Consumer value co-creation impact on Egyptian tourism through social media

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Abstract:

The Egyptian tourism industry requires different strategies to develop Egypt's image with the international audience and create a relationship with the target audience due to the tremendous development in social media and the tourist's heavy dependence on supporting the opinions and experience of other members in making decisions where the audience is no longer a passive audience but an active player that participates and co-create value through content. The literature review reveals the factors that encourage consumers to participate and collaborate with the Egyptian tourism industry in value co -creation (VCC) to effectively create differentiation, reputation, and emotional impression with the tourists. The aim of this study is to reach a strategy to encourage consumers to participate in (VCC) through social media to achieve a good reputation and brand awareness for Egyptian tourism industry. The research **method** adopts reflective reviews and related literature of the strategies based on consumer value co-creation through social media to reach a model guideline for Egyptian tourism industry in future. An analytical study conducted in current tourism campaigns in Egypt regarding consumer in managing social content. The author needs to conclude that in order to establish a new strategy based on value co-creation, it must support consumer involving, participating and interacting to fully achieve competitive advantage of Egyptian tourism industry. The end outcome is a graphical model of important factors for successful strategy based on consumer value co-creation (VCC) through social media.

Keywords:

value co-creation (VCC) - social media- UGC.

الملخص:

تتطلب صناعة السياحة المصرية إستراتيجيات مختلفة لتطوير صورة مصر مع الجمهور الدولى وخلق علاقة مع الجمهور المستهدف بسبب التطور الهائل فى وسائل التواصل الإجتماعى وإعتماد السائح عليها بشدة فى إتخاذ القرارات من خلال معرفة أراء وخبرة الأعضاء الآخرين حيث لم يعد الجمهور جمهوراً سلبيًا ولكن أصبح له دورفعال و نشط، فهو يشارك فى خلق القيمة المشتركة (VCC) لصناعة السياحة من خلال المحتوى عبر الوسائل الاجتماعية. يهتم البحث بدراسة العوامل التى تشجع المستهلكين على المشاركة والتعاون مع صناعة السياحة فى خلق القيمة المشتركة VCC مما يدعم بشكل فعال التميز والسمعة والروابط العاطفية مع السياح فى مصر، حيث تهدف الدراسة إلى الوصول إلى إستراتيجية لتشجيع المستهلكين على المشاركة فى خلق القيمة المشتركةVCC من خلال وسائل التواصل الاجتماعى لتحقيق سمعة جيدة والوعى بصورة السياحة المصرية نتيجة للمشاركة الإيجابية للمستهلك. وفى سبيل ذلك يتبع البحث المنهج الوصفى التحليلى القائم على جمع المعلومات لبناء الإطار النظرى من خلال الدراسات ذات الصلة بالإستراتيجيات والمشاركة فى خلق بناء القيمة عن طريق وسائل التواصل الاجتماعى للوصول إلى نموذج إرشادى يساعد فى نجاح وتطورصناع

السياحة فى مصر فى المستقبل. وقد أجريت الدراسة التحليلية على الحملات السياحية فى مصر القائمة على مشاركة المستهلك فى خلق القيمة المشتركة و إدارة المحتوى الاجتماعى عبر وسائل التواصل الإجتماعى، من أجل إستنتاج العوامل الهامة لبناء إستراتيجية جديدة تقوم على خلق القيمة المشتركة التى يدعمها المستهلك بشكل إيجابى والوصول إلى نموذج جرافيكى للعوامل المهمة للاستراتيجية الناجحة على أساس المشاركة فى بناء القيمة (VCC) من خلال وسائل التواصل الاجتماعى مما يحقق ميزة تنافسية لصناعة السياحة فى مصر.

الكلمات المفتاحية:
خلق القيمة المشتركة ـ وسائل التواصل الإجتماعى

1. Introduction

The Tourism industry has changed completely. Digital and social media platforms are fast becoming the most important and widely used source of travel information and making decisions, (1) Giving voice to users and consumers explores how user-generated content could lead to more inclusive outcomes for tourism at a global level where users enabled to share their experience and opinions beyond their social circles to the online communities created by platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Trip Advisor and Google.

(Fig. 1) user-generated content

The consumers have shifted from passive to active players through the content and value co-creation and the Word-of-Mouth which had a strong influence on the consumer decision-making process, due to the Consumers perceive WOM as more credible than a tourism industry's advertisements, because the content is not being created by organization interests(2)

Consumer participating in value co-creation will have a positive effect on the behavior and experiences of tourists and Egypt's image when it comes to developing tourism industry and services. Specifically, we expect that the implementation of a value co-creation strategy will lead to greater satisfaction and Consumer loyalty

Hence Egypt's tourism industry needs different strategies to strengthen its competitive position and develop Egypt's image to compete with other destinations.

The aim of the research is to guide Egypt tourism industry on how to encourage consumers to participate and collaborate in value co -creation (VCC) effectively to create differentiation and make positive image for Egypt furthermore to improve the competitiveness of its destination.

2. Social media impact in tourism industry

Social media has created a completely new way for tourism organizations to interact with consumers online, bringing intangible assets such as value and reputation for tourism organizations.

Social media platforms enable consumers to share and post content publicly, engage in collaborative planning and privately, creating virtual communities. consumers are able to interact with each others and create content without a media outlet has shifted the power dynamic between the organizations and the consumer. (3) Most of consumers follow tourism information to interact with other consumers and get involved in e-word of mouth.
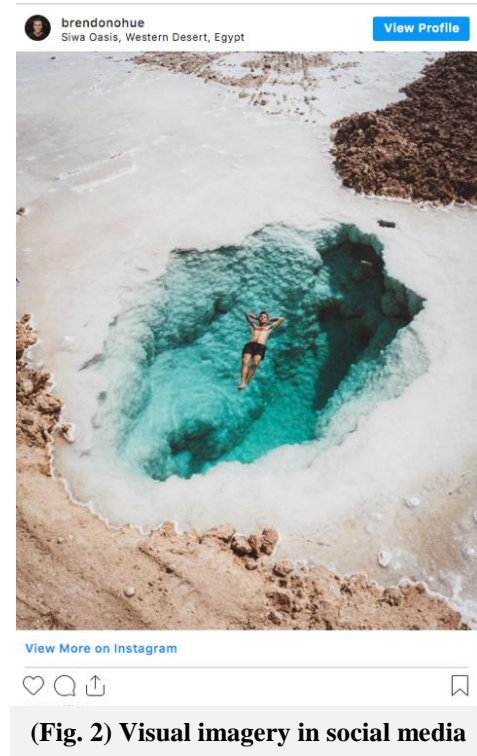
Facebook was chosen as the most used social media platform. Understanding consumer characteristics, preferences, most of tourism organizations created Facebook accounts because it is a great place for targeting their consumers and value co-creation.

In tourism, **visual imagery** is a primacy of the destinations and attractions promotion and advertising, 'captured' images taken by consumers and tourists images has become crucial for tourist image formation and reproduction.

(Fig. 2) Visual imagery in social media

Today platforms like Facebook, Trip Advisor, Instagram and Twitter have given the opportunity for consumers and travelers to post share and their pictures, videos, recommendations, opinions, and reviews of their travel experiences, virtually and on time with their friends, as well as with large global audiences. In 2017, Instagram informed that more than 95 million photos and videos were posted on their platform every day.(4) the impact of online visual images is more retain and engaging than text alone and their online sharing can reinforce a tourism destination's image and create deeper loyalty, making these images are powerful tools for tourism marketing. Indeed, a positive and emotional relationship has been found between the photographic behavior of tourists (such as sharing) and their happiness. Moreover, in a few words the text which accompanies images in posts reflects emotional values that lead to affective bonding and attitudes toward a tourism destination. (5)

3. User generated content(UGC) in tourism industry through social media

UGC is now trend and it is an increasing part of tourism industry marketing strategies. Creating and uploading content has become an attitude for consumers and travelers.

There are many factors that have led to the UGC rise as an invaluable travel research and brand marketing tool such as:

- **Increased smartphone use**

Mobile phone adoption has increased the amount and types of user-generated content, Now travelers can shoot travel photos and videos, edit them and upload them within seconds, resulting in high-quality, experiential content available for tourism destination use.(6)

- **Rise in social media channels**

Social media platforms have developed travel features like location tags and filters allowing consumers and users to include the name and location of where they are traveling hence travelers have options for posting, sharing and viewing travel content more than before . They can also post a photo, video, a 360 video, a gif, a fast-moving video of your trip, and stream a live video where people can watch his experience in real-time. Many destinations have dabbled in virtual reality to bring consumers closer to the travel experience from home. In addition to travel websites and booking channels which added the ability for users to rate their experiences and post reviews increasing the importance of UGC across the internet. Facebook asks you to post a review after checking into somewhere. Hotels and restaurants ask you to write a review following your visit. An increasing number of travelers take pride in providing reviews and consider it part of the travel experience.

- **Consumers are cautious of tourism industry content**

There has been much research establishing consumers user generated content and word of mouth and consider it as a source of information (7) as more trustful , credible and widely accepted by consumers than information from the organizations itself.

The term word-of-mouth or WOM applied to a tourism marketing context is any face-to-face interaction between consumers concerning a tourism

destination or service. The internet has added facilities and development of **electronic word-of-mouth (EWOM)** that take place on various online platforms, such as blogs, forums, virtual communities, and social media. Therefore "Electronic word of mouth spreads globally by digital media .

Social media are ideal tools for EWOM, as users can create and spread their opinions, reviews and information to friends or followers in their networks (8)
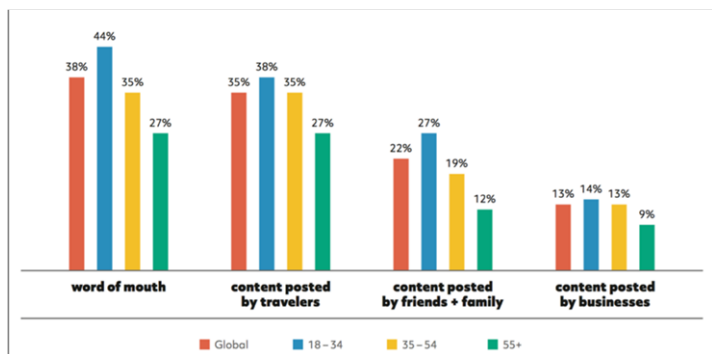
(Fig. 3) sources of travel information

2.1. Content Types

Users and consumers in Social media are not passive, they engage with content via likes, comments, shares, video message replies, and emojis. These public and private actions are measurable as vital statistics for consumer response, favorites, and trends.

Reviews: a combination of ratings, text and images (depending on the platform), user reviews share travelers' feedback and direct impressions of a destination, tour, travel experience. They can be found on TripAdvisor, Facebook, Google and other travel sites.


- **Travel Tips**: travel tips tend to target the destination. Travelers share opinions on their experiences, the best places to go, suitable times to visit, and places to avoid. This content is posted on Trip Advisor, blogs, and other travel forums.

Pictures: social media users upload their vacations' images in actual time during their trip. These images are often (hotel rooms, food, and tour experiences). They offer an ultimate view of the vacation. This is the most commonly curated type of content and is found on virtually every UGC platform.

- **Blogs or long-format articles**: accounts with travel experiences details including activities, events, hotels, travel tips, and other experiences are often self-published on blogs or in other fora. This content is perfect for social sharing and offers an opportunity for sponsorship or other collaboration forms.

- **Videos:** videos on Snap Chat or Instagram stories ranging from seconds-long to feature-length videos and webisodes, there are countless hours of travel videos posted online. They vary from low-tech cell phone videos to high production- quality YouTube videos.

(Fig. 4) content types

- **Time-lapse, boomerangs, and gifs**: consumers create content using mobile applications to make videos with unique features, such as actions on loop, videos which speed up or slow down the action to show a journey. There are other forms of rich media which can be used by brands to appear "on trend."
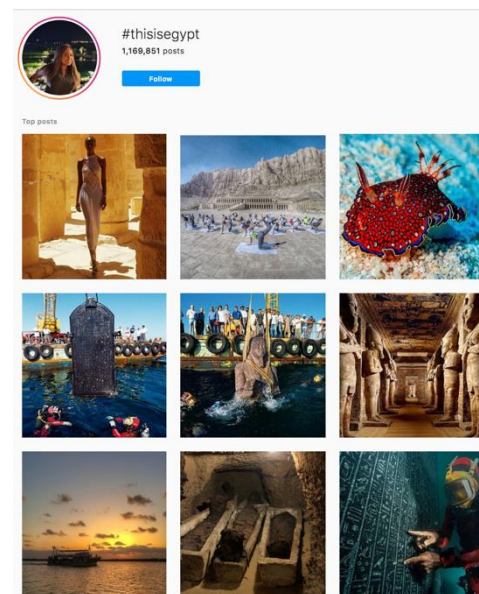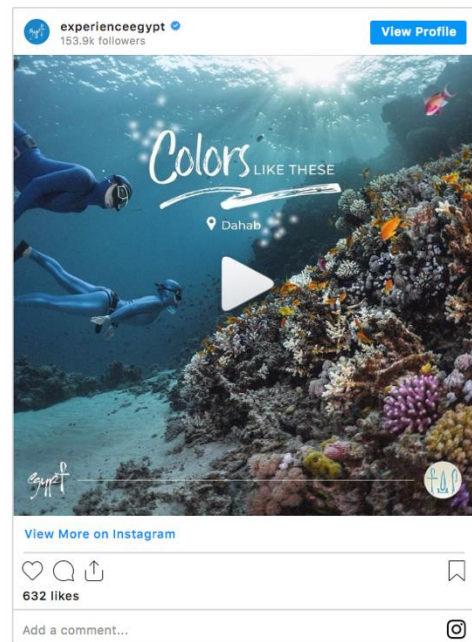
3. Value co creation in tourism industry

VCC is the collaboration between tourism organization and its consumers to produce value . In tourism industry the organization works utilizes sharing (consumer : experiences, knowledge, and problem analysis) to develop value and a new service improving its experience and image. VCC increases competitive advantage through improved consumer loyalty and the organization's image, better relationship, and innovation. Since successful implementation of VCC can lead to several benefits, it is important for tourism organizations to engage consumers in the process. (9)

The consumer is looking for opportunities to learn and generate knowledge, as well as to socialize experiences with other community. tourism industry needs a dialogue To open up with consumers , there is a need for tourism organizations to enhance intense interaction between consumers and formation of the relationships required to build a community.(10)

3.1. Value co-creation and consumer participation behavior

3.1.1. Consumer participation behavior

- **Information seeking:** consumers ask for information to clarify service requirements, understand the nature of their roles in the value co-creation process and satisfy other cognitive needs

- **Information sharing:** For successful value co-creation, consumers should provide positive information about tourism destination for use in value co-creation processes, therefore If consumers fail to provide accurate information, the quality of value co-creation will be low as information sharing is the key to the success of value co-creation.

- **Responsible behavior:** Responsible behavior happens when consumers recognize their role and responsibilities as part of value co creation

- **Personal interaction:** Value co-creation in a tourism industry context takes place in a social media; the more pleasant, congenial, and positive the social platforms is, the more likely consumers are to engage in value co-creation

3.2. 1. Customer citizenship behavior

- **Feedback:** consumers are in a unique source to offer guidance and suggestions to others, by sharing travel experience with the others .

- **Advocacy:** consumer can recommend tourism destination through social platforms to others such as friends or family.

- **Helping** refers to consumer behavior aimed at assisting other consumers.

- **Tolerance** consumer assessed and willingness to be patient when the service does not meet his expectations. (11)

3.2. Factors that encourage consumers to participate and collaborate with the Egyptian tourism industry in value co -creation (VCC)

The reasons why consumer involves in value co-creation include customizing their products, accessing services, gaining prestige in the community, money rewards, and enjoyment. when consumers develop a stronger intention to co-create in value, they offer support to the co-creation process by sharing information and knowledge or providing feedback on service innovation, thus increasing the level or degree of customer co-creation. Thus, in the

tourism industry value co-creation (Fig. 5) consumers and tourists looking for and gather information before traveling then   they can keep looking for and collecting additional information about the destination during the trip , and   after the trip, they exchange recommendations and knowledge , interact and respond to other comments, and express willingness to help.(12)

Gamification is one of motivator in value co-creation. the aim of that games is   providing a range of innovative technologies   that   develop   greater   technological   adoption   in   the creation and improvement of consumer experiences. for example   TripAdvisor has developed gamification apps to motivate and inspire consumers and travelers to contribute content by sharing travel resources with others.
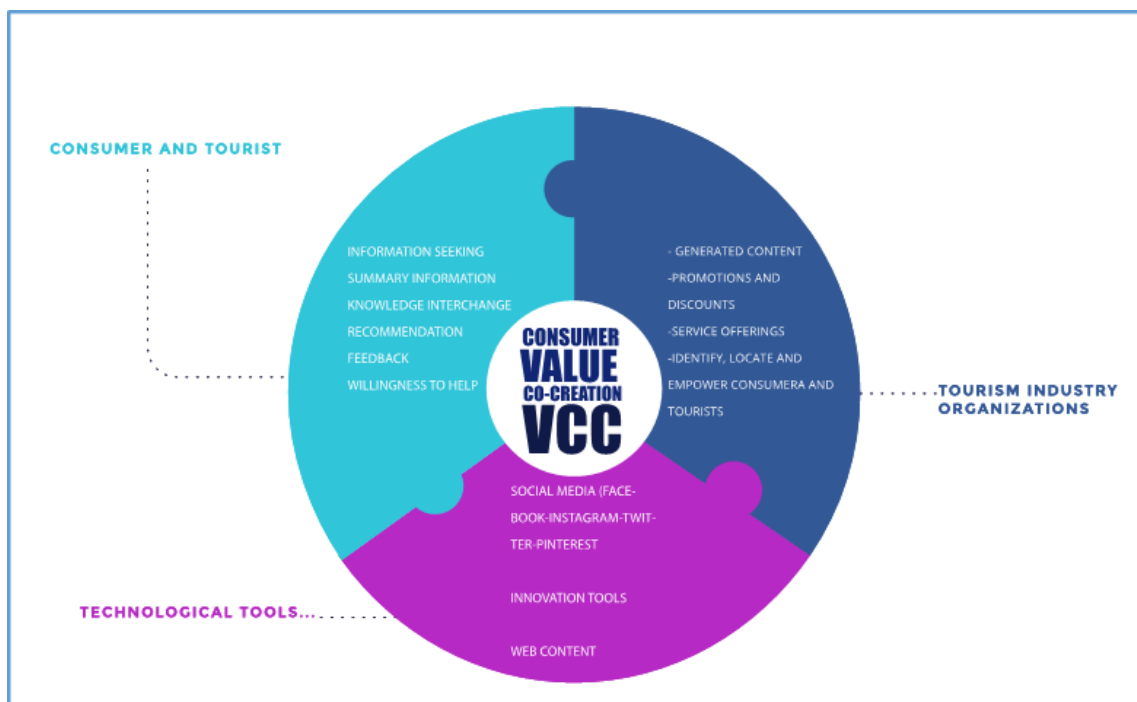
(Fig. 5) consumer value co -creation (VCC)in tourism industry –by the author

3.3 The dimensions of consumer value co creation
The dimensions of consumer value co creation are:
- Relational value
- Personal value
- Interactive value
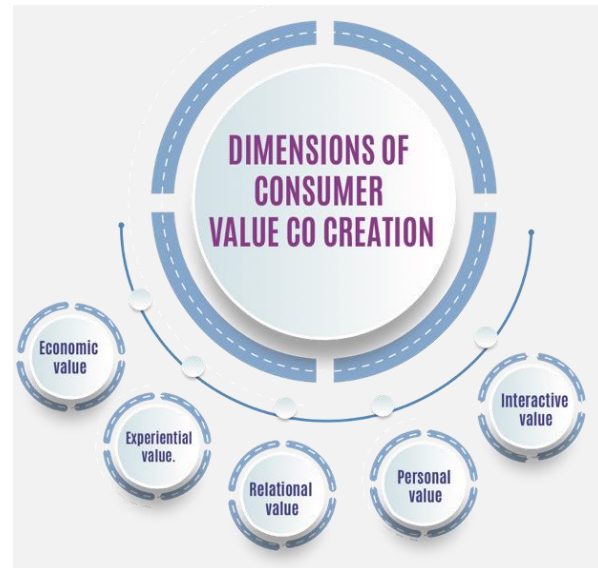- Experiential value.
- Economic value

Personal value represents the personal characteristics of value co-created, such as the self-respect, influence, dominance, and sense of achievement acquired while completing the task. **Relational value** represents the friendships creation and connections between consumers and other communities, and from consumer to consumer.

Interactive value refers to the created value in interpersonal communication, dialogue, reciprocity, and ideas and values exchange.

Economic value concerns the exchange value of invested money, the time and efforts by the consumer in co-creation**.**

Experiential value indicates the value

(Fig. 6) The dimensions of consumer value co creation- by the author

phenomenological aspect, in which value was created in the process and resulted from co-creation.

These five dimensions are most important to interactive and experiential forms for any value co-creation process. (13)

4. Methodology

An analytical study conducted in tourism campaigns in **South Africa and Egypt** regarding consumer in managing social content and A questionnaire was conducted through an online survey targeting random sample, the data was collected within a period of two weeks in September 2020.

The sample included 40% males and 60% females, most of the being in the age of less than 24 years, (46.7%)and between 24 and 39 (37.8%), Between 40 and 55 (15.6%.)

The given concept questionnaire has been distributed via different (social) media platforms The respondents provided a representative profile of students and young professionals from Egypt and USA.

The concept questionnaire has been divided up into the following parts: (A) including demographics questions to identify general sample characteristics, (B) including questions considering the reasons for using the social media platforms in general, (C) including questions concerning the consumer motivations in value co-creation for Egypt tourism industry(D) including Egypt's tourism industry priorities for the 5-year ambition set out in the Destination Plan.
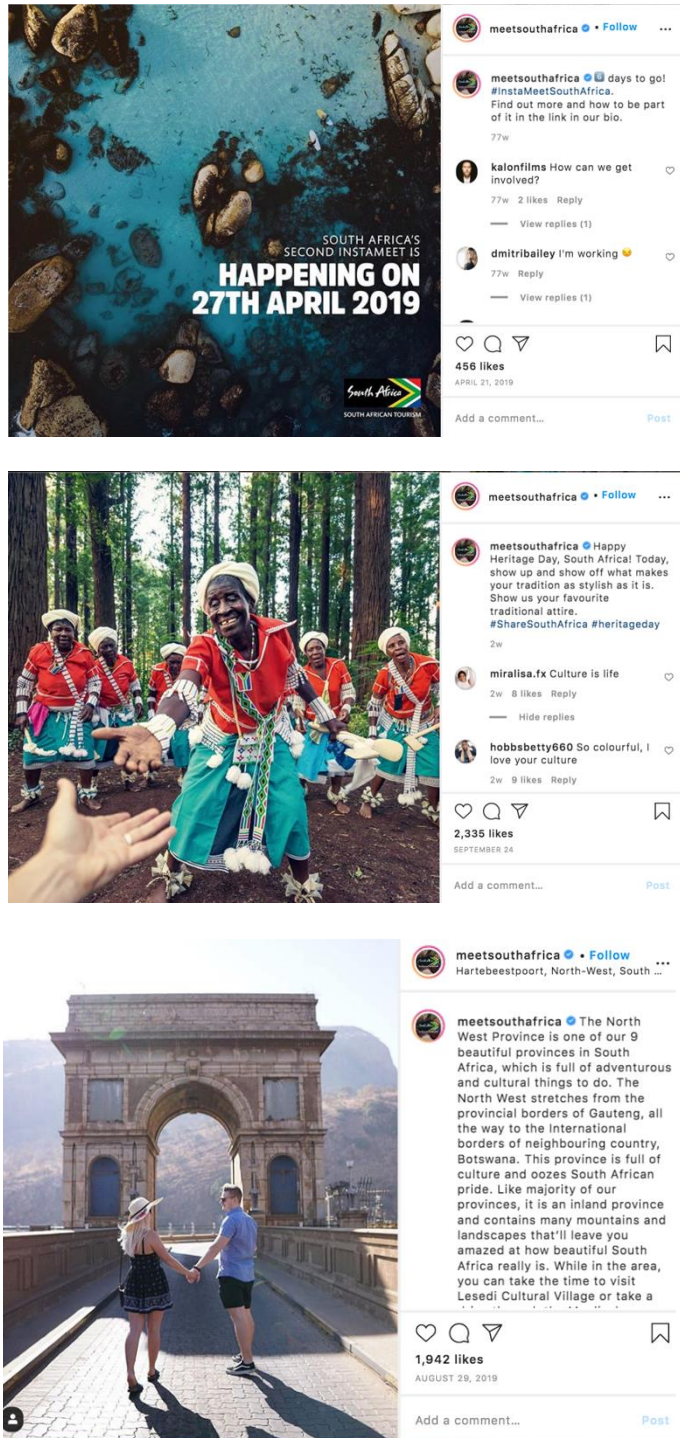
4.1. Case study

- **South Africa Tourism**

South Africa Tourism (SAT) launched a campaign Targeting North Americans depending on the impact of Influencer, User-Generated Content, storytelling tactics and Facebook-specific retargeted ad strategy to increase awareness of South Africa tourism cultural product and to celebrate 25 years of democracy in South Africa. the campaign, titled with #MeetSouthAfrica, started with four American influencers who shared their South African travel experiences on their social media channels and SAT's social accounts; to experience the attractions diversity of the country and the people stories which increased travelers' use of #MeetSouthAfrica.

The result of campaign is the following:

- The139 shared photos, generating over 15.4 million impressions (views) and 178K engagements (likes)

- The number of @VisitSouthAfrica Instagram account followers grew by over 30 percent and engagement on the account increase over 54 percent.

- Globally, the #MeetSouthAfrica hashtag produced over 26 million impressions (7 million more impressions per week than average) during the two-week duration of the tour

- 10 blog posts published by Influencers for a combined readership of over 60,000

- 528,486 video views cross-platform.

(Fig. 7) South Africa Tourism (SAT) campaign

The campaign motivated the UGC content creation and at press time, more than 310,000 Instagram posts have used #MeetSouthAfrica.

The success of this campaign led to continue and extend to launch a new digital campaign with in influencers entitled #WOWSouthAfrica. (14)

4. .2. EGYPT Tourism

Egypt Tourism launched the country's tourism campaigns, the aim of these campaigns were to create a socially responsible community that is interested in boosting Egypt's economy and

tourism through user-generated content as photos and videos of different parts of Egypt, the ministry's aim from the campaign is to attract more than 25 million tourists by 2020 and to double the tourism

One of them is **#ThisIsEgypt hashtag** campaign by official video, posted on YouTube, shows the best of the country's enduring vistas and charming landscapes; it ends by encouraging viewers to share mages of Egypt online.

revenue from $12 billion to $25 billion within the next six years.

The campaign went viral, moreover there are online initiatives, such as My Egypt Instagram page and the Live Love Egypt campaign, aim to
 support Egypt's tourism through creating online communities that shares various photos of Egypt. (15)

The other campaign was named **People to People** to "reawaken the power of human to human connection". It features several shots of locals, living their lives in beautifully edited shots. The campaign video highlights the fact that beyond our known destinations, landmarks, and year-round sunshine, Egypt moves, astonishes and awakens the senses of visitors, not only through its places but through its people as well, inviting the people of

(Fig.8)   Egypt Tourism campaign

the world to connect with us and experience Egypt's dynamic and vibrant culture".
These campaigns could be more affective by using one of motivation factors such as money rewards, and enjoyment to develop stronger consumer intention to participate in co create value for Egypt tourism through social media usage to promote tourism, by highlighting Egypt's positives, and avoiding foreigners from an insight on the negatives of the country.

5. Findings and Discussion

Through the analysis of South Africa and EGYPT tourism campaigns and consumer questionnaire forms, the study concluded the following:

• Facebook was The most main interests in social media platform **46.7%** then Instagram 31.1%

• The participant often looks at their social media pages when they make decisions about tourism destination and services **82.2%** they trust the EWOM over tourism advertisement.

• **100%** of participants agree that Egypt needs a new creative tourism campaign plan to achieve a good reputation and brand awareness and most of them.

• **75.6%** of participants agree that consumer interaction and participation in tourism campaign through social media can add value to Egypt's image.

• **68.9%** of them like to participate in Egypt tourism campaign through social media.

• **35.6%** found that enjoyment and interest could motivate consumers to interact with Egypt tourism campaign on social media platforms although **33.3%** agree with tourism improvement, **20%** emotions and love towards Egypt and **11.1%** Sharing social status within the group.

• **31.1%** found that Establishing a clear brand identity for Egypt is the the most priority for the 5-year ambition set out in the Destination Plan although **28.9%** choose Focus on better understanding and meeting the needs of existing types of tourists, **20%** Focus on Egypt's new projects and cities.

• Participants stated attraction elements are weather, location, ancient history, beaches and low Prices, new cities and Egyptian Handmade.
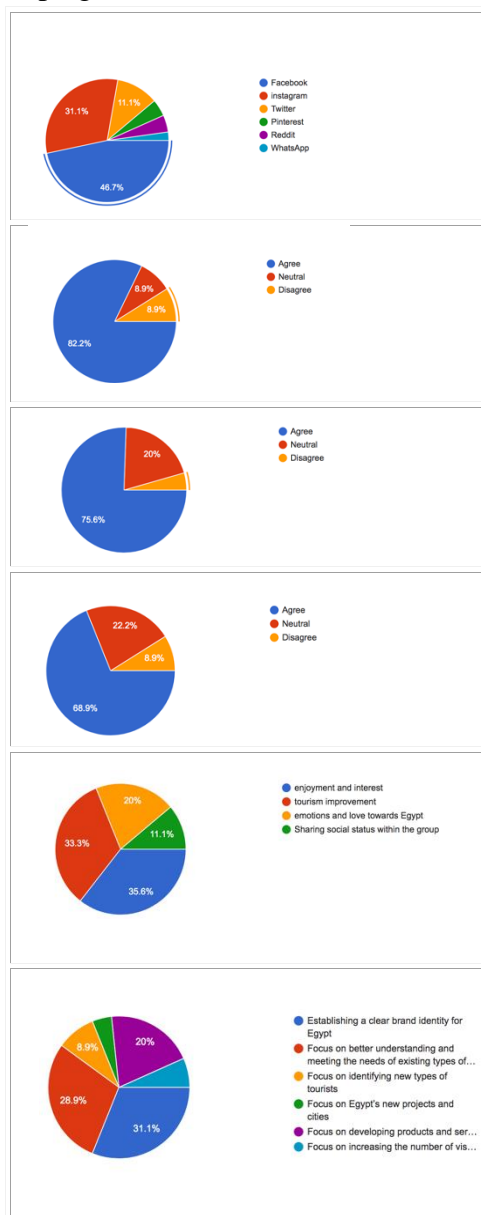
(Fig.9)   questionnaire result

when asking them about How can the consumer interact and participate in tourism campaign to add value to Egypt's image through social media the answers were:

- Sharing multiple positive experiences through tagged photos and videos, giving their opinions and show the real Egypt to the world, Good reviews, Posts enhancing Egypt's positive image.
- Sending suggestions to the administration in charge.

Concluded from the questionnaire 95% of Participants recommend a new creative campaign for Egypt , develop some ideas and tactics for campaign plan as the following:

- Using platforms by celebrities and influencers (would be more effective) with Feedback Detailed

- Making campaigns like This is Egypt supporting an important events or festivals happening in Egypt.

- Obligation on leaving the opinion.

- Encourage users to participate in tourism advertising campaigns can enhance the credibility of the content.

- Focus on better understanding and meeting the needs of existing types of tourists

-Establishing a clear brand identity for Egypt

- Consumer participating effectively in his specialized area to add value. Offering some services back to the consumer when he/she dose participate in the tourism campaign.

5.1. Egypt tourism strategy based on consumer value co-creation (VCC) through social media.

Due to the comparative advantages that can be developed through value co creation, it is important for Egypt's tourism industry to plan for campaign depending on the impact of Influencer, User-Generated Content, storytelling tactics and eWOM to increase awareness of Egypt's tourism and create positive image for Egypt (fig.10).
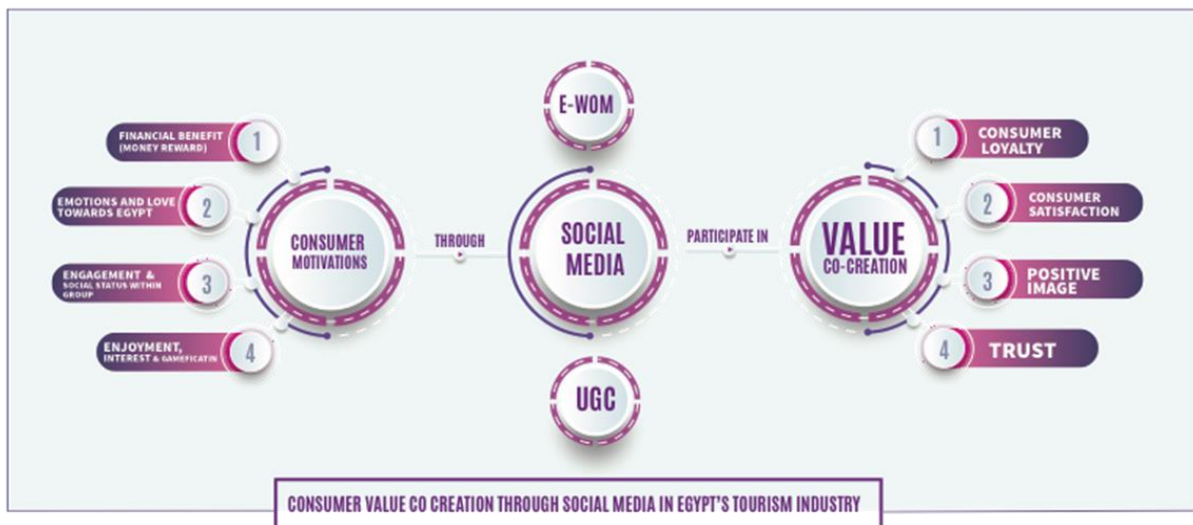
(Fig.10)   questionnaire statistics campaign- by the author

The aim of this campaign is encouraging consumers to participate in value co creation trough social media by generating positive and realable content that increase interest in travel to Egypt by using one of the following motivations:

- financial benefit (rewards).
- emotions and love towards Egypt.
- engagement and social status within group.
- enjoyment, interest and gamefication.

clarify their important role in value creation process consumers developing A content distribution strategy to not only simulate the consumer travel journey but also improve engagement and cost per engagement over time.

using a retargeting paid media strategy to announce and deliver content pieces in line with travel cycle for awareness/interest of the positive image of Egypt destination.

promoting Video content via interest targeting and then retargeted the active viewers of those videos with photo and website content as a second touch point to encourage both affinity and action. This will result in higher engagement, increased completed video views and more efficient ad spends. this will lead to Establish a clear identity, building trust, satisfaction, loyalty and positive image for Egypt.

6. Conclusion

The research demonstrates the high important role of consumers in value co-creation process. Egypt's tourism industry can achieve a positive image, good reputation and destination awareness thanks to their consumers who bring economic, social and functional values as a result of consumer's engagement in value co creation.

The research shows that consumers want to interact with tourism industry and want to be invited in value creation process in order to discuss, share travel experiences and learn with other members of the community.

The research suggests that consumers are motivated to interact with a tourism industry because they get benefits. Hence the key motivators for using social media and interacting with a tourism industry are:

- financial benefit (rewards).
- emotions and love towards Egypt.
- engagement and social status within group.
- enjoyment, interest and gamefication.

User generated content and eWOM are the most valuable content for consumers. Therefore, consumers decide how Egypt's tourism will develop on social media and how successful and gainful they will be. When consumers have emotions toward Egypt's tourism, they are going to promote it through shared content and positive reviews which create value and positive image for Egypt . For example, through hash tagged images, consumers promote the tourism organization itself, attracting new consumers. these actions create e-word of mouth communication, which plays important role in consumers and travelers decision and destination perception. Thus, the successful value co-creation directly related positively to consumer engagement in VCC.

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