How do Travel Bloggers Influence Generation Z's Travel Decisions? An Exploratory Study through Five Italian Famous Travel Bloggers

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Abstract
        The increasing adoption of new communication channels such as social networks among Generation Z has created new professional job roles over the last decade, including travel bloggers. This paper focuses on understanding the influence of travel bloggers on Generation Z's travel decisions. A mixed qualitative and quantitative survey design was employed for this study. Empirical data were drawn from 475 Generation Z travelers in Italy using a purposive sampling technique. The quantitative component involved a structured questionnaire consisting of four sections and thirty questions, including demographic information, travel habits, and perceptions of travel bloggers' influence. Responses were collected via face-to-face interviews and analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Product and Service Solutions). Data analysis included descriptive statistics, t-tests to compare sample means, and Likert-scale evaluations to measure the frequency of social media usage in travel decision-making. Findings reveal that travel bloggers play a moderately relevant role in Generation Z's travel decisions, particularly in the realm of social and mobile business. This study contributes to the literature in several ways. First, it enriches Generation Z travel decision-making theory by providing empirical evidence on factors leading to increased influence sharing among travelers. Second, it expands knowledge on the role of influencers, particularly regarding video and photo content in online

tourism communities. From a managerial perspective, the study highlights key drivers of travel decision-making in Generation Z within social networks, and it provides strategic guidelines for travel bloggers to effectively promote tourism destinations. To the best of the authors' knowledge, this study is among the first to empirically investigate the impact of travel bloggers on the tourism decision-making process of Generation Z travelers in the hospitality and tourism literature.

Keywords: Generation Z, travel blogger, travel decision-making

Introduction

In the last decade, communications technology has been a competitive driver in tourism marketing. Tourists can now be in constant contact with their network, friends, work, and fellow travelers, remaining co-present in their social, home, and work life (Law et al., 2024).

Social Media, sites, and blogs allow individuals to shift between multiple platforms, even if they are in different locations around the world (Ampountolas et al., 2024). New forms of multi-location work are rising. In particular, the decreasing costs of these technologies have facilitated a huge rise in workers that are not limited to one location 'digital nomads' (Muller, 2016). There are individuals who are 'pursuing employment that allows for global travel, flexibility in work hours and a departure from the traditional office environment' (Nash et al., 2018, p. 2). Digital nomadicity is defined to describe a geography of work in which workers can perform their job independently of their location.

However, new research has begun to recognize the importance of place as fundamental in the lifestyle choice of digital nomads. The opportunity of experiencing different places and cultures is highly valued to learn new skills and improve mindset values (Li et al., 2024). The importance of the place where someone works, and their experiences, critically differentiate digital nomadism from remote working. Whereas remote work may be wholly unconcerned with place, the value in experiencing different cultures and places is a motivating factor in individuals undertaking a digitally nomadic lifestyle. Also, they are a part of the population that can be influenced by travel bloggers to decide their new place of work. In this context, the focus of recent research has shifted to the centrality of an intriguing example of a digitally nomadic worker (Maggiore et al., 2022; Mainolfi et al., 2022; Duffy & Kang, 2020).

Travel bloggers can be a sort of digital nomad: they can work from everyplace around the world and take the most important advantage. However, this is because their income and content creation is based on their place where they stay for a limited amount of time.

Millenials and Generation Z are a major part of the future workforce, and it is important to understand their needs, which include digital nomadism solutions and their dreams, especially since the pandemic years have shown that working from anywhere is a possibility (Pataki-Bitto & Kapusy, 2021).

While substantial research exists with respect to the influence of travel blogger on the travel decisions styles of other generational cohorts (Generation X and Millennials), attention needs to be paid to the travelling style of Generation Z, as they are an emerging consumer segment. Therefore, this study examines how the work of travel blogging is contextualized in relation to how it is perceived by a sample of Generation Z and how it can influence their travel decision-making process.

Research outcomes should shed light on understanding how travel bloggers can influence Generation Z's travel decisions, concluding by offering practical recommendations for e-tourism commerce, and communicating the desired features of travel apps that influence Generation-Z's purchase intention. Consequently, there are three specific objectives in this study:

1. Conduct a quantitative approach on the target. Their responses provide much better insight into the existing partial and fragmented knowledge in investigating the decision-making process for Generation Z travelers in the realm of social and mobile business of travel bloggers;
2. Identify the underlying determinants for influencing the Generation Z's travel decisions so that travel bloggers can discover better practices for upgrading channel effectiveness and pursuing competitive advantage. This research will evaluate how they differ in terms of quality and creativity through Generation Z, and we will try to understand how relevant the influence of travel bloggers is for Generation Z;
3. Provide managerial implications for practitioners and marketers in the tourism sector to increase the travel blog marketing channel's ability to attract floating consumers, thereby achieving a competitive advantage.

To achieve this, the findings were discussed in relation to other studies that have used a theoretical framework to understand self-presentation in the online world. Each analyzed travel bloggers were evaluated on different variables to understand the reasons for their work's success (Goffman, 1959). Their profile will be analyzed from the point-of-view on how they attract Generation Z, how they influenced them, and what their profile's strengths and weaknesses are.

Literature Review

The development of old social network based on connections (Facebook, Twitter, Linkedin) and new social networks based on AI (Instagram, Tik Tok) has led to an increase in online travel information through video communication. Travel bloggers have proliferated in the last twenty years, facilitating the rise of the modern amateur travel writer (Blaer et al., 2020). Tourism is a visual sector and people are influenced through images and videos. Thus, the development of new social media platforms based on low-quality video communications, frequently used and popular on Instagram, has facilitated travel contents creators.

Travel blogs has the equivalent of personal online diaries and are made up of one or more individual entries strung together by a common theme, for example, a trip itinerary (Puhringer & Taylor, 2008). Travel bloggers are, therefore, individuals who create and maintain blogs, or better show their profiles on new social media based on keywords search and AI. Within their travel blogs, individuals attempt to generate income through means such as paid partnerships, guest posts, sponsored posts, advertising, and affiliate links. The effort required for this content creator job is not as easy as it seems from the outside.

Travel bloggers may also undertake offline work related to their blog such as running 'how to blog' courses or completing speaking engagements (Azariah, 2011).

Travel blogging is therefore a particular form of work, where individuals see themselves as digital nomads. Thus, it is considered as a particular kind of digital nomadism. For travel bloggers, digital nomadism is an integral part of the work that they do. It is the heart of their contents, and it is impossible to follow this career path without travelling.

This particular kind of job based on travel and contents have become the favourite target of tourism market players that need a push in their digital communication. These collaboration aims to reach a wider audience, offering them free trip and promotional travel (Marino et al., 2018).

This research tries to answer two most important questions "H1: How travel blogger influence Generation Z?" and "H2: What are the main points of success of these five most important Italian travel bloggers profiles?". Analyzing previous literature concerning all generations, the main point of strength of travel bloggers has been synthetized in authenticity of the contents, their capacity to report their travel as real life experience, and it is not a construct made by local brands and governments to increase tourism to their locations. Authenticity can be compared to the ability of the influencer to create quality contents.

Second point of strengths has been identified in their capacity to create community and interactions that transform a travel blogger into a self-brand

influencer. Travel blogger, as a persona, is also a brand that must increase its ability to influence. The capacity to create an active community around their profile could be a competitive advantage (Blaer et al., 2020; Duffy & Kang, 2019).

These studies are focused on Generation Z. Furthermore, their decision-making process is strongly influenced by travel bloggers. Previous studies on Generation Z show that their decision-making process on tourism and hospitality is based on high statistics of using mobile apps and mobile social media. This is alongside with video contents as the most important channel of communication. They are exposed to digital contents more than 14hours/days and this familiarity with digital contents has created a clear decision-making process, which can be explained by inspiration, social recognition, planning search and evaluation, booking, and post-booking evaluation. They can be attracted to a digital content of a tourist location, but they are also able to find other similar contents on the same platform. To understand if they are truly interested in going to that place, they collect information, especially through video, and begin planning their travel. They are also proactive in giving feedback after their trip.

This research tries to understand the role of a travel blogger in this decision-making process and whether its contribution is relevant. In particular, the research concerns five most important Italian travel bloggers to ensure that their content respects the two main values mentioned above: community creation and authenticity, and that they maintain the potential to influence Italian Generation Z.

Methodology

This is an exploratory study based on research of five travel bloggers, focused on understanding their influence on Generation Z's travel decision-making. This research is inductive and descriptive, and it develops concepts, ideas, and understanding from the data provided (Yin, 2009). Also, the research method is mixed, that is, both qualitative and quantitative (Taheri & Okumus, 2024).

Qualitative research was used to collect data through interviews. In addressing the objectives, an interview guide was prepared for the online interview with members of the Italian Association of Travel Bloggers (AITB), which includes the most influential tourism bloggers in Italy. During the interview, the researcher asked them for data about the top five travel bloggers in terms of influencers. This sampling technique is considered appropriate for exploratory research when seeking ideas or insights (Butcher & Yodsuwan, 2024). These five travel bloggers focus on innovative tourism content and are currently the most famous travel bloggers for Generation Z. They are the following: Arena Giovanni (chosen because he posts travel ideas around the

world at low prices), Bancale Diana (chosen because she posts information about solitary trips), Marras Alessandro (chosen because he is halfway between influencers and travel blogger), Sara and Lorenzo (chosen because they specialize in couple travel), Toffalini Alice and "the world through Alice" (chosen as she offers urbex trips and mysterious, unusual places far from mass tourism). All the five travel blogger have a fan base on their profile of 80% of Generation Z followers. Data were analyzed by NJAlitics before they began presenting those influencers to the sample.

Sample Characteristics

Quantitative research aims to identify and present observable data from a population sample of Italian Generation Z respondents. In 2024, Generation Z makes up for over 7.6 million of the Italian population (13 percent). They are crucial not only due to their significant size and purchasing power, but also because they exert considerable influence on the purchasing decisions of their parents. When making a purchase, this generation carefully considers the benefits and drawbacks of both physical retail stores and e-commerce platforms, ultimately opting to buy more from online stores, as the advantages they offer surpass those of physical stores. Generation Z respondents collect a wealth of information and are more thoughtful in their decision-making than any other generational group has been at their age. Although Generation Z shares some traits with other generations, they are largely a distinct generation. They are often considered the most challenging consumer group to target, given their tendency to thoroughly research and compare options before making a purchase. Therefore, understanding the decision-making process of these respondents could prove valuable for retailers and marketers in tourism and hospitality. Moreover, since this generation tends to be skeptical of well-known brands and their value propositions, gaining their loyalty will be a particular challenge, especially for established tourism and hospitality companies.

The respondents consisted of individuals who were contacted by secondary school students between the ages 14 and 18, approximately trained in data collection procedures and used as interviewers. This approach has been successfully used in previous research (Reisenwitz & Fowler, 2009; Jones & Reynolds, 2006).

Interviewers administered questionnaires and were instructed to screen potential respondents with three qualifying questions on the cover page of the questionnaire: a) an age range that categorized the respondent as a member of Generation Z; b) an acknowledgement that the respondent had known almost one of the five Italian travel bloggers; and c) confirmation that the respondents love travel.

An introduction to the questionnaire was just below the seven questions on the cover page, including an assurance to respondents that their responses would be kept confidential.

The questionnaire has four sections and thirty questions. The first section included demographics questions. Another section asked respondents to report their travel habits in a series of dichotomous questions and frequency level questions. To explore how often the respondents use online social network for travel purpose, intensity has been measured using 8-points Likert scale that varies between always = 8 to rarely = 1. The remainder of the questionnaire focused on the general knowledge of five travel bloggers and their influence on holiday choices, including an exhaustive list of strengths of each travel blogger.

The questionnaire was written in Italian because all five travel blogger are Italian. This study required participants to be born between 1997 and 2012 to be part of Generation Z according to the studies of Combi (2015) and US Census Bureau (2015). To facilitate interviews, participants live in Italy and used smart phone apps or at least had experience and knowledge of using smart devices. Interviewers collect this sample through face to face interview. To limit nationality and social influence, participants are Italian or have lived in Italy since childhood. This sample frame is also greater than comparable studies (Fedrina et al., 2021; Barbe & Neuburger, 2021; Robinson & Schanzel, 2019). Field work was carried out over a five-month period from September to November 2024.

Data Collection

A ten-page questionnaire was used as the survey instrument, and it was developed with four main constructs including scale items. Furthermore, to collect required information from many respondents, interviewers used a face-to-face survey method.

Three pretests were conducted to test the questionnaire among the students and professional friends from other generation. Validity of the research instrument can be appraised by a panel of able professionals whose expertise can judge whether the scale measures what it intends to measure and the questions are clear (Zikmund et al., 2013).

The first pretest (n = 24) were conducted with a high school class of traditional students (Generation Z). Some basic formatting issues were addressed because of the pretest. A second pretest (n = 12) was conducted with an undergraduate marketing class of traditional students (Generation Z). Modifications and reviews, including a radical change of two questions, were made because of this second test. A third test (n = 3) was conducted with professional member of Italian Association of Travel Blogger.

Based on the input received, modifications, including a cancellation of few items in the questionnaire, which were considered unnecessary, were done and wordings change to enhance understandability.

The data for the main study were collected, coded, and entered into the SPSS (Statistical Product and Service Solutions) program.

Data were collected among the face-to-face interview individual aged between 20 and 25 (Generation Z), including high school and college students. Finally, the researchers obtained 455 complete and useable responses in Generation Z sample set from the face-to-face survey, from the total of 475 collected surveys (Table 1). Respondents were explicitly asked to reflect on the online context when filling out their responses to the questionnaire items. Thirty responses were eliminated due to their non-random missing value. The non-response biases were tested, and the "early" and "late" respondents' responses were compared based on the date of the received replies to the questionnaire (Tjuatja et al., 2024).

Table 1. Descriptive information of sample

Item		Generation Z Percent (n) 100 (455)
SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS		
Gender	Male	19,7 (90)
	Female	80,3 (365)
Age (10-25)	20-25	88 (400)
	15-19	12 (55)
	10-14	0 (0)
Nationality	Italian	100 (455)
Origin	Milan	91,9 (418)
	Milan suburbs	8,1 (37)
Relationship status	Single	87,9 (400)
	Living with another	12,1 (55)
	Married	0
	Widowed	0
	Separated	0
	Divorced	0
Education completed	High School	4,40 (20)
	Undergraduate	54,94 (250)
	Graduate	39,56 (180)
	Other	1,1 (5)
Occupation	Not employed	2 (17)
	Student	79,78 (363)
	Self-employed	1,76 (8)
	Professional	6,59 (30)
	Work in a firm	4,84 (22)
	Other	3,29 (15)
VACATION CHARACTERISTICS		

Vacation destination	Italy	92 (420)
	EU	4,84 (25)
	Outside EU	3,16 (10)
Travel time (days to and from destination)	0	1,3 (6)
	1-5 days per year	84,4 (382)
	6-10 days per year	10,8 (49)
	More than 10 days per year	3,5 (18)
Length of stay (without night per year)	Never	9,3 (42)
	1-5 trips per year	50,3 (229)
	6-10 trips per year	22,7 (103)
	More than 10 trips per year	17,7 (81)
Preference to stay overnight	House	1,6 (7)
	Hostel	1,8 (8)
	Cruise	1,2 (5)
	Touristic village	7 (31)
	Caravan/camping	2 (9)
	Holiday flat	55,6 (252)
	B&B	16 (75)
	Hotel	14,8 (68)
Principal means of transport	Ferries and boats	5,4 (25)
	Plane	7,2 (33)
	Train	13,7 (62)
	Rental car	5 (23)
	Personal car and motorbike	68,7 (312)
Motivations	Scout	0,4 (2)
	Family	38,2 (174)
	Sport	8 (36)
	Religion	1,7 (8)
	Business	4,1 (19)
	Education	28,7 (131)
	Culture and leisure	18,9 (85)
INTERNET CHARACTERISTICS		
Do the respondents use online social network for travel purposes?	Yes	85 (387)
	No	15 (68)
How often do the respondents use online social network for travel purpose? Likert scale from 8 to 1 has been associated to this terms	Always	64,2 (292)
	Usually	9,6 (44)
	Frequently	13,7 (62)
	Often	9 (41)
	Sometimes	2 (9)
	Occasionally	1,5 (7)
	Seldom	0 (0)
	Rarely	0 (0)
Do the respondents use online social network to collect information about future travels?	No, I never use social network, but I collect information through different marketing channels	4,4 (20)
		19 (86)

	Yes, I watch online advertising/promotion on my social network profiles Yes, I love storytelling and photos of my followers and travel bloggers	40,9 (186)
	Yes, I do research by myself using hashtag or I look for travel account and they inspire me	35,7 (163)

Data Analysis

The study's one-round survey combines quantitative approaches. To improve the indicators' validity, convergence, consensus, and concordance, the representation of the sample was verified in comparison to the population. The t-test was applied: the first 30 percent of responses was compared with the last 30 percent. Thus, the independent sample of t-test displayed an insignificant difference between these two groups, implying no case of unit non-response bias with the collected data. Moreover, a sticker was provided to each respondent when filling out the questionnaire to elicit honest and truthful responses from the chosen sample. Giving gifts (such as coupons, cash incentives and samples) in face-to-face interview is widely practiced among the research to motivate survey respondents and to improve the completion rate (Givi et al., 2023).

Findings and Discussion

The results of this study yield several insights that confirm previous findings and shed light on the future of travel bloggers in enhancing their competitive advantage in Generation Z.

How does travel bloggers influence Generation Z?

Firstly, only 28% of the samples were influenced in their travel destination decision by video and photos posted by travel bloggers and 26.1% of the samples were influenced from social networks and offers. Adding these two groups, 54.1% of travel destination decision from this sample has been taken by digital world influence. H1 was "Is Generation Z influenced by travel bloggers?" and less than a third of the sample has been influenced by them and H2 was "Do you think travel bloggers are useful to choose travel destinations?". This sample has only 2.85% that gave worth to travel bloggers reviews.

Previous studies about Generation Z and travel bloggers found that travel bloggers' influence was less than 20%, and Generation Z was annoyed by travel posts of travel-bloggers (Robinson, 2019).

What are the main points of success of five travel bloggers profiles?

Given the first part of these results, researchers have asked the sample to evaluate five different Italian travel bloggers (Diana Biancale, Alice Toffalini, Alessandro Marras, Sara and Lorenzo, Giovanni Arena) to better understand their advantages and reasons for success.

For each of them, five questions were analyzed and a comparative study was conducted to understand if there were correlations and same results.

H3 was "What do you like the most about a travel blogger profile?". The most important answer puts the attention on image and video contents. 37.1% of the respondents stated that they like how the bloggers maintain a high level of digital and engaging content. 51% of the respondents were influenced because of the possibility to discover new tourism destinations out of the mass tourism. As a result, the capabilities of these travel bloggers to find new places were highlighted. This question was closed, and the respondents were asked to choose only the most important advantage of a travel blogger profile from a given list. Other suggestions include the following: honesty of content, photos, and people; sponsorship of destinations seems more realistic than advertising; they share real and personal experiences; fascinating places catch attention.

The answers to the open-ended question "What would you like travel bloggers to post in their social networks?" proposed in the questionnaire are interesting. Out of a total of 112 responses, there are some recurring issues that many respondents are interested in. First of all, there is a particular attention to photos and videos, in which the respondents are particularly interested as they can see the images of the places that travel bloggers visit, as if they were a sort of video diaries. Images of museums, landscapes, hotels, monuments, and restaurants can also be shared on social networks through reels, small summary videos of the holiday, in which to insert practical information or advice on a tourism destination. Respondents were particularly interested in getting the practical aspects of the travel to better organize their holidays.

Every travel blogger that was analyzed has these two strongest advantages for the followers against competitors, which are less important travel blogger in Italy. Thus, they have to keep this gap during their content creation (Peres et al., 2024).

How travel bloggers are known by the sample?

Finally, the research analyzes whether the sample knows them and how they have accessed their accounts. First of all, only 27% of the sample knows all five travel bloggers. This part of the analysis was conducted on 124 respondents and the 57% has found one of this influencer through friends

sharing post or accounts. Thus, the main factor for an influencer to develop his profile is through digital word-of-mouth. (Li et al., 2024)

Are travel bloggers influential in travel decision-making process for Generation Z?

Although most of the sample examined uses social networks to find out about possible trips (51%), it seems that travel bloggers influence is rising from less than 20% to reach the 30%. In the coming years, there will be a 10% increase in people choosing their travel destination through social media. However, social media will not be a key factor in choosing travel destination for Generation Z. Furthermore, the internet's influence could decrease from 51% to 60%-70% over the next decade. So in the near future, travel destinations decision-making process will be influenced by the digital world, but it seems travel bloggers will not be the key factor.

Which are the factors that give travel blogger profiles advantages?

Social media find their success in high quality content and network sharing. Also, travel bloggers from this study seem to confirm that the key to success is to take care of their profile videos and images contents (37,1%) and curiosity, and the capacity of each of them to discover new travel destination that are not known to the general public (51%). While the first factor can be developed with the help of digital experts, the second, with the increasing presence of new travel bloggers, will be the most difficult advantage to achieve. Every part of the world is expected to be featured in a travel blogger review in a few years. The key to success for them is social media content.

How travel bloggers profile can be discovered?

From the point of view of the respondent, the most important channel of acquisition for a travel blogger is digital word-of-mouth, people that talk about them and want to share their content with friends. Given the topic, it is more important than in other sectors: if a person is attracted to a particular destination, they will share the content they found with friends and the travel blogger's profile to convince them to join in the trip. Digital word-of-mouth was 57% of our sample, while other options were surfing on social media platform (22%), surfing internet in general (13%), video platform (5%), and other (3%). This channel of acquisition is the most important one for influencers.

Conclusions

The main purpose of the research was to examine how travel bloggers influence decisions of Generation Z in a tourism context. The proposed framework addresses the research gap by analyzing profile influence, factors

that give travel bloggers profile advantages, knowledge, and main points of success and points of weaknesses.

A small series of propositions suggested by the previous literature is offered, which was tested with survey data. As a result, this study expands the discussion of tourist information search and influence behaviour from a generational perspective, Generation Z. It offers a synthesis of competitive factors of five travel bloggers profiles (e.g., image and video contents, video diaries) affecting vacation decision-making and information research. In addition, the research expands the literature on how Generation Z uses technology in tourist decision-making.

From a theoretical perspective, this research confirms that travel blogger profile and travel behaviour variables are critical to investigate the decision-making process. As the findings indicate, Generation Z tends to use technology to search information for vacation planning. The findings cannot be generalized to all global travel bloggers, but as indicated above, there are several managerial implications in relation to the way travel bloggers tend to influence Generation Z and how they should proceed in the future.

Results indicate that the more travel bloggers perceive themselves as opinion leaders, the more likely they are engaging in social comparison on social media.

Managerial Implications

The travel market is growing alongside with digital competition, and hotel, tourism, and other sectors need to use travel bloggers and new digital channels. Possessing competitive advantages, through travel bloggers, could be the key success for those players. "The relationship established between travel bloggers and readers becomes strategic for engagement and for activating trust and loyalty mechanisms" (Maggiore et al., 2022). From a practical perspective, the results help practitioners develop a framework for positioning, segmentation and destination strategies that relate to tourist information search behaviour. To target Generation Z, travel bloggers may put emphasis on online promotion of destination with storytelling, images, and videos that attract them.

If the travel blog target Generation Z, marketers may enhance, protect, and consolidate the role of travel blogger as a key stakeholder for all tourism organizations and operators in the promotion and enhancement of a destination, a small city, a region, or an entire territory.

Companies need to invest now to create the travelers of the future and gain competitive advantage in their market. Therefore, it is important that they understand that investing in travel bloggers now will have its ROI in the next decade and not at the moment.

An extra conclusion is the key importance of the influencer choice by the marketing team and the use of software that can help company understand their best choice (Maggiore et al., 2022).

The quality and capabilities of any influencer must be predicted by marketers that want to use these channel. This study shows that travel bloggers are not guaranteed of success as they can only influence only a small part of their audience.

Limitations and Future Research

This work contributes to understanding the elements of tourism consumer behaviour among Generation Z. Given the five trillion-dollar economic growth the US has set for itself, with the nation's average age being 19, and the fact that by 2031, Generation Z income in Italy will exceed that of Millennials, this topic is vital for the tourism organizations to continue studying, as suggested by Bank of America (2022) and Istat (2019).
There are some limitations to this study that future research can address.

This paper is limited by its focus on a part of Generation Z respondents (aged 20-25) perspectives on travel bloggers in Italy. By not collecting data from respondent under 20, this study could not directly compare Generation Z with Generation X and Y on travel blogger engagement, on travel preferences, or on travel influencers. A cross-generational study between upcoming Generation Z (aged 10-19), Generation X, and the Generation Y could determine the generalizability of our results beyond Generation Z. Furthermore, re-running this study with Generation Z users who do not use the internet will uncover how generalizable Generation Z' perceptions of travel bloggers are through directly comparable data. Our use of Italian language in questionnaire limits the validity of the research in Italy. Repeating this study with Generation Y and X will allow for researchers to better generalize and contextualize our findings.

Results also focus on Milan: one of the Italy's largest and most affluent cities in Lombardy region. As a prosperous urban region, results were generalized to other Italian cities and regions, including islands such as Sardinia and Sicily. Complimentary research in rural – or other European urban – areas building on this paper's results will expand understanding of Generation Z perceptions toward travel bloggers. Doing so may help deliver a more extensive plethora of cognitive-based platforms instead of a one-size-fits-all approach.

This study wasn't conducted on an international sample of travel bloggers from a wide variety of countries. This didn't allow for covering the different cultural backgrounds of travel bloggers. However, the sample size was relatively small, which limited the possibilities for more advanced statistical analysis methods such as structural equation modeling. Thus, it

might be interesting to send out more questionnaires in different language to increase the number of respondents. A large international sample would open to examining interrelationships between cross-cultural variables. For instance, cultural variables might influence perception of travel bloggers. Other functional relationship could be tested; for example, age might influence travel bloggers negatively. The fact that a non-probability sampling method was used means that the results cannot be generalized to the population of non-Italian travel bloggers. Rather, the findings would be seen as a first step towards shedding some lights on the travel bloggers in Generation Z who share the same interest. A large-scale survey or experimental design could be conducted to take the results of this study further. Moreover, big data analytics collected from travel blogs and other content posted online by travel bloggers might reveal interesting insights that might be juxtaposed to the findings of this analysis. The chosen setting for the study was Facebook, which continues to be the dominating social media platform in many parts of the world. However, further research could look into how travel bloggers compare themselves socially with others on different platforms, such as Instagram, Snapchat, or YouTube.

There aren't many studies or literature about Generation Z. Therefore, with the development of the internet, a similar study should be conducted with future generations to understand if they will be more influenced, especially considering the rise of Instagram video contents and Tik Tok.

Findings of this study describe Generation Z as people who are influenced by digital, but not yet in a radical way by influencers. This could lead to the need to assess the impact of a similar study between 5 to 10 years from now to understand whether the results will remain the same or if the digital world and travel bloggers will increase in importance. Given the continued growth of digital contents, it could even lead to the opposite result, decreasing the importance of bloggers in travel destination decisions, and causing the loss of the second key factor of success: "curiosity" to discover new places to travel.

Thus the generalizability of the current work's result is restricted. The results of this study were based on only five travel bloggers. The extension to other travel bloggers may strengthen the results. So the future studies could verify and extend the findings by employing larger and more representative samples. Future studies could also expand this work by including the Generation X (1960-1980) too in the sample to study the influence of travel bloggers. Though "soap bubble" generation in Italy seems to be such a potential segment, research on this generation remains thin and there is a lot to be explored (Benasso & Cuzzocrea, 2019).

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