THE MANAGERIAL PERFORMANCE OF TOURISM ORGANIZATIONS - BETWEEN WISHFUL THEORY AND PRACTICE

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this article is to approach and offer potential solutions to a controversial topic, one that doesn't even have, to date, an acceptable solution: increasing the efficiency of institutions involved in tourism. Given this context, our project started with trying to establish what were the determining factors that affect the efficiency of organizations, in the field of tourism in general and in which way the management of these institutions can contribute to the impression that the clients have regarding the quality of their experience as a tourist.

Finally, we tried to evaluate the degree of satisfaction of the organizations in the field of tourism regarding the quality of organizational communication within those institutions located in Romania. We find it especially important because, and we know this as a fact, the favourable perception of the service beneficiaries leads to the rise in sales, which positively impacts the GDP.

The goal of the project is to uncover the way that organizational communication affects the satisfaction of the beneficiaries of the Romanian touristic institutions.

In this context, we had on one side a series of concrete and innovating contributions regarding creating a complete database of organizations in the field of tourism in Romania (agencies as well as hospitality institutions) and, on the other side, the initiation of a wide exploratory research study that will result in publishing the first book in Romania on the topic of increasing management efficiency through perfecting organizational communication in the field of tourism.

In order to complete our scientific endeavour we utilized surveys and interviews. The results were validated after we compared the performance obtained in the activity or organizations in the field of tourism with the benchmarks of the field.

KEYWORDS: *efficiency, management, organizational communication, performance, tourism*

JEL CLASSIFICATION: *M10, M12, M13, M16.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Either for business or pleasure, all of us use the services offered by a hotel, by the staff of a bed and breakfast or by a travel agency.

The way we make use of the services of, what we call, generally speaking, "*organizations in the field of tourism*" is by reading a pamphlet or a brochure, browsing travel websites, contacting the organization, asking friends, relatives, colleagues, acquaintances for advice, etc. In each of these instances we are basing our information gathering on the organizational communication of the organizations in the field of tourism, which is directed by its managers.

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In more concrete terms, our future actions, such as making the decision to buy the services of the organizations in the field of tourism are conditioned/determined by the messages sent to us through their external organizational communication.

2. RESEARCH MOTIVATION, PARTICIPANTS AND RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Our research was a three-step process as follows:

THE DOCUMENTATION PHASE - following the consultation of over 50 bibliographic sources and over 240 websites that promote organizations in the field of tourism we noticed that, even though there are many specialized titles on the topic of organizational communication, we couldn't find any that discuss organizational communication in the field of tourism.

At the same time, we noticed that the definitions available for "*communication*" can generate confusion or misunderstandings. For example, even though we agree with the fact that, without exception, "*…communication is the key to excellence and organization efficacy*" (Grunig, 1992, p.13), and, at the same time, it is "*…the premise of organization efficiency and efficacy*" (Zagan-Zelter, 2009, p. 19), we find that DEX – The Explicative Dictionary of Romanian Language publishes a simplistic definition of communication: "*…the action of communicating and its result*" or a "*…notice, news*" (http://dexonline.ro accessed on May 20, 2013).

We also believe that some authors make things too complicated by defining the communication process as "*…the process through which a person (or a group) transmit a concept (an attitude, an emotional state, a wish etc.) to another person or group*" or "*…all the physical and psychological processes that are made in the interaction with one or more persons in order to achieve certain objectives*" (Voicu, Rusu, 1998, p.11).

Similarly, there are authors who state that "*…in the broadest sense, we can talk about communication every time a system or another source influences another system, a receiver, through alternative signals that can be transmitted through the channel that connects the two.*" (Shannon and Weaver, 1949, p.29), while others believe that, actually, "*…communication became not only a universal concept, but also all-inclusive, because everything communicates*" (Drăgan, 2007, p.11).

In this context, we believe that a very simple definition for communication could be: <u>*a complex process of transmitting information.*</u>

Our opinion is that this process refers to individuals as well as organizations and has diverse goals that don't need to be explained in the definition of communication. We also noticed that the majority of specialized publications, even though they declare that they solve aspects regarding "*organizational communication*", they either touch on this subject slightly or they don't touch it at all. Furthermore, our opinion is that the definition of the term is simplistic in nature and doesn't add value to what we know about the field.

We find that, for example to reduce the study to underlining how important communication is at the organization level is simply stating the obvious and not something pragmatic, something able to facilitate and favor increasing the efficiency of the organizational communication process.

As we find out from experience, in most situations (even though not in all situations), at the organizational level (and not only), individuals, regardless of their place in the hierarchy, only understand what they wish to and in the form of their liking. (Bartels, 2006, pp.12-15; Popescu, 2008, pp.135-139)

Generally speaking we noticed that in specialized publications there are definitions *of* and/or interpretations that could cause confusion or a distorted image of organizational communication through their content.

Therefore, some authors believe that "*…communication, from the point of view of the organizational level is organizational communication*" (Constantinescu, Gîrboveanu and Dumitraşcu, 2011, p. 19) – this is an interpretation and not a definition of the term – while other authors state that "*…we can look at communication within the organizations as a basic framework where communication*

specialists - that work within an agreed upon framework – can integrate their contributions to communication" (Eiesenberg, Goodall, and Angela, 2009, p.11).

This case is another example of a simplistic interpretation of organizational communication.

It becomes even more ambiguous when authors describe management of organizational communication as "*…the sum of practices, models, tools and approach methods used for diagnosing, evaluating and projecting the structures of communication within an organization*". (Hallin, A., Karrbom-Gustavsson, T., 2010, p.55).

Other authors are thinking that "*…the organizational communication is the area that covers the study of communication processes in the context of the organization*" (https://www.elfconsulting.ro/showdef.php.nr.ref=35, viewed on May 5th, 2013), while other specialists think that "*…organizational communication is the exchange of verbal, non-verbal and written messages between people in an effort to reach common goals and complete common assign*ments" (O'Hair, Friedrich and Shaver, 1998, p.27).

Obviously, the authors that write "*…communication is the first component of the function of coordination*" (Gherghiță and Gherghiță, 2006, p. 21) are correct but, even though they declare their interest in solving the problem of organizational communication, when defining it all they write is "*…a complex process through which there's an exchange of messages between the members of an organization in order to reach individual and common goals*" (Gherghiță and Gherghiță, 2006, p.22).

THE RESEARCH PHASE - consists of establishing our working hypotheses as well as the actual interviews and the survey distributed to the individuals who benefit from services from the organizations in the field of tourism. This research is part of a more ample study that will have its results included in a PhD. Thesis and, in the year 2015, in a book about organizational communication in tourism (the first of its kind in Romania). The hypotheses of the research are:

Hypothesis 1: *Generally speaking, the beneficiaries of services provided by organizations in the field of tourism are not aware of the importance of organizational communication as part of increasing management performance.*

Hypothesis 2: *The documentation that the clients do regarding their destination (for business and /or pleasure) is still low impact.*

Hypothesis 3: *From the clients' point of view, the management of organizations in the field of tourism is done intuitively, without a strategy of attracting tourists and determining them to become loyal as a direct result of increasing the quality of external organizational communication.*

Our research took place through the distribution of a questionnaire (*addendum* 1) that concerned the satisfaction level regarding the organization communication of organizations in the field of tourism. The questionnaire was distributed to 318 beneficiaries of touristic services and so far 144 responded.

Out of the 144 participants, 8 decided not to answer the first question, ("*What is your gender?*"). Out of the 136 respondents, 98 are women (68.82%) and 38 are men (26.18%). The majority of the respondents (114, respectively, 79.16%) are highly educated, 20 of them (13.88% of the total) have a high school diploma, 1 (0.69%) hold a specialized graduate degree, while 9 respondents (6.25% of the total) consider that who they are and their education is not important as long as they have the unique quality of being a client.

The majority of the survey participants are young (50.97%), having the age of under 30, travel within and outside the county for business at a maximum of five times per year. We also found interesting the fact that the percentage of respondents that travel for business is identical with the one of respondents that travel for pleasure (67.60%) which makes us believe that they actually travel for both business and pleasure.

Out of the 85 persons that travel internationally for business, the majority (85.59%) travel five times or less per year and only 11.76% stated that they travel internationally for pleasure five times or less per year (*figure no. 1*). We've also noticed that the individuals that travel for business domestically and internationally are usually accompanied by other people (over 73%) - *figure no. 2*.
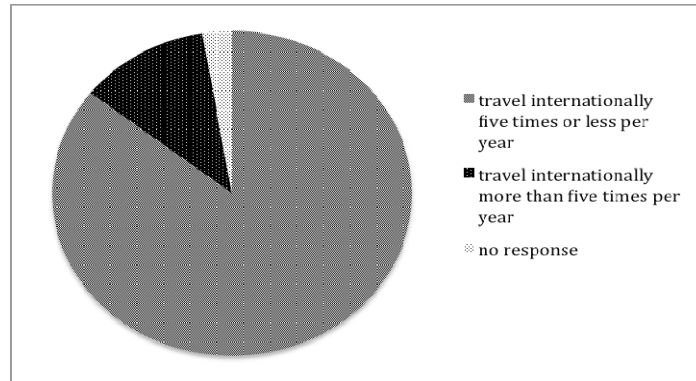
Figure no. 1: *Travel internationally frequencies*
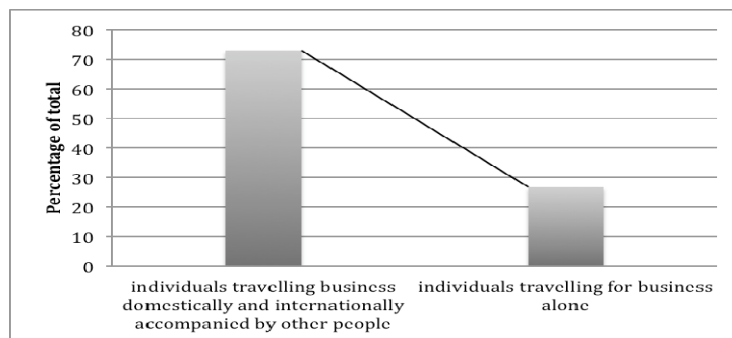*Source:* made by authors

Figure no. 2: *Individuals travelling business in group or alone*
Source: made by authors

Over 60% of the participants state that they were happy with their domestic and international travelling experience. The first warning sign that facilitated the drafting of our hypotheses was that only 12.8% of the participants states that they were happy with their domestic travelling and only 10.7% of their international travelling.

Over 85% of the respondents to our questionnaire do research on their domestic travelling destination, while almost 95% do thorough research on their international travelling destination (*figure no. 3*).
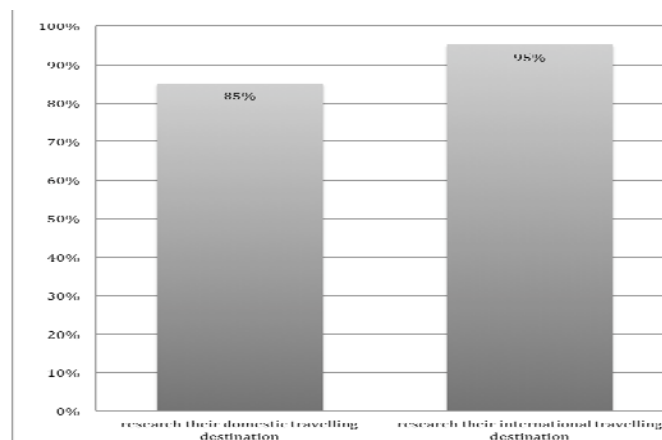

Figure no. 3: *Domestic and international travelling destinations*
Source: made by authors

When asked *"To which extent do you believe that the information/documentation means that you made use of reflect the reality that you found when you reached your destination?"*, the survey participants gave interesting answers that proved that the first hypothesis of the research is not true but the second one is true. Only 8 (5.59%) responded *"They fully reflected the reality"*, 73 (51.04%) responded *"They reflected closely the reality"* and 61 (42.65%) *"So and so"* (*figure no. 4*).
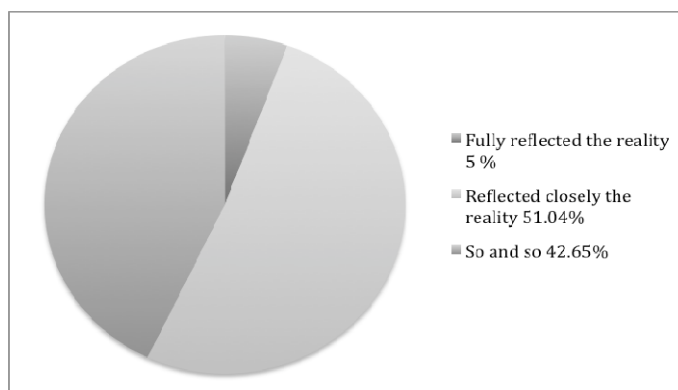

Figure no. 4: *Organizational communication image versus reality*
Source: made by authors

One person responded (which represents only 0.69% of the total) responded *"They only slightly reflected the reality"*. The first hypothesis was also proven not true by the high percentage (63.88%, 92 person respectively) of the participants that realize the fact that an extremely poor organizational communication can affect the quality of the touristic experience. We can also add to this the percentage interested in expressing their opinion about the quality of the service received: 34 respondents, representing 23.61% of the total.

If, in fact, the travelers find that the situation presented differs from the one encountered at the destination, only 14.68% of the participants (21 people) let the management of the organization know, 11.88% (17 people) make a formal complaint with the authorities, while 65.03% (93 people) consider as *"getting even"* the fact that they complain about the bad experience to their friends and acquaintances. Under these circumstances, we find it justified that the real feedback doesn't reach the management of the organizations and therefore they cannot adopt measures of correction capable not only to raising the quality of organizational communication but also to raise their financial performance. We are surprised by the fact that 10 survey participants (7%) take the situation as it is and don't do anything and actually believe that *"…they cannot change the status quo"* (*figure no. 5*).
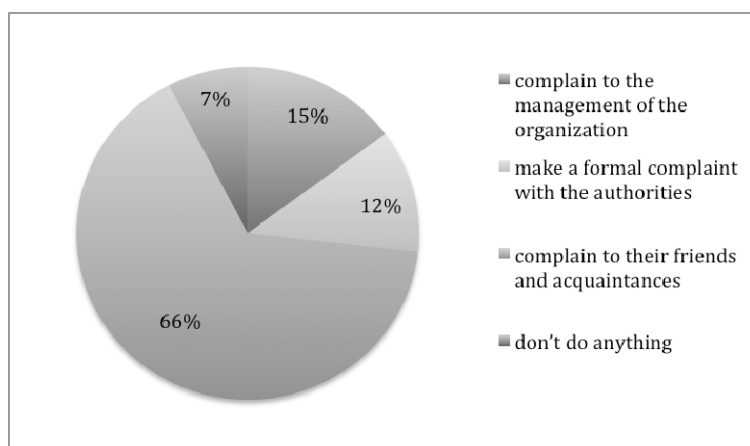

Figure no. 5: *Satisfaction and insatisfaction in travelling - what are we doing?*
Source: made by authors

When it comes to *the quality of the service*, 25 persons (17.36% of total) consider that the organizations in the field of tourism are according major importance to the effectiveness and efficiency of their external organizational communication, while 64 people (44.44% of the total) consider the importance as being "*so and so*". 11 of the survey respondents (7.63% of the total) stated that, generally speaking, the organizations in the field of tourism are not interested much in making their clients loyal, while 24 (16.66% of the total) think that "…*things are getting worse*".

Only 37 of the survey participants, representing 25.69% of the total trust that the management of organizations in the field of tourism is professional, the majority (82, respectively 56.94%) believe that the people operating tourism organizations "…*are there only to take our money*" and there we should only blame ourselves, not the people responsible for the external image of the organizations in the field of tourism.

The questions relevant for the third hypothesis are questions nr. 18, 19 and 20.

Therefore, when asked question nr. 18 ("...*Judging from your experience, do you find that other countries in the EU have external organizational communication that is superior in quality to the found one in Romania? Please narrow your answer to the quality of the information obtained from companies in the field of tourism.*"), 60 of the survey participants (41.66%) express their opinion as yes, 21 of them (14.58%) base their bias on intuitions or preconceived ideas like "…*I heard that they treat you better there, unlike in Romania*", while 34 persons (23.61% of the total) declare that there are instances where you can receive better services in Romania as opposed to abroad… we should also note that 30 of the participants (20.83%) so they neither agree nor disagree with the statement.

Question number 19 is a follow-up question to number 18, asking why the participants answered "yes" at number 18. 39 (27.08%) stated that they believe that the inferior quality of the organizational communication is due to the organization's lack of professionalism, 9 (6.25% respectively) find that it's due to ethics, while 46 people (31.94% of the total) consider that the low quality of external organizational communication primarily generated by "…*the lack of responsibility, of conscience and professional ethics*"… Only one person (0.69% of the total) declared they don't know the answer to the question and that he/she is not interested in this aspect, while other 9 persons said that the reason they're not responding is because they don't know the facts.

Chart: why do you find that other countries in the EU have external organizational communication that is superior in quality to the found one in Romania? (*figure no. 6*)
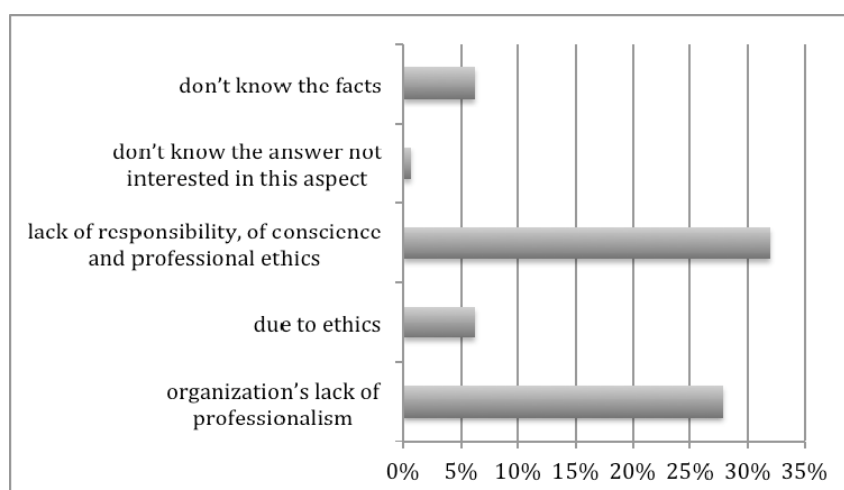

Figure no. 6: *Why do you find that other countries in the EU have external organizational communication that is superior in quality to the found one in Romania?*
Source: made by authors

Questions number 20 ("*Were you ever interviewed by any Romanian organization in the field of tourism/tour operator/travel agency and asked about your degree of satisfaction with the services you received?*") triggered some contradictory answers. Therefore, 5 of the respondents (3.48% of the total) declared that they were in fact interviewed and that the travel agencies took into account their point of view. 32 persons (22.22% of the total) said that they were interviewed but don't know whether or not the management of the agencies took note of their feedback. 24 of the respondents (16.67%) declared that they felt like "*…they were being imposed on to respond, only for statistical purpose, to questions that were sometimes ostentatious*", while another 55 (39.19% of the total) either don't know how to answer, or, if they were to answer their answers would be too subjective. Finally, 28 of the respondents declared that, if they were to be interviewed, they wouldn't respond.
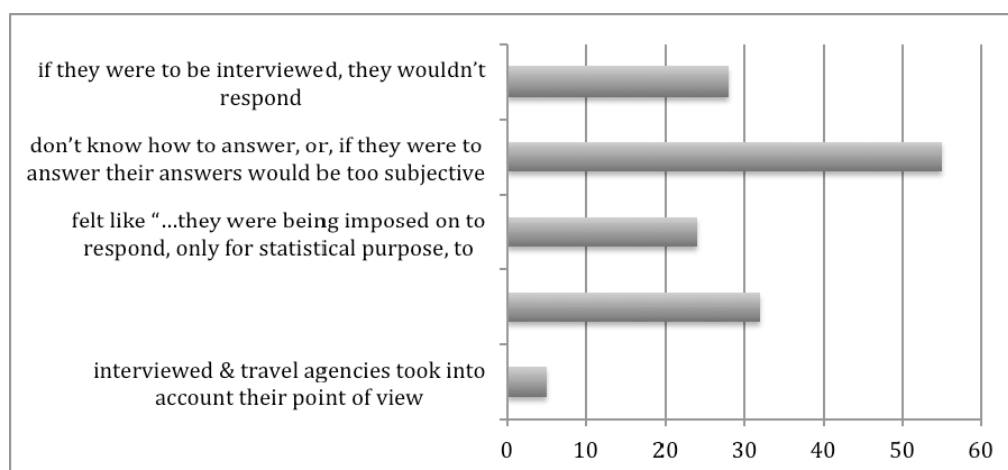

Figure no. 7: *The degree of satisfaction by the quality of tourism services*
Source: made by authors

Even though in prior years progress was reported in the field of tourism (see question number 21), the fact that the management of organizations in this field is still based on intuition is confirmed, as is our third hypothesis, through the answers we received for question number 22. In this context, the majority of the respondents consider that, when asked whether or not they thought that they were treated as potentially loyal clients and not simply as consumers, they could only slightly agree with such a statement.

Only 34 people (25.37%) considered that the organizations in the field of tourism treat their guests as loyal clients, while 20 of the interviewees (14.93%) don't see the difference between a tourist and a client. 2 respondents (1.49% of the total) don't know the answer to such a questions because they're not interested in this aspect while the other 15 (11.19%) don't answer because they don't know anything about this subject.

We would like to note that the majority of the survey participants (see questions 23-25) indicated that all employees in the field of tourism need further professional training through specialized courses in IT&C, communication and foreign languages both directly (face-to-face) and through the internet, email and social media (Twitter, Facebook etc.).

At a later stage in our research we are planning to extend the analysis through econometric tools (e.g. the theory of correlation and multiple regression, linear programming, etc.).

3. CONCLUSIONS

1. In the absence of a law on tourism in Romania, the management of tourism is still based too much on experience and intuition and too little on scientific elements.

2. The database found through national agencies, in addition to being incomplete, is not based sufficiently on facts, generating random options for its beneficiaries.

3. Consequently, the performance of the organizations in the field of tourism is primarily a goal in theory. In practice, proven by the degree of the satisfaction expressed by tourists, there are still ways to improve the management of the activities in this field, this being the only way to guarantee development.

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Addendum 1

QUESTIONNAIRE

FOR EVALUATING THE DEGREE OF SATISFACTION WITH THE
ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION
IN THE CONTEXT OF ORGANIZATIONS IN THE FIELD OF TOURISM IN ROMANIA

Please indicate, from the options below, your level of satisfaction with the quality of organization communication of the organizations in the field of tourism in Romania:

I. GENERAL ASPECTS

1. What is your gender?
   □ Male   □ Female

2. Please select your age range:
   a. 18 – 22 years
   b. 23 – 29 years
   c. 30 – 39 years
   d. 40 – 54 years
   e. Senior (over 55 years of age)

3. How many times a year do you travel?
   3.1 Domestically:
      3.1.1 for business:
         □ 1 – 5 times   □ 6 – 10 times   □ 11 – 14 times   □ 15 – 19 times   □ over 20 times
      3.1.2 for pleasure:
         □ 1 – 2 times   □ 3 – 4 times   □ 5 – 7 times   □ 8 – 10 times   □ over 10 times

   3.2 Internationally:
      3.2.1 for business:
         □ 1 – 5 times   □ 6 – 10 times   □ 11 – 14 times   □ 15 – 19 times   □ over 20 times
      3.2.2 for pleasure:
         □ 1 – 2 times   □ 3 – 4 times   □ 5 – 7 times   □ 8 – 10 times   □ over 10 times

4. Do you travel accompanied by other persons?
   4.1 domestically:
      4.1.1 YES, for business and for pleasure:
         □ 1 – 5 times   □ 6 – 10 times   □ 11 – 14 times   □ 15 – 19 times   □ over 20 times
      4.1.2 YES, but only when travelling for business:
         □ 1 – 5 times   □ 6 – 10 times   □ 11 – 14 times   □ 15 – 19 times   □ over 20 times
      4.1.3 YES, but only when travelling for pleasure:
         □ 1 – 2 times   □ 3 – 4 times   □ 5 – 7 times   □ 8 – 10 times   □ over 10 times

   4.2 în străinătate:
      4.2.1 YES, for business and for pleasure:
         □ 1 – 5 times   □ 6 – 10 times   □ 11 – 14 times   □ 15 – 19 times   □ over 20 times

4.2.2 YES, but only when travelling for business:
  □ 1 – 5 times   □ 6 – 10 times   □ 11 – 14 times   □ 15 – 19 times   □ over 20 times
4.2.3 YES, but only when travelling for pleasure:
  □ 1 – 2 times   □ 3 – 4 times   □ 5 – 7 times   □ 8 – 10 times   □ over 10 times

4.3 both domestically and abroad:
  4.3.1.YES, for business and for pleasure:
    □ 1 – 5 times   □ 6 – 10 times   □ 11 – 14 times   □ 15 – 19 times   □ over 20 times
  4.3.2 YES, but only when travelling for business:
    □ 1 – 5 times   □ 6 – 10 times   □ 11 – 14 times   □ 15 – 19 times   □ over 20 times
  4.3.3 YES, but only when travelling for pleasure:
    □ 1 – 2 times   □ 3 – 4 times   □ 5 – 7 times   □ 8 – 10 times   □ over 10 times

5. **Are you generally happy with the outcome of your trips (please circe your answer)?**
    a) YES, for both my domestic and my international trips
    b) YES, but only for my domestic trips
    c) YES, but only for my international trips
    d) NO, for both my domestic and my international trips
    e) NO, but only for my domestic trips
    f) NO, but only for my international trips
    g) I've never thought of asking myself if I'm happy with the outcome of my trips

II. PRIOR RESEARCH ABOUT THE ORGANIZATIONS IN THE FIELD OF TOURISM

6. **Please specify whethre or not you research, prior to traveling, the organizations in the field of tourism where you will be staying:**
  6.1 domestically:
    6.1.1 for business:
        a) YES, always, but only when I travel alone
        b) YES, always, but only when I travel acoompanied by other people
        c) YES, always, both when I travel alone and accompanied by other people
        d) I'm NOT interested in finding out facts about my destination, because somebody else in my organization handles this aspect
        e) I've NEVER thought of the importance of my destination, as long as this is an aspect handled by a specialized department in my organization
    6.1.2 for pleaasure:
        a) YES, always, but only when I travel alone
        b) YES, always, but only when I travel acoompanied by other people
        c) YES, always, both when I travel alone and accompanied by other people
        d) I'm NOT interested in finding out facts about my destination, because somebody else in my group handles this aspect
        e) I've NEVER thought of this aspect, as long and I'm with friends
  6.2 abroad:
    6.2.1 for business:
        a) YES, always, but only when I travel alone
        b) YES, always, but only when I travel acoompanied by other people
        c) YES, always, both when I travel alone and accompanied by other people

    d) I'm NOT interested in finding out facts about my destination, because somebody else in my organization handles this aspect

    e) I've NEVER thought of the importance of my destination, as long as this is an aspect handled by a specialized department in my organization

6.2.2 For pleasure:

    a) YES, always, but only when I travel alone

    b) YES, always, but only when I travel acoompanied by other people

    c) YES, always, both when I travel alone and accompanied by other people

    d) I'm NOT interested in finding out facts about my destination, because somebody else in my group handles this aspect

    e) I've NEVER thought of this aspect, as long and I'm with friends

6.3 both domestically and internationally:

    a) YES, always, but only when I travel alone

    b) YES, always, but only when I travel acoompanied by other people

    c) YES, always, both when I travel alone and when I travel with other people

    d) I'm NOT interested in finding out facts about my destination, because somebody else handles this aspect

    e) I've NEVER thought of this aspect, all I'm interested in is the fact that I will travel

7. Please select the research method that you make use of when you look for informaiton about your destination (multipe answers are permitted):

    a) looking at websites (internet)

    b) informantion flyers obtained from travel agencies

    c) informantion flyers received by mail

    d) trade shows and expositions

    e) information from friends and/or acquaintances

8. To which extent does your research helo with making a descision to use the services of an organization in the fiels of tourism?

    a) 100%

    b) it helps a lot, especiaslly because „commercials are the soul of commerce"

    c) it helps a lot, because it gives me the whole picture about my destination

    d) it only helps a bit, because I usually don't trust what I read and/or hear about my destination

    e) it doesn't help at all, because I'm usually only interested in finding a place to sleep

9. În ce măsură apreciați că mijloacele de informare/documentare apelate de Dumneavoastră reflectă, cu fidelitate, realitatea pe care o găsiți la locul de destinație?

    a) în totalitate

    b) destul de mult

    c) aşa-şi-aşa, adică „aproximativ"

    d) destul de puțin

    e) deloc! Chiar rămân surprins cum îşi pot minți, într-un asemenea hal, managerii unităților de turism clienții!?...

    f) NU CUNOSC, deci nu mă pot pronunța

10. If you're in the situation where what you find in reality at your destination doesn't match exactly with what was presented when you did your research:

    a) I get upset and compain to the organization's manager

b) I complain to the authorities (the organization's manager, The National Association of Agents in Tourism, the Ministry of Tourism, consumer groups) and tell other friends/ acquaintantces what I've experienced, advising them not to choose the same destination

c) I tell other friends/ acquaintantces what I've experienced, advising them not to choose the same destination

d) I get upset but don't do anything, convinced that I cannot change the situation

e) I do nothing , because I'm indiferent about the situation

f) I'VE NEVER BEEN IN THIS SITUATION

III. ASPECTS REGARDING HOW ROMANIAN CLIENTS PERCEIVE THE EXTERNAL ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION OF ORGANIZATIONS IN THE FIELD OF TOURISM

11. **Have you ever thought of the fact that a low quality external organizational communication can affect the quality of the client's travel experience (multiple answers are allowed)**
    a) YES, because the quality of the service of an organization, especially in the field of tourism, depends decisevely of the manner in which it communicates
    b) YES, especially because I alway make my opinion heard about the quality of the services received
    c) YES, because the quality of the services received affected the quality of my experience and/or my activity at the destination
    d) NO, because, regardless of the quality of my experience, I had to be able to find my destination, even when traveling for business
    e) NO, because I'm not concerned about other people and I know that one person cannot „change the world"
    f) I DON'T KNOW, so I cannot tell you

12. **To which extent do you think that the organizations in the field of tourism in Romania are concerned with an external organizational communication in order to satisfy as much as possible the clients wishes? Please formulate your answer based on your experience.**
    a) they are greatly concerned given the great number of offers on the market
    b) so and so, especially since I've noticed that the organizations are not too interested in the trourists and their loyalty and are more interested in organizing event (training event, team building, weddings, etc.)
    c) they are not concerned, especially since year to year things seem to be getting worse
    d) they are not concerned, because I've noticed that the organizations ar only interested in making a quick profit
    e) I DON'T KNOW, and I'm not interested to know!
    f) I DON'T KNOW, so I cannot tell you

13. **To which extent do you trust in the professionalism of the travel agencies in Romania, from the point of view of organizational communication? Please base your answer on the perception of the quality of the information obtained**
    a) i trust in it very much, especially because their purpose is to satisfy the wishes of all their clients. Actually I trust them completely when choosing the destination
    b) i trust in it very much, especially because their purpose is to satisfy the wishes of all their clients, especially foreign nationals travelling to Romania
    c) i don't trust in it too much, especially because I've noticed that all they want is our money
    d) i only slightly trust in it, especially because I've noticed that I receive my best infrormation through friends and acquaintances

e) I DON'T KNOW, and I'm not interested to know!

f) I DON'T KNOW, so I cannot tell you

14. From your experience, do you find that other European Union countries have organizations with superior external organizational communication? Please only refer to your perception in the field of tourism

    a) YES, especially because, no matter where I travelled internationally, I was treated better that I was in Romania. Furthermore, the professionalism of the staff is the result of a superior proffessional training

    b) YES! I've never travelled internationally but I heard that they treat you better over there, because the organizations abroad respect their clients, regardless of where they come from

    c) I'm NOT sure, I've visited places where they treated me better, but also places where the quality of service was inferior to the one of the Romanian destinations I've visited

    d) NO, the quality of the organizational communication is evenly distributed throughout the European Union countries

    e) I DON'T KNOW, and I'm not interested to know!

    f) I DON'T KNOW, so I cannot tell you

15. In case you answered YES to question number 14, please explain why you think this is the situation in Romania?

    a) lack of professionalism

    b) lack of ethics

    c) lack of responsibility, of conscience and of professinal ethics

    d) the lack of concer about the clients' satisfaction

    e) I DON'T KNOW, and I'm not interested to know!

    f) I DON'T KNOW, so I cannot tell you

16. Were you ever interviewd by an organization in the field of tourism regarding your satisfaction with the services received?

    a) YES! And I was happy to notice that the organization actually made use of my feedback

    b) YES, but I wasn't interested to find out to which extent the organization made use of my feedback for improving the quality of its service

    c) YES, but I feld like sometimes I just had to answer questions for statistic purposes and some of them were ostentatious

    d) NO but I wouldn't want to anyway since I wouldn't know how to answer and I would be too subjective

    e) NO but I wouln't answer anyway

17. Do you believe that, from your experience as a client of organizations in the field of tourism, there has been progress made in the are of external organizational communication?

    a) YES, in the most recent 3 – 5 years

    b) YES, in the most recent 5 – 7 years

    c) YES, in the most recent 8 – 10 years

    d) NO, nothing changed sine the December revolution!

    e) I DON'T KNOW, and I'm not interested to know!

    f) I DON'T KNOW, so I cannot tell you

18. To which extent do you believe that organizations treat tourists as potential loyal clients? Please only apply this to your experience in the field of tourism:

a) 100%! I've noticed that the agents treat their guest as clients that have the potential to beome loyal

b) just slitghtly, because the agents are only interested in getting me in the door and after having paid I've noticed no interest in me anymore

c) I DON'T KNOW the difference between a tourist and client, it seems to me that they are both treated the same

d) not a chance! Wherever I travelled in Romania, they all treated me like I was the one serving them, not the other way around

e) I DON'T KNOW, and I'm not interested to know!

f) I DON'T KNOW, so I cannot tell you

19. If you were to be able to decide, out of the communication methods in the table below, which is the degree to which you would use/recommend the following to organizations in the field of tourism?

Communication/Efficiency Methods	Low	Average	High	Not applicable
Individual (face to face) discussions with the clients	☐	☐	☐	☐
Formal reocurring meetings with loyal clients	☐	☐	☐	☐
Informal meetings (social events etc.) with clients' representatives	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sending questionnaires to clients periodically	☐	☐	☐	☐
Informational billboards	☐	☐	☐	☐
Intranet	☐	☐	☐	☐
Email	☐	☐	☐	☐
Phone	☐	☐	☐	☐
Social networks (*Facebook*, *Twitter* etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sugestion box	☐	☐	☐	☐
Surveys	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other (please specify): ………….. ……………………………………………..				

20. If you were to be able to decide, out of the professional development methods in the table below, which is the degree to which you would use/recommend the following to organizations in the field of tourism for their employees in Romania?

Type of courses	Non-management employees	Management employees
Initial orientation of employees	☐	☐
On the job training	☐	☐
Hospitality 101 (or similar basic courses)	☐	☐
Communication abilities	☐	☐

Leadership	☐	☐
Teambuilding	☐	☐
Information Technology	☐	☐
Sales and negotiation techniques	☐	☐
Foreign languages (please specify):...........................	☐	☐
Online marketing courses	☐	☐
Other (please specify)...............................	☐	☐
Other (please specify)...............................	☐	☐
Other (please specify)...............................	☐	☐

21. Please select your education level:

    a) high school diploma

    b) college diploma

    c) college diploma with concentration in tourism

    d) graduate studies with concentration in tourism

    e) PhD in tourism

    f) This is NOT relevant! At the end of the day we are all CLIENTS and all that matters is how we're treated by the organizations in the field of tourism!...

THANK YOU FOR BEING OPEN, SINCERE AND FOR CONTRIBUTING TO OUR STUDY!

În In case your're intersted, we will send you the survey results and their interpretation (whch is part of the research for a PhD thesis) immediately after they're finalized (approx. At the end of 2013 – the first half of 2014). We're projecting receiving over 10 000 responses to the survey.

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