>).

## 5.1 Academic Implications

Considering touristic products and services' particularities, the impact of eWOM on travellers' behaviours has already been validated by several researchers. As previously mentioned, online users have been attributing a rising level of importance to the opinions of their peers and embodying a higher level of resistance concerning traditional marketing

strategies. Nonetheless, little investigation has still been conducted regarding eWOM's influence among different nationalities and at different phases of trip planning.

This study highlights relevant aspects for touristic companies, particularly for hotels, but also for marketers, by providing advantageous insights regarding the need to understand the benefits and the consequences of online reviews for businesses' performance.

Moreover, touristic companies should be aware of the content that is published online about their services and facilities, since it can affect travellers' BI and ATH. Therefore, these companies' management should put an additional effort on tracking and monitoring negative comments in a proper and effective way, thus preventing their online dissemination and overwhelming effect they can produce on travellers' behaviours, particularly of the ones more inclined towards conformity. Companies' online presence and involvement demonstrates that they are aware and concerned about travellers' experiences, consequently proving to potential customers that they are working on improving what is currently disappointing. This action might reinforce touristic companies' mission of pleasing customers, resulting in a better and more meaningful relationship with them.

## **5.2 Limitations and Future Research**

In this dissertation, there are several limitations to consider, especially with regard to the size and constitution of the sample. First of all, 428 answers were gathered, from which only 302 met the total requirements to test the hypotheses.

Concerning the distribution of the survey, social media channels and email were mainly used. Hereafter, to overcome the research constraints related with sample size, other communication tools and channels could be used and a more intensive distribution of the survey, through social media, could be attempted. Moreover, the non-representativeness of the Portuguese population was particularly observed in terms of age, considering that the majority of the participants were aged between 15 and 24 years old, which highlight some of the issues of the distribution methods used.

Other relevant constraints are related with the methodology: participants were randomly allocated to 1 out of 4 groups, in which they had to pretend to be in a particular situation. Therefore, the exposure to a specific scenario, in which a fictitious hotel and reviews were presented, might have created complications regarding the comprehension of the survey's structure. Despite the extensive research made to create credible *stimuli*, their

production can also be faced as a limitation: the *stimuli*' layout and content were adapted from those presented on TripAdvisor, a travelling website known by the general audience, which could have influenced the final results.

Some of the limitations presented above could be surpassed with future research, further enriching the findings of this dissertation. Primarily, future research could focus on other aspects that might affect the influence of reviews on ATH and BI, such as reviewer-reader similarities or sources' credibility. Also, the consideration of other dependent variables, like customers' perception of quality, loyalty, intention to recommend or repurchase a service, would bring additional insights for this field of study. Secondly, to eliminate awareness and credibility bias that can be associated with existing websites, future researchers should create their own. Additionally, if possible, the experiments conducted in the future should be run in a laboratory, consequently improving the findings' applicability and the number of valid answers.

Finally, it would be interesting to investigate deeper on this topic regarding the influence of eWOM among other nationalities, besides Portuguese.



# CHAPTER 6 - Reference List

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# Appendices

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## Appendix 1 | English and Portuguese Versions

**Q1** Dear Participant,

The survey that you are about to answer was developed as part of my thesis, requirement of the Master in Management with Specialization in Strategic Marketing at Católica Lisbon SBE.

This research instrument aims to investigate what is the influence of social media on the Tourism Industry.

The duration of the survey will be of 5 minutes and all the collected data will be anonymous and confidential, being only used for purposes of research.

Thank you for your availability to answer the questionnaire, as well as the time taken to complete it.

Maria Carolina Claro

**Q1** Caro participante,

O questionário que está prestes a responder foi desenvolvido no âmbito da minha tese, requisito do Mestrado em Gestão com especialização em Marketing Estratégico da Católica Lisbon SBE.

Este instrumento de investigação pretende avaliar qual é a influência das redes sociais na Indústria do Turismo.

A duração do questionário será de cerca de 5 minutos e toda a informação será recolhida de forma anónima e confidencial, sendo apenas utilizada para propósitos de investigação.

Muito obrigada pela disponibilidade e tempo despendido na realização do questionário.

Maria Carolina Claro

**Q2** Is your nationality Portuguese? | **Q2** É de nacionalidade Portuguesa?

Yes (1) | Sim (1)

No (2) | Não (2)

*Skip To: End of Survey If Is your nationality Portuguese? = No*

*Skip To: Q4 If Is your nationality Portuguese? = Yes*

**Q3** Do you remember taking a trip during the last 12 months? | **Q3** Lembra-se de fazer alguma viagem nos últimos 12 meses?

Yes (1) | Sim (1)

No (2) | Não (2)

*Skip To: Q5 If Do you remember taking a trip during the last 12 months? = Yes*

*Skip To: End of Survey If Do you remember taking a trip during the last 12 months? = No*

**Q4** Are you currently working on activities related with research, advertising, marketing, media or public relations or live with someone who is? | **Q4** Encontra-se, presentemente, a trabalhar em atividades relacionadas com investigação, publicidade, marketing, meios de comunicação ou relações públicas ou vive com alguém que esteja?

Yes (1) | Sim (1)

No (2) | Não (2)

*Skip To: End of Survey If Are you currently working on activities related with research, advertising, marketing, media or p... = Yes*

*Skip To: End of Block If Are you currently working on activities related with research, advertising, marketing, media or p... = No*

**Q5** During the last 12 months, how many trips have you taken? | **Q5** Nos últimos 12 meses, quantas viagens fez?

1 - 2 trips (1) | 1 - 2 viagens (1)

3 - 4 trips (2) | 3 - 4 viagens (2)

> = 5 trips (3) | > = 5 viagens (3)

**Q6** Evaluate the frequency of use of the following means as a source of information, when making travel arrangements: | **Q6** Avalie a frequência com que utiliza os seguintes meios como fonte de informação, quando planeia uma viagem:

	1 - Never (1)	2 - Almost Never (2)	3 - Rarely (3)	4 - Sometimes (4)	5 - Frequently (5)	6 - Almost Always (6)	7 - Always (7)
a. Traditional Means (eg. TV, Radio, Magazines/Newspapers) (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Friends and Family (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Official Destination and Hotel Websites (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Travel Blogs (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. Travel Websites (eg. Booking, TripAdvisor, etc.) (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. Social Media (eg. Facebook, Instagram, etc.) (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	1 - Nunca (1)	2 - Quase Nunca (2)	3 - Raramente (3)	4 - Às vezes (4)	5 - Frequentemente (5)	6 - Quase Sempre (6)	7 - Sempre (7)
a. Meios tradicionais (TV, Radio, Revistas/Jornais) (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Amigos e Familiares (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Páginas oficiais de destinos e hotéis (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Blogs de Viagens (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. Websites de Viagens (ex. Booking, TripAdvisor, etc.) (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. Redes Sociais (ex. Facebook, Instagram, etc.) (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*Skip To: End of Survey If Evaluate the frequency of use of the following means as a source of information, when making trav... = a. Traditional Means (eg. TV, Radio, Magazines/Newspapers)*

**Q7** How often do you use the Internet, when you decide to plan a trip? | **Q7** Com que frequência utiliza a Internet, quando decide planejar uma viagem?

- Never (1) | Nunca (1)
- Almost Never (2) | Quase Nunca (2)
- Rarely (3) | Raramente (3)
- Sometimes (4) | Às vezes (4)
- Frequently (5) | Frequentemente (5)
- Almost Always (6) | Quase Sempre (6)
- Always (7) | Sempre (7)

*Skip To: End of Survey If How often do you use the Internet, when you decide to plan a trip? = Never*

**Q8** Concerning the decisions you have to make when planning a trip, express your level of agreement with the following statements: | **Q8** Expresse o seu nível de concordância relativamente às seguintes frases, sendo estas sobre decisões a tomar no planeamento de uma viagem:

	1 - Totally Disagree (1)	2 - Disagree (2)	3 -More or Less Disagree (3)	4 - Neither Agree Nor Disagree (4)	5 - More or Less Agree (5)	6 - Agree (6)	7 - Totally Agree (7)
a. I rarely book rooms at the newest hotels, until I am sure my friends approve of them. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. It is important that the others like the hotel I chose to stay at. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<p>c. When selecting a hotel to stay at, I generally select hotels that I think the others will approve of. (3)</p>	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<p>d. When selecting a hotel to stay at, I generally select hotels recommended by friends. (4)</p>	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<p>e. I like to know what hotels make good impressions on others. (5)</p>	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
<p>f. To make sure I select the right hotel, I often observe the hotels others have stayed at as well as their lodging experiences. (6)</p>	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

	1 - Discordo Totalmente (1)	2 - Discordo (2)	3 - Discordo Mais ou Menos (3)	4 - Nem Concordo nem Discordo (4)	5 - Concordo Mais ou Menos (5)	6 - Concordo (6)	7 - Concordo Totalmente (7)
a. Raramente reservo quartos em hotéis mais recentes, até ter a certeza que os meus amigos os aprovam. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. É importante que os outros gostem do hotel que escolho para ficar. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Quando escolho um hotel para ficar, geralmente seleciono hotéis que penso que outros irão aprovar. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Quando escolho um hotel para ficar, geralmente seleciono hotéis que foram recomendados por amigos. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. Gosto de saber que hotéis causam boas impressões nos outros. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. De forma a ter a certeza que seleciono o hotel certo, observo frequentemente os hotéis onde outros estiveram, assim como as suas experiências de alojamento. (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Q9** When you use the Internet to plan your trips, how often do you read other travellers' reviews? | **Q9** Quando utiliza a Internet para planear as suas viagens, com que frequência lê os comentários realizados por outros turistas?

- Never (1) | Nunca (1)
- Almost Never (2) | Quase Nunca (2)
- Rarely (3) | Raramente (3)
- Sometimes (4) | Às vezes (4)
- Frequently (5) | Frequentemente (5)
- Almost Always (6) | Quase Sempre (6)
- Always (7) | Sempre (7)

*Skip To: End of Survey If When you use the Internet to plan your trips, how often do you read other travellers' reviews? = Never*

**Q10** Imagine that you are planning on doing a trip to Budapest, the best European destination for 2019. You are conducting your travel research through TripAdvisor and the “Danubius River Hotel”, a 3-star hotel, appears as a possible alternative to your accommodation. You have never heard about this hotel before and this is the first time you are gathering more information about it. Look at the “Danubius River Hotel” pictures available at TripAdvisor: **(IS)** | **Q10** Imagine que se encontra a planear uma viagem a Budapeste, o melhor destino Europeu de 2019. Encontra-se a fazer pesquisa relativa à viagem no TripAdvisor e o "Danubius River Hotel", um hotel de 3 estrelas, surge como uma possível alternativa de alojamento. Nunca ouviu nada sobre este hotel e esta é a primeira vez que se encontra a recolher mais informação sobre o mesmo. Observe as fotografias do "Danubius River Hotel" disponíveis no TripAdvisor: **(IS)**

**Q11** Pretend that you are planning on doing a trip to Budapest, the best European destination for 2019. You have already taken care of accommodation and booked a room at a 3-star hotel named “Danubius River Hotel”. A friend recommended that hotel and since you highly trust him, you decided to book the room without consulting any other information about it. However, your departure day is arriving and, considering that you want to make sure that all the decisions you have taken were the right ones, you decide to go online and check more information about the hotel. Look at the “Danubius River Hotel” pictures available at TripAdvisor: **(LS)** | **Q11** Imagine



que se encontra a planear uma viagem a Budapeste, o melhor destino Europeu de 2019. Já tomou a decisão quanto ao alojamento e reservou um quarto num hotel 3 estrelas, chamado "Danubius River Hotel". Um amigo recomendou-lhe este hotel e, tendo em conta que confia muito nele, decidiu reservar o quarto sem antes consultar qualquer outra informação sobre o mesmo. No entanto, o seu dia de partida está a chegar e, tendo em conta que quer ter a certeza de todas as decisões que tomou, decide ir verificar mais informações online sobre o hotel. Observe as fotografias do "Danubius River Hotel" disponíveis no TripAdvisor: **(LS)**



**Q12** Reception Area| Recepção  
Pequeno-Almoço



**Q13** Bedroom| Quarto



**Q14** Breakfast Area| Sala de

**Q15** Evaluate your attitude towards the hotel as a potential accommodation (1 = "Very Bad", "Very Worthless", "Very Unpleasant" and 7 = "Very Good", "Very Valuable", "Very Pleasant"): | **Q15** Exprese a sua avaliação em relação ao hotel como possível alojamento (1 = "Muito Mau", "Sem qualquer Valor", "Muito Desagradável" e 7 = "Muito Bom", "Com muito Valor" e "Muito Agradável"):

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)	
Very Bad   Muito Mau	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very Good   Muito Bom
Very Worthless   Sem qualquer valor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very Valuable   Com muito valor
Very Unpleasant   Muito Desagradável	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very Pleasant   Muito Agradável

**Q16** Now, continue on pretending that you have never heard about this hotel and that you are still evaluating different accommodation alternatives. **(IS)** | **Q16** Agora, continue a imaginar

que nunca ouviu falar sobre este hotel e que ainda se encontra a avaliar diferentes alternativas de alojamento. (IS)

**Q17** Now, continue on pretending that you have already booked a room at this hotel and that you are just gathering more information about it. (LS) **Q17** | Agora, continue a imaginar que já reservou um quarto neste hotel e que se encontra apenas a recolher informação sobre o mesmo. (LS)

**Q18** Look at the following reviews from TripAdvisor, concerning the “Danubius River Hotel”: | **Q18** Observe os seguintes comentários online disponíveis no TripAdvisor, relativamente ao "Danubius River Hotel":

### Predominantly Positive Scenario

**Q19**



#### Comfortable hotel in the city centre!

The room was quite spacious, the bed was comfortable and there was plenty of hot water for a shower. The television had international channels and not only Hungarian, which served to distract us a little when we were in the room.

The location of the hotel is excellent! Recommend for everyone interested in staying in the centre of the city, close to all attractions.



#### Hotel no centro da cidade com todos os confortos!

O quarto era bastante espaçoso, a cama era confortável e existia bastante água quente para um duche. A televisão tinha canais internacionais e não apenas húngaros, o que serviu para nos distrairmos um pouco quando estávamos no quarto.

A localização do hotel é excelente! Recomendo para qualquer pessoa interessada em ficar no centro da cidade, perto de todas as atrações.

**Q20** After reading the review, express your level of agreement with the following statement: |

**Q20** Depois de ler o comentário online, expresse o seu nível de concordância com a seguinte frase:

	1 - Extr. Negative (1)	2 - Negative (2)	3 - More or less Negative (3)	4 - Neither Positive nor Negative (4)	5 - More or less Positive (5)	6 - Positive (6)	7 - Extr. Positive (7)
Overall, I felt the review was... (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	1 - Extr. Negativo (1)	2 - Negativo (2)	3 - Mais ou menos Negativo (3)	4 - Nem Positivo nem Negativo (4)	5 - Mais ou menos Positivo (5)	6 - Positivo (6)	7 - Extr. Positivo (7)
No geral, senti que o comentário era... (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Q21



#### True hospitality!

I arrived early after a night-train trip and I was very grateful that they had the room prepared and gave it to me immediately. The staff was always helpful and the breakfast was good. The bedrooms served perfectly our needs.

The hotel is in a great location to visit the town!



#### Verdadeira hospitalidade!

Cheguei cedo depois de uma viagem de comboio durante a noite e fiquei bastante agradecido de me terem dado o quarto de imediato. O staff foi sempre prestável e o pequeno-almoço era bom. Os quartos serviram perfeitamente as nossas necessidades.

O hotel está numa excelente localização para visitar a cidade!

**Q22** After reading the review, express your level of agreement with the following statement: |

**Q22** Depois de ler o comentário online, expresse o seu nível de concordância com a seguinte

	1 - Extr. Negative (1)	2 - Negative (2)	3 - More or less Negative (3)	4 - Neither Positive nor Negative (4)	5 - More or less Positive (5)	6 - Positive (6)	7 - Extr. Positive (7)
Overall, I felt the review was... (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



**Q25**



**Basic Hotel**

The hotel served for the purpose of our trip.

The breakfast was continental type.

The hotel staff fulfilled what was intended.



**Hotel básico**

O hotel serviu para o efeito da nossa viagem.

O pequeno-almoço era do tipo continental.

O staff do hotel cumpriu com aquilo que era pretendido.

**Q26** After reading the review, express your level of agreement with the following statement: |

**Q26** Depois de ler o comentário online, expresse o seu nível de concordância com a seguinte frase:

	1 - Extr. Negative (1)	2 - Negative (2)	3 - More or less Negative (3)	4 - Neither Positive nor Negative (4)	5 - More or less Positive (5)	6 - Positive (6)	7 - Extr. Positive (7)
Overall, I felt the review was... (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	1 - Extr. Negativo (1)	2 - Negativo (2)	3 - Mais ou menos Negativo (3)	4 - Nem Positivo nem Negativo (4)	5 - Mais ou menos Positivo (5)	6 - Positivo (6)	7 - Extr. Positivo (7)
No geral, senti que o comentário era... (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Q27**



**Terrible service**

Avoid this hotel at all costs if you are searching for a place where you can feel welcome! The staff was really rude and it seemed to look at guests with superiority. The rooms were not very clean and it was necessary maintenance in several areas.



**Serviço terrível**

Evita este hotel a todos os custos se procuras um local onde te sintas bem-vindo! O staff era bastante rude e parecia olhar com superioridade em relação aos hóspedes. Os quartos não estavam muito limpos e era necessária manutenção em várias áreas.


Quando voltar a Budapeste, ficarei noutra local!


**Q28** After reading the review, express your level of agreement with the following statement: |

**Q28** Depois de ler o comentário online, expresse o seu nível de concordância com a seguinte frase:

	1 - Extr. Negative (1)	2 - Negative (2)	3 - More or less Negative (3)	4 - Neither Positive nor Negative (4)	5 - More or less Positive (5)	6 - Positive (6)	7 - Extr. Positive (7)
Overall, I felt the review was... (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	1 - Extr. Negativo (1)	2 - Negativo (2)	3 - Mais ou menos Negativo (3)	4 - Nem Positivo nem Negativo (4)	5 - Mais ou menos Positivo (5)	6 - Positivo (6)	7 - Extr. Positivo (7)
No geral, senti que o comentário era... (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Q29**

  
**Fantastic holidays May 2019**  
 We had an amazing stay at this hotel! The rooms were clean and the breakfast was fabulous! The location was excellent, near all points of interest in Budapest.  
 We recommend this hotel! We would love to come back another time!

  
**Fantásticas férias Maio 2019**  
 Tivemos uma excelente estadia neste hotel! Os quartos eram limpos e o pequeno-almoço era fabuloso! A localização era excelente, perto de todos os pontos de interesse em Budapeste.  
 Recomendamos este hotel! Adorariamos voltar noutra altura!

**Q30** After reading the review, express your level of agreement with the following statement: |

**Q30** Depois de ler o comentário online, expresse o seu nível de concordância com a seguinte

	1 - Extr. Negative (1)	2 - Negative (2)	3 - More or less Negative (3)	4 - Neither Positive nor Negative (4)	5 - More or less Positive (5)	6 - Positive (6)	7 - Extr. Positive (7)
Overall, I felt the review was... (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	1 - Extr. Negativo (1)	2 - Negativo (2)	3 - Mais ou menos Negativo (3)	4 - Nem Positivo nem Negativo (4)	5 - Mais ou menos Positivo (5)	6 - Positivo (6)	7 - Extr. Positivo (7)
No geral, senti que o comentário era... (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Predominantly Negative Scenario

#### Q31



#### Hotel away from the centre without any comfort!

The room was tiny, the bed was not comfortable and hot water showers were a mirage. The television had little channels offer, being them all Hungarian, which led us to not use it.

The location of the hotel was terrible! I do not recommend this hotel, since it is not situated at the city centre, consequently taking much time to arrive to all attractions.



#### Hotel longe do centro sem quaisquer confortos!

O quarto era minúsculo, a cama era desconfortável e duchas com água quente foram uma miragem. A televisão tinha pouca oferta de canais, sendo todos húngaros, o que levou a que não usássemos a mesma.

A localização do hotel é terrível! Não recomendo este hotel, pois não fica no centro da cidade, levando a que se leve muito tempo a chegar a todas as atrações.


**Q32** After reading the review, express your level of agreement with the following statement: |

**Q32** Depois de ler o comentário online, expresse o seu nível de concordância com a seguinte



	1 - Extr. Negative (1)	2 - Negative (2)	3 - More or less Negative (3)	4 - Neither Positive nor Negative (4)	5 - More or less Positive (5)	6 - Positive (6)	7 - Extr. Positive (7)
Overall, I felt the review was... (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	1 - Extr. Negativo (1)	2 - Negativo (2)	3 - Mais ou menos Negativo (3)	4 - Nem Positivo nem Negativo (4)	5 - Mais ou menos Positivo (5)	6 - Positivo (6)	7 - Extr. Positivo (7)
No geral, senti que o comentário era... (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>


### Q33



**Without any hospitality!**

I arrived early after a night-train trip and I was very surprised and disappointed that they did not have the room prepared and did not give it to me immediately. The staff was not helpful and the breakfast was not good at all. The rooms did not fulfil the minimal needs.

The hotel is in a terrible location to visit the town.



**Sem qualquer hospitalidade!**

Cheguei cedo depois de uma viagem de comboio durante a noite e fiquei bastante surpreendido e desagrado de não me terem dado o quarto de imediato. O staff nunca se demonstrou prestável e o pequeno-almoço não era nada bom. Os quartos não cumpriram as mínimas necessidades.

O hotel está numa péssima localização para visitar a cidade!

**Q34** After reading the review, express your level of agreement with the following statement: |

**Q34** Depois de ler o comentário online, expresse o seu nível de concordância com a seguinte frase:



	1 - Extr. Negative (1)	2 - Negative (2)	3 - More or less Negative (3)	4 - Neither Positive nor Negative (4)	5 - More or less Positive (5)	6 - Positive (6)	7 - Extr. Positive (7)
Overall, I felt the review was... (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	1 - Extr. Negativo (1)	2 - Negativo (2)	3 - Mais ou menos Negativo (3)	4 - Nem Positivo nem Negativo (4)	5 - Mais ou menos Positivo (5)	6 - Positivo (6)	7 - Extr. Positivo (7)
No geral, senti que o comentário era... (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Q35

  
**Bad hotel**  
 It is a mediocre hotel, in a not very good location. The staff was always very rude, even after I have made the check-out.  
 I left my phone at the hotel and, when I was at the airport, called there and suggested they bring it to me. They said it was not possible and I ended up without phone.

  
**Mau hotel**  
 É um hotel medíocre, numa localização não muito boa. O staff foi sempre muito rude, até mesmo após ter feito o check-out.  
 Deixei o meu telemóvel no hotel e, quando estava no aeroporto, liguei para lá e sugeri que me fossem lá levá-lo. Disseram que não seria possível e assim, fiquei sem telemóvel.

**Q36** After reading the review, express your level of agreement with the following statement: |

**Q36** Depois de ler o comentário online, expresse o seu nível de concordância com a seguinte frase:

	1 - Extr. Negative (1)	2 - Negative (2)	3 - More or less Negative (3)	4 - Neither Positive nor Negative (4)	5 - More or less Positive (5)	6 - Positive (6)	7 - Extr. Positive (7)
Overall, I felt the review was... (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



**Q39**



**Good service**

Visit this hotel if you are searching for a place where you can feel welcome! The staff was really friendly and attentive to all guests. The rooms were really clean and all areas of the hotel were well maintained.



**Serviço espetacular**

Visita este hotel se procuras um local onde te sintas bem-vindo! O staff era bastante simpático e atencioso para com todos os hóspedes. Os quartos estavam muito limpos e todas as áreas do hotel estavam bem mantidas.

**Q40** After reading the review, express your level of agreement with the following statement: |

**Q40** Depois de ler o comentário online, expresse o seu nível de concordância com a seguinte frase:

	1 - Extr. Negative (1)	2 - Negative (2)	3 - More or less Negative (3)	4 - Neither Positive nor Negative (4)	5 - More or less Positive (5)	6 - Positive (6)	7 - Extr. Positive (7)
Overall, I felt the review was... (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	1 - Extr. Negativo (1)	2 - Negativo (2)	3 - Mais ou menos Negativo (3)	4 - Nem Positivo nem Negativo (4)	5 - Mais ou menos Positivo (5)	6 - Positivo (6)	7 - Extr. Positivo (7)
No geral, senti que o comentário era... (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Q41**



**Terrible holidays May 2019**

We had a terrible stay at this hotel! The rooms were dirty and the breakfast was awful! The location was bad, far from all points of interest in Budapest.

We do not recommend this hotel! We would hate to come back another time!



**Terríveis férias Maio 2019**

Tivemos uma péssima estadia neste hotel! Os quartos estavam sujos e o pequeno-almoço era terrível! A localização era má, longe de todos os pontos de interesse em Budapeste.

Não recomendamos este hotel! Detestaríamos voltar noutra altura!

**Q42** After reading the review, express your level of agreement with the following statement: |

**Q42** Depois de ler o comentário online, expresse o seu nível de concordância com a seguinte frase:

	1 - Extr. Negative (1)	2 - Negative (2)	3 - More or less Negative (3)	4 - Neither Positive nor Negative (4)	5 - More or less Positive (5)	6 - Positive (6)	7 - Extr. Positive (7)
Overall, I felt the review was... (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	1 - Extr. Negativo (1)	2 - Negativo (2)	3 - Mais ou menos Negativo (3)	4 - Nem Positivo nem Negativo (4)	5 - Mais ou menos Positivo (5)	6 - Positivo (6)	7 - Extr. Positivo (7)
No geral, senti que o comentário era... (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Q43** Evaluate your attitude towards the hotel as a potential accommodation, after reading the online reviews (1 = "Very Bad", "Very Worthless", "Very Unpleasant" and 7 = "Very Good", "Very Valuable", "Very Pleasant"): **Q43** Expresse a sua avaliação em relação ao hotel como possível alojamento, depois de ter lido os comentários online (1 = "Muito Mau", "Sem qualquer Valor", "Muito Desagradável" e 7 = "Muito Bom", "Com muito Valor" e "Muito Agradável"):

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)	
Very Bad   Muito Mau	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very Good   Muito Bom
Very Worthless   Sem qualquer valor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very Valuable   Com muito valor
Very Unpleasant   Muito Desagradável	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very Pleasant   Muito Agradável

**Q44** Continuing on imagining that you have never heard about the “Danubius River Hotel” before (**IS**) / Continuing on imagining that you have already booked a room at the “Danubius River Hotel” (**LS**), evaluate your booking intentions after reading the reviews: | **Q44** Continuando a imaginar que nunca ouviu falar sobre o "Danubius River Hotel" (**IS**)/ Continuando a imaginar que já reservou um quarto no "Danubius River Hotel" (**LS**), avalie as suas intenções de reserva, depois de ter lido os comentários:

	1 - Very Low (1)	2 - Low (2)	3 - More or Less Low (3)	4 - Neither High nor Low (4)	5 - More or Less High (5)	6 - High (6)	7 - Very High (7)
a. A minha vontade de reservar um quarto <b>(IS)</b> / de continuar com um quarto reservado <b>(LS)</b> neste hotel é... (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. A possibilidade de reservar um quarto <b>(IS)</b> / de continuar com um quarto <b>(LS)</b> reservado neste hotel é... (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. A probabilidade de considerar reservar um quarto <b>(IS)</b> / de continuar com um quarto <b>(LS)</b> reservado neste hotel é... (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	1 - Very Low (1)	2 - Low (2)	3 - More or Less Low (3)	4 - Neither High nor Low (4)	5 - More or Less High (5)	6 - High (6)	7 - Very High (7)
a. My willingness to book a room <b>(IS)</b> / to continue with a room booked <b>(LS)</b> at this hotel is... (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. The likelihood of booking a room <b>(IS)</b> / of continuing with a room booked <b>(LS)</b> at this hotel is... (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. The probability that I would consider to book a room <b>(IS)</b> / to continue with a room booked <b>(LS)</b> at this hotel is... (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Q45 Gender | Q45 Género**

Male (1) | Masculino (1)

Female (2) | Feminino (2)

**Q46 Age | Q46 Idade**

- < 15 years old (1) | < 15 anos de idade (1)
- 15 - 24 years old (2) | 15 - 24 anos de idade (2)
- 25 - 44 years old (3) | 25 - 44 anos de idade (3)
- 45 - 64 years old (4) | 45 - 64 anos de idade (4)
- > = 65 years old (6) | > = 65 anos de idade (6)

**Q47 Education Level | Q47 Nível de Educação**

- 4th Grade (1) | 4º ano (1)
- 9th Grade (2) | 9º ano (2)
- 12th Grade (3) | 12º ano (3)
- Bachelor (4) | Licenciatura (4)
- Master (5) | Mestrado (5)
- PhD (6) | Doutoramento (6)

**Q48 Current Occupation | Q48 Ocupação Atual**

- Student (1) | Estudante (1)
- Worker (2) | Trabalhador (a) (2)
- Student - Worker (3) | Trabalhador (a) - Estudante (3)
- Unemployed (4) | Desempregado (a) (4)
- Retired (5) | Reformado (a) (5)

#### Q49 Monthly Household Income | Q49 Rendimento Mensal Agregado Familiar:

- < 1000€ (1) | < 1000€ (1)
- 1000€ - 2000€ (2) | 1000€ - 2000€ (2)
- 2001€ - 3000€ (3) | 2001€ - 3000€ (3)
- > = 3001€ (4) | > = 3001€ (4)

#### Appendix 2 | Results of the Pre-Test

61 participants were randomly exposed either to a scenario composed by 6 PPR or PNR, in order to determine if those were perceived as significantly different from each other or not. First, a descriptive analysis was conducted: the respondents were exposed to 6 PPR or PNR and, afterwards, were asked to express their level of agreement with the following sentence: “After reading the review, I felt it was...” by using a 7 point scale, being 1 = “Extremely Negative” and 7 = “Extremely Positive”. The means concerning the predominantly positive scenario were, in general, higher than the ones verified in the opposite scenario.

Descriptives			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
PPR Question 1	30	5,33	1,124
PPR Question 2	30	6,10	,803
PPR Question 3	30	5,73	1,143
PPR Question 4	30	4,10	1,125
PPR Question 5	30	1,97	1,098
PPR Question 6	30	6,80	,551
PNR Question 1	31	2,16	,934
PNR Question 2	31	1,19	,477
PNR Question 3	31	3,74	,999
PNR Question 4	31	1,32	,702
PNR Question 5	31	2,29	,938
PNR Question 6	31	6,06	,680

Then, in order to compare the means of the two independent groups, the Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to determine if there was statistical evidence that valence had any significant effect on participants' responses means. This test was conducted because it was verified, through the performance of the K-S test, that the populations did not follow a normal population (p-values = 0 < 0.05), therefore not enabling the conduction of the Independent Samples t test.

<b>Kolmogorov-Smirnov test</b>			
		PPR	PNR
<b>N</b>		30	31
<b>Most Extreme Differences</b>	Absolute	,332	,388
	Positive	,258	,376
	Negative	-,316	-,311
<b>Kolmogorov- Smirnov Z</b>		,332	,388
<b>Asymp. Sig (2-tailed)</b>		,000 <sup>a</sup>	,000 <sup>a</sup>

According to the results obtained in the test, it was possible to conclude that the response means of participants exposed to a predominantly negative scenario and the response means of participants exposed to a predominantly positive scenario were significantly different.

<b>Test Statistics<sup>a</sup></b>	
	Response Means
<b>Asymp. Sig (2-tailed)</b>	,000
a.Grouping Variable: PPR vs PNR scenario	

A further analysis on the results obtained on the pre-test was done to understand if reviews, individually, were perceived as it was intended too. First, the individual responses regarding positive reviews and negative reviews were compared to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between them. Once more, since 2 independent samples were being compared, the Mann-Whitney U test was performed. The results obtained led to the conclusion that the means were significantly different between groups, highlighting that positive reviews were perceived as such and significantly different from negative reviews, and vice-versa.

<b>Test Statistics<sup>a</sup></b>	
	Positive Reviews - Negative Reviews
<b>Asymp. Sig (2-tailed)</b>	,000
a.Grouping Variable: Positive Reviews vs Negative Reviews	

Then, positive reviews were compared with neutral reviews, but, in this case, since the samples were dependent, once the participants exposed to positive reviews had also to express their evaluation towards a neutral review, the Wilcoxon Sign Ranks test was performed. The results of the test led to the conclusion that the means, within the same group, were significantly different, which emphasized that participants perceived positive reviews as different from the neutral review to which they were presented to.



Test Statistics <sup>a</sup>	
	Neutral Reviews – Positive Reviews
<b>Asymp. Sig (2-tailed)</b>	,000
a. Wilcoxon Sign Ranks Test	


The exact same procedure was used to compare negative reviews and neutral reviews, once the participants exposed to negative reviews were also exposed to a neutral review. The results of the test led to the conclusion that participants also perceived negative reviews as different from the neutral review to which they were exposed to.


Test Statistics <sup>a</sup>	
	Neutral Reviews – Negative Reviews
<b>Asymp. Sig (2-tailed)</b>	,000
a. Wilcoxon Sign Ranks Test	


The neutral review to which participants were exposed was the same in both scenarios. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that positive, neutral and negative reviews were perceived as significantly different from each other.

The reviews used in both scenarios are presented below:

## PPR SCENARIO


  
**Old hotel in city center. Good price and comfortable**
  
[Tradução do Google](#)
  
 «My room was not spacious but the bed was comfortable and there was plenty of hot water for a shower. The TV had English channels
   
 I would recommend this hotel to anyone interested in being in the City Center.»


  
**Budapest City Visit**
  
[Tradução do Google](#)
  
 «I arrived early from an overnight train journey and was very pleased to have been given my room immediately. Staff were friendly and helpful and breakfast very good . Would have liked more storage space in my room ( drawers or shelves), but otherwise adequate. Hotel is good location for visiting the city»


  
**Nice hotel**
  
[Tradução do Google](#)
  
 «This is a nice hotel in a good location. However it is old and I prefer modern hotels. Very helpful staff. I left my phone when checking out and I rang from train station and suggested they get a taxicab to deliver it to me. They did.»



### Vacation may 2019

[Tradução do Google](#)

«We had a great stay at this hotel! Clean and nice rooms and the breakfast was really good. Also the location was great, close to all attractions but in a quiet area. We really recommend this place! Would love to come another time!»



### Great location but terrible service

[Tradução do Google](#)

«If you're looking for somewhere cheap in the heart of the city, then this hotel fits the bill, but if you want to go where you feel welcome then I'd avoid this hotel at all costs. The staff were very rude and seemed to look down on guests. The rooms weren't very clean and maintenance was definitely needed in multiple areas. We will be returning to Budapest as the city is wonderful, but next time we'll be staying somewhere else.»



### A basic city hotel

[Tradução do Google](#)

«A basic city hotel near the metro and bus station. Staff was helpful but in your room you could hear your next door neighbors talking or walking at 01:30am. Additions you could say rooms were clean but not spotless Breakfast was a typical continental hotel breakfast.»

## PNR SCENARIO



### Nice but smoky

[Tradução do Google](#)

«Hotel is very modern and clean with an excellent breakfast but some one of the rooms still had the cigarette smoke smell. I complained to management and they stated it was a smoke free hotel, but not true. There were cigarette burns in my mattress!! Others in our group on the third floor had the same issue and were given the same story. Would not place me in another room because they were fully booked and I had to endure 3 days of the smell. Bad service!»



### Prefer to give this negative 5 star!

[Tradução do Google](#)

«Hotel cleaning staff went into our luggage in our room and stole items. The hotel manager did not take us seriously and blew us off! How can one stay in a place where you can not trust that your stuff will not be stolen! Never experienced this before and am extremely disappointed in management! Not even an apology!»



### A basic city hotel

[Tradução do Google](#)

«A basic city hotel near the metro and bus station. Staff was helpful but in your room you could hear your next door neighbors talking or walking at 01:30am. Additions you could say rooms were clean but not spotless Breakfast was a typical continental hotel breakfast.»



### Do NOT ignore this warning!!!

[Tradução do Google](#)

«When we arrived there were a STINKING smell at the lobby to the reception which resembled the sewer smell. This smell traveled all the way to our rooms and made it very difficult to stay in the rooms. The staff at the reception was TERRIBLE, incredibly rude and had an awful attitude. We will definitely not be staying here again! There are so many hotels around the same area which had way better service. Do not waste your money on staying at this crappy hotel. Consider yourself warned!!!!»



### Great location but terrible service

Tradução do Google

«If you're looking for somewhere cheap in the heart of the city, then this hotel fits the bill, but if you want to go where you feel welcome then I'd avoid this hotel at all costs. The staff were very rude and seemed to look down on guests. The rooms weren't very clean and maintenance was definitely needed in multiple areas. We will be returning to Budapest as the city is wonderful, but next time we'll be staying somewhere else.»



### Budapest City Visit

Tradução do Google

«I arrived early from an overnight train journey and was very pleased to have been given my room immediately. Staff were friendly and helpful and breakfast very good. Would have liked more storage space in my room (drawers or shelves), but otherwise adequate. Hotel is good location for visiting the city»

## Appendix 3 | Conformity Tables

I rarely book rooms at the newest hotels, until I am sure my friends approve of them			Frequency	Mean
Valid	1 - Totally Disagree		53	3,66
	2 - Disagree		67	
	3 - More or Less Disagree		30	
	4 - Neither Agree Nor Disagree		41	
	5 - More or Less Agree		45	
	6 - Agree		40	
	7 - Totally Agree		31	
	Total		307	
Missing	System		121	
Total			428	

<b>When selecting a hotel to stay at, I generally select hotels that I think the others will approve of</b>			
		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Valid	<b>1 - Totally Disagree</b>	48	4,03
	<b>2 - Disagree</b>	66	
	<b>3 -More or Less Disagree</b>	13	
	<b>4 - Neither Agree Nor Disagree</b>	23	
	<b>5 - More or Less Agree</b>	52	
	<b>6 - Agree</b>	70	
	<b>7 - Totally Agree</b>	35	
	Total	307	
Missing	System	121	
Total		428	

<b>It is important that the others like the hotel I choose to stay at</b>			
		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Valid	<b>1 - Totally Disagree</b>	46	4,33
	<b>2 - Disagree</b>	43	
	<b>3 -More or Less Disagree</b>	15	
	<b>4 - Neither Agree Nor Disagree</b>	26	
	<b>5 - More or Less Agree</b>	57	
	<b>6 - Agree</b>	76	
	<b>7 - Totally Agree</b>	44	
	Total	307	
Missing	System	121	
Total		428	

**Appendix 4 | Principal Component Analysis**

<b>KMO and Bartlett's Test</b>		
Kaiser – Meyer –Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		,811
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1508,435
	df	66
	Sig.	,000

<b>Total Variance Explained</b>									
Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	4,541	37,839	37,839	4,541	37,839	37,839	4,071	33,923	33,923
2	2,820	23,497	61,335	2,820	23,497	61,335	2,872	23,933	57,856
3	1,931	16,094	77,429	1,931	16,094	77,429	2,349	19,574	77,429
4	,721	6,008	83,438						
5	,528	4,396	87,834						
6	,455	3,795	91,630						
7	,267	2,222	93,852						
8	,217	1,809	95,661						
9	,213	1,778	97,440						
10	,181	1,509	98,949						
11	,080	,667	99,616						
12	,046	,384	100,000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

**Appendix 5 | Chi- Square test: Gender**

<b>Crosstab</b>							
			Research Group				Total
			IS+ PPR	IS + PNR	LS + PPR	LS + PNR	
Gender	Male	Count	26	36	37	32	131
	Female	Count	48	43	41	39	171
Total		Count	74	79	78	71	302

<b>Chi-Square Tests</b>			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi- Square	2,807 <sup>a</sup>	3	,422
Likelihood Ratio	2,844	3	,416
Linear-by-Linear Association	1,512	1	,219
N of Valid cases	302		

a. 0 cells (0,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected is 30,80.

**Appendix 6 | Chi-Square test: Current Occupation**

<b>Crosstab</b>							
			Research Group				Total
			IS + PPR	IS + PNR	LS + PPR	LS + PNR	
<b>Current Occupation</b>	Student	Count	21	28	27	20	96
	Worker	Count	39	36	37	35	147
	Student - Worker	Count	7	5	6	5	23
	Unemployed	Count	2	4	3	3	12
	Retired	Count	5	6	5	8	24
<b>Total</b>		Count	74	79	78	71	302

<b>Chi-Square Tests</b>			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi- Square	3,970 <sup>a</sup>	12	,984
Likelihood Ratio	3,888	12	,985
Linear-by-Linear Association	,416	1	,519
N of valid cases	302		

a. 4 cells (20,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2,82.

**Appendix 7 | Sample Validation Means**

<b>Descriptives (One-way ANOVA)</b>				
		<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
<b>Age</b>	IS+PPR	74	2,99	1,092
	IS + PNR	79	2,89	1,050
	LS + PPR	78	2,91	1,095
	LS + PNR	71	3,18	1,187
	Total	302	2,99	1,106
<b>Education Level</b>	IS+PPR	74	3,89	,713
	IS + PNR	79	3,87	,838
	LS + PPR	78	3,79	,691
	LS + PNR	71	3,92	,671
	Total	302	3,87	,731
<b>Monthly Household Income</b>	IS+PPR	74	2,45	,894
	IS + PNR	79	2,48	,972
	LS + PPR	78	2,49	,864
	LS + PNR	71	2,54	,842
	Total	302	2,49	,892
<b>Use of Online Reviews</b>	IS+PPR	74	5,77	1,165
	IS + PNR	79	5,76	1,190
	LS + PPR	78	5,86	1,078
	LS + PNR	71	5,87	1,027
	Total	302	5,81	1,114
<b>ATH before reviews' exposure</b>	IS+PPR	74	6,15	,728
	IS + PNR	79	5,91	,865
	LS + PPR	78	5,87	1,127
	LS + PNR	71	5,82	1,056
	Total	302	5,94	,960
<b>Descriptives (Mann-Whitney U test)</b>				
		<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
<b>Reviews' valence perception</b>	PPR	152	5,48	,347
	PNR	150	2,78	,457
	Total	302	4,13	1,410

**Appendix 8 | Sample's Division**

<b>Groups: H1<sub>A</sub>; H1<sub>B</sub>; H2<sub>A</sub>; H2<sub>B</sub>; H2<sub>C</sub>; H2<sub>D</sub></b>	<b>No. of Participants</b>
PPR	152
PNR	150
<b>Groups: H3<sub>A</sub> and H3<sub>B</sub></b>	<b>No. of Participants</b>
Conformists exposed to PPR	87
Non-Conformists exposed to PPR	65
Conformists exposed to PNR	80
Non-Conformists exposed to PNR	70
<b>Groups: H4<sub>A</sub> and H5<sub>A</sub></b>	<b>No. of Participants</b>

Individuals who were at an IS exposed to PPR	74
Individuals who were at an IS exposed to PNR	79
Individuals who were at a LS exposed to PPR	78
Individuals who were at a LS exposed to PNR	71
<b>Groups: H4<sub>B</sub> and H5<sub>B</sub></b>	<b>No. Of Participants</b>
Conformists, who were at an IS, exposed to PPR	39
Non-conformists, who were at an IS, exposed to PPR	35
Conformists, who were at an IS, exposed to PNR	42
Non-conformists, who were at an IS, exposed to PNR	37
Conformists, who were at a LS, exposed to PPR	48
Non-conformists, who were at a LS, exposed to PPR	30
Conformists, who were at a LS, exposed to PNR	38
Non-conformists, who were at a LS, exposed to PNR	33

#### Appendix 9 | Summary Table of Hypotheses

Hypothesis	Decision
H1 <sub>A</sub>	Accepted
H1 <sub>B</sub>	Accepted
H2 <sub>A</sub>	Accepted
H2 <sub>B</sub>	Accepted
H2 <sub>C</sub>	Rejected
H2 <sub>D</sub>	Accepted
H3 <sub>A</sub>	Accepted
H3 <sub>B</sub>	Accepted
H4 <sub>A</sub>	Rejected concerning the influence of PPR on BI, but accepted regarding its influence on ATH
H4 <sub>B</sub>	Rejected concerning the influence of PPR on BI, but accepted regarding its influence on ATH
H5 <sub>A</sub>	Accepted
H5 <sub>B</sub>	Accepted