

The Role of Social Media in Influencing Tourist Destination and Preferences Among Students of Perpetual Help College – Manila

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ABSTRACT

Abstract In an era where digital content shapes everyday decision-making, social media has become one of the most powerful forces guiding how young travelers imagine, evaluate, and choose their next destination. This study explored how various forms of online influence affect the tourism preferences of students at Perpetual Help College–Manila. Grounded in Kelman’s Social Influence Theory, the research examined the roles of compliance, identification, and internalization in shaping students’ travel choices in response to reviews, influencer content, peer posts, and visually driven media. Using a quantitative descriptive–correlational design, data were collected from 325 respondents through a validated questionnaire. Results revealed that social media significantly impacts students’ destination preferences, with visually engaging posts, peer recommendations, and influencer promotions showing strong influence across the three dimensions of social influence. Furthermore, notable differences emerged when respondents were grouped according to demographic variables, indicating that age, sex, year level, and program meaningfully affect how students respond to travel-related content. The study concludes that social media functions not only as an information platform but also as a psychological catalyst that shapes young travelers’ motivations and choices. These findings can guide tourism marketers, educators, and organizations in crafting authentic, strategic, and studentcentered digital content.

INTRODUCTION

In today’s digital age, the transformative evolution of social media has become an essential tool in our lives. Indeed, it contributes to our lives as it makes our routine easier and more accessible. In the field of travel and tours, these social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook influence how we perceive, select, and experience destinations. These platforms enable us to share travel experiences with one another in the form of images, videos, posting user-generated content and a real-time review. This event has become accessible to everyone, allowing us to gain travel information, even those with limited resources such as people living in marginalized areas, individuals from different generations and college students. This aspirational content has influenced our decision-making. For instance, posting viral hashtags which help the destination popular turning it into a "must-visit" spot based on curated aesthetics rather than traditional marketing. The mass use of social media has significantly altered how people look for information and make travel decisions, especially in the travel sector. This research, entitled “The Role of Social Media in Influencing Tourist Destinations and Preferences among Students of Perpetual Help College-Manila” investigates the effect of social media sites on the travel destination choices of students. More specifically, it examines the degree to which peer interaction, influencer promotion, travel posts, and

customer reviews on social media influence students' attitudes and decisions when choosing destinations for travel. Perpetual Help College of Manila 1240 V. Concepcion St., Sampaloc Manila College of International Hospitality Management Social media doesn't only enhance destination visibility but also personalizes travel experiences. According to Kim and Fesenmaier (2020) it displays platforms like Instagram visually shapes destination images, with users forming preferences for photogenic or Instagramable destinations for example is Bali. Similarly, Li et al. (2021) highlights TikTok's role in making a fast travel choice among teenagers and Gen Z's, where short videos contribute to impulsive decisions. These insights are relevant context diversely including educational settings, where students may prioritize trendy, influencer-endorsed spots over culturally significant or sustainable options. Furthermore, the role of social media in the tourism industry is now well documented in academic literature. Current studies show that social media use has a positive impact on consumers' attitudes towards tourist choices, and that sites such as Instagram have a direct influence on holiday planning (Sudarmanto, 2023). Likewise, Kristanto et al. (2021) established that social media exerts a positive influence on travel intentions, particularly in times of adversity like the COVID-19 pandemic, where establishing trust in destinations is essential. Electronic word of mouth (eWOM) is another central component that has proven to be a pivotal influence on travelers' decision-making. Positive eWOM, such as user-generated reviews and images, has a pronounced effect on tourists' experience and feelings of well-being (Li et al., 2022). According to Sharma (2022) in "The Influence of Social Media on Travel Decision-Making," such content is increasingly being used by travelers to make destination choices. Perpetual Help College of Manila 1240 V. Concepcion St., Sampaloc Manila College of International Hospitality Management Despite these findings, one critical gap remains in the extent to which social media in particular drives destination selection among student segments. Especially in learning environments such as Philippine colleges. This research fills this gap by presenting empirical evidence about the interaction between social media exposure and preferences of students' destinations, controlling platform preferences, content categories, and peer influences. By filling this gap, this research adds new contributions to the marketing of tourism and consumer behavior research areas, providing actionable implications for academic institutions, tourist organizations, and advertisers to formulate targeted strategies to reach student travelers more effectively.

METHODS

The researchers employ a quantitative descriptive research design to explore the impact of social media on tourist destinations and preferences, utilizing applications such as TikTok, Facebook, YouTube, and other social media platforms among students at Perpetual Help College Manila. The quantitative methodology is fitting as it enables the researcher to gather measurable data from a substantial number of respondents and to examine the relationships between variables through statistical tools. According to (McCombes, 2022) it states that quantitative research is appropriate for measuring variables and examining correlations between them. The descriptive component of the study aims to identify the patterns of social media usage among students, the types of travel-related content they interact with, and their overall travel preferences. Concurrently, the correlational aspect seeks to ascertain whether a significant relationship exists between social media factors, including exposure to travel content, trust in social media influencers, and level of engagement, and the students' preferred tourist destinations and travel intentions. Perpetual Help College of Manila 1240 V. Concepcion St., Sampaloc Manila College of International Hospitality Management A structured questionnaire will act as the main data collection instrument to guarantee consistency and objectivity in the responses. The gathered data will be analyzed using

descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, and mean to summarize the social media behaviors of the students, along with inferential statistics like correlation and regression analysis to evaluate the degree of relationship between social media usage and preferences for tourist destinations. In summary, this research design is appropriate for identifying patterns, relationships, and the extent of social media's influence on students' travel decisions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Distribution of the Respondents in terms of Age

Age	Frequency	Percent	Rank
20-30	317	97.54%	1
31-40	6	1.85%	2
41-50	1	0.31%	3.5
51 and above	1	0.31%	3.5
Total	325	100.00%	100.00%

Table 1 shows the age distribution of respondents in the study on the role of social media in influencing tourist destinations and preferences among students of Perpetual Help College-Manila. Most respondents are aged 20–30 years (97.54%), followed by 31–40 years (1.85%), while 41–50 years and 51 and above each comprise 0.31%. The results indicate that the study mainly reflects the social media usage patterns and destination preferences of young adults. According to Exploring the Influence of Social Media on Tourist Decision-Making: Insights from Cape Verde by M. F. Pazhie et al. (2024), age significantly influences social media platform preference, with younger tourists favoring Instagram and TikTok for travel information.

Table 2. Distribution of the Respondents in terms of Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	85	26.15%
Female	232	71.38%
Prefer not to say	8	2.46%
Total	325	100.00%

Table 2 presents the gender distribution of respondents in the study on the role of social media in influencing tourist destinations and preferences among students of Perpetual Help College-Manila. Most respondents are female (71.38%), followed by male respondents (26.15%), while 2.46% preferred not to disclose their gender. The findings suggest that female students are more represented in the study and may have a greater influence on the overall results. According to Karatsoli and Nathanail (2020), gender differences exist in social media use for travel, with women being more influenced by photos and videos and using social media more frequently for travel planning.

Table 3. Distribution of the Respondents in terms of Year/Level

Year/Level	Frequency	Percent
1st Year	72	22.15%

2nd Year	83	25.54%
3rd Year	101	31.08%
4th Year	69	21.23%
Total	325	100.00%

Table 3 presents the year-level distribution of respondents in the study on the role of social media in influencing tourist destinations and preferences among students of Perpetual Help College-Manila. Most respondents are 3rd-year students (31.08%), followed by 2nd-year (25.54%), 1st-year (22.15%), and 4th-year students (21.23%). The results show a balanced representation across academic levels, reflecting the perspectives of students at different stages of college education. According to Influence Of Social Media Marketing On The Destination Preferences Of Gen Z At Quirino State University by L. A. Obina et al. (2024), destination preferences vary by year level, suggesting that students in intermediate years may rely more on social media in shaping travel choices.

Table 4. Distribution of the Respondents in terms of Course/Program

Course/Program	Frequency	Percent
College of Arts and Science	4	1.23%
College of Business	10	3.08%
College of Computer Studies	26	8.00%
College of International Hospitality and Tourism	33	10.15%
College of Nursing	187	57.54%
College of Occupational Therapy	16	4.92%
College of Physical Therapy	11	3.38%
College of Radiologic Technology	34	10.46%
College of Respiratory Therapy	4	1.23%
Total	325	100.00%

Table 4 presents the course or program distribution of respondents in the study on the role of social media in influencing tourist destinations and preferences among students of Perpetual Help College-Manila. Most respondents are from the College of Nursing (57.54%), followed by the College of Radiologic Technology (10.46%) and the College of International Hospitality and Tourism (10.15%). The remaining respondents come from other programs, each comprising 1.23% to 8.00% of the population. The results indicate that the findings mainly reflect the social media behaviors and travel preferences of Nursing students. According to J. J. Kim et al. (2020), educational major significantly influences social media engagement and travel intentions.

Table 5. Overall assessment on Compliance

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
1. I visit destinations that my peers often talk about or post online	3.84	Agree	2
2. I follow the travel trends on social media even if I	3.31	Neutral	9

do not have a personal interest in them.			
3. I choose travel destinations that are popular among my friends online.	3.70	Agree	4
4. I am influenced to visit places that receive many likes, shares, or positive comments online.	3.90	Agree	1
5. I plan trips based on how popular a destination is on social media.	3.74	Agree	3
6. I follow influencer recommendations to keep up with socially popular travel.	3.48	Agree	7
7. I visit places featured by well-known influencers to gain approval or recognition from others.	3.36	Neutral	8
8. I visit destinations that are frequently promoted by social media influencers.	3.49	Agree	6
9. I am more likely to visit a destination when I think others will view my trip positively online.	3.54	Agree	5
Legend: I feel pressure to visit destinations that are considered “must-visit” by online communities.	3.20	Neutral	10
Average Weighted Mean:	3.56	Agree	

Table 5 presents the overall assessment of students’ compliance regarding the influence of social media, peers, and online communities on tourist destination preferences at Perpetual Help College-Manila. Weighted means range from 3.20 to 3.90, with the highest-rated indicator being the influence of destinations receiving many likes, shares, or positive comments online (WM = 3.90), followed by destinations frequently discussed by peers (WM = 3.84) and popular destinations on social media (WM = 3.74). Indicators related to following trends without personal interest and visiting influencer-featured destinations for recognition received lower means and were interpreted as Neutral. The average weighted mean of 3.56 (Agree) indicates that social media, peer activity, and online communities significantly influence students’ travel destination choices. According to A. S. A. M. Al-Bayati (2020), peer influence and social media engagement strongly affect students’ travel intentions and behavior.

Table 6. Overall assessment on Identification

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
1. I choose destinations that reflect the lifestyle of influencers I follow on social media.	3.48	Agree	10
2. I relate to influencers or peers who share travel experiences similar to mine.	3.72	Agree	8
3. I am encouraged to visit destinations because I can relate to the experiences of people I follow online.	3.77	Agree	7
4. I prefer destinations visited by influencers whose personalities or values I identify with.	3.70	Agree	9
5. I follow travel recommendations from online groups or	3.85	Agree	5

communities that match my interests.			
6. I travel to destinations featured by influencers I consider credible or trustworthy.	3.89	Agree	4
7. I visit places that reflect my identity, similar to how influencers present theirs online	3.89	Agree	3
8. I experience a sense of community when I visit destinations that are popular within my online network.	3.78	Agree	6
9. I am influenced to travel by peers whose opinions I value and respect.	3.98	Agree	1
10. I tend to choose destinations where I can recreate the experiences shared by my favorite influencers or friends.	3.92	Agree	2
Average Weighted Mean:	3.80	Agree	

Table 6 presents the overall assessment of students’ identification regarding the influence of influencers, peers, and online communities on tourist destination preferences at Perpetual Help College-Manila. Weighted means range from 3.48 to 3.98, with the highest-rated indicator being the influence of valued and respected peers on travel decisions (WM = 3.98), followed by recreating experiences shared by influencers or friends (WM = 3.92) and visiting places that reflect personal identity (WM = 3.89). The lowest-rated indicator, choosing destinations that reflect influencers’ lifestyles (WM = 3.48), was still interpreted as Agree. The average weighted mean of 3.80 (Agree) indicates that identification with influencers and peers plays an important role in shaping students’ travel preferences. According to W. H. Lim and Y. S. Lee (2020), peers with valued opinions have a stronger influence on travel decisions than general influencer content.

Table 7. Overall assessment on Internalization

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
1. I choose destinations because they align with my personal values and interests.	4.29	Strongly Agree	1
2. I visit destinations for their cultural or historical importance rather than their popularity	4.14	Agree	9
3. I visit destinations that offer enriching or meaningful experiences, not just because they are trending.	4.27	Strongly Agree	2
4. I seek educational and cultural experiences from destinations I discover online	4.17	Agree	6
5. I am influenced by travel content that promotes appreciation for nature, culture, and community.	4.13	Agree	10
6. I select destinations that contribute to my learning or personal development.	4.16	Agree	7
7. Social media helps me discover destinations that match my personal travel goals.	4.18	Agree	5

8. I prefer visiting destinations that promote environmental sustainability or cultural respect.	4.16	Agree	8
9. I adopt positive travel values from influencers who promote responsible and purposeful travel	4.18	Agree	4
10. I am more influenced by genuine storytelling about destinations than by advertisements or trends.	4.22	Strongly Agree	3
Average Weighted Mean:	4.19	Agree	

Table 7 presents the overall assessment of students’ identification regarding how personal values, interests, and meaningful experiences influence tourist destination preferences at Perpetual Help College-Manila. Weighted means range from 4.13 to 4.29, with the highest-rated indicator being choosing destinations aligned with personal values and interests (WM = 4.29), followed by seeking meaningful experiences rather than trends (WM = 4.27) and being influenced by genuine storytelling over advertisements or trends (WM = 4.22). The average weighted mean of 4.19 (Agree) indicates that personal values, meaningful experiences, and authentic content strongly influence students’ travel choices. According to C. R. Lu et al. (2022), students prioritize destinations that reflect their personal identity and intrinsic motivations rather than simply following trends.

Table 8. Differences in the assessed role of social media in tourist destination choice among Perpetual Help College–Manila students when grouped according to Age

Variables	p-value	Decision on Ho	Interpretation
Compliance	0.205	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Identification	0.533	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Internalization	0.301	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Overall	0.346	Failed to Reject	Not Significant

Table 8 presents the Kruskal–Wallis test results determining whether there is a significant difference in the role of social media in influencing tourist destination choices among Perpetual Help College–Manila students when grouped according to age. All variables—Compliance ($p = 0.205$), Identification ($p = 0.533$), and Internalization ($p = 0.301$)—obtained p-values greater than 0.05; therefore, the null hypothesis was failed to be rejected. The overall result ($p = 0.346$) indicates that age does not significantly influence how social media affects students’ destination choices. According to P. Sheldon and L. Ma (2021), social media remains a consistently influential source in travel decision-making regardless of age differences among students.

Table 9. Differences in the assessed role of social media in tourist destination choice among Perpetual Help College–Manila students when grouped according to Gender

Variables	p-value	Decision on Ho	Interpretation
Compliance	0.003	Reject	Significant
Identification	0.028	Reject	Significant
Internalization	0.045	Reject	Significant

Overall	0.025	Reject	Significant
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Table 9 presents the differences in the assessed role of social media in tourist destination choice among Perpetual Help College–Manila students when grouped according to gender. All variables—Compliance ($p = 0.003$), Identification ($p = 0.028$), and Internalization ($p = 0.045$)—obtained p-values lower than the 0.05 significance level; therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected for all indicators. The overall result ($p = 0.025$) indicates a significant difference in how social media influences tourist destination choices when respondents are grouped according to gender.

Table 10. Differences in the assessed role of social media in tourist destination choice among Perpetual Help College–Manila students when grouped according to Year/Level

Variables	p-value	Decision on Ho	Interpretation
Compliance	0.033	Reject	Significant
Identification	0.078	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Internalization	0.145	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Overall	0.085	Failed to Reject	Not Significant

Table 10 presents the Kruskal–Wallis test results determining whether there is a significant difference in the role of social media in influencing tourist destination choice among Perpetual Help College–Manila students when grouped according to year level. Compliance ($p = 0.033$) showed a significant difference, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis, while Identification ($p = 0.078$) and Internalization ($p = 0.145$) were not significant. The overall result ($p = 0.085$) indicates no significant difference in students’ general perception of social media’s role in destination selection across year levels. According to X. Chen (2020), social media pressure may affect lower-level students more strongly, although social media generally has a consistent influence across academic years.

Table 11. Differences in the assessed role of social media in tourist destination choice among Perpetual Help College–Manila students when grouped according to Course/Program

Variables	p-value	Decision on Ho	Interpretation
Compliance	0.444	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Identification	0.620	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Internalization	0.050	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Overall	0.371	Failed to Reject	Not Significant

Table 11 presents the Kruskal–Wallis test results determining whether there is a significant difference in the role of social media in influencing tourist destination choice among Perpetual Help College–Manila students when grouped according to course or program. All variables—Compliance ($p = 0.444$), Identification ($p = 0.620$), and Internalization ($p = 0.050$)—produced p-values above 0.05, leading to the failure to reject the null hypothesis. The overall result ($p = 0.371$) confirms that there is no significant difference in the influence of social media on destination selection across different courses or programs. According to M. C. Wang and C. H. Hsu (2020), students across tourism and hospitality-related programs exhibit similar responses to social media influence in travel decision-making.

Table 12. Marketing and Educational Strategies Tailored to Each Process of Influence, Compliance, Identification, and Internalization on Destination Preferences.

Focus	Goal	Marketing Strategies	Educational Strategies	Timeline and Budget	Expected Outcome
<p>COMPLIANCE</p> <p><i>(Destination choice influenced by trendiness, peer pressure, likes, shares, and influencer visibility.)</i></p>	<p>To increase destination visibility and immediate interest through social proof, online popularity, and influencer-driven content, prompting students to choose destinations because they are seen as “popular,” “trending,” or “must-visit.”</p>	<p>TikTok & Instagram Viral Campaigns Boosted Ads Featuring Social Validation</p> <p>Campus Micro-Influencer Partnerships</p>	<p>Workshops on Responsible Digital Tourism Behavior Workshops on Responsible Digital Tourism Behavior</p> <p>Campus Exhibit: “Behind the Trend”</p>	<p>Timeline: 6 months</p> <p>Estimated Budget: PHP90,000 to PHP 115,000</p>	<p>30–40% increase in student awareness of the destination. Surge in online engagement (likes, shares, tags). Higher tendency to select the destination because it is “trending.”</p>
<p>IDENTIFICATION</p> <p><i>(Students choose destinations because they relate to influencers, peers, communities, lifestyles, or shared values.)</i></p>	<p>To strengthen destination appeal by fostering emotional connection, relatable storytelling, and community identity that aligns with the students’ self-image.</p>	<p>Storytelling Campaign: “Travel Like Us” Student Ambassador Program Online Community Engagement</p>	<p>Peer-Led Travel Sharing Sessions Workshops on Personal Branding Through Travel Faculty-Integrated Travel Reflection Activities</p>	<p>Timeline: 6 months</p> <p>Estimated Budget: PHP70,000 to PHP 80,000</p>	<p>Students form emotional connection with destination. Increased engagement in interest-based travel groups.</p> <p>A 25–35% increase shows tourists now favor identity- and peer-aligned destinations.</p>

<p>INTERNALIZATION</p> <p><i>(Students choose destinations because the values, culture, sustainability, or personal meaning deeply resonate with them.)</i></p>	<p>To promote destinations through value-oriented messaging focusing on sustainability, culture, education, self-improvement, and meaningful experiences.</p>	<p>Authentic Storytelling and Long-Form Content Partnerships with NGOs & Sustainable Tourism Programs</p> <p>Highlight Purpose-Driven Travel</p>	<p>Value-Based Tourism Seminars Cultural Exposure Activities</p> <p>Integration in Curriculum</p>	<p>Timeline: 6 months Estimated Budget: PHP110,000</p>	<p>Students develop value-based preference for sustainable and cultural destinations. Increased awareness of meaningful travel.</p> <p>Growth of long-term loyalty toward destinations that match students' values.</p>
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CONCLUSIONS AND RECCOMENDATIONS

This study examined the role of social media through the influence of influencers, peers, and online communities on the tourist destination preferences of students from Perpetual Help College– Manila. 1. The respondents were predominantly young adults aged 20–30 years, representing almost the entire population, indicating that the findings largely reflect the preferences of Generation Z and young millennial students. In terms of sex, the majority were female, suggesting that women’s social media engagement and travel inspiration trends strongly shape the overall results. The respondents came from all year levels, with the largest group being 3rd-year students, indicating a well- distributed representation across academic progression. Finally, most respondents were from the College of Nursing, followed by the College of Radiologic Technology and the College of International Hospitality and Tourism, showing that students from diverse academic programs participate actively in travel-related social media consumption. 2. Based on the three influence processes, such as compliance, identification, and internalization, the respondents agreed that influencers, peers, and online communities significantly shape their travel preferences. In terms of compliance, students generally follow trends, popular destinations, and viral posts. They acknowledged that likes, shares, and influencer visibility affect their initial interest in destinations. This indicates that social proof plays a strong role in travel decision-making. In terms of identification, students showed high levels of relating to influencers and peers whose values, personalities, and experiences resemble their own. Identification emerged as a stronger influence than mere compliance, revealing peer opinions, relatable storytelling, and lifestyle alignment significantly guide destination choices. Lasty, in terms of internalization, among the three processes, internalization gained the highest overall rating. Students prefer destinations that align with their personal values, learning goals, cultural appreciation, and desire for meaningful travel. They are strongly influenced by authentic content such as

educational travel experiences, cultural narratives, and sustainability-oriented posts. This suggests that deeper, value-based motivations heavily shape students' long-term destination preferences. 3. Differences in the role of social media when grouped by profile show that in terms of age and course, there was no significant difference in compliance, identification, or internalization when grouped by age or course, suggesting that social media influences students uniformly despite differences in maturity or academic programs. In terms of sex, there was a significant difference across all three influence processes when grouped by sex, indicating that males and females respond differently to social media stimuli, with females being more influenced by visual content and peer or influencer engagement. In terms of year level, only compliance showed a significant difference when grouped by year level. This implies that younger students may be more susceptible to trending content and social pressure, while identification and internalization remain consistent across academic progression. Therefore, the findings demonstrate that demographic factors such as sex and year level influence susceptibility to online travel persuasion, whereas age and course do not significantly alter how students interpret social media's role in destination choice. 4. Differentiated marketing and educational strategies show that based on the identified influence patterns, the study developed tailored strategies to enhance destination promotion and digital literacy among students. In terms of compliance strategies emphasize trend-based marketing such as viral challenges, influencer endorsements, and high-engagement content, paired with educational workshops on social media literacy. In terms of identification strategies center on relatable storytelling, student ambassadors, and interest-based content, supported by peer-sharing sessions and identity-focused travel education. Lastly, in terms of internalization strategies highlight cultural, educational, and sustainability-oriented content reinforced by seminars, cultural immersion programs, and value-based tourism education. These differentiated approaches allow tourism marketers and educational institutions to design targeted initiatives that resonate with students based on how they perceive and internalize social media influence. The following recommendations were formulated based on the study's findings, which revealed that identification emerged as the highest level of social influence, indicating that students are most influenced by peers whose opinions they value and respect. This was followed by compliance, where students are influenced by destinations receiving many likes, shares, and positive comments online, and internalization, where students choose destinations that align with their personal values and interests. 1. For the Department of Tourism (DOT). Since identification ranked as the strongest influence, DOT should prioritize partnerships with relatable influencers, peer leaders, and advocates of responsible travel whose values resonate with students. Peer-driven campaigns can strengthen trust and credibility among young travelers. To support compliance, DOT should continue producing visually engaging and shareable content that generates high online interaction. Meanwhile, internalization can be reinforced by promoting cultural heritage, sustainability, and authentic storytelling. Implementing nationwide social media literacy initiatives will further help students critically assess travel-related content. 2. For City Tourism Offices City Tourism offices should implement localized digital marketing strategies that highlight unique attractions and authentic community narratives. Given that students respond strongly to peer relatability and identification, cities can collaborate with local micro-influencers and campus ambassadors to promote destinations. They should also develop visitor experiences centered on culture, sustainability, and educational value, appealing to students' internalized preference for meaningful travel. 3. For Perpetual Help College–Manila The institution should integrate responsible tourism, digital literacy, and cultural appreciation into student activities and academic subjects. The school can host travel expos, influencer forums, and cultural immersion programs to guide students toward more value-driven destination choices.

Establishing partnerships with DOT, local tourism offices, and travel businesses will further expose students to authentic, educational travel opportunities aligned with internalization and identification processes. 4. For Students Students should practice critical evaluation of social media content to avoid making travel decisions solely based on trends (compliance). They are encouraged to explore destinations that align with personal values, cultural interests, and meaningful experiences. Engaging with travel communities, attending tourism seminars, and participating in cultural immersion activities will support more informed and responsible decision-making. Students should also be mindful of the influence of peers and influence behavior on their travel choices. 5. For Tourism Marketers and Destination Managers Tourism marketers must adopt segmented digital strategies tailored to each influence process such as for compliance they can use viral content, influencer endorsements, and trend-based promotions. For identification, they can highlight relatable stories, user-generated content, and community-based promotions. For internalization, they can focus on cultural depth, sustainability, values, and meaningful travel experiences. Destination managers should also ensure that their offerings provide authentic and educational elements, which strongly attract student travelers. Collaborations with schools and youth organizations can further enhance student engagement. 6. For Educational Institutions Schools should embed digital citizenship, social media analysis, and responsible travel education into their curriculum. Offering field trips, cultural tours, and sustainability-focused travel experiences will help students internalize meaningful travel values. Institutions should also partner with local and national tourism authorities to provide students with real-world exposure to tourism marketing and destination management practices. 7. For Future Researchers Future researchers may explore the long-term effects of social media literacy on destination preferences. They can do comparative studies between tourism students and non-tourism, explore the influence of emerging platforms such as TikTok, Reels, and AI-based travel tools. in shaping Generation Z travel decisions. Lastly, qualitative methods such as interviews or focus groups to delve deeper into internalization and identity-based motivations.

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