

Role of Social Media in Tourism Marketing

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Abstract: *Social Media has revolutionized the lives of people within a decade of its introduction. It has gradually inculcated into our daily routine as a real time source of information related to every ongoing activity, including business, technology, current affairs, social life, travel, and more. Social Media has also expanded the reach of industries as now they can target consumers sitting miles away without even meeting them. Focussing on this evident nature of Social Media, this working paper is aimed at studying its relative effectson one such industry – tourism. This paper conducts a systematic and structural literature review on the history of Social Media and its relationship with the tourism industry to understand how researchers have adopted theories, used research theories, and developed conceptual frameworks in their studiesacross many countries including Turkey, China, India, Istanbul, Sweden, Britain, Spain, Germany, France, Malaysia, Australia, Sri Lanka, Kuala Lumpur, France, etc. The main objective of this paper is to establish a working relationship between Social Media and its role in Tourism Marketing. The conclusions drawn from the literature state that Social Media is fundamentally changing the way travellers and tourists search, find, read, trust, and justify information related to tourism suppliers and destinations. However, since the use of Social Media is constantly evolving, the literature review may not be exhaustive. Therefore, there is a proposal for future researchers to focus on developing working Social Media marketing models that determine its influence on the various tourism marketing strategies.*

Keywords: Social Media; Tourism Destination; Tourism Marketing; Tourism Industry; Social Media Strategy

1. Introduction

Over the years tourism have relied heavily on the power of word of mouth marketing; it used to be our friends and family who inspired and helped in planning our travels often guided by tourism guides, magazines, and travel agencies. However, today with the emergence of the digital technologies, the word of mouth information has extended beyond a limited group to the entire world. Social Mediaas a part of the digital technology revolution now connects travellers to the opinions and recommendations of millions of people, including friends in their social network and like-minded travellers they have never even met. Tourism organizations have taken advantage of this amazing technology by increasing their promotions of destinations and products on Social Media with the sole aim of reaching out to the masses. Certain tourism organizations such as Yelp, TripAdvisor, Trip Hobo, Travel Triangle, and many more provide extensive information starting from small boutiques, restaurants, and shops to major sightseeing attractions for all tourism destinations through various Social Media tools. With more than 200 million reviews and opinions posted on TripAdvisor till date, and more than 800 million active users on Facebook posting updates and sharing images of their travel destinations, Social Media can be seen as dominating the tourism marketing scenario. Today travellers develop an image about a tourism destination and set their expectations based on previous experience, word of mouth, press reports, advertising, and common beliefs, before actually visiting a destination, as quoted by Baloglu & Brinberg and Chon (1997 and 1992). Further, Social Media has also made tourism companies accountable for what they promote and promise through its various channels. Travellers and tourists today are more prompt and often voice their opinions actively through Social Media tools like Facebook, Twitter, etc. and websites such as Yelp, TripAdvisor, etc.

2. Problem Statement

Ever since the advent of digital Web 2.0, different researchers have conducted quantitative and qualitative studies to understand the ever-changing role of Social Media and its adoption and usage for tourism marketing. It has been discussed that Social Media marketing efforts in the tourism industry will most likely be an important element in the marketing mix for many years to come. As the usage of Social Media tools continue to grow and evolve, we need to form a better understanding of the ardent role of Social Media in a travellers' travel choices and develop a working relationship model that could help tourism officials better understand the optimum approaches to Social Media marketing to promote their tourism products and destinations.

3. Methodology / Approach

Social Media and its relationship with the tourism industry has been widely discussed and defined by many renowned researchers across the world. A quantitative analysis of available literature along with important definitions and aspects of various Social Media studies has been conducted to establish a working relationship between Social Media and tourism. A total of 14 research papers were consolidated and analysed which also included empirical studies conducted from 2009 to 2015. Studies, surveys, and concepts discussed by eminent researchers like Kaplan and Haenlein, Gretzel, Yuan, and Fesenmaier, and many more have been analysed and discussed in the context of various Social Media factors that influence tourism marketing. The definitions related to Social Media, the research methodology used along with the theories and conclusions provided in the studies and literature have been summarized in the Literature Review Section for easy reference and comprehension of results.

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4. Literature Survey

There are different methods used to collect studies and research papers based on the relationship of Social Media and tourism across the world. One of the methods was Google Scholar search engine which threw up promising literature on keywords like “Social Media tourism campaigns”, “Social Media and tourism”, “Facebook and tourism”, “tourism branding through Social Media”, and more. The most helpful piece of literature that was found was on “Social Media as a Destination Marketing Tool: its use by National Tourism Organisations” that was published in *Current Issues in Tourism*, 2012, iFirst article, 1–29 by Stephanie Hays, Stephen John Page, and Dimitrios Buhalis. Apart from that a number of literature that studied the effects and usage of Social Media in the tourism industry was collected. The databases pertaining to research papers like JGate and EBSCO was the second method of collecting relevant literature. When “impact of Social Media” on tourism industry” was searched, 10 journals / articles were found that was relevant to my study. The articles were retrieved and reviewed. Other terms were searched and sorted in the same manner. Certain journals procured from the library of IIM Bangalore was also studied and the definitions on the effect of Social Media on tourism was captured.

The studies collected will be reviewed based on the analysis of literature available relevant to the following research questions:

RQ1: How is Social Media tools used in tourism marketing?

RQ2: Is Social Media used as a source of information by during the pre-travel stage?

RQ3: Does Social Media have a role in promoting tourism destinations and products?

5. Social Media tools used to Promote Tourism Destinations

Mayank Yadav, Yatish Joshi, and Zillur Rahman published a research titled “Mobile Social Media: The new hybrid element of digital marketing communications” (2015, India) in which they opined that the powerful smartphone and other mobile devices have given birth to lot of Social Media applications. An extensive literature review of papers on Social Media and mobile phone applications was done to develop an understanding of the mobile Social Media usage. The researchers concluded that it is necessary for firms entering the Social Media world to consider planning to employ mobile Social Media in its marketing communications. Also, the companies have to be more cautious in case of mobile Social Media as compared to other conventional Media because of the vulnerability of brand equity through User Generated Content through Social Media.

Talking of Social Media tools used for promotion of tourism destinations, there was a Social Media campaign launched by The State of Colorado called “Snow at First Sight” in 2009 to raise awareness for Colorado as a winter sport destination. The campaign aimed at selecting three people who have never experienced snow through a competition. The potential participants were asked to submit a minute-

long video to www.snowatsight.com and explain why they’ve never had a “snow rendezvous”, and why they deserve such a unique first-time experience. The participants had to use their Social Media channels, such as Facebook and Twitter, to spread the word about their entry and also write about their experiences, take pictures and videos to share on YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, etc. The prize included a winter season experience in Colorado from January to March, 2010 comprising ski / snowboard / snowshoe courses, exciting après ski nightlife, pampering, and spas. The Media coverage for the campaign was worth \$2.9 million in advertising dollars, and it generated 300 million Media impressions (CTO, 2010) thereby creating an impression on Colorado as a snow-lover destination.

To implement Social Media in its marketing campaign, The Canada Tourism Commission launched a website and application for iPhone or Android Smartphones “Explore Canada like a Local” in 2011. The aim of the campaign was to enhance the Canadian experience by sharing insider information on spots of interest, by enabling visitors to plan their journey, and serving as a comprehensive guide during their trip through various Social Media channels and the application. This led to travellers sharing travel tips, photos, videos, and new venues that were not featured anywhere. The campaign was awarded by HSMIA Adrian Awards (Digital Campaign – Silver), New York Times Feature, and Webby Awards Tourism as a People's Voice Nominee (CTC, 2011; Greenstein, 2011).

A similar campaign was organized by Visit Florida, Florida State’s official tourism marketing corporation called “Sunshine Moments” that was launched in 2011. The campaign wanted to reach families through digital advertising on Facebook, AOL, Yahoo, and other Social Media tools. The exclusive Facebook campaign targeted families in 16 of Florida’s key drive markets. The competition encouraged participants to upload their favourite Florida vacation images to Visit Florida’s Facebook page, where followers could vote for their favourite photo and select one grand prize winner who received a Florida vacation, a Mazda CX-7 and a Kodak PlayTouch video camera. The campaign showed a 10-point increase in the intent to visit Florida and a significantly improved opinion among the state’s key demographic of 25-34 year olds. The \$1.1 million, five-week Social Media-driven campaign resulted in more than 279 million Facebook Ad impressions, and 18,481 people submitted photos in the sweepstakes (Aboutourism, 2012). During the competition period, the Facebook page of Visit Florida received 162,237 new likes; the page reached nearly 50 million users, and 51,086 unique competition entries from 135 countries was received (Reborn, 2012).

Alžbeta Kiráľová and Antonín Pavlíček opined in their research titled “Development of Social Media Strategies in Tourism Destination” (2014, Madrid, Spain) that the marketing strategies aligned with Social Media can help tourism destinations to remain competitive. The researchers conducted qualitative research to understand the form and nature of destination Social Media campaigns. They identified best practices through the study of the benefits of Social Media campaigns held for particular destinations.

They stated based on the studied campaigns that to remain competitive tourism destinations should use Social Media and that the most used Social Media platforms for tourism destination marketing are Facebook, YouTube, Google, Google Street View, Instagram, Twitter, Flickr, Tencent Weibo, Sina Weibo, Foursquare, Yelp, Android applications, and Smartphone applications.

6. Information sharing through Social Media during the pre-travel stage

Hossein Nezakati, Asra Amidi, Yusmadi Yah Jusoh, Shayesteh Moghadas, Yuhani Abdul Aziz, and Roghayeh Sohrabinezhad Talemi established through their study titled "Review of Social Media Potential on Knowledge Sharing and Collaboration in Tourism Industry" (2014, Kuala Lumpur) that Social Media have revolutionized communication in the tourism industry. Their research revealed that previous studies have examined the role of information technology in tourism; however, there is still a lack of research to reveal how Social Media promote knowledge sharing processes. The researchers explained the present status of knowledge sharing in Social Media in the tourism industry and discussed the potential of Social Media as a tool for knowledge sharing in tourism industry which further revealed that information technology is highly effective in supporting knowledge dissemination, communication, and collaboration in the tourism industry. The researchers opined that the significant role of Social Media is during the pre-trip travel planning and decision making. They concluded that future research should investigate the most important Social Media application or sharing knowledge in the tourism sector in addition to investigating the characteristics of Social Media that can actually enhance the knowledge sharing related to tourism destinations and products.

Yuanfang Qian, Jun Hu, and Mu Zhang published a research titled "Study on the online travel information search: a perspective of Social Media" (2015, China) which described the important role of Social Media in the area of online information search in China. The researchers used Baidu as a search engine and adopted the way of "destination + keywords" as a search model to collect data. In order to study the relationship among various kinds of search engines, specific search keywords and travel destinations, keywords with the highest frequency used by online travellers to look for travel information were selected. To make the study more targeted, several travel destination cities were chosen as representatives. The researchers concluded that Social Media provides a variety of travel information sources for users, facilitates the restructuring of the tourism information structure, and changes the dissemination pattern of the travel information. Further, the most important conclusion from the study was that Social Media provides a variety of sources to travel information search, it boosts the reconstruction of travel information, and that it recreates the search process of travel information.

There was a study conducted amongst university students of Atilim University, Tourism and Hotel Management Department, Ankara, Turkey on "The Effects of Social Media on Tourism Marketing" (2015, Turkey). This study

talked about the increasing popularity of internet applications. The young researchers concluded that tourism organizations, such as hotels, airline companies, and travel agencies have started using internet as one of their important marketing and communications strategies and that Social Media is being used as a new marketing approach within the growing internet technologies by the tourism sector. In order to understand the importance of Social Media in tourism marketing, they conducted a survey on the students of Atilim University and the results clearly portrayed that the tourism preferences of young generation are affected by comments on Social Media and Social Media has both positive and negative effects on the tourism market. Thereby, the study concludes that Social Media users who share their experiences were largely influenced by the comments and reviews on Social Media channels when they make tourism preferences.

7. Social Media as a means of promoting tourism destinations and products

Viet Hung Nguyen and Zhuochuan Wang conducted a study on "Practice of Online Marketing with Social Media in Tourism Destination Marketing" (2011, Sweden) for VisitSweden in which they analysed why online marketing is essential for today's tourism destination marketing and how specific destination marketing organizations (DMOs) build destination brands through Social Media. The research was conducted on VisitSweden, which is the national DMO of Sweden. The researchers collected empirical data from an in-depth interview with the Head – Tourism Destination Marketing of Visit Sweden. One of the most significant findings to emerge from the study was that the DMOs need to emphasize on the wide participation in online marketing and Social Media activities to achieve benefits. The DMOs have to be in the place where the visitors are instead of waiting for the visitors to search for them. The researchers concluded that integrating online marketing and Social Media activities with traditional marketing is an essential marketing strategy for today's Destination Marketing Strategy.

Stephanie Hays, Stephen John Page, and Dimitrios Buhalis argued that Social Media is rapidly gaining prominence as an element of destination marketing organisation's (DMO) marketing strategy in their study titled "Social Media as a destination marketing tool: its use by national tourism organisations" (2012, many international locations). The researchers explored the usage of Social Media among the DMOs of the top 10 most visited countries by international tourists. They used content analysis and semi-structured interviews to examine the usage and impact of Social Media marketing strategies and identify a framework of best practices for other National Tourism Organizations (NTOs) to learn from. The researchers concluded that the majority of the examined DMOs are not currently utilising Social Media to their full effectiveness when it comes to the ability to interact and engage with consumers. Secondly, they opined that Social Media is still not widely recognised and / or respected as a vital tool in marketing strategies, and thus is frequently underfunded and / or neglected. The researchers concluded that the DMOs could benefit from becoming even more innovative and creative when it comes to their Social

Media strategies, in order to fully differentiate these efforts from traditional marketing methods.

Irina Albăstroiu and Mihai Felea conducted a research on “The Implications of User-Generated Content (UGC) Websites for Tourism Marketing” (2014, Rome) to understand the implications of travellers’ use of user generated content websites for the marketing of tourism services and destinations in Rome. They conducted an extensive literature review to illustrate the impact of user generated travel websites for tourism marketing. The researchers conducted a quantitative study to explore consumers’ views on User-Generated Content in relation to travel planning. They stated that the Romanians are highly influenced by other travellers’ reviews and appreciate the detail and relevance of information provided by travel service providers. Based on the literature review and exploratory research, they concluded that User Generated Content websites play the role of an additional source of information that travellers consider as part of their search information process, rather than as the only source of information.

M.Onur Gulbahara and Fazli Yildirima described the framework of Social Media and electronic communication usage to market tourism destinations in their study titled “Marketing Efforts Related to Social Media Channels and Mobile Application Usage in Tourism” (2015, Turkey, Istanbul). The researchers examined the effects of Social Media and electronic communication on marketing in tourism sector and collected data from Istanbul Hotels in Turkey. The researchers opined that all the hotels used web pages for collecting reservations and shared their service and hotels’ information through web, but very few of them had full service support for mobile applications. Around half of the hotels used mobile applications for the aim of sharing information which are transformed through their current websites without online purchasing option. And, the other half of the hotels claimed that they use individual mobile applications. Further, they concluded that the hotels that did not have mobile application realized that this is a necessity and they are planning to have them within a short time period. This study stated that many companies are today following and adapting the technological developments for communicating with their customers including, web pages, mobile applications based services, and various Social Media channels.

Mahmood A. Khan conducted a research titled “Social Media’s Influence on Hospitality & Tourism Management” (2012, India) in which he studied the reviews and comments on TripAdvisor.com as compared to the actual experience. He used an observation method to observe how critics have analysed the review system on TripAdvisor and how TripAdvisor responded to those criticisms. The researcher opined that Social Media can have both positive and negative impact not only on smaller businesses but also on franchise corporations and in such a case actions become necessary which includes timely response to the reviews. He further states that with the rapidly changing technology it is impossible for any hospitality operator to ignore the Social Media. It should also be taken into consideration that it is

just the beginning and nobody knows where it would lead us.

Evangelos Christou suggests in his study titled “Branding Social Media in the Travel Industry” (2014, Greece) that the trust in a Social Media brand has high influence in developing brand loyalty. He established that trust in a travel Social Media brand is influenced by brand characteristics, company characteristics, and customer characteristics. He conducted a shopping mall intercept survey in Greece and examined the attitudes of visitors in the cities of Thessaloniki and Athens. The research results showed that trust in a travel Social Media brand and trust in the company behind the brand are two issues strongly interconnected; one cannot be achieved without the other. The researcher opined that the travel marketers can develop trust in the Social Media Company by using marketing communications to strengthen the company’s image and therefore, the marketers should adopt an integrated approach with regard to the management of different online brands within the same Social Media Company.

S. Sabraz Nawaz and K. Mohamed Mubarak examined the Social Media adoption models in his study titled “Adoption of Social Media Marketing by Tourism Product Suppliers” (2015, Sri Lanka). The researchers studied the use of Social Media by tourism product suppliers in Sri Lanka along with the challenges confronted, and the opportunities available when they adopt Social Media marketing. They opined that the two main Social Media tools namely Facebook and Twitter are used by tourism product suppliers in Sri Lanka and the adoption of such Media is still in early stage. Rather than using these tools as a medium of engagement with customers, these firms see them as an advertisement and promotional tool to push their customers. They identified that Social Media marketing has generally been adopted by tourism product suppliers in Sri Lanka especially the Eastern province of the country and this adoption was instrumental in retaining their customers and reconnecting the discontinued ones.

8. Research on the use of Social Media by travellers

As per the data collected and studied by eminent researchers, the number of Social Media users around the globe has risen by 18% in 2013 (SMT, 2013). Nearly 25% of people in the world now use Social Media. By 2017, the number of Social Media users is expected to rise to 2.33 billion (Statista, 2014). Sticky Media (2014) found that in 2013 82 million people downloaded the TripAdvisor application, over 2800 new topics were posted every day to the TripAdvisor forums, the website alone shows more than 150 million reviews from over 60 million members worldwide, and it has 1.23 billion monthly active users as of December 2013.

There was a major survey conducted called Nielsen’s Global Survey of Trust in Advertising (Nielsen, 2013); it indicated that 68% of global respondents trusted consumer opinions posted online, 84% of respondents trusted word-of-mouth recommendations from friends and family, in 2013 the second most-trusted advertising source was content and

messaging on brand websites with 69% of global respondents, more than half (56%) of respondents trusted consumer-consented email messages, 48% of respondents trusted ads in search engine results/ online video ads/ ads on social networks, 42% trusted online banner ads, 45% of respondents in Nielsen's survey believed display ads on mobile phones were credible, and 37% trusted text ads on mobile phones. Also according to Nielsen, 55% of respondents said they were willing to take action at least some of the time based on social network ads, 52% based on online video ads, 50% based on online banner ads, 49% based on display ads on mobile devices, and 45% based on text ads on mobile phones.

According to PhoCusWright's Social Media in Travel 2012: Social Networks and Traveller Reviews (Juman, 2012), more than 75% of travellers use social networks to find shopping-related deals, while 30% specifically seek out travel-related deals, 52% of Facebook users said their travel plans were affected by seeing pictures of trips posted by friends, 52% of travellers who had already made travel plans changed some part of their plan after checking out what was being said on Social Media channels – 33% changed their hotel, 10% changed their resort, 7% changed their destinations, and 5% changed their airlines. Further 52% of Facebook users said their friend's photos inspired their holiday plans, 40% of visitors post restaurant reviews on Social Media, 46% post hotel reviews, 76% visitors post post-vacation photos and 55% of all Facebook users like pages specific to vacations. According to research from Sticky Media (2014), visitors are relying on Social Media more than ever to decide where to go for holidays and what to visit, 40% of online visitors visit social networking sites to influence destination selection, 70% of visitors trust online recommendations while only 14% trust advertisers. Facebook has the greatest influence on 24 -34 year olds' holiday choices, and the greatest influence over men, TripAdvisor had the greatest impact on female booking habits.

9. Results and Discussion

The recent advances on the internet and the development of Social Media have facilitated the interconnectivity of travellers. The potential travellers have social interactions through Social Media such as online forums, communities, ratings, reviews and recommendations. These developments have introduced a new promotional medium which empowers potential travellers to generate content and influence others. These interactions provide different values for both tourism businesses and travellers. The present study conducts a review of all kinds of studies conducted across the world to understand this new trend and examine the role of Social Media in travel planning and tourism marketing.

The reliability and validity of the extent of Social Media usage in the pre-travel stage and as a promotional tool by destination marketing organizations have been discussed separately in the following sections.

10. Popular Social Media tools are used to promote tourism destinations

The results of certain studies conducted on the use of Social Media channels for promoting tourist destinations concluded that ever since the advent of Social Media, the tourism companies have most benefitted as Social Media has allowed them to conduct mass promotions.

Analysing what the researchers concluded, it can be stated that today the new tourism companies who plan to enter the market leverage their Social Media channels mostly through Social Media because they have seen the high awareness quotient of Social Media and the increasing usage of Social Media applications in the regular lifestyle of the masses.

Further, famous Social Media campaigns like "Snow at First Sight" conducted by The State of Colorado called in 2009, the website and mobile (iPhone / Android) application launched by The Canada Tourism Commission called "Explore Canada like a Local" in 2011, and the "Sunshine Moments" organized by Visit Florida, Florida State's official tourism marketing corporation have proved that the number of followers and visits that they generated through the power of Social Media was never achieved via traditional marketing methods.

The Social Media campaigns conducted across the years promoted destinations that were known only within the country to the whole world and generated up to 50 million Social Media users in a few weeks.

Understanding the mass appeal of these campaigns, it can be inherited that the most used Social Media tools are Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Yelp, YouTube; Google; Google Street View, TripAdvisor, etc.

The analysis of the studies and campaigns also reinstated that Social Media provides a less expensive approach to marketing for destinations and offers many opportunities for to attract potential visitors to destinations.

Today travellers no longer trust advertising that focuses on the advantages and special features of the destinations. The travellers require a personal approach, intelligent, creative, interactive, communication, and messages that include empathy and emotions.

They want to participate in the creation of tourism products and want to buy based on relationship and this can be achieved only through Social Media and the level of interaction level that it can provide.

There is a lot of information sharing through Social Media during the pre-travel stage

The studies conducted across Kuala Lumpur, Turkey, and China revealed that Social Media has revolutionized the communication pattern across the tourism industry. The type of information sharing through Social Media is dynamic and depends highly on the perception of the users of the various Social Media tools.

It can be concluded from the studies that the significant role of Social Media is during the pre-trip travel planning and decision making period. Various Social Media tools are highly effective in supporting knowledge distribution, communication, and collaboration across the tourism industry.

There was a search engine study conducted using Baidu and relevant tourism destinations that concluded that Social Media provides a variety of travel information sources for users, facilitates the restructuring of the tourism information structure, and changes the distribution pattern of the travel information.

Further, the most important conclusion arrived by the researchers was that Social Media provides a variety of sources to travel information search, it boosts the reconstruction of travel information, and that it recreates the search process of travel information.

The studies further portray Social Media as a means of creating / increasing awareness of the destination, reaching out to masses, encouraging travellers to plan their journey, strengthening the destination image as a favourite destination, targeting new / specific market, spreading positive word of mouth, increasing number of visitors, creating buzz around the destination, increasing the number of Facebook / Twitter fan base, changing the appeal of the destination in the mind of visitors, creating a brand image for the destinations, and more.

Social Media has been widely accepted as a means of promoting tourism destinations and products by popular destination marketing organizations

Summing the conclusions for studies conducted across the globe including Sweden, Rome, Turkey, India, Greece, and Sri Lanka, it can be stated that Social Media has been widely accepted by destination marketing organizations as a popular promotional tool.

The destination marketing organizations emphasize on the wide participation of online marketing and Social Media activities and make sure that they are always available in the place where the visitors are instead of waiting for the visitors to search for them. For example, their Social Media presence is so strong that their tourism products and destination USPs are readily available whenever a potential traveller looks for a similar travel destination or product. This leads to a stronger presence in the travel market and a better promotional strategy each time there is a new product to offer. Further, the studies have concluded that as more and more tourism providers are understanding the importance of Social Media, they are promoting their products and announcing their offers through different Social Media channels.

11. Conclusion

This paper is based solely on a review of literature and studies conducted across the world on the usage of Social Media by tourism organizations and the effect of Social Media on the travel planning of tourists across the world. For

future research, a qualitative analysis tool, "Content analysis" can be used to analyse and understand the kind of content used in various Social Media platforms to promote tourism destinations. The Social Media tools to be analysed can be Facebook and Twitter. The content analysis can be further backed up with a quantitative study in the form of questionnaire survey to understand how tourists are impacted by Social Media during travel planning. This complete data will provide a 360 degree view of how tourism organizations use Social Media to promote their tourism products and how far the travellers are dependent on Social Media content while planning for a travel destination.

12. Scope and Limitations

Firstly the conceptual paper only discusses the literature post the advent of Web 2.0. This is delimiting because it excludes the period before that and doesn't take into account how tourism products and destinations were promoted and marketed during that period. The paper is biased towards the importance of Social Media on the promotion of tourism. Secondly, the paper solely bases its conclusions on the influencing role of Social Media on studies conducted by researchers across different countries, whereas the discussion of studies conducted in India is very minimal. This is delimiting because although Social Media is a global phenomenon and Indian travellers are equally impacted by the influence; however, there has been no studies conducted to prove the same. Thirdly, being a conceptual paper, this study attempts to analyse studies conducted by other researchers where certain errors may have crept up owing to their limitations. Similar errors have been unknowingly borrowed in this paper since the entire conclusion has been based on those studies.

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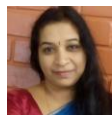
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