

## TOURISTS' OPINION REGARDING A TOURISM PRODUCT-CASE STUDY ON STAYS AT BLACK SEA

TOADER COSMINA-SIMONA<sup>1</sup>, RUJESCU CIPRIAN IOAN\*<sup>1</sup>,  
MILIN ANDA IOANA<sup>1</sup>, FIRU-NEGOESCU ADRIAN GHEORGHE<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Banat's University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine "King Michael I of Romania" from Timisoara, Faculty of Management and Rural Tourism*

\*Corresponding author's e-mail: rujescu@usab-tm.ro

**Abstract.** *The stays are packages of services offered to tourists for spending a holiday in a tourist resort. This kind of tourism products are popular in offers of Romanian travel companies, they are bought especially in summer and the most wanted resorts are located on Romanian seaside.*

*The article presents results of a study which involved tourists who chose tourist products like stay at the Black Sea. Data were collected through a survey, using as research instrument a questionnaire. The questionnaire was elaborated with the application provided by Google Forms and it was distributed through social networks.*

*The authors analyzed data collected by a questionnaire regarding tourists' opinion about stays at Black Sea. The surveyed sample of tourists spent their summer vacation in one of resorts located at Romanian seaside.*

**Key words:** *tourists' opinion, direct comparisons, seaside, statistics*

### INTRODUCTION

The tourist product includes all goods and services offered to tourists by scientific tourism entities (travel agencies or direct providers - hotels, restaurants, etc.).

The tourist product presents a set of material goods and services meant to satisfy the tourism needs of a person, from the moment of departure until the moment of arrival at the place of travel. For the tourist, tourist product covers the complete experience of leaving home and returning. [14,15].

The tourist product is a composite product, its elements being attractive, spontaneous (natural and cultural elements) and attractive derivatives (structural and organizational elements) or in a simpler formula it includes and combines the attractiveness of a given destination, facilities and access routes on which the tourist buys as a combination of activities and arrangements [10].

The stay is a way of spending the holiday that involves traveling to a resort for a period of time and involves accommodation in an accommodation structure.

One of the most popular stays during the summer for Romanian people are those spent in seaside resorts [9].

Opinion on tourism products is often different depending on age groups, place of residence, gender or other criteria. The need to customize tourism services in accordance with consumer opinions requires the need to know concrete details about differences [8,11,16-18]. This is the purpose of the paper, the steps being taken by applying statistical questionnaires on tourism products on the Black Sea coast. The personalization of the tourist packages brings the bilateral benefit, both to the tourists who find the desired product but also to the providers of tourist services in order to achieve an optimal management. [1,7,12].

Of the total accommodation units existing on the Romanian territory, 8.9% are on the Black Sea coast, except for the units present in Constanta [9].

The purpose of this article is to establish the existence of differences between the opinions of tourists who have spent a stay at the Black Sea. The delimitation is made according to groups based on the environment of residence, gender, age. Thus, we

followed the existence of possible particular information in order to personalize the services.

### **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The perception of tourists regarding a tourism product, stays at Black Sea is based on a survey, the research instrument was a questionnaire. In order to find out the opinion of tourist about stays at Black Sea, authors made the following steps: questionnaire design, pre-testing the questionnaire, distribution of the questionnaire, analysis and interpretation of data collected and drawing conclusions.

Testing people's opinions was done using the Google Forms app found at <https://docs.google.com/forms> [6].

The questionnaire has 11 questions, 10 questions are closed questions with a single correct answer. Closed questions with a single correct answer are related to gender, age, area of residence, main criterion taken into account when choosing a stay at the Black Sea, way of planning the stay, when the stay was organized, stay duration, way of traveling, type of tourist accommodation structure chosen, board basis options. The last question of questionnaire is an evaluation scale. Respondents appreciated the following aspects using an evaluation scale from 1 to 10:

- stay (overall);
- travel time;
- road infrastructure;
- accessibility of the accommodation unit;
- facilities of accommodation unit (overall);
- cleanliness of the accommodation unit;
- staff professionalism (attitude, kindness, involvement in solving problems);
- room (comfort, facilities, cleanliness, etc.);
- food quality;
- the amount of food;
- menu diversity;
- diversity of leisure options;
- beach - cleanliness;
- beach - safety;
- beach - water quality;
- beach - easy access.

Appreciation note 1 means a totally unsatisfactory level of appreciation and appreciation note 10 an excellent level of appreciation related to the aspects mentioned in the question.

The questionnaire was distributed through social networks. Graphics and descriptive statistics were returned by the Google Forms application. The IBM SPSS Statistics Version 23 package was also used to test differences of opinion between groups, but also for statistical tables or charts. [2-5,13].

The questionnaire was applied during the period April 21-27, 2021. Some people declined the invitation to complete the questionnaire because they were not in the last time as tourists on the Black Sea coast. It should be mentioned that this study has a limitation due to the small number of study participants.

A number of 70 people were invited to answer to a questionnaire that aims to investigate the opinions of tourists who spent their holidays on the Romanian coast in the last 5 years. Graphical representations were used that indicate the frequencies of occurrence of some answers, but also of the Box Plot type. For comparisons between

groups, the nonparametric Mann Whitney U Test and the Independent Samples Median Test were used. The level of significance is  $\alpha=5\%$ .

### RESEARCH RESULTS

First questions were related to gender, age group and place of residence. These elements were the basis for delimiting different groups of people in order to test their opinions. Some answers were also interpreted for the whole group of respondents.

As it can see in figure 1, about 64% of respondents were women. The 35-60 age group predominated (71%).

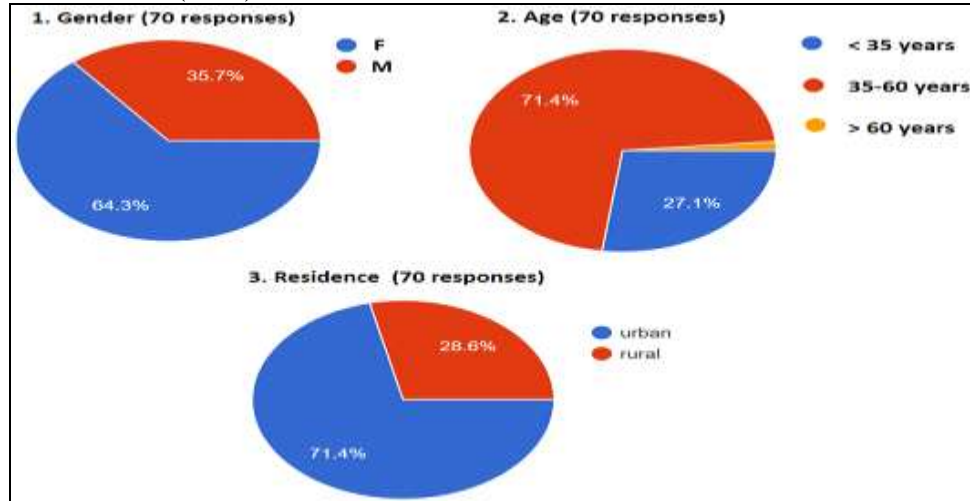


Figure 1. Sample description

Further details on the sample are shown in figure 1, table 2 and table 3. These tables show cross-tabulations indicating the structure of the sample. Of the 70 people who accepted the invitation to complete the survey, most people from urban areas (71.4%). By gender of respondents, according to the information in Table 1, it is observed that females answered a larger number of questions to the questionnaire (64.3%).

Table 1.

Sample description. M/F - Residence (urban / rural), cross-tabulation

Sample			Residence (urban / rural)		Total
			Rural	Urban	
M/F	Female	Count	11	34	45
		% of total	15.7%	48.6%	64.3%
	Male	Count	9	16	25
		% of total	12.9%	22.9%	35.7%
Total		Count	20	50	70
		% of total	28.6%	71.4%	100.0%

Table 2.

Sample description. Age group - Residence (urban / rural), cross-tabulation

Sample			Residence (urban / rural)		Total
			Rural	Urban	
Age group	< 35 years	Count	7	12	19
		% of total	10.0%	17.1%	27.1%
	35-60 years	Count	13	37	50
		% of total	18.6%	52.9%	71.4%
	> 60 years	Count	0	1	1
		% of total	0.0%	1.4%	1.4%
Total		Count	20	50	70
		% of total	28.6%	71.4%	100.0%

The most common criteria according to which the selection of the stay was made were: attractiveness of the place (31%), holiday vouchers (27%), recommendations of friends (13%), price (11%), attractive offers (10%). Other responses were negligible in frequency of occurrence (figure 2).

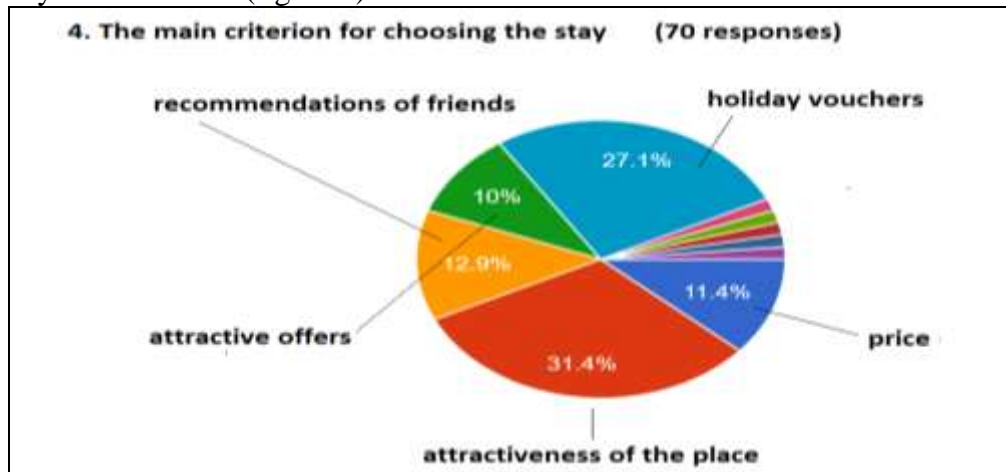


Figure 2. Criterion for choosing the stay

About 67% of respondents said they planned their vacation on their own and only 31% asked for help from travel agencies. Only 21% of respondents stated that they planned the holiday at the last minute (figure 3).

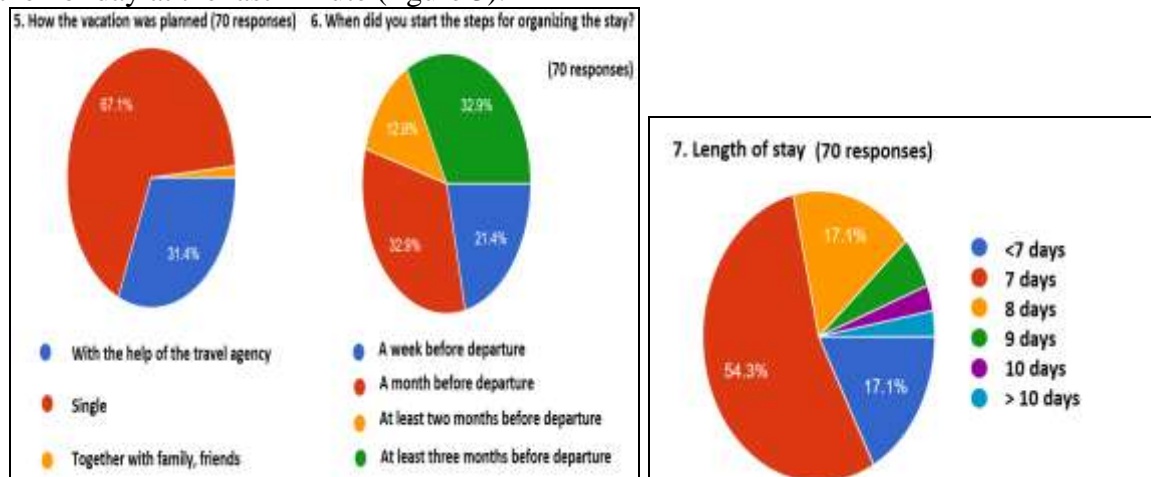


Figure 3. Vacation planning and organization

Most respondents (78%) used their own car to travel to Black Sea. The train is also another way of travel (21%). The highest frequency of answers is the self-catering variant, when asked about the type of food (47%) (figure 4).

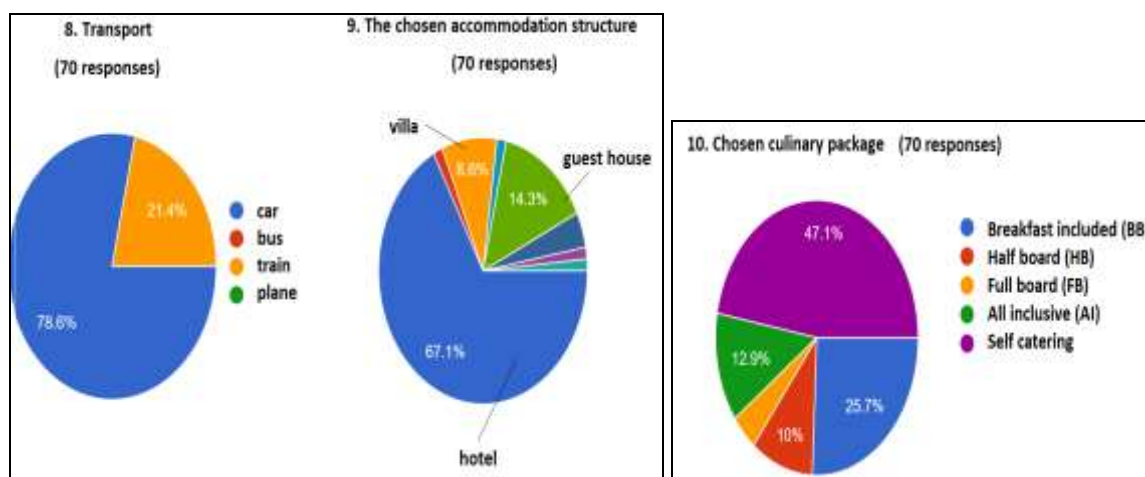


Figure 4. Transport, accommodation and meal planning

Respondents rated the following with grades from 1 to 10: the stay in general, travel time, road infrastructure, accessibility of the accommodation unit, the facilities offered by the accommodation unit in general, cleaning in the accommodation unit, staff professionalism (attitude, kindness, involvement in solving problems), room (comfort, facilities, cleanliness etc.), food quality, the amount of food, menu diversity, diversity of leisure options, beach - cleanliness, beach - safety, beach - water quality, beach - easy access. The median values of the groups are indicated in Table 3.

Table 3.

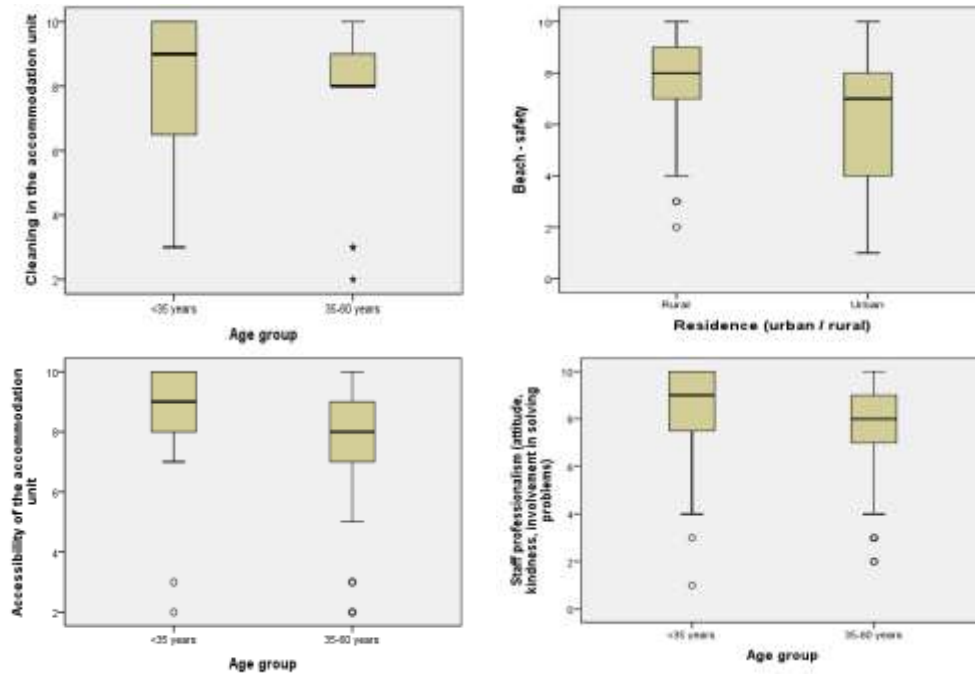
Median values of the answers

Median	Gender		Age group		Residence		Total
	F	M	< 35 years	35-60 years	Rural	Urban	
The stay (overall)	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0
Travel time	7.0	6.0	7.0	7.0	6.5	7.0	7.0
Road infrastructure	6.0	6.0	5.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0
Accessibility of the AU	9.0	8.0	9.0	8.0	9.0	8.0	8.0
Facilities of AU (overall)	8.0	8.0	9.0	8.0	8.5	8.0	8.0
Cleanliness of the AU	9.0	8.0	9.0	8.0	9.0	8.0	8.5
Staff professionalism	9.0	8.0	9.0	8.0	9.0	8.0	9.0
Room	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	9.0	8.0	8.0
Food quality	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0
The amount of food	9.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0
Menu diversity	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0
Diversity of leisure options	8.0	7.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0
Beach - cleanliness	7.0	7.0	7.0	7.0	8.0	7.0	7.0
Beach - safety	7.0	7.0	7.0	7.0	8.0	7.0	7.0
Beach - water quality	7.0	7.0	8.0	7.0	7.5	7.0	7.0
Beach - easy access	8.0	7.0	8.0	7.5	8.0	8.0	8.0

AU=accommodation unit

Using the Mann Whitney U Test, significant differences were observed regarding the distribution of responses for *Beach safety* among the groups determined by *Residence* ( $p = 0.045$ ). Also, using the Mann Whitney U Test, significant differences were determined for the *Accessibility of the accommodation unit* responses between the Age group groups ( $p = 0.028$ ).

The graphical representations in the form of boxplot diagrams of the answers for the groups in which significant differences were determined are shown in figure 5.



**Figure 5. Boxplot diagrams**

Using the Independent Samples Median Test, significant differences were determined between the *Age group* groups for the answers *Cleanliness in the accommodation unit* ( $p = 0.028$ ) and *Staff professionalism* ( $p = 0.011$ ).

## CONCLUSIONS

Similar studies indicate the particular and specific character of the tourist market, of the management of tourist destinations, of tourist packages. [1,11,12,16]

Using non-parametric statistical tests, it was found that a large number of responses did not show significant differences between the groups determined by residence or age.

The gender of the persons did not indicate differences between groups in any case.

However, cases have been identified in which residence or age indicates differences between groups (beach safety/residence, accessibility of the accommodation unit/age group, cleanliness in the accommodation unit/age group, staff professionalism/age group). Younger people seem to be more interested in accessibility of the accommodation unit and also to staff professionalism.

People living in rural areas seem to be more interested to beach safety than people who lives in urban areas.

The particular character of the opinions of certain persons, which present differences between certain analyzed groups, imposes the need for a periodic and personalized evaluation of the opinions of tourists.

We make this recommendation to both the relevant authorities and the entrepreneurial segment in the field of tourism.

Given that the data were collected during the COVID 19 pandemic, it is possible that some people may have changed their expectations of existing tourism services on the market.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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