

STORYTELLING THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA: ENHANCING NORTH LOMBOK'S TOURISM WITH DIGITAL NARRATIVES TEXT

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Abstract

This study explores how digital narrative texts are used as an effective tool to promote tourism in North Lombok, focusing on the Instagram account @lombokutara.tourism. North Lombok has emerged as a geotourism destination, attracting visitors with its unique blend of cultural heritage and natural beauty. In the digital era, tourism promotion through storytelling on social media has become a crucial strategy. The Instagram account, managed by the North Lombok government, serves as one of the main platforms for promoting local tourism. The research applies narrative paradigm theory, representation theory, and media ecology theory. The method of this study is using qualitative interpretative which examines digital narrative text as a media for North Lombok tourism promotion on the @lombokutara.tourism, incorporating content analysis of 8 posts from 2022 to 2024 which collected through purposive sampling and secondary data. The results reveal that the digital narratives on the @lombokutara.tourism account emphasize that storytelling is not only informative but instrumental in establishing an emotional connection between the audience and North Lombok as a tourism destination. Through immersive descriptions, interactive captions, visual appeal, sensory language, and supported by strategic influencer collaboration, the account shows cultural narratives that reflect brings the landscapes of nature, community identity, local traditions, environmental consciousness and the spiritual richness of the region to life, making it more relatable and accessible to a broader audience. The study highlights the need for more focused digital strategies to maximize the potential of storytelling in promoting local traditions and geotourism.

Keywords: Digital Narrative, Tourism Promotion, Geotourism, Social Media, North Lombok

A. INTRODUCTION

North Lombok is famous for its natural beauty that is rich in tourism potential in it. In addition to its natural wealth, this area is also known for its amazing culture. The presence of tourism in the form of geotourism has made North Lombok a popular destination for both local and international tourism (Kurniawan, 2023). In relation to the dissemination of tourism information, digital promotion has an important role in introducing North Lombok tourism. As a form of modern communication, digital narratives through social media platforms are an effective channel in conveying messages related to tourism. Visual content presented on social media is a strong attraction to attract the attention of the audience. In addition to photos and videos, social media also provides a feature to write a message in the description column (Pratiwi et al., 2024).

The use of social media facilitates interaction with audiences who want to visit these tourist attractions. Effective use of social media can increase visibility, attract interest, and build strong relationships with travelers (Yanti et al., 2024). The North Lombok Tourism Office uses Instagram social media as one of the intermediaries to distribute information about its tourism. Through the @lombokutara.tourism account, they share cultural narratives, information, and natural beauty of North Lombok that can be used as a tourist destination.

Digital narrative text analysis is considered important because of its ability to attract tourists. The structure of digital narrative text consists of tourist information and self-reference memory. The narrative elements presented stimulate readers' empathy and influence decisions in planning their travel destinations (Fauzia et al., 2022). In addition, digital narrative texts are also able to represent geotourism in North Lombok. So that in the successful dissemination of information about tourism in North Lombok, the role of relevant stakeholders as policy makers is needed to be able to coordinate the delivery of messages through this digital communication.

In the digital era, the use of narratives as a tourism promotion strategy has undergone a significant transformation. To market and inform the wider community about tourist locations, digitalization of tourism is the right strategy (Asilady et al., 2023). Instagram is a very significant media for promoting tourist destinations through text and visuals. One of the accounts that does this is @lombokutara.tourism, which specifically uses posts to promote the tourist destination of North Lombok.

Previous studies have highlighted the importance of narratives in tourism promotion. As Fauzia et al. (2022) identified that digital narrative texts that combine tourist information and personal memories can influence readers to choose tourist destinations. Research by Pamungkas (2023) examined how the promotional video *The Heartbeat of Toba* narrates local wisdom content to enrich the story so that it can be used as a tourism promotional video that not only displays the beautiful scenery of the destination but also offers a deeper travel experience to its audience. In his research, he found that rational structured narratives were used to convey local wisdom content.

As the research done by Li et al. (2024) examined the use of virtual storytelling in promotion and found that VR enhances tourists' behavioral intentions through emotional and restorative experiences. Meanwhile, Xu et al. (2024) examined digital museums and how social representations of digital content can enhance educational value and visitor experiences. Hence, Heck and Tsai (2022) viewed digital narratives as a co-creative tool to create social engagement, enhance destination promotion, and convey the identity and therapeutic experiences of local communities.

This study emphasizes how the role of digital narratives in influencing tourists' interests using text, video, and virtual reality approaches. However, this study provides novelty that focuses on the @lombokutara.tourism account. This study is a multimodal interaction study in promoting tourism by combining video, image, and caption analysis related to tourism and geotourism wealth in North Lombok. The main novelty lies in a better understanding of how story elements embody the appeal of tourist destinations. In addition, this study shows how digital narratives can enhance tourist interest. This complements existing literature. These findings will help destination managers and tourism practitioners create more sustainable promotional strategies.

The Narrative paradigm theory proposed by Walter Fisher provides a strong basis for explaining the role of this digital narrative. According to Fisher in Griffin et al. (2022) narrative is a symbolic action, words and/or deeds, that has a sequence and meaning for those who experience, create, or interpret it. In addition, this paradigm states that the story conveyed by the communicator has a sequence of beginning, middle, and end events, and invites the communicant

to interpret its meaning and what values of the story are useful for their lives (Tantama & Agustiningsih, 2013).

In tourism promotion, digital narratives posted on Instagram accounts such as @lombokutara.tourism not only provide information, but also encourage the audience to connect emotionally with the destination through the story told. This study uses Stuart Hall's Representation Theory as a reference because it is relevant to understanding how North Lombok is described in digital narratives. Hall in Adiyanto & Saptiyono (2022) stated that representation is the production of meaning through language or narrative to others, narrative uses signs to symbolize or represent things.

The writing of stories posted by the @lombokutara.tourism account is very important to provide cultural and social understanding of North Lombok to readers from all over the world. Through the way these places are described, visitors can gain a special understanding of the identity and character of the place, which ultimately influences their decision to visit.

Media ecology theory is also used to analyze the use of Instagram as an online narrative platform. According to McLuhan in Ulfah & Yulianita (2024) technology always plays an important and inseparable role in various aspects of people's lives and has an impact on almost every social segment. This theory emphasizes how important media is in the communication process. Instagram, as a social media platform, can quickly spread stories about North Lombok to global users.

Thus, this theoretical study shows how important digital narrative texts are as a tourism promotion tool because they not only provide information but also create strong emotional bonds and cultural representations. This study will provide a new perspective on how social media accounts such as @lombokutara.tourism can use digital narratives to describe North Lombok tourist destinations.

Currently, there is no research that focuses on digital narrative text in managing tourist perception built on Instagram @lombokutara.tourism, also with the use of narrative paradigm theory, representation theory, and media ecology theory. In fact, narrative texts are a way that can be maximized in promoting tourism from the aspects of traditional, local, and unique culture in North Lombok (Syarif et al., 2023).

The purpose of this study is to fill the gap about digital narratives as a promotional medium in the field of local tourism that focuses on the uniqueness and urgency of these narratives. This research is expected to provide scientific contributions as insights for stakeholders to optimize the use of digital narratives for tourism promotion. The research question that can be determined from those backgrounds is: "How does the @lombokutara.tourism account use digital narratives to enhance tourism promotion and engagement for North Lombok?"

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative interpretive approach to understand how digital narratives are used as a tool to promote tourism in North Lombok, specifically through the Instagram account @lombokutara.tourism. As stated by Kriyantono (2022) qualitative research aims to explore the construction of a reality, grounded in a constructivist/interpretive paradigm. The researcher views communication phenomena as meanings constructed.

The main data source for the content analysis is the posts of Instagram account @lombokutara.tourism. All posts from the accounts are considered as the population and purposive sampling is used to select specific content that meets the research objectives.

Sampling criteria include posts that highlight major tourist attractions in North Lombok, and posts that highlight cultural or geotourism features. Additional posts selected for analysis included those related to seasonal events, local culture, environmental conservation, and the use of tourism-related hashtags. Limiting the time frame with focus on posts from 2022 to 2024 ensures that the data analyzed is current and reflects the most recent tourism promotion strategies, particularly in the post-pandemic recovery phase.

Therefore, this research uses 8 sample posts as an analysis unit. Secondary data such as relevant web sources, academic journals, & books are used to contextualize the findings and provide a broader understanding of the role of digital storytelling in tourism promotion.

This research uses content analysis as its data analysis method, based on Bengtsson (2016) starts with planning by identifying an interesting research problem, defining the sample, and choosing the unit of analysis. Data collection involves transforming gathered information into written text. In data analysis, four stages occur: (1) Decontextualization to create meaning units and codes, (2) Recontextualization to refine the content, (3) Categorization to group similar data, and (4) Compilation to draw conclusions.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the research, triangulation is used by comparing data from multiple sources, including secondary data, to draw comprehensive and accurate conclusions.

C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. FINDINGS

The results of the study, based on the analysis of 8 sample units, explore the use of digital narratives in promoting North Lombok tourism through the @lombokutara.tourism Instagram account. Through content analysis based on the communication styles, several narrative strategies were identified that effectively captured audience attention and enhanced interest in the region's tourist destinations. These findings illustrate how elements such as visual descriptions, audience interaction, sensory language, and the integration of cultural and religious values are optimized to build North Lombok's tourism appeal.

1.1. Natural Beauty and Scenic Appeal

The digital narratives on the @lombokutara.tourism Instagram account often feature North Lombok's impressive natural landscapes, capturing the area's unique scenery and promoting it as a must-see destination. For instance, posts showcasing the Senaru-Torean trail often highlight its panoramic views and call it "the best view of Rinjani," positioning it as a top attraction for nature lovers and adventurers. Phrases like "best view" serve as cues to potential visitors, suggesting that this trail provides an unparalleled experience for those who enjoy scenic hikes and nature photography (see **Figure 1.**).

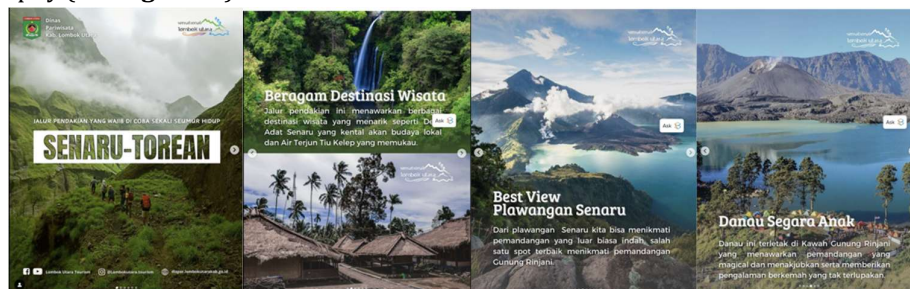




Figure 1. Focus on Natural Beauty and Scenic Appeal

Another prominent feature is Segara Anak Lake in the Geopark Rinjani area. Posts refer to the lake as "Jurassic Park Lombok," blending adventure with the allure of exploring a pristine, almost mythical landscape. By referencing well-known visuals from pop culture, like *Jurassic Park*, the post taps into the audience's imagination, creating a sense of discovery and exoticism that is particularly appealing to adventure-seeking tourists.

These narratives often use immersive descriptions to encourage audiences to visualize themselves in these landscapes. For example, a post says, "...menawarkan pemandangan magical dan menakjubkan serta memberikan pengalaman berkemah yang tak terlupakan" inviting the viewer to picture the experience of being physically present. This storytelling technique leverages sensory details and adventure-oriented phrases, effectively stimulating interest in visiting these iconic locations.

1.2. Interactive and Conversational Tone

The digital storytelling on the @lombokutara.tourism Instagram account frequently adopts a relaxed, conversational style that engages the audience in a way that feels both personal and inviting. By using casual, persuasive phrases like "WAJIB COBA" and "Siapa sih yang ga tergoda untuk mencobanya? terbukti beberapa artis ibukota pernah mencobanya, lantas kalian kapan?", the account simulates a friendly conversation rather than a formal promotional message (see **Figure 2.**). This tone helps to make North Lombok feel accessible and desirable, as if the account is speaking directly to potential visitors, encouraging them to take part in the experiences it showcases.





Figure 2. The Use of Interactive and Conversational Tone

For example, posts about sports tourism activities, such as golf, paragliding, and cycling, highlight not only the physical appeal of these activities but also their social and visual appeal. Terms like "instagrammable" are used strategically to attract a social media-savvy audience who values capturing and sharing unique experiences. This choice of words appeals to tourists who are motivated by visually appealing destinations and the opportunity to create memorable content for their own social media profiles.

Additionally, these posts often include interactive calls to action that prompt followers to engage with the content. For example, "*Nah tunggu apalagi, trying something new guys. We never know if we never try, right?*" This language not only builds curiosity but also creates a sense of urgency, subtly encouraging followers to make visiting North Lombok a priority on their travel list. By framing the activities as a "must-do," the account elevates North Lombok as a place that offers unique, bucket-list experiences. This conversational tone, combined with the interactive prompts, helps the audience feel like they are being invited into an exclusive adventure. It fosters a sense of excitement and eagerness, making potential visitors more likely to consider North Lombok as their next travel destination.

1.3. Sensory and Emotive Language in Storytelling

The @lombokutara.tourism account employs sensory-rich, emotive language to transport its audience to North Lombok's destinations, making them feel as if they are already experiencing the location's beauty. This technique is particularly effective in helping the audience visualise the setting, engaging their senses through vivid descriptions and emotionally resonant language that connects them to the environment on a deeper level.

For example, posts about North Lombok's **coastal roads of Malaka** use carefully chosen phrases like "**swaying palm trees**," "**refreshing ocean breeze**," and "**mesmerizing blue ocean**." These descriptions go beyond merely describing the landscape; they evoke the sensations associated with the location. The mention of "swaying palm trees" conjures an image of gentle movement, which suggests relaxation and tranquility. The phrase "**refreshing ocean breeze**" adds a sensory element, encouraging the audience to imagine the cool, soothing feeling of the wind on their skin. This approach engages the senses of sight, touch, and even smell, creating a layered experience that makes followers feel as though they are physically present, standing on the coastal roads of Malaka.

Furthermore, the use of **emotionally charged language** like "**mesmerizing blue ocean**" taps into the audience's emotions, as words like "mesmerizing" carry a sense of awe and wonder. By framing the ocean in this way, the account emphasizes the destination's beauty in a way that feels almost magical, appealing to followers' desire for breathtaking experiences that they may feel

compelled to seek out. This language is not only descriptive but also evocative, subtly suggesting that the journey through North Lombok is not just a visual treat but a peaceful, almost transformative experience.

Through such sensory and emotive storytelling, the account builds a connection between the audience and North Lombok by inviting them to imagine the sounds, sights, and sensations they would experience. This approach is highly effective because it transforms what could be a simple description into a vivid, immersive story that makes North Lombok feel like a must-visit location. By appealing to both the audience's senses and emotions, @lombokutara.tourism strengthens the viewers' emotional attachment to the destination, making them more likely to feel drawn to experience it firsthand.

1.4. Highlighting Cultural and Religious Heritage through Digital Storytelling

@lombokutara.tourism instagram account skillfully highlights North Lombok's rich cultural and religious heritage, weaving together traditions, historical landmarks, and religious events to create a multidimensional tourism appeal. By focusing on cultural landmarks like the **Masjid Kuno Bayan** and annual events such as the **Maulid Adat Festival** (see Figure 3.), the account positions North Lombok not merely as a scenic destination but as a place imbued with history, spirituality, and community values. This storytelling approach resonates with travellers who seek immersive cultural experiences, providing an enriching layer to the visual appeal.

For example, posts about the Masjid Kuno Bayan, a historic mosque renowned for its unique architecture and spiritual significance go beyond simple descriptions, framing the site as a symbol of the region's enduring Islamic traditions. With phrases like "traditional architecture" and "spiritual significance," the content invites followers into a deeper appreciation of the mosque's historical importance, portraying as opportunities to connect with the community's cultural roots.

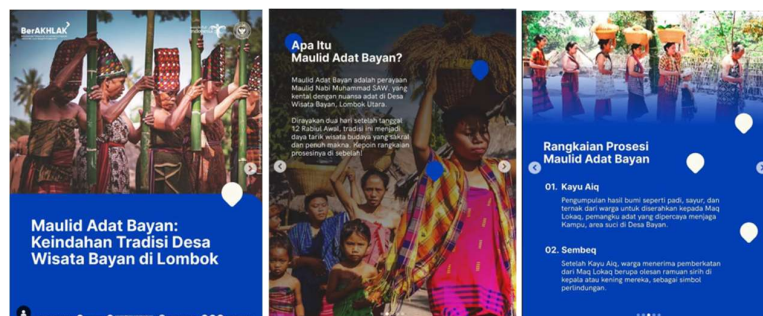
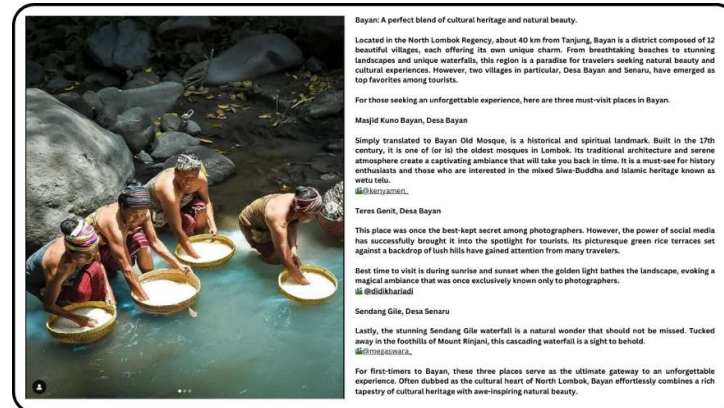




Figure 3. Highlight of Cultural Heritage

Similarly, the Maulid Adat Festival, an annual celebration honoring the Prophet Muhammad's birthday, is presented as a vivid expression of North Lombok's living traditions. Through immersive storytelling, the account describes the festival's joyful communal feasts, vibrant costumes, and processions, reflecting the community's cultural identity and devotion. The use of sensory language paints a lively atmosphere from the sounds of traditional drums to the colorful garments capturing not only the visual appeal but also the communal and spiritual energy of the event. This portrayal transforms the festival into a unique experience for culturally and spiritually motivated travelers, who can connect more deeply with the local community's values.

By combining historical context, sensory-rich language, and engaging visuals, @lombokutara.tourism effectively promotes North Lombok's cultural and religious sites as destinations that offer travelers meaningful, culturally immersive experiences.

1.5. Encouraging Engagement with Interactive Captions and Visual Aesthetics

@lombokutara.tourism effectively uses interactive captions to prompt followers to engage with their content, creating a sense of community and personal connection to North Lombok's attractions. Captions that ask direct questions like **"Who has been here?"** or **"What's your favorite part?"** invite followers to share their own experiences or thoughts, thereby transforming the posts from simple visuals into engaging conversation starters. This strategy not only boosts the visibility of each post through likes, comments, and shares but also fosters a sense of belonging among followers who feel more involved in the content. By interacting in the comments, users are given an opportunity to reminisce about their past visits, plan future trips, or simply express their admiration for North Lombok's beauty, reinforcing their emotional connection to the destination.

The visual aesthetics play a crucial role in amplifying this engagement. High-quality photos and videos that capture North Lombok's landscapes, cultural sites, and activities are curated to captivate and inspire. These visuals are not merely for admiration, they serve as storytelling tools that invite audiences to imagine themselves in the setting. For example, a scenic photo of the pristine Segara Anak Lake framed by mountains and a tranquil blue sky can evoke feelings of serenity and awe. Paired with an interactive caption like **"Who would love to wake up to this view?"** The post draws users into a virtual experience that goes beyond passive viewing, encouraging them to engage and imagine their own presence in that scene.

1.6. Leveraging Influencer Collaborations for Wider Reach

To extend its reach and appeal to a broader audience, @lombokutara.tourism strategically collaborates with local influencers who have established followings that align with tourism and lifestyle interests. These influencers bring a layer of authenticity to the account, as they often share their genuine travel experiences and impressions with their followers. Posts featuring influencers

often receive higher engagement rates, as they draw in not only the account's existing audience but also the influencer's own followers, who may be unfamiliar with North Lombok.

As example by @raditya.maulana, with 11.3K followers, takes his audience on a good journey along the coastal roads of North Lombok. Starting from the vibrant town of Senggigi and heading toward Pemenang, he captures the serene atmosphere of the region. His storytelling highlights the swaying palm trees and picture ocean views, creating a vibe that resonates with his followers. Among the highlights is Malaka Hill where he showcase scenes of the endless blue ocean and the enchanting Gili Islands, bringing the North Lombok feel to life through his lens.

Moreover, these collaborations often highlight specific aspects of North Lombok that appeal to niche interests, such as adventure tourism, cultural experiences, or nature photography. When an influencer highlights an activity, such as snorkeling or attending a local festival, it introduces new audiences to North Lombok's offerings in a way that feels personal and trustworthy. This not only boosts engagement on individual posts but also enhances @lombokutara.tourism's brand perception, positioning it as a source of credible, relatable travel inspiration.

1.7. Using Multilingual Captions for Broader Engagement

To reach a diverse audience, @lombokutara.tourism uses both Indonesian and English captions in its posts, allowing it to engage both local and international followers. This multilingual approach not only makes the content accessible to a wider range of users but also emphasizes inclusivity, signaling that North Lombok is a welcoming destination for travelers from around the world. By using English alongside Indonesian, the account caters to international tourists who may be interested in exploring the cultural and natural attractions showcased on the page but may not be fluent in the local language.

For example, a post featuring the breathtaking views of Geopark Rinjani might be accompanied by a caption in both languages, describing the landscape and inviting users to visit. This ensures that the message resonates with both Indonesian audiences, who may feel a sense of pride and connection to the region, and international audiences, who may be intrigued by the destination's beauty and uniqueness.

Additionally, @lombokutara.tourism strategically employs hashtags such as #visitlombokutara to extend the reach of these bilingual posts. These hashtags help categorize the content under popular travel tags, allowing users searching for tourism in Indonesia to discover North Lombok more easily. Hashtags create a bridge between audiences interested in Lombok as a travel destination and the specific attractions of North Lombok, increasing the account's visibility across social media and attracting new followers.

2. DISCUSSION

The utilization of digital narratives on the form of storytelling in promoting tourism, as evidenced by the Instagram account @lombokutara.tourism managed by the *Dinas Pariwisata Kabupaten Lombok Utara* (North Lombok Tourism Office), showcases a strategic approach by local governments in adapting to modern digital marketing trends. As stated by Afren (2024) that in a digital era where utilization of social media has become a dominant platform for tourism industry marketing tools, government agencies are recognizing the importance of leveraging these channels to connect with potential visitors.

Walter Fisher's *narrative paradigm theory* begins with the idea that storytelling is a fundamental part of being human. People naturally make sense of their own actions and the actions of others through stories, with the main aim being to find meaning and understanding (Littlejohn et al., 2021). The @lombokutara.tourism account effectively utilizes this paradigm by constructing

compelling, coherent narratives that highlight North Lombok's natural beauty, cultural richness, and unique tourism experiences. These narratives are presented in a way that aligns with the audience's values and expectations, increasing their believability and impact. Viewing life experiences as stories has become the foundation for a significant body of theoretical work known as the narrative paradigm (Fisher, 1984).

By framing the destination in a relatable and culturally rich narrative, the account taps into the human predisposition to be persuaded by stories, thereby enhancing its appeal and potential influence on tourist behavior. Previous research used the same theory by Chronis (2012), which focused on heritage museums, found that for storytelling to be successful in tourism, it's essential to involve the tourists themselves.

The @lombokutara.tourism account demonstrates how visual storytelling, interactive content, and influencer collaborations are used effectively to highlight North Lombok's natural beauty, cultural heritage, and adventure tourism offerings. Previous research by Pamungkas (2023) also used narrative paradigm theory with different media also showcasing not only natural beauty but also local wisdom and culture in promotional tourism videos.

This government-managed account reflects a broader trend in tourism promotion where digital platforms are used to craft compelling narratives that engage audiences on an emotional level. This strategy aligns with previous research findings by Heck and Tsai (2022), which suggest that digital storytelling fosters social connections and engages audiences on a deeper emotional level by tapping into shared memories and significant experiences.

Findings from Fauzia et al. (2022) note that digital narrative texts not only provide in-depth knowledge about a destination but also evoke enjoyment and empathy, which further make readers' interest and motivates them to visit the location being portrayed. By using immersive descriptions and leveraging well-known pop culture references like "Jurassic Park Lombok" the account creates a sense of exoticism and adventure. During the pre-travel phase, emotions are crucial in sparking tourist motivations and influencing their decision-making when selecting a destination (Hosany et al., 2020).

Research by Asilady et al. (2023) found that promotional texts often emphasize action verbs, such as "discover" or "visit," to highlight physical activities. By using interactive calls to action and framing these experiences as "must-do" the account encourages followers to actively engage and consider North Lombok as their next travel destination, creating a sense of urgency and excitement.

Additionally, the interactive, conversational tone of the captions, coupled with calls to action such as "*Siapa sih yang ga tergoda untuk mencobanya?*", helps to create a personal connection with the audience, making the promotional content feel more like an invitation from a friend rather than a formal advertisement. The main goal of a call to action strategy is to convert content visitors into more engaged customers or prospects (Maulana, 2024). The use of bilingual captions in both Indonesian and English also underscores an inclusive approach, signaling that North Lombok is a welcoming destination for a diverse range of travelers, and helping to broaden the account's reach.

The promotional focus on specific attractions and cultural events raises important considerations about sustainability and community representation. By heavily marketing popular sites like the Rinjani Geopark and cultural festivals such as the Maulid Adat, there is a potential risk of over-tourism, which can place undue pressure on local infrastructure and disrupt the natural environment. Without careful management and sustainable tourism practices, residents, with deep cognitive, emotional, spiritual, moral, mythical, and material connections to a place, may suffer more from over-tourism than temporary visitors, leading to dissatisfaction and frustration that can

result in tourism phobias (Insch, 2020). It is important to implement strategies that promote responsible tourism and minimize negative impacts.

Stuart Hall's *representation theory* provides another layer of analysis, focusing on how cultural meanings are constructed and communicated through media texts (Hall, 1997). In the context of @lombokutara.tourism, the account acts as a representational platform that showcases the identity and heritage of North Lombok. Through visuals and captions, the account does not merely depict the landscape but also conveys deeper cultural narratives, such as the historical significance of the Maulid Adat Festival and the spiritual value of local religious sites. By choosing specific symbols and language, the account shapes a particular representation of North Lombok that aligns with the goals of the regional tourism office.

The curated nature of Instagram content often highlights the most photogenic aspects of a destination, potentially creating unrealistic expectations for visitors. This highlights the need for the account to incorporate more diverse perspectives, including the voices and stories of local residents, to provide a more holistic view of the region that goes beyond surface-level aesthetics. By doing so, the digital narrative can align more closely with the lived experiences of the local community, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation among potential tourists. A similar approach was used with the Umbria web platform, where bloggers were invited to live in scenic Umbrian villages and engage with locals, allowing for authentic storytelling that reflected the true essence and everyday experiences of the region (Bassano et al., 2019).

The account's strategy of encouraging user-generated content through interactive captions and hashtags like #visitlombokutara is a key strength, as it engages into the participatory nature of social media and builds a sense of community around the destination. The use of hashtags attracts attention, generates interest, and raises desire (Anggreani et al., 2023). By prompting followers to share their own experiences, the account not only increases engagement but also amplifies its reach, as users become informal ambassadors who contribute to the narrative of North Lombok. This crowdsourced content enriches the overall storytelling effort. This approach mirrors the strategy employed by Kemenparekraf in their campaign, where the use of the TikTok hashtag *Travel X Wonderful Indonesia* encouraged social media users to share their experiences visiting the "10 New Bali Destinations" (Anggreani et al., 2023).

While the digital narrative strategy employed by @lombokutara.tourism is largely effective in engaging potential visitors and showcasing North Lombok's attractions, there are several areas where improvements could enhance its overall impact. One notable issue is the inconsistency in content uploads. Although the account features high-quality posts that highlight key natural, cultural, and adventure tourism assets, the frequency of these posts is often irregular.

In the fast-paced environment of social media, maintaining a consistent posting schedule is crucial for keeping the audience engaged and sustaining interest in the destination. In addition to regular content uploads, recent research has shown that the timing of posts can significantly influence user engagement (Shahbaznezhad et al., 2021). Gaps in content uploads can result in missed opportunities to capitalize on seasonal travel trends, special events, and real-time engagement, ultimately limiting the account's potential to build a steady and loyal follower base.

Lastly, the account could benefit from diversifying its content to include more behind-the-scenes narratives and community-based stories. The current emphasis on polished visuals and influencer collaborations is effective for generating initial interest, but it may lack the depth needed to sustain engagement over time. More frequent updates featuring local voices, traditional artisans, environmental conservation efforts, and everyday life in North Lombok could provide a richer, more authentic glimpse into the region. The use of digital media strategies in the tourism sector is

important to enhance the destination visibility and add a meaningful engagement between tourists and locals (Tabuni & Singgalen, 2024).

Media ecology theory that was introduced by McLuhan has the idea of “the medium is the message” suggests that to understand social and cultural change, we must first recognize how media shape our environment (McLuhan, 2008). Media creates symbolic contexts that influence how we perceive the world, affecting our experiences, attitudes, and behaviors. The @lombokutara.tourism account operates within the broader media ecosystem of Instagram, a platform designed for visual storytelling and audience engagement.

This theory highlights how the medium itself shapes the message, with Instagram’s focus on imagery influencing the way North Lombok is presented to potential tourists. High-quality photos and immersive videos become the primary tools for storytelling, emphasizing aesthetics and visual appeal. This approach aligns with findings from Li et al. (2024), who highlight that storytelling in immersive environments, such as digital platforms, plays a persuasive role in engaging audiences.

This visual-centric approach leverages the media ecology of Instagram, tailoring content to fit the platform’s audience, who are usually drawn in by eye-catching visuals and the urge to share memorable moments. However, this also means that the depth of narrative may be constrained by the platform’s format, which favors shorter, image-led posts over more detailed, text-heavy storytelling. Previous research by Xu et al. (2024) suggests that while digital formats are widely recognized for their advantages, there is a lack of inquiry into how these displays are effectively used to communicate compelling stories.

D. CONCLUSION

This research on the Instagram account @lombokutara.tourism highlights the strategic use of digital narratives to promote North Lombok’s unique blend of natural beauty and cultural heritage. By applying narrative paradigm theory, representation theory, and media ecology theory, the study demonstrates that storytelling is not only informative but instrumental in establishing an emotional connection between the audience and North Lombok as a tourism destination. Through immersive descriptions, interactive captions, and visually captivating posts, the account effectively brings the landscapes, local traditions, and the spirit of the region to life, making it more relatable and accessible to a broader audience.

The findings reveal that the account's emphasis on visual appeal and sensory language, supported by strategic influencer collaborations, enhances engagement by encouraging the audience to imagine and experience North Lombok’s natural wonders vicariously. This approach positions North Lombok not only as a scenic destination but as a place where tourists can immerse themselves in cultural narratives that reflect the community's identity, environmental consciousness, and spiritual richness.

Despite these strengths, the study notes that engagement levels, while positive, have not reached their full potential. To enhance audience interaction, the research suggests practical implication to optimizing digital strategies through the use of multilingual captions, interactive stories, and more frequent influencer collaborations. By embracing these practices, @lombokutara.tourism can better align its content with audience preferences, maximize visibility, and position North Lombok as a leading geotourism destination in Indonesia.

In conclusion, this research emphasizes the value of storytelling as a transformative tool in tourism & geotourism promotion. Digital narratives on @lombokutara.tourism do more than showcase destinations; they invite audiences to participate in the cultural and environmental

journey of North Lombok. These insights underscore the importance of digital strategies that combine visual appeal, narrative depth, and strategic collaboration, offering valuable guidance for tourism practitioners seeking to leverage social media in the promotion of regional tourism in the digital era.

However, this study has limitations because it only analyzes the narrative and text dimensions. This study only relies on social media posts without conducting direct interviews or field observations and the absence of quantitative measurements such as audience engagement data (likes, comments and shares) which would provide in-depth and specific insights into the effectiveness of the digital narrative strategy for future research recommendation.

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