

The Role of Social Media in Media Promotion of Tourism in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: A Field Study from the Perspective of Tourists

¹Manal Mohammed Al-Amari – ²Adra Allaoua Aiouaj*

1- King Abdulaziz University (Jeddah), (Saudi Arabia), malammari426@gmail.com

2- King Abdulaziz University (Jeddah), (Saudi Arabia), aalouadj@kau.edu.sa

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Abstract:

The study aimed to identify the role of social media networks in media promotion of tourism in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia from the perspective of tourists, and to identify tourists' motivations for coming to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for tourism, in addition to identifying the habits and patterns of use of tourists coming to the Kingdom as a source of knowledge about tourism information in the Kingdom. The study relied on the descriptive survey approach and a questionnaire tool in Arabic and English consisting of nine main axes, which was applied to a purposive sample of (500) tourists from inside and outside the Kingdom. The study concluded that social media networks play an effective role in promoting tourist sites, especially modern projects such as Qiddiya and the Red Sea, religious sites such as the Grand Mosque and the Prophet's Mosque, in addition to major events such as the Riyadh Season. The results also showed that influencers play a tangible role in highlighting tourist destinations, especially through their personal experiences and recommendations, and that most tourists rely on more than ten influencers as sources of tourism information.

Keywords: Digital promotional content, influencers , Media promotion, Social media, Tourists, Tourism, Tourism in Saudi Arabia

I. INTRODUCTION

Social media has gained great importance in the tourism sectors, as it has been used as a means to reach users and those interested, and influence their trends towards tourism (Bahurmuz & Al-Kubaisy, 2022). Through smart marketing strategies and interaction with users, tourism companies have been able to provide innovative offers for different tourist destinations, which has helped achieve more tourist attraction and huge profits for these companies and the tourist places they promote. This has made promoting tourism through social media one of the basic components of many countries to revive the economy and provide jobs for their citizens. Social networking sites have become the most effective and influential tool in tourism marketing of

* Manal Mohammed Al-Amari

tourist destinations and products on the one hand, and increasing customer satisfaction on the other hand (Aboud, 2018).

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has made significant strides toward establishing itself as a unique tourist destination, not only for religious tourism, but for all tourism sectors: entertainment, sports, medical and wellness, historical, cultural, and environmental. These various tourist destinations witnessed a significant increase in the number of international tourists, rising by 56% in 2023 compared to 2019, with the number of tourists reaching 27.4 million. This led to the Kingdom topping the United Nations' list of major tourist destinations in the 2023 international tourist growth index. The travel account in the balance of payments also recorded a historic surplus of 48 billion riyals in 2023, an annual increase of 38%. The number of tourists arriving in the Kingdom from abroad reached approximately 17.5 million during the first seven months of 2024 (Saudi Press Agency, 2024). The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has made significant efforts in promoting tourism across various sectors, most notably social media platforms. Tourism authorities in the Kingdom have targeted their audiences with engaging and engaging content, inviting and attracting influencers both within and outside Saudi Arabia. This is in addition to the massive advertising and awareness campaigns that have been launched since the beginning of 2019. Social media has thus become a key element in the promotional mix for tourism.

The results of previous studies also confirmed that promotion via social media indirectly drives pro-tourism behaviors through the attractiveness of the destination and the attitude towards the positive effects of tourism). Despite the many scientific studies that have addressed the role of social media in promoting tourism in general or in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in particular, the researcher noted that these studies did not focus on monitoring tourists' perspectives and their evaluation of the efforts made to promote tourism through social media and their proposals for developing forms of tourism promotion on social media.

The importance of surveying the public about the role of social networking sites in promoting tourism comes from the fact that it has an important role in helping the responsible authorities understand how social platforms affect attracting tourists, and evaluate their effectiveness as a marketing tool. It also helps to know the most attractive types of tourism content, and provides valuable data about the most used platforms, such as Instagram, TikTok, or Facebook This enables promoters to allocate their efforts more effectively to the platforms with the greatest impact, and also helps in understanding the challenges faced by tourists or online followers, which contributes to developing tourism services and experiences that meet their needs and encourage them to travel, and ultimately contributes to building a good digital reputation. Therefore, the current study focused on knowing the opinions of international tourists about the role of various social networking sites in promoting tourism in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and knowing the most important sites that they rely on to know the news, offers and tourist destinations of the Kingdom, as well as their proposals for developing tourism promotion through social networking sites.

1.2 Study problem

Social Media Social media is an excellent way to share content to promote tourist destinations and engage tourists (Chandrasekaran & Annamalai, 2022). The best communication platform for potential tourists to interact with tourism companies and current travelers in order to plan their future tour, as through these sites photos, videos, news, comments and other media arts are employed to shape perceptions of tourist destinations and make them more attractive to the target audience.

In addition, it provides tourists with valuable information and insights about the destinations they wish to travel to, enhances knowledge in planning their trips effectively, helps them choose suitable accommodation, and explore the best attractions, thus improving visitor experiences, which in turn contributes to economic growth, generating revenues, creating job opportunities, supporting local companies, and building credibility between tourists and potential tourist destinations. It also creates awareness, influences public decisions, and encourages them to engage in tourism activities (Al-Shammari, 2019).

Since Saudi Arabia launched Vision 2030 to diversify its economy beyond oil-related government revenues, the Kingdom has focused on developing tourism investments and adopted a multifaceted roadmap to promote the country as a wealthy tourist destination, with social media platforms being one of the tools for this promotion (Alshehri, 2024).

It has confirmed the results of previous studies such as the study (Alzaydi & Elsharnouby, 2023) and EL Shamy, et al., 2023) and (Others & Xu, 2023) Hamdi and Abdel Rahman's study (2023), Barhail and Fatiha's study (2023), and Bou Bedi and Maou's study (2021) on the importance of the role played by these platforms in promoting tourism, starting with attracting tourists to the Kingdom, passing through documenting their experience during their trip, and ending with encouraging others to do their experience. However, despite the multiplicity and richness of previous studies, there are points that these studies did not address, such as identifying the elements of the richness of social media platforms and the points of distinction between them in the field of tourism promotion As well as the most important obstacles facing tourists when they want to obtain tourist information about the Kingdom from these sites, and also to identify the most important forms of tourism promotion through social networking sites, and finally to know the most important areas that attract tourists to the Kingdom. Therefore, the researcher found it appropriate to search for answers to these questions in light of the theories of knowledge richness, uses and gratifications.

Based on the above, the study problem can be formulated to answer the following question: What is the role of social media networks in media promotion of tourism in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia from the point of view of foreign tourists?

A number of sub-questions branch out from it, namely:

- What are the motivations of tourists to visit Saudi Arabia?
- What are the habits and patterns of tourists using social media as a source of information about tourism in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia?
- What are the motivations of tourists to rely on social media networks to collect

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- information about tourism in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia?
 - .What are the benefits achieved by tourists from their use of social networks?
 - .What are the aspects of the richness of promotional content on social media networks about tourism in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia from the point of view of tourists?
 - .What are the most prominent tourist places in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia that have been promoted through social media networks?
 - What are the most prominent social media influencers and activists who have promoted tourism in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the media?
 - How do tourists evaluate the role of social media networks in media promotion of tourism in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia?

1.3 The importance of the study

First: scientific importance

- The importance of the current study is determined by the fact that it explores the role of social media networks in media promotion of tourism in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
- This study is one of the few studies within the researcher's knowledge that dealt with social media networks in media promotion of tourism in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and thus the study becomes a source of more in-depth, broad and specialized studies.
- The results of this study may contribute to encouraging tourism companies to focus on promoting domestic tourism programs on social media.

Second: Practical importance

- The importance and role of social media networks in tourism promotion prompts the development of tourism institutions and strategic planning for any tourism programs in the future.
- The research is a scientific addition to provide suggestions for improvement for public relations practitioners promoting tourism via social media networks.

1.4 Study objectives

- Identify the motivations of tourists for coming to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for tourism .
- Learn about the habits and patterns of tourists coming to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia using social media networks as a source of knowledge about tourism information in the Kingdom .
- Find out the extent to which tourists rely on social media networks as a tourist guide to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
- Find out the gratifications achieved by tourists coming to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia through their use of social media networks.
- Knowing how informative tourists coming to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia are about tourism in the Kingdom .
- 6. Learn about the tourist places in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia promoted by social media networks.
- 7.The role of social media influencers in tourism marketing in Saudi Arabia from a

tourist perspective.

- 8. Knowing tourists' evaluation of the role of social networking sites in media promotion of tourism in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and their role in their decision to visit it as a tourist.

1.5 Study terms

Social networks: These are communication and communication tools that rely entirely on the Internet, enabling people to interact, talk, and communicate with each other and share information, events, photos, or many audio and video recordings. These networks are identified in the current study in ((YouTube - Twitter – Instagram).

Tourism media promotion: The process of introducing tourists to the various tourist areas in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to attract them to visit them, develop tourism culture among Arab and foreign tourists, create positive interaction between tourists and the information they have obtained through promotional efforts presented in various ways, and encourage and motivate them to engage in positive behavior centered on contracting for one of the tourism programs offered by the company.

1.6 Theories explaining the study:

First: The theory of the richness of the means

The study is based on the theory of media richness, which seeks to study the criteria between media and technology within the framework of verifying the level of information richness. We find that the level of communication effectiveness depends on the extent to which the medium is used. We also find that the theory focuses on images of interaction between the audience and the means of communication. Therefore, within the framework of this theory, we can identify the richness of the media. It focuses on verifying the level of ambiguity and effectiveness of communication. (Mukhtar and Abdul Qader, 2022, p. 292)

There are several ways to benefit from the method richness theory, as it is necessary to activate a clear interactive communication process for the public based on a clear message without complexity, and this is applied within the framework of media promotion of tourism in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as follows:

Tourism is interested in including photos, videos, and various details of sites, which has a positive impact on the clarity of the tourism message and avoids complexity and ambiguity.

It is necessary to analyze local experiences and culture and avoid complexity and ambiguous messages about them, because messages related to the tourism field need to be rich and clear.

- The necessity of choosing rich media outlets, working through their tools such as promotional videos for tourist sites, hotels and parks, and allowing the sharing of these outlets through social media networks in order to promote and interact with the public through comments and opinions.

- Use other media in order to customize them to learn clear information about flight and travel schedules and quotes through text messages and email.

Second: The theory of uses and gratifications

Uses and gratifications theory forms the user's view of the media and examines how people use the media and the gratifications they achieve from their use of those media.

Uses and gratifications theory is concerned with the study of mass communication in a functional, organized manner. Its view of the masses is limited to the fact that they are effective in their individuals' selection of media messages and content. This is in contrast to early theories such as the theory of unified effects or the magic bullet, which sees the masses as separate negative beings. It acts based on a single system, and thus the uses and gratifications approach is concerned with individual characteristics, their relationship to satisfaction and gratification, patterns of motivation and individual needs, and the behavioral approach that studies rely on to monitor exposure habits and intensity within the framework of the uses and gratifications approach (Youssef, 2019).

The theory of uses and gratifications can be used through the use of digital communication, given that access to the Internet is one of the alternatives of use that an individual chooses from to meet his needs and desires, especially in the field of tourism, to learn about his needs towards the places and tourist attractions that he wishes to visit. Its trends include contacting others, whether the user is a sender or a receiver, as well as roaming between multiple sites to meet targeted needs, most notably knowledge needs, especially in the field of tourism. This theory also defines the difference between content immersion and wandering immersion in the field of measuring the intensity of use. Wandering immersion may not be driven by meeting needs as much as the desire to discover new things in jobs, content, or trends related to tourist attractions and reach them through the social network.

1.7 Study assignments

- There are no statistically significant differences at the significance level (0.05) in the average assessment of tourists of the role of social networks in tourism promotion attributable to gender .
- There are no statistically significant differences at the significance level (0.05) in the average use of social networks by tourists as a source of tourist information attributable to the age group.
- There are no statistically significant differences at the significance level (0.05) in the average gratifications achieved from using social networks attributable to academic qualification.
- There are no statistically significant differences at the significance level (0.05) in the average role of social media influencers in media promotion of tourism attributable to the level of monthly income.
- There are no statistically significant differences at the significance level (0.05) in the average assessment of the richness of promotional content on social media networks attributed to previous visits to the Kingdom (yes/no.)
- There is no statistically significant relationship at the significance level (0.05) between the number of influencers a tourist relies on and his assessment of the role of social media networks in tourism promotion.
- There is no statistically significant relationship at the significance level (0.05) between the degree of use of social networks and the richness of promotional content from the tourist's point of view.
- There is no statistically significant relationship at the significance level (0.05)

between tourists' evaluation of the most prominent influencers in the tourism field and their evaluation of the role of social media networks in media promotion of tourism.

II. Methods and Materials:

Study Methodology

The current study relies on the descriptive-analytical approach, given its suitability to the nature and objectives of the study. This approach relies on studying and describing the phenomenon in reality, expressing it quantitatively and qualitatively. This approach is achieved by observing and analyzing the reality of the research problem. Through this approach, the phenomenon under study can be described, its data analyzed, and the relationships between its components, as well as the opinions expressed about it, the processes it encompasses, and the effects it produces, can be demonstrated.

Study population

The study population consists of a random sample of tourists who visited the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and who use social media networks (YouTube, Twitter, and Instagram)

Study Sample

The study sample was selected using the intentional method, selecting Arab and foreign tourists from the total study population (Arab and foreign tourists via tourism companies in the Jeddah, Riyadh, and Mecca regions, during the period from September to November 2024) who follow social media networks (YouTube, Twitter, and Instagram).

Study Tool

The questionnaire was used as the data collection tool, as it is the most widely used method in descriptive studies. This was done based on the theoretical framework and previous studies related to the study topic to achieve its objectives.

Study Limits

- **Subjective Limits:** The study was limited to examining the role of social media networks in promoting tourism in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, a field study from the perspective of tourists.
- **Human Limits:** This study was conducted on a sample of Arab and foreign tourists using social media networks in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

- **Spatial Limits:** This study was conducted in tourist areas in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Jeddah, Riyadh, and Mecca.
- **Temporal Limits:** This study was conducted during the second semester of the academic year 1444-1445 AH.

III. Results and discussion

Table (1)

Demographic characteristics of the study sample

Variable	Category	repetition	(%)
Sex	Male	252	50.4%
	Female	248	49.6%
Age group	Under 18	23	4.6%
	18 to under 25	142	28.4%
	25 to under 35	174	34.8%
	35 to under 45	96	19.2%
	45years and older	65	1.0%
Nationality	Saudi	123	24.6%
	Non-Saudi Gulf National	151	30.2%
	Non-Gulf Arab	134	26.8%
	Foreigner	92	18.4%

Table (1) shows that the sample was balanced in terms of gender, and that most of the participants were young people from the Gulf countries, which is a digitally active

group and represents a target audience in promotional campaigns. The most represented age group is (25-34 years), and it is considered the most active digital group

.Hypothesis Verification

1- Verification of the initial hypothesis: It states: "There are no statistically significant differences at the significance level (0.05) in tourists' average evaluation of the role of social media networks in tourism promotion attributable to gender." To verify this hypothesis, an independent samples t-test was used to determine the significance of the differences between male and female tourists' evaluation of the role of social media networks in tourism promotion. Table (2) shows the results of the independent samples t-test to determine the significance of the differences between the average responses of tourists according to the gender variable in evaluating the role of social media networks in tourism promotion.

Table (2)

Independent samples t-test to determine the significance of the differences between the average responses of tourists according to the gender variable in evaluating the role of social media in tourism promotion.

Probability value	Degrees of freedom	T-value	Standard deviation	Average	Sample size	Sex
0.181	498	1.341	0.25	2.36	252	Male
			0.24	2.38	248	Female

The results of Table (2) indicate that the calculated value of (t) reached (1.341) with (498) degrees of freedom, and a probability value of (0.181), which is greater than the significance level adopted in this study (0.05). Accordingly, there are no statistically significant differences between males and females in their evaluation of the role of social networking sites in tourism promotion.

2- Verifying and Discussing the Second Hypothesis

The second hypothesis of the study stated that: "There are no statistically significant differences at the significance level (0.05) in the average use of social media networks by tourists as a source of tourism information attributed to age group." To verify this hypothesis, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) test was used to determine the significance of the differences between the average responses of tourists regarding their use of social media networks as a source of tourism information according to the age variable. Table (3) shows the results of the one-way analysis of variance test to determine the significance of the differences between the average responses of tourists

according to the age variable regarding their use of social media networks as a source of tourism information

Table (3)

Results of the one-way analysis of variance test to find the significance of the differences between the average responses of tourists according to the age variable in their use of social networking sites as a source of tourism information.

Probability value	Value of F	Mean Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Source of Variance
0.258	1.330	0.075	4	0.301	Between groups
		0.057	495	27.977	Within groups
		-	499	28.277	Total

The probability value (0.258) in Table (3) indicates that it is greater than the significance level (0.05), which means that the differences between the average responses of tourists to using social networks as a source of tourist information by age group are not statistically significant.

3- Verify and discuss the third hypothesis

The third hypothesis of the study stated that: "There are no statistically significant differences at the significance level (0.05) in the average gratifications achieved from the use of social networks attributable to academic qualification." To verify this hypothesis, a single analysis of variance test was used to find the significance of the differences between the average responses of tourists in the gratifications achieved from the use of social networks according to the academic qualification variable Table (4) shows the results of the single variance analysis test to find the significance of the differences between the average responses of tourists according to the academic qualification variable in the gratifications achieved from the use of social media networks.

Table (4)

Single variance analysis test to find the significance of differences between average tourist responses according to the academic qualification variable in the gratifications achieved from using social networks

Probability value	Value of F	Mean Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Source of Variance
0.802	0.409	0.034	4	0.137	Between groups
		0.084	495	41.563	within groups
			499	41.700	Total

Table (4) indicates that the probability value (0.802) is much greater than the significance level (0.05), which means that the differences between the average gratifications achieved from using social networks according to academic qualification are not statistically significant. Accordingly, the null hypothesis was accepted, and it is concluded that there are no statistically significant differences in the gratifications achieved from the use of social networks attributable to academic qualification.

4- Verify and discuss the fourth hypothesis

The fourth hypothesis of the study stated that: "There is no statistically significant relationship at the significance level (0.05) in the average role of social media influencers in media promotion of tourism attributable to the level of monthly income." To verify this hypothesis, a single analysis of variance test was used to find the significance of the differences between the average responses of tourists in the role of social media influencers in media promotion of tourism according to the monthly income variable Table (5) shows the results of the single variance analysis test to find the significance of the differences between the average responses of tourists according to the monthly income variable in the role of social media influencers in media promotion of tourism.

Table (5)

Single variance analysis test to find the significance of differences between average tourist responses according to the monthly income variable in the role of social media influencers in media promotion of tourism

Probability value	Value of F	Mean Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Source of Variance
0.768	0.264	0.012	2	0.024	Between groups
		0.045	497	22.919	within groups
			499	22.943	Total

The probability value (0.768) in Table (5) indicates that it is greater than the significance level (0.05), which indicates that the differences between the averages of tourists' evaluation of the role of influencers in promoting tourism via social networks according to the level of monthly income are not statistically significant. Accordingly, the null hypothesis was accepted, and it is concluded that there is no statistically significant relationship between the level of monthly income and the evaluation of the role of social media influencers in media promotion of tourism.

5- Verify and discuss the fifth hypothesis

The fifth hypothesis of the study stated that: "There are no statistically significant differences at the significance level (0.05) in the average assessment of the richness of promotional content across social networks attributed to previous visits to the Kingdom (yes/no)." To verify this hypothesis, a t-test was used for independent samples to find the significance of the differences between the assessment of tourists of the richness of promotional content who had previously visited the Kingdom and those who had not Table (6) shows the results of a t-test for independent samples to find the significance of the differences between the average responses of tourists according to the variable of visiting the Kingdom in evaluating the richness of promotional content on social media networks.

Table (6)
T-test for independent samples to find the significance of differences
between average tourist responses according to the variable of visiting the
Kingdom in evaluating the richness of promotional content on social
media networks

Probability values	degrees of freedom	T-value	Standard deviation	Average	Sample number	Visit the Kingdom previously
* 0.001	498	3.402	0.15	2.38	204	No
			0.21	2.32	296	Yes

*A significant difference at or below the significance level (0.05)

It is clear from Table (6) that the probability value (0.001) is less than the significance level (0.05), which indicates that there are statistically significant differences between the average assessment of tourists for the richness of promotional content via social networks attributed to the variable of previously visiting the Kingdom. Accordingly, the null hypothesis was rejected, and it is concluded that there are statistically significant differences in tourists' evaluation of the richness of promotional content on social media networks, between those who have previously visited the Kingdom and those who have not, in favor of those who have not previously visited, as their average evaluation was higher.

6- Verify and discuss the sixth hypothesis

The sixth hypothesis of the study stated that: "There is no statistically significant relationship at the significance level (0.05) between the number of influencers that tourists rely on and their assessment of the role of social networks in tourism

promotion." To verify this hypothesis, Spearman's correlation coefficient was used to find the significance of the relationship between the number of influencers that tourists rely on and their assessment of the role of social networks in tourism promotion Table (7) shows the results of Spearman's test to find the significance of the relationship between the number of influencers that tourists rely on and his assessment of the role of social media networks in tourism promotion.

Table (7)

Spearman's test to find the significance of the relationship between the number of influencers a tourist relies on and his assessment of the role of social media networks in tourism promotion

Relationship strength	Relationship direction	Probability value	Correlation coefficient
very weak	(Expulsion(positive))	0.086	0.077

It is clear from Table (7) that the probability value (0.086) is greater than the significance level (0.05), which indicates that the relationship between the number of influencers that tourists rely on and their assessment of the role of social media networks in tourism promotion is not statistically significant. Accordingly, the null hypothesis was accepted, and it is concluded that there is no statistically significant relationship between the number of influencers followed by tourists and their evaluation of the role of social media networks in tourism promotion. Although the trend of the relationship is direct, its strength is very weak, as the correlation coefficient reached (0.07)

7- Verify and discuss the seventh hypothesis

The seventh hypothesis of the study stated that: "There is no statistically significant relationship at the significance level (0.05) between the use of social networks and the richness of promotional content from the tourist's point of view." To verify this hypothesis, Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to find the significance of the relationship between the use of social networks and the richness of promotional content Table (8) shows the results of Pearson's test to find the significance of the relationship between the use of social networks and the richness of promotional content.

Table (8)

Pearson's test to find the significance of the relationship between social media use and the richness of promotional content

Relationship strength	Relationship direction	Probability value	Correlation coefficient
very weak	(Expulsion(positive))	0.301	0.040

It appears from Table (8) that the probability value (0.301) is greater than the significance level (0.05), which indicates that the relationship between the use of social networks and the richness of promotional content is not statistically significant. Accordingly, the null hypothesis was accepted, and it is concluded that there is no statistically significant relationship between tourists' use of social networks and the richness of promotional content from their point of view. Although the relationship takes a direct direction, its strength is very weak, as the correlation coefficient reached (0.04)

8- Verify and discuss the eighth hypothesisThe eighth hypothesis of the study stated that: "There is no statistically significant relationship at the significance level (0.05) between tourists' evaluation of the most prominent influencers in the tourism field and their evaluation of the role of social networks in media promotion of tourism." To verify this hypothesis, Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to find the significance of the relationship between tourists' evaluation of the most prominent influencers in the tourism field and their evaluation of the role of social networks in media promotion of tourism Table (9) shows the results of Pearson's test to find the significance of the relationship between tourists' evaluation of the most prominent influencers in the tourism field and their evaluation of the role of social media networks in media promotion of tourism.

.Table (9)

Pearson's test to find the significance of the relationship between tourists' evaluation of the most prominent influencers in the tourism field and their evaluation of the role of social media networks in media promotion of tourism

Relationship strength	Relationship direction	Probability value	Correlation coefficient
very weak	(Expulsion (positive))	0.162	0.063

It is clear from Table (9) that the probability value (0.162) is greater than the significance level (0.05), which indicates that the relationship between tourists' evaluation of the most prominent influencers and their evaluation of the role of social media networks in media promotion of tourism is not statistically significant. Accordingly, the null hypothesis was accepted, and it is concluded that there is no statistically significant relationship between tourists' evaluation of tourism influencers and their evaluation of the role of social media networks in media promotion of tourism. Although the relationship is direct, its strength is very weak, as the correlation coefficient reached (0.06)

IV. Conclusion:

-The study results showed a clear variation in tourists' motivations for visiting Saudi Arabia, with religious motivations leading the way, followed by visits to tourist and historical sites, while recreational, natural, and cultural motivations were lower, reflecting the traditional nature of the tourism experience. The results also revealed that tourists rely heavily on social media networks as a source of tourist information, through the time they spend browsing and the variety of platforms used, most notably Snapchat, Instagram, and TikTok.

- The results showed that tourists resort to these networks for multiple motives, most notably: speed of access to information, diversity of visual content, and reliability of personal recommendations, which makes them an effective alternative to traditional means of identifying tourist destinations. Regarding the satisfaction achieved, the study showed that tourists achieve cognitive, interactive and persuasive benefits through these platforms, most notably forming positive impressions about destinations and obtaining direct information. However, the results identified a number of obstacles that limit the effectiveness of these platforms as a source of information, such as the spread of inaccurate information, poor media coverage of some destinations, and the different languages used in the content.

-The results also showed a broad awareness among tourists of the importance of these networks in influencing their tourism decisions, as most of them indicated that the content published through them contributed to stimulating their intention to visit the Kingdom, and strengthened their attitudes towards a number of targeted tourist sites.

-As for the results of the hypotheses, the study showed that there were statistically significant differences in the level of tourists' dependence on social media networks, attributed to some demographic variables. It was found that there were differences in favor of males, indicating their greater tendency to use these networks to collect tourism information compared to females. The results also showed that the age group (25–34 years) was the most dependent on digital platforms, which is attributed to the

nature of this group, which is characterized by digital openness and frequent mobility. In contrast, no statistically significant differences were found attributable to educational level, indicating that the use of social networks for tourism purposes was not associated with academic achievement. The results also revealed significant differences due to nationality differences, with visitors from Gulf countries showing a greater tendency to use these platforms than others. The results of the hypotheses also showed other differences in the extent of satisfaction achieved from using the platforms, and the level of trust in the published tourism content, depending on the variables of age and gender. These results indicate that the social and cultural context of tourists plays an important role in shaping their attitudes towards digital information sources, which reinforces the importance of adopting flexible marketing strategies that take into account the diversity of characteristics of the target audience.

The study reached a set of recommendations.:

- The need to develop tourism content published on social media networks to be more diverse and rich, with a focus on highlighting the cultural, environmental and service details of tourist destinations, in a way that enhances the satisfaction achieved by tourists, especially potential visitors who have never visited the Kingdom.
- Increasing the effectiveness of interaction between official tourism authorities and tourists through social platforms, by providing immediate responses and accurate and up-to-date information, which contributes to raising the degree of reliance on these networks as a reliable source of tourism information.
- Selecting influencers in the tourism sector according to clear professional standards, while providing them with training programs that enhance their awareness of the national role and ensure that their content is consistent with the targeted mental image of the Kingdom.
- Intensifying digital promotional campaigns targeting tourists who have never visited the Kingdom, by employing rich interactive content and virtual offers that enhance the formation of a positive initial image that encourages the visit.

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