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REIMAGINING HOSPITALITY FOR A MULTI-GENERATIONAL WORLD
THROUGH INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP
TOWARD SUSTAINABILITY

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THE 6th INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALITY ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INNOVATION
CONFERENCE 2026

“Reimagining Hospitality for a Multi-Generational World through Innovation and
Entrepreneurship toward Sustainability”

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PREFACE

Om Swastyastu,

Dear Esteemed Participants and Presenters,

On behalf of the Organizing Committee, we are pleased and honored to welcome all participants and speakers to the 6th International Hospitality Entrepreneurship and Innovation Conference (InHEIC) 2026. The InHEIC conference has been successfully conducted every year over the past five years, from 2021 through 2025. In 2026, we adopt the theme “Reimagining Hospitality for a Multi-Generational World Through Innovation and Entrepreneurship Toward Sustainability.” This theme is intended to foster deeper discussions on the challenges and opportunities of adapting hospitality practices to meet the expectations of multiple generations through innovation and entrepreneurship while supporting long-term sustainability.

For the 6th InHEIC 2026, we have arranged a distinguished roster of speakers, consisting of three keynote speakers and six invited speakers who are experts in their respective areas. The conference also provides a platform for academics and industry practitioners to present their latest research and publish their work. All accepted papers will be included in the conference proceedings book with an ISSN after completing any required revisions.

We extend our best wishes for the 6th InHEIC 2026, hoping that it will bring great benefits to all of us and serve as a forum for exchanging ideas and enriching experiences.

Om Santih, Santih Santih Om,

Sincerely,

Kusmawan Aditya

Chairman of The Committee

WELCOME REMAKS

Director of Politeknik Pariwisata Bali



Dear Esteemed Participants, Distinguished Speakers, and Valued Partners,

On behalf of Bali Tourism Polytechnic, it is a great honor to extend a warm welcome to all participants of The 6th International Hospitality, Entrepreneurship and Innovation Conference 2026. It is conveyed with sincere appreciation that the presence of all distinguished guests, partners, and participants reflects a shared commitment to advancing knowledge, strengthening academic collaboration, and fostering meaningful global engagement within the hospitality community.

In light of today's rapidly evolving global landscape, the urgency to reimagine the future of hospitality has become increasingly significant. This year's theme, "Reimagining Hospitality for a Multi-Generational World through Innovation and Entrepreneurship toward Sustainability," underscores the critical need for the industry to adapt to demographic shifts, technological advancements, and sustainability challenges. The coexistence of multiple generations demands more inclusive, adaptive, and forward-thinking approaches. Therefore, this conference serves as a vital platform to encourage innovation, promote entrepreneurial mindsets, and cultivate sustainable solutions that are responsive not only to present needs but also to future transformations, while maintaining a collaborative and inclusive academic environment.

Special recognition is extended to Woosong University for its invaluable partnership and unwavering commitment to academic excellence. As a globally recognized institution, Woosong University has played a significant role in enriching this conference through its academic expertise, international perspective, and active contribution to knowledge exchange. This collaboration represents a strategic partnership that strengthens institutional capacity, expands global networks, and enhances the quality of education in alignment with international standards.

It is sincerely hoped that this conference will serve as a sustainable foundation for future collaboration, fostering innovation, resilience, and global competitiveness among all participants. Furthermore, the outcomes of this initiative are expected to contribute to the

development of human resources who are not only academically competent but also adaptable, creative, and prepared to address the complex challenges of the future hospitality industry. Through continued partnership and a shared vision, this collaboration aspires to generate long-term impact and support the advancement of a more resilient and sustainable global hospitality ecosystem.

Sincerely,

Dr. Drs. Ida Bagus Putu Puja M. Kes.
Director of Politeknik Pariwisata Bali

WELCOME REMARKS

Coordinator of Hotel Management Study Program



Om Swastiastu,

Dear Honorable Speakers, Distinguished Participants, and Valued Partners,

It is my great honor, as the Coordinator of the Hotel Management Study Program of Bali Tourism Polytechnic, to welcome you to The 6th International Hospitality, Entrepreneurship and Innovation Conference (InHEIC) 2026. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to our keynote and plenary speakers, collaborating institutions, presenters, industry partners, lecturers, and especially our students whose dedication and commitment make this conference possible.

Within our study program, this conference is an integral part of the Managerial Application course, where students are actively engaged in planning, coordinating, and executing an international academic event. Through this experience, students not only develop operational management skills, but also strengthen their leadership, teamwork, strategic thinking, and professional communication skills that are essential in the hospitality industry.

Aligned with this year's theme, *"Reimagining Hospitality for a Multi-Generational World through Innovation and Entrepreneurship toward Sustainability,"* this conference reflects our commitment to preparing future hospitality professionals who are adaptive, innovative, and responsible in addressing global challenges.

May this forum strengthen collaboration between academia and industry and generate impactful ideas for the advancement of the hospitality industry

Om Santih, Santih, Santih Om.

Sincerely,

Ni Made Suastini, SE., MM., CHE

Coordinator of Hotel Management

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From For You Page to Flight Gates: A Pilot Study on TikTok's Influence on Travel Preferences Among Indonesia University Students

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Abstract

The current study aims to analyze the effect of TikTok content on the travel destination choice behavior of Generation Z, particularly university students in an English Language Education Study Program. Applying an exploratory study with 26 respondents, the study examines the role of User Generated Content (UGC), influencer marketing, and TikTok's algorithm in shaping decision making. Findings indicate that TikTok has transitioned into a primary search engine and decision making tool for this demographic. Key drivers of travel behavior include visual storytelling, where aesthetic views and atmospheric music create a strong urge to visit new locations. Notably, the study identifies an overwhelming preference for "hidden gems" over viral destinations to avoid over-tourism and achieve social escapism. Furthermore, respondents exhibit a "cautious trust" toward travel influencers, prioritizing perceived authenticity and unedited footage while frequently cross referencing information with other digital sources. TikTok also functions as an informal educational tool that successfully shifts indifferent or negative perceptions of destinations into positive interest through cultural and environmental awareness. These insights suggest that destination marketing organizations (DMOs) should prioritize authentic, relatable digital content and collaborate with transparent creators who emphasize authenticity over mere aesthetics to effectively target the younger generation of travelers.

Keywords: TikTok, Generation Z Travelers, Travel Destination Preferences, Digital Literacy, Digital Tourism.

Introduction

It is widely recognized today that with the development of social media, people's approach to traveling destinations has changed. In particular, the application called TikTok has had a significant effect on the process, especially regarding Generation Z users. Due to the availability of short-form videos, visuals, trending sounds, and the personal algorithm, TikTok may become a source of discovering interesting information about different traveling destinations.

This phenomenon, often termed the "TikTok Effect," allows destinations to achieve viral status almost overnight (Wengel et al., 2022). However, while rapid virality boosts local economies, it frequently poses a threat to destination sustainability, as sudden mass tourism can lead to environmental degradation and the

commercialization of local heritage, creating a paradox between digital popularity and long-term preservation.

To explain, Generation Z refers to the group of individuals born between 1997 and 2012. It is commonly characterized by high engagement and dependence on digital technologies. As far as tourism is concerned, Generation Z usually shows a greater preference for UGC and influencer marketing rather than for other advertising techniques. Therefore, many traveling destinations have gained considerable popularity or reached viral status because of regular exposure to TikTok.

As research reveals that visual appeal, authenticity, and emotional engagement are the factors that may significantly affect decision-making in the sphere of tourism. However, there is no empirical evidence on the effects of TikTok videos on the preferences of university students from the English Language Education Study Program. Selecting this specific demographic is crucial because English Education students possess a unique digital behavior characterized by high exposure to global English-speaking content and international literature. Unlike the general population, their constant engagement with foreign language materials allows them to navigate global TikTok trends, making them more susceptible to international tourism marketing and cross-cultural travel narratives. Their academic background fosters a higher level of digital literacy and curiosity toward global destinations, which shapes a distinct psychological response to travel-related stimuli on the platform. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct research in the chosen area because the selected target group belongs to Generation Z and has constant access to globalized social media.

Thus, the aim of the paper is to examine the effects of TikTok content on Generation Z's preferences when choosing travel destinations, with emphasis on students enrolled in the English Language Education Study Program. The target population will be represented by university students, and the target sample will include students from the fourth semester. Purposive sampling will be used as it presupposes selecting people who fit certain criteria, i.e., active users of TikTok with recent experience in watching travel-related videos.

Although numerous studies have explored the impact of social media and TikTok on tourism, many of them focus on general populations or broader contexts (Dramićanin et al., 2023; Zhou et al., 2023). There is still limited research that specifically examines the influence of TikTok content on travel destination preferences among university students within a localized academic environment (Arkansyah et al., 2025). Therefore, this study aims to address this gap by focusing on Generation Z students, with specialized linguistic and cultural backgrounds providing a more specific and contextual understanding of how TikTok influences their travel preferences.

Literature Review

The landscape of the tourism industry has undergone a fundamental transformation due to the evolution of social media, which has redefined how individuals search for information and evaluate destinations (Ofitserova, 2021). While conventional advertising often relies on high-production, top-down communication, modern travelers particularly Generation Z increasingly prioritize the visual authenticity and peer-validated experiences found on digital platforms (Schoner-Schatz et al., 2021; Journal

of Commerce, Management, and Tourism Studies, 2023). This shift suggests

that social media is no longer just a supporting tool but the primary driver of modern travel behavior.

The effectiveness of TikTok as a marketing medium lies in its departure from traditional, broad-spectrum advertising. Unlike stagnant conventional ads, TikTok's short-video format utilizes creative storytelling and personalized algorithms that deliver content directly to niche audiences based on their specific interests (Abidin, 2021). This "discovery-based" mechanism allows User-Generated Content (UGC) to spread rapidly, creating the "TikTok Effect" where destinations achieve viral visibility through organic engagement rather than forced promotional campaigns (Wengel et al., 2022; Dramićanin et al., 2023). By leveraging UGC, TikTok fosters a sense of trust and "realness" that conventional marketing fails to replicate, significantly stimulating viewers' interest and intention to visit.

Furthermore, the synergy between Generation Z's digital habits and TikTok's algorithmic nature creates a powerful influence on decision-making. Generation Z (born 1997–2012) represents a cohort that naturally avoids traditional advertising in favor of interactive, fast-paced content and peer-to-peer recommendations (Mohd Rizal et al., 2025); (Băltescu & Untaru, 2025). Their travel preferences are no longer shaped by polished brochures, but by the continuous exposure to authentic, algorithm-driven trends that highlight cultural uniqueness and visual appeal (Tien et al., 2025; Neliti, 2022). Consequently, the psychological impact of seeing a "hidden gem" through the lens of a fellow user rather than a brand creates a more profound emotional connection, leading to higher travel intentions among younger audiences (Liu et al., 2024; Zhou et al., 2023; Zaffran et al., 2023).

Research Methodology

The methodology applied in this study is an exploratory study. Due to the specific target population and the objective to explore preliminary trends, this research is framed as a pilot study. This approach entails assessing the influence of TikTok content on Generation Z travelers' preferences for particular travel destinations. The population of the study consists of all students studying in the English Language Education Study Program at Universitas Muhammadiyah Prof. DR. HAMKA. The sample comprises 26 students from the 4th semester, selected through a purposive sampling technique. This demographic was chosen due to their high digital engagement and their academic background, which fosters a critical perspective toward digital information.

Primary data were collected using a Google Forms questionnaire. The instrument utilized a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 to assess perceptions of TikTok content and its role in influencing travel decisions. The questionnaire was designed to capture specific Gen Z behaviors, including their digital literacy in cross-checking information and their tendency to seek "hidden gems" or exclusive destinations to avoid mass crowds. Secondary data were gathered from different sources, including literature review, journals, articles as well as online sources in relation to social media usage in the context of travel and tourism.

Data analysis involved a quantitative processing phase using descriptive statistics. The gathered data were analysed to determine frequency distributions and mean scores, which helped classify information regarding social media influence, trust levels, and destination preferences. This systematic process enabled the researchers to present

findings clearly through high-resolution tables and charts. The

triangulation of the data is supported the explanation from the respondents by answering open ended question.

To ensure the rigor and credibility of the study, the research instrument underwent a comprehensive two-stage validation process prior to full-scale distribution. In the first stage, Content Validity was established through Expert Judgment, where the questionnaire was reviewed by academic experts in the fields of digital media and tourism. This panel evaluated each item for its relevance to the "Awareness-Priority Gap" and ensured that the indicators for cognitive, visual, and affective engagement were theoretically aligned with established digital tourism frameworks. Based on their feedback, several items were reworded to better reflect How TikTok shapes Gen Z's travel map.

Result and Discussion

This section provides a detailed analysis of the findings from the questionnaire distributed to 26 students of the English Language Education Study Program at Universitas Muhammadiyah Prof. DR. HAMKA. The study examines how TikTok content characteristics influence the travel destination preferences of Generation Z.

Respondents' Demographic and Engagement

Based on the collected data, 26 respondents participated in the study. The gender distribution is dominated by females, accounting for 76.9% (20 students), while males represent 23.1% (6 students). The majority are 4th-semester students aged between 18-28 years old. In terms of platform engagement, more than 70% of respondents reported using TikTok "Often," while their traveling frequency varies between "Sometimes" and "Often." This high digital engagement confirms that the sample represents the typical Generation Z profile, which relies heavily on social media for lifestyle inspiration.

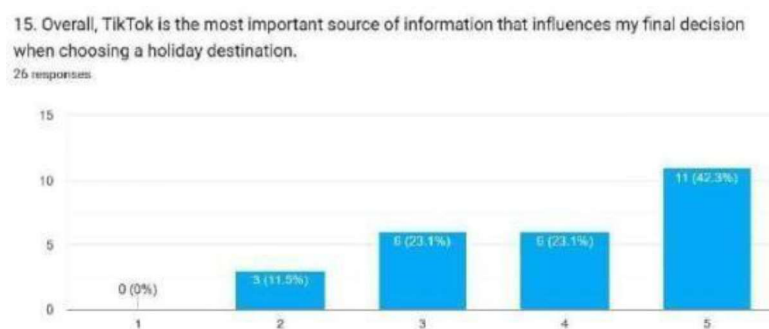


Figure 1: Students' Level of Agreement on TikTok as the Primary Travel Information Source

[Source: Primary Data from Online Questionnaire (2026)]

The data presented in Figure 1 indicates a high level of agreement among respondents regarding the importance of TikTok in their travel decision-making process. Out of 26 participants, the vast majority responded with scores of 4 (Agree) and 5 (Strongly Agree). This suggests that for Generation Z, TikTok is not merely an entertainment

platform but functions as a primary search engine and decision-making tool for tourism. The minimal number of neutral or negative responses further reinforces the platform's significant influence on this demographic

The high engagement and reliance on TikTok found in this study align with the concept of "digital ethnography" and modern communicative forms discussed by (Abidin, 2021), where social media platforms transition from mere social spaces to vital information hubs for younger generations. The dominance of female respondents (76.9%) also reflects broader trends in digital tourism consumption; as noted by (Zaffran et al. 2023), visual-based storytelling on TikTok is particularly effective in influencing the lifestyle aspirations of female Gen Z users.

Furthermore, the shift from traditional search engines to TikTok for travel inspiration supports the findings of (Liu et al., 2024). Their research emphasizes that the "short-video" format provides a more immersive and digestible experience, which significantly impacts the behavioral intentions of travelers compared to static information. This phenomenon, often referred to as the "TikTok Effect," proves that for university students, perceived authenticity and peer-generated content are now more persuasive than conventional tourism marketing (Wengel et al., 2022).

The Power of Visual Storytelling

The analysis indicates that visual appeal is the primary driver of travel interest among students. Qualitative responses show that aesthetic views and the atmosphere created through background music are essential. For instance, Respondent 10 and Respondent 17 noted that the combination of "aesthetic views" and "relaxing music" creates a strong urge to visit a location. The findings suggest that TikTok's short-video format effectively captures the attention of Gen Z by providing an immersive experience that feels more relatable than traditional travel advertisements.

The quantitative data supports this, as shown in the figure below:

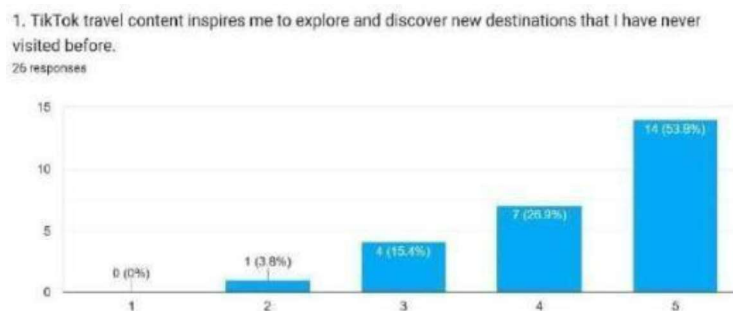


Figure 2: Level of Agreement on TikTok as an Inspiration for New Destinations

[Source: Primary Data from Online Questionnaire (2026)]

Based on Figure 2, the majority of respondents responded positively regarding TikTok's role as a source of travel inspiration. Out of 26 respondents, 14 students (53.8%) chose "Strongly Agree" and 7 students (26.9%) chose "Agree". This suggests that TikTok's short-video format effectively captures the attention of Gen Z by providing an immersive experience that feels more relatable than traditional travel advertisements.

This finding from Figure 2 above aligns with the research by (Liu et al., 2024), which emphasizes that the factors of short videos on TikTok significantly impact the behavioural intentions of Generation Z travellers. The high level of inspiration felt by students is a result of "digital ethnography" and modern communicative forms, as described by (Abidin, 2021), where visual storytelling acts as a bridge for discovering new geographical information.

"Hidden Gems" over Viral Destinations

One of the most significant findings is the overwhelming preference for "Hidden Gems" among the 26 respondents. While TikTok is known for making places "viral," students in this study showed a critical attitude toward trending spots.

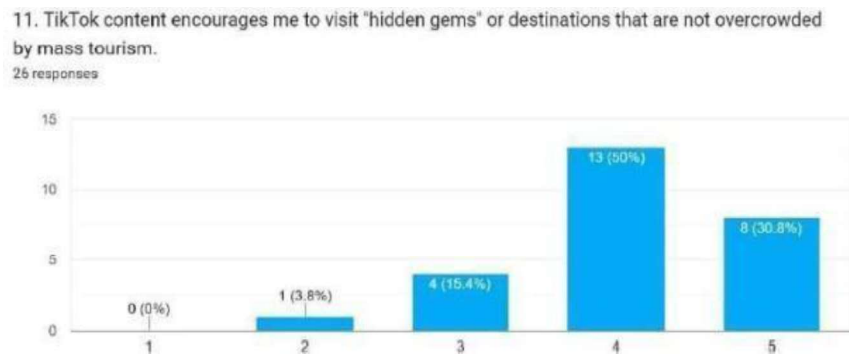


Figure 3: Respondents' Interest in Exploring Hidden Gems
[Source: Primary Data from Online Questionnaire (2026)]

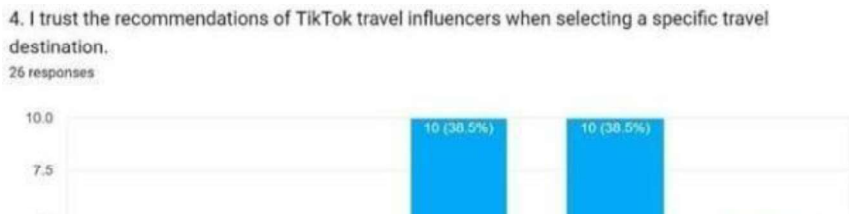
As shown in Figure 3, TikTok content encourages a vast majority of the participants to visit destinations that are not overcrowded by mass tourism. Respondents such as Respondent 4 and Respondent 15 prefer hidden gems because viral spots are perceived as "too crowded," which leads to long queues and a less enjoyable experience.

This preference for authenticity and quiet locations corresponds with the study by (Wengel et al., 2022), which highlights the "TikTok effect" where destinations that become famous overnight often struggle to maintain their appeal due to over-tourism. Furthermore, the desire for rarity and exclusivity mentioned by Respondent 26 reflects the motivation of "social escapism," a key driver in Gen Z travel behaviour.

Trust and Authenticity of Information

Trust is a crucial factor in determining whether a student actually visits a destination seen on TikTok. Based on the survey, while students are inspired by visual content, they maintain a "cautious trust" toward the information provided by influencers.

figure 4:
StudR



Influencer Trustworthiness and Content Authenticity
[Source: Primary Data from Online Questionnaire (2026)]

The data in Figure 4 reveals a "Moderate to High" level of trust. Most respondents agree that they value honesty in reviews. For instance, Respondent 6 emphasized the importance of seeing "real, unedited footage" before believing a recommendation. This is further supported by the open-ended responses where students stated they often cross-check TikTok information with Google Maps or Instagram comments to ensure the place is as good as it looks in the video.

This cautious behavior reflects the findings of (Zaffran et al., 2023), who argue that Gen Z's travel motivations are heavily influenced by "perceived authenticity." If a video feels too commercial or "staged," it loses its persuasive power. Furthermore, this trend aligns with (Tien et al., 2025) regarding the role of social media influencers; they are effective only when they maintain a sense of relatability and transparency. The students' habit of cross-referencing information also supports the theory by (Abidin, 2021) about the "vernacular" nature of TikTok, where users rely on peer-to-peer validation rather than traditional corporate advertisements to determine what is "real."

Social and Environmental Awareness

TikTok content also plays a pivotal role in fostering environmental and cultural awareness among students. Beyond seeking beautiful landscapes, TikTok has the power to transform how students perceive a destination, often turning indifference or negative stereotypes into positive interest.

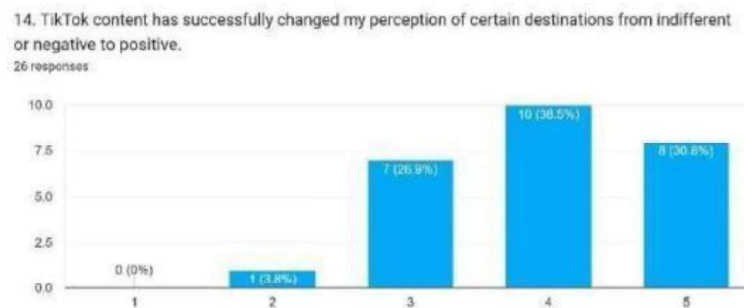


Figure 5: TikTok's Impact on Changing Destination Perceptions

[Source: Primary Data from Online Questionnaire (2026)]

Based on the data in Figure 5, a significant number of respondents agreed that TikTok content successfully changed their perception of certain destinations from indifferent or negative to positive. Respondents noted that seeing content about local traditions such as the Nyepi ceremony or sustainable tourism encourages them to be more respectful and interested travelers. This indicates that TikTok serves as an informal educational tool that shapes the travel ethics of the younger generation.

The ability of TikTok to shift perceptions, as shown in the findings, is consistent with

the research by (Liu et al., 2024), which suggests that the immersive and aesthetic

nature of short videos can diminish negative biases and replace them with curiosity. When influencers or local creators showcase the "real" and respectful side of a culture, it creates a sense of perceived authenticity (Zaffran et al., 2023).

Furthermore, this shift in perception aligns with (Wengel et al., 2022), who highlight that TikTok can be a powerful medium for "re-branding" destinations by focusing on cultural heritage rather than just mass tourism attractions. By educating users through storytelling, TikTok helps students develop a more nuanced understanding of global cultures, effectively functioning as a platform for vernacular education (Abidin, 2021) that promotes more conscious and ethical travel choices.

Conclusion

This study shows that TikTok is now a way for Generation Z university students to search and make decisions. The platform has a mix of pictures and videos personalized suggestions and content made by users that really changes what people like to do when they travel. The results show that while Gen Z students like things that look good they also think carefully about what's real and what is not. They prefer things that are genuine and not too popular.

To better engage Generation Z, Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) must pivot from polished, traditional advertising toward authentic, utility-driven storytelling that bridges the gap between digital hype and physical reality. Rather than focusing solely on "Instagrammable" aesthetics, DMOs should collaborate with creators to produce content that prioritizes transparency over perfection, incorporating honest reviews, logistical tips, and "day-in-the-life" narratives that build consumer trust. Furthermore, marketing strategies should align with the principles of sustainable and regenerative tourism by highlighting off-the-beaten-path cultural experiences and hidden gems. By leveraging TikTok to promote these lesser-known, environmentally conscious activities, stakeholders can alleviate the pressure of overtourism in crowded hotspots while satisfying Gen Z's growing demand for travel that is both socially responsible and culturally immersive.

Despite its foundational insights, this study possesses several limitations that warrant consideration. First, as a preliminary pilot study, the sample size is relatively contained (N=26), which may restrict the statistical generalizability of the findings to the broader Generation Z population across Indonesia. Second, the geographical and academic scope was concentrated within a specific local context, focusing exclusively on students from the English Language Education program. While this demographic provides a highly relevant look at digitally literate youth, it does not account for the diverse perspectives of Gen Z individuals from different socio-economic or educational backgrounds. Consequently, these findings should be viewed as a representative case study rather than a universal trend. Future research should aim to expand both the demographic and geographical reach to include a more diverse range of participants, thereby offering a more comprehensive understanding of TikTok's global and multifaceted impact on evolving tourism behaviours.

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