The Influence of Media on Teenagers in Choosing Panjang Beach for Tourism in The Digital Era

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Abstract: *Social media has become essential for tourism promotion in this digital era. This research analyses the influence of social media platforms on tourism promotion in Bengkulu, using James S. Coleman's rational choice theory. This research uses a closed questionnaire given to 90 students who use social media to find a tourism destination. The analysis technique used is multiple linear regression analysis and percentage descriptive statistics. The results showed that the review of social media posts significantly influenced teenagers' interest in visiting a destination. 52.22% of respondents prefer Instagram as their travel reference, supported by reviews of tourist destinations in promotional posts. Tourism destinations that are active and creative in utilizing social media and have good reviews tend to have a higher level of interaction with potential tourists. The results of this study guide tourist destinations and tourism marketers to maximize the potential of social media in their promotion.*

Keywords: *Long Beach Tourism Destination; Social Media; Tourism Promotion; Social Media Platform.*

A. INTRODUCTION

Communication and information technology utilization also directly correlates with the tourism sector. E-ticketing, various kinds of advertising and sales of tourist lodging, promotion and sales of travel agents and tour operators through the Internet and web pages, as well as similar activities that can increase the progress of promotional activities (Rifki Rahmanda et al., 2020). Tourism web pages and similar activities can increase the progress of promotional and tourism activities (Mariani et al., 2022). Many tourist destination managers utilize digital developments to achieve their marketing goals. The private sector is not limited to using the Internet for business; it also includes other applications.

The important thing about digital media use is that there is a silent communication channel between the availability of products and services and consumers. Utilizing digital media and various information communication (ICT) sources can boost day-to-day business performance, especially regarding changes in operations, activities, and communication styles, as well as advances in buyer behavior when requiring business references and purchases. (Buhalis, D, 2014). This shows how information technology, particularly social media, has become a powerful force in shaping consumer behavior and marketing strategies in the tourism sector.

The communication technology has significantly impacted the global economy. In particular, it has affected the tourism sector. Advances in communication

technology have enabled tourism service providers to improve services to their consumers through various means, such as electronic tickets, marketing through the Internet and websites, sales through online travel agents, and other applications. The impact is seen in economic changes both on a large scale (macro) and a small scale (micro). Today's Tourism marketing relies on the Internet and integrates various technology platforms to reach the target market more effectively. In addition, the direct relationship between service or product providers and consumers is increasing through channels that focus more on information and data. Changes in consumer behavior are also significant in this context. Consumers are now more aware of the importance of the information and services they receive, and technology has enabled service providers to meet their needs and preferences better

In the digital age, the landscape of tourism marketing has significantly changed, with social media content on travel as a critical influencer of consumer behavior. Many tourists share their experiences on social media (Sjaida et al., 2021). Besides being used to make friends, social media is also a powerful tool in shaping purchasing decisions. Travelers trust online information and comments posted by others and also trust the company's official website. Knowing this, companies should be able to develop appropriate strategies designed to attract the attention of millennials and encourage them to make purchasing decisions based on the experiences and satisfaction felt by others. Millennials trust comments and posts from people they do not know more than official recommendations from companies (Dabija et al., 2018). Therefore, it can be concluded that the digital age has necessitated a significant shift in tourism marketing strategies, with social media content playing a pivotal role. TTravelerstend is to share their experiences online and information and comments from others on social media and official company websites more than official recommendations. Therefore, tourism companies need to adapt their marketing strategies to the digital age, leveraging the power of social media to attract the attention of millennials and influence their purchasing decisions based on the experiences and satisfaction of others they see online.

Panjang Beach Tourism is located on the west side of Bengkulu City, which is only approximately two kilokilometersm kilometersentre. The location and being not far from the city center is a strecenterossessed in addition to the natural panorama and beautiful sea, so it needs serious attention from the Provincial Government and Bengkulu City to make Panjang Beach a tourist area that attracts tourists to come to Bengkulu City. The increasing number of tourist visits to Bengkulu City has contributed significantly to tourism development. This can be seen from the data from the Bengkulu City Culture and Creative Economy Office regarding data on foreign and domestic tourist visits in 2018 – 2022 (Table 1), which shows an increase in the number of tourist visits each year. Still, there was a decline in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but the number of tourist visits increased again after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 1. Foreign and Local Tourist Visits 2018 – 2022

Category of travelers	Year travelers					
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
local tourists	531.353	600,429	690.493	225.553	421.458	511.271
foreign tourists	868	952	1.066	320	529	793
Total	532.221	601.381	691.559	225.873	421.987	512.010

Source: Bengkulu Province Tourism Office, 2023

Promotion must essentially make marketing efforts. Strategies carried out by the Bengkulu City Tourism Office related to promotion include marketing via the Internet, through booklets and leaflets, and participating in tourism exhibitions. Regional and national exhibitions are also part of the promotion strategy. Panjang Beach destination development is one of the main focuses of the provincial government and Bengkulu City to improve the tourism sector. Strong support from the local government and diverse promotional strategies have helped increase the interest of domestic and foreign tourists to visit Bengkulu City.

With the development of technology and easy access to the Internet, teenagers are increasingly influenced by digital media, especially social media, in seeking information and making travel choices. Travel documentation posted on social media attracts the attention of other users, mainly if supported by interesting backgrounds and scenery. Self-branding activities on social media also influence the increase of information related to tourist destinations. They can access reviews, photos, videos, and recommendations that influence destination choice through social media. This study aims to analyze the role of the rolanalyzecial media in influencing teenagers' decision to travel to Bengkulu City. This research is essential for designing more effective tourism marketing strategies based on understanding digital media's role.

B. METHOD

This research uses quantitative methods with data collection through questionnaires and secondary data in user interactions on platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and YouTube. The research sample consisted of 90 respondents selected using the snowball sampling method, facilitating access to relevant respondents, namely teenage students active on social media. The age group of 17-25 was chosen as they are active social media users and play an important role in tourism trends. The number of 90 respondents was considered sufficient for quantitative analysis, including multiple linear regression, to illustrate the role of social media in travel decisions. The research was located at Panjang Beach in Bengkulu City, chosen due to its popularity among millennial travelers. The Travelers is an ideal place to collect data on the role of social media in influencing travel decisions. The researcher used quantitative analysis, namely multiple linear regression and percentage descriptive statistics, to illustrate trends and correlations. Multiple linear regression was used to see the effect of independent variables, such as social media promotion (X1) and tourist destination reviews (X2), on repeat visit interest (Y).

Conceptual Framework of Research:

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Social Media Promotion
        (X1)
                                          Visiting Decision (Y).
Reviews of Tourist
Destinations (X2).
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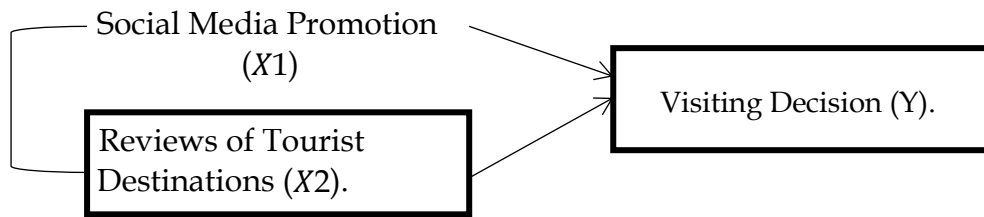
Research Variable

The variables used in this study are as follows:

1. This study uses two independent variables: Instagram Social Media Promotion (X1) and tourist destination reviews (X2).
2. The dependent variable in this study is the Visiting Decision (Y).

C. LITERATUR REVIEW

Social Media Promotion

Research (Tantriana & Widiartanto, 2019) on the Effect of Accessibility, Experiential Marketing, and Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) on Customer Satisfaction as an Involving Variable reveals that parsimoniously, accessibility, experiential marketing, and electronic word of mouth have a significant influence on customer satisfaction. Conversely, simultaneously, experiential marketing and electronic word-of-mouth have a significant impact on client happiness (Pamungkas, 2017).

Arisondha and Nifita (2018) show that social media, including Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram, impact people's willingness to return. In line with Setiyorini et al. (2018), effective word of mouth and social media hurt visitors' tendency to visit specific tourist destinations. In addition, research (Sutiyati et al., 2020) that examines the effect of social media promotion on the visiting interest of teenage followers shows that promotion through social media significantly influences the visiting interest of adolescent followers.

Thus, it can be concluded that tourism destination promotion aims to increase the number of tourists and tourism revenue. Social media is essential in this promotion because it can attractively reach a broader audience. Research shows that marketing accessibility significantly affects customer satisfaction. Social media has also significantly impacted visitation interest and people's willingness to return. Effective promotion through social media can increase interest in visiting, especially among teenagers.

Visiting Decision

According to Intan Juwita (2016), a visiting decision is an action taken by an individual or group of individuals who travel to a specific place to express creativity, develop themselves, or learn about the unique qualities of the tourist destination they visit for a short time.

Rational Choice Theory

James S. Coleman's rational choice theory explains that individuals make decisions based on logical calculations to maximize their benefits or satisfaction by considering various options and consequences. In the context of research on the influence of digital media on teenagers' tourism choices in Panjang Beach, this theory is relevant because it shows how rational individuals utilize information on social media to make tourism decisions.

Rational choice theory became popular when James S. Coleman founded the journal Rationality and Society in 1989. The purpose of the journal entry was to fill in ideas from a deeply rational point of view. James S. Coleman's rational preference theory is clearly stated in its definition: "Individual preferences refer to the way individuals choose to pursue their goals as well as the way those goals are determined by their preferences." However, James S. Coleman goes on to state that to achieve the theoretical goal, they must have accurate knowledge of the rational actors in the economic domain. These actors can then maximize utility or profit while satisfying their wants and needs (Ritzer, 2010)—a person who is steadfast in determining what needs to be done to formulate the indicated needs.

In this study, teenagers used social media such as Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and YouTube to search for information about travel destinations, read reviews, view photos and videos, and get recommendations from other users. They evaluate this information rationally to determine the most attractive destinations that suit their preferences. Coleman states that individual actions are based on rational preferences and the information they have. Therefore, in the context of this study, teenagers rely on social media as the primary source of information to make rational and informed travel decisions.

D. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data in this study are data from the results of questionnaires to ninety selected respondents, 56% men and 44% women, who were distributed to students who were sampled. In this study, 81% of respondents live in Bengkulu, and 11% are respondents who come from outside Bengkulu.

Table 2. Teenagers use of Social Media Platforms Bengkulu to Share Travel Posts
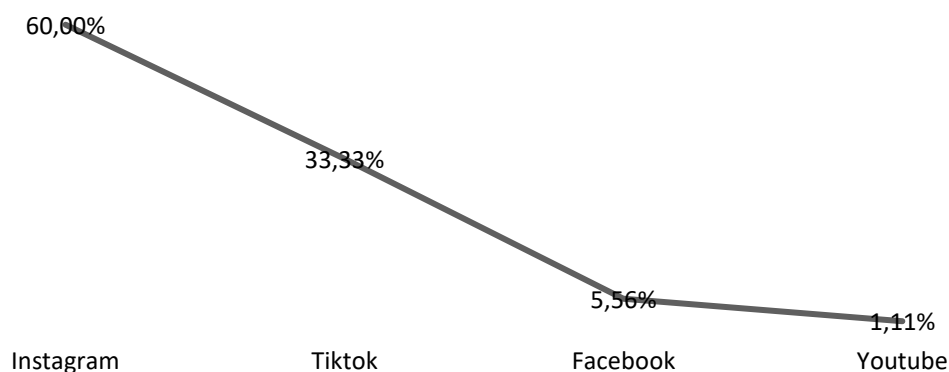
Source: primary data processed by researchers (2023)

Table 2 shows that 60% of respondents chose Instagram as the social media platform for sharing posts related to tourism in Bengkulu. This shows millennials prefer Instagram as a medium for promoting tourism through social media posts.

Table 3. Percentage of Social Media Where Tourist Destination Content is Found
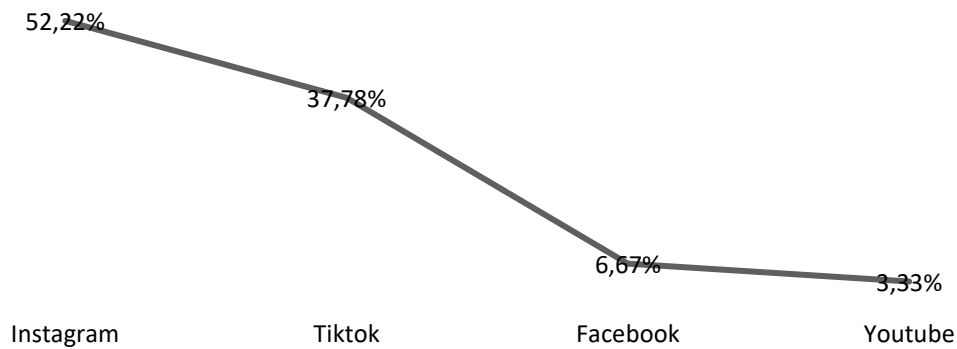
Source: primary data processed by researchers (2023)

Based on Table 3, the Instagram media platform is the most commonly found platform related to tourist destination content, with a percentage of 52.22%, followed by TikTok at 37.78%. This shows that millennials prefer Instagram as a reference for their travel; their preferences are influenced by reviews and information available on social media; this is by the principle of rational choice, where individuals seek information most beneficial to their decisions.

Significance of Correlation Variable

In this study, researchers used SPSS 18 for quantitative, multiple linear regression, and coefficient of determination analyses.

Multiple linear regression analysis is a model that involves more than one independent variable and is used to determine the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable, namely Instagram Social Media Promotion ($X1$) Tourism Attraction ($X2$) on Visiting Decisions (Y).

Description:
Instagram Social Media Promotion: $X1$
Reviews about tourist destinations: $X2$
Visiting decision: Y

According to Sugiyono (2017: 224), The correlation coefficient is the number of relationships between two or more variables. According to Sugiyono (2017: 228), The product-moment correlation coefficient is a technique used to find relationships and prove the hypothesis of a relationship between two variables when the data from two variables are the same. The coefficient of determination, which is the square of the correlation coefficient ($r2$), is called the determining coefficient because the variance in the dependent variable can be explained through the variance in the independent variable.

Table 4. Interpretation Guidelines for the Coefficient of Correlation

Interval Koefisien	Relationship Level
0,00 – 0,199	Very Low

0,20 – 0,399	Low
0,40 – 0,599	Medium
0,60 – 0,799	Strong
0,80 – 1,000	Very Strong

Source: Sugiyono (2017: 148)

The following are statistical regression results that explain the correlation value and the coefficient of determination value

Table 5. Statistical Regression Results

Regression Statistics	
Multiple R	0,50616553
R Square	0,25620354
Adjusted R Square	0,23910477
Standard Error	0,49207476
Observations	90

Source: primary data processed by researchers (2023)

The correlation value between $X1$, $X2$, and Y is 0.5061, shown by Multiple-R, so it falls into the medium category. This indicates that Instagram tourism promotion and tourist destination reviews are moderately correlated.

Based on the results of determination testing using SPSS version 18, we can see that the coefficient of determination is 0.256, or 25.6%, indicated by R-Square. This means that $X1$ and $X2$ affect Y by 25.6%; other factors influence the rest.

Table 6. Statistical Regression Results

	Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value	Lower 95%	Upper 95%	Lower 95,0%	Upper 95,0%
Intercept	1,340412843	0,252224448	5,31436526	8,1525E-07	0,839089442	1,8417362	0,83908944	1,84173624
X1	0,211291872	0,111153883	1,90089511	0,0606266	-0,009638506	0,4322223	-0,0096385	0,43222225
X2	0,310393956	0,105620878	2,93875568	0,00421863	0,100461024	0,5203269	0,10046102	0,52032689

Source: primary data processed by researchers (2023)

Variable $X1$ p-value of 0.060 means greater than Alpha 0.05, while variable $X2$ p-value of 0.004 means less than Alpha 0.05. Thus, it can be concluded that variable $X2$ significantly affects Y.

Statistical analysis shows exciting results regarding the influence of variables in the context of tourist visiting decisions. The variable $X1$ has a p-value of 0.060, greater than alpha 0.05, indicating that Instagram social media promotion does not significantly influence visiting decisions. However, the variable $X2$ has a p-value of 0.004, which is smaller than alpha 0.05, indicating that reviews of tourist destination posts significantly affect visiting decisions. From this analysis, it can be concluded that reviews on tourist destination posts have a significant influence. This shows the importance of solid review content and testimonials in attracting interest and influencing tourists' visiting decisions. This analysis can be an essential foundation in planning marketing and promotion strategies for the tourism industry to attract attractive reviews.

In the study, destination reviews and social media interactions influenced travelers' decisions. The results show that reviews through social media significantly influence teenagers' interest in visiting. This is consistent with rational choice, where effective reviews can affect individuals' perceptions and preferences, making them

more likely to choose a well-promoted destination. Teenagers weigh the benefits of positive information (such as good reviews and creative posts) and avoid potential costs (such as bad experiences or negative reviews). This reflects rational choice theory, emphasizing decision-making based on evaluating benefits and costs. Social media allows tourist destinations such as Panjang Beach to promote themselves directly to teenagers. Through photos, videos, and reviews from previous visitors, they can showcase the beauty of the beach, the facilities available, and the activities that can be done there. Posts on social media about holiday experiences at Panjang Beach from friends or family members can inspire and motivate teenagers to visit the place. This can positively encourage choosing Panjang Beach as a holiday destination.

In addition, reviews and recommendations from other users on platforms such as Instagram or TikTok can provide a clearer picture of the experience at Panjang Beach. Beach. Teenagers trust reviews from fellow social media users more when making holiday decisions. Through social media, teenagers can obtain complete information about the accessibility of Panjang Beach, such as transport that can be used, accommodation around the beach, and facilities such as restaurants, places to relax, or other tourist activities. Thus, social media plays a vital role in helping teenagers make travel choices, including in the context of Panjang Beach in Bengkulu City.

The influence of media in the digital era is vast for teenagers who are choosing Panjang Beach, Bengkulu City, as a tourist destination. They are often influenced by attractive images and videos about Panjang Beach shared on social media, such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube by influencers or tourism activists. In addition, positive reviews and online ratings on sites such as TripAdvisor and Google Reviews can also encourage them to choose Panjang Beach for its natural beauty and facilities. Technological advancements also provide virtual experiences through virtual tours and 360-degree videos, allowing teenagers to experience first-hand experiences digitally. Digital advertising campaigns, both from tourism boards and travel agencies, also influence teenagers' decisions by highlighting the unique attractions and experiences at Panjang Beach.

In addition, the influence of influencers, bloggers, and user-generated content also plays a vital role in inspiring teenagers to visit Panjang Beach. Environmental awareness and sustainable tourism practices can also be a determining factor in choosing a destination, especially if Pantai Panjang is promoted as an eco-friendly destination. Thus, media in the digital era plays a vital role in shaping teenagers' tourism preferences towards Pantai Panjang, Bengkulu City. It also reflects how the evolution of media and technology has changed how teenagers obtain information and decide their destinations.

Based on the results displayed in Table 2, it can be seen that 60% of respondents chose Instagram as the leading social media platform for sharing tourism-related content in Bengkulu. From a statistical perspective, this proportion shows that Instagram is the most popular medium among respondents for promoting tourist destinations. This result is relevant to the trend of social media usage among millennials, who are known as active users of digital technology. With its visual features such as photos and videos, Instagram is perfect for aesthetically and informatively showcasing tourist attractions. Thus, this social media provides an

excellent opportunity for individuals and the tourism industry to reach a wider audience.

The features contained in Instagram, such as digital filters, Instagram stories, IG TV, and the ease of other networking activities, make Instagram stick in the hearts of its users. The research results (Rizki & Pangestuti, 2017) state that social media, such as Instagram, significantly affects visiting decisions.

(Mahendra, B, 2017) states that Instagram is a photo-sharing program that allows users to take pictures, add digital filters, and share them. Social media users use it for various tasks and to access a wide range of information via text, audio, video, and image formats. Many people consider Instagram one of the most well-known social media platforms. There are five primary menus on Instagram. (Atmoko, 2012), which are as follows:

1) Home is the main page with images and videos posted by users you follow.
2) Other users can leave comments in the comments section on images, videos, and comments uploaded by others in the designated comments area.
3) View Explore is an assortment of liked images and movies.
4) The profile provides access to user information.
5) News Feed is a feature that allows users to receive notifications about various actions taken by other Instagram users.

Social media changes people's lives, even among female students who are part of modern society and are said to be forward-thinking people today in terms of intellectuality. The emergence of social media, one of which is Instagram, has shifted female students' behavior patterns culturally and in terms of ethics and norms. It is undeniable that, from various circles and ages, almost all female students currently use social media to obtain and convey information to the public (Sarmiati, 2019). Research (by Harahap et al., 2023) also explains that social media is used by its users to carry out various activities and various information through images, text, video, and audio. Instagram is one of the most widely known social media by many people. So, it can be concluded that Instagram is an attractive social media platform with various features that make it popular among users, especially teenagers. Features such as digital filters, Instagram Story, IG TV, and ease of networking help Instagram stick in the hearts of its users.

The results show that the use of the Instagram social media platform in sharing posts related to tourism in Bengkulu has a significant influence on visiting decisions, which indicates that this platform is not just ordinary social media but also has a real impact on user behavior—teenagers' decision to use Instagram as their primary platform is based on rational judgment. From the perspective of Coleman's logical theory, tourism industry players need to make sensible decisions about which social media platforms to use based on the preferences and habits of their target audiences. Choosing Instagram for tourism promotion is rational because this platform is more effective in attracting the attention and interest of teenagers, the primary target audience. In addition, Instagram has five main menus that make it easy for users to explore and interact with content and other users, making it one of the most desirable and widely used platforms worldwide. Instagram plays a vital role in increasing tourism visits and development, as the platform allows users to promote tourist destinations through engaging photos and videos, inspiring others to visit the place. The Explore feature also helps in finding new travel inspiration. Collaboration with

influencers and monitoring travel trends through Instagram also increase visits to tourist destinations. Thus, Instagram is a social media platform and an essential tool in the tourism industry.

Table 3 and Table 5 show that the Instagram media platform dominates in tourist destination content with a percentage of 52.22%, while TikTok is in second place with 37.78%. This indicates that Instagram is millennials' most widely used platform as a source of tourist-related information. Several factors may explain Instagram's dominance in this context. Firstly, Instagram has long been a popular platform among millennials and has built a reputation as a place to share high-quality photos and videos, including travel-related content. Features such as Instagram Stories, IGTV, and location tagging make it easy for users to find travel inspiration and tips. In addition, influencers and travel bloggers often use Instagram as a critical platform to share their travel experiences, which can influence other millennials' travel preferences and decisions. On the other hand, TikTok may be an increasingly popular platform among millennials, but Instagram is still the top choice in the context of travel content. Nonetheless, changes in trends and user preferences may occur over time, making it necessary to continuously monitor and follow the evolution of consumer behavior in the context of travel.

This statistical analysis reveals that there is a moderate relationship between tourism promotion through Instagram ($X1$) and tourist destination reviews ($X2$) with the measured variable (Y), with a correlation value of 0.5061. This result is supported by the coefficient of determination of 0.256 or 25.6% indicated by R-Square, which suggests that about a quarter of the variation in the measured variable (Y) can be explained by the predictor variables ($X1$ and $X2$). At the same time, the rest is influenced by other factors not included in the analysis model. A broader interpretation of this result is that tourism promotion through Instagram and tourist destination reviews significantly affect the measured variable. However, other factors play a role in determining the variability of the measured variable.

Tourism promotion and destination reviews can influence visitors' interest in or preference for a destination. This is due to the tendency of visitors to consider various additional factors, such as price, amenities, weather, and special events, that can be seen through reviews and posts on social media. This information presented in social media becomes the primary source that visitors access to shape their perception of a destination. This analysis provides greater insight into the complexity of factors that influence the tourism industry and can serve as a foundation for formulating more targeted marketing strategies and more effective decision-making in tourism.

Thus, it can be concluded that to develop tourist destinations and increase the number of tourist visits, there is a close relationship between tourism promotion and reviews related to destinations on social media. The more quality tourism promotion content posted, the more positive the reviews will be about the destination. For example, a review that mentions that Panjang Beach in Bengkulu City is beautiful, clean, easily accessible, and offers interesting culinary variations shows how positive reviews can influence the destination's image and encourage tourists' interest in visiting.

E. CONCLUSIONS

In Bengkulu City, millennials tend to use Instagram as the leading platform to find references related to their travel. Based on the data, Instagram, social media, and reviews related to tourist destinations significantly influence tourists' decision to visit, especially Panjang Beach and Bengkulu City. The more positive content shared about the area's tourism, the more positive reviews and exposure increases, which impacts increasing tourist visits in terms of frequency and volume of visits. This fact underscores that visitor decisions are the result of rational choices. Although every individual has the freedom to make choices, in tourism, they tend to consider strategic needs, such as accommodation facilities, accessibility, and amenities available in the destination.

F. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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