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TRAVEL EXPERIENCE SHARING ON SOCIAL MEDIA: OPINION AND BEHAVIOR OF TOURISTS

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ABSTRACT

When social media is one of the fastest growing communication technologies in the Internet environment as well as tourism marketing. In the era of information communication technology, sharing travel experiences on social media is one of the most important aspects of tourist behaviors for consumers as well as travel and tourism organizations. Given the prominence of information sharing effects on tourist behavior and tourism development, it becomes vital to understand the role of social media in reshaping and influencing how people organize and enjoy travel. Previous research has found that people tend to use social media in travel consumption for functional, social and physiological benefits. Shared experiences on social media have been proved to strongly influence future travel intentions and choices. In recent tourism research, the role social media plays in tourism consumption has gained considerable attention. However, past literature seemed to focus on the impact of social media on the tourism industry, whilst relatively little attention has been paid to tourists' behaviors of sharing their travel experiences as well as their opinion on sharing behavior. This paper seeks to address this research gap by investigating the opinion and behavior of tourists on travel experience sharing on social media. Data from the survey of 500 tourists who live, work or study in Ho Chi Minh City showed that the respondents highly evaluate the importance and impacts of travel experience sharing on social media as well as tend to do this kind of sharing often. The result also revealed that personal social media account is considered a more reliable source of travel information than the official websites.

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1. Introduction

Social media is one of the fastest growing communication technologies in the Internet environment as well as tourism marketing (Kang M. & Schuett M. 2013). In the era of information communication technology, sharing travel experiences on social media is a common type tourist behavior (Ip et al., 2012; Kang and Schuett, 2013; Kim and Fesenmaier, 2017; Lee et al., 2014; Munar and Jacobsen, 2014 cited in Huang S. & Wei X. 2019) and also one of the most important aspects of tourist behaviors for consumers, for travel and tourism organizations (Cahyanto et al. 2016) as well as for destinations (Wong J., Lai Y. & Tao Z. 2019). People enjoy sharing their experiences at different stages of their journey (i.e pre-trip, during-trip and post-trip) (Jung & Cho 2015 cited in Wong J., Lai Y. & Tao Z. 2019) and while using social media for sharing, the power of the user is growing, influencing their friends or unknowns (Aboushouk M. & Elsayy T., 2020). Such changes in the tourism industry not only affect the choices made by the customer, but also strongly influence business models and marketing strategies in the tourism field as well (Julia Nevmerzhitskaya, 2013 cited in Aboushouk M. & Elsayy T. 2020).

Given the prominence of information sharing effects on tourist behavior and tourism development (Shen et al. 2020), it becomes vital to understand the role of social media in reshaping and influencing how people organize and enjoy travel. Previous research has found that people tend to use social media in travel consumption for functional, social and physiological benefits (Parra-Lopez et al, 2010 cited in Cahyanto et al. 2016). Shared experiences on social media have been proved to strongly influence future travel intentions and choices (Bae et al., 2017 cited in Wong J., Lai Y. & Tao Z. 2019). Social media and User – Generated Content (UGC) share a strong relationship (Rodgers & Thorson, 2017 cited in Naem M. & Okafor S., 2019). Marketers can build strong customer relationships and can strengthen their brands by executing UGC campaigns on social media (Naem M. & Okafor S., 2019). Accordingly, together with information sharing on social media, UGC has also been a subject of interest. This topic of research is not new as many studies had been conducted since 2000 (Bahtar A. & Muda M., 2016).

For its importance and strong impact, in recent tourism studies, the role of social media in tourism consumption has gained considerable attention (i.e., Dasgupta, Granger, & McGarry, 2002; Wang & Fesenmaier, 2004; Pan & Fesenmaier, 2006; Xiang & Gretzel, 2010; Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2009 cited in Cahyanto et al. 2016). However, past literature seemed to focus on the impact of social media on tourism industry (Conrady, 2007; Gretzel and Yoo, 2008 cited in Kurma T., Goh S. & Balaji M. 2021), whilst relatively little attention has been paid to tourists' behaviors of sharing their travel experiences as well as their opinion on sharing behavior (Huang S. & Wei X., 2019).

All things considered, this paper seeks to contribute to address the above-mentioned research gap by investigating the opinion and behavior of tourists toward travel experience sharing on social media. Understanding how tourists think and do about travel experience sharing on social media may be helpful in suggesting better strategies for more effective tourism business and tourism e-commerce.

2. Theory and Method

Popular and important as it is, social media has been studied and defined in numerous ways. Social media represents a variety of forms such as social networks, photo and video sharing sites, online communities, microblogging tools, social tagging, newsreaders, public Internet boards and forums, review/rating websites, blogs/moblogs, tagging sites, podcasting, wikis, and individual websites (Akar & Topcu, 2011; Blackshaw, 2005 cited in Kang M. & Schuett M., 2013).

One of the widely accepted definitions is Kaplan and Haenlein's, which considered social media as "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and allow the creation and exchange of user generated content" (Wong J., Lai Y. & Tao Z. 2019, p1774).

In this study, social media includes social network (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram); video sharing site (e.g. YouTube), individual websites/blog; review/rating websites (e.g. TripAdvisor); OTA (e.g. Agoda, Traveloka, Booking) and public tourism forum. And the travel experience sharing includes reviews and opinions posted online by respondents themselves or other users for a tourism product/service which can include comments, criticism, photos, video or any kind of self-experience reflecting the product/service features, design, utility, packaging or delivery.

User – generated content (UGC) or also known as User-created content (UCC) or electronic word – of – mouth (eWOM) refers to any own created material uploaded to the Internet by non–media (Bahtar A. & Muda M., 2016, p 338). In the tourism context, some researchers prefer to call it Tourist Created Content (TCC) (Ana María Munar, 2010 cited in Aboushouk M. & Elsayy T. 2020). The usage of UGC might aid and assist the buyers' decision-making and sellers' performances (Bahtar A. & Muda M., 2016). Moreover, compared to other "official" sources of information (such as producer–generated content), UGC is proven to be more trustworthy, useful, relatable and unbiased (Buttle, 1998; Mir & Rehman, 2013; Jonas, 2010; Verhellen, Dens, & Pelsmacker, 2013 cited in Bahtar A. & Muda M. 2016; Seadle & Greifender, 2014 cited in Naem M. & Okafor S., 2019).

The conceptual framework to study the impact of UGC on online purchasing created by Bahtar A. & Muda M. (2016) included three factors affecting attitude towards UGC, then online purchase intention: (1) Perceived Credibility, (2) Perceived Usefulness and (3) Perceived Risk, while Kang M. & Schuett M. (2013) suggested perceived enjoyment. In this study, aspects of perceived credibility, perceived usefulness and perceived enjoyment of sharing travel experience on social media have been explored.

The target population for this research was defined to include tourists who live, work or study in Ho Chi Minh City with inclusion criteria of having at least one travel during 6 months before the survey.

A convenience sample was used for selecting the participants. Sample size is 500.

Structured questionnaires with close-ended questions were used to collect main information on travel experience sharing opinion and behavior of the participants. The survey also questioned the following socio-demographic characteristics: gender, age, educational level and occupation.

Data collection was conducted in 3 months, from June to August 2020. Researchers found potential participants in 22 districts of Ho Chi Minh city satisfied the inclusion criteria and sent research participation invitations. Once agreed upon participation, the respondents were given the questionnaire to fill themselves and submitted upon finishing.

The software package used to analyze the data was SPSS. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the distribution of the demographic characteristics of the participants as well as presented as proportions for categorical variables. Independent Samples T-Test and One-way Anova were used to compare differences in categorical variables by gender, age, educational level and occupation.

3. Result and discussion

3.1. Participant’s demographic characteristics

Table 1 demonstrates the participants’ demographic characteristics (i.e., gender, age, education, and occupation). The 500 – participant sample for this research was 60.0% female (300) and 40.0% male (200). The most prevalent participant age group was 25 to 40 years (40.0%, 200), followed by the group of under 25 (38.2%, 191) and 41 years and older (7.8%, 39). There was missing age information (14.0%, 70), which did not generally affect the result. The participants were mostly university or post-graduate degree holders (59.8%, 299 and 14.2%, 71), the rest were under college (26.0%, 130). The most prevalent respondent occupation was professionals and officer (47.0%, 235), followed by student (40.4%, 202), the rest was business, sales, and other jobs (12.6%, 63).

Table 1: Participant’s demographics

Demographic variables	N = 500	Percent (%)
Gender		
Male	200	40.0
Female	300	60.0
Age		
Under 25	191	38.2
25 – 40	200	40.0
41 and older	39	7.8
Missing	70	14.0
Education		

Vocational/High school graduate and below	130	26.0
Undergraduate	299	59.8
Graduate	71	14.2
Occupation		
Student	202	40.4
Professionals and officer	235	47.0
Business, sale, and other job	63	12.6

3.2. Tourists' opinion about travel experiences sharing

Shared-travel experiences on social media (SM) are one of the most important aspects of traveler behaviors for customers as well as travel and tourism organizations (Kang, M., & Schuett, M. A., 2013). Several studies have shown that travel information sharing activities of tourists have become an increasingly popular behavior (Jacobsen & Munar, 2014).

The survey evaluated tourists' opinion about sharing travel experiences on SM by collecting their assessment for 4 given statements: (1) *Sharing travel experiences on social media makes the trips more meaningful*; (2) *Travel experiences shared on social media (travel forums, online travel channels, ...) bring out helpful applications for potential tourists*; (3) *Travel experiences shared on social media bring out helpful applications for travel companies, hotels and destinations in providing better services*; (4) *Travel experiences and destination images shared on social media of my related people pushes me to implement my future trips*. The participants were asked to express their assessment by giving from 1 to 5 levels of Likert rating scale (1. strongly disagree, 2. disagree, 3. neutral, 4. agree, 5. strongly agree).

Table 2: Tourists' opinion about travel experiences sharing

No.	Opinion	Mean
1	Sharing travel experiences on social media makes the trips more meaningful	3.77*
2	Travel experiences shared on social media bring out helpful applications for potential tourists	3.59*
3	Travel experiences shared on social media bring out helpful applications for travel companies, hotels, and destinations in providing better services	3.65*
4	Travel experiences and destination images shared on social media of my related people pushes me to implement my future trips	4.09

*Statistically significant difference, calculated by *One-way ANOVA* test ($p < 0.05$).

The participants agreed with all given statements, mean values were in the range of 3.59 to 4.09. The One-Way ANOVA test also indicated some statistical evidence of differences amongst participants.

This paper evaluated tourists' opinion in the term of meaning by asking them whether sharing travel experiences on SM could make the trips more meaningful to them. The participants seemed to agree with the No.1 statement "Sharing travel experiences on social media makes the trips more meaningful" (mean 3.77). As indicated in Kang M. & Schuett M. (2013), this type of tourists' sharing would enable them to achieve meaningful, and rewarding goals of their trips, so that they can enjoy their prior trips more. Numerous studies showed that the behavior of sharing previous travel experiences might enhance the happiness of tourists (Kumar & Gilovich, 2015) as well as help tourists increase the positivity of their experiences (Tung, Cheung, and Law, 2018). Tourists would have opportunities to recall their journey experiences more clearly when sharing (Langston, 1994). Additionally, sharing experiences also gives visitors a chance to build personal image and influence on the online communication sites (Carter & Gilovich, 2012; Schau & Gilly, 2003; Chung & Darke, 2006).

One-Way ANOVA parametric test showed that there is statistical evidence of differences among participants with different educational level ($p=0.026$). The respondents with university degrees agreed with the above statement the most (mean 3.88), for the rest two groups, mean was 3.75 (under university) and 3.51 (graduate). In the study of Božić, S., & Jovanović, T. (2017), higher education respondents shared information about their trip to express themselves more frequently than those with only elementary and secondary school degrees. These authors explained the reason for this tendency by basing on the more educated tourists' intention to satisfy their need for prestige by posting information about their trips (Božić, S., & Jovanović, T., 2017).

This research sought more detailed on tourists' opinions about the benefit of shared travel information on SM by asking them to give assessment for the statement: "Travel experiences sharing on SM (travel forums, online travel channels, ...) brings out helpful applications for potential tourists". The results showed that the mean of scale is 3.59 (agree) which means the participants agreed that sharing travel information on SM may bring out helpful tips for potential tourists, who need to make a trip in the future. One-Way ANOVA parametric test showed that there is statistical evidence of differences among participants with different occupation ($p=0.031$). Group of students gave the highest level of agreement (mean 3.7) compared with the second highest level of the professionals and officer (mean 3.55) and the rest group (business, sales, and other jobs) neither agreed nor disagreed with mean 3.4 (very close to agreement). Lots of previous studies also show accordance to our findings. Wang, Yu, & Fesenmaier (2002) indicated that SM enables tourists to share individual experiences and convey social benefits for others. On researching travel information sharing by tourists, Kurma T., Goh S. & Balaji M. (2021) also stated that it was beneficial to the recipients or helpful in raising awareness about tourism for potential tourists. Additionally, these shared information are known as user-generated content (Blackshaw & Nazzaro, 2006; Blackshaw, 2005) and considered a more objective and reliable information source in travel planning for potential tourists. Travel-related information sharing might play a

significant role in helping tourists to reduce uncertainty about tourism services and products (Antón, Camarero, and Garrido 2018).

The sharing behaviors mentioned above generally benefit not only tourists but also other travel and hospitality related stakeholders including travel agencies, hotels, destination centers etc. Participants tended to agree that “Travel experiences sharing on social media brings out helpful applications for travel companies, hotels and destinations in providing better services” (mean 3.65). This information exchange can benefit these stakeholders because travel organizations and businesses use SM as an important platform to communicate with their customers (Akehurst, 2009) and also a channel of marketing. Through these sharing, providers can have important clues to adjust and revise their products' quality, especially to predict travel trends in the near future (Neirotti, P., Raguseo, E., & Paolucci, E., 2016; Hlee, S., Lee, H., & Koo, C., 2018). Since these agencies always strive to gain appreciation from experienced visitors in order to improve their rating as well as their brand image (Gartner, WC, 1994) on websites, social media or e-commerce site, this is one of the marketing methods associated with the digital era (Hays, S., Page, SJ, & Buhalis, D., 2013).

By using the One-Way ANOVA test, the results pointed out that groups of respondents having different occupation expressed dissimilar levels of agreement ($p=0.039$). Mean value of student, the professionals and officer, the rest group (business, sales, and other jobs) is 3.76, 3.60 and 3.48 respectively. The research by Thayer and Ray (2006) showed that young people, especially students, tend to use SM the most, and also have a lot of free time to share trip information. Wang and Fesenmaier (2004) demonstrated that young users (under 20 years old) tend to express their influence and interact on social networks more. These influence and interaction might bring out benefits for potential tourist's who seek information for planning their trips because SM has recently become the most preferred source for searching and exchanging tourism products related information (Kapoor et al., 2018).

On one hand, tourists themselves can become a source of travel information for other potential tourists, but on the other hand, they can use information from one another as well as find motivation from other's experiences. Result from this study showed that the participants generally agreed with the statement “Travel experiences and destination images shared on SM of my related people pushes me to implement my future trips” (mean 3.65). Seeing others (especially the related, familiar ones) going for a trip with nice photos and interesting experiences may bring out a push motivation of traveling for potential tourists. Destination image is a fundamental factor in travelers' selection of a destination, and it influences their behavior (Gunn, 1972; Gartner, 1994; Bigné, Sánchez & Sánchez, 2001; Carballo, Araña, León, & Moreno-Gil, 2015 cited in Nuria Huete Alcocer & Víctor Raúl López Ruiz, 2020). Social media, additionally allows potential travelers to communicate with other travelers, and therefore exchange ideas, suggestions, and construct the experiences for future trips (Chung & Buhalis, 2008; Sigala, 2009, cited in Cahyanto, Ignatius et al, 2016). These factors push potential tourists to implement their future trips, and thus they might also share their experiences, reviews and pictures of their trips on social media afterward. In this regard, the One-Way ANOVA test did not indicate statistical evidence of differences amongst participants ($p>0.05$).

In short, this part investigated how tourists think about travel experiences sharing on SM by asking their agreement for some given statements. The results demonstrated their agreement on some aspects: sharing makes the trips more meaningful, brings out helpful applications for potential tourists as well as helpful applications for travel companies, hotels, and destinations in providing better services. Tourists, thus, admitted that travel experiences and destination images shared on social media of related people pushes them to implement their future trips. The One-Way ANOVA test also indicated some statistical evidence of differences amongst participants.

3.3. Tourist’ experiences sharing on social media

Currently, with the support of information technology and the development of social networks, sharing activities take place not only through traditional channels (Caprariello & Reis, 2013), but also through communication online/social networks (Lee, 2016 cited in Lee, SA, & Oh, H., 2017).

In this part, the research investigated how often the participants share their travel experiences on SM. These sharing activities include (1) *Sharing travel experiences and information on personal sites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, blog, ...)*; (2) *Sharing travel experiences and information on social forums*; (3) *Sharing travel experiences and information on e-commerce websites*. The Likert scale was used with 5 levels from 1 to 5: 1. Never, 2. Rarely, 3. Occasionally, 4. Frequently (most of the time when traveling), 5. Very often (every time they travel). The results were presented in the below table:

Table 3: Tourist’ experiences sharing on social media

No.	Behavior	Mean
1	Sharing travel experiences and information on personal sites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, blog, ...)	3.91*
2	Sharing travel experiences and information on social forums	3.06
3	Sharing travel experiences and information on e-commerce websites	2.80

**Statistically significant difference, calculated by One-way ANOVA test ($p < 0.05$).*

The results demonstrated two distinct frequencies of travel experiences sharing on different sites. The respondents frequently share on personal pages (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, blog...) (mean = 3.91) while they occasionally do the same on social forums or on e-commerce sites (means 3.06 and 2.80 respectively). The One-Way ANOVA test also indicated some statistical evidence of differences amongst participants.

First, the participants shared their travel experiences on personal sites the most (mean=3.91). SM is one of the fastest growing communication platforms on the Internet as well as in travel (Blackshaw, 2005; Blackshaw & Nazzaro, 2006; eMarketer, 2007; Buhalis & Law, 2008; Gretzel, Kang, & Lee, 2008; Xiang & Gretzel, 2010 cited in Kang, M., & Schuett, MA, 2013). Thus, the use of SM by tourists for travel sharing is a growing phenomenon in the tourism industry (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). Depending on the channels visitors choose, they could share

images with reviews, video clips, long article etc. The kind of sharing behavior was also tested by research of Bizirgianni, I., & Dionysopoulou, P. (2013) with 254 participants, 74% (187) said they had shared their feelings and experiences with other users on their personal pages after the trips. Some individuals could use social networks to share travel information and experiences, create and orientate tourism trends, many of them could become KOLs (Key opinion leaders) or “Influencers” in tourism activities.

The One-Way ANOVA test showed that women are more often than men in sharing travel experiences, pictures on their SM (means 4.03 and 3.74, respectively, $p=0.01$). Similarly, Muscanell and Guadagno (2012) tested gender differences in SM using and highlighted that women also used more often than men. The same finding was noted by Kim, D., & Jang, S. (Shawn) (2018), their study found that women tended to use social sites more, finding and sharing information, while men pay less attention. Another research conducted in 2007 by Joinson, A. N. (2008) also revealed that female participants scored higher on scales for social connection and posting of photographs, so females perceive more benefits from using SM than males do (Gretzel & Yoo, 2008; O’Connor, 2008; Weiser, 2004, cited in Božić, S., & Jovanović, T., 2017).

The test proved the differences of frequency amongst groups of participants having dissimilar ages ($p=0.000$) and occupation ($p=0.02$). In terms of age, the most common of sharing participants was under 25 (mean = 4.12), the lowest level of performance belongs to the group from 26 to 40 years old (mean = 3.72), the group from 41 and above demonstrated medium rate (mean = 3.79). This finding was in line with a research suggested by Wang and Fesenmaier (2004) which demonstrated that younger SM users have more desire to express themselves online for social position than the older ones. For occupation, students performed the most often (mean = 4.10), the lowest rate belonged to the group of professionals and officer (mean = 3.78). This is in agreement with research done by Thayer and Ray (2006) which showed that young people, especially students, tend to use SM the most, and have a lot of free time to share information.

Nowadays, there are many web portals and forums where tourists can express their opinions, experience and satisfaction, and at the same time read someone else's (IECE, 2016). In this study, the respondents occasionally shared experiences, pictures, and reviews of destinations on social forums (mean=3.06). Social forums in the terms of tourism are created through website platforms, including information exchanging websites, blogs, or tourism websites where visitors could leave comments and share their opinions about services or products relating to their trips in the past. Destination marketers could also create an open forum for visitors to share their experiences to get more attention for the destination (Lee, SA, & Oh, H., 2017). Consequently, they could predict tourists needs, consumption trends and improve products/services quality through these reviews. The One-Way ANOVA test here did not indicate any statistical evidence of differences amongst participants.

For e-commerce platforms, these are new and developing tools for searching, booking as well as sharing experiences of the trips. The respondents shared their travel experience and information on these sites the least often (mean=2.80). Visitors could share their reviews about the quality of services used or destinations visited through OTAs (i.e., Online travel agency) websites since they created tools to support users in sharing. Thus, these sharing could contribute to create

criteria for evaluating and ranking tourism products, services, and destinations, which affects potential tourists' decision to buy products/ services in the future (Neirotti, P., Raguseo, E., & Paolucci, E., 2016; Lee, SA, & Oh, H., 2017). This seems to be a reliable source of information for travelers to prepare their trips (Leung R., Vu HQ, Rong J., Miao Y., 2016). The One-Way ANOVA test did not indicate any statistical evidence of differences amongst participants.

To summarize, the respondents showed different levels of frequency in sharing travel experiences. They often shared on personal sites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, blog, ...) while occasionally doing the same on social forums and e-commerce websites.

3.4. Trustworthiness assessment of experiences sharing on social media

The emergence of online information, which is generated by users on online information sites has revolutionized tourists' perceptions, attitudes, and even behaviors (Boo and Busser 2018; Narangajavana Kaosiri et al, 2019). When planning a trip, travelers have increasingly visited online information sites to search for travel-related information, because they believe the reviews can help them to make the proper purchase decision (Cheng and Jin 2019; Narangajavana Kaosiri et al. 2019, cited in Kim M, Kim J., 2020). Trust might also be affected by the SM sites where information is posted (Gretzel & Yoo as cited in Bronner & de Hoog, 2011). This research assessed trustworthiness of a number of travel information sources by using the Likert scale with 5 levels from 1= totally unreliable to 5= totally reliable. Results are showed in the table below:

Table 5: Trustworthiness assessment of experiences sharing on social media

No.	Sources of information	Mean
1	Personal social media account of friends, relatives, ...	3.77
2	YouTube, Vlog or different personal sites of strangers, celebrities	3.50
3	Official websites of destinations or governments	3.66*
4	Travel information exchanging forums	3.67
5	Tourist reviews on online travel agencies (e.g., Agoda, TripAdvisor, Traveloka, Foody, ...)	3.67

**Statistically significant difference, calculated by One-way ANOVA test ($p < 0.05$).*

The results highlighted that the respondents seemed to trust all given online information sites, mean values were in the range of 3.50 to 3.77. Personal SM tended to be the most reliable sources of information, whereas YouTube, Vlog or different personal sites of strangers, celebrities were the least reliable ones. The One-Way ANOVA test also indicated some statistical evidence of differences amongst participants.

Personal SM account of friends, relatives were the most reliable sources of travel information used by the participants to prepare their trips (mean=3.77). This finding was supported by a research of Deri Lukrecija et al. (2017) which noted that tourists rely mostly on their friends

and relatives' information while choosing travel alternatives and they tend to buy travel packages at travel agencies where friends or relatives work. According to Mazanec, J.A., et al (2002), travel information given by friends and relatives is the most important for potential tourists. The information on related accounts is more reliable because it was posted by acquainted tourists traveling in the past and potential tourists seeking information could know exactly about users posting the information. Similarly, a study conducted by Cao and Lien (2014) revealed that WeChat users have higher trust in products/services commented or posted by their good friends and renowned companies (cited in Kassegn Berhanu, Sahil Raj, 2020). Groups of participants with different demographics did not present differences (One-way ANOVA test).

YouTube, Vlog or different personal sites of strangers, celebrities received the least trustworthy rate (mean = 3.5) compared with other sources. This kind of channel is also popular with potential tourists when they seek information for their next trips. However, its credibility is not so high because it was created by a stranger and it is not easy to check its accuracy. This finding concurred with the one highlighted by Ana María Munar & Jens Kr. Steen Jacobsen's (2013): Holidaymakers who make use of SM for seeking travel information find social networks with limited reach and extensive social cues (i.e., acquaintances on Facebook and similar) to be more trustworthy than those they do not know (Ana María Munar & Jens Kr. Steen Jacobsen, 2013). One-way ANOVA test did not find differences amongst groups of participants with different demographic characteristics.

Official websites of destinations or governments were also found to be reliable sources of travel information (mean=3.66). However, these sources were less trustworthy than other ones (except YouTube, Vlog or different personal sites of strangers, celebrities). Similarly, Ana María Munar & Jens Kr. Steen Jacobsen (2013) also indicated that respondents found websites of destination management organizations (DMO) to be less trustworthy than actual visitors sharing. Jiménez-Barreto, J. and Campo-Martínez, S. (2018) highlighted finding that there is a direct and significant relationship between websites quality, attitudes toward the website and willingness for tourists to participate in online co-creation experiences. Gretzel and Yoo (2009) suggested that online travel reviews are almost perceived as more likely to provide reliable information than content posted by official organizations. One-way ANOVA test showed differences amongst groups of participants with dissimilar education levels ($p=0.014$). Mean values decreased stably when participants had higher educational degrees (3.83, 3.62, 3.49 respectively). Undergraduate groups trusted travel information on official websites of destinations or governments the most.

Travel information exchanging forums and online travel agencies (e.g., Agoda, TripAdvisor, Traveloka, Foody, ...) had the same level of credibility given by the participants (mean=3.67). With support of web-based technology, tourists could share travel experiences and information on forums, thus they can exchange values with one another in the travel community. Moreover, they contribute free of charge information to online forums, this shared information might have high commercial value for potential tourists in the future and services providers. For online travel agencies (e.g., Agoda, TripAdvisor, Traveloka, Foody, ...), these forms have increasingly developed and become effective ways for seeking information and buying travel products/ services as well as sharing experiences. Ana María Munar & Jens Kr. Steen Jacobsen

(2013) reported that review sites such as TripAdvisor achieved the highest level of trust (mean score of 2.4 on a scale from 0 to 4). The e-travel agents strictly require travelers to fill out their personal information (Kim M, Kim J., 2020), so the range of authors posting reviews and comments is limited and more authentic. Furthermore, the content co-creator on these sites also were prior customers buying services and products or visiting destinations in the past, as a result, they could give trustworthy sharing. Groups of participants with dissimilar demographics did not present differences (One-way ANOVA test)

In short, this part reported trustworthiness assessment of tourists in the research sample on online travel sources of information. Tourists' friends and relative's personal SM accounts were the most reliable source of travel information, whereas the source of YouTube, Vlog or other personal sites of strangers (including celebrities) were the least trustworthy ones. Other sources tested also showed certain reliable levels. The One-Way ANOVA test indicated some statistical evidence of differences amongst participants.

4. Conclusion

The major objective of this study was to investigate the tourists' behaviors of sharing their travel experiences as well as their opinion on travel information sharing behavior. The results revealed that personal SM account, to some certain degree, is considered a more reliable source of travel information than the commercial and official websites. Another finding of this study is the differences in sharing behavior of distinct demographics features groups.

For tourists' opinion about sharing experiences, the results reported their agreement on some aspects: sharing makes the trips more meaningful, brings out helpful applications for potential tourists as well as helpful applications for travel companies, hotels, and destinations in providing better services. Additionally, travel experiences and destination images shared on social media of related people made potential tourists more motivated to entail their future trips. Next, the respondents created their post of travel experiences on a line of channels with different levels of frequency. They often shared on personal sites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, blog, ...) the most while occasionally doing the same on social forums and e-commerce websites. The last part of this research highlighted participants' trustworthiness assessment of some popular sources of travel information. Tourists' friends and relative's personal SM accounts were the most reliable source of travel information, whereas the source of YouTube, Vlog or other personal sites of strangers, celebrities were the least trustworthy ones and other sources tested (i.e Official websites of destinations or governments, Travel information exchanging forums, Tourist reviews on online travel agencies) also showed certain reliable levels.

The One-Way ANOVA test used indicated some statistical evidence of differences amongst participants having dissimilar demographics characteristics. Generally, student and undergraduate groups were amongst the group having the highest agreement and sharing activities. Additionally, women tended to be more likely to share travel experiences on SM than men, the group of participants under 25 years old and students performed the same behavior. Undergraduate

groups trusted travel information on official websites of destinations or governments the most in comparison with other groups.

Taken together, results from this study may suggest some implications. The participants seemed to highly appreciate travel information sharing and they themselves do it quite often, especially on the personal SM accounts. Tourists need information about destinations so that they can make a choice, in this era of technology, e-word of mouth is among the most common methods to select destinations. Policy makers and practitioners, providers in the field of tourism should take this into account and pay more attention to this effective way of marketing. Besides, trustworthiness paid by tourists for official websites was not so high which may drive the stakeholders to find solution for making that channel more productive. On making use of e-WoM from tourist, tourism services and products providers and marketers should take notice of the potential groups who use the internet and SM more (e.g female, young people, students in this study).

This study had some limitations. The survey did not have a random sample which may result in generalizing the findings. The study's sample also includes those whose job is somewhat intellectual as well as a bit technology connected (i.e having more chances of using computer, internet or having smart phone, tablet) which may lead to sample bias. Moreover, this research did not investigate factors affecting the participants's perceptions and behaviors.

For future research, far more detailed investigation needs to be implemented to explore factors affecting respondents' perception and behavior of travel experience sharing as well as travelers' trustworthiness information process in a more detailed manner. Additionally, some study might be created to explore the trend of sharing travel experiences on SM as well as find out how this sharing could affect potential tourists' decision in seeking destinations and services.

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