

The Role of Social Media Instagram in the Travel Process: Evidence from Young People in Surabaya

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Abstract

This paper aims to examine the role of Instagram in the travel process of Surabaya's young people. This process was divided into five stages: dreaming, planning, booking, experiencing, and sharing. Quantitative descriptive was employed by distributing 200 questionnaires to respondents aged ranging from 18 to 24 years old. The qualitative method was also utilized by having in-depth interviews with five informants. The results have shown that Surabaya's young people attach the most significant role of Instagram on the dreaming stage and the least role on the booking stage. Youngsters are inspired after seeing posts (uploads) associated with travel on Instagram due to travel-related accounts they follow. This study has provided a preliminary investigation of the travel process using Instagram. It should provide insights to travel agents, both offline and online, to consider Instagram as a promotional media because it plays an important role in the travel process amongst young people.

Keywords: Instagram; travel Process; young people; Surabaya.

1. Introduction

The tourism industry is one of the fastest-growing sectors globally and has constant and stable growth every year (UNWTO, 2018). A key characteristic of the tourism industry is becoming a knowledge-based industry (Nezakati et al., 2015). Information is part of the tourism industry which is also an information-intensive industry (Fotis, 2015). The emergence of web 2.0 and social media allows users to get extensive information. This phenomenon causes a shift in how tourists access information and the decision-making process from traditional to digitalized (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). Besides, the risks taken to buy intangible products are greatly reduced by the amount of information available from social media (Cao, Yu & Tian, 2017). This intangible product, for example, is service; there is no actual form but can be felt.

According to Parsons (2017), social media is a necessity that is used every day and has become part of the planning process of one's journey. Social media is used to share information and information search (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010) and create value for exchanging and sharing personal experiences and information (Litvin, Goldsmith & Pan, 2008). Social media itself has also changed the way tourists communicate, who initially only through verbal communication by Word-of-Mouth (WOM) into Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM).

Besides e-WOM, User Generated Content (UGC) also has a similar meaning to e-WOM (Leung

et al., 2013). According to Manap & Adzharudin (2013), UGC has a way of working that is the same as e-WOM (Bahtar & Muda, 2016). UGC is content that is on social media and shared by users (Parsons, 2017). According to Hvass & Munar (2012), UGC can even include visual, audio-visual, and written content. UGC is considered more reliable than a commercial advertisement because it is produced by fellow consumers, not by companies.

Over time, with all the facilities available, tourists began to look for visual information in travel-related decision-making. Visual information is the process of delivering information or messages to individuals or other parties using media portrayal with or without sound in the form of photos or videos. According to Tong (2018), Instagram is one of the most extensive and most active social media applications that concentrate on visual content and focus on UGC.

Instagram's popularity has skyrocketed and proved by the increasing number of users. Statistics from Statista (2019) show that Instagram users have reached one billion, which 500 million active users upload 100 million more photos and 400 million snapgrams a day that contain their daily lives, activities, and exploration of their journey (Ahlgren, 2019). At present, Indonesia is ranked fourth with 62 million active users on Instagram. In Indonesia, Instagram is one of the most popular social media platforms for today's young people. Most Instagram users in Indonesia range from 18 to 24, where the number reaches 23 million users (NapoleonCat, 2020).

Young people are willing to spend hours in front of the mobile phone screen to dwell on Instagram. Previously, Facebook and Twitter were the most preferred social media. In Piper Jaffray Survey, Instagram is now the favorite social media for young people (Sheetz, 2018). Compared to other types of social media, Instagram seems to be more conducive to users displaying photos, videos, travel, hobbies, and other daily activities attached to creativity and youth (Bohang, 2016). Instagram continues to develop the latest features such as Instagram Story, Instagram TV, and Instagram Live. Not to mention, Instagram also always updates its features, such as stickers on Instagram Story, and filters images, so that users will not get bored (Matchamu, 2019).

Instagram has many uses. The most significant use is as a visual-based application, where users can share their experiences through images (Parsons, 2017) and can be used to upload, edit photos and videos as effective communication and marketing tools by displaying products with visual descriptions (Ting et al., 2015). For young Indonesians, holidays are also considered incomplete if they do not take photos that will later be shared with an Instagram account. Not a few young people also share the results of food photos through Instagram (Matchamu, 2019). This trend makes Instagram began to be used as a tool to increase the growth of the tourism industry. This is proved by the increasing number of contents related to travel. At present, there are 387 million uploads with the hashtag #traveland, and this number continues to grow every day. Terttunen (2017) believes there is a strong correlation between trends in changing tourist behavior regarding trip planning along with the increasing popularity of travel content on Instagram.

Many people change destinations of vacation and places to visit after seeing photos uploaded by family, friends, relatives, or even strangers. Watching these photos can increase people's attention and interest in specific destinations and inspire travelers to travel (Lin & Huang, 2006). This is supported by Clark (2016) where the intensity of seeing a photo will stimulate the brain to crave something shown in the photo. Having a photo of a product shared on Instagram will increase interest and desire to get a similar product, leading to the same tourist destination selection. Instagram helps people connect motivation directly to action. That is, someone takes action immediately because of inspiring photos.

Research conducted by Tong (2018) in Hong Kong, Terttunen (2017) in Finlandia, Shuqair & Cragg (2017) found that Instagram was inspiring and had an

influence on the travel planning process. However, not many studies have explored the role of Instagram in the travel decision stages, specifically on the young group of people in Indonesia as one of the biggest users of Instagram. Thus, this study aims to examine the role of Instagram in the travel process, particularly for young people in Surabaya, and at what stage Instagram plays the biggest role in their travel stages.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Instagram

Instagram is a free application that allows each user to download and share photos with other Instagram users (Pratama, 2016). This application was founded on October 6, 2010, by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger. The Instagram name comes from the understanding of the overall function of this application. The word "insta" comes from the word "instant," which means displaying photos instantly. Whereas the word "gram" comes from the word "telegram," where telegram itself works to send information to others quickly (Rouse, 2018).

Instagram is one of the most widely used types of social media by young people and focuses on UGC to focus on existing content. In 2019, Instagram had 387 million posts with the #travel hashtag, and as many as 1 million users search for hashtags related to travel every week. Instagram plays an important role in the tourism industry and can benefit related businesses such as travel agents (Germon, Sokolova & Bami, 2017). Further research was done by Terttunen (2017) in Finland, and Tong (2018) in Hong Kong also revealed that more than 80% of the respondents agreed that Instagram has some influence on their travel plans. Instagram is considered as one of the social media that has inspired the selection of destinations and the best sources of travel-related information (Tong, 2018).

Most promotional activities in the tourism industry that utilize Instagram result in active engagement and customer attractiveness (Hanan & Putit, 2013). Given that tourists' interest in travel-related content is high, businesses can take advantage of free features provided by Instagram and natural involvement to increase awareness, loyalty and build a strong 'followers' base without the need to use ads on Instagram. Before Instagram, tourists used traditional methods to share holiday experiences with family and friends. It is currently more common to share photos, videos, and experiences on social media because it will reach a wider audience with a concise time. The internet has a

role in developing tourism destinations, and social media is a driving factor in promoting destinations (Manap & Adzharudin, 2013) and has become a useful tool for sharing travel experiences and also for users to plan trips (Terttunen, 2017).

2.2. Travel Decision Stages

Existing research on destination or travel planning process tends to follow the general consumer decision-making process model that proposes five main stages (Kotler & Keller, 2016). However, this model needs to be modified when linked to the context of the trip. Several researchers have offered some stages in the travel process, which can be seen in Table 1.

Cox et al. (2009) suggested a travel planning process model into three stages: pre-trip, during the trip, and post-trip. In comparison, Fotis et al. (2011) employed four steps by separating the pre-trip phase before and after selecting destinations. Before choosing the destination, users find information to get ideas of holiday destinations and narrow down their selection to destinations. After choosing the destination, users look for ideas and information related to accommodation and recreation. Then, Fotis (2015) utilized a new model adopted from Fotis et al. (2011) to assume that the travel process is a cycle. The dreaming phase is started when tourists share their travel experiences by uploading their pictures and expressing themselves on social media, and talking directly to their friends and family about their trip. The dreaming stage is ended right before a new decision about vacations is made, and pre-trip is commenced by a decision to have a vacation trip. Post-trip is a stage when tourists return to their homes and share their travel experiences.

Tong (2018) then adopted a model from Fotis (2015) and developed it into five stages. These five stages of travel decisions were primarily adopted for research related to social media, where social media is utilized at each stage.

a. **Dreaming.** It is the stage before the trip when tourists still do not have a destination. At this stage, tourists seek inspiration for the next trip actively or passively.

- b. **Planning.** It is the stage before the trip and after having a destination and begins further planning. The process of finding information is vital at this stage.
- c. **Booking.** This is the stage when tourists have decided when and where the destination is, then place an order (destination ticket, accommodation, and places to eat).
- d. **Experiencing.** It is a moment of experience during the journey and experience that was felt at that time. In this stage, tourists also look for additional information about certain activities, or things to do, look for additional information about restaurants, and to stay connected with the closest people while on vacation trips. This stage creates moments of experience during the trip.
- e. **Sharing.** It is the stage where tourists share their experiences and information about their destination through photos or videos after the trip ends. The related information can be a perspective on the choice of accommodation that is occupied and activities or things to do at the destination.

3. Methods

This study employed quantitative descriptive and qualitative research. Non-probability sampling using the purposive method was adopted in this study with some criteria: (1) Surabaya young people with age ranging from 18 to 24 years old; (2) Open the Instagram every day; (3) Love traveling. Of 200 questionnaires were collected from Surabaya young people using google form as an internet survey tool from 10 to May 25, 2019. Social media such as LINE, Whatsapp, Facebook, Twitter were utilized to collect the data from respondents. The questionnaire consisted of two parts; where the first part of the questionnaire contained an overview of the characteristics of the respondents. The second part contains the role of Instagram in the decision-making process related to the journey. The authors adopted the five-stage theory from Tong (2018), which consisted of dreaming, planning, booking, experiencing, and sharing stage. These five stages of the travel process are a model that is developed from the previous models showed in Table 1.

Table 1. Stages in Travel Decisions

Phase	Cox et al (2009)	Fotis et al (2011)	Fotis (2015)	Tong (2018)
Phase 1	Pre-trip	Pre-trip before selecting destinations Pre- after selecting destinations	Dreaming Pre-trip	<i>Dreaming</i> <i>Planning Booking</i>
Phase 2	During the trip	During the trip	During the trip	<i>Experiencing</i>
Phase 3	After the trip	Post-trip	Post- trip	<i>Sharing</i>

In addition, this model is considered more representative and suitable to examine tourists' travel behavior. Therefore, the authors chose Tong's (2018) model to analyze and investigate the travel process of young people in Surabaya when using Instagram as their social media platform.

Statistic descriptive was employed to measure mean and standard deviation associated with five travel stages to identify young people's perceptions of Instagram's role in their travel process. Moreover, in-depth semi-structured interviews with five informants were also deployed to understand better Instagram's role in the travel process of Surabaya young people.

According to Miles and Huberman (1994), there are three analysis elements: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. These systematic were adopted in this study to analyze the qualitative data. The result of the qualitative data was expected to explain the quantitative survey results further and confirm the role of Instagram in the travel decision stages.

4. Results

4.1. Respondent Profile

The profile of the respondents is presented in Table 2. Over 60% of respondents were female with ages ranging from 18 to 24 years. The majority of respondents were students (82.5%) with pocket money under IDR 3 million (46%), and about 70% had the frequency of opening Instagram more than 6 times per day. YouTube was mostly used by respondents other than Instagram, followed by Facebook and Pinterest, with the content preference were about destinations, restaurants, and activities.

4.2. Mean and Standard Deviation of Travel Stages

Table 3 shows the mean and standard deviation for each stage of travel decision from dreaming, planning, booking, experiencing, and sharing to measure Instagram's role in the travel process of

Table 2. Profile of the Respondents (n=200)

Variable	Frequency	%
Gender		
Male	69	34.5
Female	131	65.5
Occupation		
Students	165	82.5
Staff	19	9.5
Entrepreneurs	7	3.5
Professional	3	1.5
Others	6	3.0
Average monthly income/pocket money		
≤ Rp 3.000.000	92	46.0
Rp 3.000.001-5.000.000	77	38.5
Rp 5.000.001-10.000.000	22	11.0
>Rp. 10.000.000	9	4.5
Frequency of opening Instagram Apps per day		
Once	5	2.5
2-3 times	13	6.5
4-6 times	41	20.5
More than 6 times	141	70.5
Social Media used other than Instagram		
Facebook	84	42.0
Twitter	61	30.5
Snapchat	55	27.5
YouTube	183	91.5
Pinterest	72	36.0
Others	13	6.5
Content Preference		
Destinations	195	97.5
Accommodation	106	53.0
Activities	132	66.0
Restaurants	160	80.0
Others	1	0.5

Table 3. Mean and Standard Deviation of Travel Process

Statement	Mean	SD
Dreaming Stage	4.16	0.768
I felt inspired after seeing the upload (<i>post</i>) associated with <i>travel</i>	4.25	0.618
I have the intention to search for more information after seeing an upload (<i>post</i>) associated with <i>travel</i>	4.20	0.755
I used Instagram to find ideas about tourist destinations	4.16	0.861
I got inspiration for traveling through Instagram by following the account (<i>follow</i>) related to <i>travel</i>	4.02	0.839
Planning Stage	3.83	0.867
I use Instagram in the process of planning a trip to look for information on attractions and activities	4.01	0.767
I use Instagram in the travel planning process for exchanging information	3.90	0.821
I use Instagram in the travel planning process to narrow tourist destination choices	3.88	0.889
I use Instagram in the travel planning to find accommodation options	3.51	0.992
Booking Stage	3.19	1.094
I used Instagram in the process <i>booking</i> to confirm that I made the right tourist destination decision	3.25	1.079
I used Instagram in the booking process to help please feel happy after book a holiday	3.25	1.12
I used Instagram in the <i>booking</i> process to confirm that I made the right choice in choosing accommodation	3.15	1.028
I considered <i>booking</i> directly when I saw interesting ads on Instagram	3.11	1.148
Experiencing stage	3.89	0.863
I use Instagram when traveling to seek additional information on where to eat	4.31	0.674
I use Instagram when traveling to seek additional information on interesting activities to do	4.20	0.678
I used Instagram when take a trip to keep in touch with friends or family	3.91	0.849
I use Instagram to share experiences when the trip is taking place	3.14	1.252
Sharing Stage	3.79	0.874
I use Instagram when it finishes the trip to share trip photos	4.39	0.686
I use Instagram when it finishes the trip to share my opinion about the activities that I have done	3.70	0.874
I used Instagram when it finishes the trip to share opinions, I was on a travel destination	3.68	0.944
I use Instagram when it finishes the trip to share my opinion about the accommodation selected	3.39	0.991

Surabaya's young people. The findings revealed that among those five stages, dreaming (Mean = 4.16) played the most important role in the travel process, in which respondents felt inspired and had the intention to search for more information from Instagram after seeing posts related to travel. After dreaming, experiencing phase (Mean = 3.89) was deemed to be essential by youngsters when they travel, followed by planning (Mean = 3.83), sharing (Mean = 3.79), and then booking (Mean = 3.19).

4.3 Interview's Results

For a deeper insight into Instagram's role in the travel process amongst young people in Surabaya, in-

depth interviews were conducted with five informants with the profile as seen in Table 4. All the informants were required to use Instagram,Whatsapps, and LINE. The informants were selected based on the diversity of age, gender, and occupation to maintain the representative of Surabaya youngsters.

Table 4. Profile of the Informants

Informant	Gender	Age	Occupation
Informant 1	Female	20 years	Student
Informant 2	Male	21 years	Student
Informant 3	Male	22 years	Staff
Informant 4	Female	23 years	Entrepreneur
Informant 5	Female	24 years	Staff

Dreaming

Interview results indicated that the five informants followed at least one influencer who uploaded posts about travel. By following the account, informants indirectly saw the uploaded posts as interesting, and the informants felt inspired, as stated by a respondent as follow:

"... Most of the influencers usually recommend so I often see it, so it is like oh, it is interesting if you come here." (Informant 3)

In addition, Instagram is also used actively in finding destination ideas. If previously the informant felt inspired after seeing the post accidentally, the informant also sought information with their intentions as voiced a respondent as follow:

"... I happened to be on Lebaran holiday soon, so I was already looking at Instagram, so I was looking for information because I was still confused where I want to go on holiday" (Informant 3)

Instagram plays an essential role for the informants when looking for travel-related information through hashtags and location tags. Instagram is mainly used to seek inspiration for a future trip destination or destination ideas.

Planning

The informant stated that Instagram played a role in narrowing down tourist destination choices as described by a respondent as follow:

"... I usually look for more information, for example, when I have selected three destinations, I look for more information which is more interesting, something that will make me more interested. For example, in town A, five things interest me, but there are only three interesting ones in city B, so I will try to reduce the destination, which makes me less interested, like eliminating it." (Informant 1)

According to some informants, most of the experiences shared on Instagram were real experiences that are felt by most people, so that people can say it more honest as said by a respondent as follow:

"... now I am sure that young people are using Instagram for social media to find information or anything because from Instagram I think it is informative because it can upload photos. There are pictures, and there are captions in captions, there is a location, all of them are complete, so

want to find the information it is even easier with Instagram, so I think that searching for information about activities in other countries or certain cities is helpful." (Informant 4)

In the planning stage, the informants would exchange information by using direct messages with other users domestically and internationally to know more about the destinations. In addition, Instagram can also be used in the travel planning process to find accommodation. Story and hashtag were employed to help users explore a destination. Online travel agents such as Traveloka, Tiket.Com, and Airbnb would frequently use users to seek more information about the price after checking their Instagram.

Booking

During the booking stage, Instagram is mainly used to ensure that informants have made the right accommodation decisions by looking at reviews written and uploaded by others. This finding is more interesting and more reliable because photos can show things that are not explained by the OTA (online travel agent) site. For the booking process, Instagram is still used by informants as expressed by a respondent as follow:

"Usually, Instagram is also a medium for people to write a review, so sometimes when people travel and experience certain experiences, they can share via Instagram to people, the term is the review, I usually like to read, rather than reading reviews on Google, I prefer to read a review on Instagram." (Informant 4)

Several Informants also used Instagram to book their holiday if the offer was attractive. They also posted their booking by capturing their ticket to the story in Instagram.

Experiencing

To keep in touch with family and friends, informants use the direct message feature when the informant uploads a story. Other Instagram users can reply story, and it will show up in the informant's inbox. Informants can also interact through comments located under the photos that have been uploaded, as revealed in the following excerpt:

"When dealing with friends and family, huh? Usually using the DM feature, direct messages. Maybe some families ask, "Where is it, where?" Yes, usually through DM." (Informant 3)

Even though the informants had made a list at the planning stage, they were still looking for additional information, such as which menus should be ordered at the restaurant they were previously chosen. The informants opened the restaurant's Instagram or influencer account, uploading photos of food to find out its favorite or bestseller menu. Instagram is also used to share informants' experiences while they were traveling using the story feature.

Sharing

At the sharing stage, the informant stated that Instagram was used to share travel photos. This photo can contain tourist destinations and activities that have been carried out. Whereas to distribute opinions is rarely done unless someone asks directly to the informants. This result can be done through direct message as stated by the respondent as follow:

"To share opinions, I rarely, in general, I only share experiences through photos alone, through photos it is reflected whether we enjoy it or not."
(Informant 1)

In the sharing stage, Instagram is also used by informants to express their bad experiences relating to their holiday. They also use the story feature on Instagram to share the food they ate and the hotel they stayed.

5. Discussion

Young people of Surabaya were most likely to use Instagram at the dreaming stage. They agreed that Instagram plays an essential role in inspiring users after seeing uploads (posting) that deals with travel and drive their intention to search for more information. In other words, it can be said social media is a driving factor to promote and develop destinations (Manap & Adzharudin (2013). The results of this study confirmed the research done by Tong (2018), which revealed that Instagram played the biggest role in the dreaming stage to create inspiration for tourists to plan their holiday trip. This finding is also supported by the results obtained by Terttunen (2017) that Instagram had a crucial role in the information search process at the pre-trip stage.

From the interviews, it can be said that travel and food influencers' accounts were followed so that they could see related content. After viewing uploads, Surabaya's young people will seek further information if they feel interested. Information retrieval can be through features on Instagram such as the hashtag and location tag. When Surabaya youngsters press the hashtag or location tag, various photos will appear

immediately with the same type of content. If they have not got an idea about a tourist destination, they also can use Instagram to look for these ideas. Marketers can use hashtags and location tags to get more exposure uploaded and promote the destination to its targeted audience (Fatanti & Suyadnya, 2015; Terttunen, 2017). In other words, young people can get inspiration about tourist destinations passively or actively.

In the experiencing phase, the youngster in Surabaya uses Instagram to find additional information about places to eat and interesting activities to do for their trip. They realize that their plans can be different with what they wish during a trip; therefore, using Instagram to find additional information is very necessary. Even though they made plans and lists in the previous stage, people can still use Instagram to do a double check. For example, Instagram is used to view photos of menus in restaurants that have been previously selected. From Instagram, people can also get information about menu recommendations and reviews from other Instagram users.

Another example is to ascertain whether the attraction chosen at the time of planning is open or reviews to compare one attraction with another. At this stage, they can employ Instagram to stay in touch with friends or family. This fact is taken place through the direct message feature and comment column. Usually, Instagram users will reply to the story and will go into direct messages. In addition, at the experiencing stage, young people do not share their experiences when the trip takes place. They do not prefer to use a live video feature but to use a story to share their trip experience.

The planning stage was ranked third after the dreaming and experiencing phase. At this stage, Surabaya's young people use Instagram to find information about attractions and activities through the hashtag and uploads from other Instagram users. At this stage, Instagram has the least role in finding accommodation options. This is because young people tend to use other applications such as Airbnb and Traveloka. After all, these apps can provide more information needed for a trip. However, Instagram usage also remains because young people in Surabaya can see photos of the accommodation on Instagram to assess whether the accommodation is suitable or not. This result is because Surabaya youngsters believe that Instagram is not biased and more honest than other media. In addition, they also use Instagram to narrow down tourist destination choices. Photo comparison can be made, and they can use the location tag to view similar photos even if they do not follow the account that uploads them. Moreover, young people also use Instagram to exchange information at this stage. This is taken place by replying to the story or comment on the photo that is considered attractive. From there,

information can be obtained from the story uploader and photo.

The sharing stage in the travel process is that youngsters are most likely to use Instagram to share their trip photos when they end their traveling. This shows that the study results are in line with Instagram's primary function, which is the application for sharing photos. Instagram has been a helpful tool to share travel experiences among travelers and for users to plan their trips (Tertunen, 2017). People will upload vacation photos after the photo goes through an editing process that takes a long time to produce Instagrammable photos. The caption will also be written in the photo that explains the photo. Photos that are shared can be of various types of content, including personal photos with destination backgrounds, landscape photos, activity photos. At this stage, Surabaya's young people are less likely to share their opinion unless someone asks them to provide their opinions.

The booking stage plays the least role in the travel process of Surabaya's young people. At this stage, youngsters prefer to use OTA (Online Travel Agent) more than Instagram. They use Instagram at this stage only to ensure that the right decision has been made by looking at reviews of posts uploaded by other Instagram users. Instagram is deemed to be able to provide a real picture of a destination and selected accommodation. People would only share their happy feelings through Instagram when they were about to leave or get the original ticket but did not rule out the possibility to share photos of tickets after booking.

Overall, the interviews from five informants confirmed the quantitative method that Instagram plays an important role in inspiring its users to travel. By sharing photos, videos, and views or opinions during traveling, users widely get connected and inspired to experience what their friends and relatives have done during their trips. As Instagram continues to evolve in its functionality and features, users will benefit even more to get more information and inspiration to dream, plan, book, experience and share their trip. Social media impacts tourist motivation and influences the decision-making behavior of young tourists who are dominant on the social media platform (Parsons, 2017). Parsons (2017) confirmed that the younger generation is the most active group and becomes the main target of social media influences.

6. Conclusions

The wide range of perceived travel processes using Instagram amongst Surabaya's young people has been expressed through five discrete stages (dreaming, planning, booking, experiencing, and sharing). The results have shown that Surabaya youngsters attach the

greatest role of Instagram to dreaming stages, followed by experiencing, planning, sharing, and the least role (lowest ranking) to booking. People, especially young people in Surabaya, are inspired after seeing posts (uploads) associated with travel on Instagram due to travel-related accounts they follow.

Sharing trip experiences on Instagram are performed by young people through stories and not live video. They use Instagram to find additional information, places to eat, and exciting activities to do. Instagram also helps young people to plan their trip by narrowing down tourist destination choices with the help of travel-related information and exchanging information among users on Instagram. In addition, youngsters use Instagram to share their photos during their trips with a caption that can contain opinions about tourist destinations, accommodations, and activities carried out. Sharing pictures has become an important point when using Instagram. The booking stage is not considered to be employed by young people as they prefer to utilize Online Travel Agent (OTA) to make the booking for their trip.

This study has provided a preliminary investigation of the travel process using Instagram perceived by young people in Surabaya, and it should provide insights to industry practitioners, particularly travel agents, both offline and online, to consider Instagram as a promotional media as a result that Instagram plays a vital role in the travel process of young people. For travel-based Instagram users, especially influencers, this study is expected to be an input for account users and influencers to share more experiences in photos because people are more interested and inspired when looking at interesting photos before traveling.

The limitation of this study is that the findings draw exclusively on young people in Surabaya between 18 to 24 years as Instagram users. Their views may diverge somewhat from people from other cities, age-range, and other apps users. Thus, the results cannot be generalized as a guide for decision-making. Therefore, it is suggested that a conclusive study should be conducted for further research to examine the relationship between the travel process and visit intention to destination. Other social media such as Youtube and Facebook in the travel process with a more diverse sample would be interesting to investigate.

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