Article

Exploring Australian travellers' satisfaction with traditional accommodations in Invercargill, New Zealand

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Abstract: This research studies Australian travellers' satisfaction with traditional accommodations in Invercargill, New Zealand, and the aim is to explore Australian travellers' satisfaction with traditional accommodations in this city. This descriptive research uses content analysis based on 256 online reviews gathered from online travel platforms and analysed using quantitative and qualitative methods. The research results distinguish that Australian travellers in Invercargill were mostly couples who stayed two days or less in motels and hotels. The quantitative results indicate that most Australian travellers gave moderate satisfaction ratings, with no significant differences across different accommodation types and traveller categories. The qualitative analysis revealed that Australian travellers generally expressed satisfaction with room, service, and accommodation characteristics but identified areas for improvement, including indoor environment, bathroom, soundproofing, service quality, and certain aspects of accommodation characteristics. The study recommends that managers of traditional accommodations should make improvements based on negative feedback from Australian travellers.

Keywords: tourism; accommodation; Invercargill; Australian travellers; satisfaction

1. Introduction

The tourism industry has become an essential part of New Zealand's economy. Byett et al. [1] pointed out that visitors prefer visiting New Zealand's South Island over the North Island. They also showed that Queenstown stands out as a primary attraction on the South Island. Queenstown is important in attracting visitors to New Zealand because its trends and regional attractions lead to satisfying economic benefits [2]. The same researcher revealed from the credit card data analysis that international tourists spend more than half of their overall expenditure in Queenstown. Moreover, those who visit New Zealand primarily for Queenstown contribute around NZ$452–640 million. The influx of tourists led to a Queenstown accommodation shortage, redirecting many to Southland in 2016 [3]. Tourists shift from Queenstown to Southland highlights traditional accommodations' impact on the local economy. Southland saw a 26% increase in room reservations, crucial for local and community advancement [3].

New Zealand closed its borders to international travellers from 2020 to 2022, resulting in minimal entry for two years. The first reopening of the Tasman border (the border between Australia and New Zealand) in 2022 increasedthe number of Australian travellers visiting New Zealand. Australian travellers have been exploring various destinations around New Zealand [4]. This increase in tourism has led to a renewed emphasis on enhancing customer satisfaction within the tourism sector [5].

The experiences and levels of satisfaction among travellers play a pivotal role in shaping their perceptions and the probability of returning [6]. As a result, traditional accommodations in New Zealand have recognised the importance of providing exceptional customer service and experiences to meet the expectations of travellers [7]. Accommodations might concentrate on delivering tailored services, immersive encounters, and a warm atmosphere to guarantee the contentment of travellers [6]. Moreover, online reviews have emerged as a dependable information source for travellers when selecting accommodations [8]. These reviews often contain crucial details and are written by guests who have first-hand experience [9]. Thus, examining online reviews provides valuable data on customer preferences, satisfaction, and areas for hospitality sector improvement.

Issues with accommodation management began with poor service quality and a lack of awareness, resulting in decreased customer satisfaction [10]. Unhelpful behaviour from accommodation staff and ineffective resolution of customer complaints lead to extended wait times, resulting in unfavourable customer satisfaction [7]. These problems result in low service quality, which reduces customer satisfaction and impacts the reputation and loyalty of motels [11]. Service quality and customer satisfaction are crucial for the future growth and performance of motels. Furthermore, it is vital to prioritise customer satisfaction, as dissatisfied customers are unlikely to return [12]. As a result, excellent service and customer satisfaction are critical in the accommodations industry for continued success and growth.

Studies have been undertaken to examine the satisfaction of travellers in different accommodation settings, such as the luxury accommodation experience in New Zealand [13,14], social media by tourism operators in Dunedin [15], and Māori indigenous culture towards tourism sustainability [16,17]. Furthermore, there is intense competition between traditional accommodations and peer-to-peer accommodations [18]. Hotels and motels need to provide excellent customer service to overcome the competition [19]. Having satisfied customers at accommodations not only boosts performance but also has the potential to address local unemployment by creating job opportunities, especially after the COVID-19 period [20]. Nevertheless, there exists a gap in research that specifically concentrates on the experiences of Australian travellers and their experiences with traditional accommodations in Invercargill [21]. Hence, this study aims to fill a research gap and contribute to understanding a specific setting.

This research explores Australian travellers' satisfaction with traditional accommodations in Invercargill, New Zealand. The objective of the study is to investigate the factors that affect the satisfaction of Australian travellers with traditional accommodations and to understand the attributes that lead to their dissatisfaction with staying in traditional accommodations in this city. The online reviews were used to make recommendations for traditional accommodations to improve their businesses.

2. Literature review

This section discusses research evidence and highlights earlier studies that have influenced this area under three themes: examining the definition and terms of

accommodations, trends within the hospitality industry, and how the hospitality industry utilises online reviews to enhance their businesses.

2.1. Accommodation

The accommodation industry has seen continuous growth, offering diverse options for various travellers' preferences. Weissinger [22] pointed out that the modern-era lodging industry offers alternative stays beyond traditional hotel or motel rooms. Accommodations play an important role in the hospitality industry in numerous countries. Olayele [23] noted the tourism sector's recovery and rapid growth post-COVID-19 period, highlighting these establishments' vital role in New Zealand's economic development. Zhu et al. [24] noted various accommodation choices for travellers starting from motels, hotels, lodges, guesthouses, camping sites, bed and breakfasts, and peer-to-peer accommodations, which offer a unique experience for guests. With the border reopening between Australia and New Zealand in June 2022, accommodations prioritise guest satisfaction and manage their online reputation to stay competitive.

To distinguish accommodations, this study utilises two phrases: traditional and peer-to-peer accommodations. Leick et al. [25] noted that traditional accommodation options include motels, hotels, lodges, backpacker hostels, guesthouses, camping sites, inns, and bed and breakfasts. These establishments usually follow established styles and often highlight local or cultural traits, offering guests an authentic experience. Traditional accommodations are owned by an individual or company and are situated in a particular area [25]. In contrast, peer-to-peer accommodation allows individuals to rent or share their homes directly with others via platforms like Airbnb, VRBO, HomeAway, and FlipKey, offering travellers a personalised and often cheaper lodging option [26]. This study in Invercargill specifically examines motels, hotels, and lodges as the most prevalent traditional accommodations. Inns, guesthouses, and bed and breakfasts were not considered due to potential data limitations.

2.2. Trends in the hospitality industry

Individuals tend to exhibit certain inclinations or patterns in the hospitality industry. This section covers the significance of word of mouth as a crucial element for travellers seeking information about prospective accommodations, thereby significantly impacting the hospitality business. Moreover, it will explore the factors contributing to traveller satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their chosen lodgings. Furthermore, it will elaborate on the diverse preferences stemming from various cultural backgrounds.

2.3. Word of mouth

The evolution of technology has changed how people search for information related to hospitality and engage in exchange processes. The Internet revolution and the rise of the second generation of the Internet (Web 2.0) in the 2000s significantly transformed the hospitality and tourism industry's landscape [8]. According to Ruiz-Mafe et al. [27], a significant element of this process is the rising influence of word-

of-mouth in shaping customers' purchase decisions. Hence, due to information technology and the internet revolution, word-of-mouth has evolved.

Evans and Erkan [28] stated that word-of-mouth refers to communication among consumers that includes comments about products and services. People trust comments more than non-personal sources like television commercials or other advertisements. Ring et al. [29] posited that word-of-mouth communications used to take place between consumers with strong bonds, like friends and family. Electronic word of mouth encompasses both marketer-generated and user-generated content on various online platforms such as social networks, brands' websites, product review sites, forums, and blogs [28]. Sparks and Browning [30] stated that consumers share online reviews without any commercial interest. They emphasise that electronic word-of-mouth from unknown consumers carries a similar level of credibility compared to word-of-mouth from friends or family. Therefore, word-of-mouth significantly impacts consumer perceptions and decisions, with credibility given to recommendations from both familiar acquaintances and unknown individuals in online interactions. Businesses leveraging positive and negative word-of-mouth gain market insight into tourism and hospitality [31].

2.4. Satisfaction and dissatisfaction

Every hotel business strives for guest satisfaction as its primary objective. According to Xiang et al. [32], guest satisfaction can be defined as the guest's assessment of their overall experience, formed by interacting with different service aspects. Nowadays, guests have greater access to information and a wider range of choices, leading to increased expectations and higher demands [33]. Sinclair and Sinclair [34] conclude that the hotel industry has been renowned for its resilience in the face of competitive challenges. Hotel managers confront increasing challenges in striving for high guest satisfaction amid fierce hospitality industry competition.

Examining guest reviews is essential for the hospitality industry to stay competitive. Guests frequently regard the quality of products [35,36] and services as important things to consider [37]. In most past research, structural methods have been employed to identify the factors influencing guests' satisfaction or dissatisfaction [32,38–43]. Soifer et al. [42] found that accommodations offering additional services beyond basic room and housekeeping facilities can gain guests' satisfaction. The value of accommodating employees, attentiveness to guests, availability of concierge services, and a smooth check-in or check-out process lies in their ability to make guests happy. Cleanliness and satisfactory service were crucial in meeting guest expectations [42]. Kucukusta [41] emphasised that accommodations should provide a wide range of complementary services, such as morning meals, parking lots, newspapers, telephones, internet access, and cable TV, to their guests. In addition, some accommodations differentiate themselves by providing extra facilities like restaurants, gyms, and swimming pools [40,32]. Furthermore, lower prices and higher quality attributes result in better-perceived utility, but higher prices can lead to dissatisfaction if expectations are not met [39]. Hence, analysing guest reviews and understanding preferences are vital strategies for the hospitality industry to stay competitive and ensure guest satisfaction.

Fu et al. [40] explained that various factors such as entertainment, service, facilities, and atmosphere can contribute to guest dissatisfaction. They had a further analysis and found indoor facilities and entertainment more frequently lead to dissatisfaction. In addition, guests often reported dissatisfaction with the level of responsiveness and attentiveness of hotel staff [39,32]. Furthermore, Xiang et al. [32] believed that cleanliness problems such as untidy rooms and inadequate housekeeping would not directly contribute to positive reviews but would cause dissatisfaction if they were absent. Failing to meet guest expectations can have significant impacts on the hospitality business [44]. Negative reviews can prevent potential customers from booking and damage the hotel's reputation, leading to a decline in overall business performance [45]. Therefore, addressing these areas of concern for hospitality businesses will improve guest satisfaction and maintain a positive online reputation.

2.5. Cross-cultural preference

Cross-cultural preferences when staying in accommodations vary significantly based on cultural norms, customs, and individual preferences. Hung et al. [46] explained that people from different cultures have unique preferences for lodging. For instance, Chinese travellers prioritise service quality more than Westerners due to social hierarchy [47]. In comparison, Japanese travellers are widely known to spend more on shopping [48]. On the other hand, Muzaini [49] posited that Europeans and North Americans prioritise cultural immersion and local experiences when choosing accommodations.

Australian travellers prefer a quick stay, spending an average of 1.8 days in the Southland area and 1.74 days in Invercargill [50]. A study by Dean et al. [51] revealed that out of many accommodation options, 38% of Australians like to stay at a luxury hotel or budget motel when they travel. Meanwhile, only 5% would choose lodges as a choice of accommodation. They also found that 46% of Australians travel as a couple. In addition, a study by Darcy [52] claimed that Australian travellers tend to prioritise certain aspects when selecting accommodations such as friendly staff, comfortable bedding, and a convenient location. Furthermore, the proximity of local attractions and the availability of parking options are also important [53]. Eco-friendly accommodations should be made available to Australian travellers shortly, as they may not place a high priority on environmental concerns [54]. Understanding Australian travellers' preferences can help New Zealand hospitality businesses tailor their services to meet their expectations.

2.6. Online reviews in the hospitality industry

Online reviews are valuable for hospitality establishments as they offer detailed feedback that can be used as an effective marketing tool [32,40,43,55]. Gavilan et al. [56] added that management realises that adding community content to a website motivates people to leave reviews about their experiences with products and services. Ong [57] outlined that if a hotel lacks an online review page on its website, it can still guide guests to third-party platforms to leave their reviews there. Moreover, accommodations can display some of the positive reviews from customers on third-party sites on their websites [57]. A one-point increase in a hotel's rating on third-

party sites or even on its website (measured on a Likert scale) can lead to an increase in bookings [9,12]. The hotel's online rating also impacts occupancy and room pricing. Thus, it is crucial to maintain a positive online reputation to attract more guests and increase sales.

Negative reviews can harm hospitality businesses by damaging their revenue and reputation, as potential customers tend to avoid establishments with negative feedback. Even a slight decline in review ratings can result in a significant decrease in revenue. Moreover, negative reviews can hinder a business's ability to attract new customers and retain existing ones. As a result, it is very important for accommodations to always monitor and provide effective responses to online reviews [58–62].

By utilising the review platform as a means of interacting with patrons, accommodation can address service issues, showcasing their dedication to valuing and considering customer feedback [57]. Gunden [63] explained that hospitality businesses should respond quickly and professionally to negative reviews and resolve issues to demonstrate their commitment to customer service. Gavilan et al. [56] found that accommodations that reply to negative reviews and positively address customer concerns often receive positive reviews. Hospitality businesses should prioritise customer engagement beyond mere review responses [59,64]. Micu et al. [65] found that any business can attain an exceptional online reputation and attract new customers by actively responding to customer comments and engaging with their posts on the internet. Hence, engaging with customers online can enhance hospitality businesses' reputation and customer experience.

3. Research design

This research employed content analysis of online reviews from online travel platforms. Content analysis allows for a systematic and objective analysis of textual data [66]. Data was collected and preprocessed from online travel platforms for analysis in this study. There are three online travel platforms used in this research: Booking.com, Agoda, and Hotels.com. This research only uses these three online travel platforms because they cater to the average New Zealander and provide sufficient data [67]. In addition, to maintain the accuracy of hotel reviews, these platforms only allow users who have paid for and stayed at the hotel to provide feedback [68]. Invercargill was selected as the research destination according to the aim and objectives of this research because it provides a range of traditional accommodation choices [69]. Moreover, according to Roberts [70], Invercargill offers an ideal setting for researching Australian travellers' satisfaction with traditional accommodations in Southland's capital. The data comprises reviews by Australian travellers from June 2022 to August 2023 of all hotels, motels, and lodges in Invercargill available on online travel platforms. The selected dates represent when Australian travellers began visiting New Zealand after the trans-Tasman border opened [71] until the present day to collect more data. The collected information includes the accommodation type, travellers' category, the duration and timing of their stay, the overall rating they assigned, and their positive or negative comments about the accommodations they encountered in Invercargill.

The study's population comprises travellers from Australia who lodged in traditional accommodations in Invercargill. The sample comprises Australian travellers who used Booking.com, Agoda.com, and Hotels.com to share their stay experiences in Invercargill. This study has collected all valid online reviews from Australian travellers on various online travel platforms between June 2022 and August 2023. The sample consists of 256 participants who submitted thorough reviews without blanks. Both quantitative and qualitative analyses have been employed to analyse data. Quantitative analysis was used to examine the number of overall comments, feedback (positive and negative), and overall ratings obtained from online reviews. While qualitative analysis was grouped using thematic analysis, the most common feedback regarding each accommodation type.

4. Results and analysis

In this research, three online booking platforms were used to collect detailed information about Australian travellers' profiles. This information includes the accommodation type, travellers' category, the duration and timing of their stay, the overall rating they assigned, and their positive or negative comments about the accommodations they stayed in Invercargill.

4.1. Demographic information

Table 1 reveals that approximately 94% of Australian travellers choose to stay in motels and hotels, with a marginal difference of one in frequency and 0.39% in percentage. The remaining 4% chose a lodge for their accommodations. In addition, most Australian travellers travel as couples, accounting for more than 50% of the total sample. The second most prevalent traveller category is families, representing 21%, while solo and group travellers follow. Furthermore, 82% of Australian travellers stayed for 1 to 2 nights, 12% stayed for 3–4 nights, and only 5% stayed for more than 5 nights. Therefore, the predominant traveller profile among Australians comprises couples who chose either a motel or hotel for their accommodations, typically for short stays of 1 to 2 nights. The least was travelling as a group, choosing a lodge to stay at, and staying for durations of 5 nights or more. This profile is aligned with the literature review stating that Australians prefer a brief stay, spending 1.74 days in Invercargill on average [50]. In addition, it is also aligned with the previous study by Dean et al. [51], showing that Australians will travel mostly as a couple and choose a hotel or motel instead of a lodge.

Table 1. Demographics of Australian travellers.

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Accommodation type		
Motel	121	47.27%
Hotel	120	46.88%
Lodge	15	5.85%
Travellers' category		
Couple	141	55.08%
Family	54	21.10%
Solo traveller	44	17.19%
Group	17	6.63%

Table 1. (*Continued*).

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Duration of stay		
1–2 nights	210	82.03%
3–4 nights	31	12.10%
5 + nights	14	5.47%

4.2. Frequency and statistical analysis of overall comment

Figure 1 illustrates the frequency of Australian travellers' ratings based on their stay. Most travellers rated their stays in motels and hotels between 7 and 8. Ratings of 9–10 were nearly as common as ratings of 5–6. Conversely, ratings of 3–4 and 1–2 constituted a smaller portion of the total reviews. In contrast, Australian travellers who stayed in lodges predominantly gave the highest ratings for their accommodations and provided the lowest ratings in the 3–4 category.
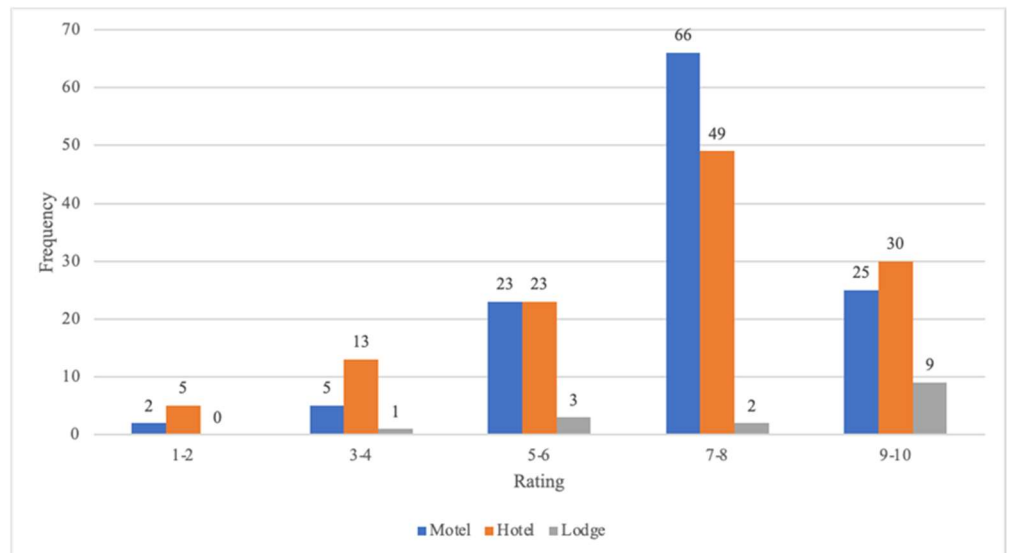
Figure 1. Overall ratings based on the accommodations type.

The average analysis continues using analysis of variance (ANOVA), which analyses the means across all accommodation types. The *p*-value obtained from ANOVA is higher than 0.05 [$F_{(2.253)} = 2.99$, $p = 0.518$)]. There is no significant difference from the mean among the accommodation types. This could happen because every accommodation type fulfils the needs of the travellers and aligns with their expectations in terms of perceived service, across all three accommodations [72].

Figure 2 illustrates the frequency of ratings provided by various Australian travellers for traditional accommodations. The data indicate that most travellers rated their experiences in traditional accommodations within the range of 7 to 8. Ratings between 9 and 10 were also quite frequent, although slightly less so than ratings falling between 5 and 6. In contrast, a smaller fraction of reviews fell within the 3 to 4 and 1 to 2 rating brackets.

The *p*-value obtained from the ANOVA is higher than 0.05 [$F_{(2.252)} = 1.45$, $p = 0.23$)], indicating that there is no significant difference between the means of the travellers' categories. This implies that the overall ratings of the couple, family, solo, and group categories do not differ significantly based on statistical analysis. This could

occur because every category of Australian travellers feels satisfied with the traditional accommodations in Invercargill, and the experience they receive closely matches their expectations [72]. Therefore, the average overall ratings of couple, family, solo, and group travellers are not statistically different.
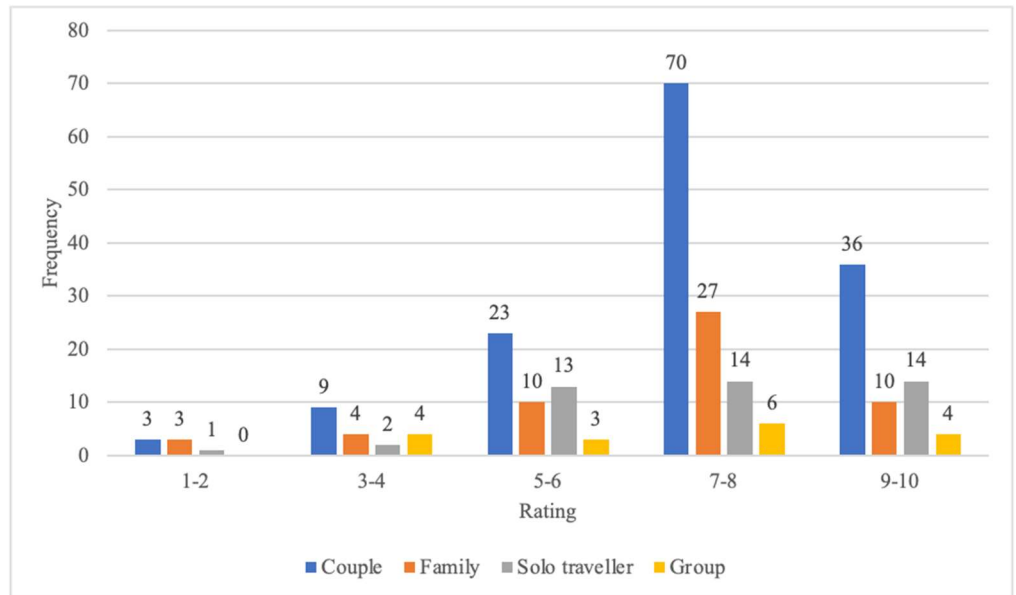

Figure 2. Overall ratings based on the travellers' category.

4.3. Classification of overall comments and feedback

Table 2 shows that at least 70% of traditional accommodations in Invercargill satisfy Australian travellers. Motels had the highest satisfaction percentage at 86.78%, significantly higher than other accommodations. Hotel satisfaction was approximately 15%, and lodge satisfaction was less than 0.1% in comparison to motel satisfaction. This means that less than 30% of traditional accommodations had dissatisfied guests, with 29.17% for hotels and approximately 13% for others. Motels received 105 overall satisfactory comments, followed by hotels with 85 and lodges with 13. On the other hand, the highest number of overall dissatisfactory comments came from hotels, with 35, followed by motels with 16, and lodges with the lowest at 2.

Table 2. Percentage of overall comments and feedback based on accommodations type.

Category	Motel	Hotel	Lodge
Overall comments	-	-	-
Satisfied	86.78%	70.83%	86.67%
Dissatisfied	13.22%	29.17%	13.33%
Feedback	-	-	-
Positive	63.74%	57.61%	62.50%
Negative	36.26%	42.39%	37.50%

As shown in **Table 2**, motels received the highest percentage of positive feedback at 63.74%. Lodges received less feedback because fewer travellers stayed there, but they still had a positive feedback percentage of 62.50%. The lowest positive feedback

percentage was for hotels, at 57.61%. On the other hand, motels and lodges received less than 40% of the negative feedback. Hotels need to work on that aspect, as they received 42.39%.

4.4. Positive and negative feedback from different groups of travellers

Among the positive feedback, couples contributed 66.13% for motels, 60% for hotels, and 58.33% for lodges (**Table 3**). At the same time, Australian families rated accommodations at 60.61% for motels, 50% for hotels, and 70% for lodges. In the service category, Australian couples and families were pleased with the staff's attitude at most accommodations. Australian families are also satisfied with the service quality. In the accommodation characteristics category, Australian couples were content with the location as well as the facilities and outlets for all accommodation types. Families shared this contentment with the addition of overall accommodations for hotels and lodges. Sometimes, Australian couples appreciated the quality of food and the presence of restaurants and bars in hotels.

On the other hand, they also provided negative feedback. Australian couples gave 33.87% for motels, 40% for hotels, and 41.67% for lodges, while Australian families rated accommodations at 39.39% for motels, 50% for hotels, and 30% for lodges in terms of negative feedback. In the service category, they were particularly dissatisfied with the service quality and staff's attitude in some accommodations. In the accommodation characteristics category, Australian couples and families were unhappy with the design and decor, facilities and outlets, and parking.

Among the positive feedback, solo travellers contributed 59.77% for motels, 63.89% for hotels, and 71.43% for lodges. Meanwhile, Australian group travellers rated accommodations at 62.50% for motels, 51.61% for hotels, and 66.67% for lodges. In the service category, Australian solo and group travellers were pleased with the service quality and staff's attitude at motels and hotels. Australian solo travellers did not provide any positive feedback for lodge services, while group travellers also expressed satisfaction with the service quality. In the accommodation characteristics category, Australian solo and group travellers complimented the location, facilities and outlets, and parking for motels and hotels. Solo travellers liked the location, and families expressed contentment about the overall accommodations for lodges.

On the other hand, they also provided negative feedback. Australian solo travellers gave 40.23% for motels, 36.11% for hotels, and 28.65% for lodges, while Australian groups rated accommodations with 37.5% for motels, 48.39% for hotels, and 33.33% for lodges in terms of negative feedback. In the rooms category, they expressed dissatisfaction primarily with the bathroom, cleanliness and odour, indoor environment, and soundproofing across all accommodation types. In the service category, they were primarily dissatisfied with the staff's attitude toward motels and hotels.

Table 3. Numbers and percentages of positive and negative feedback from different categories of travellers.

Couple and Family

Category	Motel				Hotel				Lodge			
	Couple		Family		Couple		Family		Couple		Family	
	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative
Rooms	84 (33.87%)	45 (18.14%)	26 (39.39%)	16 (24.24%)	78 (29.43%)	64 (24.15%)	22 (18.65%)	41 (34.74%)	11 (30.55%)	7 (19.44%)	5 (50.00%)	1 (10.00%)
Service	26 (10.48%)	8 (3.22%)	6 (9.10%)	1 (1.52%)	16 (6.04%)	8 (3.02%)	10 (8.48%)	6 (5.09%)	2 (5.56%)	4 (11.11%)	-	-
Characteristics	53 (21.38%)	30 (12.11%)	8 (12.12%)	9 (13.63%)	57 (21.51%)	28 (10.57%)	25 (21.18%)	12 (10.17%)	6 (16.66%)	2 (5.56%)	2 (20.00%)	2 (20.00%)
Food and beverage	1 (0.4%)	-	-	-	7 (2.64%)	1 (0.38%)	2 (1.69%)	-	2 (5.56%)	-	-	-
Others	-	1 (0.4%)	-	-	1 (0.38%)	5 (1.88%)	-	-	-	2 (5.56%)	-	-
Total	164 (66.13%)	84 (33.87%)	40 (60.61%)	26 (39.39%)	159 (60.00%)	106 (40.00%)	59 (50.00)	59 (50.00%)	21 (58.33%)	15 (41.67%)	7 (70.00%)	3 (30.00%)

Solo and Group

Category	Motel				Hotel				Lodge			
	Solo		Group		Solo		Group		Solo		Group	
	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative
Rooms	32 (36.78%)	25 (28.74%)	11 (34.38%)	9 (28.13%)	18 (25.00%)	12 (16.67%)	3 (9.68%)	8 (25.81%)	2 (28.57%)	1 (14.28%)	-	1 (33.33%)
Service	8 (9.19%)	1 (1.15%)	2 (6.25%)	1 (3.12%)	7 (9.72%)	2 (2.78%)	2 (6.45%)	3 (9.68%)	-	-	1 (33.33%)	-
Characteristics	12 (13.80%)	8 (9.19%)	6 (18.75%)	2 (6.25%)	19 (26.39%)	9 (12.50%)	11 (35.48%)	4 (12.90%)	2 (28.57%)	1 (14.28%)	1 (33.33%)	-
Food and beverage	-	-	-	-	2 (2.78%)	3 (4.16%)	-	-	1 (14.28%)	-	-	-
Others	-	1 (1.15%)	1 (3.12%)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	52 (59.77%)	35 (40.23%)	20 (62.5%)	12 (37.5%)	46 (63.89%)	26 (36.11%)	16 (51.61%)	15 (48.39%)	5 (71.43%)	2 (28.57%)	2 (66.67%)	1 (33.33%)

4.5. Most frequent feedback from Australian travellers

The most common feedback from travellers about each type of accommodation was classified using thematic analysis. On the positive side, the majority of Australian travellers had an exceptional or very good stay at the motel. Couples and solo travellers mostly appreciated the overall feel of the rooms, mentioning that the rooms were well-equipped and the beds were comfortable. Most of the solo travellers had a great welcome while staying at the motel. As for families and groups, they occasionally encountered booking problems, but the motel allowed them to use the room for a moment. A significant benefit for group travellers was that they could leave unwashed dishes in the kitchen. Regarding the motel's characteristics, Australians particularly liked its location.

In terms of negative feedback, the most frequent expressions included disappointment, not worth it, and the need for updates and fixes. Within the rooms category, many travellers dislike the indoor environment and bathrooms. Indoor environment problems involved non-functional air conditioners and rooms that were excessively hot even at night. Bathroom problems included small sizes, and the design posed risks for elderly individuals. Another major issue for both couples and groups was soundproofing. Couples were unhappy about the noisy main road and the rooms above. Couples also mentioned dated décor and facilities, limited parking space, and a slightly distant location from shops. Families reported issues with the internet, noting that it was not reliable.

Most Australian couples mentioned that hotels in Invercargill are at a moderate level and meet their expectations. In the rooms category, they expressed satisfaction with the room's overall quality, size, cleanliness, and bed comfort. Most couples, families, and solo travellers found the rooms spacious, well-appointed, and convenient, with comfortable beds. In the service category, the staff received praise from most travelers and was described as friendly and pleasant. Families noted that their hotel rooms were serviced every day, while solo travellers had a smooth check-in experience. Regarding the hotel's characteristics, Australians particularly liked its location.

In terms of negative feedback, the most frequent included expressions like disappointing and would never recommend. These comments were often made by couples. Within the rooms category, many travellers faced issues related to the indoor environment and soundproofing. Problems related to the indoor environment included rooms becoming excessively hot in the afternoon and non-functional air conditioners. Soundproofing problems pertained to sounds from the crossing road beeping, the nearby construction site, and noise from people in adjacent rooms. Australian couples and families expressed strong concerns about room ventilation and expressed a desire for openable windows.

The positive and negative aspects of the most frequent overall feedback from Australian travellers regarding lodges. On the positive side, most Australian travellers had a positive experience using expressions such as a touch of luxury, wonderful, a great place to stay, and a relaxing stay. In the rooms category, the couples expressed satisfaction with the overall room, bathroom, cleanliness, and bed, mentioning that the room was cosy, clean, and had a comfortable bed. In terms of negative feedback, the most frequent comments included expressions such as disappointing and better to stay

at another place if you want decent sleep and can afford more. They also mentioned noise from dogs outside their room. Regarding the lodge's characteristics, there were some negative feedback points related to price, location, and parking that need to be addressed. Couples and solo travellers mentioned that it was overpriced.

5. Discussion

The quantitative analysis reveals that most travellers rated their experience between 7 and 8, indicating moderate satisfaction based on a 10-point Likert scale. In addition, the descriptive statistic shows that the mean ratings did not significantly differ between different groups, indicating that Australian travellers rate the accommodations in Invercargill equally. Furthermore, the overall comments showed more satisfaction than dissatisfaction. This can be related to the theory of expected confirmation. According to Oliver [73], the Expectation-Confirmation Theory posits that customer satisfaction with a product or service leads to repeat purchases. This is because the product or service meets the customer's expectations and perceptions before the purchase. He also posits that customer satisfaction positively influences their likelihood of making future purchases. Therefore, quantitative results indicate that accommodation in Invercargill mostly meets Australian travellers' expectations.

The qualitative analysis identified various factors contributing to both satisfaction and dissatisfaction among Australian travellers. The results show that Australian travellers provided more positive than negative feedback. This aligns with the quantitative analysis that shows most of them rated their experience between 7 and 8, signifying their satisfaction. The findings address the research objective by revealing the factors that made Australian travellers satisfied with the accommodation in Invercargill. In the room category, most of the travellers were happy about the overall room condition, size, bed, cleanliness, and odour. In terms of service, they were satisfied with the quality and staff attitude. As for the characteristics, Australian travellers liked the location, facilities, and overall characteristics of the accommodation across all types. This confirms a previous study on customer satisfaction in the hospitality industry by Tseng et al. [61], which stated that online reviews significantly influence hotel bookings, with room quality being the primary factor affecting booking decisions. These findings emphasise the importance of hotel managers considering online reviews. Thus, the findings are in line with previous studies showing that better accommodation attributes lead to higher bookings and customer satisfaction.

The research objective was addressed by identifying the factors that caused dissatisfaction among Australian travellers with the accommodations in Invercargill. In the room category, most travellers expressed dislikes regarding the indoor environment, bathroom, soundproofing, and some cleanliness issues. In terms of service, they were dissatisfied with the quality and staff attitude. As for the characteristics, Australian travellers disliked outdated design, parking issues, location, and internet facilities. The finding matches a study by Xiang et al. [32] that believed negative feedback may not result directly from room issues such as heating systems, lack of soundproofing, and cleanliness issues like unclean and odorous rooms but may

express dissatisfaction if these issues are present. As a result, there are recurring negative comments that require attention.

It is advisable to identify factors responsible for satisfaction and dissatisfaction and determine areas for improvement. Assisting traditional accommodations in utilising online reviews to enhance their business can be achieved by addressing the most frequent feedback. In the room category, traditional accommodations excel at creating cosy, spacious rooms with comfortable beds, room cleanliness, and a pleasant scent. In terms of service, they offer a high-quality experience with easy check-in and booking processes, daily room servicing, occasional extra services like dishwashing, and complimentary breakfast. Additionally, the staff is friendly and welcoming. Regarding the characteristics of the accommodations, they perform admirably with their central location, comprehensive facilities such as laundry and cable TV, and quality throughout their appearance. Having a positive online reputation is vital for accommodations to attract and retain customers and increase sales [9,12]. Therefore, traditional accommodations in Invercargill, such as motels, hotels, and lodges, need to maintain their positive trend.

There is some negative feedback about traditional accommodations in Invercargill. In the room category, they need to work on the indoor environment, such as room ventilation, like having windows that can be opened and an effective cooling system since the AC is often not working and the rooms get too hot in the summer. In terms of service, Australian travellers sometimes found that the accommodations lacked service quality and the staff displayed an unpleasant attitude. Additionally, there are parking issues, such as expensive fees, being far from the accommodation, and being limited. The internet is not always reliable and may not meet its advertised quality.

The analysis of results also revealed that Australian travellers prioritise aspects like friendly staff, comfortable bedding, and convenient locations when selecting accommodations. They also value lodgings offering amenities like complimentary breakfast, free Wi-Fi, leisure facilities, and accessibility for people with disabilities. Thus, traditional accommodations in Invercargill should address these areas to improve and prevent negative reviews.

6. Conclusions and recommendations

The most common Australian travellers' profiles are those of couples who stayed in motels or hotels for 1 to 2 nights. In contrast, the least common profile involves group travellers selecting lodges for stays lasting 5 nights or more. The quantitative analysis revealed that most Australian travellers and traditional accommodations received ratings ranging from 7 to 8, signifying a moderate level of satisfaction based on a 10-point Likert scale. The ANOVA analysis indicates that there is no significant difference in ratings across different accommodation types and travel categories. When analysing the number and percentage of overall comments and feedback, it is evident that more Australian travellers expressed satisfaction with their stay. The qualitative analysis highlights that Australian travellers generally expressed satisfaction with room, service, and accommodation characteristics. They applaud the room condition, staff attitude, and location. However, areas of improvement include

addressing issues with the indoor environment, bathrooms, soundproofing, service quality, and certain aspects of accommodation characteristics such as outdated design, parking, and internet.

This study found moderate levels of satisfaction among Australian travellers and traditional accommodations, with no significant differences between accommodation types and traveller categories. Australian travellers generally expressed contentment with room quality, staff attitudes, and location but mentioned improvement in aspects like indoor environment, bathroom, soundproofing, service quality, and certain aspects of accommodation characteristics such as outdated design, parking, and internet. Traditional accommodations in Invercargill can focus on making changes in rooms, services, and characteristics, thereby increasing travellers' satisfaction. The traditional accommodations in Invercargill should consider further utilisation of online reviews to improve their business.

In the room category, most Australian travellers expressed dissatisfaction with the indoor environment, bathrooms, soundproofing, and cleanliness. The indoor environment includes factors such as air circulation, ventilation, heating systems, and air conditioning. Traditional accommodations in Invercargill need to address travellers' concerns by fixing the heating or cooling system and adding ventilation. In addition, traditional accommodations in Invercargill need to address issues related to their bathrooms, such as unclean amenities, a lack of spaciousness, and designs that are unsuitable for the elderly. Furthermore, soundproofing is also a concern in traditional accommodations in Invercargill. The use of meta-curtain is a solution to soundproofing and ventilation. The meta-curtains can filter hot air into fresher air and dampen sounds at specific frequencies [74].

In addition to addressing room-related issues, traditional accommodations should make improvements in terms of service and accommodation characteristics. In the service aspect, negative feedback mainly pertains to the lack of service quality, including problems during check-in, room availability, and staff attitude. Providing targeted training for motel staff with a focus on professional knowledge such as service processes, guest issue resolution, and service etiquette can significantly enhance guest satisfaction. Moreover, regarding accommodation characteristics, Australian travellers are mostly concerned about parking, outdated design, and occasional issues with the location and internet access. Traditional accommodations should offer parking or partner with automated parking solutions to address distance, availability, and cost issues [75]. To tackle outdated design, traditional accommodations can be renovated to refresh and update. Renovation is crucial to stay competitive, align with trends, retain market share, and satisfy guests [76]. Finally, traditional accommodations in Invercargill occasionally face issues with their internet service. They could improve this aspect by investing a bit more in selecting a reliable internet service provider, which usually doesn't require a substantial physical investment [77].

Further research opportunities exist to investigate customer satisfaction across various sectors of the Invercargill accommodation industry. This inquiry provides valuable recommendations to enhance customer satisfaction at various accommodations. Identifying prevalent issues will enable traditional accommodations managers to implement necessary improvements. Additionally, researchers can

investigate how accommodation managers react to the data collected and evaluate its reliability for future studies.

Author contributions: Conceptualization, TTI; methodology, TTI and IK; software, TTI; validation, TTI and IK; formal analysis, TTI; investigation, TTI; resources, TTI and IK; data curation, TTI; writing—original draft preparation, TTI and IK; writing—review and editing, TTI and IK; visualization, TTI and IK; supervision, IK; project administration, TTI and IK. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Conflict of interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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