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Bridging Cultures Through Screens: ASEAN Youth Collaboration in Green Economy for Sustainable on Promotion of Tourism Via Social Media

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Abstract

This study investigates the role of social media in advocating sustainability and driving the green economy in the tourism sector, particularly among ASEAN youth, notably in Indonesia. Through surveys and interviews with youth from various ASEAN countries, the research highlights the significant impact of daily interactions with social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook, consistently averaging 3 hours and 26 minutes per day in Indonesia. The focus of the study is to understand how social media facilitates cross-cultural collaboration and supports sustainable tourism objectives in the ASEAN region. The analysis reveals a range of digital initiatives spearheaded by youth, from social media campaigns to the strategic use of hashtags to promote green tourism and increase participation in responsible tourism activities. Additionally, the study explores the complexities of leveraging social media to promote sustainable tourism, including challenges such as over-tourism and the dissemination of inaccurate information. The analysis provides strategic insights aimed at tourism stakeholders, policymakers, and local communities to optimize the use of social media by ASEAN youth in advancing the goals of the green economy and sustainable tourism paradigm. This research makes a significant contribution to understanding how ASEAN youth, particularly in Indonesia, utilize social media to promote sustainable tourism practices. It is hoped that the findings and insights generated will serve as a foundation for policy and action at the local, national, and regional levels to strengthen the role of youth in driving sustainable tourism development in ASEAN.

Keywords: Social Media Advocacy; Sustainable Tourism; ASEAN Youth; Green Economy; Paradigm

1. Introduction

In recent years, social media has become one of the most dominant tools in shaping the behavior, preferences and perceptions of global society, especially among the younger generation. Amidst the global push towards sustainability and awareness of the importance of protecting the environment, attention to sustainable tourism practices is increasing. In Indonesia, as a country with abundant natural wealth and a strong tourism attraction, youth have a crucial role in promoting responsible and environmentally friendly tourism practices.

In this context, it is important to understand how social media, which has become an integral part of the daily lives of young generations, can be used as a tool to advance sustainable tourism goals. The use of social media by ASEAN youth, including in Indonesia, has shown a significant impact in influencing attitudes and behavior towards tourism.

However, while there are visible efforts in leveraging social media for sustainable tourism advocacy, there is still a need to further explore the role of social media in encouraging responsible tourism practices in the ASEAN region. Therefore, a case study on the role of social media in encouraging sustainable tourism, with a focus on ASEAN youth, especially in Indonesia, is relevant. Thus, this background highlights the importance of further research to understand the potential and challenges of the use of social media in supporting sustainable and environmentally friendly tourism in the ASEAN region.

2. Literatur Review

2.1. Theoretical Foundations and Relevant Concepts

This study delves into the intersection of social media, sustainability advocacy, and the green economy within the tourism domain, drawing on contemporary theoretical frameworks. Firstly, the Uses and Gratifications Theory posits that individuals

actively choose media to fulfill certain needs or gratifications (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1973). In the context of sustainable tourism promotion via social media, this theory elucidates the motivations behind users' engagement with platforms, such as information-seeking, entertainment, or social interaction. Additionally, the Social Cognitive Theory emphasizes the role of observational learning and modeling in shaping behavior (Bandura, 1986).

Applied to this study, it suggests that exposure to sustainable tourism content on social media platforms can influence individuals' attitudes and behaviors towards adopting environmentally responsible practices during travel. Furthermore, the Diffusion of Innovations Theory offers insights into the spread and adoption of new ideas, products, or practices within a social system (Rogers, 2003). In the context of this research, it helps analyze how youth-led initiatives on social media can serve as catalysts for promoting sustainable tourism practices and influencing broader societal norms.

2.2. Research in the Past

Recent studies have explored various aspects of social media's role in promoting sustainable tourism and fostering environmental awareness. For instance, research by Ribeiro et al. (2019) investigated the effectiveness of social media campaigns in promoting eco-friendly travel destinations, revealing that user-generated content significantly influenced travelers' decision-making processes. Similarly, Gonzalez-Padron et al. (2020) examined the impact of social media influences on sustainable tourism behavior, highlighting the importance of authenticity and credibility in shaping consumers' perceptions and actions.

Furthermore, studies by Han, Hwang, and Kim (2020) and Kim and Nunkoo (2021) focused on the role of social media in facilitating dialogue and engagement between tourists and local communities to promote sustainable tourism practices. These recent research endeavors provide valuable insights into the evolving landscape of social media's role in advancing sustainability goals within the tourism industry.

3. Research Method

The methodology chapter delineates the systematic approach undertaken to conduct the research, encompassing the tools and materials utilized, data collection procedures, data processing methods, and cost analysis. In this chapter, the intricate details of the research methodology employed to explore the intersection of social media, sustainability advocacy, and the green economy within the tourism domain are elucidated. By delineating the systematic framework adopted for data collection, processing, and analysis, this chapter aims to provide transparency and clarity regarding the research process, ensuring the validity and reliability of the study outcomes.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Research in the Past

The survey, facilitated through Google Forms, elicited responses from a diverse pool of 50 participants, offering valuable insights into their digital engagement with social media platforms and their advocacy for sustainable tourism practices. Through meticulous analysis of the survey data, several noteworthy trends and patterns emerged, shedding light on the respondents' utilization of social media and their attitudes towards sustainability initiatives within the tourism sector. Notably, a prevalent theme among the findings was the considerable amount of time reported by participants spent on various social media platforms, with Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook emerging as the most frequented channels. This observation underscores the immense potential of these digital platforms as effective vehicles for disseminating information and fostering awareness about sustainable tourism practices, particularly among the youthful demographic of the ASEAN region.

Furthermore, the survey outcomes unveiled a robust inclination among respondents towards actively participating in online campaigns and initiatives geared towards advocating for environmental stewardship and responsible tourism behavior. A substantial number of participants expressed eagerness to engage with sustainable tourism content on social media platforms, signaling a palpable surge in interest and concern among the younger generation regarding environmental sustainability issues. This growing enthusiasm for online activism reflects a burgeoning movement towards leveraging digital platforms as catalysts for driving positive change and fostering collective action in support of sustainable tourism objectives. Moreover, the willingness demonstrated by respondents to actively contribute to online discourse and initiatives underscores the pivotal role of social media in galvanizing youth engagement and mobilizing advocacy efforts towards a more sustainable tourism future.

Overall, the survey findings paint a compelling picture of the evolving landscape of digital activism and sustainability advocacy within the tourism domain. By harnessing the power of social media as dynamic channels for information dissemination and community mobilization, stakeholders in the tourism industry stand poised to capitalize on the burgeoning momentum among the younger demographic towards championing environmental sustainability. However, while the survey results underscore the immense potential of social media platforms in advancing sustainable tourism goals, it is imperative for stakeholders to navigate challenges such as ensuring the authenticity and credibility of online content and fostering meaningful engagement with diverse audiences to effect tangible change in promoting responsible tourism practices across the ASEAN region and beyond.

4.2. Analysis Result

The analysis of survey data revealed significant themes elucidating the drivers of youth engagement in sustainable tourism advocacy on social media platforms. Peer interactions and social networks notably influenced individuals' attitudes and behaviors towards sustainability, as observed in the survey. Participants were more inclined to adopt environmentally responsible practices when influenced by peers or exposed to such content on social media. This underscores the role of social influence in shaping youth perceptions of sustainability. Moreover, exposure to sustainable tourism content on social media positively correlated with active support and participation in related initiatives, indicating the effectiveness of digital platforms in fostering environmental consciousness and collective action among ASEAN youth. Overall, social media plays a pivotal role in promoting environmentally responsible tourism practices and engaging youth in sustainability advocacy. However, challenges like greenwashing necessitate authentic messaging. Further research is warranted to explore innovative strategies for maximizing social media's potential in advancing sustainable tourism.

5. Conclusion

The culmination of this research endeavor underscores the pivotal role of social media in fostering youth engagement and advocacy for sustainable tourism practices within the ASEAN region. Through the administration of a comprehensive survey via Google Forms, valuable insights were gleaned into the patterns of social media usage among young individuals and their attitudes towards sustainability initiatives within the tourism sector. The findings revealed a pronounced inclination among respondents towards active participation in online campaigns and initiatives aimed at promoting environmental stewardship and responsible tourism behavior. Moreover, the survey outcomes highlighted the substantial amount of time devoted by participants to various social media platforms, indicating the significant potential of these digital channels as effective vehicles for disseminating information and fostering awareness about sustainable tourism practices.

Furthermore, the willingness demonstrated by respondents to engage with sustainable tourism content on social media platforms signifies a palpable surge in interest and concern among the younger demographic regarding environmental sustainability issues. This growing enthusiasm for online activism underscores the transformative power of social media in galvanizing youth engagement and mobilizing advocacy efforts towards a more sustainable tourism future. By leveraging the dynamic capabilities of digital platforms for information dissemination, community mobilization, and dialogue facilitation, stakeholders in the tourism industry can harness the burgeoning momentum among the younger generation to advance the objectives of the green economy and sustainable tourism development.

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