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Hidden Gem Tourism on TikTok: Examining User Perceptions and Travel Interest

Gusti Panca^{1*}, Muhamad Ramdani Pamungkas²

^{1,2}Tourism Department, Universitas Sahid, Indonesia

Email: Gusti_panca@usahid.ac.id^{1*}, muhamad_ramdani@usahid.ac.id²

Abstract

The term “Hidden Gem” has become widely used in TikTok tourism content to describe destinations perceived as unique and less explored. However, little is known about how users interpret this label. This study descriptively examines user perceptions of Hidden Gem tourism content on TikTok across five dimensions: perceived uniqueness, perceived authenticity, perceived exclusivity, visual attractiveness, and curiosity to seek further information. Using a descriptive mixed-method approach, survey data were collected from 200 TikTok users and analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation). Semi-structured interviews with 20 participants were conducted to complement the quantitative findings. The results show that all five dimensions were rated high to very high, with visual attractiveness emerging as the strongest dimension, followed by perceived uniqueness, exclusivity, and authenticity. Interview findings indicate that users associate Hidden Gem destinations with being unique, natural, visually appealing, and relatively undiscovered, while curiosity to seek more information develops after initial visual attraction. The study concludes that the Hidden Gem label functions as a visual and symbolic narrative that shapes users’ early perceptions of tourism destinations on TikTok.

Keywords: Hidden Gem, TikTok, Tourism, Perception, Travel.

1. Introduction

The rapid growth of digital platforms has fundamentally transformed the way tourism destinations are introduced, imagined, and evaluated (Balatska et al., 2022). Among various social media platforms, TikTok has emerged as a dominant channel for short-form, visually immersive content that shapes users’ perceptions in a matter of seconds (Nilsson et al., 2023). Unlike traditional promotional media, TikTok relies heavily on algorithm-driven exposure, peer-generated narratives, and emotionally engaging storytelling, making it particularly influential in constructing tourism appeal among younger audiences (Ningrum & Roostika, 2021). One of the most prominent trends within TikTok tourism content is the use of the term “Hidden Gem.” This label is commonly attached to destinations perceived as undiscovered, less crowded, authentic, and aesthetically unique (Park, 2022). Rather than highlighting mainstream or mass-tourism locations, “Hidden Gem” content emphasizes exclusivity, novelty, and personal discovery. The framing often creates a sense of intimacy and insider knowledge, positioning viewers as part of a select

group who are “in the know.” As a result, the term functions not merely as a descriptive label but as a powerful narrative device in digital tourism communication (Pradipta & Anggraini, 2021).

The increasing circulation of “Hidden Gem” videos reflects a broader shift in tourist preferences. Contemporary travelers are no longer satisfied with standardized attractions; instead, they seek unique experiences, cultural authenticity, and destinations that offer social media-worthy moments (Yin et al., 2023). In this context, TikTok acts as both an information source and a visual imagination engine, enabling users to mentally construct a destination before physically visiting it. The short video format, combined with music, captions, and dynamic editing, enhances emotional engagement and may intensify curiosity and travel interest (Abidin et al., 2024; Haryanto et al., 2022; Ilieva, 2022). Despite the popularity of “Hidden Gem” content, academic discussions remain limited in exploring how users actually perceive this type of tourism narrative. Most previous studies in digital tourism marketing focus on influencer credibility, electronic word-of-mouth, destination image formation, or visit intention using causal models (Eliana et al., 2023; Ilieva, 2022; Laurance et al., 2023; V.A.R.Barao et al., 2022). However, there is still a need for descriptive research that maps how audiences interpret, understand, and emotionally respond to “Hidden Gem” content itself. Before testing complex structural relationships, it is essential to first capture the descriptive patterns of user perceptions and travel interest associated with this phenomenon.

Therefore, this study aims to provide a descriptive exploration of how TikTok users perceive “Hidden Gem” tourism content and explores users perceptions and expressed curiosity toward travel destinations. By employing descriptive statistical analysis of 200 survey respondents and insights from 20 semi-structured interviews, this research seeks to map patterns of audience interpretation, emotional reactions, and expressed travel curiosity toward destinations framed as “Hidden Gems”. Through this approach, the study contributes to the growing discourse on digital tourism communication by offering an empirical description of a trending narrative format that increasingly shapes travel imagination in the social media era. Rather than focusing on causal testing, this research prioritizes understanding how audiences make meaning of “Hidden Gem” content and how such meaning construction aligns with emerging patterns of travel interest in the TikTok ecosystem.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Social Media and Digital Tourism Communication

The transformation of tourism communication has accelerated with the rise of social media platforms. Unlike traditional destination marketing channels that rely on structured promotional campaigns, social media enables user-generated content,

peer influence, and algorithmic amplification (Choudhury & Mohanty, 2018; Eman & Refaie, 2025). Platforms such as TikTok have intensified this shift by prioritizing short-form, visually dynamic videos that combine entertainment and information in a highly immersive format (Du et al., 2020; Rimadiaz et al., 2021). TikTok's algorithm-driven system allows tourism content to reach audiences beyond existing follower networks, creating viral exposure for destinations that may not have been previously well known. The platform emphasizes authenticity, relatability, and emotional resonance, characteristics that differentiate it from more curated visual platforms. This digital environment encourages spontaneous discovery, which aligns closely with emerging tourism narratives such as "Hidden Gems."

In tourism studies, social media is widely recognized as a powerful source of travel inspiration. It influences the early stages of the travel decision-making process, particularly in shaping awareness, curiosity, and initial attraction (ULUCAN, 2024). However, beyond its persuasive function, social media also serves as a meaning-making space where users interpret, negotiate, and internalize destination representations.

2.2 The Concept of "Hidden Gem" in Tourism Narratives

The term "Hidden Gem" has gained popularity in digital tourism discourse, yet it remains under-theorized in academic literature. Conceptually, a "Hidden Gem" refers to a destination perceived as undiscovered, less crowded, unique, or authentic. The label implies exclusivity and novelty, positioning the destination as special and not yet mainstream (Krisna et al., 2024). From a symbolic perspective, "Hidden Gem" operates as a narrative framing device. It shapes audience expectations before any actual experience occurs. By presenting a place as secret or undiscovered, content creators trigger psychological responses such as curiosity, anticipation, and the desire for unique social experiences. The narrative implicitly offers social value: visiting a "Hidden Gem" may signal originality and insider status (Dewi et al., 2022; Pradipta & Anggraini, 2021).

In the context of digital culture, the paradox of the "Hidden Gem" becomes evident. Once shared widely on social media, a destination labeled as hidden can quickly become viral and lose its exclusivity. This dynamic highlights the tension between authenticity, exposure, and commercialization in contemporary tourism. Therefore, understanding how users interpret the "Hidden Gem" concept is crucial in mapping its role within digital tourism communication (Pradipta & Anggraini, 2021). The term "*Hidden Gem*" has become a dominant narrative in digital tourism content, particularly on TikTok. Rather than functioning as a simple label, it operates as a framing mechanism that shapes how audiences interpret a destination. The term implies that a place is special, undiscovered, and worthy of attention, influencing both perception and curiosity.

Five key perceptual dimensions are closely associated with this concept. Perceived Uniqueness reflects the belief that the destination is different from

mainstream tourist sites. Perceived Authenticity refers to the impression that the place is natural, genuine, and not overly commercialized. Perceived Exclusivity relates to the sense of discovering something not widely known, increasing perceived value. Visual Attractiveness plays a central role in short-form platforms, as aesthetic presentation strongly shapes immediate evaluation. Finally, Curiosity to Seek More Information represents the tendency of viewers to explore further details after exposure to the content. Together, these dimensions explain how “Hidden Gem” narratives influence audience interpretation within digital tourism environments.

3. METHOD

This study employed a descriptive research design to examine how TikTok users perceive “Hidden Gem” tourism content. The objective was to describe patterns of audience perception across five dimensions: perceived uniqueness, perceived authenticity, perceived exclusivity, visual attractiveness, and curiosity to seek more information.

Quantitative Phase

The quantitative data were collected through an online survey involving 200 TikTok users who had watched at least one “Hidden Gem” tourism video within the last six months. Respondents were selected using purposive sampling. The instrument was designed to examine users’ perceptions of hidden gem tourism content on TikTok and their interest in seeking further information about the destinations presented. User perceptions were assessed through four dimensions: perceived uniqueness, perceived authenticity, perceived exclusivity, and visual attractiveness, while travel interest was represented by curiosity to seek more information. Each dimension was measured using three indicators, resulting in a total of 15 measurement items. All items were measured using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency distribution, percentages, mean scores, and standard deviation, to identify dominant response tendencies across the dimensions (Sugiyono, 2016).

Table 1. Measurements Indicators

Dimension	Indicator	Measurement
Perceived Uniqueness	The destination presented in the TikTok video appears different from commonly promoted tourist destinations.	5-point Likert
	The destination offers distinctive attractions or experiences.	5-point Likert
	The destination is presented as unusual or special compared with conventional tourist destinations.	5-point Likert
Perceived Authenticity	The TikTok video presents the destination as reflecting its genuine local character.	5-point Likert

Dimension	Indicator	Measurement
Perceived Exclusivity	The tourism experience shown in the video appears natural rather than overly staged.	5-point Likert
	The content provides a realistic representation of the destination.	5-point Likert
	The destination appears to be known by relatively few tourists.	5-point Likert
	The destination appears to be away from crowded tourist places.	5-point Likert
Visual Attractiveness	The destination gives the impression of being a place that not many people have discovered.	5-point Likert
	The visual presentation of the destination in the TikTok video is appealing.	5-point Likert
	The scenery shown in the video is visually attractive.	5-point Likert
Curiosity to Seek More Information	The video makes the destination visually interesting to explore.	5-point Likert
	The TikTok video makes me want to learn more about the destination.	5-point Likert
	I am curious to find additional information about the destination.	5-point Likert
	The TikTok video encourages me to search for more information before considering a trip to the destination.	5-point Likert

Source: Primary Data 2026

The operationalization table presents the dimensions and indicators used to examine user perceptions of hidden gem tourism on TikTok and their travel interest. Each dimension consists of three indicators measured using a five-point Likert scale. The five perception dimensions perceived uniqueness, perceived authenticity, perceived exclusivity, and visual attractiveness capture users' evaluations of hidden gem tourism content, while curiosity to seek more information reflects their level of travel-related interest.

Qualitative Phase

To complement the survey findings, the study conducted semi-structured interviews with 20 selected respondents. Participants were chosen from those who agreed to participate further after completing the survey. The interviews explored how respondents interpret the term "Hidden Gem," what elements of the videos influenced them, and how the content stimulated curiosity.

Table 2. Interviewed Question

No.	Dimension	Topic	Qualitative Interview Question
1	Perceived Uniqueness	Distinctiveness of the destination	What makes a hidden gem destination on TikTok appear unique or different from other tourism destinations?
2		Unique tourism experience	What kinds of attractions or experiences shown in TikTok videos

No.	Dimension	Topic	Qualitative Interview Question
3	Perceived Authenticity	Local character	make a destination seem special to you? How do TikTok videos influence your perception of the local character and authenticity of a hidden gem destination?
4		Natural representation	What makes the presentation of a destination on TikTok feel authentic and realistic to you?
5	Perceived Exclusivity	Less-known destinations	How does knowing that a destination is relatively unknown influence your perception of it?
6		Less crowded experience	What attracts you to destinations presented on TikTok as less crowded or away from mainstream tourism?
7		Visual presentation	What visual elements in TikTok videos make a hidden gem destination attractive to you?
8	Visual Attractiveness	Destination appeal	How do the scenery, atmosphere, and video presentation influence your interest in a hidden gem destination?
9		Information seeking	After watching a hidden gem tourism video, what information do you usually want to find out more about?
10		Travel interest	How does watching hidden gem tourism content on TikTok influence your interest in considering or visiting the destination?

Source: Primary Data 2026

The qualitative data were analyzed using the interactive analysis model, which consists of three interconnected stages:

1. Data Reduction – selecting, simplifying, and organizing relevant interview statements;
2. Data Display – presenting organized findings in structured summaries to identify patterns;
3. Conclusion Drawing and Verification – interpreting emerging meanings and confirming consistency across responses.

This interactive process allowed continuous reflection between data collection and analysis, ensuring that qualitative insights supported and enriched the descriptive survey results (Miles et al., 2014). Through this combined approach, the study provides a comprehensive description of audience perceptions toward “Hidden Gem” tourism content on TikTok

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Descriptive Analysis of Hidden Gem Perception Dimensions

The findings of this study indicate that “Hidden Gem” tourism content on TikTok is predominantly interpreted in a positive and engaging manner. Based on descriptive analysis of 200 respondents, all five perceptual dimensions show high mean scores, suggesting that the narrative framing of “Hidden Gem” effectively shapes audience perception. Among the categories, Visual Attractiveness emerged as the most dominant dimension, followed by Perceived Uniqueness, Perceived Exclusivity, and Perceived Authenticity, while Curiosity to Seek More Information also demonstrated a moderately high tendency.

These results suggest that TikTok-based “Hidden Gem” content operates primarily through strong visual stimulation and symbolic framing. The aesthetic presentation appears to function as the initial trigger, attracting attention and enhancing emotional engagement. At the same time, the narrative label “Hidden Gem” reinforces cognitive interpretations related to rarity, authenticity, and insider discovery. This combination of visual appeal and symbolic meaning contributes to increased curiosity and exploratory interest among viewers.

Table 3. Statistic Descriptive Result of Hidden Gem Perception

No	Category	Mean	SD	Interpretation Level
1	Perceived Uniqueness	4.21	0.68	High
2	Perceived Authenticity	4.08	0.72	High
3	Perceived Exclusivity	4.15	0.70	High
4	Visual Attractiveness	4.38	0.61	Very High
5	Curiosity to Seek More Information	3.97	0.81	Moderately High

Source: Primary Data 2026

Based on the descriptive results presented in the table, all five categories demonstrate mean scores ranging from high to very high levels. This indicates that “Hidden Gem” tourism content on TikTok is generally perceived positively by respondents. The highest mean score is found in Visual Attractiveness (Mean = 4.38; SD = 0.61), categorized as very high. This suggests that visual elements play the most dominant role in shaping audience perception. Scenic imagery, aesthetic presentation, video composition, and overall visual storytelling function as the primary drivers of attention and initial evaluation. The relatively low standard deviation also indicates consistent agreement among respondents. This finding is consistent with previous research showing that TikTok tourism content can contribute to the formation of destination perceptions and travel-related responses. Previous research found that destination awareness and destination image are associated with perceived quality among Indonesian TikTok users who consume tourism content, while perceived quality is positively related to visiting intention (Yumna & Roostika, 2023). Similarly, research specifically examining “Hidden Gem” tourism content on TikTok found that destination image plays an important

role in shaping users' visit intention, demonstrating the relevance of hidden gem content in constructing positive destination perceptions (Song & Park, 2023).

Perceived Uniqueness (Mean = 4.21; SD = 0.68) also falls within the very high category. This finding shows that respondents strongly interpret "Hidden Gem" destinations as different from mainstream tourist attractions. The label effectively reinforces the idea of rarity and distinctiveness, which becomes a central component of destination appeal. This interpretation is consistent with research on TikTok tourism content that identifies originality and vividness as important characteristics of tourism information presented through short-form video. Research examining TikTok tourism content found that originality and vividness contributed positively to destination familiarity, suggesting that distinctive and vivid content can strengthen users' cognitive perceptions of destinations (K. Li & Rui, 2023). In the specific context of hidden gem tourism, previous research also demonstrates that TikTok content can contribute to destination image formation and subsequently to users' interest in visiting the destination (Sobarna, 2023).

Meanwhile, Perceived Exclusivity (Mean = 4.15; SD = 0.70) and Perceived Authenticity (Mean = 4.08; SD = 0.72) are both categorized as high. These results indicate that respondents associate "Hidden Gem" content with a sense of insider discovery and natural, less-commercialized environments. The moderate dispersion of responses suggests relatively stable perceptions across participants. The finding regarding authenticity is supported by previous research examining TikTok tourism promotion, which found that TikTok-based promotional content can strengthen perceptions of destination authenticity, including both object-based and existential authenticity, which are subsequently related to travel intention (Zhu et al., 2022). Similarly, previous research has found that TikTok influencer involvement is associated with tourists' perceptions of authenticity and destination image, highlighting the importance of authenticity in the digital presentation of tourism experiences (Tham & Chen, 2024). Thus, the relatively high score for perceived authenticity in the present study suggests that respondents do not merely evaluate hidden gem content based on its visual appeal but also perceive the destinations as offering genuine and less-commercialized experiences.

Finally, Curiosity to Seek More Information (Mean = 3.97; SD = 0.81) also falls within the high category, although it has the lowest mean among the five dimensions. This implies that while respondents are strongly attracted to the visual and symbolic aspects of the content, the intention to actively search for additional information is slightly less pronounced. Nevertheless, the high mean indicates that TikTok content still generates a considerable level of curiosity toward the destinations presented. This finding is consistent with research showing that short-form tourism videos can stimulate audience involvement and shape travel-related responses through destination image formation (Xu & Law, 2022). More recent research on TikTok tourism content also indicates that information quality can be associated with travel intention both directly and through destination image

perceptions and positive emotions, suggesting that information-related responses remain an important component of tourism content consumption (Sun & Wen, 2026).

4.2 Qualitative Findings (Interactive Analysis)

To complement the survey results, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 selected participants. The qualitative data were analyzed using the interactive analysis model, consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing (Miles et al., 2014). This approach allowed continuous interpretation of interview responses while maintaining alignment with the five quantitative dimensions.

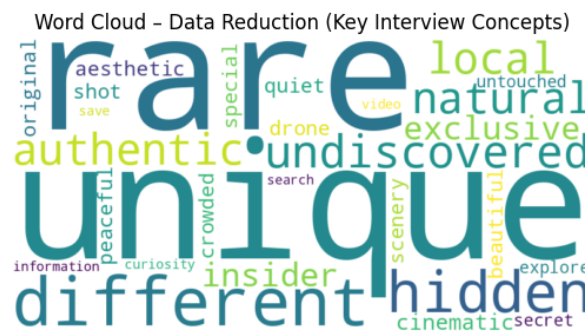


Figure 1: World Cloud Data Display Hidden Gem

The word cloud display generated from the data reduction stage illustrates the dominant expressions that emerged from the semi-structured interviews. The most prominent words “unique” and “rare” indicate that participants primarily interpret “Hidden Gem” destinations as places that are different from mainstream tourist sites. This reinforces the strong emphasis on perceived uniqueness identified in the quantitative findings. Other highly visible terms such as “undiscovered,” “hidden,” and “exclusive” suggest that respondents associate the concept with limited exposure and insider discovery. These words reflect a perception of exclusivity, where visiting such destinations conveys a sense of finding something special before it becomes widely known.

The appearance of words like “natural,” “authentic,” “local,” and “untouched” highlights the importance of authenticity in shaping audience interpretation. Participants frequently linked “Hidden Gem” with environments that feel genuine and less commercialized, strengthening the narrative of originality and purity. Visual-related terms, including “cinematic,” “aesthetic,” “drone,” and “beautiful,” further demonstrate that visual presentation plays a crucial role in attracting attention and shaping perception. This supports the finding that visual attractiveness acts as the initial trigger in digital tourism engagement.

Additionally, words such as “curiosity,” “explore,” “search,” and “information” indicate a behavioral tendency to seek further details after exposure to the content.

Although not as dominant as uniqueness or rarity, these terms confirm that the “Hidden Gem” narrative stimulates exploratory interest among viewers. Overall, the word cloud reveals that audience interpretation of “Hidden Gem” tourism content is constructed through a combination of symbolic rarity, perceived authenticity, visual appeal, and emerging curiosity.

4.3 Constructing Hidden Gem Perception on TikTok

The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings reveals a consistent pattern in how “Hidden Gem” tourism content is interpreted within the TikTok environment. Quantitatively, all five dimensions demonstrate high to very high mean scores, indicating strong positive perceptions. Qualitatively, interview responses reinforce this pattern by repeatedly emphasizing terms such as “unique,” “rare,” “natural,” and “exclusive.” This convergence suggests that the “Hidden Gem” narrative is not interpreted randomly, but rather follows a structured perceptual logic shared among users. The alignment between statistical tendencies and interview expressions strengthens the validity of the overall findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2023).

One of the most striking syntheses emerges in the dimension of visual attractiveness. The survey results show that visual attractiveness holds the highest mean score among all categories, positioning it as the dominant perceptual driver. This is further confirmed by interview data, where participants frequently referenced cinematic shots, aesthetic editing, drone perspectives, and visually striking landscapes as the primary reasons for their engagement. The qualitative insights clarify that visual elements function as the initial gateway to perception. In other words, before users cognitively interpret a destination as unique or authentic, they are first captured by its visual appeal (Y. W. Li & Wan, 2025).

Beyond visual stimulation, the combined findings highlight the symbolic power of perceived uniqueness. Quantitatively categorized as very high, perceived uniqueness reflects a strong consensus among respondents that “Hidden Gem” destinations are different from mainstream tourism spots. Interview narratives deepen this understanding by revealing that participants associate uniqueness with rarity, peacefulness, and absence of crowds. The word cloud further confirms this through the prominence of terms such as “rare,” “different,” and “undiscovered.” This suggests that uniqueness is not merely about physical characteristics but about psychological differentiation from mass tourism (Daniela et al., 2021; Du et al., 2020).

Similarly, perceived exclusivity and authenticity emerge as interconnected constructs across both datasets. Survey data place both dimensions in the high category, indicating stable positive perceptions. The qualitative findings elaborate that exclusivity is often experienced as a feeling of insider discovery being among the first to know or visit a destination. Authenticity, meanwhile, is described through references to natural settings, local atmosphere, and minimal

commercialization. The synthesis of these findings suggests that exclusivity enhances perceived value, while authenticity strengthens emotional resonance, together reinforcing the overall attractiveness of the “Hidden Gem” narrative.

Another important synthesis emerges in the dimension of curiosity to seek more information. Although this category recorded the lowest mean among the five dimensions, it still falls within the high range. This indicates that while visual appeal and symbolic meaning strongly shape perception, the transition from perception to exploratory behavior is slightly more selective. The interview findings provide clarity: not all participants immediately searched for additional details, but many reported saving the video, checking the location on maps, or reading comments. This suggests that curiosity operates as a secondary effect activated after visual and symbolic engagement has been established.

The integration of both datasets also reveals a sequential perception mechanism. Visual attractiveness appears to function as the entry point, capturing attention instantly within TikTok’s fast-paced environment. Once attention is secured, users cognitively process the destination through frames of uniqueness, exclusivity, and authenticity. Only after these layers of interpretation are formed does curiosity emerge as a potential behavioral response. This layered process demonstrates that “Hidden Gem” content operates through a structured perceptual pathway rather than a spontaneous reaction.

Moreover, the findings highlight the role of narrative labeling in constructing perceived value. The term “Hidden Gem” itself acts as a cognitive shortcut, guiding users toward specific interpretations even before they evaluate the destination independently. Quantitative agreement on uniqueness and exclusivity, supported by qualitative expressions such as “undiscovered” and “secret,” indicates that the label significantly shapes meaning construction. This confirms that digital tourism narratives are not neutral representations but actively frame how destinations are understood.

Finally, the synthesis underscores the dual nature of “Hidden Gem” as both a visual and symbolic construct. On one hand, its effectiveness depends heavily on aesthetic presentation, as reflected in the dominant visual attractiveness scores. On the other hand, its persuasive strength lies in symbolic associations with rarity, authenticity, and insider discovery. The convergence of statistical patterns and interview narratives demonstrates that the appeal of “Hidden Gem” content is not purely aesthetic; it is deeply embedded in psychological perceptions of distinction and meaningful travel experiences.

5. CONCLUSION

From a theoretical perspective, the synthesis of findings suggests that “Hidden Gem” operates as a perceptual value amplifier within digital tourism communication. The consistent high scores across uniqueness, authenticity, and

exclusivity indicate that the narrative strengthens the perceived distinctiveness of a destination. The qualitative insights further demonstrate that these perceptions are not formed independently but are reinforced by symbolic cues embedded in the label itself. This implies that narrative framing plays a crucial role in shaping tourism imagination, particularly in algorithm-driven platforms where attention spans are short and interpretation must occur quickly (Kerdpitak, 2022).

The findings also contribute to understanding how digital environments reshape early-stage travel cognition. Rather than relying on detailed information, users often form impressions through aesthetic exposure and symbolic labeling. The dominance of visual attractiveness confirms that perception formation begins at a sensory level, while subsequent cognitive evaluations revolve around rarity and authenticity. This layered interpretation process aligns with contemporary models of digital media consumption, where emotional engagement frequently precedes rational assessment (Kushwaha et al., 2020).

At the same time, the qualitative responses reveal a subtle awareness of the paradox embedded in the “Hidden Gem” concept. Several participants implicitly acknowledged that once a destination becomes viral, it may lose its hidden status. Although this was not measured as a primary dimension in the quantitative phase, interview narratives suggest that exclusivity is perceived as temporary and fragile. This indicates that the attractiveness of “Hidden Gem” content may depend on the balance between visibility and scarcity within digital circulation.

Overall, the integration of quantitative and qualitative findings demonstrates that “Hidden Gem” tourism content functions as a multidimensional construct shaped by visual appeal, symbolic differentiation, and emerging curiosity. The convergence of statistical trends and interview narratives confirms that the narrative effectively constructs perceived value in the digital tourism context. However, its sustainability may depend on how destinations manage the tension between viral exposure and the preservation of perceived uniqueness.

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