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Lisbon Unveiled: The Power of Storytelling in Shaping Destination Perception and Tourist Intentions.

Valeria Claps

Master of Science in Tourism, Development & Culture
Erasmus Mundus Joint Master's Degree

Supervisor: PhD Catarina Maria Valente Antunes Marques, Associate
Professor, ISCTE-IUL

September, 2024



BUSINESS
SCHOOL



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Department of Marketing, Strategy and Operations

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Resumo

A tese examina a influência da narrativa nas redes sociais na percepção dos turistas sobre Lisboa como destino de viagem. A relação entre a narativa nas plataformas de mídia social e a formação da imagem do destino, que inclui elementos cognitivos, afetivos e únicos, juntamente com a autenticidade objetiva, e a forma como esses fatores impulsionam as intenções comportamentais dos turistas, como revisitar, recomendar e participar de boca-a-boca eletrônico (e-WOM) são exploradas na tese. Um modelo conceitual é desenvolvido para analisar as relações entre esses construtos, propondo que uma narrativa eficaz nas redes sociais potencialize tanto a imagem percebida como a autenticidade do destino. O estudo utiliza um questionário estruturado para recolher dados empíricos de turistas que visitaram Lisboa e interagiram com conteúdos de redes sociais relacionados. Os dados são analisados utilizando métodos estatísticos para testar as hipóteses propostas, através do SPSS. Os resultados indicam que narrativas de redes sociais estimulam significativamente a imagem e autenticidade percebidas de Lisboa, o que por sua vez afeta positivamente as intenções dos turistas em revisitar, recomendar a cidade aos outros e compartilhar suas experiências online. A pesquisa destaca a importância da narrativa digital na formação das percepções do destino e sugere que as Organizações de Gestão do Destino (DMOs) devem alavancar a narrativa para melhorar a esforços de marca. Este estudo contribui para a compreensão de como as redes sociais influenciam o comportamento do turismo e fornece informações práticas para melhorar as estratégias de marketing de destino. Investigação futura poderá explorar a aplicação deste modelo a outros destinos e examinar o impacto de diferentes tipos de técnicas de narativa.

Keywords: narativas nas redes sociais, imagem do destino, autenticidade objetiva, intenção de revisitar, WOM, e-WOM, turismo em Lisboa

JEL Classification System: Z32 (Tourism and Development); Z39 (Tourism: Other)

Abstract

The thesis examines the influence of social media storytelling on tourists' perceptions of Lisbon as a travel destination. It explores the relationship between storytelling on social media platforms and the formation of destination image—comprising cognitive, affective, and unique elements—alongside objective-based authenticity, and how these factors drive tourists' behavioural intentions, such as revisiting, recommending, and engaging in electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM). A conceptual model is developed to analyse the relationships between these constructs, proposing that effective storytelling on social media enhances both the perceived destination image and its authenticity. The study utilises a structured questionnaire to gather empirical data from tourists who have visited Lisbon and interacted with related social media content. The data is analysed using statistical methods to test the proposed hypotheses, through SPSS. The findings indicate that compelling social media narratives significantly enhance Lisbon's perceived image and authenticity, which in turn positively affect tourists' intentions to revisit, recommend the city to others, and share their experiences online. The research highlights the importance of digital storytelling in shaping destination perceptions and suggests that Destination Management Organizations (DMOs) should leverage storytelling to enhance their branding efforts. This study contributes to understanding how social media influences tourism behaviour and provides practical insights for improving destination marketing strategies. Future research could explore the application of this model to other destinations and examine the impact of different types of storytelling techniques.

Keywords: storytelling on social media, destination image, objective-based authenticity, intention to revisit, WOM, e-WOM, tourism in Lisbon

JEL Classification System: Z32 (Tourism and Development); Z39 (Tourism: Other)

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List of Abbreviations

S: Storytelling

DI: Destination Image

DCI: Destination Cognitive Image

DAI: Destination Affective Image

DUI: Destination Uniqueness Image

ObA: Objective-based Authenticity

IR: Intention to Revisit

WOM: Intention to Recommend

e-WOM: electronic word-of-mouth

DMOs: Destination Management Organisations

SPSS: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

1.Introduction

In recent years, the tourism industry has undergone a profound transformation driven by the rapid advancement of digital technologies, particularly social media (Pencarelli et al., 2021). Platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube have become powerful tools for destination marketing, enabling the dissemination of compelling narratives that shape tourists' perceptions and influence their travel decisions (Tran & Rudolf, 2022). Among the many tourist destinations leveraging the power of social media, Lisbon has emerged as a particularly interesting case study. The city's rich history, vibrant culture, and unique atmosphere provide fertile ground for engaging storytelling, which has the potential to significantly enhance its image as a must-visit destination.

1.1 Contextualization and Definition of the Research Question

Lisbon, the capital city of Portugal, has long been celebrated for its rich cultural heritage, historic architecture, and vibrant local traditions. In recent years, it has also become a focal point for international tourism, attracting millions of visitors annually. Lisbon was the most popular destination in Portugal for international travellers in 2022, attracting 5.4 million overnight visitors (Statista, 2024). In 2023, the number of international tourists in the country increased further, with nearly 6.5 million foreign guests visiting Lisbon (Statista, 2024)

As the city continues to grow as a popular tourist destination, understanding how it is perceived through the lens of social media storytelling becomes increasingly important. The central focus of this research is to explore how social media storytelling influences the perception of Lisbon as a tourist destination. This study delves into the multifaceted relationship between the narratives shared on digital platforms and the resulting destination image, encompassing cognitive, affective, and uniqueness dimensions (Molinillo et al., 2018). Additionally, it explores also the relationship between storytelling and objective-based authenticity. The research also examines how these perceptions influence tourists' intentions to revisit Lisbon, recommend it to others, and share their experiences online through electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) (Litvin et al., 2008). Understanding this relationship is of paramount importance in the contemporary tourism landscape, where digital presence and online narratives play a critical role in shaping tourists' decisions (Pencarelli et al., 2021). Social media has not only democratized the creation and dissemination of content but also blurred the lines between marketers and consumers (Hollebeek et al., 2014). Tourists themselves have become

storytellers, contributing to the collective image of destinations like Lisbon (Lund et al., 2018). As such, this research is relevant not only to academic discourse but also to practitioners in the tourism industry, particularly Destination Management Organizations (DMOs), who must navigate this new landscape to effectively promote their destinations.

1.2 Importance and Relevance

The significance of this research lies in its potential to offer new insights into the role of storytelling in tourism marketing. While traditional marketing strategies often focus on conveying factual information about a destination, storytelling engages audiences on a deeper emotional level, creating a more memorable and persuasive narrative (Jo et al., 2022). By analysing the specific impact of storytelling on Lisbon's destination image, this study aims to contribute to the broader literature on tourism marketing and destination branding. In addition, this study wants to contribute more to the research on the uniqueness component of destination image, as it has been studied less compared to the other two (cognitive and affective).

Moreover, in an era where travellers increasingly seek authentic and unique experiences, understanding how storytelling influences perceptions of authenticity is crucial (Kolar & Zabkar, 2010). This research addresses a gap in the existing literature by linking social media storytelling to both destination uniqueness image and perceived authenticity, thereby providing a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that drive tourists' behavioural intentions.

1.3 Research Questions and Objectives

The primary research question guiding this study is: "To what extent does storytelling on social media impact the perception of Lisbon as an authentic and desirable tourist destination, and how does this perception influence tourist intentions to revisit, recommend, and engage in electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM)?" To address this overarching question, the research is structured around several sub-questions:

- How does social media storytelling affect the perception of Lisbon as a tourist destination?
- How do different aspects of destination image (cognitive, affective, uniqueness) influence tourists' perception of authenticity in Lisbon?
- How do destination image and perceived authenticity relate to tourists' intentions to revisit or recommend Lisbon?

The objectives of this research are therefore to evaluate the impact of social media storytelling on the cognitive, affective, and uniqueness dimensions of Lisbon's destination image and to analyze how these dimension influence tourists' perceptions of authenticity and subsequent behavioral intentions, such as revisiting and recommending the destination.

1.4 Dissertation Structure

This dissertation is organized into six chapters, each contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the research problem.

Chapter 1: Introduction – This chapter provides the background of the study, defines the research questions and objectives, and outlines the structure of the dissertation.

Chapter 2: Literature Review – This chapter reviews the existing literature on key concepts, including social media storytelling, destination image, authenticity, and tourist intentional behaviours.

Chapter 3: Conceptual Model and Research Hypotheses – This chapter presents the conceptual framework and hypotheses that guide the empirical investigation. The model explores the relationships between social media storytelling, destination image, authenticity, and behavioural intentions.

Chapter 4: Methodology – This chapter details the research design, including the data collection methods, sample selection, and analytical techniques used to test the hypotheses.

Chapter 5: Results and Discussion – This chapter presents the findings of the research, analyses them in relation to the hypotheses, and discusses their implications for both theory and practice.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations – The final chapter summarizes the key findings, discusses their limitations, and offers recommendations for future research and practical applications in the field of tourism marketing.

2. Literature review

2.1. Tourism storytelling on social media

Storytelling in tourism involves crafting and sharing engaging narratives about a destination to attract potential visitors. It is a strategic approach used by destinations to convey their unique characteristics, history, and culture, thereby enhancing their appeal (Bassano et al., 2019). According to Choi (2016), storytelling in tourism goes beyond merely providing information; it is about delivering an immersive experience that engages multiple senses, making the destination memorable and attractive to tourists. Choi's study (2016) emphasises that effective storytelling positively influences tourist behaviour and destination brand value, particularly in aspects like understandability, interestingness, and uniqueness.

Storytelling has emerged as a powerful tool for tourism marketing, particularly in the digital age where social media platforms play a significant role in shaping tourists' perceptions and experiences (Bassano et al., 2019; Lund et al., 2018). Research shows that compelling narratives shared online can enhance destination image, evoke emotions, and influence travel intentions (Gong & Tung, 2016). The integration of storytelling in tourism aims to create emotional connections, enhance brand value, and differentiate destinations in an increasingly competitive market (Solomon et al., 2022).

The evolution of digital storytelling has further amplified its effectiveness in tourism. Clarizia et al. (2017) discuss how digital storytelling can enhance tourist destinations by providing personalised, interactive narratives that engage users on a deeper level. Through digital platforms, stories are not only told but also co-created by users, allowing for a dynamic and participatory experience (Huang et al., 2024). This participatory nature of digital storytelling fosters a sense of ownership and connection among tourists, which can significantly enhance their engagement with the destination (Cahyani et al., 2023; Shahbaznezhad et al., 2021).

Social media platforms have revolutionized how stories are shared and consumed in the tourism sector. They provide a space for tourists to share their experiences, thereby contributing to the destination's narrative (Lama, 2024). The research by Clarizia et al. (2017), about the use of social media in storytelling, enables the creation of collaborative narratives where the boundary between the storyteller and the audience blurs. This interaction not only broadens the audience for the stories but also cultivates a community centred around the destination, increasing its attractiveness and brand value. The impact of storytelling on tourist behaviour and destination brand value has been well-documented. Choi's (2016) research indicates that

storytelling significantly affects tourists' behavioural intentions, including their intention to revisit and recommend the destination to others.

Moreover, Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) should also participate in the online presence by harnessing the power of tourism storytelling on social media to enhance their branding efforts. Through strategic storytelling, DMOs can actively participate in shaping tourism narratives, nurturing a more desirable and engaging brand image for their destinations. (Lund et al., 2018). DMOs can foster a stronger sense of place and inspire travel aspirations (Molinillo et al., 2018).

By participating in these storytelling spaces, DMOs can tap into authentic narratives that resonate more deeply with potential visitors than traditional marketing approaches (Lund, 2015). Instead of trying to control the brand narrative, DMOs should collaborate with social media storytellers to co-create compelling stories highlighting their destinations' unique aspects (Munar, 2012). This approach not only enhances the destination's appeal but also fosters a sense of trust and connection with audiences who value genuine, experience-driven content (Lund et al., 2018). Ultimately, storytelling in social media can strengthen the destination's brand by turning passive consumers into active participants in its narrative (Dwivedi et al., 2021).

The growing significance of storytelling in destination marketing is becoming increasingly evident, particularly on social media. As discussed by Li and Liu (2020), tourism-related contents which leverage the power of empathy and persuasion, serve as a powerful tool for destination marketers. By emotionally connecting with potential tourists through these compelling narratives, they can effectively influence travel decisions (Ali Selcuk Can et al., 2024).

2.2. Destination Image

Destination image is a pivotal concept in tourism studies, encapsulating the perceptions, impressions, and mental representations individuals hold about a particular place (Marques et al., 2021). As a multifaceted construct, destination image has been explored from various perspectives, leading to a robust body of literature that examines its dimensions, formation, and impact on tourism behaviour. Hunt (1975) was one of the first to propose that image represents the perceptions held by potential tourists, while Um and Crompton (1990) later described destination image as a holistic construct. This holistic view emphasizes that the image of a destination is not just a sum of its parts but an overall mental picture shaped by various factors. Kotler, Haider, and Rein (1993) further reinforced this idea by referring to destination image as

a "mental picture" that individuals hold about a place, influenced by their experiences, knowledge, and emotions.

The complexity of destination image lies in its dual nature; it is formed both by cognitive evaluations of the destination's characteristics and by affective responses, which are emotional reactions based on personal feelings towards the destination (Sultan et al., 2021). Some authors also considered a third component, the unique image (Echtner & Ritchie, 1991).

The cognitive destination image refers to the mental representation that individuals hold regarding a destination, encompassing their beliefs, knowledge, and perceptions about various aspects of that location (Jebbouri et al., 2022). This concept involves the specific attributes of a destination that attract tourists, such as notable attractions, environmental factors (e.g., climate and cleanliness), and memorable experiences, all of which contribute to the cognitive structure of the destination image (Wang, 2012).

An affective image encompasses the emotions and feelings that a tourist associates with various features of a chosen destination, reflecting the subjective and emotional aspects of the destination image (Baloglu et al., 2014). This dimension reflects the emotional responses that a place evokes, which can range from positive to negative, with varying degrees of intensity (Arslanova et al., 2017).

Researchers have found that the cognitive component tends to be more stable over time compared to the affective component, as it is grounded in previously formed knowledge and experiences (Kim et al., 2009). Instead, the affective component tends to change, becoming more pronounced after a tourist visits a destination, as direct experiences shape emotional responses (Baloglu et al., 2014).

The uniqueness component of destination image has received less attention in the literature compared to the cognitive and affective components. However, it plays a crucial role in differentiating one destination from another. Echtner and Ritchie (1993) introduced the idea that destination image can include both common characteristics and unique features. These unique features may include local gastronomy, cultural traditions, historical landmarks, or distinctive experiences that are specific to a particular destination.

According to Karagöz et al. (2020), the psychological need for uniqueness drives individuals to seek out destinations that offer distinct and memorable experiences, often linked to their personal and social identities. This pursuit of uniqueness is not only a reflection of character traits but also a desire to differentiate oneself through the selection of distinct travel experiences. Kirillova et al. (2014) highlight that the perceived uniqueness of a destination significantly influences its appeal, with destinations that possess identifiable and unique

characteristics being more attractive and desirable to travellers. Furthermore, the ability of a destination to stand out through its unique cultural offerings or distinctive features is vital in attracting tourists, as emphasized by Anshori et al. (2020).

Qu et al. (2011) built on this concept by proposing a three-dimensional model of destination image that includes cognitive, affective, and unique components. Their study found that the unique attributes of a destination are critical in forming the overall image in consumers' minds.

Destination image, encompassing cognitive, affective, and uniqueness dimensions, is a vital construct in tourism research (Santana & Sevilha Gosling, 2018). As tourism destinations continue to compete globally, understanding and managing destination image effectively can lead to more significant positive outcomes, such as increased visitor loyalty, better brand equity, and enhanced overall appeal (Amaro et al., 2021).

2.3. Objective-based authenticity

The concept of authenticity has been a subject of extensive debate and analysis across various disciplines over the last century. Despite being a seemingly straightforward concept—an object is considered authentic if it "is what it appears to be or is claimed to be" (Trilling, 1972)—the term has been dissected and interpreted in numerous ways depending on the context and discipline in question. The notion of authenticity has been a central theme in tourism research since the 1960s, significantly influenced by the work of Boorstin (1964), who argued that mass tourism had shifted away from the pursuit of true authenticity towards indulging in pseudo-events. This early critique introduced the idea of objective authenticity, which suggests that authenticity is an inherent quality of the toured objects or destinations, independent of tourists' perceptions or interpretations (Wang, 1999).

Despite its widespread usage, the concept of authenticity has been criticised for its lack of definitional and conceptual clarity (Scott & Campos, 2024). Scholars like Steiner and Reisinger (2006) have argued that the concept is too unstable to be reliably used, while others, such as Newman (2019) and Nunes et al. (2021), have highlighted the ongoing debates about its applicability and meaning. Moreover, Newman (2019) sustains that the recognition of the objective authenticity can still be influenced by personal judgments.

Several implicit assumptions underpin the definition of objective authenticity, particularly in tourism (Scott & Campos, 2024). Scholars like Li and Li (2022) argue that this form of authenticity captures the purest meaning of the term, which is grounded in the idea that there is a "real" or "true" version of a cultural or historical element that can be identified and validated

by external, factual standards. In tourism, this often involves ensuring that a destination's cultural, historical, and natural aspects are presented in a way that is true to its original or historical context (Lin & Liu, 2018).

Although this study focuses only on objective-based authenticity, further researchers identified two more authenticity constructs, constructive and existential. Constructivist authenticity is not a fixed attribute of an object but is instead a product of human interpretation, shaped by tourists' beliefs, expectations, and cultural narratives (Bruner, 1991). This shift indicated a move towards understanding authenticity as a socially constructed phenomenon, where the meaning of authenticity is negotiated between tourists and the destinations they visit (Lin, 2015). Instead, existential authenticity emphasises the search for one's "true self" through tourism activities, where the focus is not on the authenticity of the toured objects but rather on the authenticity of the individual's experience. From this perspective, authenticity is about personal fulfilment and self-discovery, rather than the objective qualities of the destination (Wang, 1999).

These newer frameworks suggest that authenticity is not merely an inherent property but is also shaped by individual perspectives and personal fulfilment, indicating the complexity and ongoing relevance of this multifaceted concept in both academic discourse and practical application. Nonetheless, for this study, the focus is on the destination's inherent attributes rather than the tourists' subjective interpretations. We only considered objective-based authenticity since its approach allows for a more standardized and measurable analysis of authenticity in the context of tourism.

2.4. Intention to Revisit

Revisit intention refers to a traveller's readiness and willingness to revisit a destination, and it is an essential behavioural outcome for the tourism industry (Prayag, 2009). Many tourism practitioners focus on creating memorable experiences that influence tourists' future decisions to return (Tung & Ritchie, 2011). Experiences are considered one of the most powerful predictors of revisit intention, as they play a significant role in memory generation, a key objective in tourism marketing (Tsai, 2016).

Positive emotions and satisfaction from previous trips can strongly influence a tourist's future decisions. Feelings of joy and positive memories from past experiences are linked to an increased likelihood of revisiting a destination (Prayag, 2009). When tourists develop a deep emotional connection to a destination, it leads to increased loyalty, which often manifests as a

desire to return. Studies have highlighted the relationship between brand love and repurchase intention (Batra et al., 2012; Junaid et al., 2020), suggesting that similar dynamics can be applied to destinations. For example, tourists who form an emotional attachment to a place are more likely to revisit.

2.5. Intention to Recommend (WOM)

The intention to recommend or WOM (word-of-mouth), is a powerful form of marketing communication that becomes especially relevant in tourism, where personal experiences and recommendations strongly influence decision-making (Amaro et al., 2021). The intention to recommend a destination to others is driven by a traveller's satisfaction with their experience (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2021).

In tourism, travellers' willingness to recommend a destination is closely tied to their emotional experiences. Tourists who develop emotional ties with a destination are highly likely to engage in positive WOM, sharing their experiences with friends, family, and even strangers (Amaro et al., 2021). Aro et al. (2018) and Strandberg and Styvén (2019) both found that positive WOM was a notable outcome of destination brand love, showing that travellers' emotional connections influence their likelihood to recommend the destination.

Positive recommendations serve as credible endorsements, encouraging others to visit a destination. The intention to recommend a place is not only a reflection of satisfaction but also a means through which tourists become active promoters of the destination, contributing to its reputation and attractiveness (Litvin et al., 2018).

The intensity of WOM also plays a critical role in its effectiveness. Xu et al. (2018) defined WOM intensity as how actively consumers talk about a product or brand, including the frequency and detail of the communication. For tourism, higher WOM intensity—especially from satisfied customers—can lead to greater interest and potentially increased visitation to the destination. Zhang et al. (2018) noted that greater WOM intensity results in better outcomes for companies, including increased profitability.

2.6. e-WOM (electronic word-of-mouth)

With the rise of social media and online platforms, electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) has emerged as a key factor in destination marketing and management. e-WOM refers to tourists' sharing of their experiences, opinions, and recommendations through digital channels, which

has been well-documented as having a significant impact on the tourism industry (Litvin et al., 2008; Wang & Fesenmaier, 2004).

As defined by Henning-Thurau et al. (2004), e-WOM refers to any online statements made by current or past customers about a product, service, or company. This digital form of communication has expanded in importance with the advent of Web 2.0, offering speed, convenience, and a broad reach that surpasses traditional word-of-mouth (WOM). Unlike face-to-face WOM, e-WOM allows users to share and compare travel experiences, service quality, and other aspects of tourism in online spaces, such as social media, review websites, and forums (Sun et al., 2006; Litvin et al., 2018).

The significance of e-WOM in tourism is particularly pronounced. Tourism, as the biggest "experience generator," involves tourists constructing narratives around their personal experiences (Litvin et al., 2018). Tourists now routinely share their experiences online, which influences others' perceptions of destinations and services. This has made e-WOM an indispensable tool for understanding consumer preferences in the tourism and hospitality sectors (Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2006). Positive emotional experiences, in particular, have been found to boost satisfaction and increase e-WOM engagement (Serra-Cantallops et al., 2018). When travellers have memorable experiences, they are more likely to share those experiences online, with a global audience, contributing to the circulation of e-WOM and potentially attracting new visitors (Rivera et al., 2015).

The impact of e-WOM on the tourism industry is multi-dimensional, affecting not only prospective tourists but also the service providers (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2021). Travelers rely on e-WOM to evaluate destinations and plan their trips, making it an essential component of their decision-making process. Furthermore, businesses in the tourism industry use e-WOM as a feedback mechanism to assess the quality of their services and adjust their offerings accordingly. e-WOM can also magnify the impact of positive or negative experiences, making it essential for destination managers to actively monitor and engage with online content (Litvin et al., 2008). Corporations are increasingly recognizing the immense potential of social media to engage with their customers and influence their conversations (Bruhn et al., 2012; Sashi, 2012).

Engagement with e-WOM aligns with broader discussions on consumer loyalty and advocacy, where tourists with higher levels of brand engagement are more likely to contribute positively to online discourse (So et al., 2014). Studies suggest that highly engaged customers, through their digital interactions, serve as brand advocates and enhance the destination's reputation and attractiveness (France et al., 2016; Wallace et al., 2014). This reinforces the need

for destinations to foster authentic, memorable experiences that encourage tourists to share their stories online.

e-WOM is particularly impactful due to its transparency and the visibility of conversations. Unlike traditional WOM, e-WOM can be easily observed, measured, and influenced through previously posted comments and discussions on social networks (Srivastava & Sharma, 2017). Furthermore, social networks encourage engagement with e-WOM by fostering communities where users feel motivated to participate due to the "fun" element of these platforms (Di Pietro et al., 2012). Strong social media communities also play a significant role in strengthening the relationship between brands and consumers (Srivastava & Sharma, 2017).

3. Conceptual Model and Research Hypothesis

3.1. Conceptual Model

Figure 1 illustrates this study's conceptual model along with the associated hypotheses. The conceptual model for this study explores the intricate relationships between storytelling on social media and various aspects of destination perception and behaviour. It posits that storytelling (S) on social media has an influence on the overall Destination Image (DI) as well as its subcomponents: Destination Cognitive Image (DCI), Destination Uniqueness Image (DUI), and Destination Affective Image (DAI). Additionally, the model hypothesises that storytelling also impacts Objective-based Authenticity (ObA), which is closely linked to the Destination Image. Further, the model suggests that a strong Destination Image correlates with greater intentions to revisit (IR), recommend (WOM), and engage in electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM). Moreover, objective-based authenticity is believed to enhance these behavioural intentions. Finally, the model examines the interconnections between the intentions to revisit, recommend, and share experiences online, positing that they are correlated with each other, thereby creating a comprehensive framework for understanding how social media storytelling shapes travellers' perceptions and actions. In this study, the model will be applied to the city of Lisbon, however, it is also suitable to be applied to other destinations.

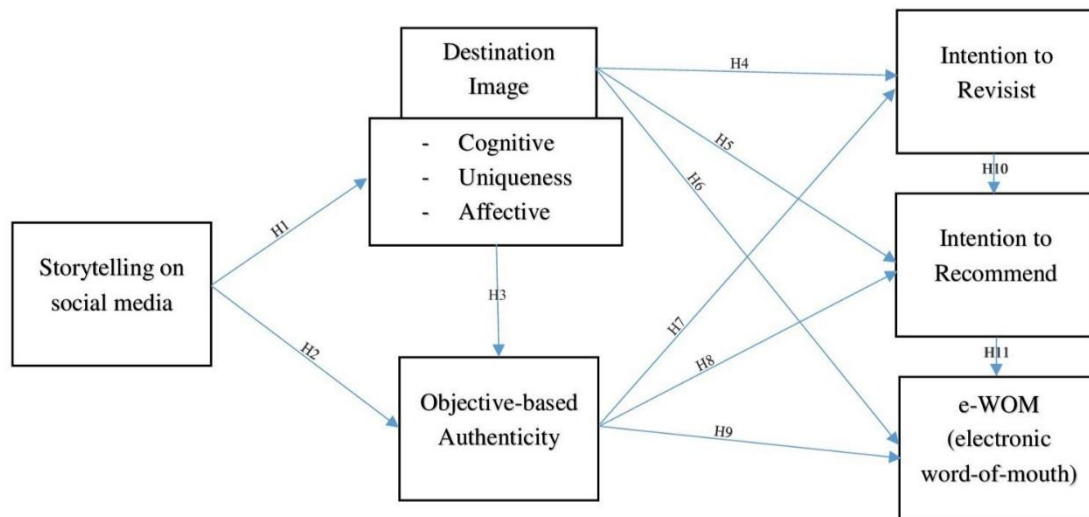


Figure 3. 1 Conceptual Model

Source: Author's elaboration, 2024

3.2. Research Hypotheses

The conceptual model's definition enabled the development and testing of eleven hypotheses. These hypotheses were examined through data analysis gathered from the questionnaire to assess whether they were supported or not supported. Drawing on the insights gained from the literature review and the model's design, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

H1: Storytelling (S) on social media is related to Destination Image (DI)

H1.1: Storytelling (S) on social media is related to Destination Cognitive Image (DCI)

H1.2: Storytelling (S) on social media is related to Destination Uniqueness Image (DUI)

H1.3: Storytelling (S) on social media is related to Affective Image (DAI)

H2: Storytelling (S) on social media is related to Objective-based Authenticity (ObA)

H3: Destination Image (DI) is related to Objective-based Authenticity (ObA)

H3.1: Destination Cognitive Image (DCI) is related to Objective-based Authenticity (ObA)

H3.2: Destination Uniqueness Image (DUI) is related to Objective-based (ObA)

H3.3: Destination Affective Image (DAI) is related to Objective-based Authenticity (ObA)

H4: Destination Image (DI) is related to Intention to Revisit (IR)

H5: Destination Image (DI) is related to Intention to Recommend (WOM)

H6: Destination Image (DI) is related to e-WOM (electronic word-of-mouth)

H7: Objective-based Authenticity (ObA) is related to Intention to Revisit (IR)

H8: Objective-based Authenticity (ObA) is related to Intention to Recommend (WOM)

H9: Objective-based Authenticity (ObA) is related to e-WOM (electronic word-of-mouth)

H10: Intention to Revisit (IR) is related to Intention to Recommend (WOM)

H11: Intention to Recommend (WOM) is related to e-WOM (electronic word-of-mouth)

This research aims to investigate the impact of social media storytelling on the perception of Lisbon as a tourist destination, particularly its influence on destination image, authenticity, and behavioural intentions. We hypothesise that compelling narratives shared on social media platforms contribute to a positive Destination Image, encompassing cognitive, uniqueness, and affective dimensions (H1, H1.1, H1.3). Previous studies have shown that engaging narratives on social media can enhance tourists' cognitive understanding and emotional connection (Molinillo et al., 2018). As previously noted in the literature review, the uniqueness aspect of destination image has been less considered, therefore his relationship with storytelling on social media hasn't been tested yet. Furthermore, the study by Ben Youssef et al. (2018), even if

doesn't suggest a direct correlation between Storytelling (S) and Objective-based Authenticity (ObA), affirms that destination storytellers should ensure unique and authentic components in their storytelling procedures. (H1.2, H.2)

When the destination image accurately reflects the unique and genuine attributes of a place—such as its cultural heritage, natural beauty, and local traditions—tourists are more likely to perceive the destination as authentic (H3). This perceived authenticity shapes the destination's image by influencing how real or genuine tourists find the experience (Marine-Roig, 2015). In this way, a well-constructed destination image can elevate the perceived authenticity of a location, which, in turn, influences tourists' overall satisfaction and engagement with the destination (Yuliana et al., 2023).

Ghaderi et al. (2023) highlight the positive effect of storytelling on destination image and subsequent tourists' behavioural intentions, suggesting that positive stories can motivate potential tourists. This study further examines the influence of DI on tourists' intentions to revisit (H4) and recommend (H5). The relationship between DI and e-WOM (H6) is adequately discussed by Amaro et al. (2021).

Tourist's perception of authenticity can significantly influence their intention to revisit (H7) (Bryce et al., 2015; Kolar & Zabkar, 2010). Authentic experiences serve as key motivators for tourists, and higher perceived brand authenticity increases the likelihood of return visits (Shen et al., 2014).

Moreover, authenticity plays a significant role in shaping this recommendation behaviour (H8) (Hollebeek et al., 2014). Authenticity, as reflected in a destination's integrity, credibility, and symbolism, enhances tourist engagement and satisfaction, leading to greater e-WOM (H9) (Bryce et al., 2015; Litvin et al. 2008).

Finally, we explore the interrelationships between revisit intention and recommendation (H10) and consequently WOM and e-WOM (H11) as behavioural outcomes of a positively perceived destination image and authenticity (Sultan et al., 2021).

Positive emotional experiences, memorable tourism experiences, and a favourable destination image significantly influence tourists' intention to revisit, recommend through WOM, and share experiences via e-WOM (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2021).

While revisit intentions remain crucial for destinations looking to foster long-term visitor loyalty (Zhang, Wu, et al., 2018), with the digital shift, eWOM plays an even greater role, amplifying tourist experiences across a vast network (Srivastava & Sharma, 2017).

By investigating these hypotheses, this research seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of how social media storytelling shapes tourist perceptions and behaviours towards Lisbon.

4. Methodology

4.1. Research Approach

After developing the conceptual model and corresponding hypotheses from the literature, it is essential to test them empirically. Based on the literature review, the research objectives are designed to investigate and the hypotheses are formulated to validate the relationships between the constructs.

4.2. Samples and data collection

The research approach to investigate the hypotheses employed a structured questionnaire designed to capture data from participants who have both engaged with social media content related to Lisbon and visited this destination at least once.

Considering the social media prerequisite, the main expected target would be international youngsters (between 18-30 years old). Moreover, we anticipate they are mainly from Europe and the USA (TravelBI by Turismo de Portugal, 2024). Be that as it may, the questionnaire was distributed from June to August of 2024, online (on social media and in travel group chats) and in person, along the streets of Lisbon with a QR code. A cluster sampling method was used since the survey was distributed (both online and in person) only to groups or clusters of tourists with the requirements mentioned above. The questionnaire was administered directly, with participants being informed of the research's purpose (Malhotra & Birks, 2017).

4.3. Questionnaire development

The questionnaire was developed using the Qualtrics software. The decision fell on it rather than Google Forms because with Qualtrics it was easier and direct to transfer the data on SPSS, the software used to analyse the data.

The initial questionnaire is composed of 7 sections for a total of 22 questions. The first section contains the introductory message and explanation of the study. The second one revolves around the “Visit to Lisbon”, asking how many times, for which reasons, how long and with whom this visit happened. The third, fourth, fifth and sixth sections contain respectively the constructs of the research, Storytelling (S), Destination Image (DI), Objective-based Authenticity (ObA) and the three intentional behaviours Intention to Revisit (IR), Intention to Recommend (WOM), and electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM). The last sections gathered demographical information, asking about gender, age, nationality, level of education, professional status and income.

4.4. Pre-test and final questionnaire

Before launching the questionnaire, a pre-test was conducted using a non-probability convenience sampling method. The primary goal of this test was to evaluate the clarity and comprehension of the questions by the respondents and determine if any adjustments were necessary. Feedback from the 30 participants, who took part in the pre-test, resulted in minor revisions to the questionnaire's structure. Additionally, some questions were rewritten to enhance clarity and ease of interpretation. Another aim of the pre-test was to assess the reliability of the scales used, which was done by measuring Cronbach's alpha values (Malhotra & Birks, 2017). All scales except one had values exceeding 0.7, confirming their reliability and indicating good internal consistency. Objective-based authenticity had a 0.566 α based on 7 items in the pre-test. Therefore, it was necessary to re-elaborate the items to make them clearer and easily understandable. Moreover, an explanatory paragraph was included at the beginning of this section (ObA) and of the Storytelling (S) one to give respondents a framework to better understand the topic in question.

Lastly, from the feedback gathered we also realized it was a requisite to add a section concerning the use of social media for travelling purposes (regarding the frequency and network platforms used), along with the visit. As a result, the final version of the questionnaire has 8 sections, with a total of 24 questions.

4.5. Measures and scales

The model constructs were adapted from existing studies, incorporating specific items and characteristics ([Annexe A](#)). All questions were formatted using a Likert-type scale from 1 to 5, where 1 represents "strongly disagree" and 5 represents "strongly agree."

The construct of Storytelling (S) was adapted from Jo et al. (2022); it is divided into 5 sub-categories, Interestingness (SI), Educability (SE), Sensibility (SS), Descriptiveness (SD) and Uniqueness (SU), for a total of 20 items (4 each).

The destination image was comprised of three components: cognitive, affective, and unique. The cognitive destination image construct included 6 items adapted from prior research (Amaro et al., 2020; Lee & Lockshin, 2011; Añaña et al., 2018). Secondly, the uniqueness of the destination image was measured using 14 items adapted from Munawar et al. (2020), Melo (2014), and Soares (2022). Lastly, the affective destination image was assessed using 7 items adapted from Barnes et al. (2013) and Marques et al. (2021).

For the third construct, namely Objective-based Authenticity (ObA), 7 items were included in the questionnaire, which were adapted from Zhao and Li (2022) and Lin and Liu (2018).

Regarding behavioural intentions, the construct Intention to Revisit (IR) was included in the questionnaire with 4 items from Lee et al. (2012). Intention to Recommend (WOM) was based on 7 items from previous studies from Carrol & Ahuvia (2006), Amaro et al., (2020), Reitsamer & Bunner-Sperdin (2021) and Nieves-Pavón et al., (2024). To conclude, the last construct, e-WOM, took into account 3 items adapted from Amaro et al., (2020).

The items of each construct are placed in [Annexe A](#).

4.6. Statistical analysis

To analyse the proposed conceptual model, the software IBM SPSS "Statistical Package for the Social Sciences" (version 29) was utilised. Using this software, a descriptive analysis was conducted, and all the hypotheses were tested using Pearson correlation.

Correlation is a bivariate analysis used to assess how strongly two variables are related and the direction of their relationship. The correlation coefficient ranges from +1 to -1, with ± 1 representing a perfect correlation between the variables. As the coefficient value approaches 0, the relationship between the variables becomes weaker. The sign of the coefficient shows the direction of the relationship: a positive sign (+) indicates a positive relationship, while a negative sign (−) indicates a negative relationship (Cohen et al., 2014), and the magnitude reflects its strength.

For this study, we employed Pearson's Correlation. Pearson Correlation, also known as Pearson's correlation coefficient (r), measures the linear relationship between two continuous variables. It assesses how well the relationship between these variables can be described by a straight line (Schober et al., 2018). A positive value of r signifies that as one variable increases, the other tends to increase as well, with the strength categorized as strong ($r > 0.5$), moderate ($0.3 < r \leq 0.5$), or weak ($0 < r \leq 0.3$) (Turney, 2022).

5. Results and Discussion

5.1. Sample characterisation

The final sample consists of 303 valid answers from a total of 399 answers received (96 respondents abandoned the questionnaire at the beginning). Table 5.1 presents the distribution of respondents' sociodemographic characteristics.

The study involved 303 tourists, with a minor difference between men (40.4%) and women (38.6%). The participants were mainly between 25 and 34 years old (41.9%) and 45 and 54 years old (26.1%). Visitors between 18 and 24 years old were only 17.8%.

The Nationality question was the only one with a text entry as a type of response. In total, 59 nationalities were represented ([Annexe B](#)). Therefore, considering this number, it was graphically easier to group and present them by Continents of belonging. The voice “Double” represents the respondents who insert two nationalities. The majority of visitors were from Europe (62%).

Additionally, it was found that 73.8% of respondents held an academic degree at the bachelor's level or higher. It was also noted that 2/3 of the participants were either students or employees (72.6%). Lastly, the population of this study is almost equally distributed in terms of income according to the average of their countries. 1/3 of people have an average income and 37,3% of them have an income above the average prevailing on the 29.4% of people with an income below the average.

Table 5. 1 - Distribution of sociodemographic characteristics of respondents

Sociodemographic variables		N	%
Gender	Female	117	38.6%
	Male	122	40.4%
	Non-binary/ third gender	64	21.1%
	Prefer not to say	0	0%
Age	Under 18	3	1.0%
	18-24	54	17.8%
	25-34	127	41.9%

	35-44	18	5.9%
	45-54	79	26.1%
	55-64	12	4.0%
	65+	10	3.3%
Nationality per Continents	Africa	12	4.0%
	Asia	26	8.6%
	Europe	188	62.0%
	Europe-Asia	18	5.9%
	North/Central America	37	12.2%
	South America	19	6.3%
	Double	3	1.0%
Level of education	Less than a High School Degree	61	19.3%
	High School Degree (or equivalent)	20	6.6%
	Bachelor's Degree	131	43.2%
	Master's Degree	78	25.7%
	PhD or higher	12	4.9%
	Other	1	0.3%
Professional status	Student	110	36.3%
	Employee	110	36.3%
	Unemployed	42	13.9%
	Retired	7	2.3%
	Other	50	16.5%
Income	below the average of my country	89	29.4%

	on the average of my country	101	33.3%
	above the average of my country	113	37.3%

Source: Own elaboration with data from SPSS

[Annexe C](#) presents the distribution of travellers. 45.9% of the respondents were on their 2nd visit, 50.5% went to Lisbon for a vacation/holiday and 45.5% travelled there alone. Regarding social media platforms, 38.3% of the participants always use them for travelling purposes and the most used one is Instagram with 72.9%.

Table 5. 2 Reliability Analysis

Reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, to test the internal consistency of the variables. It was found to be satisfactory for all the variables studied, with values exceeding the acceptable threshold of 0.70, including Objective-based Authenticity (ObA). As reliability was not an issue, a score was determined for each construct by averaging the answers of e its items.

Table 5.2- Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients

Variables	Cronbach's alpha	N. of items
Storytelling (S)	0.887	20
Destination Cognitive Image (DCI)	0.868	6
Destination Affective Image (DAI)	0.894	7
Destination Uniqueness Image (DUI)	0.899	14
Objective-based Authenticity (ObA)	0.781	7
Intention to Revisit (IR)	0.737	4
Intention to Recommend (WOM)	0.916	7
e-WOM	0.819	3

Source: Own elaboration with data from SPSS

5.3. Descriptive Statistics

This section provides a concise descriptive analysis of the model's constructs. The mean and standard deviation of each construct will be examined to gain insight into the overall perception of the respondents toward each construct.

Table 5. 3 Descriptive statistics of the model's constructs

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Storytelling	303	1,00	4,95	3,6398	,38420
destination_cognitive_image	303	2,67	5,00	4,0594	,59612
destination_uniqueness_image	303	2,43	5,00	3,9269	,51157
destination_affective_image	303	1,71	5,00	4,0118	,58953
Objective-based Authenticity	303	3,57	5,00	4,6082	,25812
intention_to_revisit	303	1,75	5,00	3,7137	,58606
intention_to_recommend	303	1,86	5,00	4,0339	,60925
eWOM	303	1,00	5,00	3,6722	,76699
Valid N (listwise)	303				

Source: Data from SPSS

The construct Storytelling (S) is generally viewed positively by the participants, with a mean of 3.64 indicating a tendency towards agreement with the statements provided. The low Standard Deviation (0.38) suggests a consistent set of responses, indicating that the participants' perceptions of storytelling are fairly uniform. The range of the scores indicates the spread from the lowest to the highest observed values. The minimum score of 1 indicates that at least one respondent strongly disagreed with some items. The maximum score of 4.95 suggests that the highest score was close to 5, but not quite, indicating no perfect agreement with any item. The relatively wide range from 1 to 4.95 suggests that while most responses clustered around the mean, there were still a few respondents who strongly disagreed with certain items. The values per item are displayed in [Annexe D](#). The one with the lowest Mean (3.27) is “I was able to satisfy my intellectual needs through the stories of Lisbon”, leading to the conclusion that storytelling on social media might not have been perceived as highly intellectually stimulating or enriching by most participants.

The Destination Cognitive Image (DCI) construct shows that participants generally perceived the destination positively, with a mean score of 4.06. The standard deviation of 0.6

reflects a relatively low variability in participants' responses. the minimum score of 2.67 suggests that some participants had less favourable perceptions and the maximum score of 5 shows that some participants had the most positive possible perception of the destination. In [Annexe E](#) we find the descriptive statistics per item; for the Cognitive Image, the highest Mean is “Lisbon offers exciting and interesting places to visit” (4.17) and the lowest is “Lisbon is safe and secure” (3.95).

The Destination Uniqueness Image (DUI) construct shows that participants generally perceive the destination as somewhat unique, with a Mean score of 3.9. The low standard deviation (0.51) suggests that responses were fairly consistent, indicating a shared perception among participants with only slight variations. The lowest score reported was 2.43, indicating that some participants rated the destination's uniqueness below the neutral midpoint of 3 on the Likert scale. The highest score was 5, meaning that some participants rated the destination as highly unique, strongly agreeing with the items that measure uniqueness. The item with the highest Mean ([Annexe E](#)) is “Trams and elevators are distinctive features of Lisbon” (4.15) and the one with the lowest is “Lisbon is the most unique city” (3.07). This last one was to be expected because it is an extreme statement.

The Destination Affective Image (DAI) construct reveals that participants generally had positive emotional responses to the destination, with a mean score of 4.01. The moderate standard deviation of 0.59 suggests some variation in these responses, though most were positive. The range from a minimum of 1.71 to a maximum of 5 shows that while many participants had strong positive feelings, at least one had less favourable reactions to the destination. The item with the lowest Mean ([Annexe E](#)) is “Lisbon is an emotional area” (3.89) instead the one with the highest is “Lisbon is pleasant” (4.12).

The Mean score of 4.6 indicates that, on average, respondents tend to agree strongly with the items related to Objective-based Authenticity. Since 4.6 is close to the upper limit of the Likert scale (5), it suggests a high level of perceived authenticity among the respondents. The standard deviation of 0.26 shows that there is low variability in responses. Most of the respondents' answers are clustered closely around the Mean score of 4.6. This suggests a consistent perception of the construct among the respondents. The minimum score of 3.47 and the maximum score of 5 demonstrate that while most respondents gave high ratings, there was some variation, with a few respondents giving lower ratings. However, even the minimum score (3.47) is above the midpoint of the scale (3), indicating that all respondents generally agree with the items, though to varying degrees. “I appreciate how this place blends architectural heritage with the natural landscape” is the item with the highest Mean (4.73), meanwhile the one with

the lowest (4.33) is “I believe that the handicraft items or souvenirs available at local shops showcase traditional craftsmanship” ([Annexe F](#)).

For the construct Intention to Revisit (IR), the Mean score of 3.71 suggests a generally positive intention to revisit, although it is not extremely high. The standard deviation of 0.59 indicates that responses are relatively consistent, with moderate variation around the mean. The minimum score of 1.75 shows that there is some variability, with a few respondents indicating a lower intention to revisit. The maximum score of 5 demonstrates that some respondents are highly likely to revisit. In [Annexe G](#), we find that the item with the most agreement is “I would love to revisit Lisbon” with a Mean of 4.04; the one with the least agreement is “I would prefer revisiting Lisbon rather than going to other places” with a Mean of 3.03.

Regarding the Intention to Recommend (WOM), a Mean of 4.03 indicates that, on average, respondents generally agree when it comes to recommending the subject in question. Since 4 on the Likert scale corresponds to "agree," the Mean suggests a positive overall intention to recommend. A standard deviation of 0.61 is relatively low, indicating a general consensus among the participants, with few extreme deviations. The minimum score of 1.86 suggests that at least one respondent was closer to "disagree" or between "disagree" and "neither agree or disagree," while the maximum score of 5 indicates that some respondents "strongly agree" intending to recommend. The fact that the minimum value is 1.86 rather than 1 (the lowest point on the Likert scale) suggests that no participant strongly disagreed across all items. The maximum value is 5 indicates that some participants felt very strongly positive about recommending. As we can see in [Annexe H](#), the item with the highest Mean is “I would encourage friends and family to visit Lisbon” (4.15). Instead for the lowest Mean level, we have an even of 3.97 for “I will recommend Lisbon to lots of people” and “I will “talk up” Lisbon to my friends”.

To conclude, for the construct e-WOM (electronic word-of-mouth), the mean score of 3.7 indicates that, on average, respondents tend to be somewhat positive about the e-WOM construct, leaning towards agreement on the Likert scale. In this context, a standard deviation of 0.77 indicates that the responses tend to be fairly consistent around the mean. With a minimum score of 1 and a maximum score of 5, the full range of the Likert scale was utilized. This suggests that while the average response is somewhat positive, there was a broad spectrum of opinions, from strong disagreement to strong agreement. With a Mean of 3.74 for the item “I share experiences I lived in Lisbon on the internet (Facebook, Instagram, etc.)”, we can say that respondents somehow tend to share their Lisbon experiences on social media. On the other side, we can say they are not particularly fun of uploading videos about their stay in Lisbon,

according to a Mean of 3.56 for the item “I upload videos of Lisbon on the internet” ([Annexe I](#)).

5.4 Hypotheses testing

To test the hypotheses, we employ the Pearson correlation. To calculate Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) on SPSS, we used the Mean of the constructs, since the Cronbach's alpha of each indicated high reliability.

Following the Hypotheses, the first relation we are testing is the one between Storytelling (S) and the overall Destination Image (DI), (H1).

Table 5.4. 1. Correlations S-DI

Correlations S-DI			
		Storytelling	Destination_image
Storytelling	Pearson Correlation	1	,620**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<,001
	N	303	303
Destination_image	Pearson Correlation	,620**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<,001	
	N	303	303

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Data from SPSS

The Pearson correlation coefficient (r) of 0.620 suggests a moderate to strong positive relationship between storytelling on social media and the destination image of Lisbon. The positive value of 0.620 indicates that there is a direct relationship. When one variable increases, the other also tends to increase. Here, as more compelling or frequent storytelling about Lisbon happens on social media, the image of Lisbon as a desirable destination improves. A value of 0.620 is considered a moderate to strong correlation in social science research. This means that the relationship is noticeable and significant but not perfect (which would be closer to 1.0). H1 is confirmed.

Moving forward we will analyse the relationship between Storytelling (S) and the three components of Destination Image (DCI, DUI, DAI), (H1.1, H1.2 and H1.3).

Table 5.4. 2. Correlations S-DCI

		Storytelling	destination_cognitive_image
Storytelling	Pearson Correlation	1	,551**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<,001
	N	303	303
destination_cognitive_image	Pearson Correlation	,551**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<,001	
	N	303	303

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Data from SPSS

The Pearson correlation coefficient (r) of 0.551 indicates a moderate positive relationship between storytelling on social media and the cognitive image of Lisbon as a destination. This relationship is statistically significant, as indicated by the significance level ($p < 0.01$). This means that while other factors may also influence the cognitive image, storytelling on social media is a significant contributor. H1.1 is validated.

Table 5.4. 3. Correlations S-DUI

		Storytelling	destination_uniqueness_image
Storytelling	Pearson Correlation	1	,613**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<,001
	N	303	303
destination_uniqueness_image	Pearson Correlation	,613**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<,001	
	N	303	303

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Data from SPSS

The positive value (r) of 0.613 ($p < 0.01$) shows that there is a direct relationship between storytelling on social media and the unique image of Lisbon. As the quantity or quality of storytelling about Lisbon on social media increases, the perception of Lisbon as a unique destination improves. H1.2 is confirmed.

Table 5.4. 4. Correlations S-DAI

		Correlations S-DAI	
		Storytelling	destination_affe ctive_image
Storytelling	Pearson Correlation	1	,562**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<,001
	N	303	303
destination_affe ctive_imag e	Pearson Correlation	,562**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<,001	
	N	303	303

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Data from SPSS

A coefficient (r) of 0.562 ($p < 0.01$) indicates a moderate correlation. While not as strong as a coefficient closer to 1.0, it still signifies a meaningful connection, suggesting that storytelling on social media has a significant impact on how emotionally appealing Lisbon is perceived to be. When social media content effectively conveys the emotional and experiential aspects of Lisbon—such as its atmosphere, vibes, or the emotions it can evoke—people’s affective image of the city tends to improve. H1.3 is validated.

Results show that of the three components, the Destination Uniqueness Image (DUI) is the one with the highest correlation with Storytelling (S). The strongest relationship that Storytelling (S) has with Destination Image (DI) components, is with the unique image.

Table 5.4. 5. Correlations S-ObA

		Correlations S-ObA	
		Storytelling	Ojjective-based Authenticity
Storytelling	Pearson Correlation	1	,409**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<,001
	N	303	303
Ojjective-based Authenticity	Pearson Correlation	,409**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<,001	
	N	303	303

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Data from SPSS

A Pearson correlation coefficient (r) of 0.409 ($p < 0.01$) indicates a moderate correlation, suggesting that a wider implementation of authentic and fact-based storytelling on social media is likely associated with higher perceived authenticity, thus validating H2.

Table 5.4. 6. Correlations DI-ObA

Correlations DI-ObA		Destination_image	Objective-based Authenticity
Destination_image	Pearson Correlation	1	,508**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<,001
	N	303	303
Objective-based Authenticity	Pearson Correlation	,508**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<,001	
	N	303	303

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Data from SPSS

A Pearson correlation (r) of 0.508 ($p < 0.01$) suggests that there is a moderate and statistically significant positive relationship between the image tourists have of Lisbon as a destination and their perception of its objective-based authenticity. This implies that the more positively tourists perceive Lisbon's image, the more likely they are to view it as authentically representing its cultural and historical elements. Moreover, we will analyse the exact relationship with three components of DCI, DUI, and DAI, to test H3.1, H3.2 and H3.3.

Table 5.4. 7. Correlations DCI-ObA

Correlations DCI-ObA		destination_cognitive_image	Objective-based Authenticity
destination_cognitive_image	Pearson Correlation	1	,399**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<,001
	N	303	303
Objective-based Authenticity	Pearson Correlation	,399**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<,001	
	N	303	303

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Data from SPSS

Table 5.4. 8. Correlations DUI-ObA

Correlations DUI-ObA		destination_uniqueness_image	Ojective-based Authenticity
destination_uniqueness_image	Pearson Correlation	1	,527**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<,001
	N	303	303
Ojective-based Authenticity	Pearson Correlation	,527**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<,001	
	N	303	303

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Data from SPSS

Table 5.4. 9. Correlations DAI-ObA

Correlations DAI-ObA		destination_affective_image	Ojective-based Authenticity
destination_affective_image	Pearson Correlation	1	,463**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<,001
	N	303	303
Ojective-based Authenticity	Pearson Correlation	,463**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<,001	
	N	303	303

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Data from SPSS

Uniqueness Image ($r = 0.527$, $p < 0.01$) has the strongest correlation, indicating that the distinctiveness of Lisbon plays a significant role in how authentic it is perceived. Affective Image ($r = 0.463$, $p < 0.01$), even though has a moderate correlation, shows that emotional perceptions are also important in shaping authenticity beliefs. Cognitive Image ($r = 0.399$, $p < 0.01$) has the weakest, yet still moderately significant, correlation, indicating that factual knowledge about Lisbon can contribute to perceptions of authenticity, though to a lesser extent than the other factors. Therefore, all three hypotheses, H3.1, H3.2 and H3.3, are validated.

The next step is to verify the relationships between the image and perception of Lisbon and the potential intentional behaviours of the respondents.

Table 5.4. 10. Correlations DI-IR

Correlations DI-IR			
		Destination_image	intention_to_revisit
Destination_image	Pearson Correlation	1	,544**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<,001
	N	303	303
intention_to_revisit	Pearson Correlation	,544**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<,001	
	N	303	303

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Data from SPSS

A Pearson correlation of (r) 0.544 ($p < 0.01$) indicates a moderate positive relationship between the two variables. This means that as the destination image of Lisbon improves (in the minds of the respondents), their intention to revisit Lisbon also tends to increase, therefore validating H4.

Table 5.4. 11. Correlations DI-WOM

Correlations DI-WOM			
		Destination_image	intention_to_recommend
Destination_image	Pearson Correlation	1	,776**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<,001
	N	303	303
intention_to_recommend	Pearson Correlation	,776**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<,001	
	N	303	303

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Data from SPSS

A Pearson correlation (r) of 0.776 ($p < 0.01$) indicates a strong positive relationship. Visitors who have a favourable view of Lisbon as a destination are much more likely to recommend it to others. This implies that improving the overall image of Lisbon could significantly boost word-of-mouth recommendations, which is crucial for attracting new visitors. H5 is fully confirmed.

Table 5.4. 12. Correlations DI-eWOM

DI-eWOM		Destination_image	eWOM
Destination_image	Pearson Correlation	1	,332**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<,001
	N	303	303
eWOM	Pearson Correlation	,332**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<,001	
	N	303	303

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Data from SPSS

The correlation (r) of 0.332 ($p < 0.01$) suggests that while there is a positive association between a favourable destination image of Lisbon and the likelihood of visitors participating in e-WOM, this relationship is not as strong as it is with other variables, such as the intention to recommend. However, it still indicates that a better destination image is somewhat likely to lead to more positive online discussions and recommendations about Lisbon. H6 is barely confirmed.

Table 5.4. 13. Correlations ObA-IR

Correlations ObA-IR		ObA	intention_to_revisit
ObA	Pearson Correlation	1	,297**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<,001
	N	303	303
intention_to_revisit	Pearson Correlation	,297**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<,001	
	N	303	303

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Data from SPSS

The Pearson Correlation coefficient (r) of 0.297 ($p < 0.01$) indicates a positive weak, almost moderate, correlation between objective-based authenticity and the intention to revisit Lisbon. As visitors perceive Lisbon to authentically represent what they expect from the city (in an objective sense), their intention to revisit might increase. H7 is almost validated.

Table 5.4. 14. Correlations ObA-WOM

Correlations ObA-WOM		ObA	intention_to_recommend
ObA	Pearson Correlation	1	,362**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<,001
	N	303	303
intention_to_recommend	Pearson Correlation	,362**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<,001	
	N	303	303

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Data from SPSS

This value ($r = 0.362$, $p < 0.01$), suggests a moderate positive relationship: as the perception of objective-based authenticity increases (i.e., visitors find Lisbon to be genuinely representative of their expectations and experiences), their intention to recommend the city to others also tend to increase. H8 is quite confirmed.

Table 5.4. 15. Correlations ObA-eWOM

Correlations ObA-eWOM		ObA	eWOM
ObA	Pearson Correlation	1	,294**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<,001
	N	303	303
eWOM	Pearson Correlation	,294**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<,001	
	N	303	303

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Data from SPSS

The Pearson correlation (r) of 0.294 ($p < 0.01$), indicates a weak positive relationship between objective-based authenticity and electronic word-of-mouth in Lisbon. As visitors perceive Lisbon to be authentically aligned with their expectations, their likelihood of sharing positive experiences and engaging in favourable e-WOM could potentially increase. H9 is not fully validated.

Table 5.4.16. Correlations IR-WOM

		intention_to_re visit	intention_to_re commend
intention_to_revisit	Pearson Correlation	1	,658**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<,001
	N	303	303
intention_to_recommend	Pearson Correlation	,658**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<,001	
	N	303	303

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Data from SPSS

The Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r) of 0.658 ($p < 0.01$) indicates a strong positive relationship, as the intention to recommend Lisbon increases, so does the intention to revisit Lisbon. A positive correlation means that people who are more likely to recommend Lisbon are also more likely to plan to return. The strength of 0.658 indicates a moderate to strong relationship, implying a substantial association between these two variables. H10 is confirmed with no doubts.

Table 5.4. 17. Correlations WOM-eWOM

		intention_to_re commend	eWOM
intention_to_recommend	Pearson Correlation	1	,322**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<,001
	N	303	303
eWOM	Pearson Correlation	,322**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<,001	
	N	303	303

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Data from SPSS

A combination value of $r = 0.322$ ($p < 0.01$) indicates a weak to moderate positive relationship between WOM and e-WOM. It means that while there is some positive association between WOM (traditional, face-to-face communication) and e-WOM (online reviews or social media), the relationship is not particularly strong. Even though there is some degree of association—meaning people who engage in WOM are somewhat likely to also engage in e-WOM—the strength of this association is relatively modest. H11 is quite confirmed.

Overall, there's a moderate positive relationship between the constructs variables ($0.3 < r \leq 0.5$), with none of them being extremely weak or strong. Two of the relationships are weaker compared to the rest ($0 < r \leq 0.3$) but statistically significant at 1%, while other two are stronger ($r > 0.5$).

Table 5.4. 18. Validation of hypotheses

Hypotheses	Supported
H1	yes
H1.1	yes
H1.2	yes
H1.3	yes
H2	yes
H3	yes
H3.1	yes
H3.2	yes
H3.3	yes
H4	yes
H5	yes
H6	yes
H7	yes
H8	yes
H9	yes
H10	yes
H11	yes

6. Conclusions

6.1. Findings and Theoretical Contributions

This research aims to explore the extent to which storytelling on social media impacts the perception of Lisbon as an authentic and desirable tourist destination and how this perception influences tourists' intentions to revisit, recommend, and engage in electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM). Therefore, it evaluated how social media storytelling influences the cognitive, affective, and uniqueness dimensions of Lisbon's destination image and how these dimensions affect tourists' perceptions of authenticity and subsequent behavioural intentions.

The study's findings revealed that storytelling on social media significantly influences the destination image (H1), as its cognitive (H1.1), affective (H1.3) and especially uniqueness (H1.2) dimensions of Lisbon. This suggests that engaging and compelling narratives shared on social media platforms, it is a critical factor in shaping tourists' perceptions of Lisbon, enhancing their understanding, emotional connection, and particularly appreciation of the city's unique attributes. As suggested by Qu et al. (2011) the uniqueness factor of a destination plays a crucial role in shaping the overall image in consumers' minds, surpassing the importance of the emotional component. As a result, a strong unique image is more likely to create a more favourable overall perception of the destination.

Furthermore, the study confirmed that storytelling on social media is positively related to the perceived authenticity of Lisbon (H2), supporting the idea that well-crafted narratives can enhance the perception of the city's authenticity. Even if this result is not as good as the previous one about the unique image, it is a successful one for this research as it contributes to the absence of this relationship in previous studies.

This aligns with the notion that when a destination image reflects the genuine attributes of a place, such as its cultural heritage and local traditions, it fosters a sense of authenticity among tourists (H3, H3.1, H3.2, H3.3). Even in this case, the result of a stronger relationship is the one correlating the unique image to the objective-based authenticity. This involves considering the destination's assets- the authenticity aspect- and how they can be highlighted, as well as identifying what makes the destination truly unique (Ben Youssef et al., 2018).

The research also demonstrated that a positive destination image influences tourists' intentions to revisit (H4) and recommend Lisbon to others (H5). Coudounaris and Sthapit (2017) found that tourists' impressions of their travel experiences and their perceptions of the destination are critical sources of information when evaluating both revisit and WOM intentions. This underscores the idea that a positive tourism experience can have a dual impact: not only

does it encourage tourists to return, but it also prompts them to share their experiences through WOM, further influencing others. Moreover, we can notice that the Intention to Recommend is stronger than to Revisit. Studies suggest that intention to recommend is a separate construct from intention to revisit (Gabe et al., 2006), with the former often more strongly linked to the evaluation of specific destination attributes (Eusébio & Vieira, 2013).

We cannot say the same, for the relationship between Destination Image (DI) and e-WOM (H6). The correlation in this case is weaker compared to the previous two, implying that people might be more available to share their experiences and recommend visiting, in a more spontaneous and face-to-face contact, rather than just feeling the pressure of posting something on social media.

For the objective-based authenticity (ObA) and its relationship with behavioural intentions (H7, H8, H9), we had the two weakest correlations, intention to revisit and e-WOM. The latter was also not successful for DI, as it is very weak. The relationship with the Intention to Recommend, (WOM) turned out to be moderate.

Finally, the research explored the interconnectedness of revisit intentions, and recommendations (H10). The findings suggest that positive experiences and a favourable destination image not only encourage repeat visits but also lead to increased recommendations.

Unexpectedly, the relationship between WOM and e-WOM did not show a strong result for this study. We can interpret this as a non-particular willingness from the respondents of the questionnaire, to interact and share contents about their travelling in Lisbon, on social networks.

This study makes significant theoretical contributions to the understanding of social media storytelling, destination image, and tourist behaviour, particularly in the context of Lisbon. By investigating how storytelling on social media influences destination image and tourists' perceptions of authenticity, it builds upon existing literature on the cognitive, affective, and uniqueness dimensions of destination image.

One of the key theoretical contributions is the validation of the role of destination uniqueness image (DUI) as an essential factor influencing tourists' overall perception of the destination. While previous research has explored cognitive and affective dimensions of destination image, this study sheds light on the significance of the uniqueness aspect, especially when conveyed through engaging and authentic social media storytelling. This contribution fills a gap in the literature, offering a more comprehensive model that includes cognitive, affective, and uniqueness dimensions of the destination image.

Another significant theoretical contribution is the exploration of objective-based authenticity (ObA) and its relationship with behavioural intentions. By examining how ObA

interacts with destination image and storytelling, this study extends existing theories of authenticity in tourism beyond the traditional focus on cognitive or affective authenticity. It highlights that ObA plays a crucial role in influencing tourists' intentions to revisit and recommend a destination, though the strength of this relationship can vary depending on specific dimensions of the destination's image. This uniqueness, amplified through storytelling on social media, enhances tourists' perception of authenticity, as demonstrated in the work of Ben Youssef et al. (2018), linking uniqueness to objective-based authenticity

6.2. Managerial Implications

From a managerial perspective, the findings of this research have important implications for Destination Management Organizations (DMOs) and tourism marketers. Social media storytelling has emerged as a powerful tool for shaping tourists' perceptions and promoting destinations. The findings suggest that DMOs should focus on creating engaging, unique narratives that emphasise the authentic attributes of a destination, such as its cultural heritage and local traditions.

To effectively leverage storytelling, DMOs must focus on the uniqueness aspect of their destination image. This research shows that tourists are particularly influenced by how unique and authentic a destination appears, which significantly impacts their intentions to revisit and recommend. Therefore, tourism marketers should craft stories that highlight distinctive features of the destination and compellingly present them through social media platforms.

Furthermore, as storytelling has been found to positively influence objective-based authenticity, DMOs should ensure that the narratives they craft align with the genuine and authentic aspects of the destination. This could involve highlighting traditional craftsmanship, local customs, and heritage in social media content, as well as encouraging user-generated content that reflects the authentic experiences of visitors

6.3. Limitations and Future Research

This study has certain limitations that are better to state so they will not improperly, negatively impact future research. Firstly, the study focused on Lisbon as a tourism destination, and the items included in the questionnaire might vary depending on the location. Specifically, the items regarding the Destination Uniqueness Image (DUI) and Objective-based Authenticity (ObA) are strictly based on the city of Lisbon. Therefore, it would be inappropriate to generalize these findings to other cities.

In this empirical study, using a non-random sample may have introduced sampling bias, limiting the generalizability of the findings. The results could be skewed, reflecting only the characteristics of the sample rather than the broader population. Consequently, the study's external validity is reduced, affecting the applicability of the conclusions to other contexts.

One aspect we limited in this study, is the one about authenticity, since only the objective-based one has been taken into consideration. The literature on authenticity in tourism has evolved from a focus on objective authenticity to a more complex understanding that includes constructivist and existential perspectives. The shift from objective to existential authenticity highlights the growing recognition of the importance of tourists' subjective experiences in defining what is authentic. This evolving discourse suggests that a more integrative framework is needed to fully understand the role of authenticity in tourism, one that considers the interplay between objective qualities, social constructions, and personal experiences. Considering that already the testing of the objective-based component in this study has been insightful, such an approach can provide deeper knowledge into how authenticity influences tourist behaviour, including loyalty to destinations (Lin, 2015).

To conclude, this study has contributed to the topics of unique image and objective-based authenticity concerning storytelling on social media. Both these components can be used for further studies.

Building on the limitations of this study, several avenues for future research are suggested. First, applying the proposed conceptual model to other destinations would help determine its generalizability and adaptability. Different types of destinations, such as rural versus urban or cultural versus natural, may exhibit variations in how storytelling and authenticity influence destination image and behavioural intentions. By testing the model across diverse contexts, researchers could refine and extend its applicability.

Moreover, future studies could introduce additional constructs into the model to further enrich its explanatory power. For instance, including existential or constructivist authenticity could offer a more comprehensive understanding of how tourists evaluate authenticity in different settings. This would allow for the exploration of tourists' fulfilment and self-discovery as key components in shaping their destination loyalty. Other constructs that could be taken into consideration are satisfaction, place attachment, brand love and destination coolness.

Another promising direction for future research is to explore the role of different types of storytelling techniques, such as user-generated content or branded content, in shaping destination image. Understanding how various forms of digital storytelling interact with tourists' expectations and experiences, could provide valuable insights for destination marketers.

Additionally, examining the role of influencers and content creators in shaping authenticity perceptions could help expand the current understanding of e-WOM and its impact on tourism.

Finally, future studies could delve deeper into the relationship between traditional WOM and e-WOM in influencing tourists' behaviours. While this study found a weaker correlation between destination image and e-WOM, it would be useful to explore how different demographic or cultural groups engage with digital content. This could help identify specific factors that enhance or diminish the effectiveness of e-WOM in different tourism contexts.

In conclusion, this research offers valuable insights into the interplay between social media storytelling, destination image, and tourists' behavioural intentions. By highlighting the importance of uniqueness and authenticity, it provides a strong foundation for both theoretical advancement and practical application in tourism marketing. However, the limitations discussed warrant further investigation, and future research should aim to apply and extend the model to new contexts and incorporate additional constructs to deepen the understanding of tourist behaviour.

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Annexes

Annexe A: Measurement scales for the final questionnaire

Construct	Indicators	References
Storytelling (on social media) It refers to content published on social media platforms as engaging stories, expressed through different modalities (posts, videos, pictures, reels, stories, etc.), published from official tourism profiles, travel bloggers, or simple users.	● Interestingness - SI1. It was interesting to read/listen/watch stories about Lisbon - SI2. I wanted to go there after reading/listening/ watching the stories of Lisbon - SI3. The stories of Lisbon are exciting and touching - SI4. I enjoyed reading/listening/watching stories about Lisbon ● Educability - SE1. The stories of Lisbon are educational - SE2. Through the stories of Lisbon, I was able to improve my understanding of the city - SE3. I was able to satisfy my intellectual needs through the stories of Lisbon - SE4. I got information about Lisbon through the stories ● Sensibility - SS1. The stories about Lisbon give dreams and abundant imagination	Adapted from (Jo et al., 2022)

	SS2. The stories around Lisbon have provoked curiosity SS3. The stories of Lisbon aroused emotion SS4. The stories of Lisbon have memories and romance • Descriptiveness SD1. The stories of Lisbon are easy to understand SD2. The stories of Lisbon are described in detail SD3. The stories of Lisbon are expressed realistically SD4. The stories of Lisbon are explained clearly and accurately • Uniqueness SU1. There are stories about famous local figures in Lisbon SU2. There are legends, fairy tales and oral stories about Lisbon SU3. There are stories related to the history of Lisbon SU4. The stories have a unique taste of Lisbon	
Destination Cognitive Image	DCI1. Lisbon is safe and secure DCI2. Lisbon has a pleasant weather DCI3. Lisbon has a peaceful and restful atmosphere	Adapted from Amaro et al., (2020)

	DCI4. Lisbon offers exciting and interesting places to visit DCI5. Lisbon has breathtaking scenery and natural attractions DCI6. As a tourism destination, Lisbon offers good value for money	Lee & Lockshin (2011) (Añaña et al., 2018)
Destination Uniqueness Image	DUI1. Lisbon has its uniqueness compared to other cities DUI2. Lisbon spots have special features that are not offered anywhere else DUI3. Lisbon is the most unique city DUI4. Lisbon's richness of history and culture is peculiar DUI5. Lisbon offers a diversity of tourist products and activities within a short distance radius DUI6. Lisbon offers a wide variety of entertainment (shows, exhibitions, cultural events and festivals, concerts, colourful nightlife) DUI7. Lisbon offers good weather during off-peak seasons DUI8. Lisbon offers local gastronomy and wine heritage DUI9. Lisbon offers unique artisanal features such as tiles and cork DUI10. The Tagus River is a distinctive feature of Lisbon DUI11. The seven hills and their views are features of Lisbon	Adapted from Munawar et al., (2021) Melo and Farias (2014) (Soares, 2022)

	DUI12. Trams and elevators are distinctive features of Lisbon DUI13. The ancient neighbourhoods characterise Lisbon DUI14. The Fado singing, distinguished by UNESCO as “World Immaterial Heritage Patrimony”, is a distinctive feature of Lisbon	
Destination Affective Image	DAI1. Lisbon is an emotional area DAI2. Lisbon induces feelings and sentiments DAI3. Lisbon is interesting DAI4. Lisbon is exciting DAI5. Lisbon is cosy DAI6. Lisbon is pleasant DAI7. Lisbon is relaxing	Adapted from Barnes et al. (2014) Marques et al. (2021)
Objective-based Authenticity In tourism, it refers to the concept that authenticity can be determined based on factual or objective criteria, rather than subjective experiences. This form of authenticity is grounded in the idea that a "real" or "true" version of a cultural or historical element can be identified and validated by external, factual standards.	ObA1. I found the local lifestyle and practices to be traditional ObA2. I noticed that the local food recipes are distinctive ObA3. I perceived the folk culture, such as Fado, as being traditional ObA4. I perceived the traditional buildings to be original ObA5. I believe that the handicraft items or souvenirs available at local shops showcase traditional craftsmanship ObA6. I had the opportunity to experience local cultural customs	Adapted from Zhao and Li (2022) Lin and Liu (2018)

In tourism, this involves ensuring that the cultural, historical, and natural aspects of a destination are presented in a way that is true to their original or historical context. - I found the local lifestyle and practices to be traditional.	ObA7. I appreciate how this place blends architectural heritage with the natural landscape	
Intention to Revisit	IR1. I'm interested in revisiting Lisbon IR2. I intend to revisit Lisbon in the near future IR3. I would love to revisit Lisbon IR4. I would prefer revisiting Lisbon rather than going to other places	Adapted from Lee et al. (2012)
Intention to Recommend (WOM)	WOM1. I will recommend Lisbon to lots of people WOM2. I will "talk up" Lisbon to my friends WOM3. I will try to spread good words about Lisbon WOM4. I will give Lisbon tons of positive word-of-mouth advertising WOM5. I would recommend Lisbon to someone who seeks my advice WOM6. I will mostly say positive things about Lisbon WOM7. I would encourage friends and family to visit Lisbon	Adapted from Carrol & Ahuvia (2006) Amaro et al., (2020) Reitsamer & Bunner-Sperdin (2021) Nieves-Pavón et al., (2024)

e-WOM (electronic word of mouth) To be intended both as something you did during your stay and will keep doing after it) - I share experiences I lived in Lisbon on social media (Facebook, Instagram, etc.)	e-WOM1. I share experiences I lived in Lisbon on the internet (Facebook, Instagram, etc.) e-WOM2. I post photos of my stay in Lisbon on social media e-WOM3. I upload videos of Lisbon on the internet	Adapted from Amaro et al., (2020)
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Annexe B: Nationality by County of origin

		Count	Column N %
Nationality	Algerian	1	0,3%
	Angolan	6	2,0%
	Argentinian	1	0,3%
	Austrian	1	0,3%
	Bangladeshi	1	0,3%
	Belarussian	1	0,3%
	Belgian	13	4,3%
	Bolivian	1	0,3%
	Bosnian	1	0,3%
	Brazilian	8	2,6%
	British	3	1,0%
	Bulgarian	1	0,3%
	Canadian	8	2,6%
	Chinese	3	1,0%
	Colombian	4	1,3%
	Croatian	2	0,7%
	Czech	1	0,3%
	Danish	11	3,6%
	Dutch	11	3,6%
	Dutch / Colombian	1	0,3%
	Ecuadorian	3	1,0%
	Estonian	1	0,3%
	Finnish	1	0,3%
	French	19	6,3%
	Georgian	1	0,3%
	German	10	3,3%
	Greek	1	0,3%
	Hungarian	1	0,3%
	Indian	1	0,3%
	Indonesian	6	2,0%
	Iranian	1	0,3%
	Irish	1	0,3%
	Italian	41	13,5%
	Japanese	1	0,3%
	Kazakh	1	0,3%
	Kenyan	2	0,7%
	Korean	1	0,3%
	Lithuanian	1	0,3%
	Luxembourgian	1	0,3%
	Malaysian	1	0,3%
	Mexican	2	0,7%
	Moroccan	2	0,7%
	Mozambican	1	0,3%
	Pakistani	1	0,3%
	Peruvian	2	0,7%
	Polish	7	2,3%
	Portuguese	14	4,6%
	Portuguese/ Canadian	1	0,3%
	Romanian	2	0,7%
	Russian	13	4,3%
	Scottish	1	0,3%
	Serbian	2	0,7%
	South-Korean	5	1,7%
	Spanish	29	9,6%
	Swedish	1	0,3%
	Swiss	9	3,0%
	Taiwanese	1	0,3%
	Turkish	3	1,0%
	Ukrainian	1	0,3%
	USA	27	8,9%
	USA/Portuguese	1	0,3%
	Vietnamese	3	1,0%
	Yemeni	1	0,3%

Annexe C: Visit to Lisbon + social media usage

Row		Count	Column N %
How many times did you visit Lisbon?	0	0	0,0%
	1	74	24,4%
	2	139	45,9%
	3	13	4,3%
	more than 3	77	25,4%
For which reason did you visit Lisbon? (Please, select more than one option if appropriate) vacation/holiday			
	vacation/holiday	153	50,5%
	small break/weekend	39	12,9%
	business	75	24,8%
	education	41	13,5%
	family	66	21,8%
	friends	27	8,9%
	adventure/new experiences	113	37,3%
	cultural experience	54	17,8%
	events	97	32,0%
	other	6	2,0%
	1-2	55	18,2%
	2-3	19	6,3%
	3-5	101	33,3%
	5-7	33	10,9%
	more than 7	95	31,4%
Who did you travel with? (If you have visited Lisbon more than 1 time consider your last visit)			
	alone	138	45,5%
	with friends	54	17,8%
	with family (parents, children, siblings, ecc..)	129	42,6%
	with partner	47	15,5%
	with colleagues	106	35,0%
How often do you use social media for travelling purposes?	other	1	0,3%
	Always	116	38,3%
	Often	63	20,8%
	Sometimes	106	35,0%
	Rarely	16	5,3%
	Never	2	0,7%
Which social media platform do you use for travelling purposes?			
	Instagram	221	72,9%
	Tiktok	63	20,8%
	Youtube	151	49,8%
	Facebook	50	16,5%
	Telegram	94	31,0%
	Others	9	3,0%

Annexe D: Descriptive Statistics of Storytelling (S)

Descriptive Statistics of STORYTELLING (on social media)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Interestingness	303	1	5	3,79	,683
SI1. It was interesting to read/listen/watch stories about Lisbon					
SI2. I wanted to go there after reading/listening/ watching the stories of Lisbon	303	1	5	3,76	,804
SI3. The stories of Lisbon are exciting and touching	303	1	5	3,60	,653
SI4. I enjoyed reading/listening/watching stories about Lisbon	303	1	5	3,73	,635
Educability	303	1	5	3,59	,644
SE1. The stories of Lisbon are educational					
SE2. Through the stories of Lisbon, I was able to improve my understanding of the city	303	1	5	3,78	,678
SE3. I was able to satisfy my intellectual needs through the stories of Lisbon	303	1	5	3,27	,690
SE4. I got information about Lisbon through the stories	303	1	5	3,82	,726
Sensibility	303	1	5	3,60	,668
SS1. The stories about Lisbon give dreams and abundant imagination					
SS2. The stories around Lisbon have provoked curiosity	303	1	5	3,87	,661
SS3. The stories of Lisbon aroused emotion	303	1	5	3,56	,667
SS4. The stories of Lisbon have memories and romance	303	1	5	3,66	,665
Descriptiveness	303	1	5	3,74	,643
SD1. The stories of Lisbon are easy to understand					
Descriptiveness SD2. The stories of Lisbon are described in detail	303	1	5	3,44	,687
SD3. The stories of Lisbon are expressed realistically	303	1	5	3,57	,667
SD4. The stories of Lisbon are explained clearly and accurately	303	1	5	3,54	,612
Uniqueness	303	1	5	3,60	,706
SU1. There are stories about famous local figures in Lisbon					
SU2. There are legends, fairy tales and oral stories about Lisbon	303	1	5	3,33	,734
SU3. There are stories related to the history of Lisbon	303	1	5	3,74	,714
SU4. The stories have a unique taste of Lisbon	303	1	5	3,81	,660
Valid N (listwise)	303				

Annexe E: Descriptive Statistics of Destination Image (DI)

Descriptive Statistics of Destination Image (Cognitive, Uniqueness, Affective)					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
DCI1. Lisbon is safe and secure	303	2	5	3,95	,719
DCI2. Lisbon has a pleasant weather	303	1	5	4,09	,765
DCI3. Lisbon has a peaceful and restful atmosphere	303	1	5	4,03	,797
DCI4. Lisbon offers exciting and interesting places to visit	303	3	5	4,17	,759
DCI5. Lisbon has breathtaking scenery and natural attractions	303	2	5	4,09	,788
DCI6. As a tourism destination, Lisbon offers good value for money	303	1	5	4,03	,780
DUI1. Lisbon has its uniqueness compared to other cities	303	1	5	4,08	,781
DUI2. Lisbon spots have special features that are not offered anywhere else	303	1	5	3,94	,848
DUI3. Lisbon is the most unique city	303	1	5	3,07	,837
DUI4. Lisbon's richness of history and culture is peculiar	303	1	5	3,83	,690
DUI5. Lisbon offers a diversity of tourist products and activities within a short distance radius	303	2	5	4,00	,761
DUI6. Lisbon offers a wide variety of entertainment (shows, exhibitions, cultural events and festivals, concerts, colourful nightlife)	303	2	5	4,04	,769
DUI7. Lisbon offers good weather during off-peak seasons	303	1	5	3,83	,690
DUI8. Lisbon offers local gastronomy and wine heritage	303	1	5	3,94	,723
DUI9. Lisbon offers unique artisanal features such as tiles and cork	303	2	5	3,97	,732
DUI10. The Tagus River is a distinctive feature of Lisbon	303	1	5	4,01	,876
DUI11. The seven hills and their views are features of Lisbon	303	2	5	4,13	,810
DUI12. Trams and elevators are distinctive features of Lisbon	303	2	5	4,15	,831
DUI13. The ancient neighbourhoods characterise Lisbon	303	2	5	4,01	,739
DUI14. The Fado singing, distinguished by UNESCO as "World Immaterial Heritage Patrimony", is a distinctive feature of Lisbon	303	1	5	3,98	,767
DAI1. Lisbon is an emotional area	303	2	5	3,89	,675
DAI2. Lisbon induces feelings and sentiments	303	1	5	3,91	,729
DAI3. Lisbon is interesting	303	2	5	4,10	,733
DAI4. Lisbon is exciting	303	1	5	4,07	,775
DAI5. Lisbon is cosy	303	1	5	4,01	,793
DAI6. Lisbon is pleasant	303	2	5	4,12	,744
DAI7. Lisbon is relaxing	303	1	5	3,99	,822
Valid N (listwise)	303				

Annexe F: Descriptive Statistics of Objective-based Authenticity (ObA)

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
ObA1. I found the local lifestyle and practices to be traditional	303	2	5	4,63	,553
ObA2. I noticed that the local food recipes are distinctive	303	3	5	4,68	,503
ObA3. I perceived the folk culture, such as Fado, as being traditional	303	2	5	4,68	,515
ObA4. I perceived the traditional buildings to be original	303	3	5	4,70	,487
ObA5. I believe that the handicraft items or souvenirs available at local shops showcase traditional craftsmanship	303	2	5	4,33	,654
ObA6. I had the opportunity to experience local cultural customs	303	2	5	4,51	,635
ObA7. I appreciate how this place blends architectural heritage with the natural landscape	303	3	5	4,73	,452
Valid N (listwise)	303				

Annexe G: Descriptive Statistics of Intention to Revisit (IR)

Descriptive Statistics of Intention to Revisit (IR)					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
IR1. I'm interested in revisiting Lisbon	303	2	5	4,00	,702
IR2. I intend to revisit Lisbon in the near future	303	2	5	3,78	,785
IR3. I would love to revisit Lisbon	303	2	5	4,04	,740
IR4. I would prefer revisiting Lisbon rather than going to other places	303	1	5	3,03	,895
Valid N (listwise)	303				

Annexe H: Descriptive Statistics of Intention to Recommend (WOM)

Descriptive Statistics of Intention to Recommend (WOM)					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
WOM1. I will recommend Lisbon to lots of people	303	2	5	3,97	,741
WOM2. I will "talk up" Lisbon to my friends	303	2	5	3,97	,720
WOM3. I will try to spread good words about Lisbon	303	3	5	3,98	,678
WOM4. I will give Lisbon tons of positive word-of-mouth advertising	303	1	5	4,00	,748
WOM5. I would recommend Lisbon to someone who seeks my advice	303	1	5	4,11	,766
WOM6. I will mostly say positive things about Lisbon	303	1	5	4,06	,776
WOM7. I would encourage friends and family to visit Lisbon	303	1	5	4,15	,790
Valid N (listwise)	303				

Annexe I: Descriptive Statistics of e-WOM (electronic word-of-mouth)

Descriptive Statistics of e-WOM (electronic word-of-mouth)					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
e-WOM1. I share experiences I lived in Lisbon on the internet (Facebook, Instagram, etc.)	303	1	5	3,74	,899
e-WOM2. I post photos of my stay in Lisbon on social media	303	1	5	3,72	,857
e-WOM3. I upload videos of Lisbon on the internet	303	1	5	3,56	,929
Valid N (listwise)	303				