IMPACT OF INFLUENCER MARKETING ON TRAVEL AND TOURISM

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ABSTRACT

This research is an attempt to explore the different theories and studies that help to understand what motivates people to travel, especially young people, and what are the practical consequences of the theories examined. This research paper questions how motivations can affect an individual's travel habits and choices.

Travelling to a destination after being influenced by Social media is now growing to be a millennial phenomenon. The analysis of the study showed that influencer marketing constitutes a substantial part in influencing a customer/tourist for travel information search and making travelling decisions.

INTRODUCTION

The marketing industry is continually changing and so are modern, easier ways to communicate with your brand online and deliver it. Influencer marketing, one of them, has proved to be a successful model, especially effective for travel and tourism companies. It is used in the contemporary marketing mix as a combination of old and modern marketing instruments where celebrity endorsement is used. In the modern context, celebrities are real people who have devoted media followers and are considered influencers. The argument is that confidence in influencer's increases exponentially as social media becomes central to our daily lives. They are seen by many as trustworthy experts who share their experiences and encourage them.

The marketing of influencers is one of the most authentic and engaging ways to promote your online tours and activities. It will give customers a real insight into the experience and help you draw them truly to check out what you sell. For a brand, a single social media post by a well-known influencer can lead to maximizing sales. Influencers of social media have drastically altered the way brands approach marketing. These trips are used by influencers to generate written and video content for brands and put it on their social media. The broader the influencer's presence, the better it is for the brand for which they advertise themselves.

This paper sheds light on the use of influencers in social media to reveal the inner dynamics of influencer marketing for tourism destinations and discusses the effects of this practice. One of the many business and commercial sectors in which influencers have become particularly prominent is travel and tourism. In tourism, celebrities and stars that are role models or icons for people can be used to draw more or different kinds of tourists to a given area. Travelers or visitors can seek immediate information about any sort of place around the world, find the transportation available, the type of hotels or food available, and all this information can be obtained through search engines and websites.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The term "social media" is widely used now a day. It was first used in 2004 when LinkedIn created its social media online networking application. Social media influencers are vocational, sustained and highly branded social media stars who exert influence over a large pool of potential customers. Influencers typically have characteristics such as a high number of followers or a concentrated, otherwise difficult-to-reach audience, a privileged social media role, and public attention, which translates into influence on the decisions of other people. SMIs are a new form of online opinion leader and brand endorser with a great power to influence their followers, which has made them the target of marketing strategies for influencers. Influencer marketing can therefore be characterized as industry efforts to promote goods or increase brand awareness through content shared by influential social media users. Influencer marketing is seen from another viewpoint as an exchange between brands and well-followed creators of content who endorse goods or services by interweaving these promotions with their narration of their personal life. As mentioned by Gretzel, influencer marketing has been primarily used by foreign hotel companies in the travel and tourism domain.

In the context of global competition, DMOs can use influencers to reach more people, as they normally do not have as many engaged followers, and to attract demographic segments that seem more influenceable via social media, such as women and digital natives (i.e. millennia's, Gen Z).Additionally, influencer marketing will boost the reputation of a destination, thereby becoming a vital part of the branding strategy of destinations. Effective social media management by DMOs, including influencers, can also combat destination myths, and influencers can also be used to drive behavioral change and redirect actions, despite being one of the possible instigators of tourism in some locations. Initial findings indicate that practitioners seem to consider many variables in their choice of influencers, including brand-SMI fit, number of followers, type of content generated, reliability and style of communication. Recently, as grassroots online celebrities who exert influence on a smaller scale but in a very powerful way, emphasis has been put on 'micro influencers. In the ever-changing world of social networking, this extends well beyond recommendations from friends and family into the realm of online influencers. These important connections have grown significantly with the advent of social networking. Despite the closeness social networking can provide, there are still some fascinating behavioral quirks that exist online across the globe. The author argues that understanding how different regions interpret and use social media is essential for a company embarking on a social strategy. The author suggests that companies wishing to promote their global social media presence should invest in resources for cultural intelligence in order to consider cultural differences on and offline. New challenges to achieving successful destination marketing have been introduced by the increased number and variety of online information on tourism destinations. The author argues that the Internet is critical as a source of information for visitors. The role of the Internet as an agent in the development of photos for tourist destinations is therefore emphasized.

A growing number of businesses have begun merging their conventional advertising efforts with their online presence on social networks. In tourism marketing and destination marketing, the ability to develop permanent two-way contact and create a variety of communication with customers via social networks has also proved acceptable. There are many forms of social media like: blogs, micro blogs (Twitter), social networks (Facebook, LinkedIn), media sharing sites(YouTube, Flicker), social bookmarking and voting sites (Digg, Reddit), review sites (Yelp), forums, virtual worlds (Second Life). Social media has globally modernized the personal and organizational interactions through its different social media platforms. This shows the power of social media which cannot be underestimated and expected to continue. No one can imagine such social interaction in the past. Social media has challenged the traditional methods of business operations by giving new sets of business models. 14 Due to social media marketers formulate their strategies through online customer reviews. A broad range of resources and technologies are included in social media that allow people to read, extract and produce universal text, image, audio, and video content. With distinct purposes and uses, there are numerous types of social media. The term social media is widely used for social computing, social networking, Web 2.0 and the virtual social world. The above definitions will split the term social media into two parts: "social" and "media." The "social" portion refers to the activities performed by individuals, while "media" refers to the internet-enabled instruments and technologies used to conduct such activities. There are various apps on social media.

Different research shows that social media is used in three sectors of the economy i.e. public sector, which includes the government and NGOs, the education sector and the commercial sector. In marketing social media is used for customer relationship management (CRM), knowledge sharing, collaborative activities, organizational

communications, education and training, and so on. Social media is considered to be the new tool for marketing promotional mix. It is seen from numerous marketing studies that social media marketing has gained growing attention from academics and from different sectors. To facilitate the creation of instructional guidance and services, social media may also be embraced. Social networking tools have also facilitated professional growth among scientists. Social media is playing an important role in marketing and promotion. Providing educational programs in English on one side will provide more students and on other hand will increase the competition among universities. World's top educational destinations are found in US, UK and Australia etc. because these countries are highly competitive and wealthy which shows that educational tourism is related to the wealth of host country. For this reason, many foreign students choose to study in these countries. 23 Thus, it was difficult for many institutions to promote themselves in the marketplace. It is therefore not only the responsibility of educational institutions to increase their educational standards, but the government should also take a keen interest in marketing their institutions to make them the best educational destination. demand for foreign education depends on the per capita income of the home country, the prospects for education at home, the advantages of studying abroad and the fees for tuition. McMahon performed a study in which he calculated the flow from developing countries to developed countries of foreign students. The positive association between the size of the host is demonstrated by results.

The literature related to youth travelers' motivations was extensively reviewed in order to gain an in-depth understanding of this phenomenon. The guidelines for collecting secondary data developed by Authors were followed as these have been applied by many other researchers seeking to develop conceptual or theoretical frameworks. The literature reviewed for the present study was extracted by using secondary sources of information and applying the approach proposed by Authors. The current literature review was thus conducted using various journals (i.e. the ancestry approach) in order to cover different sources of information related to this study. Numerous powerful databases were used to find studies on tourist motivations and youth travel, including EBSCO, Scopus and Thompson Reuters Web of Science, thereby ensuring that the most important journal publications on these topics were reviewed.

NEED FOR STUDY

It is necessary to remember that social media marketing, rather than mere advertisement and selling, is primarily about engagement, sharing and collaboration. Since the social media space is occupied by a billion plus users, research on a subject that is not only a current trend but also the future of the tourism industry is all the more convincing, thus creating the need.

The internet is used for many modern tourism marketing campaigns, with blogs, online advertising, email and social media channels also playing a key role. If the importance of influencers in social media continues to rise and expand, so too are the amount and ways in which influencers collaborate with travel brands to plug their goods.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted to purposefully collect data for this paper on the understanding of social media influencers in tourism.

A quantitative process, an online questionnaire made via Google forms, was determined by us. It has been split into three main sections. The first part asked general questions about the use of social media by respondents in tourism, i.e. recommending, planning and sharing travel destinations and knowledge, and the second part was built on the central topic of social media influencers and their effect on their followers' travel habits.

Convenience sampling was used with an on-line questionnaire in use, as the sur- vey was shared mainly via social media such as Facebook, as well as personal contacts. In the end, the number of samples obtained was 151. Using a customer questionnaire, first-hand information is obtained by responses. Secondary data such as books, newspapers, social media platforms, and newspaper articles were collected. Influencer marketing is a marketing strategy that benefits from well-followed online users who can affect the perceptions and decision-making processes of customers in favor of brands. The power to provide and monitor information has moved from organizations to consumers and a

new kind of culture of tourism has arisen. A blend of physical travel, information and technology for communication. In order to minimize confusion and build some perceptions of what they are going to and at a destination, visitors need to understand how their experience would be through reliable sources. The extent of impact of social media on consumer behavior will be critically explored in this review. There is a massive untapped potential area for business tourism promotion by strategy of influencers. Instead of mere advertisement and selling, the most important thing to remember is that social media marketing is fundamentally about participation, sharing and cooperation. Since the social media space is occupied by a billion plus users, research on a subject that is not only a current trend but also the future of the tourism industry is all the more convincing, thus creating the need to understand the levels of impact of social media on the mechanism of customer decision-making in tourism.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Influencers are known individuals or individuals who already have a certain status, such as having a large online audience, especially on social media sites such as Facebook, YouTube and Instagram. By way of comparison, below are numerous examples of successful influencer strategies. The concept behind Influencer Marketing is not new, but only a few brands were on the market at the beginning of the 20th century and influenced product-oriented marketing. These brands have already sought to emotionally manipulate the purchasing decisions of customers. The effect of social media on tourism is seen in the ways that people study before going on a vacation. People are also encouraged to share their experiences with travelers. The way people make choices has thus been influenced by social media. Based on the ratings of others, individuals develop their faith in a tourism agency. In the tourism industry, social media has had a significant influence. Consumers participate in field trips, make informed choices about their journeys, and share their personal impressions of a particular hotel; restaurant or airline with social networking sites. The growth of information technology over the Internet has altered the available tourism-related information, as well as the way people plan and makes travel decisions, have been affected. The creation of social networking websites such as blogs, forums, wikis, social networks, and YouTube has had an effect on the further growth of the internet on its way to being a medium that has gained tremendous prominence for tourist use. Tourism goods have intangible features because, without travelling, the user can not test them. In order to minimize the risk involved in the process, online suggestions/recommendations can also be used as evidence before reserving travel products and taken into account in decisions. The way people schedule travel, including the way they purchase and consume tourism goods, has altered social media. In addition, the role of the middleman has drastically changed, that now overlaps with the influencer's position. A marketing manager should create an online profile that makes the company stand out in contrast with its rivals in order to beat the competition, thereby communicating the key benefit of the service and positioning it favorably towards the target market.

ANALYSIS OF STUDY
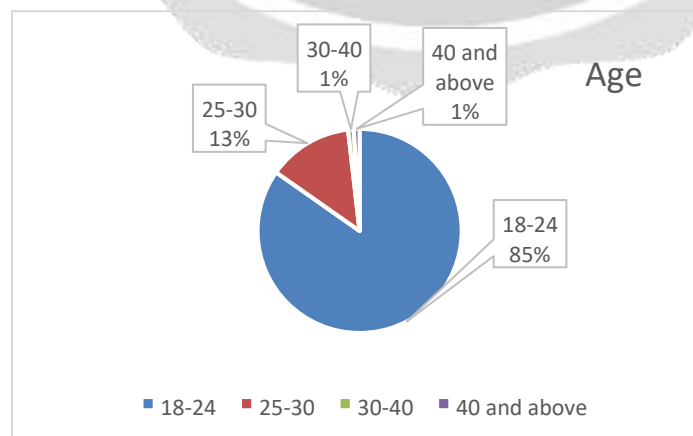
Interpretation -Most of the respondents i.e. 84.40% are of between 18-24 years of age, 13.40% are of between 25-30 years of age and 0.90% are between 30-40 and 0.90% are 40 and above .
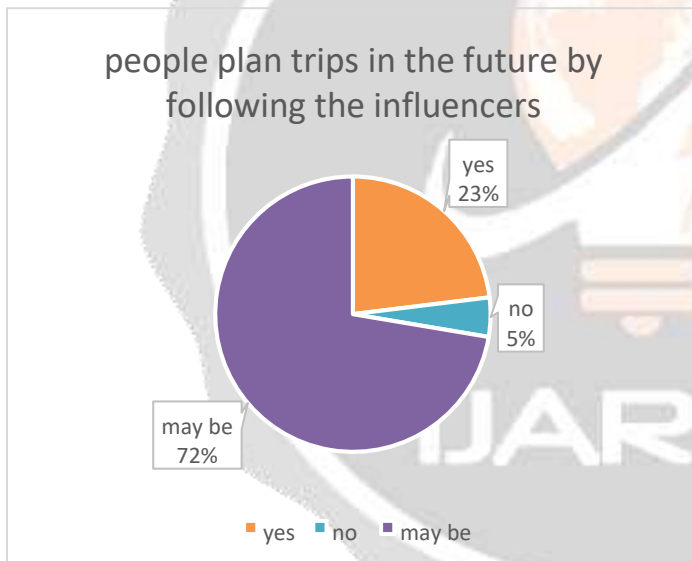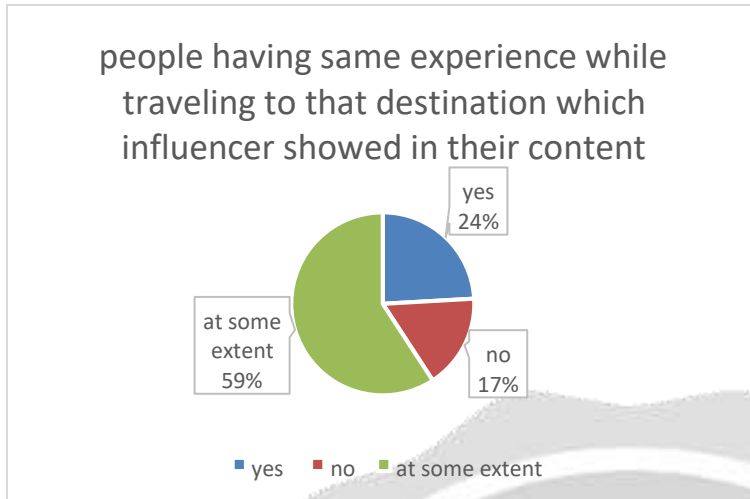
do they follow a travel influnencer

no
16%

yes
84%

▪ yes ▪ no
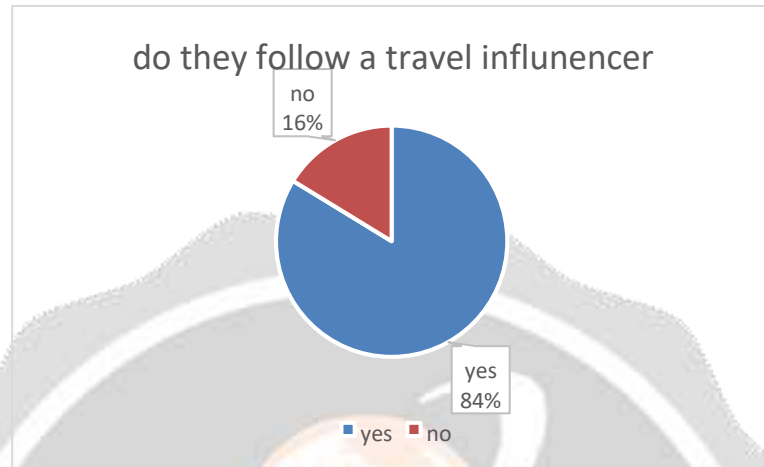
Interpretation

Most of the respondents i.e. 83.40 % says they follow a travel influencer on a social media platform and 16.20% don't follow one.

people getting influence by their content

yes
28%

no
3%

sometimes
69%

▪ yes ▪ no ▪ sometimes
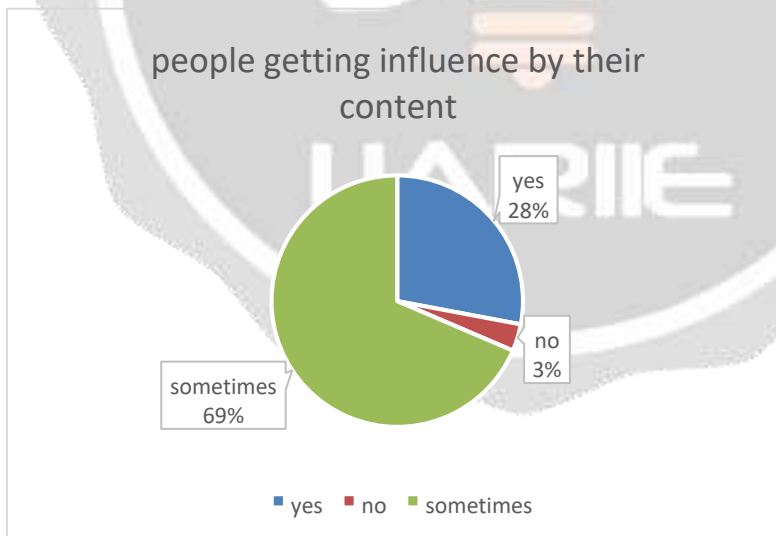
Interpretation – 28 %people get influence by the content created by travel influencers and 69% get influence sometimes and 3% don't get influence.

people having same experience while traveling to that destination which influencer showed in their content

yes 24%

no 17%

at some extent 59%

- yes   - no   - at some extent

people plan trips in the future by following the influencers

yes 23%

no 5%

may be 72%

- yes   - no   - may be

SUGGESTIONS

- In order to improve business, service providers who have a social media profile for product details may also have testimonials checked. This has dual advantages by brand placement in the minds of the customer to drive product promotion and company goodwill.

- Integrate the website of the official organization and its respective social media accounts.

- The effect of social media, as social media is a public forum, can be both positive and negative. The social media team can track positive testimonials and can highlight them.

- Simplicity and diversity in social media is the key to reach different types of users. Creating awareness through different social media tools as per customer needs and wants.

- Ensuring that the marketing teams constantly update their social media pages and post authentic offers, contest, fam-tours and reward programs for users.

- There is a huge untapped opportunity area for promoting business tourism on social media through influencer strategy to capture millennial market.

- Target the most used social media for more hits, likes and shares as it is the fastest and easiest way for users with limited time to succeed in the sub-conscious psychological space.

- Authenticity needs to be preserved and it has to establish a moment of reality. In order to have social media interaction that develops and retains relationships with prospects and consumers, service providers must consider each moment of truth as a marketer.

- User interactions are more interesting, and users should be given some advantages to share their social media experiences.

- Local service providers and external partners can be involved in the process of optimizing benefits and reducing costs. In addition, metrics on the process should be gathered, particularly to measure the detailed effects of each action throughout the campaign.

- The results also show that influencer marketing's future is exciting but also incredibly unpredictable, forcing destinations to keep their influencer marketing techniques and decisions informed.

CONCLUSION

The marketing venture has opened social media, landmark advancement in internet-based technology, into new avenues in general and for the tourism industry. The study's overall findings are focused on literature review and data analysis. It can be said that it is necessary for service providers to develop through the use of tourist psychology and the use of effective social media marketing strategies in such a way that unique personalized products and services are generated such that the entire process of serving and experiencing tourism products is fun and that the service provider and customer respectively will be the main. Throughout this post, the use of social media in tourism has been shown to be a surprisingly benevolent, effective and emotional way of capturing audiences in a very trustworthy and open way. Several examples of the introduction of such marketing activities have demonstrated tremendous progress and can only be strengthened in the future. Influencers of social media introduce new levels of involvement in the tourism industry and act as a very important connector for potential customers. The analysis has shown a great potential for social media influencers to be included in Travel marketing to B&H audiences, especially millennial, whose high social media presence and follow-up of influencers on different social networks are in line with global standards and trends in this field. Several of the survey's drawbacks were noted when evaluating it. The sample may be one of the first, as the most representative sample may not have been the use of convenience sampling and unregulated distribution of the survey on social networks.

Digital mobility and social media practices make it possible for the tourism industry to have enough visibility into the tourist world. Marketing communications will primarily focus on developing social media interactions and

responding to the needs of visitors. As one of the main competitive resources, social media has been recognized marketing in terms of tourism. Tourism needs to involve its visitors with integrated multichannel communications and inspire them to speak about positive experiences and suggest them. For the travel industry, social media has major consequences. This paper gives a deeper understanding of how social media is used can be seen by higher education as a promotional method. We should encourage educational tourism in the host countries to promote. Consider the advantages of using social media networks for the purpose of Purposes of promotion .Social networking is different from conventional marketing channels; it is about expressing views, exchanging data, and holding discussions on social media. When economic development tools are scarce and high social media expectations for outcomes can provide timely, engaging, interactive, targeted and low-cost ways to market a group. Different motivational ideas were collected and summarized in the current study as a consistent theoretical structure that can provide a deeper explanation of the reasons why young people travel. This will help to strategize their deals for marketing managers and destination planners. Application and comprehension of these models of motivation will facilitate. Market segmentation and approaches to channel marketers in more efficient directions. The application of theories to practical knowledge will promote the selection of only the best policies and long-term strategies that could lead to the development of value and enhance the functioning and integration of the tourism industry's goods.

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