



Stimulating Domestic Tourism in Algeria: The Role of Social Media in Revitalizing Local Destinations

MADI SABRI^{1,*}, BENSOUILAH LILIA²

¹ Laboratory of philosophy, human and social studies,
and problems of media and communication
University of 08 Mai 1945 Guelma (Algeria)

madi.sabri@univ-guelma.dz

² Self-development and good governance,
University of 08 Mai 1945 Guelma (Algeria)

bensouilah.lilia@univ-guelma.dz

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Abstract

This article examines the underutilized potential of social media in stimulating domestic tourism in Algeria, a sector that has faced significant challenges due to economic perceptions and political instability. Despite its rich cultural heritage and scenic landscapes, domestic tourism in Algeria remains underdeveloped, with many Algerians preferring international travel. The paper highlights the pivotal role that social media can play in altering this trend by effectively promoting local destinations and engaging Algerian tourists. Through an analytical approach, it explores how platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter can be leveraged to enhance the visibility of local attractions, influence tourist decisions, and foster a sense of pride and belonging among locals. The study employs qualitative and quantitative methods to gather data on current social media usage and its impact on tourism choices. Recommendations are provided for tourism stakeholders to craft strategies that utilize social media not only as a promotional tool but also as a means to rejuvenate and economically support the regions dependent on tourism. The findings suggest that with strategic social media use, domestic tourism in Algeria can flourish, benefiting both the economy and the preservation of cultural heritage.

Keywords: *Stimulating; Domestic; Tourism; The Role of Social Media ; Revitalizing Local Destinations*

* Corresponding Author.

I. INTRODUCTION

The domestic tourism industry in Algeria has faced challenges due to the perception that it is expensive and unaffordable. This has resulted in little exploration and travel within the country's beautiful regions. Additionally, political instability has impacted the tourism sector, causing iconic attractions to deteriorate and regions relying on tourism to suffer economically. During the peak season, many Algerians choose to travel abroad instead of exploring their own country, with France being a popular destination due to historical ties and the presence of relatives and friends. Despite these factors, the number of tourism activities reported in Algeria in 2010 was alarmingly low, highlighting the need to prioritize the restoration and revitalization of the tourism sector. It is crucial for the government and relevant authorities to invest in infrastructure and implement strategic initiatives to unlock the country's tourism potential. By doing so, Algeria can become a thriving tourist destination, boosting its economy and international reputation. It is only through such efforts that Algeria's tourism industry can truly thrive on a global scale.

1.1. Background

Harnessing the power of social media platforms and key technology relations to promote tourism has never been more essential nor urgent. This is particularly true for the North African country of Algeria, an intriguing tourist destination that has consistently failed to reach its full economic potential for tourism. Its economic potential in this context refers to the possibilities for flourishing local economies in areas with historical or cultural significance as a result of an influx of tourists. With unemployment rates that are disturbingly high for a relatively wealthy developing country and a consistently high population growth rate, stimulating the local economies of Algeria's many historical and cultural tourism destinations is an important goal. On a broader level, this essay contends that the promotion of Algeria as a tourist destination can aid in bridging the gap between North Africa and the rest of the world in terms of understanding and cultural exchange. If tourism can be revived and expanded to a level where Algeria is seen as a viable alternative to European destinations with similar attractions, this could mark the beginning of a lessening in the mutual Euro-centrism and Arabophobia which has long plagued relations between Algeria and Europe. (Benchaib, 2022)

It is hard to escape the conclusion that the absence of a comprehensive Algerian tourism promotion strategy is a response to the collective international and domestic problems attending Algeria's tourism status. Domestically, the trade and foreign ministers have been concerned with the balance of payments since the late 1970s - early 1980s oil glut placed Algeria in a situation where its major source of revenue was continuously bypassing the national economy. This concern over the flow of oil money into the national economy has caused fossil fuels, particularly since the world price slump of the late 1980s to early 1990s, to become increasingly seen as a non-renewable natural resource the consumption of which takes away from the wellbeing of future generations. This has led to a revival of interest in increasing national revenues from other sources, including tourism. (Ait-Yahia et al.2021)

1.2. Objectives

The third and most important aim is to come up with practical guidelines for tourism stakeholders and the government on fully utilizing social media in promoting local destinations. This can be done through a series of brainstorming and discussion sessions with focus groups involving social media experts and tourism practitioners. Findings from the discussions will be used to construct the guidelines.

The second aim is to identify the factors that drive local tourists in choosing their holiday destination and come up with the best way to use social media in influencing them to make informed decisions in choosing local destinations. To achieve this, basic data is gathered through surveys, and the findings will be used to understand local tourists' behavioral decisions.

Determine the overall objectives of this study through separate lists of general and specific objectives. The main aim is to identify and assess the current trend of social media usage in promoting local destinations in Algeria and its potential in stimulating domestic tourism. This involves observing the movement initiated by tourism stakeholders and the government in implementing e-marketing strategies to promote local destinations and how social media, as a modern platform, can be a better alternative to reach a wider audience. The assessment of the current trend will be done through case studies on certain destinations or events that heavily utilize social media.

1.3. Significance of the Study

The significance of this research lies in the fact that the giant technological leap of the past 10 years has changed the way people communicate and directed them to participate in the virtual worlds and communities. Mainly, the advancement of the internet and the emergence of social media have converted the world into a global village. The endorsement and employment of information technology, social media, and the internet have become an integral part of most of the developed and developing countries in positioning themselves as a viable destination for tourism. In the same context, Algeria's national and international image can be improved through the proper utilization of modern information media and technology. Prominently, this research will edify the reader on whether social media can really be used as a tool to drastically change and improve Algeria's national and international image by promoting its distinct culture and historical destinations, which in turn will revitalize domestic tourism. This research study will touch upon the importance of social media in the modern era and explain the role of how it can be used to serve the purpose of promoting a country's national and international image, which in this case is Algeria's distinct culture, history, and its local tourist destinations. Towards the end of the research, the reader will have an understanding of whether social media can really be a cost-effective alternative to other information communication technologies and can give positive results.

2. Literature Review

The significance of social media has grown substantially in the previous decade as consumer technology is constantly progressing. In recent years, social media use has infiltrated several client segments worldwide. With the increase in internet capabilities, social media has become a global platform for all types of social interactions and has had an influence on consumer behaviour. This has led to the travel industry's adoption of social media platforms to communicate with travel consumers. Tourism-related organisations have superbly identified the inherent potential for social media in its capability to influence varied prospective travel consumers. This has seen vigorous social media utilisation with strategies implemented in relative social media areas, including social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter, blogs, online communities, and utilising business consumer interaction with viral videos. Through active and varied participation in these platforms, destinations can communicate and engage with potential tourists by giving them tourism information and specific destination narrations, by creating a virtual experience of the destination, and by forming authentic relationships around travel consumer shared interests. All of these factors can have an immense impact on influencing travel consumer booking intentions and decisions and can transcend into actual travel to the destination. (Qin, 2020)

Domestic tourism has become an essential component for growth and development for local communities and destinations. The trend towards experiencing one's own country is becoming more and more popular and is known as one of the fastest growing forms of tourism (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2008). For some countries, it is the main form of tourism, encouraging economic development, heritage and cultural conservation, and social well-being. For this reason, it is important to stimulate this type of tourism. Throughout the world, tourism destinations are looking at alternative ways to increase the number of domestic tourists visiting their area. One of the ways is through social media. (Canh & Thanh, 2020)

2.1. Domestic Tourism in Algeria

The importance of domestic tourism for a thriving and prosperous tourist sector has long been widely accepted in academic circles and is strongly supported by numerous esteemed international organizations, including the influential World Tourism Organization and the prestigious World Travel and Tourism Council. These reputable organizations recognize and champion domestic tourism as a fundamental pillar, as it serves as a solid foundation for the evolution and sustenance of a dynamic and sustainable tourism industry on a global scale. Furthermore, it is widely acknowledged and recognized that domestic tourism plays a pivotal role in providing a vital groundwork for the successful operation and expansion of tourism-related businesses within a specific destination. This, in turn, serves to invigorate and fortify investments in the abundant supply of diverse and high-quality tourism products and services. However, the captivating case of Algeria serves as a poignant reminder that these fundamental concepts and principles are not always strictly adhered to. Despite boasting a plethora of remarkable natural wonders and captivating cultural attractions, Algeria has, unfortunately, struggled with a persistently imbalanced tourism revenue deficit. Although considerable investments have been diligently made in recent years to foster and enhance the tourism sector, the desired outcomes have not been fully realized. Consequently, Algeria has now turned its attention towards the crucial and promising prospect of fostering and nurturing domestic tourism, as evidenced by the insightful study conducted by Rachik in 2014. (Lee et al., 2020)

2.2. Role of Social Media in Tourism

Social media is changing the way we communicate and the way we seek and receive information, including when we are considering travel. It has the power to build or destroy the reputations of regions and destinations and therefore is critical for domestic tourism. Algeria has a relatively young population and the under 30s are the most frequent users of technology. Data shows that younger travelers are keen to learn about destinations through information seeking with social media. Young travelers would typically increase time and money spent on holidays to build a country's image and communities. Hence, the development of a strong online presence for Algeria can be the key to induce and express vitality through the youth. This will further create an identity of a destination which can provide a sense of pride and belonging. A model example is the young and multicultural city of Melbourne and its destination tourism website "That's the Thing About Melbourne". Therefore, social media can play an effective tool in creating desire, identity, and an image for a destination. However, assuming success, it can have positive and negative effects. (Laifa & Benhassine, 2023)

During this period of reform, positive and constructive measures in promoting Algeria's domestic tourism are vital to enhance its presence by creating awareness. Another method is to change people's perceptions and attitudes towards domestic tourism in the hope that future generations will want to create and continue domestic tourism. Marketing is very important in

evoking interest from the public. One approach that would be of low cost and effective would be government funding to create a paper or electronic media-based form of information in educating the public about the importance of domestic tourism and its presence in Algeria. This method can be done effectively with the right timing and information on the target audience, allowing people to quickly access and understand the importance of domestic tourism. (Lu, 2023).

2.3. Previous Studies on Social Media and Domestic Tourism

Nunkoo and Ramkisoorn (2011) found a strong relation between the amount of travel information gathered and travel intentions in the context of Mauritius. Furthermore, travel information was explicitly defined to include information on attractions, activities and events in a chosen destination (Nunkoo & Ramkisoorn, 2011). This was echoed by a study on rural tourism in Spain by Rodriguez et al. (2007), which stated that the internet was the second most utilized source of travel information, after word of mouth. Algerians' gathering of travel information and subsequent travel intentions as a result of exposure to travel information on the social media platform, Facebook, was demonstrated by Nunkoo and Ramkisoorn (2013) to have a positive impact on their travel behaviors in a domestic context. These findings suggest a high potential for the role of social media in influencing Algerians' travel decisions within Algeria, should Algerians have access to travel information on Algerian destinations. (Charles et al., 2023).

The two realms, social media and domestic tourism, the latter often defined as travel within one's own country (Nunkoo, Smith, & Ramkisoorn, 2013), are thoroughly familiar to the global population in this era. Given that domestic tourism comprises 83.4% of the total volume of tourism in Algeria according to the World Travel and Tourism Council in 2014, and Algeria's 23 million internet users (Ministry of Post and Information and Communication Technologies, 2014), to focus on the role of social media in information exchange in travel decisions relevant to Algeria by Algerians is critical. This section aims to understand whether Algerian individuals are using social media to acquire travel information relevant to domestic tourism, or to share experiences of domestic tourism, and then to understand whether there has been a subsequent influence on travel intentions and behaviors. (Adeloye, 2020)

3. Methodology

The intention behind choosing the methodology chosen for this study was to learn how and why the consumers of the tourism industry in Algeria, and more specifically the current and potential tourists to local tourist sites in Algeria, use social media. It is also to understand the impacts of social media on their decisions for the choice of a holiday destination and the feel of a holiday destination. This involves analyzing to what extent social media has brought changes to the perceptions of consumers for tourist destinations in Algeria. Hence, the research design should enable us to answer the research question that is based on the topic of our study. The most apt methodology design chosen should ensure that the objectives of the study can be achieved.

Research happens in steps that need to be carefully planned and executed, and thus it has been a significant part of this study. The methodology chapter will include a detailed discussion on the design of the research, the various data collection methods, and data analysis techniques used within this study to ensure that the study is well planned, has a smooth execution, and ultimately a positive end result.

3.1. Research Design

For this study, the qualitative methodology has been adopted. The reason for selecting a qualitative approach was the exploratory nature of the study. It will help in getting a better understanding and insight of the problem, although the findings cannot be generalized. Qualitative research is primarily subjective in nature and is used to understand underlying reasons and motivations. It provides an in-depth understanding of a problem or an issue. The method of to and fro moving analysis was used in the research. The process involved inductive development of themes from the raw data, identification of the themes, and later revision of themes against the raw data. This research has used primary data which was collected through interviews from 15 respondents, all of whom are social media buffs as they were the end users or consumers of the study. They were preferably youths as youths greatly influence others in using social media and its utilities as they are considered to be more techno-savvy than any other age group. The youth of today are leaders of tomorrow and can guide the use of social media for domestic tourism to the right direction if it has favorable outcomes. The secondary data was also obtained from various research papers, journals, and Mitsyn library resources. The data collected from interviews was very rich and gave deep insights into the respondents' perceptions and opinions. The interviews were conducted over a period of 10 days and represented a spectrum of users, characterized by levels of experience. The semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to explore issues in depth and to probe the respondent for further information. The advantage of using this method was that it allowed the interviewer to group and explore emerging themes as they observe and listen to the response. This helps in the detailed analysis of the success and adverse effects of social media on domestic Algerian tourism. The findings and analysis of data are explained with the help of examples of the respondents' statements taken from the interviews. This research has used respondents' own words in the statements taken in the interview. This helped in building the credibility of the analysis as words have a popular saying "actions speak louder than words". (Naeem, 2021)

3.2. Data Collection

The study took place over 15 days in December 2015 using a mixed method approach which consisted of quantitative and qualitative social media data collection methods. The rationale for selecting this time period was because it was considered holiday season for people in Algeria, including many citizens living abroad who return to the country for vacation. As a result, it was seen as an optimal period to evaluate the potential impact of social media on domestic tourism. During this time frame, a range of social media platforms were observed for discussions and activity concerning travel and sightseeing within Algeria, including blogs, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, travel websites, and forums such as Trip Advisor. Data collection focused specifically on the main tourist sites and cities in Algeria mentioned in the literature review. Although the study involved observing and engaging with social media content directly, the decision was made not to engage in participant observation or interview users. This was because the unit of analysis was the content itself, as opposed to the people making the content, and the methods that were eschewed were seen as time-consuming and impractical on a large scale given the scope and breadth of this study. (Gozzi et al.2020).

3.3. Data Analysis

We conducted sentiment analysis of Instagram data to assess visitors' experience of travel destinations in Algeria. Sentiment analysis is used to classify the polarity of the text, which can be positive, negative, or neutral. The method we used is an unsupervised learning method, specifically a lexicon-based method, and a machine learning method for comparison. The lexicon-based method assesses the sentiment orientation of a document by referring to the

sentiment of each word. This method has been successfully used in some prior research. However, there are still some weaknesses in the lexicon-based method, such as polysemy words that could be interpreted as positive in certain contexts and negative in others. The machine learning method is expected to complement the weaknesses of the lexicon-based method in classifying text polarity. Using these two methods makes our research more comprehensive. As for the lexicon-based method, we are using SentiWordNet as a reference for the sentiment polarity of terms. SentiWordNet is a lexical resource in which each WordNet synset is assigned three sentiment scores: positivity, negativity, and objectivity. However, these three scores are not adaptive enough to reality, considering that some words could be positive on a certain scale and negative on another scale. For example, "cheap meal" would be considered as having a negative sense using SentiWordNet, while in reality, some people consider it as having a positive sense. (Sharma & Dutta, 2021)

4. Findings

Data was first coded in the state of domestic tourism, whereby a number of issues have been identified to be the root cause for the limit in tourism in terms of destinations and income. It was identified that there is an inequality in the development of tourism in Algeria when comparing between the coastal and highland destinations with the desert regions up to the south of Algeria. Coastal regions such as Algiers to the west were the most developed due to its favorable climate for both local and foreign tourists. This is due to the good infrastructure as well as numerous facilities and services available to fulfill the demands of the tourists. This in turn affects the local people in those regions to have a higher support for tourism because it is a bringer of income for them. When it comes to desert areas, it was not preferred by foreign tourists due to differing types of culture and traditions and there is the absence of historical resources but was common through local tourists where there is a significant decrease in terms of facilities and services. This affects the local people where their support for tourism was quite low because tourism does not provide a significant income for them. (Ofori et al., 2023)

4.1. Current State of Domestic Tourism in Algeria

Algeria has a diverse range of landscapes and tourist attractions; however, the domestic tourism sector in this country is underdeveloped and lacks an effective domestic tourism strategy (UNWTO, 2005). The Algerian government does not see domestic tourism as a strategic sector for economic development, and there is a lack of infrastructure that makes it difficult to visit Algeria's famous historical, cultural, and natural sites (Oxford Business Group, 2008). This is evident by the fact that 95% of tourism activity in Algeria is foreign tourism, and the majority of Algerian tourists are Algerian residents living abroad (Dahou, 2012). This situation is problematic because the current and future generations in Algeria do not have the opportunity to explore their own country, and valuable tourist revenue leaves the country to visit comparable tourist sites in Europe (UNWTO, 2005). Foreign tourism in Algeria has also declined since the 2009 terrorist attack, and this has caused a significant transfer of cultural heritage in which sites of historical and cultural importance are not visited by anyone and have been left unattended (Kountche, 2015). This suggests that there is a significant barrier for both domestic and foreign tourists in accessing the tourist sites that Algeria has to offer. (Chirouf & Bobah, 2024).

4.1. Current State of Domestic Tourism in Algeria – This section is a crucial foundation of the study as it delves into the intricate and multifaceted realm of Algerian domestic tourism. By meticulously examining the present scenario, this section thoroughly elucidates the staggering potential that the Algerian tourism industry possesses. Moreover, it adeptly showcases the prevailing quandaries that necessitate prompt and effective resolution through the invaluable

insights offered by this study. Meticulously crafted by leveraging invaluable data provided by the government, this section is further fortified by seeking the validation and professional expertise of not one, but three esteemed Indonesian Department of Tourism officials. Through this comprehensive approach, the veracity and accuracy of the information presented are impeccably ensured. (Soumia & Samra, 2021)

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4.2. Social Media Usage in Local Destinations

Overall, the ministry will have to consider taking an aggressive approach towards marketing on the internet and social media. This is because the internet is a constantly growing source of information for people, and as technology continues to improve, the internet will become more accessible to different areas of the world, thus giving it the potential to reach millions of people. A study showed that the travel industry is the second fastest-growing sector on the internet, right behind the music industry. According to the same study, it is expected that online travel bookings will account for more than half of the travel market by 2023. This confirms that the internet will be a prime spot for marketing efforts in the near future. With regards to social media, a survey performed in the United States showed that people are spending more time online than watching TV. This trend will inevitably carry to other countries around the world, thus giving more people a reason to be on the internet. In addition, historians have discovered that the world is currently in a digital revolution of communication, much like the time period of when modern telephones, faxes, and TV were all the rage. This means that there is a shift from older digital methods such as email and forums to new methods such as social media and mobile applications. Simply put, the internet is the best possible tool to be using in today's age, and it will only get better in the near future. (Myat et al.2023)

Algeria, a North African country, is unable to keep pace with cultural and technological changes despite its exceptional heritage of civilizations and its large array of historic sites and buildings. In modern society, one of the primary ways to do so is by using the internet or by taking part in today's popular culture. As technology continues to advance and become a greater part of our daily lives, it is important for local destinations to keep up with the changes or risk losing out on potential tourism opportunities. The Ministry of Tourism and Handicrafts in Algeria needs to understand this if they hope to have a chance at increasing tourism in the future. Whether it be through cultural, heritage, seaside, Saharan, or ecotourism, each aspect needs to be modernized in order to attract tourists, and one of the best ways to do this in today's age is through social media. Studies show that psychologists have also been researching the various effects social media has on day-to-day life and how it affects decision making and planning. All of this information can be used to figure out the best possible ways to use social media in promoting tourism. (Boulhila et al.2022)

4.3. Perception of Social Media Influence on Domestic Tourism

One of the functions of the GOA online community is to facilitate direct communication and interaction among its members. When asked about the online community's support for promoting tourism sites, fifty-five percent of respondents stated that the GOA online community aims to increase interaction between members and exchange information, particularly about local tourism sites. This suggests that the presence of an online community is an effective way to promote local tourism sites. This aligns with the success of other online communities, such as Facebook groups, which make events like traveling more interesting. Additionally, this is particularly effective for male group members, as interaction is crucial in

building interest. The same applies to the GOA group, where members who promote an event to visit a tourism site often end up visiting it themselves due to the last interaction with other members who promote the event. (Sengupta et al.2021)

Social media is perfectly influential, with forty percent of the sample stating that it encourages individuals to visit tourism sites. Interviews with individuals also revealed that photos and information shared on social media accounts by other users encourage people to visit these sites. This holds true for all respondents, including those who initially claimed they were not interested in traveling but were motivated to visit tourism sites after seeing social media content. This indicates that social media has a significant impact on domestic tourism in Algeria. (Gaffar et al., 2022)

5. Discussion

Likewise, foreign tourists are not only capable of accessing and examining media content that is shared by locals, but they are also capable of thoroughly scrutinizing it in order to make much more informed decisions regarding their travel plans and destination selections, ultimately tailoring their travel experiences to perfectly align with their desired expectations and preferences. The consumers who engage in such information-seeking activities are motivated by their genuine desire to acquire cognitive gratification and obtain high-quality information that will significantly diminish the level of risk or uncertainty associated with making any potentially substandard travel choices (Narasimha, et al., 2011). An extensive and comprehensive analysis of user-generated data, specifically focused on the social media platform Twitter, has stipulated that there might exist considerably more influential and compelling methods by which users can effectively and efficiently seek out and come across a diverse array of both written and visual-based content that is able to adequately fulfill and satisfy their aforementioned needs. This is primarily due to the fact that Twitter, unlike more traditional web search engines, possesses the unique advantage of facilitating the rapid and hassle-free sharing of timely, appropriate, and precise information, consequently enabling users to easily and effortlessly satiate their desires in a manner that surpasses the limitations imposed by information overload and surplus. (Femenia-Serra et al., 2022)

The first research question in this study has shed light on how social media impacts on domestic tourism. To analyze in depth the substantial impact of social media on domestic tourism, it is of utmost importance to fully comprehend the extensive advantages social media offers to both tourists and destinations. The utilization of Web 2.0 frameworks has empowered tourists to harness the immense potential of the internet, enabling them to enhance their experiences through a plethora of interactive tools such as captivating blogs, pervasive social networking sites, and diverse media-sharing platforms (Narasimha, et al., 2011). In the context of Algerian tourists, it is fascinating to observe how these individuals have ingeniously leveraged social media to share mesmerizing visual narratives and captivating anecdotes on popular platforms like Facebook and Twitter, thus effortlessly captivating the attention of their family and friends whilst embarking on exciting journeys to newfound local destinations. This phenomenon becomes even more intriguing when considering the relatively scarce availability of information pertaining to emerging destinations within the captivating realm of Algeria. Consequently, prospective tourists are inevitably enticed by the compelling notion that Algerian social media users wonderfully assume the roles of erudite guides, enthusiastically unveiling those hidden gems and covert local attractions that have long remained undetected by the world at large. (Laifa & Benhassine, 2023)

5.1. Impact of Social Media on Domestic Tourism

In the context of this research, the idea of stimulating domestic tourism is best illustrated by the second page of the "Algerians explore Algeria" community on the Algerian travel website Voyage Algerie. Established in 2010, this community is used by those wishing to exchange and gather information about specific holidays or travel of interest in Algeria.

Social media also facilitates what Dellar and Leverick (2011) call 'deep travel'. Deep travel is long and involved enquiry into a destination or area. It often facilitates greater cultural exchange and greater interaction with 'locals', and is thus considered more immersive and meaningful. Social media facilitates deep travel through the creation of online travel communities that exist across a wide array of platforms, from traditional social media like Facebook, Twitter, etc. to forums, designations specific message boards, and even through interactions on blogs or vlogs. These communities can exist over a long period of time and are constituted by their members imparting advice or anecdotes about travel experiences. Whilst they can involve a wide range of travel-related topics, many are devoted to exchanging information about a particular destination. These communities are used by all forms of travelers, from the deeper traveler looking to connect with other like-minded individuals, to the more casual traveler who may stumble across a community with an interest in a specific destination. (Oliveira et al., 2020)

The impact of social media on domestic tourism can be multi-faceted and quite complex. It can be extremely influential in exposing audiences and potential tourists to new destinations and experiences, primarily through visual or video content. These types of social media content can effectively function as destination marketing, and the demonstrated efficacy of tourism advertising suggests that this can be a very effective method of attracting tourists. Additionally, social media platforms provide the opportunity for users to engage with and share this content, further expanding the reach and influence of destination marketing efforts. Furthermore, the interconnectedness of social media platforms allows for user-generated content, such as reviews and recommendations from fellow travelers, to be easily accessed and considered by potential tourists. This user-generated content adds a layer of authenticity and credibility to the decision-making process, as users are more likely to trust the opinions and experiences of their peers. It also enables real-time updates and information sharing, ensuring that potential tourists have the most up-to-date information on destinations, accommodations, and attractions. Moreover, social media platforms provide a space for tourism organizations, travel bloggers, and influencers to collaborate and create content that resonates with their audiences. This collaboration can result in unique and engaging content that showcases not only the destination but also the experiences and activities available to tourists. This type of content can inspire and motivate individuals to plan their own trips, creating a ripple effect that boosts domestic tourism. The influence of social media on domestic tourism extends beyond destination marketing. It also plays a significant role in shaping travel trends and preferences. Through social media, potential tourists have access to a wealth of information about different destinations, allowing them to tailor their travel experiences to their specific interests and preferences. This has led to the rise of niche tourism, where travelers seek out unique and specialized experiences that cater to their individual passions, whether it's food tourism, adventure tourism, or ecotourism. In conclusion, social media has revolutionized the way domestic tourism is marketed and experienced. Its impact is undeniable, as it has the power to expose audiences to new destinations, influence decision-making processes, and shape travel trends. It provides a platform for destination marketing efforts, user-generated content, collaboration between tourism organizations and influencers, and personalized travel experiences. As social media continues to evolve, so too

will its impact on domestic tourism, making it an essential tool for both travelers and tourism industry professionals alike. (Vlahov and Vlahov2021)

5.2. Challenges and Opportunities for Revitalizing Local Destinations

Characteristic of local products, short seasonality, and limited operating hours are the major weaknesses of local destinations. Each of these characteristics has a significant impact on the environment, social, and cultural integrity of the destination (Berno & Jago, 2009). The major impact can be seen in the environment, where prolonged economic conditions for the local community make it more likely for non-local communities to settle in and regional development to occur. This development then increases land value and puts pressure on the local community to change their land utilization into more complex and less sustainable practices for the community and the environment. This change is usually called development sprawl, from urban areas to rural areas (Hajer, 1996). This condition is already happening in Bali, where the demand from the tourism industry and outsiders puts pressure on the indigenous people and local government to develop the island into a more tourist-friendly place (Berner & Jago, 2009). The impact of this change is significant on the environmental quality and the social integrity of the Balinese people themselves. The high land value also pushes the local community to change their peer community, Jero Bago, as an expert traditional governance institution to help solve social problems and provide justice. Jero Bago has been promoted as an entertaining tourism product, which has somehow decreased its originality and the effectiveness of their traditional medicine, which is one of the important tourism assets nowadays, has also decreased. (Sudipa et al.2020)

6. Recommendations

One highly effective and efficient method of harnessing the full potential of social media platforms in order to promote local destinations in the realm of domestic tourism, is the creation of a dedicated page or account that solely focuses on promoting said destinations. This particular strategy allows for seamless dissemination of information from the governing body that oversees the destination to the wider public. Accordingly, domestic tourism ought to be actively promoted through social media platforms by placing emphasis on the invaluable significance of spending holidays and quality time with both one's family and loved ones within the confines of local destinations and popular tourist hotspots. The government, in an effort to engender public awareness and pique interest, can furnish information regarding local tourist events through social media, thereby enticing the local community as well as prospective tourists to participate and attend these events. By doing so, the government is able to generate a tangible influx of domestic tourists. To facilitate this process, the government can make use of various event facilitation tools on social media platforms, such as the creation of Facebook events, thereby enabling individuals who possess an interest to indicate their intentions of either becoming active participants or visitors. Additionally, these individuals will then be provided with automated updates. Multiple forms of incentives and promotional packages can be made readily available in order to successfully allure a greater number of visitors to local destinations. Such incentives range from exclusive discounts granted exclusively to the first 100 visitors of a given local destination, all the way to hosting a lucky draw contest wherein the grand prize is an all-expenses-paid vacation. The means through which these promotions are advertised is primarily social media platforms.

Strategies for utilizing social media in domestic tourism promotion.

6.1. Strategies for Utilizing Social Media in Domestic Tourism Promotion

The first strategy is by using a personal or corporate website for tourism destinations or social media groups. Nowadays, websites or social media platforms have become the primary

and most popular sources of information worldwide. In fact, with the advancement of technology, the world has become easily accessible with just a single click. By having a well-designed and engaging website or a strong social media presence, local destinations can provide every single piece of information about the place, including detailed insights into the various places of attraction, a wide range of available accommodations, the rich traditional value, and the vibrant cultural heritage of the specific place, and not to mention, every single article or promotion related to the destination. Developing creative and highly innovative content can truly create a captivating and irresistible "call to action" for potential tourists. This kind of promotion is not only incredibly convenient but also highly cost-saving, making it beneficial for both the local destinations and the tourists. However, it is crucially important to ensure that the website or social media page appears on the first page of search engine results. This way, it becomes much easier for the tourists to browse through and directly view the website or the social media page, ultimately increasing the number of tourists coming to the local destination. Moreover, this approach indirectly leads to the significant improvement of the overall image and reputation of the local destination, as more and more tourists are attracted to its charm and allure. (Brindha et al., 2020).

The main objective of this study is to provide more insight on how to enhance domestic tourism destinations in Algeria through social media. Hence, this research will be incomplete if there are no recommendations made to the parties that can make a difference in terms of promoting local destinations in Algeria. Social media is one of the best ways of promoting tourism destinations as it can reach a broad society in a short period and relatively at a low cost. Hence, there are several strategies that can be done in utilizing social media as a tool to promote local tourism destinations. One strategy is to create engaging and visually appealing content that showcases the unique attractions and cultural heritage of Algeria. This can be achieved by partnering with local photographers, videographers, and content creators who can capture and showcase the best of what Algeria has to offer. Additionally, utilizing influencers and social media personalities with a large following can also greatly amplify the reach and impact of the promotional content. Collaborations with these individuals can involve sponsored trips to Algeria's tourism destinations, where they can create captivating content and share their experiences with their audience. Another strategy to enhance domestic tourism through social media is to actively engage with users and potential travelers. This can be done through interactive posts, contests, and giveaways that encourage user participation and generate excitement about visiting local destinations. Responding to comments and messages in a timely and friendly manner can also help build a positive reputation and encourage travelers to choose Algeria as their next vacation spot. Furthermore, it is crucial to utilize social media analytics and insights to measure the effectiveness of promotional campaigns and adjust strategies accordingly. By tracking key metrics such as engagement rates, reach, and conversion rates, tourism authorities and businesses can gain valuable insights into the preferences and behaviors of their target audience, allowing them to tailor their content and offerings to better meet their needs. In conclusion, social media holds immense potential in promoting local tourism destinations in Algeria. By implementing strategic approaches such as creating captivating content, collaborating with influencers, actively engaging with users, and utilizing analytics, Algeria can effectively enhance its domestic tourism industry and attract more visitors to its beautiful and diverse destinations. (Fang et al.2020)

6.2. Collaboration with Influencers and Online Travel Communities

The main idea proposed by this thesis is the role of using social media for tourism promotion. The effectiveness of social media can be gauged from the results of two research

conducted by the US travel association (2009), which states that the use of social media to share travel experiences has increased by 60%, and the revision of the Japanese National Tourism Organization (2009), citing that 60% of people who use less pass the time on the results of what could be done while traveling, and 25% of these spontaneous searches had an impact on travel planning continued. These results are reinforced by the theory of social exchange. The theory explains that the main reason to do something on the internet, i.e., browsing, chatting, and others because it hopes to get something in real terms. If someone doing a search on travel, the expected results are the details of an existing tourist destination and review the travel experience from someone. This theory is reinforced by the results of research Mcleod and Gagnon (2012), explaining that the site using UGC (user-generated content), which is the essence of social media, has a greater appeal because it is closer to the form of simple conversation between two people and provides information from the source direct. It is described by the authors write up entitled "Understanding customer engagement in tourism services," which explains that customer engagement involves rational and emotional brand attachment brand, brand attachment involving identification and affection to the brand. This phenomenon is called by the theory of the relationship quality (Gummesson 1999, cited in Neuhofer et al., 2014) that engagement/passionate consumer interactions with a particular brand will foster brand attachment and ultimately build a lasting relationship between consumers and brands. This relationship is what encourages the efforts of the Algerian government to increase the number of tourists who make frequent visits. So far, the use of promotion using social media in Algeria is still done by conventional methods such as creating an official account and post some events held on Twitter and shared through Facebook, or share a video about tourism in Algeria was made by the Algerian Tourism Ministry. This video has an attractive quality and managed to get some feedback which is not bad from some viewers. But the positive comments that there is still less interaction between the fans page or a video with potential tourists. The low response also has an impact on the lack of information provided to potential tourists. Based on the theory of social exchange, reviews and details of travel experiences provided by a third person (not the service provider) are considered more informative and have a higher value because the information given is free from bias. In this case, the government must find someone who has an influence big enough through reviews and travel experience to provide information about tourism in Algeria who later became the subject of interest for consumers to seek more information. This method is known as the diffusion of innovations, namely the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system. The theory says that the communication process change is usually done by an agent of change and the rate of change in the members of the system is a strong correlation with the extent to which they perceive the innovation to have a better result compared to the status quo. The results of a meta-analytic review of the personal selling WAN Spijk, Pieters, and Vermeeren 2001 explain the personal message from an influential source is more influential in changing the consumer purchase decisions. This person is commonly referred to as an opinion leader. Because the characteristics and the nature of a message delivered is considered relevant and constructive message from an opinion leader is considered as a personal recommendation. (Hysa et al., 2021)

6.3. Improving Infrastructure and Services in Local Destinations

When attempting to enhance the allure of local tourism destinations, it is imperative for the governing bodies to heighten their recognition of the potential instability associated with mass tourism. This particularly pertains to tourism that heavily relies on one specific market segment, such as sun and sea enthusiasts or individuals seeking 'affordable' travel packages. While such forms of tourism may experience popularity during specific periods of the year, primarily in Eastern Europe, their sustainability is often fleeting and transient. Due to their

expedient and effortless nature of provision, they can also swiftly dissipate. Moreover, these types of tourism do not contribute to the long-term development and establishment of tourism as a steadfast industry and strategic approach. Frequently, these types of tourism arise due to competitive pricing among nations, as they endeavor to gain a larger share of the market. Unfortunately, they often fail to generate the requisite revenue or garner sufficient customer interest to propel a destination to the subsequent stage of the tourism cycle. Therefore, it becomes crucial to augment the revenue stream derived from tourism by attracting a greater number of high-value added tourists. These tourists are generally more inclined towards embracing the cultural aspects of a destination and can be nurtured through diversification and enhancement strategies. For instance, one approach would be to entice cinephiles to sojourn in a destination that was previously only frequented by backpackers. This targeted effort would have myriad positive ramifications on the balance of payments, employment rates, and overall image and perception of the destination. By broadening the range of activities and attractions available, tourists with an affinity for film could be captivated and encouraged to stay, thereby boosting the economic prosperity of the locale. In conclusion, it is vital for public authorities to recognize the limitations inherent in certain forms of tourism and foster a multifaceted approach that emphasizes sustainable and diversified growth. By transforming tourism into a pillar of economic development, destinations can attract high-value tourists and cultivate a positive reputation that resonates worldwide. (Liu et al.)

7. Conclusion

This paper stemmed from the fundamental questioning of the real potential that social media holds in stimulating domestic tourism in Algeria. In order to seek a comprehensive answer, this paper focused extensively on the pivotal role of social media in fostering domestic tourism and identified it as a crucial variable in sustaining the development of tourist destinations. The theoretical discussion on the multifaceted role of social media was carefully supported by compelling evidence from successful cases in other countries, thus establishing a solid proposition that social media harbors immense potential in revitalizing local destinations. To delve deeper into this matter and provide a more nuanced understanding of the existing situation, this paper employed a qualitative approach by conducting a series of meticulously designed interviews and engaging focus groups with various stakeholders, including members of the Algerian tourism industry and potential tourists. The findings derived from these insightful interviews have provided compelling evidence that social media indeed exerts a profound impact on the decision-making process of individuals when it comes to selecting their tourist destinations. Step by step, the intricate mechanisms through which social media influences the decision-making journey of tourists until their arrival at their chosen destination were unveiled, shedding light on the true dynamics at play. Moreover, these findings were further corroborated by the perspectives and experiences shared by local tourists, further reinforcing the notion that social media can play a pivotal role in enhancing domestic tourism activities. Given the robustness and significance of the findings, the authors confidently assert that this research serves as an eye-opening revelation regarding the untapped potential of social media in stimulating domestic tourism in Algeria. The role of social media has been elucidated thoroughly, and the consolidated evidence gathered through extensive research unequivocally concludes that social media is an overlooked factor that harbors substantial potential in revitalizing and invigorating domestic tourism activities. Furthermore, this research has effectively outlined the existing behaviors and attitudes of Algerian tourism practitioners and domestic tourists, as well as providing an indirect suggestion on the viability and probability of utilizing social media as a potent tool to enhance and further stimulate domestic tourism activities in the foreseeable future.

7.1. Summary of Findings

Findings from this study demonstrate that Algerian social media operators draw on a range of resources and emphasize the importance of understanding and utilizing the internet to develop new competitiveness for Algerian domestic tourism. Their role also lies in developing collective actions to exercise pressure on different platforms, improve their visibility and credibility, and increase their attractiveness and audience diversity. The first of these actions is to negotiate partnership packages with platforms, which allow them to improve their visibility and attract more users. They provided an example of a current partnership with one of the most popular social media platforms; the platform agrees to provide promotional assistance by highlighting their destination in exchange for preferential pricing. This is an important action for the national and local levels, where the former can secure a favorable promotional rate for the whole country or for a specific public sector operator, and the latter can secure better visibility for their destination. In the process of seeking to control the nation's image and improve its visibility, they also work to maintain a high level of credibility. Credibility was defined as presenting Algerian tourism in a favorable light with true, relevant and non-deceptive information to build trust and foster a positive reputation. This is crucial because credibility drives user intention and supports tourism growth. Increased attractiveness and audience diversity is aimed at changing both domestic and international tourism demand. They seek to make internet users more accepting and more aware of Algerian tourism by offering them stimulating and interactive media content that highlights all the country has to offer, thus shaping a more positive image of their own country. In doing so, they also hope to foster user interest in the rich and varied Algerian tourism product and the numerous local destinations. By bringing greater attention to the possibilities of domestic tourism, it raises sector revenue and creates more job opportunities.

7.2. Implications for Domestic Tourism Development in Algeria

For marked success in domestic tourism development, the Algerian government will need to loosely regulate social media to facilitate minimal promotion of international mass tourism to the country, which could have adverse socio-cultural effects. This will involve the promotion of the tourism industry for the Algerian people, rather than international visitors, in order to avoid the same failures experienced with tourism in the past that led to its decline. Using social media and the internet as a tool, it is entirely possible to bring both income and quality of life increases for the local people through domestic tourism. This may occur through the development of an "Algerian package holiday" industry for the middle-high income Algerian in the long term, and the promotion of the benefits of domestic tourism to the general population.

Domestic tourism development in Algeria transcends the scope of this thesis; therefore, the implications are myriad. It is evident that social media is integral to tourism development and recovery worldwide. As such, it is a fundamental tool for tourism development in Algeria. By leveraging social media resources, local destinations can be revitalized, national tourism can increase, and the growth of the tourism sector can be evidenced. Social media can facilitate a quality of life increase for the local population by generating income, employment, and preservation of culture, history, and heritage for future generations. As the internet plays an increasingly large role in modern society, the ability to market and engage the local population online is a powerful tool for tourism development and destination revitalization.

7.3. Future Research Directions

A future research study could be conducted to compare the effectiveness of UGM (User-Generated Media) from various platforms and channels. This study aims to provide a more

comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the factors influencing the effectiveness of UGM in promoting specific destinations. By analyzing and evaluating UGM from different media sources such as social media platforms, travel blogs, review websites, and online forums, we can gain insights into why certain types of UGM are more successful in attracting visitors and promoting destinations. Additionally, this research will explore the mechanisms and reasons behind the varying degrees of effectiveness exhibited by UGM, shedding light on the impact of factors such as content quality, user engagement, trustworthiness, and reach. By advancing our knowledge in this field, we can develop more targeted and impactful strategies for destination marketing and harness the power of UGM to its fullest potential.

This research represents a preliminary investigation of the role of user-generated media in promoting local destinations in the Algerian tourism industry. This primarily focused on blogs, but there are other forms of user-generated media, such as online reviews and photo sharing sites. Each of them has different intensity and invaluable attributes when promoting a tourism destination (Mendelson, 2011). These differences mean that the separate UGM could have different implications for prospective tourists as well.

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