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Editor in Chief: Ramona Pîrvu,	Table of Contents:		
University of Craiova, Romania Co-Editor: Cristina Mihaela Barbu,	Food Security and Marine Capture Fisheries of BUGSAY Association of La Libertad, Negros Oriental, Philippines Eden Grace V. TABANAO, Christine B. GALLOSA		
Spiru Haret University, Romania Editorial Advisory Board:	Fuzzy Analytical Hierarchy Process Evaluation of Stakeholder Groups 2 Involvement in Forest Management Situations		
Omran Abdelnaser, University Sains Malaysia, Malaysia	Dorina GRAZHDANI How Advanced Is Green Participatory Budgeting in Poland and Spain? A Case		
Huong Ha , Singapore University of Social Sciences, Singapore	3 Study of Gdansk and Barcelona Małgorzata SIEMIONEK-RUSKAŃ, Anna SIEMIONEK-LEPCZYŃSKA		
Harjeet Kaur, HELP University College, Malaysia Janusz Grabara, Czestochowa University of Technology, Poland	Alternative Forms of Tourism: User Generate Content Promote Birdwatching Tourism in Kefalonia island, Greece Michail XANTHAKIS, Nikos ANTONOPOULOS, Andreas KANAVOS, Anastasia KOMNENOU		
Vicky Katsoni, Technological Educational Institute of Athens, Greece	Integration of the Pro-Environmental Concepts in Various Management Accounting Tools		
Sebastian Kot, Czestochowa University of Technology, The Institute of Logistics and International Management, Poland	Anna SIEMIONEK-LEPCZYŃSKA, Michał CHALASTRA How Green Are Hotels in Ghana? Evidence from Star-Rated Hotels in Kumasi Metropolitan Area		
Andreea Marin-Pantelescu, Academy of Economic Studies Bucharest, Romania	Amoako Noble SARKODIE, Jane DERY, Charlotte GYIMAH, Comfort GYEDUAH, Hannah Esi Akyere ACQUAH		
Piotr Misztal, The Jan Kochanowski University in Kielce, Faculty of Management and Administration, Poland	7 Integrating Marine Tourism into the Blue Economy Framework Kiran REDDY, Bhaskar SAILESH		
Agnieszka Mrozik, Faculty of Biology and Environmental Protection, University of Silesia, Katowice, Poland	Tourists' Preferences in the Context of Their Psychological Well-Being: 8 Conjoint Analysis		
Chuen-Chee Pek, Nottingham University Business School, Malaysia	Anna MŁYNKOWIAK-STAWARZ, Robert BĘBEN Improving Tourist Loyalty: Examining the Role of Environmental Tourism		
Roberta De Santis , LUISS University, Italy Fabio Gaetano Santeramo , University of Foggia, Italy	Policy on Tourist Behavior Ivo NOVITANINGTYAS, Clarisa Alfa LIONORA, Andhatu ACHSA, Budi HARTONO		
Dan Selişteanu , University of Craiova, Romania	Assess the Barrier of Small and Medium-Sized Hotel Digitalization: A Combination of AHP and DEMATEL Analysis		
Lesia Kucher, Lviv Polytechnic National University, Ukraine	Pham Thanh TUNG The Interconnection of Rural Tourism Development with Local SMEs:		
Lóránt Dénes Dávid, Eötvös Loránd University, Hungary	The Potential of Startup Business Networking in Southern Malang Indonesia Agung WINARNO, Desti Nur AINI, Norlida Hanim Mohd. SALEH,		
Laura Ungureanu, Spiru Haret University, Romania	Muhammad Aris ICHWANTO, Agus PURNOMO, Amalia Arifah RAHMAN Exploring Tourists' Experience in Cinema-Induced Tourism through Sentiment		
Sergey Evgenievich Barykin, Peter the Great St. Petersburg Polytechnic University, Russian Federation	12 Analysis Approach: Case of Ouarzazate Film Attractions Moulay Abdellah TAIBI, Raja HANBALI, Fatima-Zohra IFLAHEN		
Omar Abedalla Alananzeh, Faculty of Tourism and Hotel Management, Yarmouk University, Jordan Marco Martins, Polytechnic Institute of	Al in Competitive Intelligence, Traditional and New Techniques for Gathering and Analysing Data Silvia Denisa TARANU, Adrian Gabriel CIORANU		
Tomar, Portugal Konstantinos Antoniadis, University of			
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Exploring Tourists' Experience in Cinema-Induced Tourism through Sentiment Analysis Approach: Case of Ouarzazate Film Attractions

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Abstract: This research aims to explore tourists' experiences in movie-induced tourism in the region of Ouarzazate, the hub of the cinematographic industry in Morocco and Africa to come up with managerial implications that can improve the tourist experience in this region. A sentiment analysis approach was applied to TripAdvisor reviews in English on the three main filming facilities and attractions: Atlas and CLA studios and the film museum in Ouarzazate. The method combined topic modeling and lexicon-based algorithms; an approach based on Natural Language Processing using a Python toolkit to investigate prevailing sentiment among visitors of these touristic sites. The result of our study showed that tourists generally have a positive sentiment towards the region of Ouarzazate. However, the desert still dominates as the primary aspect that attracts tourists to the region, while cinema is a secondary attraction to the majority of tourists. The study is one of the first studies to reflect on the potential of Cinema Induced Tourism in Ouarzazate, Morocco, one of the attractive destinations for tourists and filmmakers, which, despite its potential, does not figure among cinema-induced tourism destinations in the literature.

Keywords: tourism; cinema-induced tourism; Ouarzazate; sentiment analysis.

JEL Classification: Z32;

Introduction

Ouarzazate is one of the five provinces of the Draa Tafilalet region, Morocco. This region is a well-recognized tourist destination worldwide for its desert tours. Owing to its history and geographical location, this province has distinguishing qualities that make tourism and cinema the main pillars of Ouarzazate's economy. This territory is one of the most attractive destinations for tourists and filmmakers as it affords most of the touristic infrastructure in the region in addition to cinema facilities, which is why Ouarzazate annually attracts foreign and Moroccan movie productions. Due to this reputation, the city was nicknamed the Hollywood of Africa. As a meeting point for tourism and cinema, this city has features of a movie-induced tourism destination.

This paper aims to assess the significance of cinema-induced tourism as a potential niche for innovative cultural tourism practices in Ouarzazate. Using the opinion-mining approach, we explored tourist opinions on their experience in movie-induced tourism in this province. TripAdvisor reviews about the main film attractions were

collected and analyzed through combining topic modeling and lexicon-based algorithm techniques based on Natural Language Processing relying on a Python toolkit.

The originality of our study is in exploring the untapped potential and significance of assessing the reputation of a place as a top film tourism destination through visitors' reviews. Ouarzazate has been widely recognized by national professionals in tourism and culture as a significant hub for film tourism. However, obtaining a deeper understanding of the real experiences and viewpoints of visitors through their assessments provides a nuanced perspective on the efficacy of the location as a film tourism destination. The purpose is to evaluate the extent to which Ouarzazate's identity and appeal as a film tourism destination are validated by the testimonies of its visitors. The findings offer valuable insights for the development of appropriate strategies and suitable marketing activities.

1. Literature Review

1.1 Tourism as an Experience

The shift in modern consumer behavior from focusing on the product and service to focusing on the experience makes this latter an essential driver of the economy (Yang *et al.* 2020). Since its first use by Pine and Gilmore (1998), the "experience economy" has gained ground. Many researchers consider it at the heart of different fields of activities, including the hospitality industry, where experience is the core of the whole operation (Sarmiento-Guede *et al.* 2021), as well as a source of value creation (Sorensen *et al.* 2017). After commodities, goods, and services, experience has emerged as the fourth and last step in the "progression of economic value." For Pine and Filmore (1998, p. 98), experience is "not an amorphous construct; it is as real an offering as any service, good or commodity". It is the most influential antecedent that can affect tourists' intentions to revisit a destination (Chang *et al.* 2014); the reason why a good experience would be the best way to commercialize a destination among potential visitors.

The main focus of tourists' Experience while traveling is " visiting, seeing, and living in a different mode of life" of the destination (Stamboulis and Skayannis, 2003, p. 38). In addition to reasoning abilities during visits, previous experiences help tourists give meaning to the Experience they are living (Oliveira *et al.* 2019). Accumulated experiences help tourists classify and rate destinations according to their level of satisfaction. Experience is not only limited to the instant feelings while visiting a destination but extended to the ability of the service to construct an everlasting memory, for the ultimate purpose of an experience is to "create lasting memories that a visitor will reminisce about and will share in respective social networks," (Andrades and Dimanche, 2014, p. 108). Extensive documentation exists in the literature on defining and specifying the factors that create an exciting and memorable experience. Larsen *et al.* (2019) argue that for a tourist experience to be interesting depends on a combination of familiarity and novelty, while Sthapit *et al.* (2020, p. 549) add that different factors significantly influence the "importance and memorability of a tourist's experience: satisfaction, novelty, refreshment, involvement, and knowledge." Beatriz Gómez-Morales *et al.* (2024) state that research on film fan tourists highlights the psychological and sociological aspects of their experiences, particularly at filming locations, where they experience the narrative, fantasize, and create new memories.

Based on the literature, Gentil *et al.* (2007, p. 397) defined customer experience as "an evolution of the relationship between the company and the customer. The Customer experience originates from interactions between a customer and a product, a company, or part of its organization, which provoke a reaction. This experience is strictly personal and implies the customer's involvement at different levels (rational, emotional, sensorial, physical and spiritual)". Customer experience includes both participation tourism experience perception and opportunity tourism experience perception (Ge, 2022).

1.1 Value Co-Creation in the Era of UGC

By sharing the experience through word-of-mouth with one's social network, family, friends, and colleagues, the visitor creates a circle of potential visitors that would base their traveling decisions on that experience. Disseminating information about an experience guides potential tourists and service providers in the destinations to improve the service and the whole experience. This exchange is the first step to achieving value co-creation, a revolutionary notion that ends the traditional model where the suppliers produce goods and services, and the customer is a passive consumer.

The emergence of Web 2.0 and ICT has considerably boosted these social processes and interactions between different stakeholders. Like most activities, tourism has widely benefited from the proliferation of these tools that add further social dimensions of co-creation and empower the consumer (Neuhofer *et al.* 2014). They have transformed how experiences and value are created (Neuhofer *et al.* 2012) by revolutionizing communication between service providers and their customers and consumers. ICT and Social Media, in particular, have improved

working and communication techniques and brought the concept of peer communication during service processing (Grönroos, 2012). In other words, these tools facilitate vertical communication between the customers and suppliers or service providers and horizontal communication among consumers and users. Potential visitors and media users can access various travel content, opinions, and commentaries produced and shared by other users (Lam *et al.* 2020). According to Assaker (2020), tourists increasingly rely on reviews on social media from previous tourists to make travel decisions (Lam *et al.* 2020). A study by Gretzel and Yoo (2008) confirms that 97% of the participants in a survey admitted consulting previous travelers' reviews while planning their trips (González-Rodríguez *et al.* 2021).

These opinions and reviews are an aspect of what is currently known as User Generated Content (UGC), a creative work produced without a clear commercial interest and published on publicly accessible websites OECD (2007). UGC is related to electronic word-of-mouth, e-WOM marketing (Wang and Rodgers, 2010). It is a horizontal communication built on compassion among peers (tourists) far from the influence of Destination Marketing Organisations (DMOs) and service providers. It is any "positive or negative statement made by potential, actual, or former customers about a product or company, made available to many people and institutions via the Internet" (Hennig-Thurau *et al.* 2004, p. 39). Unlike traditional Business-to-Consumer (B2C) advertising models, e-WOM's main characteristic is the ability of consumers to control and create marketing communication about any given product or service (Wang and Rodgers 2010, 214).

Because UGC and eWOM are increasingly gaining customers' trust, companies work on taking advantage of these tools by getting involved in the process and adopting them as marketing strategies (Wang and Rodgers, 2010), which questions the truthfulness and reliability of UGC information (Lu and Stepchenkova, 2015). Despite some critics, UGC has significantly shifted the power balance between businesses and customers, shifting from Goods-Centered to Service-Centered Dominant Logic Vargo and Lusch (2004). This shift, facilitated by UGC, allows businesses and customers to collaborate and create value.

1.2 Movie-Induced Tourism in Ouarzazate

Ouarzazate is one of the five provinces composing the Draa Tafilalet region with an area of 12464 km², which counts for 14 % of the total regional territory (HCP, 2019). Geographically, it is situated between the High Atlas and Anti-Atlas Mountains. The history and geographical location offered Ouarzazate specific characteristics that make tourism and cinema the first and second pillars of Ouarzazate's economy (Zabadi, 2016). Ouarzazate is considered one of the most attractive regions for both tourists and film producers.

The province affords significant and varied potential in tourist activity, allowing it to be the principal pole of tourist attraction in the Draa Tafilalet region. Tourism is considered the fundamental field of activity in the provincial economy. Up to 31/12/2015, the province had 47.2% of the number of classified tourist establishments, with a proportion of 52.1% of the total rooms and 74.8% of nights spent in the region in 2015. (HCP, 2019). Foreign tourist arrivals in Ouarzazate reached 236 857 in 2018, representing 4.5% of foreign national (HCP, 2019).

Concerning the cinematographic industry, Ouarzazate is internationally known as a destination for many international producers and filmmakers. This reputation granted the city the nickname: "Hollywood of Africa". Earning this privilege was due to its natural, cultural, and human assets. Its unique topography and landscape made it an appealing destination for the cinematographic industry Rutherford and Marshall (2017, p. 25) and its brilliant sun and its quietness (which is conveyed by its Amazigh name 'ouar zazat' which literally means 'that which is without noise') motivated the British producer-director David Lean to "became the first top producer to utilize the site's crystal-clear atmosphere when he shot shimmering desert scenes for Lawrence of Arabia" in 1962 (Rutherford and Marshall 2017 p25). The local architectural style known as Ksur and Kasbahs is also an attraction for many famous producers and directors like Ridley Scott, who transformed the Ksar Ait Benhadou into sets for his blockbuster Gladiator in 2000. The same site was the setting of many famous films, from Sodom and Gomorrah (1963) to Game of Thrones (2017).

In addition to these traditional and historical buildings transformed into movie sets, Ouarzazate affords three main filming facilities: Atlas1983, CLA 1983, and Kanzaman, 2004 Studios. These facilities offer directors and producers sets used by previous productions with the possibility of modifying them to respond to the requirements of the new films or even building new ones on request. Ouarzazate affords highly experienced extras, and skillful craftsmen who can "fabricate anything anywhere" (Rutherford and Marshall 2017p 27) using materials such as plaster, plastic and polystyrene, wood and metal.

As mentioned earlier, the cinematographic industry constitutes the second pillar of the province's economy. Ouarzazate studios and region increasingly attract movie national and international movie productions (Rutherford and Marshall 2017, p. 28). The general manager of Atlas and CLA studios says that "the increasing number of film

productions in Ouarzazate not only creates new opportunities for Moroccan and Arab-world actors and directors but also boosts income for everyone in the region, from taxi drivers to restaurant owners" and that around 30 percent of the budget is spent locally on everything from hotels and meals to helicopters. (Rutherford and Marshall 2017, p. 26)

Being a meeting point of both tourism and cinema gives Ouarzazate an absolute advantage that has led to the emergence of a specific tourism niche: movie-induced tourism.

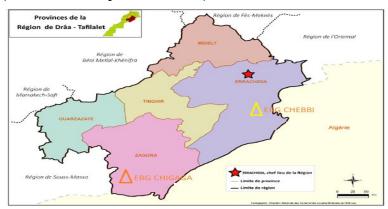


Figure 1. Map of Draa Tafilalet Region Provinces, adapted from HCP

Carte 1: Provinces de la Région

1.3 Movie-Induced Tourism

People usually interchange the terms movie-induced tourism, film-induced tourism, and film tourism. They are all used to refer to a worldwide emerging typology of tourism that is "fueled by both the growth of the entertainment industry and the increase in international travel" (Hudson and Richie, 2006, p. 387). The literature defines this phenomenon as the "visitation of a site or a location that is or has been used for or is associated with filming" (Buchmann *et al.* 2010, p.233). Roesch (2009, p. 6) defines it as a "specific pattern of tourism that drives visitors to see screened places during or after the production of a feature film or a television production". For Hudson and Ritchie (2006, p. 387), it is "tourist visits to a destination or attraction as a result of the destination's being featured on television, video, or the cinema screen".

Like all of its precursors, such as art and literary tourism, movie-induced tourism "falls under the umbrella of cultural tourism" (Gjorgievski and Trpkova, 2012, p. 98). Bolan and Kearne (2017) argue that the beginning of cinema-induced tourism was with the John Ford film 'Quiet Man,' 1952 (Bolan and Kearne, 2017), while in a literature review, Taibi and Iflahen 2023 state that the first known form of cinema-induced tourism is associated with Casablanca (1943) by Michael Curtiz, which makes Morocco a pioneering destination of cinema-induced tourism. However, the connection between films and tourism gained ground in the 20th century when cinema and television became principal media (Beeton, 2016). Only until the late 2000s did movie-induced tourism become a widely researched topic among academics (Connel 2012, 1012).

Beeton (2005) explains that film has a vital role in destination imaging and marketing as it reinforces the image of a destination held by potential visitors, builds a new one, or replaces an old one. The effect of films on tourists who seek to "re-live an experience (or even emotion) encountered in the film, reinforce myth, storytelling or fantasies, or for reasons of status (or celebrity)" (Beeton 2010, 2) pushed the advertising industry to adopt it as an effective strategy to reach potential mass markets (Horrigan 2009, 52). Many countries have witnessed increased tourists after being featured in films or television dramas (Hudson and Ritchie, 2006). Hudson and Ritchie (2006, 256) add that Tourism Organizations can use films as "springboards for marketing" if visitors perceive them as appropriate for the destination. Though destinations featured in movies generally attract fans for a visit, Spears *et al.* (2013) specify that destinations featured in Hollywood movies have the most robust attractiveness.

Within movie-induced tourism, Beeton (2005) distinguishes between 'on-location' tourism and 'off-location' tourism. The first refers to the actual physical site of the film shooting, while the second refers to movie sets and locations created in film studios and the film studio to replace the actual site. In the context of Ouarzazate, we are mainly concerned with off-location tourism as the filming facilities on the site that filmmakers use as an alternative for locations worldwide.

Cinema-induced tourism is an essential niche in Ouarzazate regarding its potential in cinema and tourism. However, destination marketers and academia give little importance to this activity. There needs to be more

institutional promotion valorizing the movies filmed in Morocco, and there is a dearth of research in this area (Taibi and Iflahen, 2023).

1.4 Previous Studies Used Sentiment Analysis

The development and affordability of communication tools such as devices, internet connections, and eventually social media raised internet users who share information on the network to express their opinions or vent their emotions (Xu et al. 2019). The exponential growth of data on the Internet in various fields has led to the emergence of big data (Shayaa et al. 2018), the datasets whose size is beyond the ability of typical database software tools to capture, store, manage, and analyze" (J. Manyika et al. 2011, 1). Nowadays, digital data is a tool for both businessmen and their clients (Manyika et al. 2011). To exploit it, researchers have developed methodologies to analyze the massive amount of data. Opinion mining, called sentiment analysis, is an emerging method among these tools. It is the extraction of individual viewpoints and emotional responses towards specific entities, phenomena (Pawar et al. 2016). This new methodology has been recently used in tourism studies to analyze tourists' opinions vis-à-vis a given destination. Unstructured data retrieved from social media or other platforms is treated using various methods and tools to develop insight into tourists' experiences.

Wang and Kirilenko (2021) researched to confirm that the opinions and feelings expressed by tourists in their reviews through social media on the Grand Canyon, USA, significantly impact other visitors' decisions to visit the park and how sentiments and experiences change according to the origin of the reviewer. The data studied was 27,177 reviews on TripAdvisor from visitors from ten different countries.

Ge (2022) analyzed tourists' experiences and perceptions of tourism experience and explored the characteristics of tourists' behavior to devise managerial suggestions to deal with negative reviews to strengthen the sustainable development of small island tourism. This study used the content analysis method and Ver1.0.1 word frequency analysis software to count the frequency of 120 travel notes retrieved online.

Arianto and Budi (2020) conducted an aspect-based sentiment analysis based on a dataset of 5592 Google Maps reviews of Indonesia's tourist sites Borobudur and Prambanan Temple. The data was retrieved using BotSol's Google Maps review Crawlers, and then data was manually annotated. The researchers applied five machine learning algorithms: Random Forest (RF), Naïve Bayes (NB), Logistic Regression (LR), Decision Tree (DT), and Extra Tree (ET). In addition to words, the researchers also processed emojis.

Garner et al. (2022) used topic modeling to interpret and categorize comments and reviews about travel dimensions from Yelp.com. Then, the authors performed a sentiment analysis using machine learning to capture the weight of positive and negative words in each review. R package was used to generate a selection of topics featured by frequent keywords, used correlated topic models, and conducted topic sentiment analysis, with each comment as a single document, to identify the valence of each review. After obtaining frequent keywords from each topic, the researchers investigated the original sentences to determine the content of each topic.

This new method has been applied nationally by a few researchers in tourism. Ali *et al.* (2021) provide a new technique by combining topic modeling and lexicon-based algorithms to explore the destination's negative ereputation using an aspect-based sentiment analysis approach. The corpus of the study was 39,216 TripAdvisor reviews from different locations and attractions in Marrakech, Morocco. This approach focuses on Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) instead of an R package to extract hidden aspects and dimensions from the visitors' reviews and then conduct Lexicon-based sentiment analysis to reveal the weaknesses in the tourism experience in this city.

Safaa *et al.* (2017) studied how tourists identify the authenticity of a travel experience in Marrakech and its surroundings. The methodology adopted was the semantic analysis of a corpus of 361 reviews collected from different types of tourism establishments on TripAdvisor. The study used the IRAMUTEQ analysis method to identify the dominant ideas and themes in the reviews according to computing frequency and proximity statistics of words in the data.

Concerning cinema and the application of sentiment analysis to movie-induced tourism, Agrusa *et al.* (2018) studied Walt Disney's animated film Frozen and its impact on tourism in Norway. Unlike other studies using sentiment analysis on data retrieved from online platforms, this study was an electronic survey with over 1,000 worldwide participants who shared their opinions about the effect of movie tourism on a destination. The study used open-ended questions, which the researchers analyzed through text mining. The study resorted to dictionaries to classify the comments by uploading the API and then categorizing opinions into positive, negative, and neutral.

2. Research Methodology

This section presents the methods and tools used in this paper to answer the research questions.

2.1 TripAdvisor Platform

With the emergence of Web 2.0, interactive platforms changed the dynamics of relations between consumers and service providers. Founded in 2000, TripAdvisor aims to serve as a travel information and advisory e-channel (Law, 2006). The platform owners claim it to be "the world's largest travel guidance platform with more than 1 billion reviews and opinions of nearly 8 million businesses, available in 43 markets and 22 languages" (TripAdvisor).

TripAdvisor is not a booking agent or tour operator; it acts as a comparison-shopping website to introduce the best offers to potential travelers/tourists based on reviews and ratings by other users. Due to its reputation among travelers and academia, we opted for TripAdvisor to investigate the opinions of tourists of Ouarzazate concerning the significance of film tourism.

2.2 Methods and Tools

This paper utilizes topic modeling with Latent Dirichlet allocation (LDA) to expose latent trends in a corpus of reviews on filming facilities and cinema museums in Ouarzazate collected from TripAdvisor. The collected dataset will display topics that indicate the opinions and sentiments of tourists through reviews. Using a vocabulary-based algorithm, we developed a sentiment analysis model using reviewers' ratings to show to what extent the vocabulary used in reviews reflects the sentiments of tourists.

2.2.1 Latent Dirichlet Allocation

Topic modeling is a type of modeling that assumes that observed variables interact with unobserved or latent parameters in a specific probabilistic relationship, which then generates the data within a dataset (Vayansky and Kumar, 2020). It is one of the most potent techniques in text mining for data mining, latent data discovery, and finding relationships among data and text documents (Jelodar, 2018).

One of the most popular topic modeling methods is Latent Dirichlet Assignment (LDA), an unsupervised generative probabilistic model of a corpus. In brief, it represents documents as random mixtures over latent topics," where all topic's characteristics are via a distribution over words author (Jelodar, 2018, p.3).

Steps and Processes

The following chart illustrates the steps of the processes of our method.

Data Preparation Topic Modeling Sentiment analysis Scrapping data Collecting Data Load features TripAdvisor Load topics remove digits remove stopwords remove Text preprocessing Latent Dirichlet Allocation caiptalization lammatization Topci1 Topci2 Topci3 feature regenration Exporting topics to CSV files Lexicon based model to detect sentiment polarity Bag of words

Figure 2. Diagram of research flow

2.3 Experiments and Results

Data were collected, preprocessed then analyzed using basic natural language processing techniques on the studied corpus of reviews.

2.3.1 Data Preparation

2.3.1.1 Data extraction

This study aims to analyze TripAdvisor reviews on Ouarzazate, Morocco. Travelers mostly use the platform to discover future travel destinations or provide feedback on their experiences. This platform is a set of web pages following the same template. Each page contains:

Overviews, more exciting experiences near you, reviews, questions and answers, FAQs. The section considered here is where users provide feedback. Each review consists of the following set of information:

- Reviewer's name.
- Reviewer's location.
- User information: User level, date of joining the community, number of helpful votes, distribution of ratings.
- Bubble rating: User-assigned score to determine user satisfaction.
- Title of the review.
- Review date.
- Date of experience.
- Body of the review.

As stated earlier, we collected all available English reviews up to 2021 using a scraping script developed in Python with the 'Beautifulsoup package,' which allowed us to retrieve the TripAdvisor reviews from HTML code.

The outcome was that 1540 reviews were collected from 2011 Until November 2021 and saved as a CSV file. The four main features identified were the review date, location, rating, and the review text.

Demographics:

We stated earlier that the main features afforded by the platform are the review date, location, rating, and review text. The only demographic detail available is the nationality of the reviewers, which is of paramount importance because, according to studies, nationality has a significant influence on tourist behavior (Pizam and Jeong, 1996), and it can even make a difference in generating satisfaction among tourists (Campo and Garau, 2008). In our research, among all the reviews, only 33,5% mentioned their origin in the review in which the leading nationality of the reviewers is the United States, followed by the United Kingdom (Fig.2)

Figure 3. Word cloud of reviewers according to nationalities



Figure 5. Word cloud of reviewers from the USA according to state



2.3.1.2 Data Analysis

2.3.1.2.1 Text preprocessing

The first step before data evaluation and analysis is data preprocessing. This stage is meant to format and declutter data to produce accurate results properly.

Thus, our data was preprocessed using basic natural language processing techniques. First, it corrects word features such as removing capital letters, removing punctuation, repeating words, and shortening words. The next step is to take the review as input, return a list of tokens (tokenization), and apply stopwords to these tokens to perform proper research processes and facilitate the interpretation of the results. It was to keep only the meaningful elements. The next step was to return each word to its root (lemmatization).

For example, a raw review seemed like this: « The tour is nice and it will get you through the rather unexpected Morocco's contribution to mainstream cinema. All cool and nice until the guide (official guide of the studios) asked us if we wanted to take a picture with a couple of extras in costumes who were chilling in between scenes.

We did and then it turned out they wanted money for it!! Expected in places like Marrakech's Square but NEVER in a place where you think everybody is behaving professionally. »

The review becomes: « tour nice get rather unexpected morocco 's contribution mainstream cinema cool nice guide official guide studio ask want to take picture couple extra costume chill scene turn want money to expect a place like Marrakech square never place think everybody behaves professionally »

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Technique	Description			
Remove upper capitalization	Lower case each letter in the review			
Word repetition	Replace word repetition with a single occurrence. 'OOOO' becomes 'OO'.			
Punctuation repetition	Remove punctuation.			
Word contraction	Replace contractions with their extended forms.			
Stop words	Remove stop words from the review			
Lemmatization	Return every word to its root.			
Tokenization	Take a review as input and return a list of tokens.			

After normalizing the text, we assumed that a rating of 1-2 was negative, a rating of 4-5 was positive, and a rating of 3 was neutral. Then convert each rating into sentiment. 1 for positive sentiment, -1 for negative sentiment, 0 for neutral sentiment.

Table 2. Sentiment classification

Review rating	Classification	Polarity	
1 or 2	Negative	-1	
3	Neutral	0	
4 or 5	Positive	1	

2.3.1.2.2 Features regeneration

We have enforced different exploratory data analyses to produce helpful perceptions in our corpus and understand tourists' feedback concerning their experience in Ouarzazate. This part presents the data analysis applied to our dataset.

Word cloud: is a semantic extraction from a text corpus. It is a visual representation of the most common words in a document. It is usually one of the first steps in visualization to develop an overall idea about the subject of the text corpus. Figure 1 shows the most commonly used words in negative reviews.

Figure 6. word cloud of negative reviews



Word frequency: Figure 5, Figure 6, Figure 7, and Figure 8 show the most common words and their frequency in positive, negative, and neutral reviews. We can see that desert, tour, trip, and guide are the most frequently used words in positive reviews. In the negative reviews, film, movie, set, and studio are the most frequent words. As for neutral reviews, the most frequent words are film, guide, movie, and tour. This indicates that tourists are more interested in the tour in the desert than the cinema in Ouarzazate.

Then we converted our corpus into two lists, one for the review tokens (X) and one for the review sentiment (y); we used these lists to build a dictionary with the word and sentiment as an index and the count of occurrence as value (Table 3), that allows us to calculate the frequency of each word in positive, negative or neutral review (Table 4).

Figure 6. Word frequency of the top 15 most occurent words in Positive reviews

Figure 7. Word frequency of the top 15 most occurent words in Positive reviews

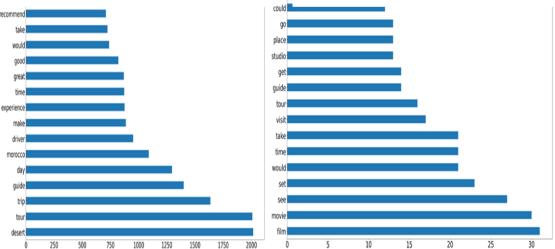


Figure 8. Word frequency of the top 15 most occurent

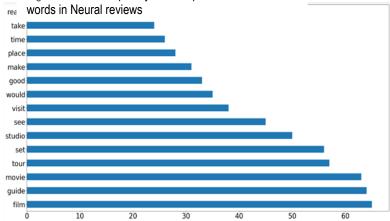


Table 3. Example of a dictionary based on token and sentiment Table 4. Some word frequency in different reviews

Word	Positive Neutral		Negative	
Place	Dict[(place,1)]	Dict.[(place,0)]	Dict.[(place,-1)]	
Movie	Dict.[(movie,1)]	Dict.[(movie,0)]	Dict.[(movie,-1)]	

Word	rd Positive Neutral		Negative	
Tour	1999	56	16	
Desert	2007	10 3		
Trip	1627	4	6	
Guide	1321	64	14	
Movie	Movie 131		62	
Studio 121		50	13	

3. Results

3.1 LDA Results

The first step was determining the optimal number of topics in our corpus. We used a manual evaluation of topic-document and a manual evaluation of topic-top words. Based on this, the researchers identified three topics.

Through our reading of the results, we identified three dimensions: the movie set, the behavior of the tourism workers, and the travel experience (Table 5). We distinguish movie sets by the terms set, film, movie, and studio. The second dimension is the behavior of the tourism workers, represented by words like guide, driver, and trip. The third dimension is the travel experience, characterized by vocabularies such as tour, desert, Morocco, and experience.

The data set was split into training and testing sets and manually labeled. Each rating in the test set refers to one aspect/sentiment category.

Movie set		Behavior o	f the tourism worker	Travel experienc	е
Terms	Weight	Terms	Weight	Terms	Weight
Set	0.02439	Desert	0.11081	Tour	0.11328
film	0.02343	trip	0.09638	desert	0.09112
movie	0.02243	tour	0.07822	morocco	0.07745
see	0.01948	day	0.07622	trip	0.0683
guide	0.01933	guide	0.06283	guide	0.06645
Studio	0.01873	driver	0.05332	day	0.05463
Tour	0.01699	great	0.04833	make	0.04864
Visit	0.01535	night	0.0469	experience	0.04796
Place	0.01022	time	0.04201	driver	0.04246
Interesting	0.00883	good	0.03982	time	0.04176

Table 5. Highlighting dimensions and terms of Ouarzazate reviews corpus

3.1.1 Lexicon-Based Model Results

Lexicon-based approaches use each word's intensity and semantic orientation to represent the phrase's attitude; this suggests using a predetermined dictionary to distinguish between positive and negative expressions. A bag of words often represents a text. Following the distribution of the individual scores for each phrase, a pooling procedure - such as averaging the total sentiments - determines the final sentiment.

Following identifying the fundamental phrases and themes within our corpus, the extracted words are subjected to a sentiment analysis technique to determine the emotions and mood associated with each dimension. Sentiment analysis is the process of looking at data and analyzing it according to the needs of the study, usually through utilizing these feelings to identify different impressions and events caused by the data. In light of this, the authors conducted a comparative analysis of the corpus for each dimension to determine tourists' preferences, needs, and main issues.

3.1.2 Using Topic Modeling for Sentiment Analysis Approach

Topic modeling is a natural language processing (NLP) technique that identifies topics in a collection of texts. LDA is one of the most popular topic modeling techniques. It assumes that documents are mixtures of topics and that each topic is distributed over words. LDA assigns topics to documents and words to topics probabilistically, seeking to find the most likely topics for each document and word based on the observed word frequencies.

3.1.2.1 Sentiment detection using VADER sentiment with LDA

We have also used the Valence Aware Dictionary and Sentiment Reasoner (VADER) to determine reviews' polarity and classify them according to multiclass sentiment analysis. VADER is a lexicon and rule-based sentiment tool for identifying user sentiments shared on social media (Elbagir and Yang, 2019).

TripAdvisor's reviews are mostly positive, indicating that 91.3% are positive, and Vader scores 97.2%.

Table 6. Summary of basic results of Vader sentiments.

Positive		Neutral		Negative			
Topic	Reviews	Expected	Observed	Expected	Observed	Expected	Observed
1	285	152	245	88	10	45	30
2	670	669	669	1	0	0	1
3	591	590	588	0	2	1	1

3.1.2.2 Sentiment detection using Textblob

TextBlob is a Python library for processing textual data using Natural language Processing. It analyzes sentiments based on polarity and subjectivity.

Results using TextBlob were so close to Vader's results, 97.5% observed positive reviews compared to 91.3% expected positive reviews on TripAdvisor.

Positive Neutral Negative Reviews Observed Expected Observed Topic **Expected Expected** Observed 285 152 31 1 250 88 4 45 2 670 669 669 1 0 0 1 3 591 590 588 0 0

Table 7. Summary of basic results of TextBlob

4. Discussion

It is worth emphasizing that all reviews are explicitly scraped from the pages of the filming facilities and attractions in Ouarzazate on TripAdvisor and that most of them are positive. However, based on the study of word frequency associated with ratings, we deduce that the top three frequent words associated with positive reviews are, respectively, desert, tour, and trip (fig. 3). In comparison, the three most frequent words in negative reviews are film, movie, and see (fig. 4). Concerning the neutral reviews, the three most frequent words are, respectively, film, guide, and movie (Fig. 5).

The high frequency of positive feedback about the 'desert' in film attractions pages implies that the desert is the primary attraction to Ouarzazate and the region, making cinema-induced tourism a secondary activity on the way. Busby and Klug (2001) discuss this standard practice, confirming the existence of two distinct forms of film-induced tourism: visiting film-related attractions as a primary interest or visiting filming sites as part of a more significant holiday. The genre of movies filmed in Ouarzazate (which are primarily biblical and historical stories that feature the ancient Middle Eastern countries of Jerusalem, Jordan, Egypt, and Yemen) might have contributed to reinforcing the desert image of the region because films significantly reinforce the image held by potential visitors of a destination (Beeton, 2005). This role of film-induced tourism in enhancing the region's image is a testament to the unique potential that Ouarzazate could offer.

The dissatisfaction with the film attractions might be attributed to the fact that the leading nationality of reviewers is the United States, particularly California, the land of Hollywood and New York, this "actual" location contains iconic places for filming many blockbuster movies (Pomerance, 2007, p.11). Californians who live near Hollywood and New Yorkers who frequent the streets and coffee shops featured in many American films would have elevated expectations and, therefore, might be disappointed when comparing Hollywood studios and the actual locations to those of Ouarzazate. On the other hand, interest in the desert rather than other aspects offered by the region can be explained by the fact that the second most prevalent nationality among reviewers is the British. Tourists seek unique experiences that contrast their previous experiences (Bigné et al. 2009). The desert, with all its attributes, is in stark contrast to the usual landscape experienced by the British, Sunny, warm weather, calm atmosphere, unique geological formations, such as dunes, rock formations, canyons, unique flora and fauna, and a distinct array of manufactured landmarks and monuments characterize it. Together, these attributes may seem more exotic and excitement-triggering. Excursions through the desert using quad bikes and camels, spending a night in traditional desert camps, and admiring the sunset and sunrise in the region of Draa Tafilalet, to which Ouarzazate belongs, are the principal activities offered by all tourism agencies operating within this territory. All tour operators in the region propose tours that all end in the desert as the peak achievement of the touring adventure, either in Erg Chebbi dunes (in the east) or Erg Chigaga dunes (to the South) (see Fig. 1).

Additionally, it is noteworthy that Ouarzazate is the gate to Draa Tafilalt, given its border with Marrakech, which is the primary tourist destination in Morocco (MTAESS, 2024; Observatoire Du Tourisme, 2024). Furthermore, Ouarzazate International Airport is the main airport serving the Draa-Tafilalet region (ONDA, 2024). Therefore, it is primarily the departure and the end of one of the famous sightseeing tours known as the classical tour of the desert. Ouarzazate is not a standalone destination but rather a part of a sightseeing tour offered by most agencies operating in the region. These tours typically range from 1 to 3 days and cover the Draa Tafilalet region, an area larger than Belgium, and the Netherlands combined, with no railways, highways, and minimal domestic flights. Therefore, time is an essential resource for tourists who travel on a tight schedule and desire to reconsider priorities to maximum satisfaction in a shorter time. Thus, "time" is consistently used in positive, neutral, and negative reviews (Fig. 3, Fig. 4, Fig. 5).

However, the association of neutral and negative comments with film and cinema attractions suggests that the visitors were not fully satisfied with their visits to film attractions compared with their satisfaction with the desert. This dissatisfaction is primarily related to the archaic nature of the sets that harsh weather wears out, the behavior of some of the staff (who, according to some reviews, ask for extra tips), or the price of the tickets (8 Euros for Atlas Studio and 3 Euros for Cinema Museum). We can summarize the reasons for dislike in the following review.



Neglected place with very rude persone!! Also they make you pay extras that they don't mention at the beginning! $8 \in$ basic entrance, plus $4 \in$ game of thrones, plus, plus, plus and on top of it you have to pay also the local guide to explain what you see. These people are not professionals at all. There are bigger and new studios close by instead of this awful place. Total waste of time...

It is crucial to acknowledge that film tourists have distinct profiles compared to other categories of tourists, mainly nature tourists. Before visiting and appreciating a film-related attraction, they must possess some prerequisites. Film tourists are typically cinephiles who visit locations featured in a movie they have previously watched. Therefore, a serendipitous or incidental tourist (Macionis and Sparks, 2009) who is not interested in cinema or has yet to watch the movie associated with the visited site (possibly by chance) would have a different gaze and perspective than a specific film tourist. The following review illustrates our hypothesis, presenting a contrasting perspective to the preceding one.



as a person who loves movies i was overwhelmed by this studio.to walk and see a set as this is a truly wonderful experience.the sets are beautifully kept and walking thru is a wonderful experience.i highly recommend a visit to this set so you too can experience a walk inside movie making.

The two comments are separated by one month but convey contradictory viewpoints. Therefore, it is necessary to examine further the cause of this discrepancy in perspectives and emotions toward the exact location.

As stated earlier, the topic modeling method demonstrates that one can infer three topics from the global corpus of reviews. The first topic is cinema and movie sets, the second one is the behavior of the tourism workers, and the third is the tourist experience. The first topic seems evident since we are dealing with pages of cinema and film attractions. The second topic emphasizes the crucial role of tourism workers, especially drivers and tour guides, in creating a positive or negative impression in a tourist's mind. Finally, experience seems to be the most important takeaway that tourists focus on in their visit to any destination, and this is a shift in modern consumer behavior from the focus on the product and service to experience, which is considered the core of the whole tourism operation (Sarmiento-Guede *et al.* 2021).

Conclusion and Implications

The study of the 1540 reviews (from 2011 to 2021) on film tourism in Ouarzazate available on TripAdvisor, using sentiment analysis, shows that cinema is related to negative sentiment while desert tourism looks positive, which leads us to conclude that the aspect of a desert destination is the hallmark that eclipses other attributes of the region, especially cinema. The city is nicknamed the Hollywood of Africa and welcomes its visitors with cinematic emblems that stand as city landmarks. However, the cinematic image attributed to the city is still dominated and resisted by the stereotyped image of a sunny desert region inhabited by the Berber nomads. Although cinema is not a significant pull factor for Ouarzazate, it can still play a pivotal role in promoting the region and the country. It is a powerful tool embedded into the destination promotion strategy.

Online reviews on various platforms should be invested as insightful, ready-to-use feedback to improve the service provided by film-related facilities and guarantee a positive reputation among potential tourists. Online reviews, especially negative ones, should be addressed as complaints that offer an opportunity to improve the cinema destination (Heung and Lam 2003, 283). Research shows that consumers will be more likely to consider negative than positive e-WOM reviews in their decision-making process, given that the former is more truthful, influential, helpful, and valuable than the latter (Von Helversen *et al.* 2018). Negative reviews substantially affect potential visitors' attitudes and behaviors (Von Helversen *et al.* 2018). Thus, the increase in negative reviews related to cinema should alarm decision-makers.

The literature recognizes that cinema management's primary purpose in building film sets in Ouarzazate is purely cinematographic. Once the filming is over, filmmakers leave the site (Beeton, 2005), and then the inherited sceneries are exploited as tourist attractions by any right holder. Thus, in this sense, tourism is a side/extra activity that fills the gap between filming periods, which might explain why cinema managers give limited attention to this niche

All stakeholders should collaborate by establishing a synchronized policy to promote the region and build an attractive destination to face the growing competition from emerging film destinations with similar properties to Ouarzazate, like Jordan, Tunisia, and Saudi Arabia. Tourism and cinema management should cooperate to sustain this niche by encouraging more film productions through practical measures like tax incentives, procedure facilitation, and consideration of the tourism dimension while preparing the movie sets. We also recommend organizing cinema-related events to attract cinephiles and devise instructional and entertaining experiences to satisfy tourists during their visits to cinema-related facilities.

Ultimately, the results also accentuate the role of tour guides and drivers. Thus, it is necessary to provide formal training for cinema tour guides like other specialized tour guides and raise tour drivers' awareness regarding the responsibility they hold vis-à-vis the image and reputation of the destination.

Limitations and Future Research

We acknowledge that analyzing tourists' sentiments based solely on English reviews retrieved from TripAdvisor may have limitations. Using data from a single platform may result in platform bias (Twil *et al.* 2021), as tourists often share their reviews on other platforms like Google Maps or other social media platforms. Furthermore, most tourists do not leave reviews about every visited destination. On top of that, people tend to comment on what they dislike more than what they like because adverse experiences have more impact than positive ones (Baumeister *et al.* 2001). Additionally, we do not disregard the possibility of fraudulent reviews within the corpus. As a result, we recommend conducting a similar study on other platforms, such as Google Maps, in the three main languages used by site reviewers: English, French, and Spanish, and ensuring the genuineness of exploited reviews.

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Credit Authorship Contribution Statement

Moulay Abdellah Taibi: Conceptualization, Investigation, Methodology, Formal analysis, Writing – original draft, Data curation, Validation, Writing – review and editing, Visualization.

Raja Hanbali: Methodology, Software, Formal analysis, Data curation, Validation, Visualization.

Fatima-Zohra Iflahen: Supervision, Validation, Writing – review and editing.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Declaration of Use of Generative AI and AI-Assisted Technologies

The authors declare that they have not used generative AI and AI-assisted technologies during the preparation of this work.

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