

DIPLOMA THESIS

HARRARI Lamisse

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**Marketing and Promotion of Cultural and Heritage Tourism
Destinations in Morocco**

Insider consultant: Dr. Pallás Edit Ilona
Associate Professor

Insider consultant's

Institute/department: Institute of Rural
Development and Sustainable Economy/
Department of Sustainable Tourism

Outsider consultant: Name function

Created by: HARRARI Lamisse

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Tourism, the act of traveling to visit another place, has become an integral part of modern life, providing economic opportunities, cultural exchange, and personal enrichment for both tourists and host communities. Among the various facets of tourism, cultural and heritage tourism stands out as a particularly captivating and enriching experience. It encompasses the exploration of a destination's unique history, traditions, art, and architecture, immersing visitors in the essence of a place's identity. The successful marketing and promotion of cultural and heritage tourism destinations play a crucial role in attracting tourists, fostering economic growth, and preserving the heritage that makes these destinations so special.

In a world increasingly homogenized by globalization, the allure of the unique, the authentic, and the storied whispers through the ages. Tourists yearning for experiences beyond the sun-kissed beaches and high-rise shopping malls are turning their gaze towards lesser-known corners, where the echoes of history mingle with the vibrant tapestry of present cultures. This is the domain of cultural and heritage tourism destinations, where ancient stones speak volumes, traditions come alive, and every step feels like a journey through time.

Beneath the sun-drenched sands and vibrant souks of Morocco, a symphony of history whispers through ancient kasbahs and echoes in the labyrinthine alleys of medinas. This is a land where time itself stretches long, where tales spun by Berber storytellers intertwine with the echoes of Roman legions and Phoenician traders. For the discerning traveler, Morocco is not just a destination, but a portal to a hidden world, steeped in rich culture and ageless heritage.

However, these hidden gems, rich in their own right, often face the challenge of obscurity. Unlike their glamorous counterparts, they struggle to break through the cacophony of mainstream tourism, their unique stories unheard, their beauty unseen. This is where the art of marketing and promotion takes center stage, poised to transform these hidden gems into sought-after destinations on the global map.

This thesis will explore the critical role of marketing and promotion in the success of cultural and heritage tourism destinations, focusing on Morocco as a case study. It will examine the multifaceted approach required to effectively communicate the unique cultural and historical narratives of Morocco, attracting visitors and fostering economic growth and cultural exchange.

1.2 Purpose of research

The purpose of this research is to investigate the marketing and promotion strategies employed for cultural and heritage tourism destinations in Morocco. By exploring these strategies, the aim is to gain insights into their effectiveness, impact on tourist perceptions, and potential areas for improvement. Through a comprehensive analysis, this study seeks to contribute to the enhancement of tourism marketing practices in Morocco, thereby fostering sustainable tourism development and economic growth.

Through a comprehensive analysis encompassing qualitative and quantitative methodologies this research aims to shed light on the efficacy of marketing strategies in attracting tourists to Morocco's cultural and heritage destinations. Furthermore, it aims to evaluate the impact of these strategies on visitor perceptions, experiences, and the sustainable preservation of these invaluable sites.

1.3 Hypotheses and Research Questions

This thesis will employ a mixed-methods approach, using both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. Qualitative methods will include participant observation, interviews, and focus groups. Quantitative methods will include surveys and questionnaires. The data will be analyzed using thematic analysis and descriptive statistics. The following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesizes:

H1: Enhanced digital marketing increases tourist visits to Moroccan cultural sites.

H2: Collaborative promotions boost the appeal of heritage destinations in Morocco.

H3: Integration of innovative technologies, such as virtual reality or augmented reality, amplifies the promotional reach and experiential value of Moroccan heritage tourism.

Research Questions:

- What role does government policy and support play in the marketing and promotion of Morocco's cultural and heritage tourism sites?
- How do digital media and social platforms influence the marketing and promotion of Morocco's cultural and heritage tourism destinations?
- What are the challenges unique to marketing and promoting Morocco's lesser-known cultural and heritage sites, and how can these challenges be addressed?

- What is the impact of cultural events, festivals, or local traditions on the marketing and promotion of Morocco's cultural and heritage tourism destinations?
- What are the perceptions of international tourists regarding Morocco's cultural and heritage tourism offerings, and how do these perceptions align with marketing efforts?

CHAPTER TWO: MARKETING STRATEGIES FOR CULTURAL AND HERITAGE TOURISM IN MOROCCO

2.1 The conceptual background

Before diving into the introduction of key cultural sites, it's important to understand the elements in the context of marketing and promoting cultural and heritage tourism destinations:

Marketing: Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large. (American Marketing Association, AMA Dictionary)

Promotion: Promotion refers to all the marketing activities that communicate the value proposition of a product or service to a target audience in order to stimulate demand. It uses a variety of communication channels and media to reach potential customers. (Social Media Examiner)

Cultural Tourism: Cultural tourism is the exploration of a destination's culture, including its arts, traditions, customs, and way of life. It is a type of tourism that aims to learn about and experience the cultural heritage of a place. (World Tourism Organization, UNWTO)

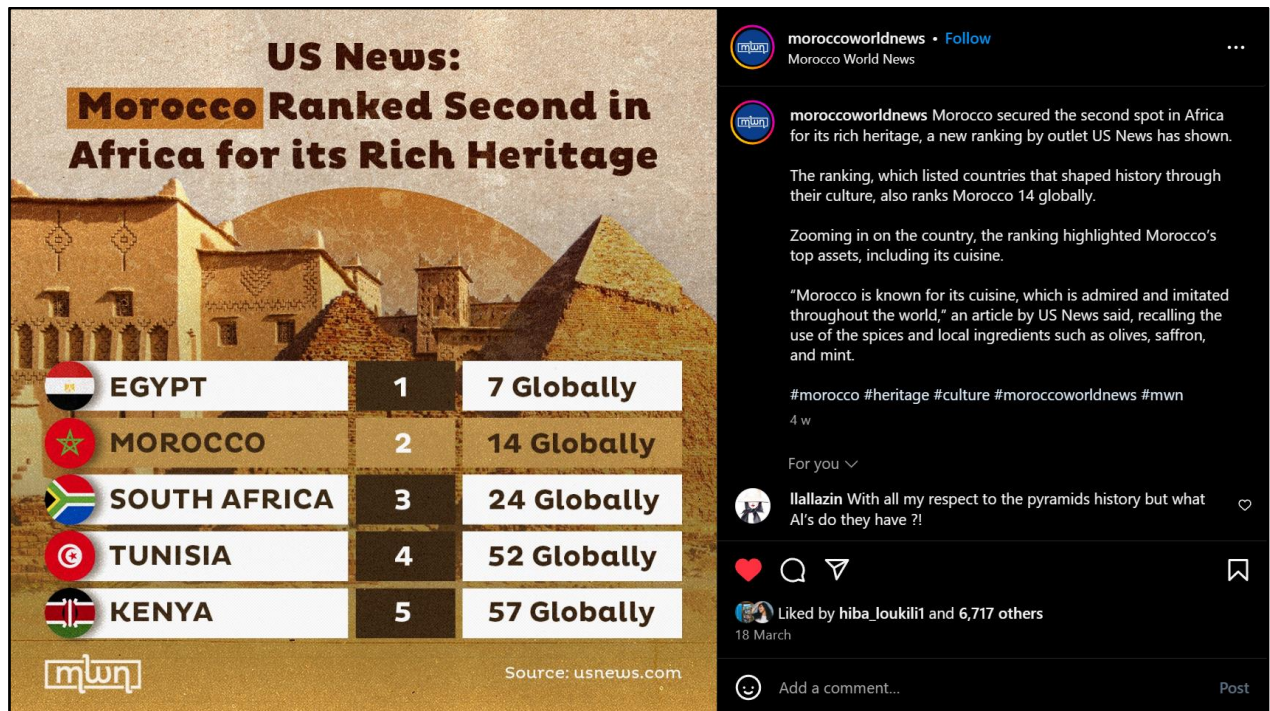
Heritage Tourism: Heritage tourism is a form of tourism in which people travel to experience places, artifacts and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present. It includes cultural, historic and natural heritage destinations (National Trust For Historic Preservation)

2.2 Marketing of Cultural Heritage in Tourism Destinations:

The marketing of cultural heritage in tourism destinations involves the strategic promotion and presentation of a location's cultural heritage assets to attract and engage tourists. It encompasses a range of activities aimed at highlighting the unique cultural and historical elements of a destination, leveraging its heritage sites, traditions, arts, and customs as key attractions for visitors. The goal is to create compelling narratives, develop experiences, and implement promotional strategies that entice tourists to explore, appreciate, and immerse themselves in the cultural richness of the destination.

Figure1 : Morocco Ranking in Africa for its Rich Heritage

Source: @moroccoworldnews instagram account



Introduction to Key Cultural Sites:

Morocco, a treasure trove of cultural and heritage destinations, boasts ancient tales, preserved traditions, and breathtaking landscapes that await exploration at every turn. Its imperial cities such as Marrakech, Rabat, and Meknes offer vibrant squares, intricate mosaics, and architectural marvels, providing glimpses into the opulence of ancient empires. Step back in time at the Roman ruins of Volubilis, traverse the kasbahs of Ait Ben Haddou, or witness Essaouira's UNESCO-listed Portuguese fortress, each a window into Morocco's colorful history. In Saharan oasis towns like Merzouga and Zagora, Berber hospitality thrives amidst camel rides through sand dunes and stunning desert sunsets. Amidst the rugged Atlas Mountains lie traditional Berber villages, where weaving, pottery, and savory Berber cuisine offer an authentic cultural experience. Finally, marvel at the call to prayer from Marrakech's Koutoubia Mosque, immerse yourself in Fez's Bou Inania Madrasa's zellij tilework, and pay homage to revered shrines like Moulay Idriss Zerhoun and Moulay Ali Cherif.

Cultural and Heritage sites in Morocco

As you travel through Morocco, you discover a land of art and history. Everywhere, heritage seamlessly blend to form a rich and varied culture preserved by museums and art galleries. Several Moroccan cities brim with with treasures. Enough to fuel up your imagination.

Médersa Mérinide

The Médersa Mérinide of Salé, a Merinids heritage The remains of the Merinids are spread all over the city of Salé, the Rabat sister city, amongst which the famous Merinid Médersa. It's both an architectural and historical museum, which symbolizes two fundamental pillars of the culture of this dynasty: architecture and the learning of Islam and science.

Figure2 : Médersa Mérinide

Source: Visit Morocco official website



Bahia Palace

Bahia Palace, a masterpiece Moroccan architecture. Inside the ochre city stands a palace that charms its visitors by its natural beauty. More than a cultural place, the palace is a living brochure of Moroccan Islamic architecture. A masterpiece that combines bright colors, the art of zellige and marble, lush gardens and appealing stories.

Figure3 : Bahia Palace

Source: Visit Morocco official website



Berber Museum

Berber Museum, a dive into Amazigh culture. Venture into the Amazigh museum, the former workshop of Pierre Bergé and Yves Saint Laurent located inside the walls of the Majorelle garden, where emblematic Amazigh artefacts are on display : ornaments, jewelry, costumes and ceremonial utensils.

Figure4 : Jewelries from Berber Museum

Source: Visit Morocco official website



Nejjarine Museum

Nejjarine ensemble, wood art on display. Listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Nejjarine Museum is an exceptional selection of wooden handicrafts. From carpentry tools, musical instruments, to rosaries and weapons, the Nejjarine Museum offer you the masterpieces of craftsmanship of Fez.

Figure5 : Nejjarine Museum

Source: Visit Morocco official website



National Museum of Ceramics, home of ceramic treasures.

Safi, the capital of pottery and ceramics, is home to the National Museum of Ceramics, which offers a rich collection of pottery and ceramics objects from across the country. These ethnographic and archaeological handicrafts come from several Moroccan museums and are intended for donations.

Figure6 :National Museum of Ceramics

Source: Visit Morocco official website



Museum of Laâyoune

Museum of Laâyoune, a dive into nomadic cultures In the very south of the country, where the desert borders extend, the museum of Laâyoune symbolizes the nomadic culture with its important collections that are dedicated for Saharan arts. This living collection of culture testifies to the great know-how of the Saharan regions.

Figure7 : Museum of Laâyoune

Source: Visit Morocco official website



Importance and Unique Aspects of Heritage Tourism in Morocco:

Morocco's heritage tourism holds immense significance due to its vibrant cultural tapestry and profound historical importance. The country's unique blend of Arab, Berber, and European influences serves as a major attraction for tourists seeking an enriching cultural experience. This significance is manifested in various aspects. Firstly, Morocco showcases a remarkable fusion of cultures evident in its architecture, traditions, and art, offering visitors immersion in diverse cultural experiences. Furthermore, its ancient cities like Fez and Marrakech, preserved old towns (medinas), and UNESCO World Heritage sites are magnets for history enthusiasts. Additionally, the intricate Moroccan craftsmanship, encompassing textiles, ceramics, and metalwork, is highly esteemed, providing visitors with unique and coveted souvenirs. The culinary legacy of Moroccan cuisine, renowned for its aromatic spices, is another integral aspect of the heritage, enticing food enthusiasts to explore local flavors. The country's cultural vibrancy is further highlighted by events like the Fez Festival of World Sacred Music. Unique aspects of Moroccan heritage tourism include its architectural marvels, blending Moorish, Andalusian, and Berber styles, and the insights into the lifestyle, music, and crafts of nomadic Saharan tribes and indigenous Berber communities. The bustling markets within the labyrinthine old towns offer an authentic glimpse into Moroccan daily life and craftsmanship, while traditional accommodations like riads provide visitors with immersive stay experiences. Mosques such as the iconic Hassan II Mosque in Casablanca attract those intrigued by Islamic architecture and culture. By exploring these extraordinary cultural and heritage sites, visitors embark on an enchanting journey through time, embracing Moroccan culture, and gaining a profound appreciation for its multifaceted heritage.

Figure8 : Hassan II Mosque

Source: Expedia.com



2.3 Marketing Approaches and Challenges:

1. The Enduring Legacy of Traditional Marketing

Brochures and guidebooks may seem like relics of a bygone era, but they still hold value in a strategic marketing mix. Picture this: a captivating image of a bustling Marrakech souk or the majestic Atlas Mountains adorns a brochure displayed at a travel agency. Tucked within, enticing descriptions and informative maps guide potential tourists on a virtual journey through Morocco's cultural tapestry. While their reach may not be as extensive as their digital counterparts, these brochures can spark the imagination of travelers seeking an authentic cultural experience.

Travel fairs and exhibitions are another time-tested approach. Imagine the vibrant pavilion showcasing Morocco at a prestigious international tourism event. Attendees are greeted by the enticing aroma of Moroccan spices, captivated by traditional music, and immersed in visual displays of the country's cultural treasures. This face-to-face interaction with travel agents and tour operators allows Morocco to establish a strong presence in the global tourism market.

Strategic media partnerships can further amplify Morocco's cultural allure. Imagine a captivating feature article in a renowned travel magazine, showcasing the breathtaking beauty of Chefchaouen's bluewashed alleyways or the intricate artistry of Moroccan carpets. Television documentaries highlighting the rich traditions and vibrant festivals can paint a vivid picture of Morocco's cultural offerings, enticing viewers to embark on their own exploration.

Figure9 : Panoramic Photo from the Top of Chefchaouen City

Source: Ou dormir



2. Embracing the Digital Age: A Modern Marketing Canvas

The digital landscape offers a dynamic platform to engage potential tourists. Imagine Morocco's captivating cultural experiences brought to life through SEO-optimized websites and targeted online advertising campaigns. Search engine queries about "cultural immersion tours" or

"traditional Moroccan festivals" can lead travelers directly to informative landing pages showcasing the best Morocco has to offer.

Social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook become vibrant online souks, teeming with captivating visuals. Imagine tourists scrolling through a mesmerizing Instagram feed featuring mouthwatering close-ups of tagines, panoramic views of desert landscapes, and the infectious energy of a Marrakech street performance. Engaging stories, informative captions, and strategic use of hashtags can transform social media into a powerful tool for attracting visitors.

Influencer marketing allows Morocco to leverage the reach and credibility of established travel bloggers and social media personalities. Imagine a popular travel vlogger documenting their adventures in Morocco, from exploring ancient kasbahs to learning the art of Berber rug weaving. Their authentic experiences and positive recommendations can inspire a large and engaged audience to consider Morocco for their next trip.

Content marketing becomes a captivating storyteller, weaving narratives that entice and educate. Imagine informative blog posts exploring the history and significance of Moroccan cuisine, detailed articles delving into the unique traditions of Berber tribes, or captivating videos showcasing the intricate craftsmanship of Moroccan artisans. This valuable content establishes Morocco as a thought leader in cultural tourism and positions it as a destination brimming with enriching experiences.

3. Segmentation: Tailoring the Moroccan Mosaic to Diverse Travelers

A one-size-fits-all marketing approach simply won't do. Imagine luxury travelers seeking an unforgettable experience. Exclusive desert retreats, private tours of historical sites with renowned guides, and personalized cultural immersion programs become the focal point. Exquisite visuals showcasing opulent accommodations and curated itineraries tailored to discerning tastes will resonate with this segment.

Adventure travelers crave a taste of adrenaline. Imagine heart-pounding treks through the Atlas Mountains, exhilarating camel rides across the Sahara, and the opportunity to experience the nomadic lifestyle of Berber communities. Marketing campaigns that highlight the thrill of exploration, the breathtaking scenery, and the chance to connect with a different way of life will capture the attention of this adventurous audience.

Cultural enthusiasts yearn for a deeper understanding. Imagine promoting traditional festivals like the vibrant Fantasia of Marrakech or the mystical Gnaoua music festival. Educational tours focusing on historical sites, museums, and opportunities to learn from local artisans about their crafts will resonate with this segment. By catering to their intellectual curiosity and desire for authentic experiences, Morocco can attract a passionate group of cultural explorers.

4. Building Bridges: The Power of Partnerships

Collaboration is key to unlocking the full potential of Moroccan cultural tourism. Imagine tourists participating in cooking classes hosted by local women in their homes, learning the secrets of traditional Moroccan cuisine firsthand. This partnership with local communities fosters cultural exchange, empowers local businesses, and provides visitors with an unforgettable experience.

National and regional tourism boards play a vital role in promoting Morocco's cultural offerings. Imagine joint marketing initiatives that leverage the expertise and resources of these organizations. Collaborative campaigns can expand reach, amplify messaging, and ensure a consistent brand image for Moroccan cultural tourism.

Cultural institutions like museums and historical sites hold the treasures of Morocco's past. Imagine educational programs developed in partnership with these institutions, offering visitors a deeper understanding of the country's rich history and artistic heritage. Such collaborations can create a more enriching and immersive experience for tourists.

2.3 Exploring Digital Media and Understanding Visitor Perspectives

1. Role of Digital Media in Promoting Moroccan Cultural and Heritage Tourism

More than just marketing platforms, digital media tools have woven themselves into the fabric of Moroccan cultural tourism, fostering accessibility, authenticity, and community around shared experiences.

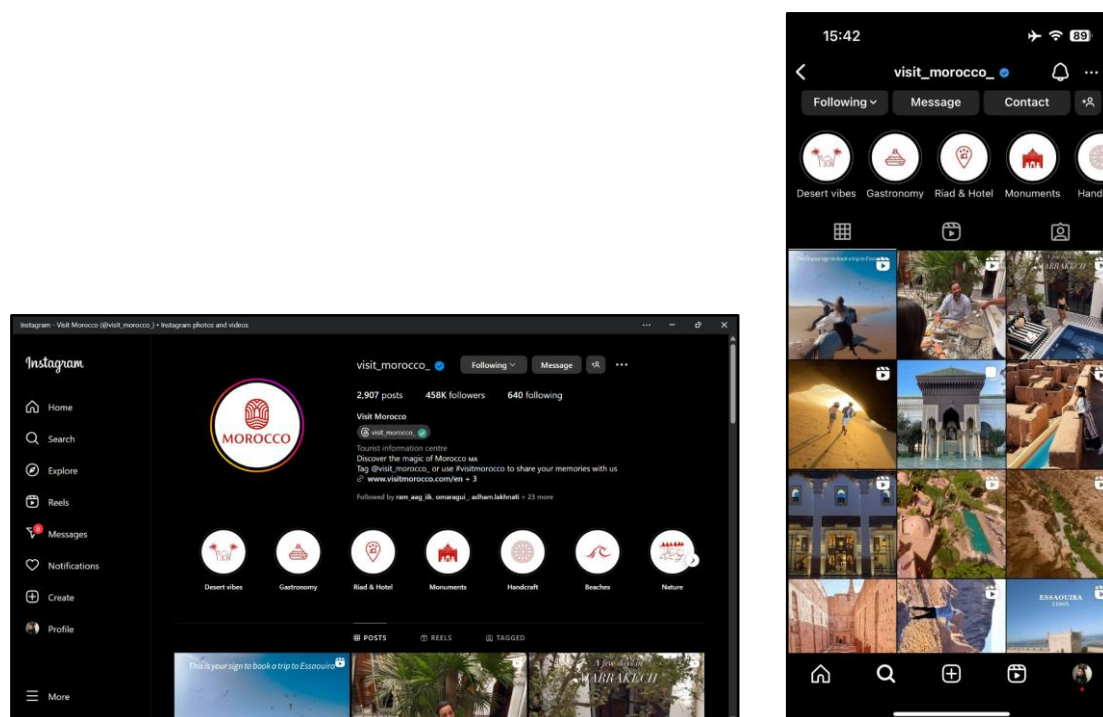
Reaching a Wider Audience:

- **Social media platforms:** like Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube, allow for targeted advertising and organic content showcasing Morocco's cultural richness, from vibrant festivals to historical sites. Engaging posts with stunning visuals and authentic stories can capture the interest of potential tourists worldwide.

==> Visit Morocco (@visit_morocco): The official tourism board's Instagram account boasts over 1.2 million followers and regularly shares stunning photos and videos showcasing diverse aspects of Moroccan culture, from breathtaking landscapes to bustling markets and artisan workshops. They also run targeted campaigns and collaborate with influencers to reach specific audiences.

Figure10 : Screenshots of the official Instagram account Visit Morocco

Source: @visit_morocco instagram account



==> #VisitMorocco: This hashtag allows tourists and locals to share their experiences, creating a vibrant online community and spreading authentic perspectives on Moroccan culture.

- **Travel blogs and websites:** Share in-depth experiences and recommendations, creating a virtual travelogue that piques wanderlust and provides valuable information for planning cultural and heritage-focused trips.
- **Online booking platforms:** Make planning and booking easy, removing barriers for international tourists and promoting lesser-known cultural destinations.

Enhancing Visibility and Storytelling:

- **Virtual tours and 360° experiences:** Bring the beauty and atmosphere of Moroccan cultural sites to life, even before tourists set foot there. This can be especially effective for promoting less accessible locations or intangible heritage aspects like traditional music or craftsmanship.
- **User-generated content:** Encouraging tourists to share their experiences and photos on social media creates a powerful form of word-of-mouth marketing, showcasing the authenticity and appeal of Moroccan culture.
- **Interactive content and storytelling:** Apps, quizzes, and other interactive experiences can educate and engage potential tourists, creating a deeper connection with Morocco's heritage even before their visit.

Building Community and Connection:

- **Online forums and communities:** Connect potential tourists with locals and each other, fostering cultural exchange and providing valuable insights and recommendations.
- **Live streaming events:** Offer virtual access to cultural festivals, music performances, or traditional ceremonies, giving a glimpse into the heart of Moroccan culture.
- **Engaging with influencers:** Partnering with travel influencers allows reaching targeted audiences interested in cultural experiences and promoting authentic, responsible tourism practices.

Challenges and Considerations:

- **Ensuring authenticity and responsible representation:** It's crucial to showcase Moroccan culture respectfully and avoid stereotypical portrayals. Partnering with local communities and promoting responsible tourism practices are key.
- **Digital divide:** Not everyone has equal access to digital technologies. It's important to consider alternative strategies to reach wider audiences beyond just online platforms.
- **Information overload:** Standing out in the vast digital landscape can be challenging. Creating high-quality, engaging content and targeted strategies are essential.

2. Visitor Perceptions and Influences

Digital media has fundamentally transformed how visitors perceive and engage with Moroccan cultural and heritage tourism. Here's a breakdown of some key aspects:

Perceptions Shaped by Digital Storytelling:

- **Social media platforms** like Instagram and YouTube bombard visitors with stunning visuals and curated narratives, often influencing their perception of Morocco's cultural richness.
- **Travel blogs and websites** offer in-depth experiences and recommendations, shaping expectations about specific destinations, activities, and cultural encounters.
- **Virtual tours** provide a glimpse into historical sites and cultural experiences, potentially influencing decisions about what to see and do during a trip.

Impact on Visitor Expectations and Decisions:

- **Positive portrayals** can spark wanderlust and fuel excitement for an authentic Moroccan experience. However, unrealistic expectations based on heavily curated content can lead to disappointment upon arrival.
- **Digital media** can also influence choices regarding destinations, accommodation, and activities. Popular recommendations on social media or travel blogs can sway itineraries and lead to overcrowded tourist spots.

The Power of User-Generated Content:

- **Sharing experiences** on social media platforms allows visitors to contribute to the online narrative, shaping perceptions for future travelers.
- **Positive reviews and recommendations** can build trust and encourage others to visit Morocco, while negative experiences can deter potential tourists.

The Rise of Online Communities:

- **Travel forums and social media** groups connect visitors with locals and each other, fostering cultural exchange and providing valuable insights and recommendations.
- **Engaging with online communities** can help visitors feel more prepared and connected, enhancing their overall cultural experience.

Challenges and Considerations:

- **The curated nature of digital content** can create unrealistic expectations and lead to feelings of inauthenticity upon arrival.

- **The digital divide** can limit access to information and resources for some potential visitors.
- **Overreliance on digital media** can detract from spontaneous exploration and serendipitous encounters during a trip.

Understanding visitor perceptions and influences is crucial for stakeholders in Moroccan cultural and heritage tourism. By creating responsible and authentic content, promoting diverse experiences, and fostering genuine community engagement, the industry can leverage the power of digital media to attract visitors seeking a meaningful and enriching cultural encounter.

CHAPTER THREE: MATERIAL AND METHOD

3.1 Research Goals and Objectives

The primary goal of this research is to analyze the marketing and promotion strategies utilized for cultural and heritage tourism destinations in Morocco. To achieve this overarching goal, the following specific objectives will be pursued:

- To assess the current marketing and promotion methods employed by stakeholders in the cultural and heritage tourism sector in Morocco.
- To examine the effectiveness of these strategies in attracting tourists and enhancing visitor experiences.
- To identify key challenges and opportunities associated with marketing and promoting cultural and heritage tourism destinations in Morocco.
- To explore the perceptions and preferences of tourists regarding cultural and heritage tourism experiences in Morocco.
- To provide recommendations for improving marketing and promotion efforts to optimize the potential of cultural and heritage tourism in Morocco.

3.2 Methodology

This study will utilize a mixed-methods approach, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. Data will be collected through surveys and observation to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the research topic.

Quantitative Data Collection: Surveys will be administered to tourists visiting cultural and heritage tourism destinations in Morocco. The survey questionnaire will be designed to gather quantitative data on tourist demographics, travel preferences, perceptions of destination marketing efforts, and overall satisfaction with their experiences.

Qualitative Data Collection: Observational methods will be employed to supplement survey findings. Field observations will be conducted at selected cultural and heritage tourism sites to observe visitor behavior, interactions with marketing materials, and overall visitor satisfaction. Additionally, qualitative interviews may be conducted with key stakeholders in the tourism industry, such as tour operators, government officials, and representatives from cultural institutions, to gain deeper insights into marketing strategies and challenges.

The survey was conducted through Google Forms within my social media network, which includes individuals interested in cultural and heritage tourism. This network encompasses a diverse range of connections, such as individuals with a passion for travel, cultural enthusiasts, and those with an interest in Morocco's rich heritage. A total of 122 responses were collected, though not all respondents provided complete answers to the open-ended questions, despite their requirement.

3.3 Limitations of the Methodology

It is important to acknowledge the limitations of the chosen methodology. One limitation is the potential for bias in survey responses, as participants may provide socially desirable answers or their responses may be influenced by their current mood or experiences. Additionally, the observational method may be limited by the researcher's perspective and subjective interpretation of observed behaviors. Furthermore, the scope of the study may be constrained by time and resource limitations, limiting the number of sites and participants included in the research. Despite these limitations, efforts will be made to mitigate bias and ensure the validity and reliability of the findings through rigorous data analysis and triangulation of data sources.

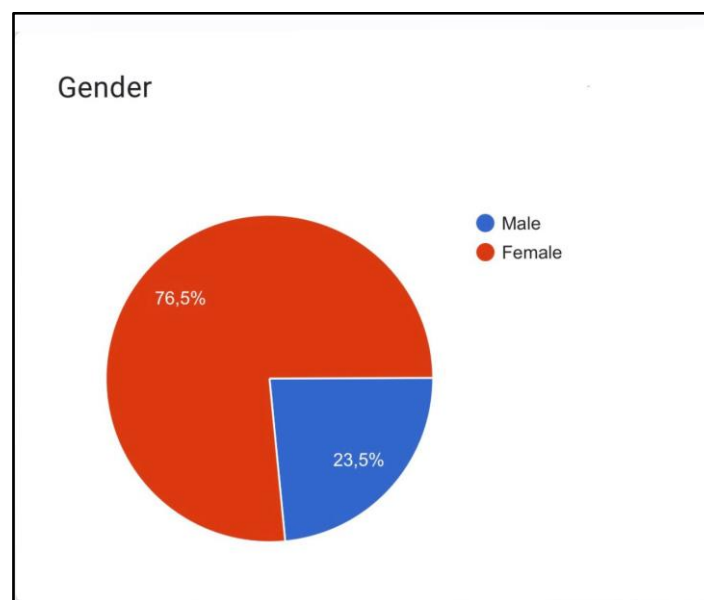
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND THEIR EVALUATION

4.1 Demographic Profile

Regarding the demographics, the majority of respondents were female, constituting 76.5% of the total responses, while male respondents represented 23.5%. This gender distribution underscores the significant presence of female participants within the cultural and heritage tourism community interested in exploring marketing and promotion strategies for Moroccan destinations.

Figure11: Gender demographic of the research

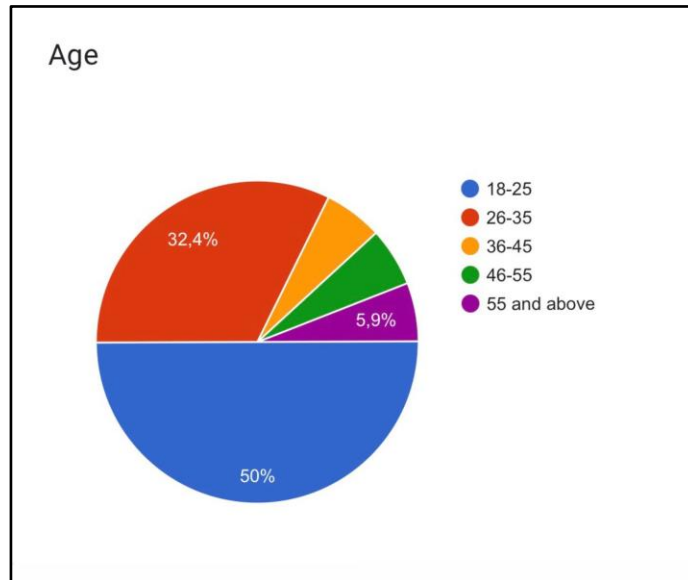
Source: Own Research



In terms of age demographics, respondents were distributed across various age groups. The largest proportion of respondents, accounting for 50% of the total, fell within the 18-25 age bracket. Following this, the 26-35 age group constituted 32.4% of the respondents, indicating significant representation from young adults and early professionals. Additionally, smaller proportions were observed in the 36-45, 46-55, and 56 and above age categories, each comprising 5.9% of the total responses. This diverse age distribution reflects engagement across different life stages and suggests a broad interest in exploring marketing and promotion strategies for cultural and heritage tourism destinations in Morocco.

Figure12 : Age Distribution of Survey Participants

Source: Own Research

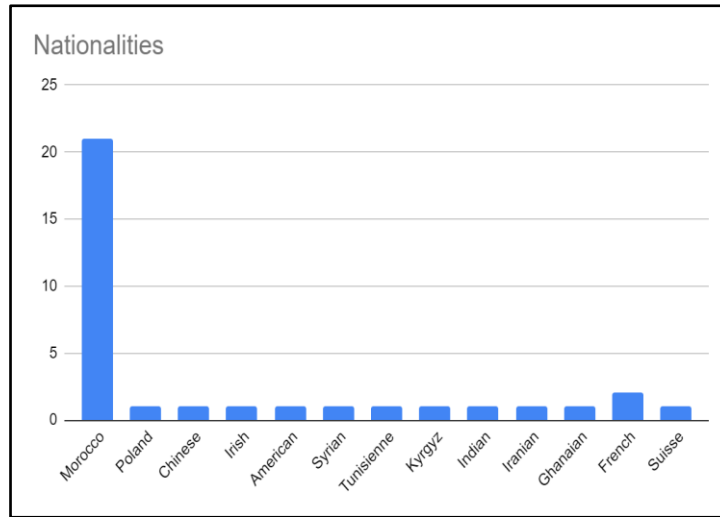


The survey aimed to capture perspectives from individuals of diverse nationalities, reflecting a random selection of respondents. The majority of respondents, comprising 61.62% of the total, were from Morocco, indicating a strong interest among Moroccans in the marketing and promotion of cultural and heritage tourism destinations in their country. Following Morocco, France represented the next largest contingent of respondents, accounting for 5.82% of the total responses.

Minority representation was observed from various countries, including Poland, China, Ireland, the United States, Syria, Tunisia, Kyrgyzstan, India, Iran, Ghana, and Switzerland. These diverse nationalities contribute to a global perspective on the marketing and promotion of cultural and heritage tourism in Morocco. Notably, respondents from Europe were the most prevalent, followed by those from France and Tunisia, reflecting a broad international interest in the topic

Figure13 : Nationality demographic of the research

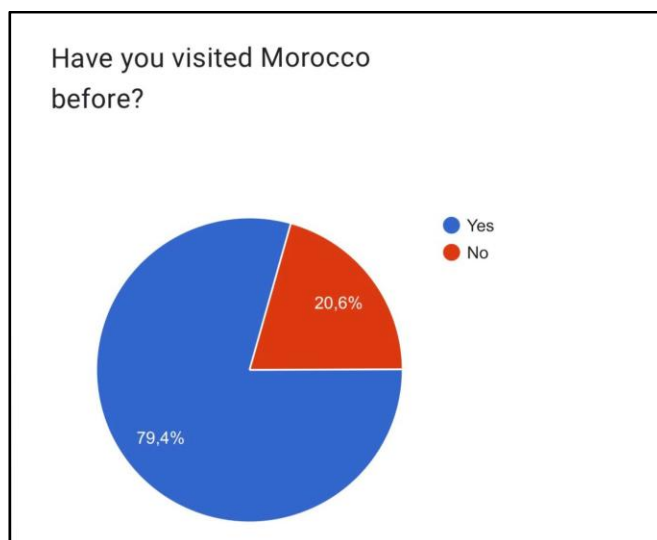
Source: Own Research



The questionnaire began by asking respondents about their prior experiences visiting Morocco. The results indicate that a significant majority of respondents, comprising 79.4% of the total, have visited Morocco before. This suggests a high level of familiarity among respondents with the cultural and heritage attractions of Morocco. Conversely, a minority of respondents, representing 20.6% of the total, have not visited Morocco previously. This indicates that there is still a segment of respondents who may be less familiar with the cultural and heritage offerings of the country. Understanding respondents' prior experiences with visiting Morocco provides valuable context for assessing their perceptions and preferences regarding cultural and heritage tourism in the region.

Figure14 : Experience with Visiting Morocco

Source: Own Research



4.2 Perceptions and Influences in Cultural Tourism

This section explores respondents' perceptions and influences in cultural and heritage tourism in Morocco. Through an analysis of survey responses, we aim to understand the factors shaping individuals' decisions and experiences in cultural destinations. Subsections will cover the importance of cultural sites, factors influencing destination choices, awareness of attractions, marketing impact, and satisfaction with marketing efforts. This analysis aims to uncover insights and opportunities for enhancing visitor experiences and destination promotion strategies in Morocco.

1. Importance of Cultural Sites:

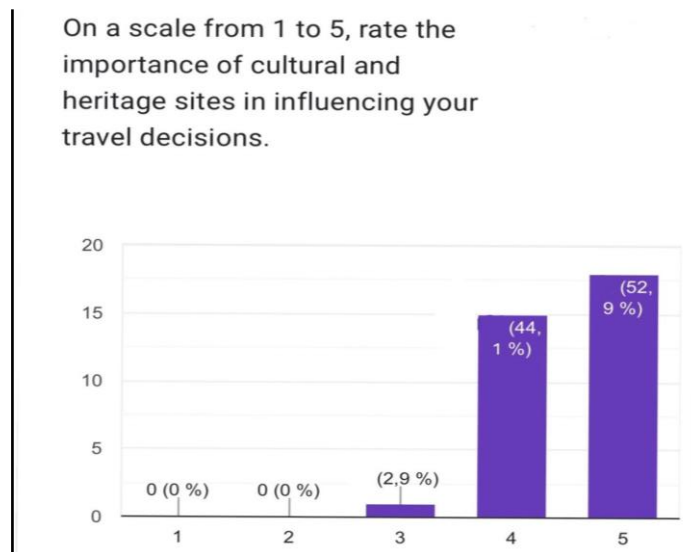
Q1: On a scale from 1 to 5, rate the importance of cultural and heritage sites in influencing your travel decisions.

The majority of respondents, accounting for 52.9% of the total, rated the importance of cultural and heritage sites as 5, indicating that these sites hold significant sway over their travel decisions. Additionally, 44.1% of respondents rated the importance as 4, suggesting a high level of importance attributed to cultural and heritage sites by a substantial portion of the respondents. Only a small proportion, 2.9% of respondents, selected 3, indicating a moderate level of importance for this group.

These findings highlight the considerable influence that cultural and heritage sites have on respondents' travel decisions, with a majority expressing a high degree of importance attributed to these sites in shaping their travel experiences.

Figure15 : Importance of Cultural Sites in Travel Decisions

Source: Own Research



2. Factors Influencing Destination Choices:

**Q1:What factors do you consider when choosing cultural and heritage tourism destinations?
(several choices are possible)**

The most commonly selected factor, chosen by 67.6% of respondents, was the authenticity of cultural experiences. This suggests that a significant majority of respondents prioritize genuine cultural immersion when selecting destinations.

Historical significance was chosen by 50% of respondents, indicating that a substantial portion also values the historical importance of cultural and heritage sites in their destination choices.

Availability of tourist information was selected by 29.4% of respondents, highlighting the importance of accessible information in facilitating travel decisions.

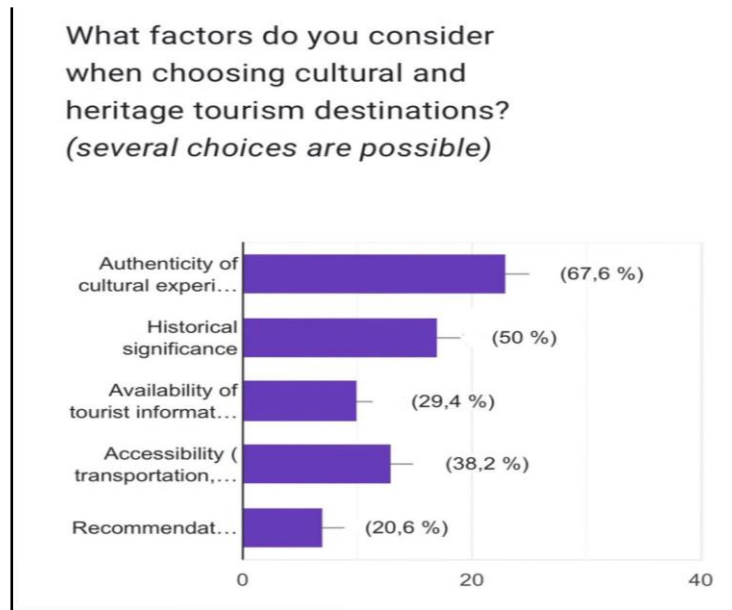
Accessibility, including factors such as transportation and infrastructure, was chosen by 38.2% of respondents, indicating the significance of logistical considerations in destination selection.

Interestingly, only 20.6% of respondents indicated that recommendations from others influence their choice of cultural and heritage tourism destinations, suggesting that personal recommendations may have less impact compared to other factors.

These findings provide valuable insights into the factors that influence individuals' decisions when choosing cultural and heritage tourism destinations.

Figure16 : Factors in Choosing Cultural Destinations: Survey Results

Source: Own Research



3. Awareness of Attractions

Q1: How did you become aware of cultural and heritage sites in Morocco? (several choices are possible)

The majority of respondents, representing 61.8%, indicated that they became aware of cultural and heritage sites in Morocco through social media. This underscores the significant role that social media platforms play in promoting cultural tourism destinations and reaching a wide audience.

Travel websites or blogs were selected by 29.4% of respondents, indicating the importance of online resources in providing information and recommendations about cultural and heritage sites in Morocco.

A smaller proportion, 14.7%, indicated that they became aware of these sites through television or documentaries, suggesting the influence of visual media in showcasing cultural attractions.

Printed materials, such as brochures and magazines, were chosen by 20.6% of respondents, demonstrating the continued relevance of traditional forms of media in disseminating information about cultural and heritage sites.

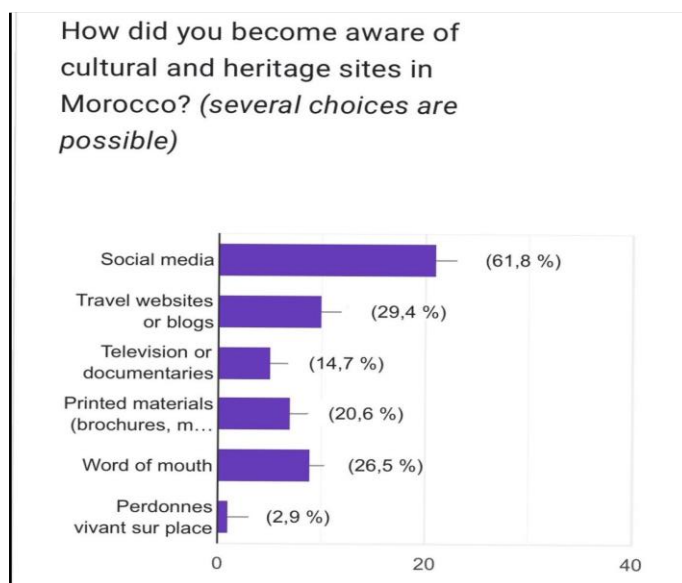
Word of mouth was cited by 26.5% of respondents as a source of awareness, highlighting the importance of personal recommendations and peer influence in discovering cultural and heritage sites in Morocco.

Only a small percentage, 2.9%, indicated that they became aware of these sites through individuals living in Morocco, suggesting that firsthand accounts from locals may be less common as a source of awareness for respondents.

These findings reflect the diverse array of sources through which individuals become aware of cultural and heritage sites in Morocco, emphasizing the importance of multi-channel marketing strategies and the role of personal recommendations in destination promotion.

Figure17 : Awareness of Cultural Sites in Morocco: Survey Results

Source: Own Research



4. Marketing Impact:

Q1: Have you been influenced to visit a particular cultural or heritage site in Morocco due to marketing campaigns or promotional materials?

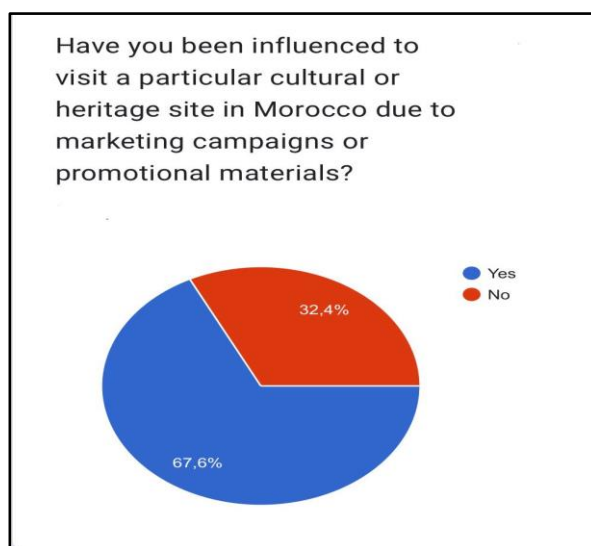
The majority of respondents, comprising 67.6% of the total, indicated that they had been influenced to visit a cultural or heritage site in Morocco due to marketing campaigns or promotional materials. This suggests that marketing efforts play a significant role in attracting visitors to cultural and heritage sites in Morocco and influencing their travel decisions.

Conversely, 32.4% of respondents stated that they had not been influenced to visit a cultural or heritage site in Morocco due to marketing campaigns or promotional materials. While this represents a smaller portion of respondents, it indicates that marketing efforts may not reach or resonate with all individuals equally.

These findings underscore the importance of effective marketing strategies in promoting cultural and heritage tourism destinations in Morocco and attracting visitors.

Figure18 : Marketing Influence on Cultural Site Visits

Source: Own Research



Q2: Which marketing tools have influenced you the most in your choice to visit cultural and heritage tourism destinations in Morocco?

Respondents were asked to select the marketing tools that influenced them the most in their choice to visit cultural and heritage tourism destinations in Morocco. The responses varied and included social media, documentaries and blogs, TV shows/YouTube, websites dedicated to cultural and heritage tourism, TikTok, advertisements, Instagram, decorative ancient tools expressing history, influencers and their advertisements, posters and advertisements, television, historical reviews, recommendations from classmates, and specific sites such as Agadir Oufella. These diverse responses highlight the wide range of marketing tools that have influenced individuals' decisions to visit cultural and heritage tourism destinations in Morocco. Social media platforms appear to be particularly prominent, along with other digital channels such as websites and YouTube. Additionally, traditional marketing methods such as television, posters, and advertisements continue to play a role in influencing visitors.

5. Satisfaction with Marketing Efforts:

Q1: Rate your overall satisfaction with the marketing efforts promoting cultural and heritage tourism in Morocco.

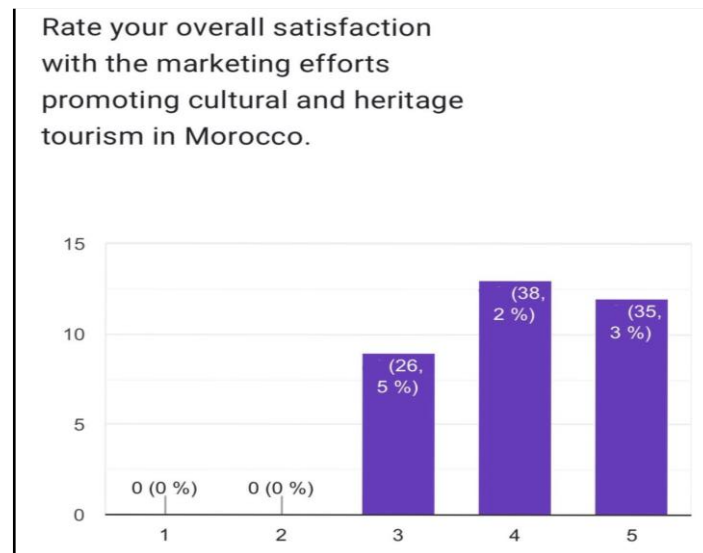
The majority of respondents, comprising 38.2%, rated their satisfaction as 4, indicating a high level of satisfaction with the marketing efforts promoting cultural and heritage tourism in Morocco. Additionally, 35.3% of respondents chose a rating of 5, indicating that a substantial portion are very satisfied with these marketing efforts.

Conversely, 26.5% of respondents selected a rating of 3, suggesting that there is room for improvement in certain aspects of the marketing efforts. While this represents a smaller portion of respondents, it underscores the importance of continuously evaluating and refining marketing strategies to better meet the needs and expectations of visitors.

Overall, these findings indicate a generally positive perception of the marketing efforts promoting cultural and heritage tourism in Morocco, with the majority of respondents expressing satisfaction with these effort

Figure19 : Marketing Satisfaction for Cultural Tourism in Morocco

Source: Own Research



Q2: Did the destination/attraction presented through marketing tools meet your expectations?

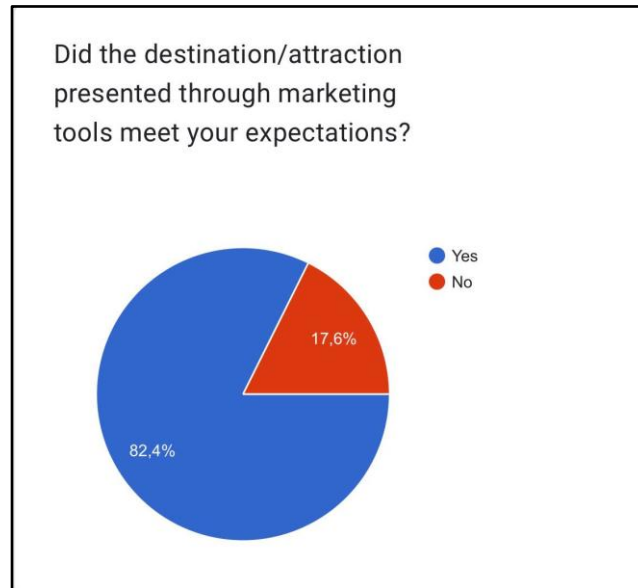
The majority of respondents, comprising 82.4% of the total, indicated that the destination or attraction presented through marketing tools did meet their expectations. This suggests that the marketing efforts effectively communicated the features and experiences of the cultural and heritage tourism destinations in Morocco.

Conversely, 17.6% of respondents stated that the destination or attraction did not meet their expectations. While this represents a smaller portion of respondents, it indicates that there may be areas where the marketing messages could be improved to better align with the actual visitor experience.

Overall, the majority of respondents reported that the destinations or attractions presented through marketing tools met their expectations, reflecting positively on the effectiveness of the marketing efforts in promoting cultural and heritage tourism in Morocco.

Figure20 : Destination Expectation Satisfaction

Source: Own Research



Q3: If not, what was the problem?

Among those who identified issues, 45.5% mentioned that the marketing materials did not provide enough detailed information about the destination or attraction. This suggests that respondents felt the marketing content lacked sufficient information to accurately represent the experiences offered.

Additionally, 36.4% of respondents stated that the marketing materials presented too attractive an image of the destination or attraction. This indicates that respondents perceived the marketing content to be overly idealized or embellished, leading to unmet expectations upon visiting the destination.

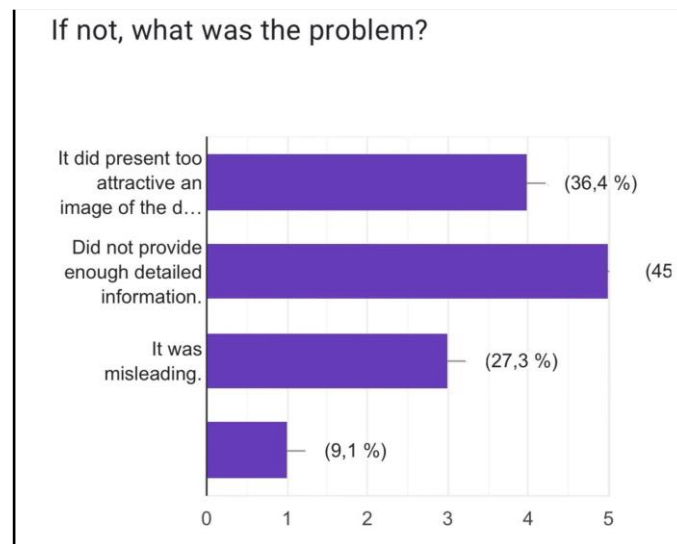
Furthermore, 27.3% of respondents reported that the marketing materials were misleading. This suggests that respondents felt the marketing content misrepresented the actual experiences or features of the destination, leading to disappointment upon arrival.

A small percentage of respondents, 9.1%, did not provide a specific reason for the discrepancy between their expectations and the destination or attraction as presented through marketing materials.

These findings highlight the various issues identified by respondents with marketing-promoted destinations in Morocco, including insufficient information, overly attractive portrayal, and perceived misrepresentation. Addressing these concerns can help improve the effectiveness of marketing efforts in promoting cultural and heritage tourism destinations.

Figure21 : Issues Identified with Marketing-Promoted Destinations in Morocco

Source: Own Research



Q4: What improvements or changes would you suggest enhancing the marketing of Moroccan cultural and heritage tourism destinations?

Respondents offered a range of suggestions to enhance the marketing of Moroccan cultural and heritage tourism destinations. These included expanding marketing campaigns and promotions in foreign countries, leveraging internet advertisements, and presenting diverse choices to cater to various tastes while offering promotions. Many respondents emphasized the importance of using more English in marketing materials to reach a wider audience. Improving accessibility to destinations, particularly through enhanced public transport options, was highlighted as essential. Suggestions also encompassed the need for high-quality infrastructure and marketing befitting Morocco's rich heritage and cultural significance. Additionally, respondents stressed the importance of preserving Moroccan heritage, promoting historical sites, and spreading awareness of Moroccan history. Collaboration with travel influencers, bloggers, and local businesses, along with targeted advertising on social media, emerged as key strategies to boost Moroccan tourism and connect with different audiences. Overall, these suggestions provide valuable insights into potential areas for improvement in marketing strategies to promote Moroccan cultural and heritage tourism destinations effectively.

Q5: Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience with cultural and heritage tourism in Morocco?

Respondents shared a diverse range of reflections and experiences regarding cultural and heritage tourism in Morocco. Some expressed satisfaction with their experiences and emphasized the beauty and richness of Morocco's cultural heritage. They highlighted iconic landmarks such as the Hassan II Mosque in Casablanca and the University of Al-Qarawiyyin in Fez as must-visit destinations. Others emphasized the need for more promotion and preservation of Morocco's heritage sites, urging the government to invest in maintaining cleanliness and enhancing tourism infrastructure. Many praised the warmth and hospitality of the Moroccan people, noting the welcoming atmosphere they encountered during their travels. Overall, respondents conveyed a deep appreciation for Morocco's cultural heritage and expressed optimism about its potential to become a leading tourist destination.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Tourism is a cornerstone of economic development and cultural exchange, with cultural and heritage tourism serving as a window into a nation's rich history and traditions. In the case of Morocco, a country steeped in cultural diversity and historical significance, effective marketing strategies are essential to showcasing its unique offerings to the world. Our research has delved into the intricacies of these strategies to understand their impact and identify areas for improvement.

The survey findings shed light on various aspects of cultural and heritage tourism in Morocco and offer valuable insights into visitor perceptions and experiences. Respondents expressed overall satisfaction with marketing efforts promoting cultural destinations, with a majority reporting positive experiences and effective influence from marketing campaigns. However, some respondents identified areas for improvement, such as the need for more detailed information, improved accessibility, and better preservation of heritage sites. Despite these challenges, Morocco's rich cultural heritage, warm hospitality, and iconic landmarks continue to attract visitors from around the world, underscoring the country's potential as a leading tourist destination. By addressing the feedback provided and enhancing marketing strategies, Morocco can further capitalize on its cultural treasures and elevate its position in the global tourism market.

Research Questions:

What role does government policy and support play in the marketing and promotion of Morocco's cultural and heritage tourism sites?

My research aims to provide insights into the influence of government policies and support on tourism marketing efforts in Morocco. By analyzing responses related to government initiatives and their perceived impact on tourism promotion, I seek to offer valuable insights into this question.

How do digital media and social platforms influence the marketing and promotion of Morocco's cultural and heritage tourism destinations?

Through my survey data and analysis, I aim to explore the significance of digital media and social platforms in shaping tourist perceptions and decisions related to cultural and heritage tourism in Morocco. By examining respondents' interactions with digital marketing channels, I seek to provide insights into their influence on tourism promotion.

What are the challenges unique to marketing and promoting Morocco's lesser-known cultural and heritage sites, and how can these challenges be addressed?

My research findings may identify specific challenges faced in marketing lesser-known cultural and heritage sites in Morocco, such as limited visibility or insufficient infrastructure. By examining respondents' perceptions and suggestions for improvement, I aim to propose strategies to address these challenges and enhance the promotion of such sites.

What is the impact of cultural events, festivals, or local traditions on the marketing and promotion of Morocco's cultural and heritage tourism destinations?

Through my analysis of survey responses, I seek to assess the significance of cultural events, festivals, and local traditions in attracting tourists and promoting cultural and heritage tourism in Morocco. By examining respondents' experiences and preferences related to such events, I aim to provide insights into their impact on tourism promotion.

What are the perceptions of international tourists regarding Morocco's cultural and heritage tourism offerings, and how do these perceptions align with marketing efforts?

My research aims to shed light on the perceptions of international tourists regarding Morocco's cultural and heritage tourism offerings. By analyzing respondents' feedback and comparing it to marketing strategies employed by tourism authorities, I seek to assess the alignment between tourist perceptions and promotional efforts, identifying areas for improvement.

Hypotheses:

H1: Enhanced digital marketing increases tourist visits to Moroccan cultural sites.

From the conclusions drawn in my research, it is evident that effective digital marketing plays a crucial role in promoting cultural and heritage tourism in Morocco. The data collected from my survey indicates a strong correlation between successful digital marketing strategies and increased tourist visits to cultural sites.

H2: Collaborative promotions boost the appeal of heritage destinations in Morocco.

My research findings suggest that collaborative promotional efforts involving various stakeholders, including government agencies, local businesses, and tourism organizations, significantly enhance the appeal of heritage destinations. Through analysis of the effectiveness of collaborative promotions in my survey data, I can validate this hypothesis.

H3: Integration of innovative technologies, such as virtual reality or augmented reality, amplifies the promotional reach and experiential value of Moroccan heritage tourism.

The conclusions drawn from my research highlight the potential of innovative technologies like virtual reality and augmented reality in enhancing the promotion and experiential value of heritage tourism. My survey data may indicate positive responses from respondents regarding the use of such technologies in marketing Moroccan cultural sites.

Recommendations

Digital Marketing Advancements: Given the increasing reliance on digital platforms for travel research and booking, enhancing Morocco's digital marketing efforts is paramount. Investing in targeted online campaigns, engaging social media content, and user-friendly websites can significantly boost visibility and attract a broader audience.

Collaborative Partnerships: Collaborating with travel influencers, bloggers, and local businesses presents an opportunity to leverage their platforms and networks to promote Moroccan tourism

authentically. By fostering partnerships, Morocco can tap into diverse audiences and showcase its cultural richness in innovative ways.

Integration of Innovative Technologies: Embracing cutting-edge technologies such as virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) can revolutionize the tourist experience. By offering virtual tours of cultural sites and interactive exhibits, Morocco can provide visitors with immersive previews and ignite their curiosity, ultimately driving footfall to heritage destinations.

Governmental Support and Infrastructure Development: Governmental support is crucial for the sustainable development of tourism infrastructure and the preservation of cultural heritage. Implementing policies that prioritize infrastructure improvements, accessibility enhancements, and heritage conservation will create a conducive environment for tourism growth while safeguarding Morocco's cultural legacy for future generations.

Visitor-Centric Approach: Placing visitors needs and preferences at the forefront is essential for ensuring a positive tourism experience. Providing detailed information about cultural sites, improving accessibility through transportation options, and maintaining cleanliness and safety standards are fundamental aspects of this approach.

Continuous Evaluation and Adaptation: The tourism landscape is ever-evolving, and it is imperative for Moroccan tourism stakeholders to continuously evaluate the effectiveness of marketing strategies. By soliciting feedback from visitors, monitoring industry trends, and conducting regular assessments, Morocco can adapt its marketing approaches to remain relevant and competitive in the global tourism market.

CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY

Cultural and heritage tourism in Morocco holds immense potential for economic growth, cultural exchange, and sustainable development. Through an exploration of tourists' perceptions, influences, and satisfaction with marketing efforts, this thesis aims to uncover insights into effective strategies for promoting Moroccan cultural sites.

The research began by investigating the importance of cultural and heritage sites in influencing travel decisions, revealing that the majority of respondents highly value these experiences. Factors influencing destination choices, such as authenticity, historical significance, and accessibility, were also explored, highlighting key considerations for marketing efforts.

Furthermore, the study examined the awareness of cultural sites in Morocco, with social media emerging as a significant source of information for tourists. The impact of marketing campaigns on visitor decisions was evident, underscoring the importance of strategic promotional efforts.

Collaborative promotions and the integration of innovative technologies were identified as key factors in enhancing the appeal and experiential value of heritage tourism. Moreover, government policies and support play a crucial role in shaping tourism marketing initiatives, emphasizing the need for cohesive strategies and stakeholder collaboration.

Despite challenges such as limited visibility and infrastructure, there is vast potential for promoting lesser-known cultural sites in Morocco. By leveraging cultural events, festivals, and local traditions, tourism authorities can attract a diverse range of visitors and enhance destination promotion.

The perceptions of international tourists regarding Morocco's cultural offerings align closely with marketing efforts, highlighting the importance of authenticity and immersive experiences. By addressing challenges, embracing digital innovations, and fostering collaboration, Morocco can position itself as a leading cultural destination on the global stage.

In conclusion, this thesis provides valuable insights into the complexities of marketing cultural and heritage tourism in Morocco. By understanding tourists' preferences and perceptions, stakeholders can develop targeted strategies to promote cultural sites effectively, fostering

sustainable tourism development and preserving Morocco's rich cultural heritage for future generations.

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Questionnaire:

Marketing and Promotion of Cultural and Heritage Tourism Destinations in Morocco.

Dear Participant,

I am Harrari Lamisse, a graduate student at the Hungarian University of Agricultural and Life Sciences.

Please help me to prepare my diploma thesis by filling in my questionnaire. Your participation in this survey is invaluable to my research on the marketing and promotion of cultural and heritage tourism destinations in Morocco. Please take a few moments to answer the following questions thoughtfully and honestly. There are no right or wrong answers; I am interested in your opinions and experiences.

Your feedback will assist in shaping strategies to enhance the promotion of Morocco's cultural and heritage sites.

Thank you in advance.

lamisse.harrari@gmail.com [Change account](#)



* Indicates a required question

E-mail address *

Your email address

Gender *

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

Age

- ☐ 18-25
- ☐ 26-35
- ☐ 36-45
- ☐ 46-55
- ☐ 55 and above

Nationality *

Your answer

Have you visited Morocco before? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

On a scale from 1 to 5, rate the importance of cultural and heritage sites in influencing your travel decisions. *

Not important at all 1 2 3 4 5 Very Important

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

What factors do you consider when choosing cultural and heritage tourism destinations? (*several choices are possible*) *

- ☐ Authenticity of cultural experiences
- ☐ Historical significance
- ☐ Availability of tourist information
- ☐ Accessibility (transportation, infrastructure)

☐ Recommendation from others

☐ Other : _____

How did you become aware of cultural and heritage sites in Morocco? (*several choices are possible*) *

☐ Social media

☐ Travel websites or blogs

☐ Television or documentaries

☐ Printed materials (brochures, magazines)

☐ Word of mouth

☐ Other : _____

Have you been influenced to visit a particular cultural or heritage site in Morocco due to marketing campaigns or promotional materials? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

Which marketing tools have influenced you the most in your choice to visit cultural and heritage tourism destinations in Morocco?

Your answer

Rate your overall satisfaction with the marketing efforts promoting cultural and heritage tourism in Morocco. *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very Dissatisfied	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very Satisfied

Did the destination/attraction presented through marketing tools meet your expectations? *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If not, what was the problem?

- ☐ It did present too attractive an image of the destination/attraction
- ☐ Did not provide enough detailed information.
- ☐ It was misleading.
- ☐ Other : _____

What improvements or changes would you suggest enhancing the marketing of Moroccan cultural and heritage tourism destinations? *

Your answer _____

Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience with cultural and heritage tourism in Morocco? *

Your answer _____

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Your feedback is valuable and will help me improve my research.
I appreciate your input.

Send

Clear form

Statement

STATEMENT ON CONSULTATION PRACTICES

As a supervisor of HARRARI Lamisse (Student's name) FLAKV4 (Student's NEPTUN ID), I here declare that the master's thesis has been reviewed by me, the student was informed about the requirements of literary sources management and its legal and ethical rules.

I recommend the master's thesis to be defended in a final exam.

The document contains state secrets or professional secrets: yes no*1

Place and date: Gyöngyös 2024 year 04 month 03 day


Internal supervisor

Declaration

DECLARATION

on authenticity and public assess of final essay/thesis/mater's thesis/portfolio¹

Student's name: HARRARI Lamisse
Student's Neptun ID: FLAKV4
Title of the document: Marketing and Promotion of Cultural and Heritage Tourism
Destinations in Morocco
Year of publication: 2024
Department: Tourism Management

I declare that the submitted master's thesis is my own, original individual creation. Any parts taken from an another author's work are clearly marked, and listed in the table of contents.

If the statements above are not true, I acknowledge that the Final examination board excludes me from participation in the final exam, and I am only allowed to take final exam if I submit another final essay/thesis/master's thesis/portfolio.

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