



the Role of Social Media Influencers in Promoting Algerian Cultural Heritage A Case Study of influencer Khoubib Kowas as model

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Abstract:

This article emphasizes the crucial role of social media influencers in the promotion of Algerian cultural heritage. It illustrates how tourism influencers in Algeria have become key figures in revealing the country's hidden treasures. By effectively using platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok , these influencers create engaging content that showcases Algeria's breathtaking landscapes, rich historical sites, and vibrant local traditions.

Our study focused on Khoubib Kowas, a prominent influencer who has positioned himself as a leading ambassador for cultural tourism. His impact resonates on local, national, and global levels as he documents his travels across Algeria. Through visually striking posts and captivating narratives, Kowas attracts both domestic and international audiences, skillfully highlighting the richness of Algeria's diverse cultural heritage.

Keywords: *Social media, influencer, tourism, promotion, Algerian cultural heritage*

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I. INTRODUCTION

The emergence of new technologies has dramatically reshaped our world, allowing us to connect instantly from virtually anywhere with just a simple click on our cell phones or laptops. This profound shift has not only transformed the way we communicate, but it has also revolutionized the tourism industry, opening up exciting new opportunities for meaningful engagement and exploration. Embracing these advancements can elevate our travel experiences and foster deeper connections with the places we visit. (Benaissa& Kassah , 2024).

In recent years, social media influencers have become a significant force in reshaping the tourism industry. These digital trendsetters use platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube to share captivating content that highlights the beauty and appeal of various destinations. As a result, tourists have transformed into enthusiastic "promoters" of the places they visit, sharing vibrant images and engaging stories with their followers and friends in the vast world of social media(Ghadjati, Y., Merabti, A., & Bennafla, 2024).

.Algeria, the largest country in Africa, is a mesmerizing land teeming with diverse landscapes and a rich, intricate cultural heritage. Algeria offers a stunning array of natural wonders, from the captivating golden dunes of the Sahara Desert to the verdant, rolling hills of the Kabylie mountains. The country's vibrant cultural tapestry has been woven through centuries of Arab, Berber, Ottoman, and French influences, creating a unique blend that is both fascinating and historically significant. (Razali& Pan ,2023).

Recently, influencers and cultural enthusiasts have emerged as passionate advocates for Algerian tourism, playing a crucial role in promoting the country and preserving its cultural identity. They explore and document Algeria's historic sites, traditional festivals, and artisan crafts, bringing its cultural legacy to life and making it accessible to a global audience. Algeria's cultural heritage is a remarkable blend of historical, architectural, and social elements, each contributing to the nation's unique identity and significant tourism potential. Integrating cultural heritage into tourism strategies is essential for driving economic development and ensuring effective preservation efforts. Social media influencers act as cultural ambassadors, passionately sharing their personal experiences and insights about Algeria with their followers. They create engaging narratives and visually stunning content that showcase the country's rich traditions, exquisite crafts, and profound values, fostering cross-cultural appreciation. Furthermore, these influencers play a vital role in the digital preservation of culture by meticulously documenting and sharing traditional practices, festivals, and artifacts on social media platforms, raising awareness about the importance of conserving Algeria's rich heritage. (Yacine & Bennafla , 2024).

The role of social media influencers in promoting Algerian cultural heritage is becoming increasingly important. These platforms enable the sharing and appreciation of local traditions and crafts, highlighting the beauty of Algeria's cultural offerings. By utilizing their wide reach, influencers engage their audiences and help in recognizing and celebrating Algeria's unique and vibrant cultural landscape. ***Therefore, what is the Role of Social Media Influencers in Promoting Algerian Cultural Heritage?***

1 . Literature Review

1.1 The first study: Vlogging as a Tool of Promoting the Algerian Cultural Heritage. (Ben cherrad, & Rahmouni, 2021)

This analytical study aims to understand the role of video vlogging as a tool that provides digital content to promote the Algerian cultural heritage by analyzing an intentional sample of 54 Algerian video vlogs via the YouTube platform for vloggers who provide audiovisual content about the Algerian cultural heritage, and by applying the Content Analysis tool, the two researchers came to confirm the interest of Algerian video vlogs of various kinds in the material Algerian cultural heritage (historical cities, archaeological buildings, excavations, museums ...) And immaterial (dialects, music, dance, cooking, dress...), With a focus on diversifying the content and methods of its presentation, and these contents came in a variety of expressive formats, highlighting The increasing importance of visual platforms and their pivotal role in preserving and promoting cultural heritage to become an integrated industry produced by specialized institutions in the best image.

1.2. The second study: Cultural Heritage and the Tourism Industry in Algeria (Ali Boukhalkhal, & Mohammed Touhami 2024) The paper highlights that Algeria's tourism is influenced by its diverse natural, historical, and civilizational assets. However, deficiencies in service quality hinder the effective management and development of its cultural heritage for tourism, particularly affecting foreign tourist expectations .

1.3. The third study Cultural Heritage and Tourism: The Case of Dellys in Algeria (Yamina Necissa, Moussaoui Rayane 2024)

Algerian cultural heritage is a vital resource for cultural tourism, offering economic and social opportunities. In Dellys, it requires careful integration into tourism strategies, emphasizing preservation and enhancement to fully realize its potential for local development and identity promotion .

2 . Objectives of the research:

This study seeks to achieve a specific set of objectives, including:

Subjective Reasons:

- The researchers' interest in topics related to the representations of local cultural heritage in Algeria.
- The desire to provide a semiotic analysis of the cultural heritage content in Khoubaib Kouas's posts.

Objective Reasons:

- The growing attention social media influencers give to promoting Algerian cultural heritage among social media users.

The novelty of the topic regarding the presence of cultural heritage in Khoubaib Kouas's posts on YouTube, especially considering the digital openness that Algeria has witnessed in recent year.

3 .The importance of study:

Our study derives its importance from the importance of the topic under study, which is the contribution of tourism influencers in promoting cultural heritage as the basic component of national identity, in addition to the fact that it examines our customs and culture and introduces them in light of modern change And also Valuing the role of digital content and vloggers on social media platforms in contributing to the promotion of the tourism sector in Algeria.

II. ADJUSTING STUDY CONCEPTS

1 . Social media

defined as social platform based on users' social relationships, and a platform for content production and communication. There is no consensus on the definition of social media. Some The International scholars believe that social media is a set of Internet applications built on the ideas and technologies of Web 2.0, which allows users to create and exchange generated content. Nowadays, the online environment is diverse, and every user can post their life on social media. This has led to the emergence of many videos on the Internet that promoted emotions and high luxury of life

2 .Social media influencers :

(SMIs) represent a new type of independent third-party endorser who shape audience attitudes through blogs, tweets, and the use of other social media (Freberg et al., 2011)

Recognized as opinion leaders, they are able to increase the influence of the information they receive and transmit to others (Magno & Cassia, 2018, p. 1). Zerouati Maouahib, Sayah Fatima Identifying influencers should be a key element of a well-planned social media marketing strategy. Social media influencers are considered opinion leaders and usually have some level of expertise in areas such as makeup and technology. They are based on different platforms like YouTube and Instagram Influencers are public figures who talk about different family traditions and different cultures. Primarily, they try to raise awareness of the different traditions in the world and the versatile cultures of every country. In that process, they can promote mostly services that can help any social media user find out more about the different traditions. Folk (Traditions) Influencers and bloggers find ways to get their content in front of the right audience. They take pictures of traditional elements of a specific culture, visit traditional places in one country, or talk about traditional recipes and cuisine. It's their job to bring every culture closer to the ideal customer. Representing culture means to deeply understand, process, and reveal cultural values that may be important for followers

3 .Tourism promotion:

Tourism is "the activities of people who travel to places outside their usual environment, staying in them for no more than one year, for leisure, work, or other purposes (Kimaru & Kimaru, 2011). Tourism is an economic sector and a service industry that continues to develop and is witnessing constant competition among tourism operators to gain customer satisfaction and ensure attraction by adopting the concept of tourism promotion as a mechanism, or "a set of communication technologies dedicated to the design, promotion, and marketing of products, services, and tourist destinations to create demand for them (Chadi & Chabbi, 2022).

4 .Cultural Heritage

cultural heritage There are multiple juristic definitions of cultural heritage, and one of the most important definitions is as follows: "Cultural heritage is the material urban remains, whether immovable or movable, including archaeological buildings and discoveries, as well as the artifacts represented in museums from various inherited civilizations. These artifacts possess religious, artistic, historical, or scientific value. It also includes intangible heritage created by individuals throughout ages, such as knowledge, skills, customs, arts, traditions, and others that continue to exist from ancient times until the present day, in a manner that does not contradict Islamic principles."³ The Algerian legislator has defined cultural heritage in Article 2 of Law No. 98-04 on the Protection of Cultural Heritage as follows: "Cultural heritage, in the context of this law, is considered as all cultural properties, whether immovable or movable, located on national property lands and within them, owned by natural or legal persons subject to private law. It also includes the subterranean layers of inland and territorial waters inherited from various civilizations since prehistoric times until the present day.

5 .Social Media Influencers: Definition and Impact

In contemporary usage of social media, the concept of an influencer has become popular and widespread. I These individuals have rare communicative abilities, which allow them to raise the public interest of many and engage in interactions on different social media platforms, encouraging followers and friends to follow trends, cultural discourses, and new cultural communication. In general, influencers usually have several characteristics such as communication skills, intelligence, education, presentation skills, and entertainment, which allow them to attract followers in online media such as Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, blogs, or larger audiences in traditional social media like television or radio

These influencers are considered to be loyal sources of information for their followers and fans. As part of the Algerian context, the current use of influencers changes them into deputies and a form of national soft power for Algeria. Furthermore, through the use of persuasive power and the ability to leverage the networks, they can be delegates of global events and, above all, an element of local and

Social media platforms allow their users to explore and share posts, or even live or timed videos with thousands of friends and followers. Thus, several researchers have studied the marketing strategies and the role of these online influencers and their effect on the tourist decision-making process. Many others have focused specifically on the online influencer's role in the museum context. Some researchers have also analyzed the role of social media in promoting museums and exhibitions as representatives of cultural heritage. Reinforcement tourism has been an area of major importance to the majority of researchers in this context as tourists or segments are influenced by tourism.

6 .Algerian Cultural Heritage: Overview and Significance

In Algeria, cultural heritage is very important, as it reflects the history of a country with a strong historical depth. It is characterized by diversity and a blend of Arab, African, Berber, and Mediterranean cultures and civilizations that have been in contact for thousands of years. This cultural heritage touches on all areas of society and culture, including language and literature, art and architecture, traditions, customs, music, and singing. The Algerian cultural identity is known to the world through these manifestations. The main components of the heritage are divided into tangible heritage and intangible heritage; the first includes ancient places,

architectural buildings, and historical centers, while intangible heritage is characterized by art, jewelry, and traditional crafts in addition to customs and traditions.

This heritage holds a special place in the hearts of Algerians, as it links them to their history, identity, and memory, and gives them a sense of pride and cohesiveness. In fact, heritage is the mirror that reflects the image of communities and the people who have left, through it, their values and traditions. It is worth mentioning that, due to globalization and modernization processes, this heritage has been threatened by disappearance; it has thus become necessary to be interested in its preservation and recovery. In addition to those characteristics, heritage is a dynamic living entity, like a person who changes and evolves throughout his or her life. The world is taking care of the different expressions of heritage and disseminating it through various means, as well as in the form of events and festivals. Furthermore, the influence of some celebrities and social media players has played a big role in highlighting heritage aspects and masterpieces.

UNESCO offers one of the most comprehensive classifications of cultural heritage

Types of Algerian Heritage

1. Tangible Heritage

- **Historical Monuments:**
 - Palaces (El Mechouar Palace in Tlemcen, Beni Hammad Palace).
 - Fortresses (Beni Hammad Fort, Santa Cruz Fort in Oran).
 - Mosques (Ketchaoua Mosque, Emir Abdelkader Mosque).
- **Archaeological Sites:**
 - Roman ruins (Djemila, Tipaza, Timgad).
- **Traditional Architecture:**
 - Berber architecture (M'zab Valley, Chaoui homes).
 - Islamic architecture (Ottoman palaces, ancient medinas).

2. Intangible Heritage

- **Traditional Arts:**
 - Music (Rai, Chaabi, Malouf).
 - Dances (Aalaoui, Qarkabo).
- **Traditional Crafts:**
 - Pottery.
 - Weaving (Haik, Kachabia).
 - Silver jewelry (notably in Kabylie and Tuareg regions).
- **Traditional Cuisine:**
 - Couscous, Chakhchoukha, Tagine.
 - Traditional sweets (Makroud, Baklava).

3. Natural Heritage

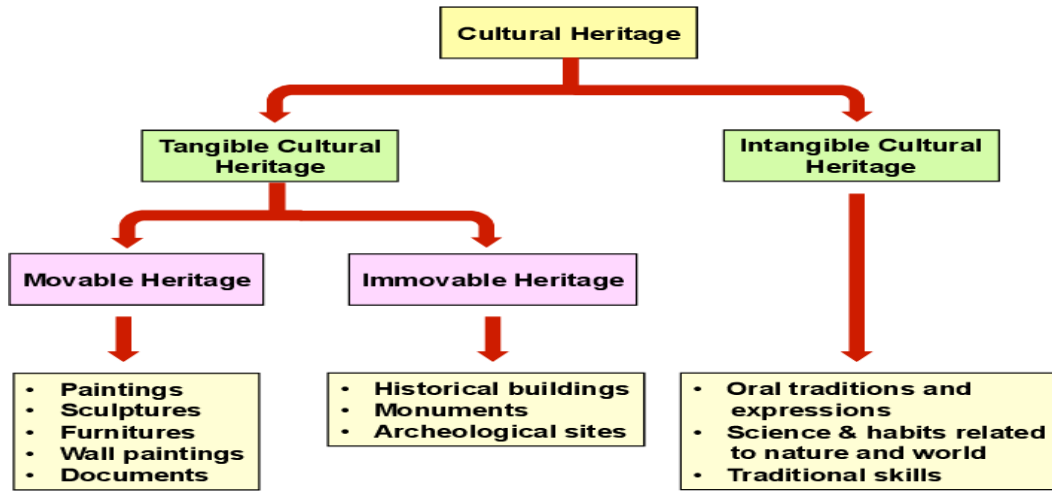
- **Landscapes:**
 - The Sahara Desert.
 - Beaches (Chotts, Corniche of Oran).
- **Nature Reserves:**
 - National parks (Taza, El Kala, Tassili N'Ajjer).

4. Cultural and Social Heritage

- **Traditions and Customs:**
 - Traditional weddings.
 - Celebrations (Yennayer, Ashura).
- **Traditional Attire:**
 - Karakou, Tlemcenian Chedda, Saharan Melhfa.
- **Languages and Dialects:**
 - Tamazight (with its various dialects).
 - Algerian Arabic.

5. Oral Heritage

- **Folktales and Legends:**
 - Stories passed down by elders.
- **Proverbs and Folk Songs:**



Prepared by a PhD student

8. The role of social media influencers in promoting Algerian cultural heritage

The role of social media influencers in promoting Algerian cultural heritage is increasingly significant, as these platforms facilitate the dissemination and appreciation of local traditions, crafts, and tourism. Influencers leverage their reach to engage audiences, enhancing visibility and interest in Algeria's rich cultural offerings. This influence manifests itself in various ways, which can be categorized as promoting artisanal crafts. Social media is a vital tool for artisans to showcase their handmade products, fostering a renewed interest in traditional crafts (Ines & Ines, 2024). Influencers can amplify the visibility of these crafts, encouraging consumer engagement and supporting local economies. Enhancing domestic tourism influencers plays a crucial role in promoting Algeria's tourism destinations through engaging content, which attracts domestic tourists (Ghadjati et al., 2024) (Yacine & Bennafla, 2024). Visual platforms such as Instagram and YouTube have been shown to significantly influence travel decisions, making them essential to tourism marketing strategies. Cultural Heritage Education Social media increases public awareness and interest in cultural heritage, providing educational content about Algeria's history and traditions (Razali et al., 2023). Influencers can create interactive content that educates audiences about cultural sites and practices, fostering a deeper appreciation for heritage. While social media influencers positively impact the promotion of Algerian cultural heritage, there is concern about the authenticity of the content shared. Commercializing culture can lead to a superficial understanding of heritage, requiring a balance between promotion and true representation.

III. Case Studie of Successful Promotion of heritage culturele by influencer "Khoubib Kouas

Influencer Khoubib Kowas:

Vlogger Khoubib Kowas: "Khoubai" is one of the most prominent tourism content creators and vloggers on social media platforms, born in the city of Constantine in eastern Algeria, a young man who has received many awards, including the best content creator in the world in the Russian city of Kazan for the year 2022, and also received the same award in Algeria for the year 2023, as reported by "EL Nahar online newspaper" in its article published on 09/03/2023, a specialist in Travel, Tourism and adventure, where he began to share his adventures through social networking sites to introduce diverse cultures under the slogan "travel, there is a lot waiting for you" (Ziad, 2023) Khoubib kowas is considered one of the most important influencer



Achievements and Awards: Achievements and Awards:

- Best Instagram Blogger in Algeria (2019): Khoubai was awarded this prize in recognition of his outstanding content on Instagram.
- Best Content Creator of 2022: He received this award at a ceremony held in Kazan, Russia, where an event was organized to honor the brightest young talents in various fields.
- Best Arab Tourism Content on Facebook (2023): Awarded by the Arab Union for Tourism Media during a ceremony held in Berlin, Germany.
- Forbes 30 Under 30 in the Middle East and North Africa (2023): This recognition came in appreciation of his contributions to tourism content creation.
- Ambassador of the Billion Followers Summit (2024): He was announced as the ambassador for the third edition of the summit to be held in Dubai under the theme "Purposeful Content."

Promoting Traditional Clothing as a Tangible Cultural Heritage : The emergence of traditional Algerian clothing is evidence of Algeria's rich and diverse cultural heritage, varying across different regions. This has been emphasized by Khabib Kouas to highlight Algerian cultural heritage

Promoting the Qashabiya:

The Qashabiya is a traditional winter garment for men, made from camel hair and sheep wool. It was used by Algerians as a means of warmth and as a hiding place for weapons during the



liberation revolution. It is considered one of the famous traditional garments in Algeria.

Recommendations for Future Research :

This study opens up many avenues for new research

Algerian cultural heritage is considered a treasure trove of tourism

The tourism sector in Algeria has enormous potential thanks to its natural and cultural diversity

Heritage as a Tourism Product this product should be seen not merely as a testament to the nation's history, identity, art, customs, and traditions, integral components of Algerian society, but also as a pivotal tourism product. This perspective is crucial for the enhancement of the tourism sector, which stands as a significant economic resource, particularly in light of the government's current policies aimed at economic diversification. Experts in tourism and economics define a tourism product as encompassing three primary components: attractions, facilities, and access. Attractions serve as the cornerstone, drawing tourists by offering new and unique experiences that allow them to enjoy authentic and unique sites and events. Facilities refer to the array of services and products that cater to the needs of tourists during their stay. Meanwhile, access involves the logistical aspects, the means, processes, and procedures of transportation that ensure tourists can travel from their places of origin to the transportation and move within them efficiently. While heritage forms an integral part of the past, present, and future of all peoples, the elements of cultural heritage today are deemed one of the most critical resources for tourism globally. The field of heritage tourism transcends mere tourism and financial gain; it involves the promotion of a community's heritage to other communities through tourists. Drawing on expert opinions and statistical data in the field of tourism, as influencers on social media



Prepared by a PhD student

IV.Conclusion:

Thanks to the vibrant efforts of SMIs content creators, Algerians are embarking on a captivating journey to rediscover their homeland through the eyes of influential voices. These influencers have emerged as passionate ambassadors for tourism, painting a rich and captivating picture of the country's diverse offerings. With the power of new media, a stunning tapestry of Algeria's tourism landscape is now unveiled, inviting everyone to explore and experience the beauty of their own heritage SMIs have made Algerians rediscover their country and discover it through the eyes of influencers

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- Internet websites:



Khoubai ✓

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قناة يوتيوب لخبيب عبر الانترنت

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_KWC9bIj8zs&pp=ygUq2YLZhtin2Kkg2K7YqNmK2Kgg2LnZhNmJINin2YTZitmI2KrZitmI2

- **Unveiling Algeria's Hidden Gems**

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GQuA99zg2rU&pp=ygUq2YLZhtin2Kkg2K7YqNmK2Kgg2LnZhNmJINin2YTZitmI2KrZitmI2Kgg>

- **Is tourism in Algeria dead? |**

- <https://youtu.be/6xT67hkI950>

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