



An analysis of how Limpopo province can utilize user-generated content [UGC] to build brand resonance.

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Abstract

Albăstroi and Felea (2014) states that user generated content (UGC) has various benefits for brands, one of the benefits in question in this research, is the contribution of UGC in build meaningful brand connection. COVID-19 travel restrictions and budget cuts within the Travel and Hospitality sector has escalated the need for destination brands to look at how UGC can aid in building brand connection with consumers (Pihlainen, 2017). This study analysed the influence of UGC on the brand resonance of the Limpopo province as a destination brand. The study observed UGC published by Limpopo Tourism Agency (LTA) on the Go_Limpopo Instagram account for the month of May 2021. The Instagram posts were sampled using purposeful non-probability sampling method and the data was collected using unobtrusive data collection method. The data collected was analysed using thematic analysis to check for the potential influence of UGC on Limpopo's brand resonance using the Keller brand resonance framework (2011). The findings indicate that Go_Limpopo's Instagram account combines the destination marketing organisation's published posts with the UGC from Instagram users. The published content positioned the destination brand favourably when considering the anticipated future travel trends post travel restrictions. As researchers argue that consumer demand and behavioural changes post travel restrictions will move destinations that meet specific nature tourism and outdoor recreation to the top of consumers choice (Rogerson & Rogerson 2021). Furthermore, The UGC posted on the Go_Limpopo account was found to resonate with users as the published posts showed experiential content that evoked consumers' sensory and behavioural responses, linking the brand with pleasurable consumer experiences.

Keywords: User-generated content, Destination brand, Brand resonance and Go_Limpopo

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1. Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Background

COVID-19 travel restrictions and marketing budget cuts within the Travel and Hospitality sector have escalated the need for destination brands to look at how User Generated Content (UGC) can aid in building brand connection (Pihlainen, 2017). The travel restrictions presented an opportunity for innovative use of UGC to recreate the travel experience and build brand resonance. As Statista (2021) explained that the COVID-19 outbreak resulted in an increased use of entertainment and social media, with global penetration reaching nearly 54 % in 2020. Research has also found that consumers trust and engage with UGC more because of UGC's uniqueness and authentic manner of showcasing the brand and escalating brand resonance (Albăstroiu & Felea, 2014).

However, brands are faced with a challenge of limited control over UGC due to the content being created by the consumer. This has resulted in the need to understand the influence of UGC and how brands can leverage on UGC to achieve brand resonance (Albăstroiu & Felea, 2014). The purpose of the study was to analyse the influence of UGC looking at its effect on the brand resonance of a destination brand. The study explored the relationship between UGC and how it may influence the Limpopo province brand's resonance by focusing on the pillars of the travel as defined by South African Tourism (SAT). This carried out by reviewing literature on UGC, destination brand and brand resonance based on the Keller's brand resonance model (2019). A qualitative research design was applied when exploring the phenomena using interpretivism as the paradigm to gather an understanding of the eligible sample interaction and interpret each UGC visual found on the Go_limpopo Instagram account.

The next section will explain the context of this research study, explaining the relevance of the research based on the research problem identified and by providing the background of the area being researched.

1.2. Contextualization

Destination brand is a widely researched area within tourism literature. Previous research looked at; destination branding as a way of communicating a destination's unique identity, a destination brand using customer experience as brand differentiation and destination brand cultivating brand resonance through branding (Balakrishnan, Nekhili & Lewis, 2011; Çiğdem, Ayşe & Dilek, 2013; Költringer & Dickinger, 2015; Séraphina, Zamanb, Olver, Bourliataux-Lajoie & Dosquete, 2019).

In recent research on the service sector, there has been an increase in the research of technology and its impact on destination brands. One of the prominent technological advances to have an impact on destination brands is the internet. It has presented consumers with many new opportunities such as searching for information, communicating, and expressing their brand experiences on social media (Tsimonis & Dimitriadis, 2014). A research study that is of relevance to this study is on by Lund, Cohen, and Scarles (2018) who looked at how the Covid-19 pandemic impacted on tourism destination management and how technology can be used to revive the tourism sector post social distancing. Wachyuni and Kusumaningrum (2020) further added by arguing that the exposure to social media influences the tourists' intention to visit tourist destinations. In the past years one has seen an increase in the research of social media, particularly on the exploration of social media as a brand strategy, customer relationship management and its importance in building a brand (Baird & Parasnis, 2011; Patino, Pitta & Quinones, 2012; Luo, Wang & Han, 2013). In a South African perspective significant effort have been made in literature to look at the influence of UGC on brand trust, which is one of the components of the Brand resonance model by Keller (2013). However, the study by Demba (2016) acknowledged a need to analyse the influence of other aspects of the model. Thus, the outcome of this study is to analyse the influence of UGC on destination brands in building brand resonance in South Africa. The next section will provide the purpose of conducting this study, justifying the significance based on the main research question.

1.3. Rationale

Research by Albăstroi and Felea (2014) emphasises the importance of UGC in building a brand connection, while recent research by Statista (2021) explained that

the COVID-19 outbreak resulted in an increased use of entertainment and social media, with global penetration reaching nearly 54 % in 2020. This has resulted in a need to understand how brands can leverage on the increase as identified by Statista. UGC has also been found to impact the way a brand is perceived by the consumer affecting the image that a traveller or potential traveller may have of the destination (Salem & Twining-Ward, 2018). Informed by combined previous research findings, the researcher seeks to gather information to better understand how destination brands can utilize UGC to influence brand resonance. The information gathered in this study assisted in answering the research problem statement that will be explained in the next section.

1.4. Problem statement

Though literature may point to the benefits of UGC, findings have also highlighted a major challenge for brands relating to social media. The negative word of mouth that negatively impacts on a brand image has been found to be a challenge to manage for destination brands (Tsimonis & Dimitriadis, 2014). Destination brands are faced with a challenge of having little control over UGC, due the content being generated by the consumer. Unlike owned media content, the brand has no control on what media is published and the conversation is solely led by the consumer (Salem & Twining-Ward, 2018). This makes it challenging for brands integrating digital marketing approaches with traditional marketing practice (Royle & Laing, 2013). Therefore, the aim of this study was to understand as to what extent can UGC influence the brand resonance of the Limpopo province as destination brand. The next section will elaborate on the research problem, explaining the potential implication of the issue being investigated for destination brands.

1.5. Why is the problem worth investigating?

Research by Rogerson (2020) states that tourism demand and supply in South Africa will reshape existing patterns, thus arguing a need to understand and research the sector for designing appropriate policy to counter act the devastating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is argued that recovery strategies that will include focused marketing strategies will provide opportunities to curve consumer demand (Rogerson, 2020). In order for destination brands to drive consumer demand innovative measures

need to be taken. Research argues that content created by consumers market the destination brand better as people trust peers ten times more than they trust brand campaigns (Salem & Twining-Ward, 2018). Salem and Twining-Ward (2018) further add, that UGC is increasingly becoming the most vital and commonly used source of information for travellers. It was therefore the aim of this study to show the potential influence of UGC for destination brands and further look at how UGC can aid in building brand resonance.

1.6. Research questions

In qualitative research, a series of questions was identified to guide the researcher towards the desired goal (Bruan & Clarke, 2006). A broad question posed the frames the research; this question was further broken down into narrow questions. These questions guide the research questions and may be refined as the project progresses (Bruan & Clarke, 2006). The research questions assisted in defining what was examined for purpose of this study. The research questions that one seeks to answer are as follows:

Main research question - How can destination brands use user-generated content to build brand resonance?

Q1 - How does Limpopo province position their destination brands amongst South African consumers?

Q2 - How can Limpopo province can utilize user-generated content to build brand resonance with the South African consumer?

Q3 - What influence does user-generated content have on building brand resonance for the Limpopo province' destination brand against Keller's brand resonance framework?

The research questions then inform the research objectives, providing clear statements of what the research aims to achieve through the research. The research objectives will be discussed in the next section.

1.7. Research objectives

The research objectives can be classified as explanatory. The study attempts to explain the relationship between one or more characteristics (UGC, destination brands

and brand resonance) of a phenomenon through observation on a social platform (Goundar, 2012). Each research objective provides specific actions that was taken by researcher, the objectives for this study are:

O1 -To analyse how the Limpopo province builds their destination brands amongst South African consumers.

O2 – To analyse how the Limpopo province can utilize user-generated content to build brand resonance with the South African consumer.

O3 - To analyse what influence does user-generated content have on building brand resonance for the Limpopo province against Keller's brand resonance framework.

The research questions and objectives of this research presented a structure this research and the desired outcomes for this study. The next section will elaborate on purpose of the study guided by the research objectives.

1.8. Purpose statement

A purpose statement summarizes a research's main goal. It serves as an introduction of what the researcher aims to accomplish (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The purpose of the study was to analyse the influence of UGC in influencing the brand resonance of the Limpopo province as a destination brand. The explored the relationship between UGC and how it influences the Limpopo province brand's resonance by focussing on the SAT travel pillars.

The next section will specify what is meant by the terms Destination brands, UGC and brand resonance which are the key concepts found in this study.

1.9. Conceptualization

In research conceptualization assists in translating portions of the theory into specific aspects. The agreed upon meaning for each concept was informed by the literature reviewed and the final definition has been selected based on the definition's relevance to the study. The key concepts for this study are defined follows;

- Destination Brand

A destination brand is used to identify the goods or services of either one seller or a group of sellers, and to differentiate those goods or services from those it's of competitors (Költringer & Dickinger, 2015).

- **Brand Resonance**

The nature of the relationship that consumers apprehend towards a brand as well as the extent to which the consumer feels “in synch” with the brand (Latif, Islam & Mdnoor, 2014).

- **User-Generated Content**

Narrative, visual or audio content that has been created by people, rather than the brand and put on social media (Albăstroiou & Felea, 2014).

The next section will provide an outline of the research method that will be undertaken by the researcher for this study.

1.10. Overview of Research Methodology

The researcher has applied a quantitative exploratory study aimed at gaining an understanding to provide insight to the phenomena in question. The data was collected through the observation of the Go_Limpopo Instagram account and looking at SAT travel pillars published posts posted by the destination brand in the month of May 2021. The data was analysed through a thematic analysis to be able to gather an understanding of how people interpret and interact within their social environment. Purposive sampling a form of non-probability sampling was used to derive to the 19 published posts found on the Go_Limpopo Instagram account. A detailed discussion is found in the methodology, chapter 3 of this research paper.

The next section will further explain the structure of this research study and provide guidance on how the argument will be arranged.

1.11. Structure of the paper

In this research study, the researcher seeks to analyse the influence of UGC on the brand resonance of the destination brand of Limpopo. The data was collected using

the unobstructive data collection method and analysed through thematical analysis. Keller's brand resonance model was the chosen framework to gather an understanding of how the UGC from the Limpopo Instagram account influences the destination brand resonance. The results were discussed using the interpretivism paradigm as the researcher sought out`1 to understand the knowledge gathered on the social platform Instagram.

1.12. Conclusion

The following section will discuss the literature found on the concepts of this study, to provide an understanding of this research study prior to investigating the phenomena.

2. Chapter 2: Literature Review

This section provides an understanding of destination brands and the UGC branding strategy tool. Each key concept of this study will be discussed through various literatures reviewed on destination brands focusing on the influence of UGC on brand resonance.

2.1. Destination brand

A destination brand is defined as an umbrella brand that extends to a multiplicity of products and services which may or may not be associated with one another (Balakrishnan, Nekhili & Lewis, 2011). Költringer and Dickinger (2015) stated that the role of the destination brand is to identify and differentiate those products or services from other competing destinations. Balakrishnan, Nekhili and Lewis (2011) listed destination brand components that sum up the brand attributes of the destination. The first attribute is intangible. This includes aspects that are psychological/ conative such as the quality of the experience, the atmosphere, ambience, or quality of service. The second attribute is tangible and these include aspects that are functional such as the attractions, activities, and amenities (Balakrishnan, Nekhili & Lewis, 2011). The Chernatony and Vortex model that looks at the elements constituting a brand (1997, cited in Balakrishnan et al. (2011) and argues that heritage, values, and psycho-social equally affects brand image. A destination brand image is defined by an individual's perception/impression of a place. This is informed by the consumers understanding of a region's characteristics/features aiding in identifying a destination (Çiğdem, Ayşe & Dilek, 2013). Another definition that acknowledges the co-creation element on destination brands is one by, Séraphina, Zamanb, Olver, Bourliataux-Lajoinied and Dosquete (2019). This element explains destination brand as a brand that captures the essence [product, services, and experience] of the destination as a result of co-creation between all stakeholders.

This study applies the destination brand definition of Séraphina et al. (2019) as it is most applicable to the South African context of destination brand. The next section will look at tourism within the South African context to gather an understating of Limpopo as a destination brand.

2.1.2 The tourism industry in South Africa

South Africa has nine provinces namely: Eastern Cape, Free State, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Northern Cape, North West, and Western Cape. The destination brand that has been appointed by the South African government to market the country is South African Tourism (SAT). SAT's marketing campaigns differ based on desired messaging for the market. For example, the #MeetSouthAfrica was targeted at the United States market. The provinces featured in each marketing communication medium depends on the product and experiences offered in the province based on the seven travel pillars [Active Adventure, Business Events, City Lifestyle, Cultural roots, Coastal Beaches, Scenic Beauty and Wildlife Safari]. One or more of the travels pillars can be used by the destination brand to drive campaigns. In this research we focused on Limpopo as a province, looking at which of the SAT travel pillars are reposted by the destination. The following section will be discussing Limpopo as that chosen destination brand for this research.

2.1.3 Limpopo

Limpopo is a province situated in South Africa bordering Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and Botswana. It is known for its diversity of fauna, flora, and its rich cultural heritage. The province has 5 regions which are; Capricorn, Mopani, Sekhukhane, Vhembe and Waterberg. These regions boast of its wildlife, vast nature and fascinating heritage that date back to the San people (Go Limpopo, 2020). The brand sought out to reposition the destination as a destination offering more than eco-tourism and cultural experiences. The tagline "More to Enjoy" on the destination brands logo together with the famous Baobab tree which was launched in 2017 as part of the agency reposition the province. This was due to the media colloquium conducted in June 2017 that revealed that Limpopo did not have a unique selling point and differentiator (Lepelle Review, 2017). Research has shown that destination brands are seeking a global branding strategy to differentiate themselves (Buhalis, 2000, cited in Saeidirad, 2018) and to strengthen their brands (Kotler & Gertner, 2002, cited in Saeidirad, 2018). It is therefore the reason why the researcher has chosen Limpopo province to analyse the brands resonance in relation to UGC published by Go_Limpopo.

In the next section we will be analysing the types of branding strategy of the destination brands, using a funnel system to reach the phenomena of interest in this research, UGC.

2.2. Brand strategy

A brand strategy that is well developed is important as it can lead to a desirable consumer image and differentiate the brand from its competitors. Authors Bianchi and Pike (2011, cited in Séraphina et al., 2019) supported the statement as they found that a branding strategy can appeal to the target audience's emotions enabling immediate recognition. Research by Séraphina et al. (2019) further added to this finding as their study states that, to be more effective, brands need to capitalise on emotions and connections of the visitor. The types of brand strategy a destination brand uses are dependent on the desired outcome of the destination. For example, a digital strategy is a series of actions the brand takes online with the aim of driving engagement through digital channels (Hudson, 2016, cited in Vermaak & Wright, 2018). The types of digital channels include social media, video marketing, e-mail marketing, content marketing etc.

For this study social media was the digital channel that was discussed in this research. The next section will be discussing social media and the UGC found on the social media platform Instagram.

2.2.1 Social media

Rachna and Khajuria (2017) defines social media as a web-based application that allows online users to exchange or create information and experiences with family, friends, colleagues etc. Social media raises the consumers role in co-creation with brands (Lund et al., 2018). Through experiential knowledge, the shared content connects them to their virtual friends and acquaintances administering truth, trustworthiness, and status (Lund et al., 2018).

Balakrishnan et al. (2011) argues that destination brands are often associated with images. Fatanti and Suyadnya (2015) supports that statement as the authors claim that with Instagram being an online photo-album that is accessible to consumers

creates a promotional channel for destination brands. Further analysing that Instagram has become one of preferred social media channels for promoting destination brand images. Rawlins (2017, and cited in Engelbrecht & Ngcongco, 2018) reported on the digital landscape of South Africa and found that Instagram in South Africa grew from 680 000 in 2013 to 3.8 million in 2017.

Salem and Twining-Ward (2018) further illustrate the power of social media, particularly Instagram through the #MeetSouthAfrica campaign by SAT. In 2015, SAT pursued to increase awareness of cultural tourism products within the US market. The destination brand conducted a UGC campaign with influencers who shared their South African travel experiences on their social platforms. This resulted in the SAT generating engagement and new interest in travel to South Africa on social media platforms. Though the campaign included 4 influencers, the campaign inspired the creation of more UGC content using the #MeetSouthAfrica reaching 310,000 Instagram posts (Salem & Twining-Ward, 2018).

It is for this reason that Instagram was the chosen social platform for this study. We looked at photo and video content shared on this social networking service (Fatanti & Suyadnya, 2015). We examined Instagram tools such as hashtags and geotagging that assist in searching purposes, thus providing a convenient access of information to the public (Buhler, 2006 cited in Fatanti & Suyadnya, 2015). The next section will elaborate more on the research that argues that Instagram has created a new source of travel information through UGC (Salem & Twining-Ward, 2018).

2.2.1.1 User Generated Content as a social media technic

Albăstroi and Felea (2014) defined UGC as narrative (textual), audio or visual content that has been created by consumers rather than brands and placed on social media platforms for public display. Gallegos (2016, cited in Engelbrecht, Ngcongco & Muir, 2018) added that this type of content is created by unpaid contributors and is no longer the brand narrative but is a co-created narrative. Lund et al. (2018) argues that consumers are storytellers and the sharing of stories on social media contributes to the brand image. Destination brands need to cope with the new reality that consumers storytelling on social networks is absorbed into the brand narrative. This statement was seen to be evident in 2020 as the limitation on movement resulted in consumers

seeking other methods to experience travel at home. Research conducted by Statista (2021) highlighting that the COVID-19 outbreak resulted in an increase need of entertainment and social media global penetration reaching nearly 54 % in 2020. Mobile technologies helped consumers experience travel through augmented reality (AR), virtual reality (VR), 360-degree videos/images, gif, time caps and live videos (Lund et al., 2018). This has brought destination brands closer to the traveller through UGC content where people can view your experience in real-time (Salem & Twining-Ward, 2018). Technological advances present a new interactive tourism experience, UGC platforms like Facebook and Google prompt users to rate/review their experiences after checking in to a location. This adds to the importance of destination brand leveraging on UGC as consumers seek for reliable, real-time content. It is found that more than 50 percent of consumers consult online word-of-mouth (eWOM) and it is important to consumers during the early destination travel research phase as it helps them fine tune choices (Salem & Twining-Ward, 2018). On the contrary, authors Vermaak and Wright (2018) emphasis on the ability of UGC to go viral, stating that traditional marketing known Word of Mouth (WOM) is evolving to viral marketing. A form of WOM were digital channels spread a message the becomes popular (Vermaak & Wright, 2018).

Literature by Anderson, Hamilton and Tonner (2016) looks at the value of UGC for brands, stating that the value of UGC lies in the ability to create engaging and resonating conversations. This assists the destination brands to inspire consumer conversations through personal marketing (Lund et al., 2018). Rachna and Khajuria (2017) looked at the benefit from a consumer data perspective, adding that, this type of content often carries valuable information of consumer behaviour, activity preferences, travel habits, and booking sources that can aid destination brands. The same consumer data can provide consumer insight that destination brands can leverage on to improve their brand resonance.

In this study, the relationship of UGC and brand resonance was explored. In the next section we will be discussing the aspects of brand resonance in particular to destination brands.

2.3. Brand Resonance

Latif, Islam and Mdnoor (2014) define brand resonance as the relationship that consumers have towards a brand that includes the extent to which the consumer feels “in synch” with the brands. Tarigan, Lubis, Rini and Sembiring (2019) further added that resonance signifies the consumers’ willingness to engage with the destination brand. Keller (2013) suggests that brand resonance can be achieved in two ways: rational and emotional. Rational includes brand performance and judgement of the brand, while the emotional includes brand visual content and feelings towards the brand (Keller, 2013, cited in Tarigan et al., 2019). The brand resonance model offers a firm foundation for this research as it looks at the relationship of the consumer and brand and looking at all the elements required to reach brand loyalty. Due to this study seeking to understand the relationship of brand resonance and UGC, the Keller's brand resonance model was the framework for this study.

2.3.1 Keller's brand resonance framework

Brand resonance is at the top of the brand equity pyramid framework (Keller, 2013) and is only achieved when the consumer feels a deep psychological connection with the destination brand (Tarigan et al., 2019). Berry and Carbone (2007) argue that brand resonance is a direct result of how customers feel about the overall experience of products and services offered by the destination brand. The study by Rachna and Khajuria (2017) gave evidence that UGC campaigns may enhance the destinations brand equity provides destinations with a source of content for marketing that resonates with other travellers and goes directly to consumers (Lund et al., 2018). Fournier and Avery (2011, cited in Lund et al., 2018) supports the statement on resonating content as the authors argue that destination brands that create culturally drive conversations that may inspire consumer conversations about the brand. Tarigan et al. (2019) supports the statement on direct communication, arguing that UGC cuts through brands marketing clutter and goes straight to consumers.

Within the brand equity pyramid (Keller, 2013) lies brand trust. This refers to the level of confidence the consumer has in a brand. Brand trust has been found to bridge desired effects of brands on customers creating a favourable response, like brand loyalty (Huang, 2017). Lee and Ganesh (1999, cited in Balakrishnan et al., 2011) argued that customers are more reluctant to trust brand content with unfamiliar

counties. In research conducted by World Bank Group and TripAdvisor (Salem & Twining-Ward, 2018). The report identified that consumers trust their peers 12 times more than they trust brands content (Salem & Twining-Ward, 2018). It is for this reason that this study aims to analyse the influence of UGC on Limpopo as a destination brand in efforts to gather an understanding of the relationship with brand resonance.

2.4. Conclusion

The literature review was conducted with the aim of addressing key issues of the research problem. The first contributor was informed by a report by Havas Group's on "Meaningful Brands" that found that 60 percent of content produced by brands failed to deliver the desired outcome as consumers grow more wary of brand content. This is linked to the decline in trust of brand content, as content creation and publishing become easier. Consumers are turning more towards shared content across the web (Salem & Twining-Ward, 2018).

The second contributor can be found in reach by Séraphina et al. (2019), stating that the branding strategy of the destination should be a co-creation activity that involves all stakeholders within the travel experience. Consumers are fast becoming part of the co-creation process through UGC. However, the challenge for destination brands is the difficulty to control the narrative of UGC.

The final contributor is technological advances shift the manner in which consumers connect with brand. It is important for destination brands to explore the influence of UGC and how it can be used as a tool to build brand resonance with digital advances. As a study by A Forrester Consulting (2014) claimed that brands that leverage on UGC increase their brand resonance, elaborating that trusted brands foster an emotional connection that produces brand loyalty.

Informed by this, this study aimed to understand to what extent UGC can influence the brand resonance of the Limpopo province as destination brand. The next section will explain the research methodology applied by the research in this study.

3. Chapter 3: Research Methodology

This section looked at the research methodologies and the learning of the various systematic methods that researchers use to research efforts to solve a research problem. By providing a comprehensive introduction to research methodology, the researcher was then be able to elaborate on the actions undertaken in this study to explain the phenomena. This assisted in providing an understanding of the influence of UGC in building brand resonance for destination brands. In the next section, we will be discussing the research paradigm, focusing on the chosen paradigm for the study.

3.1. Research paradigm

A paradigm is a method of understanding the reality of the world and an interpretation of the study that can vary based on the natural surroundings (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016). It is a basic believe system (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017) that allows researchers to understand and convey beliefs. The paradigm for this study was Interpretivism and will be elaborated further in the following section.

3.2.1 Interpretivism

Interpretivism is the chosen paradigm for this research due to its ability to aid in understanding the meanings that humans attach to their actions (Ryan, 2018). This paradigm acknowledges that there is not one universal or a single notion to a social issue. Rehman and Alharthi (2016) support this statement as their research acknowledge that in this paradigm multiple interpretation exist through different research perspectives that may arise for the same issue. Further explaining that these interpretations exist due to the different realities being approached from different views (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016). This paradigm assists in understanding the subjective world of human experiences through the viewpoint of the observed subject (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). Interpretivism as a paradigm can be explained further looking at the five subsections of interpretivism: epistemological, ontological, metatheoretical, methodological and axiological (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). These five positions of interpretivism explain how this paradigm formed the basis for this research study, by analysing the set of ideas on the phenomena that directed the interpretation of theories based on observed subjects rather than objectives.

This paradigm was applied in a qualitative approach which will be discussed in the next section.

3.2. Research approach

In research design there are 2 research approaches which are qualitative and quantitative (Muhammad, 2016). A quantitative research design, insights are derived from numerical data and analysis resulting in a statistical conclusion (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014, Muhammad, 2016). The qualitative research design draws a conclusion through the relationship between collected data and the observed users (Goundar, 2012). Muhammad (2016) argues that quantitative research design is more fixed and deductive in nature unlike qualitative research design that is inductive and has a broad generalised approach on specific observations. Goundar (2012) adds that qualitative research design is adopted by a researcher who seeks to gather the meaning, emotion and describe the situation. Hence qualitative research is less concerned with numeric data but rather data that is weighed through the study's formation of relationships. For this study, a qualitative research approach was chosen to analyse the influence that UGC may have in building brand resonance.

This research design assisted the researcher as it is more flexible and inductive nature of the research (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014). The next section will elaborate on the commonly used designs in qualitative studies and the design method used in this study

3.3. Research design

A qualitative research design was selected by the researcher based on the research objective. The designs variations include case study, action research, ethnographical and phenomenological (Ekanayake, Ahmad & McKenzie, 2012). In a case study design, the case refers to an individual, a community or a group that is selected by the researcher to gather information based on a particular topic (Gilber, 2008). Goundar (2012) states that this type of design aids in exploring and understanding rather than confirming and measuring. Rather than action design where the research is guided by the desire to act (Goundar, 2012). The researcher would apply action research with the intention of identifying areas of concern and further developing and testing alternatives or experiment with new approaches. When compared to ethnographical

design, action research is more active rather than passive (Goundar, 2012). In ethnographical design the researcher gathers information about a social interaction or a phenomenon through observation (Goundar, 2012). This enables the researcher to gather a comprehensive understanding of the social phenomenon which is recorded in a descriptive format (Kozinets, 2010). Ethnography focuses on the shared experiences within a culture while phenomenology focuses on the individual experiences. Phenomenology research design seeks to provide an understanding to the meaning of people's lived experience (Rindfleisch, Malter, Ganesan & Moorman, 2008).

Therefore, for this reason that this study applied a phenomenology research design. The researcher seeks to understand the influence based on the lived experience that individuals encounter with the UGC of the destination brand, in order to collect the information to be analysed and interpreted. However, for the information to be collected the researcher must decide on whether the design will be cross-section or longitudinal (Rindfleisch, Malter, Ganesan & Moorman, 2008).

Rindfleisch, et.al. (2008) states that cross-sectional study is a commonly used design in the social sciences, even though cross-sectional studies may provide a limitation if the researcher seeks to measure change. For the researcher to be able to measure change it is essential to have a minimum of two data collection points (Rindfleisch, Malter, Ganesan & Moorman, 2008). This can only be achieved through a longitudinal study, where a population is observed several times at regular intervals, often over a long period (Rindfleisch, Malter, Ganesan & Moorman, 2008). The disadvantage may be based on the conditioning effect, when the same respondents are contacted frequently, they may know what is expected (Rindfleisch, Malter, Ganesan & Moorman, 2008). The opposite is found to be the advantage of a cross-sectional study, the research phenomena is investigated in a single moment obtaining reliable data through direct observation (Zangirolami-Raimundo, Echeimberg & Leone, 2018). In this study we applied a qualitative cross-sectional study, as the researcher took a cross-section of the population. This approach was best suited for this study as we looked at a phenomenon in social sciences and the researcher did not seek to measure change but to capture a specific point in time looking at multiple aspects.

The next section will specify the unit of analysis for the study, explaining the population and sampling technics in research.

3.4. Population and sampling

The unit of analysis refers to the object that is being analysed in a study (Sedgwick, 2014). This influences the research design and analysis, as incorrect identification of the unit of analysis may result in deferred research findings as it forms the basis for the researcher's decisions during the development of the research codes (Sedgwick, 2014). In this study the unit of analysis refers to the UGC content posted on the Go_Limpopo destination brands Instagram account that was observed and collected enabling the researcher to be able to gather information about the unit of analysis. It is very essential for the researcher to choose the adequate technique of sampling once the unit of analysis has been identified (Sharma, 2017).

Sampling is defined as the process of selecting a portion of the population, which refers to the collective of all the research subjects that conform to a set of research specifications (Sharma, 2017). This assists with accuracy of data as it limits the researcher's biasness and naturally reflects the qualities of the population (Sharma, 2017). This can be done by using either a probability or a non-probability sampling method. The probability sampling is a sampling technique where participants are chosen on a random selection method that ensures subjects in the population have alike probabilities of being selected and is used in a quantitative study. While in non-probability sampling methods, the subjects are selected based on judgement, it has been found to minimize the risk of systematic bias due to the limited possibility of random selection and is used within a qualitative study (Sharma, 2017). In this qualitative cross-sectional study the researcher deemed the non-probability sampling method as the appropriate method to reduce sampling error as data being observed was based on characteristics that aid in addressing the research questions. The precise sample that was obtained provided the researcher in this study with well-defined data achieved through non-probability sampling methods. The next section will elaborate on the non-probability sampling methods in qualitative research and the method will be applied within this study.

3.4.1 Non-probability sampling methods

There are various types of non-probability sampling methods that can be applied by the researcher through the use of population parameters informed by the unique characteristic guided by the objectives of the study (Sharma, 2017). The researcher can either apply quota sampling, self-selection sampling, snowball sampling or purposive sampling (Sharma, 2017). In quota sampling, the researcher's aim is to have a sample where the groups being studied are proportional to the population being studied. While self-selection sampling units are allowed to take part in research on their own accord unlike snowball sampling where existing study units recruit future units based on their acquaintances. In all three sampling methods the units selected limit the researcher's flexibility relating to time and limit the judgment of the researcher (Sharma, 2017). In this study, purposive sampling was applied due to its flexibility that will be clarified further in the next section.

3.4.2 Purposive Sampling

Purposive sampling relies on the judgement of the researcher when it comes to selecting the units being studied. This assists the researcher in identifying the targeted and accessible population as defined by the population parameters (Sharma, 2017). In this study, the researcher identified UGC posted on the Go_Limpopo Instagram account as the targeted population. The researcher then applied research judgment informed by an eligibility criterion applied to specify the characteristics of the UGC content posted on the Go_Limpopo account based on the SAT travel pillars. The month of May was the parameter used to determine the accessible population due to the month being recognised as Africa month, a celebration of arts, culture, and heritage across the continent of Africa (African Union, 2021). The Africa month celebrations provide an opportunity to reinforcing the need to preserve and celebrate Africa's unique offering. The celebrations for May 2021 were held through a virtual celebration encouraging Africans to make use of online platforms to showcase Africa (African Union, 2021). This presented an opportunity for users to share what makes them proud to be African virtually, thus contributing to the number UGC shared on online platforms. The visual content posted had to include a Limpopo province geotagging, the content was required to be a non-paid post and the user must have tagged Go_Limpopo. Informed by the characteristics, the researcher was then able to

determination the number of observations to include in the sample. The next section will expand on how the researcher derived the sample size.

3.4.3 Sample size

To determine the sample size, the researcher observed the visual content posted in the month of May that had; Limpopo geotagging, Go_Limpopo tag and the hashtag #Go_limpopo. The researcher derived to 23 posts, from the 27 UGC posts, the post with the highest comments has 645 likes. To be able to determine the mean, the 645 likes was then divided by 27 posts resulting in 23,89. Thus the minimum number of likes that each post had to have was 24 comments. The researcher then relooked the number of posts and found that only 23 posts meet the criteria. Thus, the sample size for this research was 23 posts.

3.5. Data collection

Research data collected is categorised under primary data or secondary data (Muhammad, 2016). Primary data refers to the process of gathering raw data or information, while secondary data is information collected by someone other than the primary user (Muhammad, 2016). The found benefits for primary data is that it is specific in nature, and often provides up-to-date information. It is therefore the reason why the researcher seeks to gather primary data, due to the researchers need to analyse and understand the influence of visual or text uploaded on the Limpopo provinces Instagram account.

Qualitative primary data may be generated as field research and unobtrusive research. Field research is the process of collecting raw data that is concerned with interpreting the social interactions. It involves a combination of participant observation and interviewing to document the analysis. While in unobtrusive research the researcher seeks for evidence of what the observed users do, as opposed to what they state that they are doing.

In this study primary data was collected using unobtrusive research collection method. Unobtrusive data collection method will be elaborated further in the next section.

3.5.1 Unobtrusive data collection

Unobtrusive data collection method was used for this research as one seeks to analyse social science matters that do not interfere with the subjects under this study (Hine, 2011). In reactive methods of data collection such as interviews and survey, the participants are aware of the researcher. However, unobtrusive data collection method makes use of “found” data (Hine, 2011). Chen (2017) builds on this statement by adding that digital media has expanded the use of unobtrusive measures as it provides trace indicators of use of technology, social interaction, and communication. Seale, Charteris-Black, MacFarlane and McPherson (2010) added that digital internet has now made gathering of observational data less difficult than interviews. Hine (2011) supported the statement by adding that the daily life is reflected online, has an anonymity effect and ushers’ people to a truthfulness they seldom show in face-to-face encounters. This is evident on social media as it has added to possible data collected for research analysis of posts, and visualization of geolocation (Chen, 2017). The research possibilities have become more diverse as more people leave electronic traces through liking, commenting, and reviewing on social platforms (Hine, 2011).

3.6. Data analysis

Data analysis refers to the process of the researcher applying statistical and/or logical techniques to explain, demonstrate, and evaluate data of research findings (Barbara, 2004). The researcher seeks to interpret the data in 3 phases; organising the data, to reduce, summarise, or categorise the data, and identify or the patterns or themes within the data. Bruan and Clare (2006) state that qualitative analytic methods can be divided into 2, theoretical or epistemological. Theoretical is based on calculated theory rather than experience, and epistemological investigates the source, nature, methods, and parameters of human knowledge (Bruan & Clare, 2006). In this study a theoretical approach was applied as the researcher sought out to gather an understanding of concepts UGC and aspects that influence brand resonance. Through the definitions gathered from the literature review and data collected, the researcher was then able to build new knowledge in the phenomena (Gamage, 2019). It assisted in guiding the study and through the specification of which key aspects influence a phenomenon (Gamage, 2019). This framework was applied through thematic analysis which will be explained in the next section.

3.6.1 Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis provides a flexible and useful research tool, as it aids in providing detailed and multifaceted interpretation of data. It is a method for recognizing, analysing, and documenting patterns within data (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018). Similarly, Gamage (2019) argues that it presents data in various possible interpretation but must be guided by the research topic. Since the aim of this study was to analyse the influence of UGC, thematic analysis was best suited as this method assists with reflecting on reality, to analyse and unravel the surface of reality (Bruan & Clare, 2006). The real world in this study refers to the social platform Instagram, Munar and Jacobsen (2013) states that a visual content posted on social-sharing sites has a “real-life approach”. In contrary, author Rose (2012) argues that there is a blurred line between real life and visual representation. Further adding there is a growing amount of the consumed reality presented on social media due to photography practises. However, UGC has been found to be the most trustworthy form of marketing in comparison to destination brand marketing (Salem & Twining-Ward, 2018). This form of social sharing of “real-life experience” has limited benefits for the user thus making it more reputable and relatable. Munar and Jacobsen (2013) supports this statement by highlighting that features such as live sharing, enhance the authenticity and real-life effect.

Informed by the previous statement, thematic analysis was used to analyse the textual and visual data collected from Go_Limpopo's Instagram account. The researcher translated the recorded data into soft copy of written documents this assisted in noting preliminary ideas through a familiarization process (Gamage, 2019). In this study the researcher familiarised oneself with the visual, textual descriptions, likes and comments captured on the post. Once the data was familiarised the process of searching for themes may resume.

The aim of the study was to analyse the influence of UGC on building brand resonance. To achieve this, the researcher went through all the collected data to get an understanding of the visual and textual data and its relation the research questions. By identifying the pattern-based analysis, the researcher was be able to identify prominent features of the data. In this process, the researcher broke down the data

into smaller parts according to the content presented then categorising the data to manageable themes and sub-themes. The identification was applied in relation to the objectives of the study and looked at the user reactions, brand engagement, messaging as well as other brand resonance relating practices. Once the researcher had refined and defined the themes the process of producing a report began (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

The researcher then compiled extract examples, identified in the themes and sub-themes to be presented in the support or opposing previous literature reviewed (Gamage, 2019). The analysis was related back to the analysis of the research questions and literature reviewed, to produce a report that contributes a theoretical relationship found in the research study (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

3.7. Limitations and delimitations

This research attempted to understand the influence of UGC on destination brand resonance however limited research exist that looks at the brand resonance component of UGC. Previous literature on UGC looked at the other elements of the Keller's Brand Equity Model, such as brand identity (Fatantia & Suyadny, 2015) and brand trust (Demba, 2016). While a recent study by Pihlainen (2017) looked at destination organisation's content co-creation practices. Although the researcher aimed to contribute to gaps identified in the literature, some limitations exist in this research.

The information available for data analysis was limited to the published UGC on Limpopo's Instagram account. The researcher did not look at the number of mentions on Instagram using the #GoLimpopo, therefore limiting the sample size. The sample size and the time parameter were delimitations set by the researcher that affected the partial significant connections within brand resonance and UGC was not be identified due to a larger sample size being required to influence accuracy (Sharma, 2017).

Additional to this the limited observed interaction between users in the comments, placed a limitation on this studies ability to capture emotions and reaction that cannot

be capture through an Instagram likes. Though in a digital platform the brand resonance can be explored through user reaction informed by number of likes.

Lastly, this research did not look at the reasons and motivations for UGC participation or practices on Instagram but sought out to look at the influence of UGC in building brand resonance. This placed a limitation on the researcher's ability to argue the level of loyalty as a brand resonance fundamental.

3.8. Conclusion

The shortcomings and conditions identified by the researcher that place restrictions on your methodology and conclusions. This influenced the researchers control but did not affect the significance of this study. The next chapter will discuss the finding of this research study as it sought out to determine the influence of UGC in building brand resonance.

4. Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion

This chapter is presenting the findings of the study conducted. In this section, the researcher demonstrates the influence of UGC based on the interpretation of data collected on the Go_Limpopo Instagram account. The researcher seeks to develop creative solutions to solve the research problem of how destination brands can utilize UGC to build brand resonance, through the observation of the interaction of users on Instagram and the interpretation of the research data. Salem and Twining-Ward (2018) encouraged destination brands to be innovative in their marketing communication due to UGC increasingly becoming the most trusted, vital, commonly used source of information for travellers. The researcher will illustrate how the research data relates to the literature review and attempts to address the research questions. The researcher reviewed the UGC Instagram posts of Go_Limpopo to gather themes in the data analysed. The following themes were identified and will be discussed visual elements, SAT travel pillars and textual descriptions.

To begin the chapter, the positioning of the Limpopo province amongst South African consumers will be discussed starting with the definition of brand positioning against aspects related to UGC published on Instagram. The aspects relating to UGC the content published was presented against the SAT travel pillars. After, aspects relating to UGC was presented, the of use of UGC by Limpopo to build brand resonance was presented and discussed. In the second half of the chapter the attention is shifted to discuss the content found on visual and textual media of the best performing posts in order to determine the level of influence on brand resonance. The chapter will end with a discussion of the relation of Limpopo province UGC against Keller's brand resonance framework is discussed.

During the conducted study, the content on Go_Limpopo's Instagram account was found to be published by the account owner destination brand Limpopo Tourism Agency, and other Instagram users. These other users were probable to be followers of Go_Limpopo's Instagram account, viewing posts published by Go_Limpopo's to their Instagram news feed. The Go_Limpopo's is an open Instagram account, which means the viewers may not only be subjected to the Go_Limpopo's followers thus other

Instagram users were observed to the collective UGC of this study. Consequently, as it could not be determined if all observed users were followers the terms users and user observed in UGC were employed in the following analysis. All of the observed Instagram posts comprised of a visual element, a photograph, or a short video. The visual elements included a combination of textual descriptions, geolocation tags, the @ sign as user mentions, and # sign as hashtags. All these variable types of textual are visible in Go_Limpopo's Instagram account.

The themes that were identified by the researcher are visual content, textual descriptions, and user's reactions. The following sections discussed UGC published on the Go_Limpopo Instagram account in relation to the themes. The first theme, visual content is discussed in relation the SAT travel pillars. The second theme, textual descriptions are discussed against the province position amongst South African consumers. Lastly, the theme user's reactions are considered in relation to the brand resonance framework.

4.1 Theme 1: Visual content

Visual content in this study refers to Instagram content in forms of; pictures, online videos and screenshots. Visual content is shared by destination marketers with the aim of shaping potential brand positioning. Brand positioning refers to the act of designing the destination brand components [intangible, tangible attributes] and brand image in an effort of occupying a distinctive place in the mind of the traveller (Seraphin, Zaman, Olver & Bourliataux-Lajoinie, 2018). Brand positioning is achieved through the destination brand's branding strategy and is considered successful when there is a strong similarity found in the traveller's perception of the destination and the desired brand identity (Pike & Mason, 2011). In this research study, the researcher observed the selection of visual content and textual descriptions was used to determine the desired brand positioning of Limpopo Tourism Agency. The visual UGC posted on Go_Limpopo was observed in line with the South African Tourism (SAT) Travel pillars. The destination brand positioning is discussed based on the Seraphin et al. (2018), definition looking at the brand components and brand image observed through UGC found on the Go_Limpopo's Instagram. The researcher looked at the intangible and

tangible elements found on the Go_Limpopo Instagram account to discuss the brand components.

The intangible tourism services and experiences offered by a destination increase the value of the images shown by the destination's brand. In the travel decision-making process, consumers conduct extensive research ranging from destination brand websites, third-party websites, and social media. Sonnleitner (2011) argues that images are becoming even more important than reality. Images include cognitive and affective evaluations, cognitive images work on the brand's connection and logical thinking while effective images are emotions led. For visual content to provoke a reaction it is required to have both cognitive and affective elements as UGC visual content are often formed in the absence of any commercial information. Through observation of the published posts on the Go_Limpopo Instagram account, the researcher observed commonalities in the visual content that is linked to the SAT travel pillars. As illustrated in figure 4.1 all 19 published posts shown the scenic beauty of the destination. When comparing the SAT travel pillars to the total number of likes per pillar, scenic beauty outperformed the other three pillars. Though the brand posted one active adventure image, the repost showing active adventure outperformed all three Wildlife Safari posts. This indicates that scenic beauty and active adventure connects better with the Limpopo consumer.

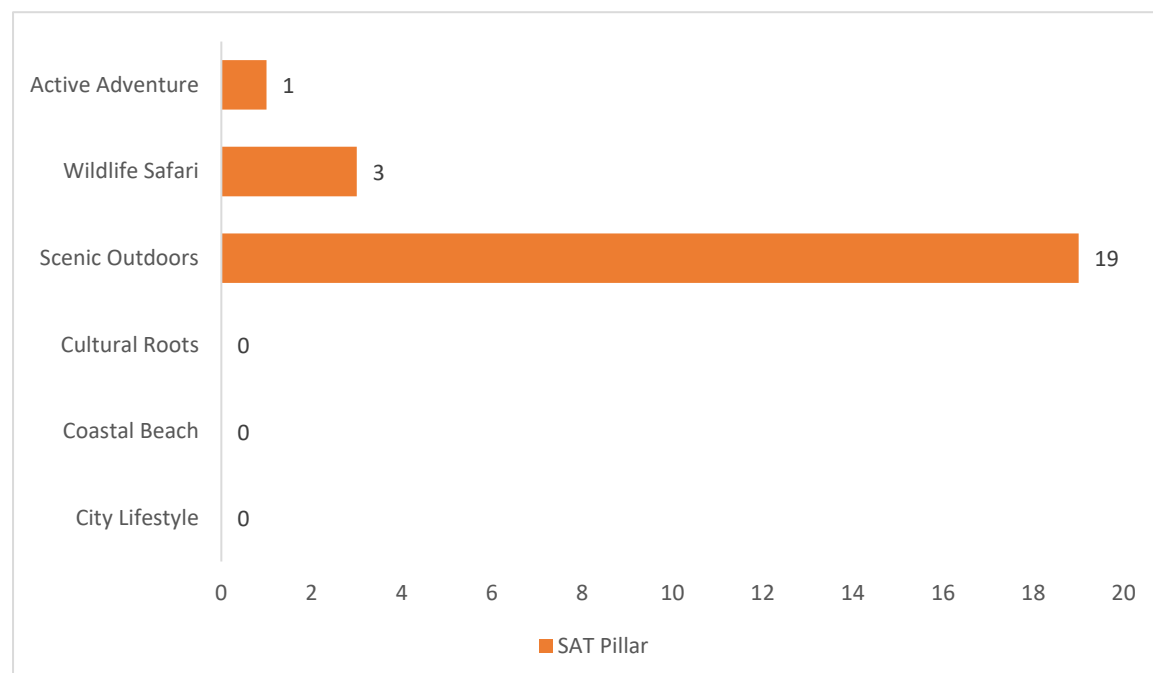


Figure 4.1: A table comparison of Go_Limpopo's Instagram account indicating the number of repost per SAT pillar published in of May 2017.

Figure 4.1 indicates that the common positioning travel pillars as defined by SAT were Scenic Outdoors, Wildlife and Active Adventure. The pillar Scenic Outdoors outperformed the other two pillars with all published posts found on the Go_Limpopo Instagram account showing experiences or services offered by the destination brand. In lure of the Covid-19 pandemic, the choice of visual content by Go_Limpopo can be argued to position the brand in a positive light. This can be supported by research conducted by Wachyuni and Kusmaningrum (2020) claiming that once travel restrictions are lifted, nature tourism will be the favourite experience or choice of travel. Supporting research finding by Prebensen, Skallerud and Chen (2010) who argues that in 2010 tourists' motivation to visit the mind-related motivations (culture and nature and escapism-related motivations) has increased. Recent research confirms this statement as Wachyuni and Kusmaningrum (2020) research found that due to aspects such as cleanliness, safety, limited crowds, and nature tourism will be the most popular attraction.

According to the previous Chief Executive Officer Nomasonto Ndlovu, Limpopo Tourism Agency, the destination brand seeks to position Limpopo brand beyond the eco and wildlife tourism assets. The destination brand seeks to encompass a more diverse offering a wide variety of amazing experiences to enjoy in Limpopo (Voyages Afriq. 2019). The observed UGC illustrate a disconnection between the variety of experiences shared by the users and the desired positioning. The observed UGC illustrated three of the six travel pillars as indicated in figure 4.1. The visual content presented the outdoor experiences for all 19 posts observed, the experiences ranged from game drives, hiking, food, and outdoor beverage experiences. However, the researcher found that there is a misalignment in the desire to show diverse experiences. The observed UGC posts showed the same experiences shared by the observed users

Besides the visual content, the studied post on Go_Limpopo's Instagram account included a textual description related to it. The next section looked at the LTA brand strategy. The researcher looked at the Instagram captions to discuss the theme textual

description under the brand personality and identity. Thus, the research question two on how the Limpopo province uses user-generated content to build brand resonance with the South African consumer was addressed.

4.2 Theme 2: Textual descriptions

The theme textual descriptions on the Go_Limpopo's Instagram is discussed against the destination brand's branding strategy. The core elements of a brand strategy consist of the brand purpose, values, brand personality, positioning, and brand identity (S  raphina et al. (2019). The entire experience the customer has is guided by the brand strategy through the brand personality, the collection of emotional and behavioural patterns unique to a brand. This is expressed through visuals and textual description on social media platforms. In this study the textual description in a form of captions is used to discuss the brand strategy of Limpopo Tourism Agency.

A caption assists the destination brand to explain or elaborate on the visual content or post. The visual content sparks interest while the caption conveys vital information. The choice of words used by the destination brand illustrates the destination brands personality and assists in strengthening brand positioning (Ahmed, Kumar, Baig, & Muhammad, 2015). A comparison of the visual content and caption reveals a story theme of escapism that compliments the nature-based experiences was recurring throughout the data set. This can be seen in captions such as "Marataba's breathtaking mountains, vast plains, rich animal diversity, and winding rivers.". The quoted caption by Limpopo province can be argued to resonate with the consumer, as researchers have found travellers seek to escape from everyday life (Valek & Fotiadis, 2019). The desire to escape and experience a service or product that they cannot partake in their everyday forms the basis of travel desire (Valek & Fotiadis, 2019).



Figure 4.2: A post of Go_Limpopo's Instagram account with caption narrating the moment captured that was published on the 14th of May 2021.

This can also be likened to the choice of hashtag used in the observed published post of figure 4.2. "#UnlikeAnyOther" appears in all published posts, the researcher was able to find similarities in the choice of positioning of South Africa. SAT identified six travel; pillars of which the marketing efforts to position South Africa as "a destination like no other" (Tourism Update, 2019). The consistency in the positioning communicated by the country and the province assists in differentiation, brand recall and tells the traveller what to expect from services and products within South Africa (Ahmed, Kumar, Baig & Muhammad, 2015).

Destination brands can build brand resonance through brand presence, targeted content, and brand engagement on social platforms (Salem & Twining-Ward, 2018). In this research study, the researcher observed textual descriptions were used to build brand resonance by Go_Limpopo's Instagram account. The textual descriptions UGC posted on Go_Limpopo was observed in line with brand presence, targeted content, and brand engagement on Instagram. The hashtags were discussed in relation to brand presences ending the section with geolocation discussed in relation to brand engagement. The researcher looked at the theme textual description in relation to the discussed targeted content, brand presences and brand engagement as approaches to building brand resonance for Limpopo Tourism Agency.

In the textual description the researcher found user mentions, geolocation tags and hashtags used by Go_Limpopo on the published posts. The textual descriptions of the UGC posts notified the mentioned user about the published post linking the user's Instagram account, thus widening the awareness of both the post and the Go_Limpopo Instagram account. Secondly, the geolocation tags attached to the post enabled users to search for additional posts published from the same location. Finally, the hashtag #GoLimpopo was observed to be sparingly used within the studied posts. Coelho, Oliveira, and Almeida (2016) argue that Instagram content that has been reported to have used a consistent hashtag, have shown to increase the activity of user reactions related to the posts. The researcher was able to observe as illustrated in figure 4.3 that through the user mentions, geolocation tags and hashtag the destination brand was able to increase social platforms.



Figure 4.3: A post on Go_Limpopo's Instagram indicating geolocation tagging and hashtags published on the 1st of May 2021.

In the figure 4.3 of the published post observed the researcher was able to observe the destination brand crediting the traveller. This can be seen in captions such as “📷 @user 3” and with the use of the hashtag “#Repost”. It can be argued that by acknowledging the users, the Limpopo province increases the brand exposure by

showcasing UGC. The well-planned Instagram repost assists the destination brand to build content and curate valuable user-generated content. Salem and Twining-Ward (2018) claim that UGC posted on social media platforms like Instagram provide the travel package and describe the travel experiences in a story format that is ideal for marketing destination brands. The UGC posted and observed on Go_Limpopo's Instagram account provided an opportunity for a new generation of tourism experiences that assist in the user making a connection between the photo and the location. This intern assists the LTA to build a deeper brand connection as Tasse (2017) claims that photos that have locations, could assist travellers to understand the destinations they are travelling to with little marketing efforts. The majority of the observed published posts found on the Go_Limpopo Instagram account had the geotagging of the establishment or the attraction where the UGC was taken. However, 4 of the published posts did not have geotags. This missed marketing opportunity affects branding as in marketing repetition is vital for brand recall and consistency is essential in brand messaging (Ahmed, Kumar, Baig & Muhammad, 2015).

Targeted communication accompanied by a brand engagement assist to strengthen brand resonance. Salem and Twining-Ward (2018) found that brands that engage with UGC, reviews and ratings build a strong brand loyalty through the user engagement. Engagement can also aid in indicating brands active presences on the social platform. The observed hashtag #GoLimpopo, enables the brand to track brand presences by searching #GoLimpopo on the Instagram feeds. The hashtag also enables the brand to gain benefits from the social media presence by incorporating the users' content on Instagram as observed in figure 4.4. This supports the recommendation by Salem and Twining-Ward (2018) that encourages destination brands to leverage on UGC to create a memorable impression on consumers. Through the use of the hashtag, LTA increases brand presence on Instagram benefiting from one of the benefits as per a survey conducted by Sprout social in 2018 which found that strong presence on social platforms revealed that 65% of consumers feel more connected to brands. Based on the observed UGC the researcher found that the LTA targeted content and brand engagement to increase brand presences.



Figure 4.4: A post on Go_Limpopo’s Instagram indicating brand engagement through comments published on the 19th of May 2021.

The researcher found strong similarities in the themes visual content and textual description. The findings in the textual descriptions theme supported the visual content theme posted on the Go_Limpopo Instagram account. The results suggest that the positioning of Limpopo province compliments the country’s positioning as per SAT travel pillars. This is due to the consistency in the visual and textual descriptions found on the observed UGC with SAT’s positioning. The next section looked at the third theme user’s reactions this was in relation the published UGC by Limpopo province against Keller’s brand resonance framework. This was conducted in attempt to answer the research question; what influence user-generated content has on building brand resonance for the Limpopo province’ destination brand against Keller’s brand resonance framework.

4.3 Theme 3: User’s reactions

The theme user’s reactions were observed in the published UGC was found to be practiced in likes of the posts and comments within the comment fields of the posts. The re-reactions towards other users’ reactions were found in the comments, in a form of mentioning other users whose comment caused the re-reaction.

After the post by @user 1 was published by LTA the researcher was able to analyse the user reacts. In addition to words, the theme users reactions were often found to contain emojis portraying body reaction in symbols. It was observed that the tagged user showed appreciation of the post in the words “Wow, Thank you” and emojis “❤️ ❤️”. While another user praised and tagged another Instagram account with added the emojis “👏🔥👏”. The positive interactions observed in the post influence brand trust and increase customer advocacy (Keller, 2013). In addition to user engagement, Go_Limpopo was also observed liking the comments on the social media post. This assists the brand in building brand resonance as social media management assist in retaining and increasing follower count as it displays a two-way communication between the brand and the Instagram user.

The following section took a closer look at the UGC in relation to the different aspects of brand resonances brought up in the theoretical framework of Keller (2013). Firstly, the researcher discussed and presented all 19 posts on the Go_Limpopo Instagram account in relation to the six aspects on Keller’s brand resonance framework. Each aspect was discussed in relation to the visual and textual data collected. Finally, the influence of UGC on the Limpopo’s brand resonance was presented within the tourism literature and deliberated using the theme user’s reaction. The researcher analysed the brand resonance of Limpopo province in the context of user’s reaction to the UGC post on the Go_Limpopo Instagram account.

Resonance in reference to this study refers to the level of social media engagement based on the user’s reactions when observing the content shared by the destination brand Limpopo. The resonance is determined by the Instagram user’s knowledge and connection with Limpopo province that results in the traveller actively amplifying the UGC content by sharing their experiences with their followers (Tafesse & Wien, 2016). This assists the destination brand in reaching potential traveller and providing relevant content that resonates with the targeted audience.

According to Tafesse and Wien (2016), social media posts that illustrate brand resonance are posts that drive attention to the brand promise and brand identity. The

posts seek to differentiate while positioning the destination brand in a favourable light in the minds of consumers. In this study, the researcher sought out to demonstrate the application of brand resonance framework based on user's reaction in the data collected by analysing the textual descriptions found on the Instagram post. This resulted in collecting 19 published posts, including post published date, textual descriptions, hashtags, geolocation tags, likes and comments per post. A screen shot of each post was taken and the textual data was subcategorised according to salience, performance, visual content, judgement, feelings and resonance. Figure 4.5 shows the UGC published posts found on the Go_Limpopo against Keller's brand resonance framework. Salience was determined by the users tagging the Go_Limpopo Instagram account, performance looked that the caption used by Go_Limpopo to explain the offerings of the destination brand. Visual content was observed using the SAT brand travel pillars while Judgement looked at the number of comments and Feelings looked at the number of likes. Lastly the resonance was determined by looking at the Instagram users and how they interact with the services and experiences offered by the destination brand.

Post	Salience	Performance	Visual content	Judgment	Feelings	Resonance
14.05.2021	@go_limpopo	Marataba's breathtaking mountains, vast plains, rich animal diversity, and winding rivers. 📍@ User 1, Limpopo Province. #GoLimpopo #UnlikeAnyOther	Scenic Outdoors	1	99	User 1
19.05.2021	@go_limpopo	📍Muanalo trail, @ User2 #GoLimpopo #UnlikeAnyOther 📷 @ User 2	Scenic Outdoors	11	180	User 2
01.05.2021	@go_limpopo	#Repost @ User 3 #GoLimpopo #UnlikeAnyOther	Scenic Outdoors	0	129	User 3
21.05.2021	@go_limpopo	Echo Caves #Repost @ User 4 #UnlikeAnyOther #GoLimpopo	Scenic Outdoors	1	100	User 4
26.05.2021	@go_limpopo	Our beautiful Limpopo. #Repost @ User 5	Scenic Outdoors	1	89	User 5

		#UnlikeAnyOther #GoLimpopo				
06.05.2021	@go_limpopo	LimpopovSunrise #UnlikeAnyOther 📍 Klaserie Drift Safari Camp, Limpopo Province. Reservations Email: talitha@klaseriedrift.co.za Website: www.klaseriedrift.co.za Telephone: +27 15 793 3521/ 2077 or +27 82 456 0673 #GoLimpopo #UnlikeAnyOther 📷 @ User_6	Scenic Outdoors	4	241	User 6
05.05.2021	@go_limpopo	The famous lightning tree at King Walden Manor. #GoLimpopo #UnlikeAnyOther 📷 @ User 7	Scenic Outdoors	2	127	User 7
12.05.2021	@go_limpopo	Work retreats and remote working sessions are done differently at Mountain Fly Fishing. #GoLimpopo #UnlikeAnyOther 📷 @ User_8	Scenic Outdoor	1	119	User 8
21.05.2021	@go_limpopo	Waterfall shower after a morning 🌲 hike👉👉#Repost @ User 9 #GoLimpopo #UnlikeAnyOther	Scenic Outdoors; Active Adventure	16	645	User 9
17.05.2021	@go_limpopo	#Repost @ User_10 #GoLimpopo #unlikeanyother	Scenic Outdoors	0	86	User 10
10.05.2021	@go_limpopo	#Repost @ User 11 #GoLimpopo #UnlikeAnyOther	Scenic Outdoors.	1	138	User 11
10.05.2021	@go_limpopo	📍 Lira Boutique Lodge, Limpopo Province. For bookings https://liraboutique.co.za/contact/ #GoLimpopo #UnlikeAnyOther 📷 @ User 12	Scenic Outdoors	4	376	User 12
13.05.2021	@go_limpopo	📍 Sun Meropa	Scenic Outdoors	0	91	User 13

		Will be the host venue for the homecoming celebration for @TTM Original . #GoLimpopo #UnlikeAnyOther  @ User_13				
18.05.2021	@go_limpopo	#Repost @ User 14 Sunset game drives #UnlikeAnyOther #GoLimpopo	Scenic Outdoors; Wildlife Safari and	0	85	User 14
19.05.2021	@go_limpopo	#Repost @ User 15 #UnlikeAnyOther #GoLimpopo	Scenic Outdoors	0	129	User 15
19.05.2021	@go_limpopo	#Repost @ User 16 #UnlikeAnyOther #GoLimpopo	Scenic Outdoors; Wildlife Safari	2	78	User 16
24.05.2021	@go_limpopo	Sbwl🤩🤩! Taking in the warm sun🌻🌻 in a cozy spot after chilling in the pool is always fulfilling. #Repost @ User_17 #GoLimpopo #UnlikeAnyOther	Scenic Outdoors	1	214	User 17
25.05.2021	@go_limpopo	#Repost @ User18 #GoLimpopo #UnlikeAnyOther	Scenic Outdoors; Wildlife Safari	1	158	User 18
20.05.2021	@go_limpopo	Peaceful escape😊😊. #Repost @ User 19 #UnlikeAnyOther #GoLimpopo	Scenic Outdoors	0	138	User 19

Figure 4.5: A table of 19 published posts found on the Go_Limpopo account in the month of May 2021 against Keller's brand resonance framework.

Keller (2011) stated, for brands to reach brand resonance a strong brand awareness which is the foundation of the brand resonance framework is required. The first aspect observed in the research data collected focused on salience, the representation aspects of brand awareness that result in purchase and consumption situations when

considering the destination brand (Keller, 2001). It can be argued that salience affects brand recall, when observing Go_Limpopo's published posts. It could be assumed that brand awareness achieved among the 19 users who formed the UGC post for this study. The assumption was informed by users travelling to the different destination offerings and tagging the destination brand. Additional to the 19 users the observed number of users reaction found in the published posts, likes, and comments provide evidence to brand awareness, as users can only like or comment on posts visible to them. However, the likes and comments cannot attest to brand the recognition as Keller (2001) suggests consumers respond more favourably to a product whose brand is identified. This exists when the consumer has a high level of brand awareness. Therefore, only Instagram users with high level of brand awareness will then progress to the second aspect of the pyramid to potentially influence choice, which will be explained concerning figure 4.6 as illustrated below.

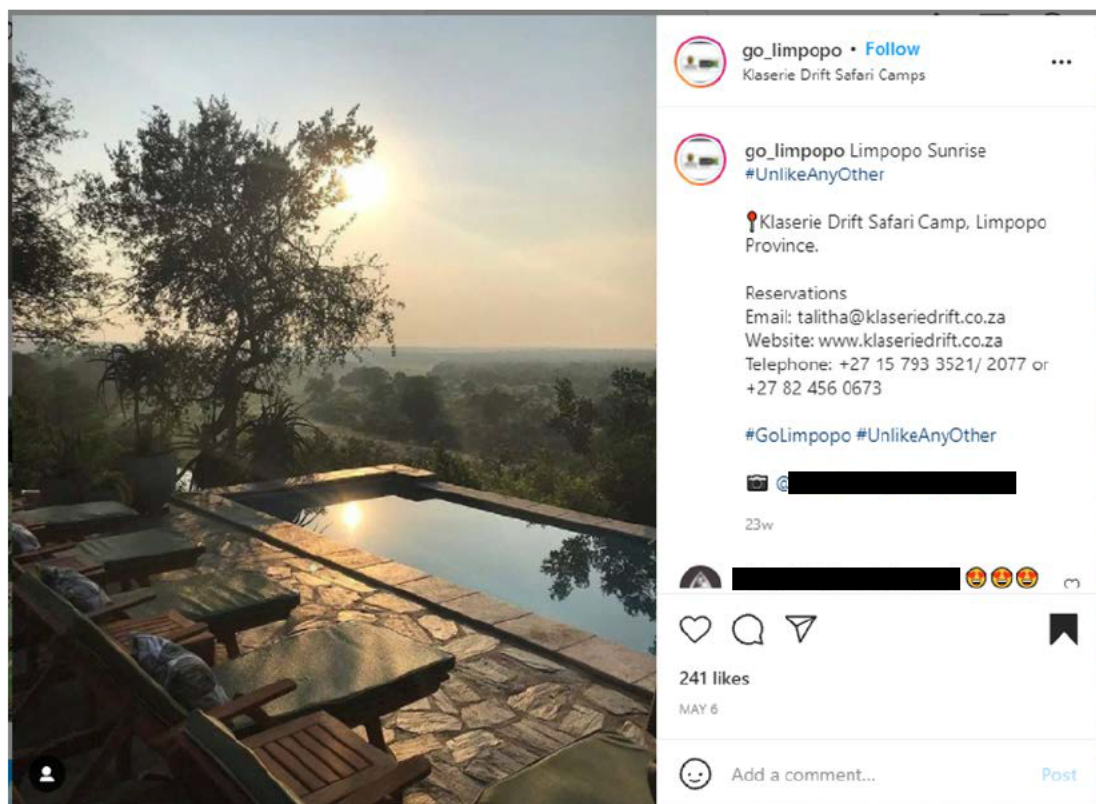


Figure 4.6: A post on Go_Limpopo's Instagram of Klaserie Drift Safari Camps published on the 6th of May 2021.

The second aspect observed was focused on performance. The researcher observed the posts that promote the benefits of destination brands offering according to product specifications (Tafesse & Wien, 2016). In reference to figure 4.6, the UGC content by Go_Limpopo illustrates a sunrise image taken by @ User 6. The post provides functional needs such as a pool area, chairs and a scenic venue and emotional needs such as relaxation and a sense of escape. Informed by the argument by Keller (2001), a positively firmed performance is considered a success based on the level of emotional brand connections reflected. Thus, it can be stated that figure 4.6 had a positive performance when taking the argument by Keller (2001) into account. In addition to this, two of the highest performing published posts show the functionality of the destination offering, alluding to positive associations and connections to the UGC content of the destination. In the caption, the visual content has a call to action and tagging of the establishment to drive further engagement. In other observed caption, the destination brand is observed as communicating how the brand meets emotional needs. This is seen in words such as “Sbwl🥰🥰! Taking in the warm sun🌻🌻 in a cozy spot after chilling in the pool is always fulfilling.” and “Work retreats and remote working sessions are done differently at Mountain Fly Fishing.”. The researcher observed positive user reaction to published posts that displayed the feeling of escape, relaxation, and nature. The published posts that stated it through textual descriptions were found to have less likes. It can be argued that users react more to visual posts portraying functional and emotional needs rather than textual descriptions.

The third aspect observed was focused on judgement and feelings, which focused on the customers personal opinions derived from the different performance and visual content associations (Keller, 2011). In this research, the judgement and feelings were observed using brand experience, the evaluation of judgement, feelings, perceptions, and behavioural responses to a brand-related stimulus UGC content. The researcher seeks to display the relationship between the UGC, consumer response and brand resonance. Varjonen (2018) argued that the consumer is not required to be personally involved in the consumption to be able to experience the destinations offering. This is evident in the social media posts when observing the user’s behavioural aspect of the brand interaction through the re-posts indicate and increased users reactions in posts where consumers are shown experiencing the brand. One can observe customer

delight through the number of likes and brand involvement through the comments (Varjonen, 2018).

Brand posts are often used to build brand awareness through functional and educational brand posts (Tafesse & Wien, 2017), However, Volkan (2017) emphasises that destination attributes alone are no longer a significant differentiator. This can be seen in engagement levels of experiential posts and UGC posts that were showing involving or based on experience. Figure 4.7 below shows the number of likes and comments per repost on the Go_Limpopo Instagram account for May 2021. Three of the five highest-performing posts of the observed published posts are experiential posts. This can be argued to be relevant thus connecting better with the consumer.

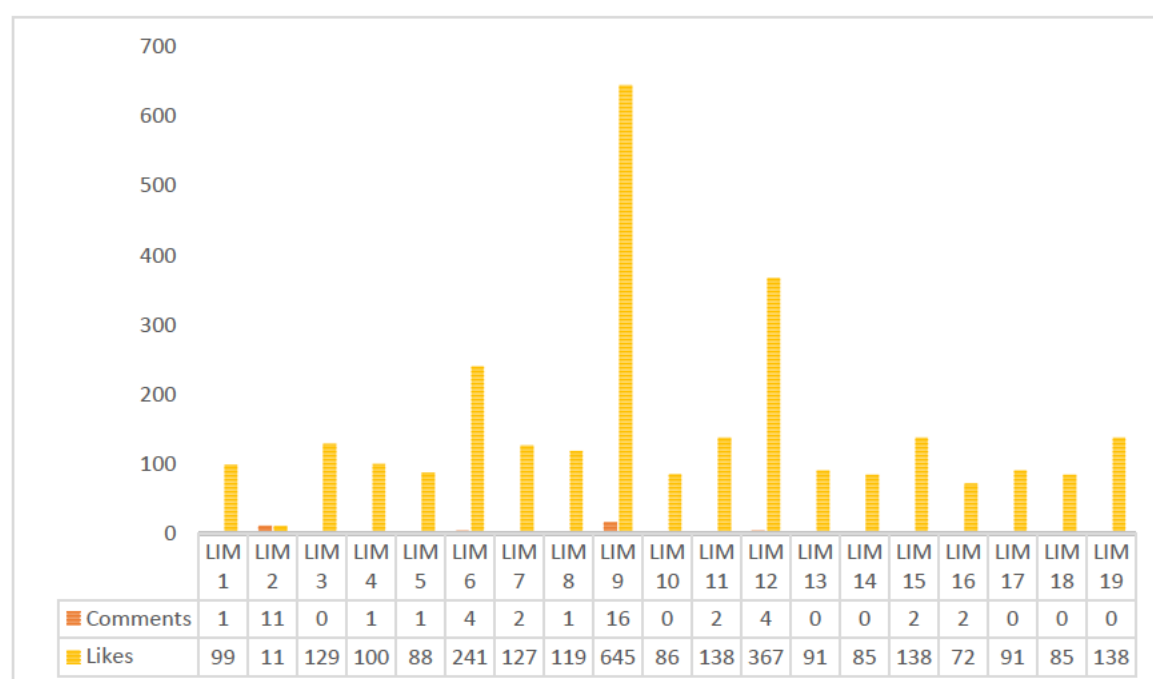


Figure 4.7: A figure on Go_Limpopo's Instagram comparing the number of likes and comments found the 19 published posts in the month of May 2021.

The level of actively engaged consumers reflects brand loyalty, as they are more probable to recommend the destination and become brand advocates (Raut, 2016). It has also been found that engaged consumers are willing to invest more in brands than lower engaged consumers (Raut, 2016). The figure 4.8 was observed with the highest level of engagement when reviewing the likes and comments of the research data. These experiential published posts highlighted the sensory and embodied qualities of the destination brand that can be associated with the brand as well as with a

pleasurable nature-based escape/experience. According to Tafesse and Wien (2017), experiential brand posts have a powerful messaging strategy that allows the brand to create a rich and authentic brand experience on their social media platforms. Which according to tourism travel trends will drive consumer demand post the travel restrictions (Rogerson & Rogerson, 2021).



Figure 4.8: A post on Go_Limpopo's Instagram of user in Magoebaskloof published on the 21st of May 2021

Together these aspects discussed, and results provide important insight into brand resonance posts being vital in destination brands positioning when compared to UGC as it creates a positive brand image and associations. On social media, UGC posts indicate brand resonance as consumers' commonly use brands to build and project their self-identity on social platforms (Tafesse & Wien, 2016).

4.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, research findings were discussed in relation to the emerging themes from the studied data. The literature reviewed and the brand resonance framework was applied to address the key issues of the research problem. The first key finding was that brand LTA brand positioning will work in favour of the destination brand. Researchers argue that consumer demand and behavioural changes will move destinations that meet specific nature tourism and outdoor recreation to the top of consumers choice (Rogerson & Rogerson, 2021). Though the visual content may work to the Limpopo province advantage based on the current consumer trends. It is important to note that the choice of visual content for a destination has a potential implication on the destination as customers' cultural differences influence how an image is perceived (Sonnleitner, 2011).

The second key finding was that brand LTA published posts allowed the brand to be seen as relatable and in synch with the consumer. The choice of images discussed under the theme visual content did not display branded marketing content. Which according to Sprout social (2018) allows the consumer to connect with the brand. The fostered brand connection leads to brand resonance thus one can argue that UGC may have an implication on destination brand resonance.

The final finding indicated that brand LTA posts that showed experiential content evoked consumers' sensory and behavioural responses This was observed in the theme user's reaction through the number of likes and comments per post. Brand resonance published posts linked the brand with pleasurable consumer experiences creating an attractive brand positioning.

4.5 Validity and reliability / trustworthiness

In qualitative research the quality criteria apply to all qualitative designs, credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Credibility provides the confidence within the truth of the research findings, ensuring that the research findings represent are collected, interpreted, and delivers plausible information (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). In this study this was achieved through the persistent observation of the Limpopo Instagram account. The researcher identified characteristics that are most appropriate to the research problem. The researcher

elaborated the behaviour and experiences to provide meaning to the data collect. This assisted in ensuring research transferability to other frameworks or surroundings with another research subjective (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). The researcher has transparently described the research steps taken within the study to ensure that the research path is kept throughout. This ensured dependability and confirmability of the study. The extent to which the evaluation and interpretation of the findings for study can be confirmed by other researchers, thus making the finding clearly derived from the data. (Korstjens & Moser, 2018).

4.6 Conclusion

In this chapter presented an argumentation of the results obtained though the themes derived from the data and the measures of trustworthiness. The data analysis assisted in the objective's discussions and outcomes of this study. The following chapter will contain of the final conclusion in relation to the research questions and ethical considerations.

5 Chapter 5: Conclusion

The researcher set out to answer the main research question on how destination brands can utilize UGC to build brand resonance. The destination brand of choice was Limpopo province and the observed UGC was found on the social media platform Instagram. The main research question was then broken down into three research questions as an attempt to gather data. This chapter presents a summary of this study's main research findings. In addition, it discusses the ethical considerations partaken in this study by the researcher. Finally, the chapter will end with future research areas that can be suggested for future studies. The next section discussed the literature and research findings in lure of the three research questions for this study.

5.1 Research question 1 - How the Limpopo province position their destination brands amongst South African consumers?

In Chapter 3, the role of a destination brand was found to be used to identify and differentiate products or services of destination brands from those of its competitors, achieved through the destination brands strategy (Költringer & Dickinger, 2015). Argument by Séraphina et al. (2019) states that a branding strategy is more effective when it capitalises on emotions and connections of the visitors. The destination brand strategy combines with brand-related components in a tourist destination as a vital element for the connection, one of the key requirements for brand resonance (Hwa-Kyung & Lee, 2018). It was agreed based on literature and the finding of this study, that brand strategy and brand components influenced the destination brand Limpopo's brand positioning for South African consumers.

In the observed data the researcher found a consistency in countries marketing efforts of the brand positing of South Africa as "a destination like no other" and Go_Limpopo's use of the hashtag #UnlikeAnyOther. The hashtag found in figure 4.2 was consist across all 19 published posts observed. This consistency assists destination brands to be easily recognisable across all marketing channels and touch points. The

cohesive consistent brand communication displays a united experience for travellers' expectation.

The researcher further found consistency in the published UGC visuals on the Go_Limpopo Instagram account. The visuals were sub-categories using SAT travel pillars. The findings revealed, 19 Scenic outdoor images, 3 wildlife images and 1 active advantage images image as seen in figure 4.1. The choice of published visuals reflected the discussions found in chapter 2 on the future travel trends and desirable destination brand post the travel restrictions. Additional to this observation, in chapter 4, a diverse offering of outdoor experience was observed in the visual images and the textual descriptions that encourage a nature based "escape" messaging.

Finally, the findings reveal a discount in the destination brands desire to reposition the brand proposition beyond the eco and wildlife tourism assets. The published UGC for the month of May 2021 did not incorporate a more diverse offering for visitors outside the three pillars, Active adventure, Wildlife safari and scenic outdoors. The findings indicate that the Limpopo province position in South African consumers' minds still remains a destination brand that offers eco and wildlife tourism products and experiences. To remediate this issue, the LTA would be required to publish UGC of users experiencing other diverse offerings unique to the destination brand found in the other 3 SAT travel pillars. In addition to this recommendation, the publish UGC would also need to be up-to-date and spread evenly among the product and experiences offerings of the destination brand.

The next section will answer the second research question on Limpopo province utilising UGC building brand resonance with the South African consumer.

5.2 Research question 2– How can Limpopo province utilizes user-generated content to build brand resonance with the South African consumer?

In chapter 3, it was reviewed that consumers engage with UGC more because of UGC's uniqueness and authentic manner of showcasing the brand (Albăstroiu &

Felea, 2014). It was found in this study that LTA uses UGC to increase brand engagement through user mention as per figure 4.4 this resulted in users engaging in comments and further tagging other users. Consumers trust and engage with UGC more because of UGC's uniqueness and authentic manner of showcasing the brand (Albăstroiu & Felea, 2014), trusted brand foster an emotional connection that build brand resonance (Tarigan et al., 2019).

Brand resonance can be achieved in two ways: rational (brand performance and judgement) and emotional (brand imagery and feelings). This is when the consumer feels a deep psychological connection with the destination brand (Tarigan et al., 2019). The findings revealed that Go_Limpopo's Instagram account used captions to provide rational and emotional information about the destination brand. Rational benefits were described using "Work retreats and remote working sessions are done differently at Mountain Fly Fishing.". Emotional features were described using "Sbwl" a local slang term from the Xhosa language, meaning crave, desire, yearn. Other words include "cozy" a word describing comfort, warmth, and relaxation. Though the rational and emotional features of the destination brand were highlighted.

Further findings indicate that some of the observed published post by Go_Limpopo textual description did not clearly provide detailed tourism information. Narrative information that could not be found in the visual content was not found in the textual description as per figure 4.3. Though Limpopo province made use of UGC, the province did not strengthen their brand messaging by describing the visual content providing meaning of the visual to build brand resonance. LTA's captions failed to provide content that was informative yet portrayed a feeling, thought or memory.

The next section will answer the final research question on the influence UGC in building brand resonance with the South African consumer.

5.3 Research question 3 - What influence does user-generated content have on building brand resonance for the Limpopo province against Keller's brand resonance framework?

As reviewed in chapter 3, social media engagement and brand mentions determine brand impact on Instagram (Twining-Ward, 2018). The use of UGC has been found to increase social engagement and display the brand as relatable. In Chapter 4 it was discussed that LTA's published posts allowed the brand to be seen as relatable and in synch with the consumer through the visual choice showing experiential content evoked consumers' sensory and behavioural responses. The researcher observed pleasurable consumer experiences observed in the number of likes and the comments on each published post. The post displaying experiential content were among the highest performing published posts. This finding was further revealed some Instagram users resonated with the UGC posted on Go_Limpopo's Instagram account. This was observed through the them users' reactions, through emojis such "❤️ ❤️", indicating love and "👏👏👏" displaying praise and appreciation.

The influence of brand resonance on the Go_Limpopo Instagram account can only be argued in reaction to the users exposed to the specific post by Go_Limpopo. Therefore, limiting the conclusion of this research question. To be able to determine resonance among South African consumers, one would need to analyse the performance of the #GoLimpopo hashtag over a longer period with a wider sample size. This will enable the researcher to track the mentions and sentiments across a wider pool of user on the Instagram platform. The limitations of this study informed the suggestions of findings for future practices. This will be discussed in the next section.

5.4 Implications of findings for future practices

This research study provided new knowledge on UGC and its influence on destination brands. Furthermore, during the course of development of the research, it was acknowledged that in order to be able to determine the extent of how the UGC published posts-built brand resonance more information was required. This could have been achieved by tracking the number of brand's mentions and review the comments on Instagram using the hashtag #GoLimpopo. Finally, research can be conducted to expand the brand equity model by analysing other variables such as brand loyalty and brand trust.

5.5 Conclusion

The study was carried out with the aim of answers the three research questions on

how UGC can be utilised to build brand resonance for the Limpopo provide.

The researcher found a relationship between destination brand positioning of LTA and South Africa as a country. The interactive nature of Instagram provided the destination brand with an opportunity to incorporate UGC while communicating their brand mantra “Unlike any other”. The published textual descriptions were discovered to be related; however, the visuals were found to be opposing to the desired positioning of offering a variety of experiences.

The strongest relationship was found between the UGC visual posted on the Go_Limpopo Instagram account with the consumer demand and travel trends post-travel restrictions. As researchers argue that consumer demand and behavioural changes post travel restrictions will move destinations that meet specific nature tourism and outdoor recreation to the top of consumers choice (Rogerson & Rogerson, 2021).

The theme user reaction was found to frequently incorporate user mentioning, thus, to expanding the audience and brand awareness. The increasing destination image awareness through UGC was found to increase perceived trustworthiness as per the literature discussions. The findings further revealed that published posts displaying experiential content resonated with the Instagram users. However, the researcher observed the relations between brand resonance and UGC to be the weakest based on sample size and the time parameter.

5.6 Ethical considerations

Research ethics refers to the scientific morality in research practice, the guidelines, basic norms, and values within the research field (Dooly, Moore & Vallejo, 2017). The ethical considerations within research encompasses, consent, participation, confidentiality, anonymity, and other components in research practice. To ensure that the researcher will conduct the study in an ethical manner, a submission to the ethics committee is requested to obtain authorisation for the study. Obtaining research consent and ensuring voluntary participation are one of the vital elements when

conducting research with participants (Dooly, Moore & Vallejo, 2017). This has been found to be different when conducting research on a public online communication. A public online communication is likened to research of publicly available documents and does not require informed consent (Dooly, Moore & Vallejo, 2017). However, previous author Udenze (2019) argued if consent is required for a public platform such as Instagram, as there is an acknowledgement that the platform being made public is intended for the propose of social norms (Udenze, 2019). Thus, it is assumed that the consent is published within the public platform based on the public accessibility of a particular Instagram account. Informed by the statement by Udeze (2019) the data that will be collected in this study has consent as the Instagram account is openly available for Instagram users including internet users. This study applied anonymity as none of the users being observed in the study will be identifiable and the information gathered will only be used for academic purposes. Additional to this, this study was conducted once approval was obtained from the ethics committee.

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Appendices:

Appendix A: Ethical Clearance Form

Appendix B: Excel of UGC content published on Go_Limpopo Instagram