

The Role of Social Media Marketing Activities in Destination Image Formation

دور أنشطة التسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في تشكيل صورة الوجهة السياحية

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Abstract:

The COVID-19 pandemic has had significant impact on international tourism, prompting tourism organizations to focus on local tourism to alleviate their losses. Social media platforms are one of the strategies used by these organizations to promote their offerings for local tourists. This paper endeavors to provide a more thorough understanding for the role of social media marketing activities in destination image formation. The study used an online self-administered questionnaire to collect data from 172 individuals who follow social media accounts promoting Bejaia town as a tourist destination. The research model was tested using a variance-based structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) approach, while the data were analyzed with SmartPLS4. The research reveals that affective image has a considerable influence on conative image, while cognitive image has an impact on both affective and conative image. However, only customization was found to have a significant impact on cognitive image among the SMMAs dimensions evaluated.

Key words: affective image, cognitive image, destination image, marketing activities, social media.

المخلص:

تهدف هذه الورقة البحثية إلى تحديد دور الأنشطة التسويقية على مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي في تشكيل صورة الوجهة السياحية، و هذا في إطار الترويج للسياحة المحلية كاستجابة لتداعيات أزمة كوفيد 19 التي أدت إلى تراجع السياحة الدولية. تم توزيع استبيان الدراسة إلكترونياً، وبلغ حجم العينة 172 فرداً ممن يتابعون حسابات التواصل الاجتماعي التي تروج لمدينة بجاية كوجهة سياحية. تم اختبار فرضيات نموذج الدراسة باستخدام طريقة المعادلات الهيكلية المبنية على التباين (PLS-SEM)، و حللت البيانات باستعمال برنامج SmartPLS 4. تشير نتائج الدراسة إلى التأثير القوي للصورة العاطفية على الصورة الفعلية، كما أن الصورة المعرفية تؤثر على كل من الصور الفعلية و الصورة العاطفية. فيما يخص تأثير الأنشطة التسويقية عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي فقد توصلت الدراسة انه من بين جميع الأنشطة التي تم دراستها فإن التخصيص customization هو النشاط الوحيد الذي يؤثر في تشكيل صورة الوجهة السياحية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الصورة العاطفية، الصورة المعرفية، صورة الوجهة، الأنشطة التسويقية، مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي.

1. Introduction

The tourism industry is vital and has a significant impact on the economy. The tourism industry can help the country in a variety of ways, including GDP, private investment, employment, and export (Nag & Gilitwala, 2019). Tourism businesses employed a range of methods and strategies to

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market their offerings. Social media could be one of the most innovative techniques for improving a company's market position. Through the growth of mobile devices and high-speed internet, social media utilization has increased tremendously. According to Data-Reportal (2023), 5.44 billion people use the internet nowadays, with 4.76 billion using social media. Social media plays an important role in people's daily lives and has evolved into the primary computer-mediated communication platform. Because it provides value for all parties engaged, such as businesses, brands, consumers, and marketers (Al-Gasawneh & Al-Adamat, 2020). Tourists use social media to find and share information about destinations before, during, and after conducting tourism activities (Primananda et al., 2022).

There is a research gap on the role of social media marketing activities in destination image formation, particularly in the Algerian context, and this gap is significant because it limits the ability to create effective marketing strategies for promoting Algerian tourism through social media. Addressing this gap can provide valuable insights for tourism stakeholders and policymakers. This research attempts to answer the following question: Do social media marketing activities affect the formation of destination image? Therefore, the research objectives are:

- identifying the elements that form destination image
- determining the main social media marketing activities
- assessing the influence of social media marketing activities on destination image creation.

2. The literature review

2.1. The previous studies

This section provides an overview of the key studies that are relevant to the current research, highlighting their main findings and contributions to the field.

The study of Gaffar et al. (2022): The Botanical Gardens Conservation Center - Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI) is a renowned tourist attraction in Indonesia, known for its commitment to environmental conservation and community education. However, there is a perceptual mismatch between the garden's image and visitors' experiences. To address this, the garden explored social media marketing as a solution. A survey was conducted among 363 social media followers, revealing a significant correlation between social media marketing and the garden's destination image. By leveraging the power of online platforms, the garden has successfully aligned its perceived image with its true essence, positively influencing visitors and the wider community.

-study of De Las Heras-Pedrosa Et Al. (2020): In their insightful study, De Las Heras-Pedrosa et al. (2020) embarked on a quest to unravel the significant power of social media in establishing strategic positioning strategies for tourist destinations. Through a comprehensive exploration that included interviews and analysis of official social media accounts, they discovered the pivotal role of stakeholders and how social media can enhance brand image and foster tourist engagement. Their findings emphasized the importance of identifying all stakeholders, developing content generation strategies that add value, and recognizing social media as a strategic tool for shaping destination image. This study serves as a guiding light, illuminating the path towards a

future where the harmonious integration of stakeholders and the artful utilization of social media weave an enchanting tapestry, breathing life into the captivating essence of our beloved tourist destinations.

-Study of Nag & Gilitwala (2019): this study delves into the examination of the impact of social media on the motivation, formation of destination image, and intention to visit Phuket among Thai travelers. The empirical evidence presented in this research illustrates the considerable influence exerted by social media on travel motivation and the construction of destination image. Furthermore, it underscores the significance of travel motivation in shaping the perception of a destination. Lastly, the findings point to the substantial impact of destination image on travel intention.

-The study of Garay (2019):the author contends that the framework of virtual (destination) brand communities and the intrinsic qualities and constituents of user-generated content have been largely uncharted in existing literature. Through a quantitative content analysis encompassing 1500 tweets sourced from the Spain brand community on Twitter, specifically under the hashtag #visitspain, the author was able to accomplish the following: identify the pertinent stakeholders, scrutinize the inherent characteristics of both emotional and cognitive dimensions, explore the interplay between these characteristics and tourism-related products, and monitor any potential seasonal fluctuations throughout the year. In this study, numerous propositions are put forth with regard to the qualitative interpretation of the fundamental attributes associated with the destination's image.

The study of Kim et al. (2017): the fundamental objective of this research was to enhance our comprehension of the elements within tourism information that play a pivotal role in shaping the tourism destination image within the realm of social media. The authors of this study recognized the growing interest among tourism researchers in the utilization of social media as a wellspring of tourism-related information. Nevertheless, there existed a noticeable dearth of scholarly groundwork substantiating a connection between the quality of tourism information and the configuration of the destination image on social media platforms. The findings of this investigation shed light on the fact that several facets of tourism information quality, namely value-added content, relevance, comprehensiveness, engaging content, and web page design, collectively exert a discernible influence on the formation of destination image among tourists in the realm of social media.

Study of Llodra-Riera et al. (2015): the study tackled the role of user-generated content in the formation of affective image, cognitive image and unique image of a tourist destination. The study suggested that user-generated content influences tourists' motivations, and these latter influence the destination image formation. The authors proposed an integrative model based on previous studies (Beerli and Martin (2004), Seabra et al. (2007) and Qu et al. (2011)). The model was tested by analyzing data from 541 national and international tourists, in addition to local people from Mallorca. The results reveal that: Information shared on social media influences motivations for visiting a destination; the motivations of travelers have an impact on their cognitive image; and affective image is influenced by cognitive one.

Study of Lai (2010): Lai's 2010 study analyzed 507 travel blogs, forums, and social media platforms to understand the role of web-based social media in creating destination images. The study classified destination images into cognitive, affective, and holistic types. The findings suggest that

social media can effectively communicate travel opinions and experiences, assessing visitors' perceptions and improving overall tourist experiences.

2.2. Main Concepts

2.2.1. Destination image

As an essential component that contributes to tourist loyalty, destination image impacts tourist behavior before, during, and after travel (Agapito et al., 2013). Destination image is frequently based on perceptions rather than reality because it is difficult to assess the experience (Gartner, 1994).

2.2.1.1. Definition of destination image

Researchers in the field of tourism have been studying destination image since 1970's (Kim et al., 2017). Research papers on destination images suggest that a tourist's satisfaction or dissatisfaction with a travel purchase is primarily determined by comparing their expectations or previously held destination image with their perceived performance of the destination (Pike, 2002).

According to Lawson and Baud Bovy (1977, as cited in Lopes, 2011), a destination image is the combination of objective knowledge, prejudices, imagination, and emotional thoughts about a specific location, influenced by various sources of information, and is the amalgamation of tourists' perceptions and beliefs about the destination. (Banyai & Potwarka, 2012). Furthermore, numerous studies on destination image have proposed that destination image should be defined by integrating both cognitive and affective aspects (Kim et al., 2017).

Based on the previous studies Etchtner & Ritchie (2003) proposes the following definition: "Destination image defined as not only the perceptions of individual destination attributes but also the holistic impression made by the destination. Destination image consists of functional characteristics, concerning the more tangible aspects of the destination, and psychological characteristics, concerning the more intangible aspects." (p. 43)

So a destination's image refers to both a person's perception of specific destination traits and the overall impact created by the destination. It encompasses functional features, which deal with tangible aspects, and psychological features, which deal with intangible aspects.

2.2.1.2. The types of destination image

Experts from various fields and academic disciplines agree that the image construct involves cognitive and affective evaluations, with cognitive image referring to beliefs or knowledge about a destination's characteristics (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999).

Gartner (1994) proposes a model for the destination image formation process. The model suggests that destination image has three components: cognitive, affective and conative. This latter is similar to behavior because it includes the elements of the action. The conative dimension of destination image is directly related to the cognitive and affective dimensions. It is influenced by the knowledge and information that a tourist has about a destination (cognitive dimension) and the emotions and feelings they associate with it (affective dimension).

Gartner believes that the three dimensions of destination image - cognitive, affective, and conative - are interrelated, but his ideas lack evidence. In his study, Agapito et al. (2013) examined the assumptions of Gartner and he proved that the affective dimension plays a mediating role in the relationship between the cognitive and conative dimensions.

2.2.1.3. The factors affecting destination image

According to Baloglu & McCleary's (1999) model of destination image, the following variables that influence destination image are:

- **Information Sources (marketing variables):** The cognitive aspect of an image is influenced by the type and quantity of information sources received, but not the affective aspect.

- **Sociopsychological Motivation:** People participate in tourism for a variety of causes or goals. It is widely acknowledged that the key concept in comprehending tourist behavior and the process of destination selection is motivation.

- **Demographic Variables:** Most models of image formation and destination choice include sociodemographic factors as consumer characteristics influencing perceptions of things, products, and destinations. Although it has been suggested that factors like age, education, income, gender, occupation, and marital status influence perceptions and images, age and education seem to be the main factors that affect image.

Furthermore, Lin et al. (2007) claim **past experience** with the destination is the most critical factor affecting destination image because tourists with previous experience seek less information from outside sources.

2.2.2 social media

During the Web 1.0 era, the Internet mostly worked in one direction - a "reading-only" format - with very few user interactions. Web 2.0, on the other hand, enabled individuals to share their information with others. As a result, social media has emerged as one of the most important marketing tools for companies seeking to improve customer communication (Kim et al., 2017).

2.2.2.1. The definition of social media

Social media and networking sites are web-based platforms where users interact with one another, share information, and exchange ideas in a virtually connected community (Javed et al., 2020). Social media are online programs, media, and platforms that promote communication, teamwork, and the dissemination of information. Weblogs, social blogs, microblogging, wikis, podcasts, pictures, videos, rating systems, and social bookmarking are just a few examples of social media (Kim & Ko, 2012).

2.2.2.2. social media marketing activities

Marketers can use social media as an innovative marketing communication tool (Hafez, 2022). The company could conduct the following activities on social media:

Informativeness: informativeness refers to a company's ability to provide relevant information to clients, enabling them to make informed purchasing decisions. It is a perceptual

dimension measured using self-reported scales, focusing on the sender's ability to logically attract the customer's response and enable them to cognitively appraise the information and messages offered (Alalwan, 2018).

Entertainment: Entertainment inspires attitudes and persistence, leading to brand favorable opinions. Marketers use social media to display amusing content, like videos and photos, to satisfy consumer demands for delight (Masa'deh et al., 2021).

Interactivity: Interactivity is an important aspect of social media marketing that has received significant attention in previous research. It is defined as a company's capacity to enable its community to virtually share and exchange a set of data with others (Hanaysha, 2022).

Trendiness: trendiness denotes social media discussion of the most recent and hot news. It is the dissemination of the most current and trending information about brands on a social media platform (Khan, 2022).

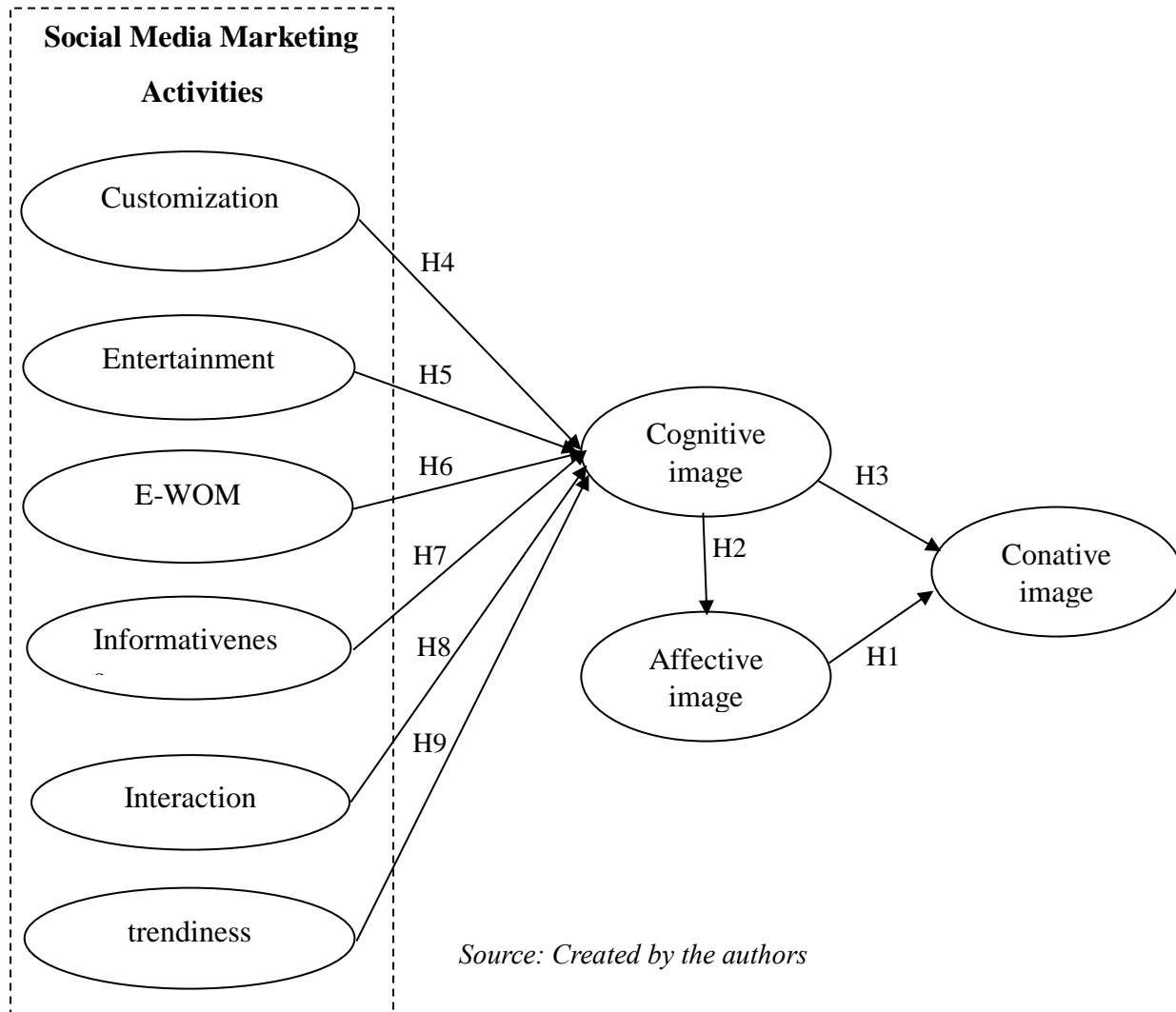
Customization: Customization refers to the degree of customization in services, marketing activities, and communications to meet consumer needs and preferences, ensuring ease of use and value for specific consumer groups (Cheung et al., 2020).

E-WOM: a number of recent studies have found that electronic word of mouth (E-WOM) can significantly influence consumer interest in products or brands, which has a big impact on Sales. Furthermore, several independent scenarios show that E-WOM influences the entire decision-making process of a consumer. Unlike physical word of mouth, which disappears once the individual has spoken, E-WOM typically appears until a message is deleted. Nonetheless, the message may still be available in Internet caches (Masa'deh et al., 2021).

3. Research model and hypotheses

In the absence of actual visitation or prior experience, the literature review of influences on destination image revealed three main factors: tourism motivations, sociodemographics, and information sources (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999, p. 870). In this study social media is considered as a source of information. The following conceptual model was developed based on the aforementioned literature review on destination image formation and social media marketing activities especially the works of Gartner (1994), Kim et al. (2017) and Kim & Ko (2012).

Fig.1 Conceptual model



the research intends to test the following hypotheses:

- H1: the affective image significantly influences the conative image of a destination
- H2: the cognitive image significantly influences the affective image of a destination.
- H3: the cognitive image significantly influences the conative image of a destination
- H4: customization positively influences cognitive image
- H5: entertainment positively influences cognitive image
- H6: E-WOM positively influences cognitive image
- H7: informativeness positively influences cognitive image
- H8: interactivity positively influences cognitive image
- H9: trendiness positively influences cognitive image

4. Data collection and sample

4.1. Data collection: the data were collected using a self-administered questionnaire which was developed using previously tested and verified instruments with slight changes. Six dimensions were used to measure SMMAs: informativeness, entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, and electronic word-of-mouth (E-WOM). The table (01) shows the sources of items that have been employed to measure the study constructs.

Table 1. Measurement Items

| | constructs | items | source |
|--|-------------------|---------------------------|---|
| Destination image | affective image | afect1, afect2, afect3 | (Kim et al., 2017) |
| | cognitive image | cog3, cog5, cog6, cog7 | (Kim et al., 2017) |
| | Conative image | cona1, cona2, cona3 | (Kim et al., 2017) |
| Social media marketing activities | Customization | cust1, cust2, cust3 | (Kim & Ko, 2012) (Yadav & Rahman, 2017) |
| | Entertainment | entert1, entert2, entert3 | (Kim & Ko, 2012) (Malarvizhi et al., 2022) |
| | E-WOM | ewom1, ewom2, ewom3 | (Kim & Ko, 2012) (Yadav & Rahman, 2017) |
| | Informativeness | inf1, inf2, inf3, inf4 | (Alalwan, 2018) |
| | Interactivity | inter1, inter2 inter3 | (Kim & Ko, 2012) |
| | Trendiness | tren1, tren2, tren3 | (Kim & Ko, 2012) (Yadav & Rahman, 2017) |

Source: Authors

4.2. Sample

In January, 2022, The questionnaire was distributed via e-mails and social media to those who follow social media accounts promoting Bejaia town as a tourist destination. As shown in the table (), the sample consists of 172 individuals. The majority of the participants are equally split between male (51.7%) and female (48.3%). In terms of education level, the majority of participants have completed post-graduation education (58.1%), followed by undergraduate education (40.1%). In terms of age, the largest group of participants (38.4%) are between the ages of 35 and 44, followed by those between the ages of 25 and 34 (25.6%). In terms of revenue, the majority of participants earn less than 30,000 (39.5%), followed by those earning 30,000 - 49,999 (21.5%).

Table 2. Sample Characteristics

| | | Frequency | Percent |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------|---------|
| gender | male | 89 | 51,7 |
| | femal | 83 | 48,3 |
| Age | <25 | 42 | 24,4 |
| | [25 – 34] | 44 | 25,6 |
| | [35 - 44] | 66 | 38,4 |
| | ≥45 | 20 | 11,6 |
| Education level | High school | 3 | 1,7 |
| | Undergraduation | 69 | 40,1 |
| | Post-graduation | 100 | 58,1 |
| Revenue | [0 -30000[| 68 | 39,5 |
| | [30000-49999] | 37 | 21,5 |
| | [50000- 69999] | 16 | 9,3 |
| | [70000-99999[| 22 | 12,8 |
| | ≤100000 | 29 | 16,9 |
| Total | | 172 | 100 |

Source: Authors' data analysis

5. Results and discussion

5.1. Assessment of measurement model (outer model).

5.1.1. convergent validity

Convergent validity is measured using average variance extracted “AVE”. Table (03) displays the loadings, composite reliability, and average variance extracted for all the measured items. All the loadings are above 0.70, this condition was met after the deletion of the items with weak loading (cog1, cog2, cog 4). Similarly, all composite reliability coefficients are found to be higher than 0.7. Therefore, the measurements are considered reliable. Furthermore, AVE values were within their acceptance range with a value higher than 0.50.

Table 3. Factor Loading, Composite Reliabilities (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

| construct | items | Factor loading | AVE | CR |
|-----------------|---------|----------------|-------|-------|
| Affective image | afect1 | 0,866 | 0,784 | 0,916 |
| | afect2 | 0,906 | | |
| | afect3 | 0,884 | | |
| Cognitive image | cog3 | 0,743 | 0,635 | 0,874 |
| | cog5 | 0,814 | | |
| | cog6 | 0,833 | | |
| | cog7 | 0,794 | | |
| Conative image | cona1 | 0,759 | 0,719 | 0,884 |
| | cona2 | 0,914 | | |
| | cona3 | 0,864 | | |
| Customization | cust1 | 0,830 | 0,716 | 0,883 |
| | cust2 | 0,888 | | |
| | cust3 | 0,818 | | |
| Entertainment | entert1 | 0,898 | 0,775 | 0,911 |
| | entert2 | 0,896 | | |
| | entert3 | 0,846 | | |
| E-WOM | ewom1 | 0,901 | 0,800 | 0,923 |
| | ewom2 | 0,903 | | |
| | ewom3 | 0,879 | | |
| Informativeness | inf1 | 0,843 | 0,713 | 0,909 |
| | inf2 | 0,846 | | |
| | inf3 | 0,879 | | |
| | inf4 | 0,810 | | |
| Interactivity | inter1 | 0,874 | 0,719 | 0,884 |
| | inter2 | 0,924 | | |
| | inter3 | 0,735 | | |
| trendiness | tren1 | 0,762 | 0,698 | 0,873 |
| | tren2 | 0,865 | | |
| | tren3 | 0,874 | | |

Source: Authors' data analysis

5.1.2. Discriminant validity:

Discriminant validity refers the degree to which a construct is empirically distinct from other constructs in a structural model is measured (Hair et al., 2021, p. 78). The Fornell-Larcker criterion is a method for evaluating discriminant validity by comparing the square root of AVE values with latent variable correlations, ensuring each construct's AVE value is greater than its highest correlation (Hair et al., 2017). As shown in the table (4), this condition is met for all the constructs.

Table 4. Fornell-Larcker Criterion

| | affective image | cognitive image | conative image | cust | entert | e-wom | inf | inter | tren |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|-------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| affective image | 0,885 | | | | | | | | |
| cognitive image | 0,508 | 0,797 | | | | | | | |
| conative image | 0,722 | 0,485 | 0,848 | | | | | | |
| cust | 0,271 | 0,330 | 0,261 | 0,846 | | | | | |
| entert | 0,231 | 0,220 | 0,277 | 0,537 | 0,880 | | | | |
| ewom | 0,168 | 0,212 | 0,261 | 0,663 | 0,548 | 0,894 | | | |
| inf | 0,207 | 0,229 | 0,253 | 0,570 | 0,730 | 0,604 | 0,845 | | |
| inter | 0,163 | 0,155 | 0,225 | 0,454 | 0,775 | 0,471 | 0,705 | 0,848 | |
| tren | 0,196 | 0,287 | 0,203 | 0,708 | 0,593 | 0,604 | 0,639 | 0,612 | 0,835 |

Source: Authors' data analysis

Cross-loadings are frequently used to examine the discriminant validity of indicators. Specifically, an indicator's outer loading on the associated construct should be greater than any of its cross-loadings (i.e., its correlation) on other constructs, (Hair et al, 2017, p.138-139). This condition is met for all the indicators.

Table 5. Cross Loadings

| | affective image | cognitive image | conative image | cust | entert | ewom | inf | inter | tren |
|---------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|-------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| affect1 | 0,866 | 0,536 | 0,661 | 0,217 | 0,197 | 0,121 | 0,239 | 0,220 | 0,192 |
| affect2 | 0,906 | 0,432 | 0,608 | 0,242 | 0,228 | 0,174 | 0,159 | 0,122 | 0,139 |
| affect3 | 0,884 | 0,367 | 0,643 | 0,264 | 0,188 | 0,154 | 0,144 | 0,081 | 0,188 |
| cog3 | 0,459 | 0,743 | 0,422 | 0,172 | 0,208 | 0,173 | 0,176 | 0,119 | 0,162 |
| cog5 | 0,372 | 0,814 | 0,348 | 0,220 | 0,168 | 0,122 | 0,189 | 0,161 | 0,177 |
| cog6 | 0,392 | 0,833 | 0,382 | 0,365 | 0,155 | 0,200 | 0,212 | 0,076 | 0,295 |
| cog7 | 0,389 | 0,794 | 0,388 | 0,285 | 0,169 | 0,171 | 0,151 | 0,143 | 0,273 |
| cona1 | 0,469 | 0,354 | 0,759 | 0,200 | 0,168 | 0,199 | 0,170 | 0,152 | 0,229 |
| cona2 | 0,650 | 0,407 | 0,914 | 0,225 | 0,266 | 0,221 | 0,251 | 0,238 | 0,162 |
| cona3 | 0,687 | 0,464 | 0,864 | 0,237 | 0,256 | 0,242 | 0,214 | 0,177 | 0,144 |
| cust1 | 0,246 | 0,244 | 0,284 | 0,830 | 0,442 | 0,545 | 0,482 | 0,380 | 0,619 |
| cust2 | 0,209 | 0,301 | 0,171 | 0,888 | 0,496 | 0,489 | 0,504 | 0,422 | 0,591 |
| cust3 | 0,237 | 0,286 | 0,220 | 0,818 | 0,422 | 0,652 | 0,462 | 0,348 | 0,593 |
| entert1 | 0,195 | 0,194 | 0,299 | 0,453 | 0,898 | 0,442 | 0,681 | 0,676 | 0,457 |
| entert2 | 0,235 | 0,210 | 0,231 | 0,524 | 0,896 | 0,504 | 0,673 | 0,696 | 0,585 |
| entert3 | 0,174 | 0,175 | 0,199 | 0,435 | 0,846 | 0,502 | 0,565 | 0,676 | 0,520 |
| ewom1 | 0,151 | 0,205 | 0,239 | 0,608 | 0,539 | 0,901 | 0,546 | 0,425 | 0,484 |
| ewom2 | 0,122 | 0,175 | 0,168 | 0,578 | 0,495 | 0,903 | 0,618 | 0,454 | 0,625 |
| ewom3 | 0,176 | 0,185 | 0,290 | 0,590 | 0,430 | 0,879 | 0,459 | 0,386 | 0,522 |
| inf1 | 0,254 | 0,200 | 0,270 | 0,458 | 0,543 | 0,521 | 0,843 | 0,553 | 0,553 |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| inf2 | 0,144 | 0,216 | 0,192 | 0,545 | 0,640 | 0,499 | 0,846 | 0,523 | 0,540 |
| inf3 | 0,135 | 0,193 | 0,166 | 0,475 | 0,609 | 0,564 | 0,879 | 0,651 | 0,573 |
| inf4 | 0,167 | 0,154 | 0,231 | 0,435 | 0,693 | 0,446 | 0,810 | 0,686 | 0,485 |
| inter1 | 0,070 | 0,145 | 0,139 | 0,403 | 0,727 | 0,442 | 0,627 | 0,874 | 0,573 |
| inter2 | 0,186 | 0,152 | 0,223 | 0,392 | 0,672 | 0,387 | 0,627 | 0,924 | 0,489 |
| inter3 | 0,189 | 0,075 | 0,245 | 0,377 | 0,562 | 0,385 | 0,546 | 0,735 | 0,533 |
| tren1 | 0,130 | 0,118 | 0,200 | 0,566 | 0,540 | 0,440 | 0,585 | 0,586 | 0,762 |
| tren2 | 0,127 | 0,255 | 0,156 | 0,556 | 0,571 | 0,570 | 0,612 | 0,655 | 0,865 |
| tren3 | 0,218 | 0,287 | 0,175 | 0,658 | 0,431 | 0,494 | 0,467 | 0,375 | 0,874 |

Source: Authors' data analysis

5.2. Assessment the structural model:

5.2.1. Collinearity assessment

In the context of PLS-SEM, a VIF value of 5 and higher indicates a potential collinearity problem. The table (06) shows that all VIF values are less than 5 and higher than 0.2, indicating that there is no concern regarding collinearity.

Table 6. Collinearity Statistics (VIF)- Inner Model

| | affective image | cognitive image | conative image |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| affective image | | | 1,348 |
| cognitive image | 1,000 | | 1,348 |
| conative image | | | |
| cust | | 2,503 | |
| entert | | 3,166 | |
| ewom | | 2,116 | |
| inf | | 2,835 | |
| inter | | 3,006 | |
| tren | | 2,672 | |

Source: Authors' data analysis

5.2.2. Coefficient of determination (R²)

R square is a statistical tool used to measure the predictive power of a model by calculating the squared correlation between the actual and predicted values (Hair et al., 2017). Following the rules of thumb, the square values of affective image (0.258), conative image (0.540), can be considered moderate, whereas the R² value of cognitive image (0.122) is rather weak.

Table 7. R Square of the Endogenous Latent Variables

| | R-square | Decision |
|-----------------|----------|----------|
| affective image | 0,258 | moderate |
| cognitive image | 0,122 | weak |
| conative image | 0,540 | moderate |

Source: Authors' data analysis

5.2.3. Path coefficient

According to the table (08), affective image strongly impacts conative image (p=0.00), while cognitive image impacts both affective and conative image (p=0.01, p=0.003, respectively). However, concerning the effect of SMMA on cognitive image, it was found that only customization that has an impact on it (p=0.029).

Table 8. Path Analysis

| | | Std. Beta | Std. error | T value | P values | Decision |
|----|------------------------------------|-----------|------------|---------|----------|-------------|
| H1 | affective image -> conative image | 0,641 | 0,056 | 11,428 | 0,000 | supported** |
| H2 | cognitive image -> affective image | 0,508 | 0,079 | 6,425 | 0,000 | supported** |
| H3 | cognitive image -> conative image | 0,160 | 0,054 | 2,977 | 0,003 | supported* |
| H4 | cust -> cognitive image | 0,251 | 0,114 | 2,191 | 0,029 | supported* |
| H5 | entert -> cognitive image | 0,098 | 0,156 | 0,632 | 0,528 | rejected |
| H6 | ewom -> cognitive image | -0,062 | 0,099 | 0,628 | 0,530 | rejected |
| H7 | inf -> cognitive image | 0,058 | 0,133 | 0,438 | 0,661 | rejected |
| H8 | inter -> cognitive image | -0,126 | 0,143 | 0,883 | 0,378 | rejected |
| H9 | tren -> cognitive image | 0,129 | 0,115 | 1,123 | 0,262 | rejected |

Source: Authors' data analysis

5.2.4. F square

The f² effect size allows for an examination of construct relevance in explaining selected endogenous constructs (Hair et al, 2017, p.224). The table () shows that affective image has a strong effect on conative image (0.661), cognitive image has a strong effect on affective image (0.34,) and a small effect on conative image. Customization has a small effect on cognitive image (0.029), but the other dimensions of SMMA have no effect on cognitive image.

Table 9. The Affect Sizes (F²)

| | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| | affective image | cognitive image | conative image |
| affective image | | | 0,661 |
| cognitive image | 0,348 | | 0,041 |
| conative image | | | |
| cust | | 0,029 | |
| entert | | 0,003 | |
| ewom | | 0,002 | |
| inf | | 0,001 | |
| inter | | 0,006 | |
| tren | | 0,007 | |

Source: Authors' data analysis

5.2.5. Predictive relevance

This indicator represents the model's out-of-sample predictive power or predictive relevance (Hair, 2017, p.212). The table () shows that Q2 values of affective image (0.193) and cognitive image (0.107) are small, whereas the Q2 of conative image (0.312) is large.

Table 10. Q2 Values

| | |
|-----------------|----------------------|
| | Q² |
| affective image | 0,193 |
| cognitive image | 0,107 |
| conative image | 0,312 |

Source: Authors' data analysis

Finally, the goodness-of-fit is measured with the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR), its value is 0.066. which means that the GoF is good. However, it should be mentioned that the goodness-of-fit is not required for PLS-SEM unlike PLS-CB (Hair et al., 2021, p. 22).

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the purpose of this study was to provide a deeper understanding of the role of social media marketing activities (SMMA) in the creation of destination image, with a specific focus on the Algerian context. The findings suggest that affective image strongly impacts conative image, while cognitive image influences both affective and conative image.

However, among the SMMA dimensions investigated, only customization was found to have a significant impact on cognitive image. These results imply a limited contribution of SMMA in the formation of destination image, which may be attributed to a lack of awareness among Algerian marketers in tourism industry regarding the importance of SMMA in attracting tourists.

These findings have significant implications for marketers, highlighting the need for a more customized approach to social media marketing strategies in the tourism industry. By enhancing cognitive image through tailored SMMA, marketers can attract new tourists and increase the

overall competitiveness in the market.

It is important to note that this study has limitations, including the suitability of SMMAs dimensions for the Algerian context, using the questionnaire as a data collection tool (potential bias, no opportunity for clarification since it was a self-administrated questionnaire). Additionally, the relatively small sample size used in this study (172 participants) may restrict the generalizability of the findings. In future research, it may be useful to investigate the impact of tourists' personal and demographic characteristics on destination image formation."

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