

FROM SOCIAL MEDIA TO THE DEAD SEA: THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS IN PROMOTING JORDAN'S TOURISM SECTORS

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Abstract: The research aimed to determine the extent of the Jordanian populace's reliance on social media influencers for information regarding Jordanian tourism. The study then aims to evaluate the influencers' role in promoting cultural, therapeutic, religious, and recreational tourism in Jordan. These two aims will lead to answering the overarching goal of this research, which is to uncover the state of Jordanians' reliance and conviction when it comes to content presented by influencers on social media regarding tourism in the country. This research is a descriptive study and therefore, it uses the questionnaire tool as a main method for collecting data. Due to the large population and the difficulty of reaching to all participants, which is the whole population of Jordan, the study employed a purposive sample that comprises 400 individuals who follow influencers' content on social media and rely on them for tourism-related information. The study revealed that the majority of respondents (49.7%) moderately depend on social media influencers for information regarding Jordanian tourism. Regarding the four main areas, the study examined, first the cultural dimension, the study found that individuals reported a high dependence on the "personal experiences about cultural activities and the insights into Jordanian culture with a mean (2.12). Second, in relation to the medical tourism area, a high reliance found on information about "the advantages of therapeutic sites like the Dead Sea and Ma'in Hot Springs" with a mean (2.03). Third, the results revealed a medium dependence on influencers regarding the promotion of religious sites, with an overall mean of 1.25 for the whole construct. Fourth, "introducing diverse recreational activities about Jordan" was the highest in terms of information the sample of the study reported that they rely on based of the content produced by influencers on social media. These results reflect how a sample of Jordanian social media users consume and rely on media content related to tourism in Jordan. This high dependence could be attributed to several factors, including the wide use of social media in the country.

Keywords: social media, influencers, tourism, tourism promotion, digital marketing, Jordan

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INTRODUCTION

In the modern digital era, social media has become among the most significant and powerful tools for influencing audiences (Khader, 2024). Social media world produced user-elites whose persuasive power stems from algorithmic visibility and relationship-based trust, and not from institutional authority. These users, or one could say creators, produce influential content whether related to tourism or other fields (Ahmad et al., 2024). They could cultivate audience attention and commercial capital through systematic self-branding and sustained posting (Tahat, 2025).

As of recent statistics on the use of social media worldwide, there are 5.24 billion user identities, which is equivalent to 63 percent of the world's population (HootSuite, 2024; Kemp, 2025). Social media users sometimes turn to influencers because they combine perceived expertise with a sense of interpersonal familiarity. Influencer guidance now extends to informational domains such as tourism (Alrahman, 2025). Social media platforms have moved beyond interpersonal exchange to become instruments that actively shape individual decisions (Nuseir et al., 2024; Ahmad et al, 2026).

Social endorsements, such as likes and shares, that people practice online, likely structure how people search for information and evaluate options (Ahmad et al., 2023; Alzoubi & Shlool, 2023). Recent studies show that social media is used intentionally during pre-purchase research and that influencer content affects choices (Macías Urrego et al., 2024).

People on social media actively go through user-generated content, especially reviews and experiential accounts, when deciding what to do or buy. Therefore, independent content creators who, by virtue of reach and credibility can shape others' attitudes and behaviors, use social media platforms as income streams through sponsorships, affiliate links, paid placements, and other monetization channels (Tahat, 2025; Ahmad et al., 2025; Hatamleh et al., 2023).

Tourism in Jordan brings clear benefits for places and people. Investment has gone into roads, visitor facilities, and public services in key destinations such as Petra, Wadi Rum, the Dead Sea, and the Aqaba Special Economic Zone, where authorities link service upgrades to tourism goals (ASEZA, 2024). The sector also creates spaces for cultural exchange

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through heritage visits, guiding, handicrafts, and local cultural activities, which can strengthen Jordan's image abroad and widen community income (MoTA, 2024). These gains are, however, vulnerable to shocks in the region. This was apparent during the Israel-Gaza conflict. Fewer bookings were made to tourism spots in Jordan, with officials reporting fewer flights from low-cost carriers (MoTA, 2024; Reuters, 2024; The Jordan Times, 2025).

Influencers often act as informal ambassadors for destinations on social media. They share personal stories and photos, which inspire followers and nudge them to visit the places they feature (Tahat, 2025). Independent creators now show and lead potential travelers to practical choices on where to go and what to do. A growing body of research indicates that such content influences the destination image and increases travel intentions (Alrahman, 2025). Recent reviews and meta-analyses found consistent positive effects on engagement and choice (Alrahman, 2025). Taken together, the role of influencers in tourism promotion is not speculative today, but it is supported by current evidence and is already being applied in Jordan's practice (Uniyal et al., 2025). Although influencers are central to destination promotion, evidence from Jordan remains limited on how Jordanians rely on influencer content and how they perceive influencers' roles across cultural, medical, religious, and recreational tourism. Existing studies often report general associations between influencer activity and stated intentions but rarely disaggregate by tourism type or audience segment in Jordan. Moreover, we lack Jordan-specific evidence on who relies on influencers (by age, gender, education) and how such reliance relates to perceived promotional roles. Addressing this gap, the present study surveys Jordanian social media users who follow influencers to estimate reliance levels and to assess perceived influencer roles across tourism domains.

Social Media Influencers and Tourism Promotion

Previous research on social media influencers within Jordan is still undergoing. Regarding their role in the field of tourism and also promoting tourism in general whether locally or internationally, still scarce. Microscopically, there is no doubt that the use of social media in tourism promotion has become increasingly popular, as travel influencers leverage their platforms to showcase various destinations. This often shapes public perceptions and encourages followers to explore new places (Xu & Pratt, 2018, Aljumah et al., 2024). This relationship not only boosts the visibility of less popular locations but also drives economic growth in those areas by attracting a wave of tourists eager to experience what they see online (Femenia-Serra & Gretzel, 2020). Thus, local businesses benefit from this influx of visitors, which leads to increased revenue and job opportunities. This means creating authentic content produced by travel content creators becomes a priority to boost tourism in Jordan as many local places are not being highlighted authentically (Tahat, 2025).

This shift towards authenticity encourages content creators to focus on storytelling that highlights the true essence of places. Moreover, this will lead to enabling travelers to connect more deeply with their chosen destinations and fostering a greater appreciation for diverse cultures and traditions (Lorgeoux & Divakaran, 2023). These authentic narratives can cultivate a more sustainable tourism model that not only attracts visitors but also preserves the cultural and historical integrity of the communities they represent. Thus, this approach will enrich the travel experience and empowers local communities by giving them a platform to share their stories and traditions (Hill & Qesja, 2022).

Previous research done by Gebreel & Shuayb in 2019 showed the relevance of social media platforms in tourism marketing and promotion in which showed the significance of social media in decision-making processes of the travelers but this work can be argued is with within the frames of international contexts and not from within even the Arab regions.

This study however highlighted how platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube facilitate information dissemination, making it easier for potential tourists to access content they need. On the same manner, Tarigan & Tinambunan (2022) explored the direct impact of social media-based promotion on travel decision-making. They confirmed a strong positive correlation and they revealed that promotional activities on social media influence consumer engagement. In a broader view, Zeng & Gerritsen (2014) provided a comprehensive review of social media's role in tourism, identifying it as a critical factor in information search, decision-making behaviors. They argued that social media has transformed traditional marketing strategies, which enables more personalized and direct communication between tourism service providers and consumers. The review points out that social media not only aids in promoting destinations but also enhances tourist experiences through interactive platforms that allow for real-time feedback and engagement. This dynamic interaction helps build destination loyalty and fosters a community of engaged travelers.

Across the above highlighted studies and more recent ones, social media is presented as an environment that has a large space for information sharing about tourism related content. There are studies that even indicated that the number of visitors visiting a destination is correlated with their consumption of content to that place on social media (Hussain et al, 2024).

A recent study within the context of Jordan, which was conducted in 2025, showed moderate yet meaningful exposure to local tourism content, with two mechanisms standing out. First, people seek vicarious experience through others' posts and recommendations. Second, promotions built around offers and discounts receive strong interaction. Crucially, influencer-led promotional content is associated with higher engagement and a positive effect on tourism decisions, which links social proof to behavioral intention in the Jordanian context (Tahat, 2025).

An interesting finding from an empirical study which was conducted on five touristic locations found that influencer promotions, and official campaigns all have significant effects on preferences and behavioral outcomes, and the authors frame these effects in terms of destination branding and visitor engagement (Amaravathi, 2025). Regarding the attractiveness of each social media platform, a study conducted on a 100-participant found that not all platforms contribute equally across attraction types. Instagram is identified as most effective for natural attractions, YouTube is preferred for cultural attractions, and Twitter underperforms in several cases. The practical implication is that destination managers should tailor platform choice and content form to the semiotics and affordances of each attraction category rather than defaulting to popularity metrics (Suryana et al., 2024). This goes to agree that content that

showcases lived experiences and clear consumer benefits elicits stronger engagement (Tahat, 2025). Likewise, a study based in Jordan performed by Alrahman (2025) in which he emphasized that the majority of individuals who interact with tourism advertisements over social media is high with 75.4%, reflecting the pervasiveness of online advertising style and its impact on audiences. Most of these studies adopt survey-based designs that quantify perceptions, and behavioral correlations. These choices indicate a quantitative tilt that privileges generalizability and effect estimation. They also show increasing attention to construct specificity, for example differentiating content forms and platform affordances.

Research Questions

This study seeks to answer the following primary question: "What is the role of social media influencers in promoting Jordanian tourism?" From this primary question, the following sub-questions emerge:

What is the extent of the Jordanian public's reliance on social media influencers for obtaining information about Jordanian tourism?

What role do social media influencers play in promoting cultural tourism in Jordan?

What role do social media influencers play in promoting medical tourism in Jordan?

What role do social media influencers play in promoting religious tourism in Jordan?

What role do social media influencers play in promoting recreational tourism in Jordan?

Research Hypotheses

H1. There are statistically significant differences in the degree of the Jordanian public's reliance on social media influencers for obtaining information about Jordanian tourism, attributed to demographic factors.

H2. There is a correlational relationship between the degree of the Jordanian public's reliance on social media influencers for obtaining information about Jordanian tourism and the role of influencers in promoting Jordanian tourism (cultural, medical, religious, and recreational tourism).

METHOD

This study is adopting a descriptive approach. This approach is commonly used to achieve a precise understanding of events and observable patterns by examining their variables, and characteristics (Ahmad et al., 2025).

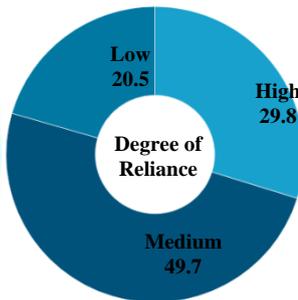
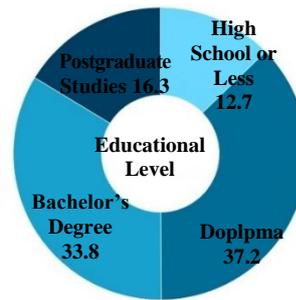
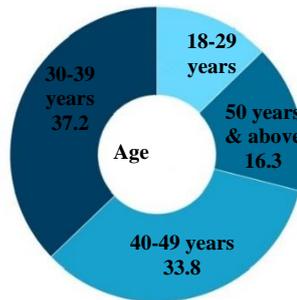
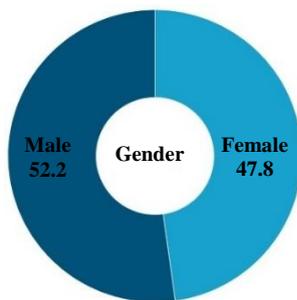


Figure 1. Demographic Characteristics Distribution

Figure 2. Reliance on Social Media Influencers

Descriptive studies aim to provide sufficient information for analyzing and interpreting these observable patterns in order to identify their implications and effects (Safari et al., 2025). This enables researchers to develop appropriate actions and recommendations for addressing the ways that enhance their positive outcomes or anticipate future development (Al Olaimat et al., 2021; Ahmad et al., 2023). Within this framework, this study employed survey method i.e., questionnaire that is distributed to a sample of audience in order to seek their attitudes, and perspectives regarding an issue or phenomenon presented through the media (Ahmad et al., 2025). Therefore, I applied this method to a group of Jordanian citizens who use social media platforms constantly which means a purposive sample model of 400 individuals was selected. The inclusion included those who rely on social media influencers to acquire information about Jordanian tourism. The demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented in Table 1 below. Also, presented in Figures 1 and 2 for further illustration.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	191	47.8%
	Female	209	52.2%
Age	18-29 years	51	12.7%
	30-39 years	149	37.2%
	40-49 years	135	33.8%
	50 years and above	65	16.3%
Educational Level	High School or Less	48	12%
	Diploma	31	7.7%
	Bachelor's Degree	221	55.3%
	Postgraduate Studies	100	25%
Total		400	100%

Measurement Scales

I used in the questionnaire of this study a four-point Likert scale to measure the respondents' agreement with the questionnaire items. The scale ranged from 0 to 3, where:

- 3 indicates the highest level of agreement (High)
- 0 represents the lowest level of agreement (No).

To determine the respondents' assessment levels, the scale was calculated by subtracting the minimum value (0) from the maximum value (3) and then dividing the result by the number of desired categories (3: High, Medium, Low). I utilized the following formula throughout the questionnaire: $(3-0)/3=1$. Accordingly, the limits of each category, resulted in the following classification: 0.00 – 1.00 = Low, 1.01 – 2.00 = Medium, 2.01 – 3.00 = High.

Validity and Reliability

To ensure the validity of the study, the instrument was reviewed by a panel of expert judges, comprising five academic professionals from the Faculty of Media at Zarqa University. The researcher wanted to verify that it effectively measures all dimensions of the research problem and that it fulfils its objectives. Additionally, the panel was asked to assess the linguistic clarity of the questionnaire to ensure the absence of typographical and grammatical errors before proceeding with the field application. After these first steps, the work on reliability began. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to calculate the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, which measures the internal consistency of the questionnaire. This process involved computing correlation coefficients for each dimension of the research instrument and assessing the degree of item correlation within each dimension. The overall reliability coefficient of the instrument reached 98.8%, which is considered highly acceptable in media research, where a reliability level of 70% or above is typically deemed satisfactory. Table 2 explains Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficients for the questionnaire dimensions.

Table 2. Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficients for the Questionnaire Dimensions

Dimension	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient
The role of social media influencers in promoting cultural tourism in Jordan.	96.5%
The role of social media influencers in promoting medical tourism in Jordan.	97.6%
The role of social media influencers in promoting religious tourism in Jordan.	97.4%
The role of social media influencers in promoting recreational tourism in Jordan.	97.3%
Overall Instrument Reliability	98.8%

RESULTS

Degree of Reliance on Social Media Influencers

Table 3 indicates that most participants report a moderate reliance on social media influencers when seeking information about tourism in Jordan, with 199 respondents, or 49.7 percent, falling in this band. A sizeable minority, 119 respondents (29.8 %), report high reliance. By contrast, 82 respondents (20.5 %) indicate low reliance. Taken together, these distributions suggest that influencers constitute a meaningful though not exclusive information channel, with nearly four in five respondents reporting at least moderate engagement. In subsequent analyses, we examine whether this pattern varies by age and travel frequency, and whether the observed differences are practically significant.

Upon examining the data in the table, it appears that most respondents in Jordan turn to social media influencers for tourism information, although they do so at a moderate rather than a high level. This suggests that influencers are viewed as a convenient and up to date point of entry, but not as an entirely authoritative source. Many users seem to acknowledge that influencer content can be shaped by commercial arrangements, advertising partnerships or promotional invitations, which may limit its objectivity. For this reason, they consult influencers to discover destinations, prices or seasonal offers, then verify the information through more formal channels such as official tourism platforms, booking sites, user generated reviews or television reports. In addition, audiences are aware that influencer travel narratives are often selective and focus on attractive, curated experiences that may not reflect costs, accessibility or service quality in all cases. The resulting pattern is a reasonable one, in which people benefit from the persuasive and visual power of influencers, while maintaining a degree of caution and diversifying their information sources. According to Dependency Theory, individuals' reliance on media is linked to their informational needs and the lack of reliable alternatives. This explains the respondents' moderate dependence on social media influencers, complemented by other sources of information. The theory posits that the more important media-provided information is to an audience, the greater their reliance on that medium. However, individuals vary in their media dependence based on differences in goals, interests, personal needs, and demographic variables.

Table 3. Degree of Respondents' Reliance on Social Media Influencers for Obtaining Information about Jordanian Tourism

Degree of Reliance	Frequency	Percentage (%)
High	119	29.8%
Medium	199	49.7%
Low	82	20.5%
Total	400	100%

The Role of Social Media Influencers in Promoting Cultural Tourism in Jordan

Table 4 suggests that the perceived contribution of social media influencers to cultural tourism promotion in Jordan is moderate overall, with a mean score of 1.68. The most salient roles center on experiential and place-based communication.

Sharing personal experiences about cultural activities attains the highest mean at 2.12, followed by introducing cultural and heritage sites at 2.05, both indicating a high influence band in your coding scheme.

By contrast, providing factual information about customs and traditions registers a mean of 1.34, and offering engaging content about cultural events and festivals records 1.20, each falling within a medium influence band.

Taken together, these results align with research that emphasizes the persuasive value of authentic narratives and visually rich depictions, which can heighten perceived realism, foster parasocial connection, and shape destination image more strongly than decontextualized factual messaging. Audiences appear to consult influencers as one input among several, triangulating with official websites, platform-based reviews, and news sources, especially when commercial sponsorship cues are salient and credibility must be assessed. This pattern suggests that content strategies that foreground first person storytelling and realistic visual coverage of sites and practices are likely to be most effective for cultural tourism objectives in Jordan, while more informational formats may play a complementary role in verification and planning rather than initial inspiration. These findings are consistent with recent evidence that experiential, transparent, and visually grounded influencer content can raise engagement and intention, whereas overt commercialization or thin factuality can temper trust and reduce persuasive impact in tourism contexts. Figure 1 shows a graphic display of these findings as well.

Table 4. The Role of Social Media Influencers in Promoting Cultural Tourism in Jordan from the Respondents' Perspective

Cultural Tourism Promotion	Mean	Std. Deviation	Level
Sharing personal experiences about cultural activities, providing deeper insights into Jordanian culture.	2.12	0.891	High
Introducing cultural and heritage sites in Jordan.	2.05	0.867	High
Contributing to a positive image of Jordan's cultural diversity.	1.84	0.856	Medium
Enhancing the desire to visit Jordanian museums and cultural landmarks.	1.66	0.897	Medium
Raising awareness of the importance of Jordanian cultural heritage.	1.54	0.876	Medium
Providing information about Jordanian customs and traditions related to cultural tourism.	1.34	0.890	Medium
Offering engaging content about cultural events and festivals in Jordan.	1.20	0.895	Medium
Overall	1.68	0.882	Medium

The Role of Social Media Influencers in Promoting Medical Tourism in Jordan

The data Table 5 indicates a moderate perceived role of social media influencers in promoting medical tourism in Jordan, with an overall mean of 1.48. Within this distribution, the most salient roles are experiential and site centered. Showcasing the advantages of therapeutic locations such as the Dead Sea and Ma'in Hot Springs records a mean of 2.03, which you classify as high influence, while introducing medical centers and health resorts and encouraging selection of Jordan as a medical tourism destination show means of 1.85 and 1.72 respectively, both in the medium band.

By contrast, providing updated information on the latest medical treatments in Jordan and highlighting the competence of Jordanian doctors and specialists are evaluated lower, with means of 0.97 and 0.81, which you describe as low influence. Substantively, these results align with what is known about the Jordanian medical and wellness offer. The Dead Sea and nearby hot springs are long standing anchors of health and wellness visitation, supported by scientific literature as well as decades of destination marketing that emphasize visual and experiential appeal.

This could help explain why influencer content that features recognizable sites performs strongly on perceived influence. At the same time, specialized medical information requires accuracy, disclosure, and professional credibility, which generalist influencers may provide less consistently than official or clinical sources. Recent work on health and medical tourism influencers suggests that audiences scrutinize credibility cues and may triangulate influencer messages with hospital websites, government portals, and professional reviews when evaluating treatments or physician expertise. In this context, your pattern is theoretically coherent. Influencers appear to function as attention getters and framers of the wellness landscape, whereas detailed treatment information and professional credentials remain more persuasive when delivered by verified medical voices or institutional channels. From a policy and practice perspective, this implies that partnership models which pair destination focused creators with vetted health professionals or provider organizations may improve the accuracy and persuasive reach of content related to treatments and medical competencies, while retaining the visual strengths of site-based storytelling.

Table 5. The Role of Social Media Influencers in Promoting Medical Tourism in Jordan from the Respondents' Perspective

Medical Tourism Promotion	Mean	Std. Deviation	Level
Showcasing the advantages of therapeutic sites like the Dead Sea and Ma'in Hot Springs.	2.03	0.931	High
Introducing medical centers and health resorts in Jordan.	1.85	0.963	Medium
Encouraging the public to choose Jordan as a medical tourism destination.	1.72	0.952	Medium
Raising awareness about the health benefits of medical tourism in Jordan.	1.62	0.985	Medium
Enhancing public trust in the quality of healthcare available to tourists in Jordan.	1.51	0.945	Medium
Contributing to the discovery of comprehensive treatment and wellness options in Jordan.	1.34	0.915	Medium
Providing updated information on the latest medical treatments available in Jordan.	0.97	0.931	Low
Highlighting the competence of doctors and specialists in Jordan.	0.81	0.948	Low
Overall	1.48	0.946	Medium

The Role of Social Media Influencers in Promoting Religious Tourism in Jordan

The data in Table 6 reveals that the role of social media influencers in promoting religious tourism in Jordan is perceived as moderate, with an overall mean of 1.25. The most notable roles include highlighting Jordan's importance as a

center for many sacred religious sites, with a mean score of 1.80, promoting religious tourism in an engaging manner that reflects the authenticity of these sites, with a mean of 1.65, and providing details about Islamic and Christian religious sites in Jordan, with a mean of 1.54, all reflecting a medium level of influence. On the other hand, the least prominent roles include encouraging the public to explore Jordan's rich religious history, with a mean of 0.95, sharing personal experiences about religious sites to deepen understanding of Jordan's religious history, with a mean of 0.88, and introducing religious activities and events in Jordan, with a mean of 0.76, all indicating a low level of influence. The moderate scores suggest that influencers present limited content related to religious tourism, religious activities, and events that could attract tourists. This may be due to a lack of personal experiences that would help audiences better understand the significance of these sites. Additionally, influencers may lack awareness of Jordan's religious and historical significance, possibly due to insufficient collaboration with religious institutions, limiting their ability to create engaging and informative content. The absence of compelling personal experiences diminishes the emotional connection that could attract potential visitors, while the limited focus on religious events reduces opportunities to highlight the vibrancy and depth of Jordan's religious heritage.

To address this, it is recommended that influencers collaborate with religious organizations to gain deeper insights, enabling them to create more authentic and engaging content that resonates with audiences interested in religious tourism.

Table 6. The Role of Social Media Influencers in Promoting Religious Tourism in Jordan from the Respondents' Perspective

Religious Tourism Promotion	Mean	Std. Deviation	Level
Highlighting Jordan's importance as a center for many sacred religious sites.	1.80	0.925	Medium
Promoting religious tourism in an engaging manner that reflects the authenticity of these sites.	1.65	0.976	Medium
Providing details about Islamic and Christian religious sites in Jordan.	1.54	0.931	Medium
Enhancing the desire to visit religious sites such as Bethany, Mount Nebo, and shrines.	1.33	0.958	Medium
Introducing the historical background of religious sites in Jordan.	1.12	0.970	Medium
Encouraging the public to explore Jordan's rich religious history.	0.95	0.954	Low
Sharing personal experiences about religious sites to deepen understanding of Jordan's religious history.	0.88	0.976	Low
Introducing religious activities and events in Jordan.	0.76	0.940	Low
Overall	1.25	0.954	Medium

The Role of Social Media Influencers in Promoting Recreational Tourism in Jordan

The data in Table 7 indicates that the role of social media influencers in promoting recreational tourism in Jordan is perceived as moderate, with an overall mean score of 1.91. The most prominent roles identified include introducing diverse recreational activities in Jordan, with a mean of 2.16, enhancing the desire to visit recreational destinations such as parks and entertainment centers, with a mean of 2.10, and promoting recreational tourism in an engaging way that reflects the variety of activities in Jordan, with a mean of 2.08, all reflecting a high level of influence.

In contrast, the least prominent roles are increasing interest in visiting recreational landmarks such as water parks, with a mean of 1.87, introducing places with diverse recreational activities and how to access them, with a mean of 1.64, and providing information about recreational activities in Jordan and the cost of participation, with a mean of 1.43, all indicating a medium level of influence. These results suggest that influencers are particularly effective in capturing audience interest through visually appealing and engaging content that highlights the diversity and excitement of recreational activities in Jordan. However, the moderate scores for roles related to providing detailed logistical information indicate a gap in practical content that could assist potential tourists in planning their visits.

This suggests an opportunity for influencers to expand their content strategies to include more comprehensive guides on accessing recreational sites, participating in activities, and understanding the associated costs, thereby enhancing their overall impact on promoting recreational tourism in Jordan.

Table 7. The Role of Social Media Influencers in Promoting Recreational Tourism in Jordan from the Respondents' Perspective

Recreational Tourism Promotion	Mean	Std. Deviation	Level
Introducing diverse recreational activities in Jordan.	2.16	0.835	High
Enhancing the desire to visit recreational destinations such as parks and entertainment centers.	2.10	0.876	High
Promoting recreational tourism in an engaging way that reflects the variety of activities in Jordan.	2.08	0.878	High
Highlighting Jordan as a destination rich in recreational activities and adventures.	2.04	0.885	High
Sharing detailed information about recreational events and new experiences in Jordan.	1.98	0.886	Medium
Increasing interest in visiting recreational landmarks such as water parks.	1.87	0.903	Medium
Introducing places with diverse recreational activities and how to access them.	1.64	0.890	Medium
Providing information about recreational activities in Jordan and the cost of participation.	1.43	0.932	Medium
Overall	1.91	0.886	Medium

Hypotheses Testing Results

H1: There are statistically significant differences in the degree of reliance of the Jordanian public on social media influencers for obtaining information about Jordanian tourism, attributed to their demographic factors.

The T-Test results reveal statistically significant differences in the degree of reliance of the Jordanian public on social media influencers for obtaining information about Jordanian tourism, attributed to gender. The T-value is -2.240 with a p-value of 0.026, which is statistically significant at the 0.05 level. Based on the mean scores, females rely more on social media influencers for tourism-related information compared to males.

While, the one-way ANOVA test shows statistically significant differences in the degree of reliance on social media influencers based on age, with an F-value of 10.777 and a p-value of 0.000, which is statistically significant at the 0.05 level. The table also indicates that younger respondents tend to rely more on social media influencers for obtaining information about Jordanian tourism. Specifically, individuals aged 18–29 exhibit the highest reliance, followed by those aged 30–39, then 40–49, with respondents aged 50 and above showing the lowest reliance.

Table 8. H1 testing results

Variable	Group/Category	N	M	SD	Test	Value	p
Gender	Male	191	2.01	0.718	T-Test	-2.240	0.026
	Female	209	2.17	0.683			
Age	18-29 years	51	2.49	0.644	ANOVA	10.777	0.000
	30 – 39 years	149	2.16	0.679			
	40 – 49 years	135	2.00	0.691			
	50 years and above	65	1.82	0.682			
Educational Level	High School or Less	48	2.15	0.743	ANOVA	0.665	0.574
	Diploma	31	2.19	0.703			
	Bachelor's Degree	221	2.10	0.694			
	Postgraduate Studies	100	2.02	0.710			

Regarding the educational level, the one-way ANOVA test shows no statistically significant differences in the degree of reliance on social media influencers based on educational qualification. The F-value is 0.665 with a p-value of 0.574, which is not statistically significant at the 0.05 level. This indicates that the degree of reliance on social media influencers is relatively consistent across respondents, regardless of their educational background.

H2: There is a correlational relationship between the degree of reliance of the Jordanian public on social media influencers for obtaining information about Jordanian tourism and the role of influencers in promoting different types of Jordanian tourism (cultural, medical, religious, and recreational).

Table 9. H2 testing results

Degree of reliance of Jordanian public on social media influencers			
Type of Tourism	N	Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r)	p
Cultural Tourism	400	0.544	0.000
Medical Tourism	400	0.427	0.000
Religious Tourism	400	0.434	0.000
Recreational Tourism	400	0.476	0.000

The Pearson Correlation test in table 9 indicates that there is a positive correlation at the level of (0.05) between the degree of reliance of respondents on social media influencers to obtain information about Jordanian tourism; and the role of influencers in promoting cultural tourism, therapeutic tourism, religious tourism, and recreational tourism. This indicates that the greater the degree of reliance of respondents on social media influencers to obtain tourism information, the greater the role of influencers in promoting Jordanian tourism.

DISCUSSION

The study revealed that a considerable portion of the Jordanian public moderately relies on social media influencers for information about Jordanian tourism, with 49.7% of respondents indicating a moderate level of reliance.

This suggests that while influencers are impactful, audiences exhibit cautious trust, balancing influencer content with other information sources. Interestingly, females were found to rely more on influencers than males, and younger respondents (18-29 years) demonstrated higher reliance compared to older age groups.

This demographic trend aligns with the findings of Gebreel & Shuayb (2019), who emphasized that younger audiences are more inclined to trust social media platforms for travel-related information due to their digital savviness.

Social media influencers play a notable role in promoting cultural tourism in Jordan. The study found that the highest-rated role of influencers in this regard was "sharing personal experiences about cultural activities," with a mean score of 2.12, indicating a high level of influence. This reflects the effectiveness of personal narratives in creating authentic connections with cultural destinations, as highlighted by Lorgeoux & Divakaran (2023), who noted that authentic storytelling significantly enhances cultural tourism engagement. Additionally, influencers excel in "introducing cultural and heritage sites in Jordan" (mean = 2.05), which suggests that visual content showcasing historical landmarks resonates strongly with audiences, consistent with the findings of Femenia-Serra & Gretzel (2020).

The role of influencers in promoting medical tourism was perceived as moderate, with an overall mean score of 1.48. The most prominent role was "showcasing the advantages of therapeutic sites like the Dead Sea and Ma'in Hot Springs" (mean = 2.03), reflecting the appeal of visually striking natural health destinations. This observation is supported by Tarigan & Tinambunan (2022), who demonstrated that visually engaging content significantly influences travel decisions, especially when it highlights health benefits and therapeutic experiences. However, roles such as "providing updated information on the latest medical treatments" (mean = 0.97) and "highlighting the competence of doctors and specialists" (mean = 0.81) were rated low, suggesting influencers focus more on popular health destinations rather than comprehensive medical services.

The study found that influencers have a moderate impact on promoting religious tourism in Jordan, with an overall mean score of 1.25. The highest-rated role was "highlighting Jordan's importance as a center for many sacred religious sites" (mean = 1.80). This indicates that influencers effectively raise awareness of Jordan's religious significance, though their content often lacks depth regarding historical and spiritual contexts. Zeng & Gerritsen (2014) emphasized that social media enhances destination marketing through personalized content, but also noted gaps in content depth, which aligns with the limited focus observed in this study on religious events and personal spiritual experiences. Influencers were found to be particularly effective in promoting recreational tourism, with an overall mean score of 1.91. High-scoring roles include "introducing diverse recreational activities in Jordan" (mean = 2.16) and "enhancing the desire to visit recreational destinations" (mean = 2.10). These results highlight the strong appeal of visually engaging content that showcases adventure and leisure activities. This finding is consistent with the conclusions of Femenia-Serra & Gretzel (2020), who noted that influencer marketing significantly boosts the visibility of recreational activities and lesser-known tourist spots.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates the influential role of social media influencers in promoting various forms of tourism in Jordan, including cultural, medical, religious, and recreational tourism. The findings indicate that while influencers are particularly effective in promoting recreational and cultural tourism through personal experiences and engaging content, there is potential for growth in the promotion of medical and religious tourism. Additionally, demographic factors such as age and gender significantly influence reliance on influencer content. To enhance the effectiveness of tourism promotion, influencers should diversify their content, collaborate with tourism stakeholders, and focus on providing comprehensive and authentic information that resonates with diverse audience segments.

Recommendations

In light of the study's findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Enhance Visual Content:** Influencers should increase the use of images and videos to showcase diverse cultural experiences, as visual content significantly attracts audiences and enhances their knowledge of Jordanian tourism.
2. **Comprehensive Information Sharing:** Influencers should provide comprehensive and rich information about Jordanian customs, traditions, and various tourist sites, especially historical and religious ones, to maximize the value for their followers and promote greater awareness of Jordan's historical and religious significance.
3. **Training in Storytelling:** Official tourism bodies such as the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities and the Jordan Tourism Board should provide training for influencers on effective storytelling techniques. This would enable them to create more engaging and impactful content, enhancing user interaction and promoting tourism destinations.
4. **Promote Medical Tourism:** Influencers should deliver accurate and updated information about Jordan's medical treatment options to boost public confidence and encourage visits to medical sites like the Dead Sea and Ma'in Hot Springs. Emphasizing authentic personal experiences can enhance the appeal of these destinations and encourage positive audience engagement.
5. **Partnerships for Recreational Tourism:** Tourism authorities should strengthen partnerships with influencers, given their significant impact on recreational tourism. This can be achieved through joint events, promotional campaigns, and collaborations to showcase recreational activities across different regions of Jordan.
6. **Highlight Unique Cultural Experiences:** Influencers should focus on promoting Jordan's unique cultural offerings, such as traditional festivals, heritage events, and activities related to Jordanian folklore and history.

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