**NEAR EAST UNIVERSITY**

**INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**TOURISM MANAGEMENT**

**USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA BY TOURIST WHEN SELECTING DESTINATION: CASE STUDY NATIONAL MUSEUM, BENIN KINGDOM, EDO STATE NIGERIA**

**M.Sc. THESIS**

**Sandra Nko Osemwengie ARISCO**

**Nicosia**

**September, 2023**

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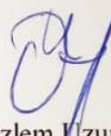
**Dr. Özlem UZUNSAF**

**Nicosia**

**September, 2023**

# Approval

We certify that we have read the thesis submitted by Mrs. Sandra Nko Osemwengie Arisco titled **"Use of Social Media by Tourist When Selecting Destination: Case Study National Museum, Benin Kingdom, Edo State Nigeria."** and that in our combined opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Educational Sciences.

| Examining | Committee Name-Surname | Signature |
|---|---|---|
| Head of the Committee: | Prof.Dr.Nesrin Menemenci | ................... |
| Committee Member: | Dr. Özlem Ercantan | ................... |
| Supervisor: | Dr. Özlem Uzunsaf | ................... |

Approved by the Head of the Department

......./....../2023

Dr. Özlem Uzunsaf

Head of Department

Approved by the Institute of Graduate Studies

....../....../2023

Prof. Dr. Kemal Hüsnü Can Başer

Head of the Institute

## Declaration

 I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with the academic rules and ethical guidelines of the Graduate School of Educational Sciences, Near East University. I also declare that as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all materials and results that are not original to this study.

Sandra Nko Osemwengie Arisco

**08/09/2023**

Day/Month/Year

## Acknowledgments

**Abstract**

**Use of social media by Tourist When Selecting Destination: Case Study National Museum, Benin Kingdom, Edo State Nigeria**

**Sandra Nko Osemwengie Arisco**

**MA, Tourism Management**

**September, 2023, 86 Pages**

As social media's effect on travelers' decision-making processes grows, this study investigates the impact of social media use on visitors' destination selection, with a special focus on the Benin City National Museum in Edo State, Nigeria. Therefore, this study empirically investigates how use of social media has influence on destination selection, perceived destination choice and tourist behavior of those tourists visiting Benin City National Museum in Edo State in Nigeria.

A quantitative cross-sectional approach was adopted to collect data from study sample. The study sample was consisting of 350 visitors. The results were analyzed using correlation, exploratory factor analysis, and regression analysis. The findings reveals that three of the hypotheses were supported. On the other hand, it implies that use of social media has significant positive influence on destination selection ($\beta$=.638, $\rho$=.000), percieved destination choice ($\beta$=.945, $\rho$=.000), and tourist behaviour ($\beta$=.839, $\rho$=.000).

This study contributes to the expanding body of knowledge on the impact of social media on tourism by presenting insights particular to the Benin City National Museum environment. The findings highlight the importance of social media in impacting tourists' decisions, attitudes, and actions, with practical implications for museum managers looking to improve their social media strategy. Museums may utilize social media to not only attract and engage people but also to nurture good visitor experiences that inspire return visits and referrals.

*Keywords:* social media, destination choice, perceived destination attractiveness, tourist behavior, Benin Kingdom, National Museum

# ÖZ

**Turistlerin Bakışaçısıyla Destinasyon Seçerken Sosyal Medya Kullanımı:**
**Vaka Çalışması Ulusal Müze Benin Krallığı, Edo Eyaleti Nijerya.**
**Sandra Nko Osemwengie Arisco**
**MA, Turizm İşletmeciliği**
**Eylül, 2023, 86 Sayfa**

Sosyal medyanın turistlerin karar verme süreçleri üzerindeki etkisinin arttigi bilinmektedir. Bu nedenle, bu çalışma Nijerya'nın Edo Eyaletindeki Benin Şehri Ulusal Müzesi'ni ziyaret eden turistlerin destinasyon seçimi, algılanan destinasyon seçimi ve turist davranışları üzerinde sosyal medya kullanımının nasıl bir etkiye sahip olduğunu ampirik olarak araştırmaktadır.

Çalışma örneklerinden veri toplamak için niceliksel kesitsel bir yaklaşım benimsenmiştir. Araştırmanın örneklemini 350 ziyaretçi oluşturmuştur. Sonuçlar korelasyon, açımlayıcı faktör analizi ve regresyon analizi kullanılarak analiz edildi. Bulgular sosyal medya kullanımının destinasyon seçimi ($\beta$=.638, $\rho$=.000), algılanan destinasyon seçimi ($\beta$=.945, $\rho$=.000) ve turist davranışı ($\beta$=.945, $\rho$=.000) üzerinde anlamlı pozitif etkiye sahip olduğu ($\beta$=.839, $\rho$=.000) sonucu desteklenmisitr.

Bu çalışma, Benin Şehri Ulusal Müzesi ortamına özgü içgörüler sunarak, sosyal medyanın turizm üzerindeki etkisine ilişkin genişleyen bilgi birikimine katkıda bulunmaktadır. Bulgular, sosyal medya stratejilerini geliştirmek isteyen müze yöneticileri için pratik çıkarımlarla birlikte, turistlerin kararlarını, tutumlarını ve eylemlerini etkilemede sosyal medyanın önemini vurgulamaktadır. Müzeler, sosyal medyayı yalnızca insanları çekmek ve etkileşimde bulunmak için değil, aynı zamanda tekrar ziyaretlere ve yönlendirmelere ilham veren iyi ziyaretçi deneyimlerini beslemek için de kullanabilir.

*Anahtar Kelimeler:* sosyal medya, destinasyon seçimi, algılanan destinasyon çekiciliği, turist davranışı, Benin Krallığı, Ulusal Müze

**Table of Content**

**CHAPTER I**

**CHAPTER II**

## CHAPTER III

## CHAPTER IV

## CHAPTER V

## CHAPTER VI

**List of Tables**

**List of Figures**

## List of Abbreviations

GDP:            Gross Domestic Product

WTTC**:**          World Travel and Tourism Council

NTDC:           Nigerian tourist Development Corporation

NTDF:           Nigeria Tourism Development Fund

ICT:            Information and Communication Technologies

USM:            Use of social media

PDA:            Perceived Destination Attractiveness

DC:             Destination Choice

TB:             Tourist Behavior

EFA:            Explanatory Factor Analysis

H1:             Hypothesis One

H2:             Hypothesis Two

H3:             Hypothesis Three

**CHAPTER I**
**Introduction**

The hospitality business is a critical sector that has a considerable influence on global revenue expansion (Kumari, 2022; Khan et al., 2022; Manzoor et al., 2019; Kumar, 2020; Ranasinghe et al., 2021). The advent of social media platforms in recent years has resulted in substantial changes in how tourism destinations are advertised (Gupta, 2019). Tourism companies may now communicate with their target audience in real-time and on a worldwide scale through social media (Tsai, 2021; Tsai & Bui, 2020), making it an excellent tool for promoting vacation destinations and attracting potential tourists Hartanto et al., 2022). Nigeria's Edo State is an example of a popular tourist destination with a rich cultural history as well as magnificent tourist sites. People move from one area to another to have fun and enjoy their free time (Higgins et al., 2019; Dinu, 2018; Burger, 2000). As Khan et al. (2020)point out, the tourist industry is intertwined with numerous sectors of the global economy and contributes to national GDP (Rasool et al., 2021). Tourism produces a large number of work chances, greatly contributing to the socioeconomic growth of not just Sub-Saharan Africa, but the entire world (Pathak, 2021; Folarin & Adeniyi, 2020).

On a worldwide scale, the expansion of the hospitality and tourist sector has demonstrated extraordinary resilience, continuing to be a major element of the world economy by providing, on average, 9% of global GDP and supporting billions of dollars in income and jobs. In Nigeria, the travel and tourism industry contributed to a 6.8% increase in GDP (Murtala et al., 2018). This significant advancement may be linked to the growth of social media platforms and online digitalization, which have broadened people's access to, sharing of, and interaction with information Balaban, 2012). Unlike in the past, when information was restricted to conventional media or personal relationships, social media platforms today allow people to discover, investigate, observe, and spread information on a wide range of topics whenever and wherever they choose (Papoola, 2014). As a result, this study will concentrate on the function of social media as a tool for promoting tourism and addressing negative impressions of the country's image as a welcoming tourist destination.

**Statement of the Problem**

Even though social media has enormous potential for promoting travel locations, a lot of tourism organizations in Edo State, Nigeria have not thoroughly adopted it as a tool for marketing. Nigeria as a nation believes that, tourism industry has the potential to contribute a large amount of revenue to the economy, it also, strive to actively engage in promoting the tourism destination but acknowledged the fact that the old strategy will not work (Bakare, 2022). This has led to a limited internet footprint of Edo State's tourism industry, resulting in decreased visibility and knowledge of the State's rich cultural legacy and tourist attractions. Based on this information, problem of this investigation it centered towards understanding the potentials of advancing tourism sector through social media in Benin city, Edo state, Nigeria.

We are resolute in our research to assessing role of online social network marketing technique as a tool to promote Benin city national museum, which will in return hope to improve revenue inflow to the state and Nigeria as a whole.

**Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this research is to explore the influence of social media usage on visitors' destination selection processes, as well as how visitors' opinions, decision-making, and information-seeking behaviors is influenced when the Benin City National Museum is considered a favored location for tourism. With a focus to the following specific objectives; to investigate the relationship between Social Media Use and Destination Selection, to investigate the Relationship Between Social Media Use and Destination Attractiveness, to investigate the Relationship Between Social Media Use and Tourist Behavior.

**Research Questions and Hypothesis**

The following research questions and hypotheses were proposed based on the aforementioned justification.

**Research Question 1.** What is the relationship between use of social media and destination choice. National Museum in Benin Kingdon in Nigeria?

**Hypotheses 1.** There is a statistically significant influence of use of social media on destination choice National Museum in Benin Kingdon in Nigeria.

**Research Question 2.** What is the relationship between use of social media and perceived destination attractiveness National Museum in Benin Kingdon in Nigeria?

**Hypotheses 2.** There is a statistically significant influence of use of social media on perceived destination attractiveness National Museum in Benin Kingdon in Nigeria.

**Research Question 3.** What is the relationship between use of social media and tourist behavior National Museum in Benin Kingdon in Nigeria?

**Hypotheses 3.** There is a statistically significant influence of use of social media on tourist behavior. National Museum in Benin Kingdon in Nigeria.

Figure 1.

*Conceptual Model of the Study.*
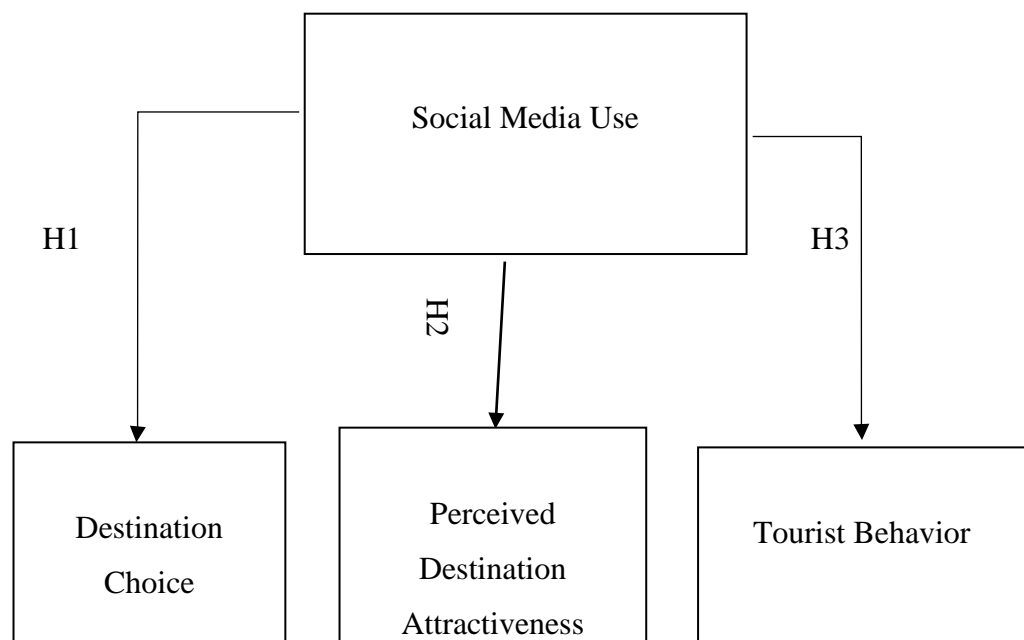


**Significance of the Study**

The results of this research will be helpful to Museum Curator at National Museum Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria and they are as follows: First, It will assist the head of the museum to review museum policies and make a strategic decision for tourism development; second, It will efficiently strategic utilization of cyberspace to expand the state's tourism business, improve communication between museum managers and potential tourists as well as the existing customers; third, provide accessible information, and develop the museum's brand image, thus revitalizing the sector's growth potential and boosting its economic contribution.

**Limitations**

The present study like other studies has some limitations. First, the research gathered replies from visitors visiting Benin City National Museum, with an average population size of 370 people. This population size might limit the generalization of the results to the overall population of visitors in Edo State, Nigeria. A greater sample size could have offered a more precise representation of tourists' attitudes and behavior. Second, due to time and budgetary constraints, the study project was unable to be carried out in additional Edo State provinces. As a result, the collected data may not completely depict the diversity and variances in tourist experiences and opinions across the state. As a result, when generalizing the findings to the total population of Edo State, extreme caution should be applied. Third limitation is the representativeness of data. The small sample size and the study's focus on certain tourist locations in Edo state. may have an influence on the representativeness of the data obtained. Tourists visiting national museum tourist attractions sites may have different choices, habits, and motives than those visiting other Edo State tourists' destinations. This may add bias and restrict the findings' application to a larger context. Last but not least limitation is the generalization of findings. Given the aforementioned limitations, it is critical to use caution when generalizing the findings of this study. While the findings give useful insights into the effect of social media on participant destination choices, they may not fully reflect the views and actions of all visitors in Edo State. As a result, it is critical to understand the findings within the context of the research rather than drawing broad generalizations about the entire population.

**Definition of the Key Terms**

**Social media.** Social media refers to online platforms and technologies that enable users to produce, share, and engage with material, information, and views in a virtual social network. Social media networks include Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok (Bagarukayo, 2018).

**Destination choice:** The decision-making process by which individuals or tourists pick a certain site or place to visit, explore, or experience, frequently for leisure, cultural, or recreational purposes, is referred to as destination choice (Aktaş, et al., 2007).

**Perceived destination attractiveness:** The subjective judgment of how pleasant or desirable a specific destination or area appears to be is referred to as perceived destination attractiveness. This perspective is impacted by a variety of elements, including the natural beauty, cultural richness, historical significance, and facilities of the place (Li, et al., 2023).

**Tourist:** A tourist is someone who goes away from their customary abode for leisure, recreation, cultural, or educational reasons. Tourists make brief journeys to locations beyond their typical habitat (Baporikar, 2023).

**Tourist behavior:** Tourist behavior includes all of the acts, activities, and decisions that visitors undertake when visiting a location. This includes their activities, the experiences they seek, and their interactions with the destination's offers (Juvan et al., 2017).

**CHAPTER II**

**Literature Review**

This chapter presents a complete theoretical framework for investigating the Nigerian tourist business, with a particular emphasis on tourism marketing in the Kingdom of Benin. The chapter also investigates the usage of social media for destination selection. Highlight the importance of social media in affecting the visitor decision-making process. It also dives into the Factors Influencing Destination Selection and the Role of social media in Destination Selection.

**Tourism Industry in Nigeria**

In the context of the Benin City National Museum, tourism is defined as people or groups visiting the museum and actively participating in various activities to study and enjoy the cultural heritage and artefacts on display. Tourism, according to (Henok, 2021), is the temporary migration of individuals to locations beyond their typical surroundings for leisure, commerce, or education. Tourists visit the Benin City National Museum because they want to experience and learn about the Benin Kingdom's unique history and cultural importance(Emifoniye, 2023).

The Benin City National Museum is a cultural destination that features a diverse range of exhibitions, including artworks, historical artefacts, and traditional objects, all of which provide insights into the Benin Kingdom's creativity, customs, and historical narratives. Visitors to the museum may participate in a variety of activities such as guided tours, interactive exhibits, and educational programs, all of which add to their overall tourism experience.

The Benin City National Museum is significant as a tourism destination because of its capacity to conserve and promote the Benin Kingdom's cultural legacy. Museums, as (Timothy & Boyd, 2015)point out, serve an important role in preserving cultural history and offering venues for cultural exchange and understanding. Visitors to the Benin City National Museum may immerse themselves in the Benin Kingdom's rich cultural legacy, gaining a deeper understanding for its art, history, and customs.

The tourist business in Nigeria includes a wide range of sectors and activities concerned with the promotion, development, and administration of tourism in the country (Ogechukwu, 2011). Nigeria, as a diverse and culturally rich nation, provides a vast variety of tourism attractions as well as encounters, including as

"natural landscapes, museums, cultural events, and active urban centers. Nigeria's tourist sector contributes significantly to a nation development, employment creation, as well as foreign exchange profits (Eniola, 2014). According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), travel and tourism contributed 1.8% of Nigeria's GDP in 2019, with a 2.8% increase expected in 2020. Furthermore, the business employs a large number of Nigerians, mainly in the hotel, transportation, and entertainment industries.

Benin city national museum is among the key tourist attraction center in Nigeria's tourism organization Tourism promotion and development in Nigeria is backed by a number of government bodies and initiatives. The Nigerian tourist Development Corporation (NTDC) is in charge of developing and executing policies, strategies, and programs to increase the country's tourist potential. The Nigeria Tourism Development Fund (NTDF) also offers financial assistance for tourism-related projects and activities. However, problems such as poor infrastructure, security concerns, and limited marketing efforts have hampered Nigeria's tourist potential from being fully realized. Efforts are being undertaken in the country to solve these concerns and encourage sustainable tourist practices. However, problems such as poor infrastructure, safety issues (Adeyemi, 2023), as well as insufficient marketing efforts have hampered Nigeria's tourist potential from being fully realized. Efforts are being undertaken in the country to solve these concerns and encourage sustainable tourist practices.

**Social-media**

Hays et al. (2013) define social media as "the online practices, behaviors, and activities of community when users come together to exchange skills, views, and knowledge via different kinds of communicative media including recordings, documents, audios, as well as pictures." It is defined as "fluid," "conversational," and "participatory" online communities where users interact and communicate with others who share their interests. The term "social" alludes to the natural human urge to connect, whereas "media" refers to the tools by which such connections are made (Safko, 2010). According to Kaplan & Haenlein (2010), social media is a collection of Internet-based apps that exploit Web 2.0 underpinnings and enable the production and sharing of user-generated content. Similarly, Howison et al. (2014) argue that social media originated as the second stage of Internet growth, drawing on Web 2.0

notions. While no commonly accepted definition exists, some research associate's social media with terminology such as user-generated content, Web 2.0, consumer-generated content, and social websites (Chan & Guillet, 2011).

It should be highlighted that comprehending social media and its link to Web 2.0 is a developing topic of study, with more research needed to grasp the complexity and enhance knowledge in the tourist and hospitality domains (Cusick, 2013). Web 2.0, formerly referred to as Social Web, has revolutionized how people communicate and interact through social media platforms. Social media is characterized by user-generated content and encompasses various public applications and services, including "virtual worlds, social networking sites, consumer feedback platforms, and video sharing platforms, and allows users to participate, review, edit, and exchange information with others (Tuten, 2008). According to Pomering et al. (2011), social media is a new collection of tools and technology that enable more efficient customer and prospect involvement, allowing organizations to create connections. It has surpassed traditional advertising tactics such as direct mail, radio, print, billboards, and telephone in terms of efficacy and efficiency (Safko, 2010). Furthermore, (Kang & Scheutt (2013) state that social media is one of the Internet's fastest-growing technologies for communication as well as is frequently used in tourist marketing.

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Social media, according to Leung et al., 2013), is both a popular catchphrase and a technological notion that has dramatically impacted "business-to-customer, business-to-business, and customer-to-customer communication". Its worldwide popularity has skyrocketed, with platforms like as Facebook gaining over one billion members since its launch in 2004. Social networks such as Facebook have substantially enhanced online information distribution and exchange by making it freely available and shareable (Akrimi & Khemakhem, 2012). According to (Syed-Ahmad et al., 2013), is the world's leading picture community, providing a platform

for travelers to share and engage with images. Travelers frequently like photographing their memories and participating in conversations by commenting on shared images.

**Social media categories**

According to Safko (2010), categorizing the entire realm of social media is necessary. In response to the demand, the following social media categories were discovered; nevertheless, the categories are not equally suitable and successful in marketing tourism in South Africa. Social networking, publishing, photo sharing, audio, video, microblogging, live casting, virtual worlds, gaming, search, mobile, and productivity apps are among the categories. According to (Irina et al., 2014), many social media categories cannot suit the personal demands of individuals as well as the commercial needs. Platforms such as social networks, video file sharing, blogs, and micro-blogs have been proposed for usage in both commercial and personal travel (Leung et al 2013).

Kang & Scheutt (2013) highlight different types of social media channels, such as image-sharing sites such as "Photobucket, Flickr, social media networks such as Facebook and Twitter, video sharing and creation sites such as Upstream and YouTube, microblogging tools such as Twitter, online communities, social tagging platforms such as Digg, rating/ review websites such as TripAdvisor, public internet forums, moblogs/blogs, podcasting, tagging sites, wikis", classify social media in a similar way. It is crucial to note, however, that different writers describe social media in different ways, and there are no universally agreed-upon standards for identifying social media platforms (Akar & Topcu, 2011).

**Social Media Platform**

Social networks, often known as social media platforms, have become an important aspect of people's everyday lives, influencing communication, connectedness, and information exchange. These platforms give online areas for people to build profiles, connect with friends, exchange material, and communicate in numerous ways (Hadjipanayis, 2019) . Below are some of the most essential characteristics and popular social media sites:

**Facebook.** With huge number of active members spread around the world, is the largest and most widely used social networking platform. Users may establish profiles, connect with friends, exchange updates, images, and videos, join groups,

and communicate privately. Facebook has several features, such as event organizing, a marketplace, and company pages (Ortiz-Ospina & Roser, 2023).

**Twitter.** Twitter is a microblogging platform that allows users to send and receive brief messages known as "tweets." Users may follow other accounts and like, retweet, and reply to tweets. Twitter is well-known for its real-time aspect, and it is frequently used for news updates, discussions, and public debates on a variety of issues (Lamsal, et al., 2022).

**Instagram.** Instagram is a visual platform for sharing photographs and videos. Users may build profiles, follow other users, and interact with material by like, comment as well as sharing posts. Instagram has a variety of features, such as Stories (temporary postings), IGTV (long-form films), and Reels on Instagram (short videos clip) (Jinyoung, et al., 2022).

**LinkedIn.** LinkedIn is a business networking platform that connects professionals, job seekers, and businesses (Urdaneta-ponte et al., 2022). Users may establish professional profiles, network with colleagues and peers in the sector, discuss work-related information, and seek for career possibilities. Groups, corporate sites, and messaging are also available on LinkedIn (López-Carril, et al., 2020).

**Snapchat.** Snapchat is a multimedia chatting software that is well-known for its vanishing messages and fleeting content? Users may send photographs and movies (dubbed "snaps") to others, which disappear after viewing. Snapchat also has features such as Stories, which allow users to share photographs and videos that are accessible for 24 hours (Heath, et al., 2022).

**Pinterest.** Pinterest is an imagery exploration network that focuses on picture as well as idea sharing and organization. Users may build boards to preserve and organize material pertaining to a variety of hobbies, including fashion, home design, recipes, and travel. Pinterest is frequently used for idea generation, planning, and bookmarking (Wang, 2023).

**TikTok.** TikTok is a video-sharing app that enables users to make and share 15 to 60-second films. It has grown in popularity because of its innovative and viral content, which includes dancing challenges, lip-syncing, comedy skits, and instructive videos. TikTok provides a customized feed based on the interests and activities of its users (Shaafi, 2023).

**YouTube.** YouTube, while largely recognized as a video-sharing website, also serves as a social networking site. Users may establish channels, follow other

channels, comment on videos, and participate in conversations. YouTube has a diverse selection of material, includes "vlogs, tutorials, music videos, and instructional videos" (Rosamond, 2023).

**Overview of Social Media Usage by Tourists on Destination Selection**

Tourists' usage of social media to choose a vacation has grown in popularity in recent years (Varkaris, & Neuhofer, 2017). People use social networking platforms to acquire knowledge, make selections, and share their experiences. Travelers now have convenient access to a broad selection of user-generated information and suggestions from fellow travelers, celebrities, as well as official tourist boards, thanks to the universal accessibility of mobile devices as well as internet connection. Publicizing travel experiences is one of the key ways social media impacts destinations choosing. Tourists frequently share images, films, and tales from their journeys, offering insights into the attractions, activities, and general ambiance of a specific location. These postings have the ability to drastically influence a location's impression and pique the curiosity of potential visitors. Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube serve as virtual displays for places, allowing travelers to visually explore and compare numerous possibilities.

Furthermore, social media platforms enable travelers to seek and trade travel tips. Travelers may converse, ask questions, and receive real-time comments from others who have visited a specific location. Platforms such as TripAdvisor, Reddit, and travel-specific forums stimulate discussions and allow people to make better selections based on the experiences of others. Influencer marketing is very important in the destination-choosing process. Influencers, who have a large social media following, frequently work with tourist boards, hotels, and travel-related businesses to promote certain locations. Their material promotes the features of a location, including as lodgings, attractions, and unique experiences, which might influence potential visitors' decision-making process. Tourists may also use social networking platforms to explore and find off-the-beaten-path sites and hidden gems. Travelers are exposed to lesser-known sites and attractions that may not have gained extensive exposure through traditional marketing methods thanks to targeted adverts, algorithms, and user-generated content. Because of the democratization of information, travelers may consider a greater selection of places and have more distinctive and authentic experiences.

However, it is crucial to remember that the use of social networking sites in selecting a destination has restrictions and potential downsides. Social media sites frequently provide an idealized view of a place, with carefully chosen and edited information. This may also lead to unreasonable expectations and dissatisfaction if what actually happens differs from the presented image. Furthermore, the abundance of bogus reviews and sponsored material raises questions about the legitimacy and validity of information on social media sites.

**Social media role and tourists' decision-making process**

Social media has been having a significant influence on influencing consumer behavior (Ioanăs, 2014) as well as the process of decision-making in a variety of areas, particularly purchases of goods, vacation preferences, and choice of lifestyle(Voramontri, & Klieb, 2019) . Here are a few examples of how social media has grown in importance:

**Product Exploration and Investigation.** Through targeted marketing, celebrity recommendations, as well as user-generated content, social media channels have evolved into virtual marketplaces (Piranda et al., 2022) where customers explore innovative goods and services. Users may investigate product suggestions, reviews, and demos on platforms such as "Instagram, Pinterest, and YouTube", allowing for more informed decision-making (Keinänen, 2017).

**Influencer Promotion.** Influencers have become significant voices in changing consumer behavior due to their vast followings and perceived knowledge in specialized sectors. They collaborate with businesses to market their products, frequently offering personalized experiences as well as suggestions. Consumers value the experiences of influencers as well as depend on their recommendations to make purchase decisions (Javed et al., 2022).

**User-Generated Content /Peer Recommendations**. Users of social media sites can express their thoughts and experiences with products, services, and companies. Through reviews, comments, and debates, consumers seek affirmation and guidance from their peers. User-generated information gives useful insights and social evidence, which influences decision-making (Ratnapuri, et al., 2023).

**Client Service and Real-Time Response**. Through social media, consumers may interact directly with companies, requesting details, making inquiries, as well as resolving difficulties. Social media platforms act as real-time feedback conduits,

allowing firms to respond quickly and solve customer problems, impacting purchase decisions and brand loyalty (Chuang & Chen, 2023).

**Targeting and Personalized Advertising**. User data and algorithms are used by social media platforms to offer personalized adverts based on users' interests, demographics, and online behavior. Targeted advertising boosts the relevance and effectiveness of marketing communications, affecting customer preferences and buying decisions (Muzafar, et al., 2023).

**Identification of Trends and Aspiration.** Social media platforms establish trends by displaying popular lifestyles, fashion styles, and consumer preferences (Rocamora, 2013) . Users strive to be like influencers and trendsetters, influencing their own tastes and purchase decisions. Social media aids in the creation and dissemination of trends, affecting consumer behavior and setting market needs (Majeed et al., 2022).

**Perception and Reputation of a Brand**. Social media has a large impact on perceptions of the brand as well as reputation. Clients regularly seek out brand identities, interact with their content, and evaluate how businesses communicate with their target demographic. Positive social media experiences boost brand reputation and influence customer attitudes, but bad experiences undermine consumer trust and purchase choices.

**Online Influence and social media**. Destination selection is heavily influenced by social media channels, travel blogs, celebrities, as well as travel forums. Travelers look for inspiration, information, and suggestions on platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and travel websites.

## Destination Selection Impact on Tourists and Tourism Business

Tourists must carefully choose their destination since it has a direct impact on their total travel experience and pleasure. The following considerations will help you understand the significance of tourist location selection and its influence on the tourism industry:

**Travel Experiences**. The destination selected sets the tone for the whole trip. It decides what kinds of tourist attractions, "activities, cultural experiences, and natural beauty" tourists will see. A well-chosen site may meet tourists' expectations, cater to their interests, and provide memorable experiences, resulting in high levels of satisfaction and the possibility of future trips.

**Economic Influence**. The economic health of the tourist sector is heavily influenced by destination choices. When visitors visit a particular location, they support the local economy by making expenditures on "lodging, meals, transportation, shopping, and other tourism-related activities". This spending produces cash for local companies, fosters job development, and helps the tourist industry flourish.

**Infrastructure Improvement**. Tourists' choice of popular sites frequently encourages the growth of infrastructures and tourism-related services. To fulfill visitor demand, places improve transportation networks, lodgings, attractions, amenities, and services. This infrastructure development benefits not just the destination but also the local neighborhood by boosting general livability and accessibility.

**Tourism Destination Marketing and Branding.** Tourists' choice of a place affects the destination's brand image and reputation. Positive visitor experiences shared via word-of-mouth, social media, and online reviews may dramatically boost a destination's exposure, legitimacy, and attractiveness. This favorable reputation draws more tourists, stimulates investment, and aids promotional efforts to further advertise the destination.

**Practices of Sustainable Tourism.** Tourists' choice of venues has also contributed to a greater emphasis on sustainable tourism practices. Travelers are becoming more aware of the environmental and social repercussions of their actions, and they are actively choosing places that prioritize sustainability and responsible tourism. This demand motivates destinations to adopt sustainable practices safeguard natural and cultural resources, and participate in community-based activities, all of which result in long-term advantages for both the destination and its visitors.

**Tourism Diversification**. Tourists' choice of varied places promotes the growth and diversity of the tourism sector. The creation of new tourism goods and experiences is encouraged when travelers discover as well as choose diverse places. This diversity helps not just the locations, but also allows the tourism sector to cater to a greater range of tastes and desires, attracting a bigger audience of travelers.

**Competitiveness of Destinations**. The places chosen by visitors have an influence on their competitiveness in the global tourism industry. A well-chosen location that provides one-of-a-kind experiences, high-quality services, and appealing facilities may acquire a competitive advantage and attract more tourists.

This competitiveness fosters innovation, investment, and constant enhancement of the tourism products of the location.

**Factors That Influence Destination Selection**

A range of variables impact destination choice, which might differ from one traveler to the others.

Personal interests and preferences have a significant role in destination choosing. Adventure, leisure, cultural discovery, nature, history, gastronomy, shopping, or specialized interests are many reasons why people travel. They select places that match their personal interests and provide the experiences they want (Klenosky et al., 1993).

The available budget is an important consideration in location choosing. Travelers evaluate the costs of transportation, lodging, food, activities, and other incidentals (Tussyadiah, & Pesonen, 2016) . Some places may be seen as more economical, while others as more opulent or pricey. The sort of experience that travelers might enjoy is influenced by their budget (Dutt, 2023). Accessibility is an important factor in destination choice. Travelers examine issues such as the availability and expense of various modes of transportation, such as flights, train connections, and road accessibility. The traveler's location, ease of travel, and convenience are all important concerns. Furthermore, visa requirements and entrance limitations might have an influence on destination selection. When it comes to choosing a travel destination, tourists prioritize safety. They look at things like government stability, crime rates, health concerns, and natural disasters. Destinations with a reputation for safety and security are frequently desired, whilst those believed to be hazardous may be avoided (Rapti, & Gkouna, 2022). Recommendations from friends, relatives, or reliable sources have a significant impact on location choices. Travelers frequently seek advice and insights from others who have already visited certain areas. To obtain knowledge and make educated selections, they rely on travel reviews, internet platforms, social media, and travel forums. For many travelers, a destination's cultural and historical attraction is important. They are looking for places with a rich history, prominent monuments, historical sites, museums, and thriving local customs. Travelers are frequently motivated to explore various cultures and immerse themselves in unusual experiences.

Widespread adoption of social media, started in the early twenty-first century, when the internet was extensively used in many nations and had an impact on their economies and social lives (Milano, et al., 2011). Eventually, as more internet users participated in social networks, the societal structure of society also changed (Seth, 2012). Initially, social media were only used for amusement, but as internet usage has increased and Technology has advanced, they are now used for a variety of purposes, including communication, employment networking, target marketing, and more (Assenov & Khurana, 2012; Clark & Roberts, 2010). Social networking site elements like global user interaction on Facebook help businesses get immediate customer response. The use of social media for promotion has taken the place of conventional techniques (Safko, 2010). Compared to commercials on TV, radio, and periodicals, digital ads on social media are the most reliable (Li & Darban, 2012). Many industries, including the health care system, adverts, public outreach, new product development, branding for hospitality, and education, utilize social media sites as a communication tool (Kumar, et al., 2015).

A significant connection exists between the tourism business and information and communication technologies (ICT). Both tourists and travel businesses are widely using social media platforms (Adeola, & Evans, 2020), As a tool to exchange their opinions on tourist services and goods, tourism consumers form various online social groups. Customers share their travel experiences, images, videos, and comments on social media sites like Twitter, Facebook, and TripAdvisor. which will lead to other social network users, instantly view and enjoy the entire communication regarding their friends. For instance, by posting travel and vacation opinions, Facebook members can influence one another's vacation and holiday interests. It is a huge benefit for tourism businesses to have such chances on social networking sites, as it allows them to reach a wider range of potential clients. Tourist businesses may increase awareness and maintain current promotion through tracking and enhancing their social platforms.

In Nigeria, tourism has greatly assisted in the growth of the nation in a number of ways, including the creation of jobs, improved brand awareness, revenue generation, resolving the balance of payments imbalance, increased gross domestic products, and per individual income (Tsai, 2021; Egbaji, 2007). According to Esu, et al., (2011), the Global Growth Identifier for 2002 indicated that Nigeria needed to produce more than three million US dollars, or roughly 7% of the global market, as

well as the possible advantage of job possibilities. According to projections, the country's GDP will grow by 6% every year starting in about 15 years from 2006. Given that the sector has assumed a rising potential and is significant to Nigeria's social and economic development, it is obvious that there is a need to improve the efficacy of tourism marketing in the nation. The biggest nation in Africa, Nigeria offers a wide range of wildlife and aquatic species, alluring golden beaches, lovely verdant mangrove forest flora, distinctive cultural dynamics, lovely hotels and eateries, alluring parks, and very friendly and inviting people (Egbaji, 2007; Philip, et al., 2022).

For a state like Edo (Uko et al., 2023), which has low industrial potential despite being full of gorgeous and infinite tourist attractions center, it is undeniable that growing revenue sources like agriculture and tourism continue to be a crucial source of domestic revenue (Egbaji, 2007). This implies that an effective and long-term marketing strategy is highly needed to boost trip package sales and utilization in Benin City.

**Social-media Usage and Travel Schedule**

In recent years, travelers have turned to social media platforms such as "Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Snapchat, Twitter, YouTube, Pinterest, and Foursquare to evaluate hotels, plan their trip itinerary, criticize lodging, and share personal images (Gamage, et al., 2022; Sultan, et al., 2020; Waxer, 2012). Social media has radically impacted how tourists plan and book vacations, access information, and share their experiences (Hays, et al., 2013). They emphasize that the growing popularity of social media platforms that enable users to interact, communicate, and post original material (Aichner, et al., 2021) such as "wikis, videos, blogs, photographs, and reviews" is a key advancement in the evolution of the internet. Original material on social media has the ability to impact travel behavior.

**The Theory of Social Influence**

Social influence, as defined by (Kang & Scheutt, 2013), is the extent to which a person believes that people who are important to them want them to behave in a particular way. As members of communities, persons who engage in social media activities are impacted by other community members. One of the most crucial

elements of traveler behaviors for visitors as well as tourism organizations is the sharing of travel experiences on social media. The social influence theory offers a solid framework for comprehending people's psychological commitment to a particular attitude or activity. This also illustrates how social factors can alter an individual's behavior. Due to this, social media has a huge impact on the travel sector.

**Pre-trip period and the impact of social media.**

Google described that; a sizable majority of leisure travelers (84%) use the internet as their main source of information for trip preparation. Furthermore, (Torres, 2010; Leung et al., 2013) discovered that online travelers are more likely to encounter social media material, which is responsible for over one-tenth of search results. This study encouraged experts to realize the critical role of social media in the early stages of trip planning, particularly given the rising popularity of websites containing user-generated material. Howison et al. (2014) underline the importance of pre-trip tourism and hospitality operator-generated content, advising tourism firms to grasp and exploit the powerful reach of social media audiences.

According to Leung et al. (2013), a key difficulty in the sector is the lack of direct experience with tourist products, as the perceived advantages and quality of such items are difficult to judge before consumption. Given that tourism-related item are often high-involvement, high-priced, and distinctive, travelers must obtain and analyze adequate information early in their decision-making process to reduce the risk of making poor decisions. Social media platforms provide a solution to this information demand, allowing travelers to not only acquire critical information through their social network connections, but also access enormous knowledge from internet users all over the world (Luliana, et al., 2013). Previous travelers can offer their thoughts and experiences in various multimedia formats on social media, according to (Leung et al., 2013; Theovenot, 2007). When compared to other information sources, this cooperation of worldwide information offers social media an efficient instrument for educating buyers with location and tourist product knowledge. It is crucial to emphasize, however, that the dependability of information on social media might be questioned, since it may be manipulated by those with economic self-interest. Trust is important in the development and use of user-

generated travel material on social media, with less trust put in more generic social networking sites than in online travel portals.

**During travel and Social-media Role**

Pasi, G., & Viviani, M. (2020), state that tourists can benefit from user-generated material on social media, which provides an unparalleled breadth of current information provided in a variety of ways. Howison et al. (2014) underline the relevance of social media for travelers at all stages of their journey. Concomitantly (Sultan, et al., 2021), emphasize that travelers use the internet and platforms such as Facebook to stay connected when traveling, whether through mobile devices or free internet connections at airports and hotels. They distribute text messages with information on their destinations, arrivals, and departures, as well as emails, videos, and digital photographs. Friends and family are prompted to follow them on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and other social media platforms, where they become both recipients and co-creators of user-generated material made by visitors (Hysa et al., 2022; Yoo & Gretzel, 2011). Social media platforms also have a significant impact on destination understanding destination as well as subsequent decision-making. According to research, information discovered on social networking sites has a substantial impact on customers' shopping decisions. A significant number of travelers revealed that were highly impacted by travel reviews when making purchase decisions (Verma & Yadav, 2021; Leung, et al., 2013; Sparks, & Browning, 2011; Gretzel, & Yoo, 2008).

**After Travel and Social-media Role**

Social media platforms widely used throughout travel preparation period, but they also play an important part in post-trip engagements (Bhuiyan, et al. 2022). Social media impacts visitors' behavior from the first information acquisition stage to post-purchase activities, such as internet usage habits and expressions of happiness or discontent (Javed et al., 2020; Luliana et al. 2013). Further emphasized by (Xiang, et al.,2021; Loreche, et al., 2012) that customers, particularly tourists, actively contribute to the creation and enrichment of online travel information. (Yoo & Gretzel 2011) investigated the motives behind visitors' post-purchase evaluation and creation of user-generated content on social media, viewing it as the final stage of the trip planning process. According to the findings, social contact as well as

communicating life experiences are the top motivators for travelers to publish user-generated content on social media sites. Howison et al. (2014) emphasize the importance of traveler-generated material during and after the trip stages of the travel planning process.

**Social-Media Role in Tourist of Process of Decision Making**

Using a variety of platforms including "microblogs, blogs, online communities, media sharing sites, social knowledge sharing sites, and social bookmarking sites", tourists are using social media as a tool for searching for information, organizing, sharing, and annotating their travel experiences Majeed, & Ramkissoon, 2022; Leung, et al., 2013). Because social media provides a virtual environment for consumer socializing, it has a substantial influence on marketing tactics and consumer decision-making processes (Lei et al., 2021; Al Kailani & Kumar, 2011). According to the consumer socialization theory, communication amongst consumers changes their views and behavior, underlining the potential impact of social media on the tourist business (Luliana et al., 2013). Because tourist experiences are intangible and rely heavily on word-of-mouth, personal recommendations discovered on social media sites have a lot of clout.

This study's conceptual framework depicts the interdependence of social media usage, tourist decision-making processes, perceived location attractiveness, and tourist behavior. The framework is based on three primary goals that investigate the influence of social media on the experiences and behaviors of tourists at the Benin City National Museum.

It is expected that tourists' perceptions of the beauty of Benin City National Museum are influenced positively by their use of social media. Positive information and visually attractive pictures on social media platforms may improve tourists' perceptions of the place (Asyraff et al., 2023; Camilleri & Kozak 2022).

According to the hypothesis, there is a considerable association between social media use and tourists' desire to visit Benin City National Museum. Social media sites may give useful information and recommendations from other visitors, which might influence tourists' destination decision (Pereira et al., 2023). According to the hypothesis, believe that travelers at the Benin City National Museum are influenced by their usage of social media. Tourists might be inspired by social media

to try new activities, snap and share images, and participate in unusual experiences while on vacation (Wang et al., 2023).

**CHAPTER III**

**Method and Methodology**

According to Mishra and Alok (2022), research methodology refers to the approach used to gather data during a study. The research technique and design utilized in the study are the subject of this chapter. It describes the reason for the research approach used, which is guided by the study's objectives. Following the study goals, the research design is presented. Following that is a full overview of the techniques used to gather the main data.

**Research Design**

A research design is a systematic blueprint, as defined by Burns & Bush (2010), meticulously outlining the methods employed to conduct research and achieve the defined aim and objectives. It revolves around the precise selection of research methodologies employed for data collection and analysis. As elaborated by Malhotra (2010), a research design serves as a comprehensive framework for executing a research project, explicitly specifying the methods to be followed to gather essential information in pursuit of the study objectives. The research design serves as a guiding blueprint for researchers to execute a research project, encompassing the approach to data collection. Its principal aim is to propose a study that not only provides information for decision-making but also addresses the research objectives. Research design can take on various forms, such as casual, descriptive, or exploratory.

This study uses a quantitative method of research adopting a descriptive research approach that is based on cross-sectional dimension, in order to obtain information from guests who visit Benin city national museum, Edo State Nigeria, attractive destination for tourism. Quantitative method of research is widely used in exploratory research investigating causal relationships, correlations as well as associations (Leavy, 2022). Descriptive research, as described by (Churchill, & Iacobucci, 2010), examines the relationships between variables or the frequency of occurrences, aligning with the study's specific aims. Furthermore, this study is classified as a correlational study since the researcher aims to succeed in achieving outlined objectives to determine how social media use, influence tourist decision. A study strategy can be quantitative in nature with precise data collecting and analysis

processes (Saunders et al., 2007). This research is following quantitative method of investigation. This was a cross-sectional study with a quantitative research technique.

According to (Creswel, 1994), a quantitative research technique is "an inquiry variable, measured in numbers, and analyzed using statistical procedures, to determine the truthfulness of the theory's predictive generalizations." According to (Saunder et al., 2007) , the quantitative research method is primarily concerned with data-collection and data-analysis processes such as the use of surveys and statistics or graphs that employ statistical models and numerical data. In a nutshell, (Sognuro, 2002) explains that quantitative research is empirical inquiry in which the data is in numerical form, quantitative research depends largely on numerical data as well as statistical analysis, and (Sognuro, 2002) offers a brief overview of the characteristics of quantitative research approach as gleaned from the literature and his own experience while conducting his evaluation study. The quantitative research technique is used when it is necessary to generalize the study's findings to a wider population (Mohajan, 2020; Sekerani & Bougie, 2013). It entails data gathering techniques that stress the use of organized and regimented standard questioning practices in which the researcher predetermines the response alternatives.

The seven primary research strategies as described by (Saunders et al. 2007), survey, experiment, case study, grounded theory, action research, archive research, and ethnography. Each of these techniques utilizes a distinct way of data gathering, and the approach chosen for a research project is determined by the study's objectives, research questions, the degree of existing information, and the number of resources available. Given the economic implications and the amount of work to be completed in a restricted amount of time, a survey technique was used for this study.

**Population and Sample**

In this study, we refer target audience as the target population. Where population is defined as the entire set of subjects, individuals, or events of interest to the investigator that the researcher desires to explore (Kotler, & Armstrong, 2013). According to (Zikmund, & Babin, 2013) described target population as a collection of units that will be studied by the research endeavor. The demographic for this study consisted of local and international tourist, who visited Benin city national museum. According to the five years statistical report by the "National Commission for Museums and Monuments" which was requested during this study shows a record of

43,674 visitors were received from 2018 to 2022 according to the report there was an average of 10,000 tourist each year, with the exception of the end of 2019 and 2020 when COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, witness a heavy downfall, when lockdown strategy went viral (Lancet, 2020; Rawal et al., 2020). However, 2018 was the year with the higher number of records of tourist who visited Benin city national museum within the last five years which amount to 14,311.

Table 1 below described the distribution of the last five years, while table 2 contain detail of the year 2022 monthly records of number of visitors received at the museum.

Table 1.

*Benin City National Museum 5 Year Visitors Reports*

| S/N | Year | Total |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2022 | 10,903.00 |
| 2 | 2021 | 6,963.00 |
| 3 | 2020 | 783.00 |
| 4 | 2019 | 10,734.00 |
| 5 | 2018 | 14,311.00 |
| Total | | **43,734.00** |

Source (National Museum, Benin City, 2022).

However, the National Museum in Benin City receives an average of 400 tourists per month. Notably, the months of February, March, and November show the highest influx of tourist arrivals at the museum. Conversely, June and July mark the second-highest influx, with approximately 1000 tourists visiting the National Museum in Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria, in the year 2022. According to the report from the National Museum in Benin City (2022), the total visitor counts for the year 2022 reached 10,903. Consequently, our research sample encompasses 384 participants. By the conclusion of our data collection, we garnered 350 valid responses for analysis.

According to (Sekerani, & Bougie, 2010), a sample is a subset of the research population. Furthermore, they state that a larger sample size signifies better dependability of the study's conclusions. It is further explained that its highly important to examine the entire population since data from the entire population is more trustworthy than data from a sample (Bless, & Smith, 2008). A non-probability

sampling approach was utilized in this research for the sampling methods. (Babbie, 2012), state that the non-probability sampling technique is a group of sampling procedures that have the distinguishing feature that subjective judgment can play a role in sample selection. Non-probability sampling was used in the investigation.

Table 2.

*Monthly Record of Visitors in the Year 2022*

| S/N | Year (2022) | Total |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | January | 420.00 |
| 2 | February | 1,369.00 |
| 3 | March | 3,379.00 |
| 4 | April | 186.00 |
| 5 | May | 462.00 |
| 6 | June | 765.00 |
| 7 | July | 479.00 |
| 8 | August | 478.00 |
| 9 | September | 322.00 |
| 10 | October | 904.00 |
| 11 | November | 1,480.00 |
| 12 | December | 459.00 |
| **Total** | | **10,903.00** |

Purposive sampling is a types of non-probability sampling strategy, and was used for this study. This strategy represents units in a sample which are chosen depending on parameters pre-specified by the researcher in order for the sample to have the same distribution characteristics as the population (Babbie 2012). Age, duration of stay, purpose of visit, and location of origin were among the pre-specified parameters. Respondents were mostly above the age of 18, had spent less than a year in Benin City, and the aim of their stay was unrelated to remunerated activities in Benin Holloway, & Humphreys, 2022). This was consistent with (Stephen, 2011), who defined tourism as activities of persons who travel and stay in areas distant from their regular environs for business, pleasure, and other non-

remunerated activities inside a place of visit for no more than one year. This broad idea was employed to distinguish visitors from the regular public.

The number of units chosen for the research study is referred to as the sample size (Burns, & Bush, 2010). The sample size was influenced by factors such as data collecting instrument accuracy and population diversity. According to Sekaran, and Bougie (2010) sample size for this study was 384 visitors to Benin City National Museum.

**Data Collection Instruments**

The scale comprises two sections, with the initial segment encompassing participants' demographic information through six items: Gender, Age, Marital Status, Race, Income Level, and Educational Level. The second section is divided into three parts, each encompassing distinct variables: Social Media Use, Destination Choice, and Tourist Behavior. Within each of these sections, there are four questions, except for the Social Media Use variable, which comprises five questions. A questionnaire was adopted (Madondo, 2016), with 17 questions, which were used transferred to google form for data collection from the tourist, as the major research tool for this study. (Shrestha, 2021) recommend the use of questionnaire in self-administered surveys such as this one. A questionnaire is a document that comprises questions designed to elicit relevant data for the study.

According to (Taherdoost, 2019), a questionnaire was chosen as the best data-collecting tool for this study for the following reasons: Firstly, the tool is simple to administer to the visitors who participated in this research. Secondly, it can give a significant quantity of information. Thirdly, respondents are asked the same questions, which lowers bias by keeping the procedure the same for all respondents. Fourth, questionnaires are often used to gather information about an individual's behavior, views, and views. Fifth, the instrument was deemed the best method for gathering impartial, exact, and relevant data for this investigation. Last but not least, for this investigation, the instrument was recognized as a cost-effective strategy.

**Method of Data Collection**

All research activities revolve around collecting data from secondary and primary sources (Shrestha, 2021). Secondary data is raw data or published summaries generated by other searchers for different reasons. Primary data is information gathered by the researcher for a specific reason. As is customary in quantitative research, a questionnaire was used as the research instrument to gather

primary data in this study. The questionnaire was created primarily with closed-ended questions and a 5 point-Likert scale in order to elicit respondents' perceptual judgments and to facilitate the use of statistical analysis methods. A Google Forms questionnaire was produced and sent to respondents with the help of museum managers and tour operators who volunteered to help with distribution by posting the URL to the questionnaire via social media instant messaging tools (WhatsApp & Messenger). The link to the questionnaires was presented to respondents at the Benin City National Museum. Data analysis is the process of manipulating, sorting, summarizing, classifying, and explaining data in more relevant terms (Cooksey, 2020; Malhotra & Birks 2010).

It is the process of cleaning, examining, manipulating, and modeling data with the goal of showing important information, assisting decision making, and recommending conclusions, (Calin, 2020; Ader et al., 2008). Concomitantly, Mohajan, 2020; Wilson, 2010) adds that data analysis is the methodical arrangement of research data and the use of that data to evaluate research hypotheses. The gathered surveys were reviewed for completeness, and no missing values were discovered. To evaluate the data, Microsoft Excel 2016 and the "Statistical Package for Social Scientists" were utilized. We employed both descriptive and inferential statistics.

According to (Zikmund & Babin, 2013), descriptive statistics concentrated on frequencies, means, standard deviations, and the intelligible presentation of data. Inferential statistics were used to reach conclusions and generalizations about the population based on sample data (Amrhein et al., 2019; Mendenhall et al., 2010). In this study, inferential statistics such as the Chi-square test, correlation analysis, and logical regression analysis were utilized to analyze the data.

**Data Analysis Procedure**

To offer a first overview of the dataset's essential properties, descriptive analysis was performed. This study included computing metrics of central tendency, such as mean and median, as well as dispersion measures, such as standard deviation and range. In order to show the distribution of variables, frequency distributions and histograms were created. These descriptive statistics provided insights into the basic features of the data, allowing for a better comprehension of its structure.

A reliability study was undertaken to determine the internal consistency and reliability of the measurement items. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated for each scale or construct in the dataset for this research. Cronbach's alpha values were used to determine how well the items on a scale measured the same underlying concept. Greater internal consistency and dependability were indicated by higher alpha values.

To find the underlying latent components in the dataset, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was performed. The goal of this research was to find patterns of shared variance among variables and to minimize data dimensionality (Baglin, 2014). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) metric was used to evaluate the data's suitability for factor analysis (Shrestha, 2021). The principal component analysis (PCA) approach was used to extract components, and the number of factors was calculated based on eigenvalues and scree plot evaluation. To improve interpretability, factor rotation (e.g., varimax) was used. Correlation analysis was used to investigate the correlations between variables in the dataset. Pearson's correlation coefficients were calculated to assess the strength and direction of linear relationships between continuous variables (Obilor & Amadi, 2018). Correlation coefficients were used to uncover significant relationships as well as potential multicollinearity concerns.

Regression analysis was used to investigate the predicted correlations between one or more independent variables and a dependent variable ((Tu, 1996; Hosmer et al., 2000; King, & Zeng, 2001; Alam 2022). When predictors were present, linear regression was used. The investigation included computing regression coefficients, and intercepts, and assessing the model's overall fit. The assumptions of linearity, independence, and homoscedasticity were tested. Additionally, diagnostic tests such as residual analysis and variance inflation factors (VIF) were performed to validate the model's validity and dependability.

CHAPTER IV

**Findings and Discussion**

The preceding chapter described the research approach and methods used to acquire data for this study. This chapter summarizes and discusses the findings from the questionnaires used in this study. The questionnaire was the primary method used to gather data online from the link supplied to tourists at the Benin City National Museum. SPSS version 29.0 was used to analyze the data received from the replies. The findings gave descriptive statistics for the quantitative data obtained in the form of graphs, cross-tabulations, and other figures. Correlations and chi square test scores are examples of inferential approaches that are interpreted using p. values. A total number of 400 questionnaires were distributed electronically using the Google form online survey tool, of which 350 are returned containing the tourist opinion on their usage of social media to select the National Museum Benin City. Response rate of the study is 87.5%.

**Sample Demographics**

Table 1 shows research respondents' profiles. The total net number was 350 respondents. Frequency was used for looking at detailed research, including demographic data.

Table 3.

*Demographics Profile*

| Characteristics | Categories | Frequency | Percent (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | Female | 206 | 58.9 |
| | Male | 144 | 41.1 |
| Ethnic Background | African | 273 | 78.0 |
| | Asian | 45 | 12.9 |
| | European | 32 | 9.0 |
| Age | Under 20 | 23 | 6.6 |
| | 20-29 | 138 | 39.4 |
| | 30-39 | 94 | 30.00 |
| | 40-49 | 50 | 14.3 |
| | 50-59 | 25 | 8.3 |
| | 60 and above | 5 | 1.4 |

Demographic Profile Table Continue

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Marital Status | Married | 132 | 38.00 |
| | Single | 193 | 55.00 |
| | Divorced | 15 | 4.00 |
| | Widowed | 10 | 3.00 |
| Educational Level | High School | 63 | 18.00 |
| | University | 186 | 53.1 |
| | Master | 81 | 23.1 |
| | PhD - Doctorate | 20 | 6.0 |
| Income Level | Less than $500 | 102 | 29.2 |
| | $501 - $1000 | 67 | 19.2 |
| | $1001 - $1500 | 54 | 15.4 |
| | $1500 - $2000 | 56 | 16 |
| | More than $2000 | 71 | 20.2 |
| Active | Yes | 350 | 100 |
| | No | 0 | 0.00 |
| Social Media | Facebook | 75 | 21.4 |
| | WhatsApp | 109 | 31.1 |
| | Twitter | 22 | 6.2 |
| | TikTok | 44 | 13.0 |
| | Instagram | 56 | 16.0 |
| | Snapchat | 25 | 7.2 |
| | LinkedIn | 10 | 3.0 |
| | YouTube | 9 | 3.0 |

n=350.

As evident from the data presented in Table 3, the study's participant demographics reveal that 58.9% of the respondents (n=206) identified as female, marking the predominant gender category. In contrast, 41.1% of the respondents (n=144) identified as male, constituting the second most common gender category. These findings clearly indicate that within the binary gender classification of female and male, females represent the majority in this study.

The study's analysis of respondents' ethnicity, as presented in Table 3, categorized them into three groups: African, Asian, and European. The results show that Africans

constituted the largest ethnic group, accounting for 78% of the respondents (n=273), making them the majority. In contrast, Asians represented the second largest ethnic group, with 12.9% of respondents (n=45). European tourists comprised 9% of the total respondents (n=32). Thus, the data from the table unequivocally indicates that during the study period, African tourists were the most numerous visitors to the Benin City National Museum.

In Table 3, we categorized respondents into six distinct age groups: "Under 20," "20-29," "30-39," "40-49," "50-59," and "Above 60 years of age." The results reveal that the "20-29" age group stands out as the most prominent, representing 39.4% of the total respondents (n=138) and thus constituting the majority. The second highest age group is "30-39," with 33% of respondents (n=94). In contrast, the "40-49" age group makes up 14.3% of the respondents (n=50), while the "50-59" age group comprises 8.3% of the sample (n=25). "Under 20" respondents constitute 6.6% of the total (n=23), and the age group "Above 60 years" exhibits the lowest percentage, with 1.4% of respondents (n=5). This analysis underscores that the majority of respondents fall within the age range of 20-29 years, with the fewest participants aged 60 and above.

In Table 3, we also calculated the frequency of respondent according to their marital status classified into three statuses starting from "Single, Divorced and Widowed." Non married that is single are the highest having 55% (n=193), Married are the second highest with 38% (n=132), followed by 4% (n=15) divorced as the third and widowed are lowest with 3% (n=10). As been represented in the table single and married are the majority while divorced and widowed are the lowest. In terms of educational attainment, our analysis revealed that 53% (n=186) of the participants had achieved a university-level education, while 23% (n=81) had attained educational levels up to master's degree. High school graduates constituted 18% (n=63) of the sample, and individuals with PhDs or doctorates represented 6% (n=20). Our examination of the visitors' educational profiles underscored a prevailing trend in university education, with the majority of the population having successfully completed undergraduate degrees. High school graduates comprised 18% of the overall population, whereas individuals holding high school and doctorate degrees constituted a smaller segment.

As we can see in Table 3. Analysis of the income level was conduct on five categories ranging from less than 500 United State Dollar (USD) to more than 2000.

29.2% (n=102) earn less than 500USD as the highest, 20.2% (n=71) are earning above 2000 as the second highest. While, those earning from 501-1000 is 19.2% (n=67). And 54 individuals in the category of 1001-1500 make up 15.4%. while 1500-2000 earners have 56 people making 16%. This result highlights the significant proportions of the population falls into earning less than 500 29%, and above 2000 20.2%, as well as 502-1000 19.2%. While the lowest population as we seen in the table 3, above is 16% and 15.4% for those earning 1001-1500 and 1501-2000 respectively.

As can be seen in Table 3, above when we ask the tourist who were available at the Benin City National Museum during our research "Are you active on social media platform" with the option yes or no, 100% (350) visitors reported yes that they are active on social media. This result shows that all the participant of the study active social media users.

In Table 3, we conducted an analysis of tourists' choice of social media platforms, considering the most popular options, which included Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat, LinkedIn, and YouTube. Our findings revealed that WhatsApp emerged as the most preferred social media platform, with a substantial representation of 31.1% (n=109) of the respondents. Facebook followed closely as the second most favored platform, with 21.4% (n=75) of the participants indicating their preference. Instagram garnered a significant share of 16% (n=56), while TikTok and Snapchat garnered 12.5% (n=44) and 7.1% (n=25), respectively. Twitter and LinkedIn were chosen by 6.3% (n=22) and 3% (n=10) of the respondents, respectively, while YouTube was the least preferred, with only 2.6% (n=9) of the participants opting for it.

**Explanatory Factor Analysis-EFA**

A factor analysis was performed on the data to investigate the underlying structure of the variables linked to social media usage, destination choice, perceived destination attractiveness, and tourist behavior. To examine the data's eligibility for factor analysis, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was derived. The data were very suited for factor analysis, as shown in table 3, with the KMO value of 0.941. Furthermore, the sphericity test by Bartlett was statistically significant (2 = 3424.789, df = 136, p.001), showing that the variables were adequately linked for component analysis.

Table 4.

*KMO and Bartlette's Test*

**KMO and Bartlett's Test**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy. | | 0.941 |
| Bartlett's Test of Sphericity | Approx. Chi-Square | 3424.789 |
| | Df | 136 |
| | Sig. | <.001 |

n=350

As seen in Table 5 below, to determine the underlying structure of a set of five items, a factor analysis was performed in this study. After looking at the factor loadings for each item, it was found that SMU2 had the greatest loading (0.778), suggesting a strong correlation with the underlying component. The data was found to be suitable for factor analysis, as shown by the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of 0.863 and the substantial Bartlett's test of sphericity (chi-square = 710.056, p < 0.001). These findings suggested that the items shared some variance. Item loadings of the statement related to the SMU factor were over .500 (Hair et al., 2014), Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value was 0.863, excellent level to explain the factor (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007), and Bartlett's (1954) test of sphericity reached statistical significance ($\chi^2$ = 0.710,056, df = 10) at $\rho$ =.001, which was acceptable.

Table 5.

*EFA for SMU*

| Factor | Item loading | KMO and Bartletts tests |
|---|---|---|
| SMU1 | .649 | |
| SMU2 | .778 | |
| SMU3 | .775 | |
| SMU4 | .766 | |
| SMU5 | .719 | |
| | | .863 (710,056/10), $\rho$=.001 |

n=350

Table 6. shows the factor loadings of four items (DC1, DC2, DC3, and DC4) within the framework of a factor analysis are displayed in the table. The results show that DC1 has a strong positive relationship (loading = 0.881) with a factor, while DC2 (loading = 0.775), DC3 (loading = 0.826), and DC4 (loading = 0.773) also have significant positive relationships with underlying factors. These loadings indicate the strength and direction of relationships between the items and latent factors. Additionally, the data were found to be suitable for factor analysis according to the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test result of 0.742. Moreover, the Bartlett's test revealed a p-value of less than 0.001, confirming the significant deviation from an identity matrix and confirming that factor analysis of the dataset was appropriate. Table 6.

*EFA for DC*

| Factor | Item loading | KMO and Bartletts tests |
|--------|--------------|-------------------------|
| DC1 | .881 | |
| DC2 | .775 | |
| DC3 | .826 | |
| DC4 | .773 | |
| | | .742 (422,056/6), $\rho$=.001 |

n=350

Factor loadings for four items with the labels PDA1, PDA2, PDA3, and PDA4 are shown in Table 7. below within the framework of a factor analysis. The degree and direction of the correlations between each item and the latent components found during the research are quantified by these factor loadings. In particular, PDA2 exhibits a high positive link (loading = 0.802) with the underlying component, whereas PDA1 exhibits a moderately positive relationship (loading = 0.682). PDA4 shows a substantial positive link (loading = 0.754) and PDA3 shows a very strong positive relationship (loading = 0.901) with the latent component. Table 7. Furthermore, a value of 0.797 for the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test indicated that the data was suitable for factor analysis. A p-value of less than 0.001 ($\rho = 0.001$) from Bartlett's test indicated a significant departure from an identity matrix and supported factor analysis on the dataset.

Table 7.

*EFA for PDA*

| Factor | Item loading | KMO and Bartletts tests |
|--------|--------------|-------------------------|
| PDA1 | .682 | |
| PDA2 | .802 | |
| PDA3 | .901 | |
| PDA4 | .754 | |
| | | .797 (692,056/6), ρ=.001 |

n=350

The factor analysis results are displayed in the Table8, which shows the item loadings for the four factors (TB1, TB2, TB3, TB4). Factor loadings quantify how strongly the items and factors are related to one another; TB2 has the greatest loading (0.826), indicating a strong correlation. Furthermore, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure indicates that the dataset is sufficiently appropriate for factor analysis, with a score of 0.779. With a chi-square value of 586.056 and a tiny p-value of 0.001, Bartlett's test of sphericity reveals that the variables are adequate for factor analysis and that the correlation matrix significantly deviates from an identity matrix. All of these results lend credence to using factor analysis to investigate the data's underlying structure.

Table 8.

*EFA for TB*

| Factor | Item loading | KMO and Bartletts tests |
|--------|--------------|-------------------------|
| TB1 | .802 | |
| TB2 | .826 | |
| TB3 | .759 | |
| TB4 | .641 | |
| | | .779(586,056/6), ρ=.001 |

n=350

For factor extraction, Principal Component Analysis was utilized. The extraction approach showed three components with eigenvalues larger than one, accounting for 63.602% of the total variance. The scree plot in Figure 2, revealed an elbow at three elements, indicating that these components should be kept (Shrestha, 2021). The loadings of every variable over the extracted factors were emphasized in the first component matrix. Variables were identified as being to load most strongly on one factor when the component matrix was rotated, showing an explicit

factor structure. However, the reorganized matrix of components was subsequently rotated using Kaiser normalization, leading to an extra-understood factor structure.

Figure 2.

*Screen Plot*
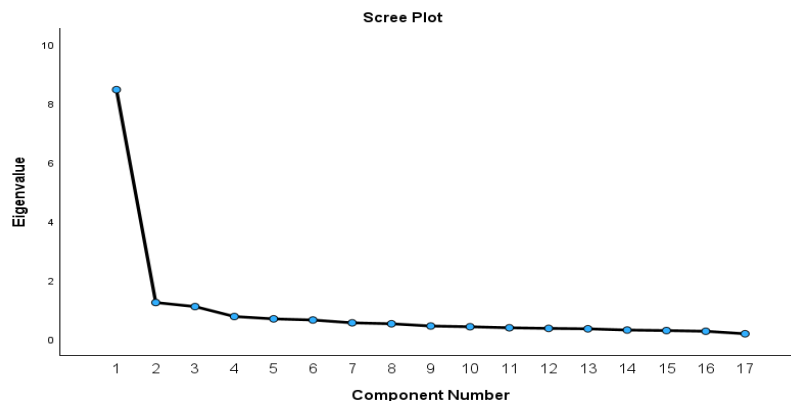


Influence of Social-media and Destination Choice. The second factor, which included the variable "Social media use," showed destination selection as well as the impact of social media use. These factors revealed a high relationship between the use of social media and tourists' decision-making processes when choosing Benin City National Museum as their preferred travel destination.

Social Media Use and Destination Attractiveness. Variables associated with social media usage, perceived destination attractiveness, and tourist behavior were included in this component. This factor was strongly influenced by variables such as "perceived destination attractiveness," and "tourist behavior." demonstrating a relationship between visitors' opinion of location attractiveness and their activity on social media platforms.

Destination Choice and Tourist Behavior. The third element included variables "Destination Choice," which represented destination competency and tourist behavior. This element emphasized the importance of visitors' views of a destination's competency in affecting their behavior throughout their stay. However, Communalities following extraction ranged from.512 to.732, showing that the extracted factors represented a significant share of the variation in the variables.

**Reliability Test**

To verify the internal consistency Cronbach's Alpha was used and this is demonstrated in the Table 9. Results are showing that the Cronbach alphas values was higher than the threshold value of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2010). The values which are

given are of SMU, DC, PDA, and TB and their values are 0.941, 0.948, 0.967, and 0.979 respectively. These results demonstrate that these scales were reliable (Bagozzi et al 2012). The study's fundamental model was well fitted to the data. As a result of these findings, the hypothesized model now has discriminative validity.

Table 9.

*Reliability test for the study variables*

| Factor | Adjusted no of items | α |
|--------|----------------------|------|
| SMU | 5 | .854 |
| DC | 4 | .867 |
| PDA | 4 | .817 |
| TB | 4 | .850 |

n=350

**Descriptive and Correlation Analysis**

The assessment of univariate normality was conducted using SPSS version 29. To examine the univariate distribution, we compared the absolute skewness and kurtosis values to the responses of the observed variable. The skewness values ranged from .388 to .870, and the kurtosis values ranged from .560 to 1.167, as illustrated in Table 10. According to Kline's (2022) skewness criteria, which stipulates that values should be less than 8, our results indicated a lack of evidence supporting univariate normality.

Table 10.

*Skewness and kurtosis of variables*

| Variable | Skewness | Kurtosis |
|----------|----------|----------|
| SMU | .703 | 1167 |
| DC | .870 | .562 |
| PDA | .388 | .900 |
| TB | .644 | .992 |

The table presents summary statistics and pairwise correlation coefficients for four variables: SMU, DC, PDA, and TB. The "Mean" column displays the average values for each variable, while the "S.D." column indicates the standard deviation, representing data variability. The correlation coefficients in the "1," "2," "3," and "4" columns show the strength and direction of the relationships between these variables, with double asterisks denoting statistical significance. Notably, a strong positive

correlation exists between SMU and DC, with a coefficient of 0.950, revealing how closely related they are.

Table 11.

*Means, standard deviations and correlations of variables*

| Details | Mean | S.D. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|---------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| SMU | 2.03 | .807 | - | | | |
| DC | 2.13 | .757 | .950** | - | | |
| PDA | 1.90 | .742 | .943** | .934** | - | |
| TB | 1.90 | .753 | .907** | .866** | .741** | - |

n=350; p <0.05 **

Table 12.

*Mean Analysis of Variables*

| | N | Missing | Mean | Median | SD | Minimum | Maximum |
|---|---|---------|------|--------|-----|---------|---------|
| I use social media to find information on my travel destination to Benin Kingdom | 350 | 0 | 3.99 | 4.00 | 1.032 | 1 | 5 |
| I follow tourism-related account on social media | 350 | 0 | 4.00 | 4.00 | 0.915 | 1 | 5 |
| I post about my travel experiences on social media | 350 | 0 | 3.83 | 4.00 | 1.090 | 1 | 5 |
| I find social media helpful when planning for my travel | 350 | 0 | 4.16 | 4.00 | 0.895 | 1 | 5 |
| I use social media to connect with other travelers | 350 | 0 | 3.86 | 4.00 | 1.137 | 1 | 5 |
| I consider recommendation from friends or family member when selecting Destination. | 350 | 0 | 3.41 | 4.00 | 1.223 | 1 | 5 |
| I am influence by images and reviews on social media when choosing travel destination | 350 | 0 | 3.92 | 4.00 | 0.985 | 1 | 5 |

*Mean Analysis of Variables*

| | N | Missing | Mean | Median | SD | Minimum | Maximum |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I prefer to travel to popular tourist destination that are frequently mentioned on social media | 350 | 0 | 3.95 | 4.00 | 1.018 | 1 | 5 |
| I choose tourist destination that offers unique experiences tha | 350 | 0 | 4.19 | 4.00 | 0.878 | 1 | 5 |
| I find positive review and images of Benin Kingdom tourist destination more attractive on social media. | 350 | 0 | 3.98 | 4.00 | 0.945 | 1 | 5 |
| I am more likely to visit a destination that has good social me | 350 | 0 | 4.11 | 4.00 | 0.907 | 1 | 5 |
| I consider the reputation tourist destination on social media when making my travel plans | 350 | 0 | 4.08 | 4.00 | 0.848 | 1 | 5 |
| Positive social media reviews make me feel excited about visiting a destination | 350 | 0 | 4.23 | 4.00 | 0.823 | 1 | 5 |
| I am more likely to try new activities and experiences when travelling | 350 | 0 | 4.17 | 4.00 | 0.880 | 1 | 5 |
| I enjoy taking and sharing photos of my travel experience to Benin Kingdom on social media | 350 | 0 | 4.02 | 4.00 | 0.936 | 1 | 5 |
| I enjoy unique experience | 350 | 0 | 4.29 | 4.00 | 0.798 | 1 | 5 |
| I am more likely to stay at a hotel that are rated on social media | 350 | 0 | 3.90 | 4.00 | 1.048 | 1 | 5 |

Based on the 350 participants' responses, the mean shows the average score for each variable. It provides a general idea of the predominant tendency or typical reaction. The mean score, for instance, is roughly 3.99 for the statement "I use social media to find information on my travel destination to Benin Kingdom," indicating that, on average, respondents tend to agree and actively use social media for

gathering information about their travel destinations in Benin Kingdom. When all responses are sorted in ascending order, the median, which represents the middle number, is another way to measure central tendency (Chakrabarty, 2021). The middle respondent's score is often around 4, which suggests a good attitude or agreement with the claims, and the median for most of the variables is close to 4.00.

The standard deviation calculates the variability or dispersion of the responses. While a higher standard deviation shows more variability, a smaller standard deviation means that the responses are closer to the mean. For instance, the standard deviation is low, at about 0.798, for the statement "I enjoy unique experiences," indicating that responses are generally consistent, with most respondents scoring similarly for this item (Saleh, 2019). the minimum and maximum values on a scale of 1 to 5 for each variable. Strong disagreement or infrequent behavior are indicated by a score of 1, whereas strong agreement or frequent behavior are indicated by a value of 5. For example, the statement "I consider recommendation from friends or family member when selecting Destination" has a minimum value of 1, suggesting that some respondents strongly disagree with this statement, and a maximum value of 5, showing that others strongly agree.

**Hypothesis Results**

The linear regression analysis done by using SPSS to test direct effects of variables.

**Findings for Hypothesis 1.** There is a statistically significant influence of use of social media on destination choice National Museum in Benin Kingdon in Nigeria

The linear regression from USM to DC is positive in line with H1 ($\beta$= .638, t= 13.92,).   The DC of the tourists increases by 63.8% due to the increase of one-unit USM. The model was found to be fit ($R^2$=0.358, $\rho$=0.001), with USM explaining .35% by the DC of tourists. Therefore, the results support Hypothesis 1. Table 13 summaries the results of direct effect.

Table 13.

*Summary of hypothesis 1 result*

| Hypotheses | B | S.E. | t | $\rho$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| H1. USM on DC | .638 | .0573 | 13.92 | < .001 |

$\rho$<0.05; $R^2$=0.358

**Findings for Hypothesis 2.** There is a statistically significant influence of use of social media on perceived destination attractiveness National Museum in Benin Kingdon in Nigeria.

The linear regression from USM to PDA is positive in line with H2 ($\beta$= .945, t= 18.05,).   The PDA of the tourists increases by 94.5% due to the increase of one-unit USM. The model was found to be fit ($R^2$=0.483, $\rho$=0.001), with USM explaining .48% by the PDA of tourists. Therefore, the results support Hypothesis 2. Table 14 summaries the results of direct effect.

Table 14.

*Summary of hypothesis 2 results*

| Hypotheses | $\beta$ | S.E. | t | $\rho$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| H2. USM on PDA | .945 | .0524 | 18.05 | < .001 |

$\rho$<0.05; $R^2$=0.483

**Findings for Hypothesis 3.** There is a statistically significant influence of use of social media on tourist behavior. National Museum in Benin Kingdon in Nigeria.

The linear regression from USM to TB is positive in line with H3 ($\beta$= .839, t= 14.99,).   The TB of the tourists increases by 83.9% due to the increase of one-unit USM. The model was found to be fit ($R^2$=0.483, $\rho$=0.001), with USM explaining .48% by the PDA of tourists. Therefore, the results support Hypothesis 3. Table 15 summaries the results of direct effect.

Table 15.

Summary of Hypothesis 3 result

| Hypotheses | $\beta$ | S.E. | t | $\rho$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| H2. USM on TB | .839 | .0560 | 14.99 | < .001 |

$\rho$<0.05; $R^2$=0.483

Table 16.

*Summary of Hypotheses Testing*

| Hypotheses | Relation | Finding |
|---|---|---|
| H1 | USM on DC | Accepted |
| H2 | USM on PDA | Accepted |
| H3 | USM on TB | Accepted |

**CHAPTER V**

**Discussion**

The purpose of the current study was to conduct a thorough analysis of how social media use influenced visitors' views and actions while they were at the Benin City National Museum. Understanding how social media affects the tourist business is crucial in a time when technology has a significant impact on it (Masip et al. 2018). The high correlation between social media use and destination preference is one important component of the research findings that is made clear. Social media platform act as repositories of knowledge, reviews, and advice from other tourists in the modern digital era (Chretien, & Kind, 2013). Before finalizing their vacation plans, tourists are increasingly turning to these internet platforms to get ideas and acquire information. Because of its rich cultural past, the Benin City National Museum may profit greatly from having a strong online presence on a variety of social media sites.

Furthermore, as revealed by (Liu et al., 2020), in this study we also discovered that social media has a significant impact on perceived destination attractiveness. Potential visitors establish opinions of a place based on real-life tales published by their peers, with millions of people sharing their travel stories, images, and experiences on platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter. Positive social media experiences can boost the Benin City National Museum's attractiveness and attract more visitors. Furthermore, social media usage was discovered to have a significant influence on visitor behavior (Shang et al., 2021). Tourists visiting the Benin City National Museum are likely to be affected by evaluations and suggestions found on social media. For example, if they read about other visitors' enriching experiences, they may spend more time exploring the museum and engaging more profoundly with its cultural assets. On the other hand, unfavorable reviews or the museum's lack of a web presence may repel some potential visitors.

The study's findings highlight the importance of social media in the context of the tourist business (Xiang, & Gretzel, 2010). Museum administrators and stakeholders must acknowledge the influence of these internet platforms on tourists' views and conduct. The Benin City National Museum can attract more visitors and generate a buzz on social media by cultivating a positive and fascinating presence. This will persuade potential tourists to fully discover the delights it has to offer. Furthermore, tourism marketers and companies in the museum's neighborhood may

utilize social media to construct effective and focused campaigns, increasing visitor traffic.

The regression analysis provided excellent insights into the association between social media use and destination choice, offering significant evidence to support the research hypothesis. The investigation' major findings provide light on the impact of social media on visitors' decision-making processes when choosing vacation locations, specifically in the context of the Benin City National Museum.

First and foremost, the findings demonstrated a statistically significant relationship between social media use and destination preference. This means that social media platforms have an important influence in changing travelers' choices and decisions about where they wish to vacation. Social media has become a significant source of information and inspiration for visitors in today's digitally linked world. The findings support the idea that potential tourists actively connect with social media material about vacation locations, such as experiences, reviews, and visual representations, and that this participation impacts their final decisions. This substantial relationship is further supported by the positive beta value of 0.562. The beta coefficient shows the amount that the dependent variable (destination choice) changes for every unit change in the independent variable (social media use). The positive beta coefficient in this situation suggests that as the usage of social media rises, so does the possibility of travelers pick the Benin City National Museum as their destination. This shows that more social media interaction, such as following travel pages, reading reviews, or watching user-generated material, improves the museum's attractiveness as a travel destination.

These findings are consistent with and add to prior studies, strengthening the study's robustness. The reference of previous research by (Napratilora et al. 2020; Madondo, 2016), underscores the academic community's agreement on the importance of social media in determining travel decisions. This uniformity among studies adds to the credibility of the present study's findings.

The findings suggest that tourist authorities, destination marketers, and enterprises affiliated with the Benin City National Museum should understand the value of developing a compelling and engaging presence on various social media platforms. They may successfully contact and influence potential visitors in this way, boosting the possibility of the museum being chosen as a trip destination.

The regression analysis supported our hypothesis that social media use has a considerable impact on perceived destination attractiveness. The positive beta coefficient (0.639) reveals that when tourists are exposed to good reviews and photographs on social media sites, they consider Benin City National Museum as more appealing. This study supports the notion that social media plays a significant influence in altering tourists' opinions of a place (Bzovsky et al., 2022). The R-squared value of our study (0.483) shows that social media use accounts for over half of the variance in perceived location attractiveness, emphasizing its significant effect on visitors' decision-making process.

Our findings corroborate our hypothesis by revealing a significant relationship between social media use and visitor behavior. The beta coefficient (0.392) indicates that visitors who actively interact in social media are more likely to engage in particular behaviors, such as attempting new activities and experiences during their vacation. This conclusion is consistent with prior research that has highlighted the importance of social media on tourist behaviors and preferences (Ozili, 2023; Tan et al., 2019).

The study's findings have ramifications for destination marketing and management. Understanding the impact of social media on visitors' decision-making processes and behaviors can assist tourism authorities and businesses in tailoring their marketing plans to successfully exploit social media platforms. Positive evaluations and appealing photographs of Benin City National Museum shown on various social media networks might raise the destination's perceived attractiveness and visitor numbers.

The study finds a link between social media use and destination choice, demonstrating that visitors are affected by social media content when choosing their trip locations. As people utilize social media more, they are more likely to choose the Benin City National Museum as a destination.

The study found that tourists' opinions of place attractiveness are highly influenced by their usage of social media. Positive social media evaluations and photographs boost the perceived appeal of the Benin City National Museum as a tourism destination.

The study found a strong correlation between social media use and visitor behavior. Tourists that actively use social media during their vacation are more likely to engage in particular behaviors, such as exploring new activities and experiences.

The theoretical contributions of the study are in improving our understanding of how social media influences many parts of visitors' decision-making processes. It expands on previous study by stressing the role of social media in influencing travel decisions, location perceptions, and tourist behavior. The incorporation of numerous views from media studies, destination marketing, consumer behavior, and tourist management adds to the research's richness and provides a holistic picture of the issue.

Overall, the study emphasizes the need of strategic social media marketing and content production for destination management and provides useful insights for tourism practitioners. Furthermore, it lays the groundwork for future interdisciplinary study in the dynamic and ever-changing subject of tourist studies

## CHAPTER VI

## Conclusion and Recommendation

This study has shed light on the significant influence of social media on visitors' views and actions at the Benin City National Museum. The research findings highlight a strong correlation between social media use and destination preference, emphasizing that social media platforms serve as essential sources of information and inspiration for travelers. Moreover, the study reveals that social media has a substantial impact on perceived destination attractiveness, with positive content on platforms like Instagram and Facebook enhancing the museum's appeal. Additionally, the research confirms that social media use significantly influences visitor behavior, encouraging tourists to engage more deeply with the museum's cultural assets based on online reviews and recommendations. These findings underscore the critical role of social media in the tourism industry, emphasizing the importance of a positive online presence for the Benin City National Museum and the potential for destination marketers to leverage social media for effective campaigns to attract more visitors

## Recommendations

Understanding the consequences of social media is critical as it continues to play an increasingly prominent role in the field of tourism. The study emphasizes the close relationship between social media use, destination selection, perceived destination attractiveness, and tourist behavior. Embracing social media as a potent tool may provide significant benefits for the Benin City National Museum and help it establish itself as a must-see cultural monument.

This study looked at how tourists' usage of social media influences their decision to visit Benin City National Museum as a planned trip. The study instrument was tested for validity and reliability, and the association between social media use and destination choice in the setting of Benin City National Museum was investigated. Validity and reliability are critical parts of research, and this study demonstrated that the measuring instrument accurately tested the construct of interest while also producing consistent and stable results. The Cronbach's Alpha reliability analysis revealed that the study's instrument had strong internal consistency, with alpha values surpassing 0.70 for all variables, suggesting that the items consistently measured the constructs. This strengthens the study's results' credibility and reliability.

Furthermore, descriptive research of tourists' views about social media use in vacation planning indicated that the majority of visitors stated they use social media to learn about Benin City as a destination, follow tourism-related accounts, and share their travel experiences. Social networking was discovered to be useful in trip planning and interacting with other tourists.

The correlation study revealed a substantial positive association between social media use and perceived destination attractiveness (correlation value of 0.674). This means that as the usage of social media grows, so does the perceived desirability of the place. The high sample size (n = 350) for both variables supports the stability of this association. Based on these data, it is possible to conclude that social media has a significant impact on tourists' destination selections and perceptions of destination attractiveness. The influence of social media is obvious in its capacity to deliver useful information, stimulate tourist involvement, and add to the perception of a destination's desirability.

Future research might broaden the scope of the study to include a more varied sample of travelers from different places. It would also be interesting to investigate how other elements, such as word-of-mouth referrals and traditional advertising, interact with social media in changing tourists' attitudes and behavior.

Recommendations for tourism stakeholders, particularly the Benin City National Museum's administration, include using social media to promote and sell the attraction. They can attract new tourists and keep existing ones by generating entertaining and useful content. Interacting with visitors on social media may improve their experiences and inspire them to submit favorable evaluations, improving the museum's image. Monitoring and responding to user-generated material can also help to create trust and credibility among potential visitors.

Furthermore, in order to remain relevant in an ever-changing digital market, tourist companies must frequently assess and improve their social media strategy. They may successfully adjust their marketing efforts by studying passengers' interests and activities on social media.

This study focuses insight on the role of social media in influencing visitors' destination preferences and views. It gives tourism stakeholders great insights on how to use social media as a strategic tool for recruiting and engaging guests. As the digital era progresses, harnessing the possibilities of social media will be critical for improving the entire tourism experience and driving destination growth.

Cross-Cultural Analysis: Explore how the impact of social media on destination preference, attractiveness, and tourist behavior may vary across different cultural backgrounds. Investigate whether cultural factors influence how social media content is perceived and acted upon by tourists.

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**Appendices A**
**Questionary of the Study**

Dear Participants

I am currently a registered student with the department of tourism management at Near East University, located Turkish republic of Northern Cyprus. As part of my studies and to qualify for the award of a master's degree in tourism management, I have to complete a thesis as among the prerequisite. I am therefore conducting a study titled, **Use of social media by Tourist When Selecting Benin city as Destination.**

I have to distribute questionnaires to tourists who are currently enjoying their visit in Benin city so I kindly request you to participate and contribute to this study by completing this questionnaire which will not take more than 15 minutes of your valued time. All the data collected in this study will solely be applied for research purposes and confidentiality is guaranteed. Should you not understand any one question in this questionnaire, please do not hesitate to ask me or my fieldwork assistant for clarity on +23480----. All your effort to complete this questionnaire is highly appreciated.

Thank you

Sandra Arisco                                   Dr. Özlem Uzunsaf

Near East University                            Near East University

Faculty of Tourism                              Faculty of Tourism

Tourism Management                              Tourism Management, Head of the Department

Email: 20214455@std.neu.edu.tr                  Email: ozlem.uzunsaf@neu.edu.tr

Master Student                                  Thesis Supervisor

**Demographic Profile of Respondents**

Please tick as appropriate

1. Gender

   [ ] Male [ ] Female

2. Race

   [ ] African [ ] Indian [ ] European [ ] Asian

3. Marital status

   [ ] Single [ ] Divorced [ ] Widowed

4. Age Group

   [] Under 20 [ ]20-29 [ ]30-39 [ ]40-49 [ ]50-59 [ ]60 and above

5. Educational Level

   [] less than National certificate [ ] National Certificate [ ] National Diploma [

   ] Bachelor Degree [  ] Post Graduate degree

6. Income Level (In US Dollar Equivalent)

   [ ] Less than USD100 [ ] 100- 300 [ ] 300-500 [ ] above 500

7. Are you active on online communities? Yes/No ………………

8. Which social media platform are you most active on?

   [ ] Facebook [ ] Twitter [ ] YouTube [ ] WhatsApp [ ] Flickr [ ] None

**Please indicate your opinion**

"1 – Strongly Disagree 2- Disagree 3 – Neutral 4– Agree 5– Strongly Agree" on the
following statements as regards to:

### 1.  Social Media Use

| 1. | I use social media to find information on my travel destination to Benin Kingdom | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | I follow tourism- related account on social media | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3 | I post about my travel experiences on social media | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4 | I find social media helpful when planning for my travel | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5 | I use social media to connect with other travelers | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

### 2.  Benin Kingdom as Destination Choice

| 1 | I consider recommendation from friends or family member when selecting destination | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|

| 2 | I am influence by images and reviews on social media when choosing travel destination | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | I prefer to travel to popular tourist destination that are frequently mentioned on social media | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4 | I choose tourist destination that offers unique experiences that I can share | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

**3. Benin Kingdom as Perceived Destination Attractiveness**

| 1 | I find positive review and images of Benin Kingdom tourist destination more attractive on social media. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | I am more likely to visit a destination that has good social media presence. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3 | I consider the reputation tourist destination on social media when making my travel plans | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4 | Positive social media reviews make me feel excited about visiting a destination | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

**4. Tourist Behavior**

| 1 | I am more likely to try new activities and experiences when travelling | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | I enjoy taking and sharing photos of my travel experience to Benin Kingdom on social media | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3 | I enjoy unique experience | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4 | I am more likely to stay at a hotel that are rated on social media | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

**Data Request Letter**

# NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR MUSEUMS AND MONUMENTS

National Museum Benin
P.M.B 1115, Benin City,
Edo State.

**NCMM**
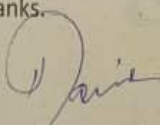
NMB/AF.VOL.V/120

12th May, 2023

The Dean,

Near East University,

Faculty of Tourism,

North Cyprus.

**RE: REQUEST FOR RESEARCH MATERIALS**

With reference to your letter dated Wednesday 10th May, 2023, I wish to forward the statistics of the guests visiting the National Museum, Benin City, from 2018 to 2022 to your Institution for the purpose of research only.

Attached is the Educational Annual Statistic of the year as stipulated.

Thanks.

Mr. Mark Olaitan

Curator

E-mail: benni.museum@ncmm.gov.ng, info@ncmm.gov.ng
www.ncmm.gov.ng

**Appendices B**

**Ethics Committee Approval**

NEAR EAST UNIVERSITY

**SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**

22.06.2023

Dear Sandra Nko Osemwengie Arisco

Your application titled **"Use of social media by tourist when selecting destination: Case study National Museum, Benin Kingdom, Edo State Nigeria"** with the application number NEU/SS/2023/1623 has been evaluated by the Scientific Research Ethics Committee and granted approval. You can start your research on the condition that you will abide by the information provided in your application form.

Prof. Dr. Aşkın KİRAZ

The Coordinator of the Scientific Research Ethics Committee

**Appendices C**
**Plagiarism Similarity Report**

USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA BY TOURIST WHEN SELECTING
DESTINATION: CASE STUDY NATIONAL MUSEUM, BENIN
KINGDOM, EDO STATE NIGERIA.

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| 7 | Li Sun. "Mindfulness-based mobile apps and university students' social anxiety, loneliness and Well-being: Students' Perceptions of the Mindfulness-based Treatment", Research Square Platform LLC, 2023<br>Yayın | <%1 |