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How opinion leaders and operators communicate the image of the sustainable tourism destination

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Abstract: Spiritual and cultural routes represent an example of a sustainable tourist destination, meaning a destination with the goal of generating economic activity while simultaneously safeguarding environmental and cultural heritage. In this regard, the Region of Sardinia, through its cultural and spiritual routes, is trying to counter mass tourism and promote the development of slow and sustainable tourism. In light of the region's objectives, it is interesting to understand how the image of the sustainable destination of Sardinia's spiritual and cultural routes is perceived and communicated. Specifically, the aim is to understand the image that emerges from the communication of opinion leaders and operators. To achieve the research objective, a mixed-method QUAL-QUAL approach was used, combining auto-photography with participant observation. Auto-photography was used to analyse destination photographs shared by opinion leaders and operators to understand how the image of the sustainable destination was communicated. In addition, participant observation was conducted to enhance the study's insights through the engagement and direct observation of participants' experiences. The integration of these two methodologies allowed us to establish the overall destination image. From the research results, it is evident that the overall image portrays a model of slow, experiential, and sustainable tourism. However, the results demonstrated that it needs to be further developed to fully realize its potential. Participant observation revealed that Sardinia is trying to preserve its authenticity and promote slow and sustainable tourism. Still, several challenges have surfaced including limited development, absence of laws to facilitate tourism activities, the need for new professional roles, and slow bureaucracy. The auto-photography revealed that opinion leaders and operators communicate aspects related to slow tourism through photographs, such as the pleasant, uncomplicated, and unhurried experiences. Nevertheless, the communication remains fairly standard, failing to emphasize the destination image's sustainability, but focusing on aspects related to the cognitive dimension (e.g., beautiful scenery, a variety of fauna, and religious elements). From a theoretical perspective, the subject of sustainable destination image has been relatively underexplored, particularly within the context of cultural and spiritual routes. From a managerial perspective, this study provides insights into the image communicated and promoted by opinion leaders and operators.

This enables organizations to assess whether the intended image aligns with that perceived by visitors and, if necessary, adjust their strategies accordingly.

Keywords: *cultural route; destination image; tourism; opinion leader; sustainable destination*

1. Introduction

Growing concerns about the consequences of tourism activity on the environment drive the tourism sector to adopt responsible and sustainable practices that ensure the protection and preservation of the natural environment and cultural heritage, contributing to a better quality of life (Dayoub et al., 2019; Fafouti et al., 2023). In a tourism development strategy, the role of sustainability is to protect and reveal what already exists, rather than to consume (Fafouti et al., 2023). Consequently, there is a current shift away from mass tourism towards the promotion of slow tourism, which emphasises the travel experience without complications, rush, or inconvenience (Dayoub et al., 2019). Within the framework of slow and sustainable tourism, cultural and spiritual routes are included as valuable tourism assets, capable of attracting visitors and stimulating economic activity, all the while safeguarding both the environmental and cultural heritage (Trono & Oliva, 2021; Fafouti et al., 2023). These routes play a pivotal role not only in economic development but also in environmental conservation, managing the human impact on destinations (Strauss & Lord, 2001), and converting natural and cultural resources, as well as sacred places, into heritage and assets (Trono & Oliva, 2021). Therefore, enhancing the competitiveness of tourism destinations requires the adoption of sustainable management approaches (Almeida-Santana & Moreno-Gil, 2019).

All these factors have a significant impact on the image of a tourist destination, which is the overall impression that tourists hold about a place (Kotler et al., 1993; Jeong & Holland, 2012). Strategies are necessary to convey a sustainable destination image to visitors. Over the past two decades, academics have expressed concerns about destination image (Koltringer & Dickinger, 2015). In this context, opinion leaders play a pivotal role as their communications and promotions influence consumer decision-making, thereby shaping the destination's image considerably (Nogueira et al., 2021). According to Nunes et al. (2018), opinion leaders' persuasive abilities prompt their followers to reconsider their attitudes and modify their decision-making process. In comparison to conventional sources, which often adhere solely to marketing principles, the content shared by opinion leaders has a more pronounced impact on consumers' perception of the destination's image (Palazzo et al., 2019).

The existing literature on sustainable destination image is generally limited (e.g., Almeida-Santana & Moreno-Gil, 2019), with even fewer studies focusing on the destination image communicated by opinion leaders or operators. Consequently, there is a need for further exploration in this area.

In light of this, the objective of this paper is to comprehend the image of a sustainable destination as perceived by opinion leaders and operators (e.g., archaeological guides, photographers). Specifically, the study focuses on the cultural and spiritual routes within the Region of Sardinia. This region has been actively resisting mass tourism to promote the development of slow and sustainable tourism. To achieve this goal, the region has launched the "Noi camminiamo in Sardegna" event ("We walk in Sardinia"), which allows tourists to explore pilgrimage destinations and the enchanting villages of the island at a leisurely pace. This paper aims to understand the perception of Sardinia through the perspective of opinion leaders and operators who participated in the cultural and spiritual routes of the "Noi camminiamo in Sardegna" event.

To fulfil the research objective, researchers attended the event, and opinion leaders and participating operators were invited to capture spontaneous photos during the event days and share them with the research team. The auto-photography methodology, an ethnographic research method, was employed to analyse this visual data derived from the photographs, revealing the intentions of the

subjects while taking the photographs (Thomas, 2009). The photographs taken by opinion leaders and operators during the event days were categorized based on the cognitive and affective dimensions of the destination image model (Beerli & Martin, 2004). This method facilitated the identification of the overall image of Sardinia, particularly concerning the cultural and religious routes, as perceived and communicated by the participants.

The study carries significant implications from both theoretical and managerial perspectives. Theoretically, this study addresses a gap in the literature by focusing on the image of sustainable tourist destinations as conveyed by opinion leaders and operators. Furthermore, it contributes to a broader understanding of sustainable destination image. From a managerial standpoint, this study aids in comprehending the destination image portrayed and promoted by opinion leaders and operators. This insight enables organizations to gain a comprehensive understanding of whether the conceived image aligns with the one perceived by visitors and, if necessary, to adjust their strategies accordingly.

The article is structured as follows: Section 2 provides background information, Section 3 details the methodology, Section 4 presents the research findings, and Section 5 encompasses discussions, conclusions, theoretical and managerial implications, as well as limitations and areas for future research.

2. Literature review and theoretical framework

2.1. Cultural and spiritual routes

In contemporary society, certain cultural tourist itineraries have progressively evolved into successful destinations, attracting a continuous influx of thousands of visitors throughout the year. These cultural routes have acquired symbolic importance, aligning with the emerging trend of independent and experiential tourism globally. Their significance predominantly aligns with the tourism sector, with numerous initiatives in Italy targeting religious and slow tourism markets, indicating their growing influence in current approaches (Mariotti et al., 2021; Trono & Oliva, 2021).

Responsible tourism practices advocate a shared responsibility between visitors and local communities, emphasizing the safeguarding and preservation of natural landscapes and cultural heritage, thereby enhancing the overall quality of life (Fafouti et al., 2023). Consequently, these routes transform into cultural endeavours, benefiting both visitors and the concerned territory. Their impacts extend to employment, with the creation of new job opportunities, and fosters local awareness regarding the importance of their cultural and environmental heritage. This, in turn, encourages an active involvement in conservation and protection, strengthening community cohesion (Fafouti et al., 2023).

The cultural route operates as a flexible structure (Bogacz-Wojtanowska & Góral, 2018), assuming the characteristics of a network (nodes), adapting to regional needs, resident insights, their accumulated knowledge, perceptions of specific locations, and the envisioned identity of communities (Bogacz-Wojtanowska et al., 2019). The fundamental reference point in heritage management is the individuals, who, by constructing a storytelling based on memories and past tales, create ecosystems around these stories (Bogacz-Wojtanowska & Góral, 2018).

Cultural itineraries form part of the broader cultural tourism domain, designed to educate and acknowledge the value and essence of cultural resources within tourist destinations (Mousavi et al., 2016). These routes embody the location's identity (Lemmettyinen et al., 2021), serving as vehicles for the conservation of cultural resources and uncovering the values intrinsic to heritage, encompassing natural landscapes, traditions, historical and architectural values through distinct routes and experiential encounters (Özer & Üstündağ, 2021).

Moreover, combining different tourist attractions into a unified product proves more attractive to potential tourists than singular elements (Krogmann et al., 2023), offering a new model for cultural engagement (Bogacz-Wojtanowska & Góral, 2018). These routes embody an innovative travel

concept, serving as a thematic intersection point between diverse attractions and tourist destinations (Graf & Popesku, 2016; Berti, 2015). Integrating environmental sites and scenic pathways within thematic routes should promote sustainable tourism practices, advocating responsible visitor behaviour while increasing awareness of cultural and environmental reserves along the route, eco-friendly infrastructures, and nature conservation efforts, while encouraging exploration of historical assets (Fafouti et al., 2023).

The pioneering concept entails active involvement of various stakeholders in heritage management, encompassing not only public entities but also entrepreneurs responsible for heritage product creation and tourists visiting these routes. These areas can coexist with archaeological sites, diverse museums, fortifications, churches, and monasteries, creating a distinct tourism model based on in-depth research and tailored sensitivity, differing significantly from mass tourism (Boukouvalas et al., 2018).

Recent studies (Dayoub et al., 2019) have recognised the potential of tourist routes in promoting and developing regions, fostering cross-border cooperation, raising international awareness of the location, and contributing to the regional economic growth. The reasons behind promoting cultural itineraries include the appreciation of regional cultures, providing added value to tourism offerings, reducing seasonality in the industry, fostering local development, and reinforcing cultural policies (Calderón-Puerta et al., 2018).

Due to the prevailing religiosity in the European region, several cultural itineraries have been established as religious paths (Krogmann et al., 2023). These religious routes can be seen not only as promoters of ethical and religious values, fostering feelings of peace and brotherhood, but also as catalysts of travellers' awareness and personal growth (Trono & Oliva, 2021). While these paths have always had a spiritual connotation (Santos, 2016), the current direction veers towards a resymbolization of spirituality, transitioning from religious spirituality to a more secular form (Lopez et al., 2017). This kind of spirituality is dynamic as introspection and spirituality are reinforced while walking (Sharma, 2013).

An extensive array of studies has examined the evolution in the experience of well-known religious tourist itineraries, such as the historical-cultural route of the Camino de Santiago (Seryczynska et al., 2021; Shen & Antolín, 2019; Lopez et al., 2017). Over the centuries, this route has undergone various transformative phases, connected to religious, cultural, and political considerations (Seryczynska et al., 2021). These studies regard the route as a multireligious spiritual experience, highlighting a myriad of spiritual attractions, such as breaking the routine, mental evolution, and stress-relief therapy. Within this context, the landscapes along the route emerge as therapeutic landscapes that, in conjunction with social conditions and human perceptions, create an environment conducive to spiritual healing (Lopez et al., 2017). Most pilgrims during a religious journey perceive a strong connection between body and soul, spirituality, and nature, accentuated by the rhythms of the physical journey (Walter, 2021).

Previous studies have explored spiritual itineraries, delving into the theme of sustainability in spiritual tourism (Hindersah et al., 2021; Dayoub et al., 2019; Mariotti et al., 2021). This niche tourism is characterized by its experiential dimensions (Lopez et al., 2017), and it not exclusively targeted at the religious population. As a tourism product, these routes can be experienced by individuals with a positive relationship for the natural environment they traverse or the cultural and historical artifacts that connect the routes (Krogmann et al., 2023).

The religious journey offers a biopsychosocial, emotional, and physical experience, promoting social well-being as a condition of total well-being, free from concerns throughout the journey. Previous studies (Vistad et al., 2020) have observed that the four most significant pilgrimage motives are tranquillity and peace, experiencing a primitive environment, exploring foreign places and landscapes, and being present. Travelers also aim to satisfy an emotional and intellectual need for authenticity, spirituality, and culture (Trono & Oliva, 2021), where the experience takes precedence over reaching the destination of the route. Following an itinerary primarily involves traversing the

landscape and enjoying the entire walking experience.

"Spiritual Routes", as defined by the authors, aim to implement a sustainable development strategy for the construction of a unique network of tourist destinations. It proposes tourism offerings, integrated economic and "slow" mobility, and responsive quality services to meet the needs of tourists and the local population (Dayoub et al., 2019). Table 1 describes the authors' analysis of factors, strategies, and limitations in developing a sustainable spiritual itinerary.

Table 1. Development of a sustainable spiritual itinerary

Factors	Utilization of suitable geographical position and culture heritage.
	Post-war economic development, reconstruction of image for improving international relations.
	Creation of a network of tourist destinations in municipalities crossed by the "Spiritual Route".
Strategies	Link national and international markets with the new tourist destinations.
	Creation of an integrated tourist offers, capitalizing the spiritual attraction for sustainable tourism development.
Shortcomings	Creative and slow tourism for the modern world, investment of local community
	Lack of jurisdiction on certain sites included in the "Spiritual Route", Post-war reconstruction management.

Source: Our analysis based on the work of Dayoub et al., 2019.

The factors involve appropriate use of geographical position and cultural heritage, post-war economic development, the reconstruction of a place's image to foster better international relations, the creation of a network of tourist destinations within municipalities traversed by the spiritual routes, and the establishment of links between national and international markets and emerging tourist destinations. Strategies encompass the development of an integrated tourist offer, leveraging the spiritual attraction for sustainable tourism development, promoting creative and slow tourism for the modern world, and investing in local communities. Shortcomings involve a lack of jurisdiction over specific sites integrated within the spiritual itineraries and post-war reconstruction management (Dayoub et al., 2019). These itineraries, merging spirituality and the pursuit of knowledge into a single dimension, combine the theme of faith with an interest in nature and the landscape from an experiential-perceptive level to understanding its connections with regional identity (Trono & Oliva, 2021). Thus, the sustainability paradigm assumes significant importance in managing cultural heritage. Currently, one of the possibilities in this direction focuses on cultural itineraries (Bogacz-Wojtanowska et al., 2019) and spiritual itineraries (Mariotti et al., 2021); instrumental tools capable of promoting sustainable local development. To minimize any negative impact on tourist sites, the authors suggest implementing site zoning, scheduling visits to local architectural destinations (both time of day and season), establishing the number of tourists allowed on the route in line with the territory's potential and available services (Auttarat et al., 2021). Creating a network of cultural itineraries stands as a powerful tool for sustainable development, contributing to the protection of the local environment, managing tourism activities, and promoting responsible economic growth (Fafouti et al., 2023). Recent studies (Grande, 2022) underscore the increasing activities related to cultural tourism, analysing cultural itineraries in the area and their impact from a sustainable tourism perspective. The studies emphasize the need to investigate actions related to sustainability to verify whether the principles of sustainable tourism development are correctly followed, especially when providing economic and sociocultural resources to the affected local population. To this end, the study suggests that analysing the relationships between the actors involved in tourism development can be significantly enriching.

2.2. Destination Image

Extensive scholarly attention has been devoted to the evaluation and analysis of destination image, significantly contributing to a deeper comprehension of tourist behaviour (Beerli & Martin, 2004). Destination image, as defined by some scholars, manifests as a mental construct developed by tourists based on selective impressions (Fakeye & Crompto, 1991). Others conceptualize it as a multisensory, mainly pictorial experience, lived by tourists. This experience aligns or overlaps with a wide variety of other mental encounters experienced by tourists, including feelings, perceptions, mental representations, cognitive maps, consciousness, memory, and attitude toward the destination (Lai & Li, 2016). The latter should encompass not only cognitive or rational aspects but also experiences, feelings, and emotions generated during a stay (Hernández-Lobato et al., 2006).

Destination images influence the travel decision-making process, cognitive aspects, and behavioural inclinations of tourists towards a destination, as well as their satisfaction levels and recollection of the experience (Jenkins, 1999). Recent studies have formulated models of the destination image (Jeong & Holland, 2012; Beerli & Martin, 2004). The bidimensional approach, considering affective and cognitive images, is considered more appropriate in image analysis studies. The affective image refers to the individuals' feelings about the destination, primarily influenced by personal values or motivations (Gartner, 1993). The cognitive image involves the beliefs held by individuals about the destination's attributes, mainly influenced by knowledge or objective information. Other studies prefer tri-dimensional approaches in two sub-domain variants:

- 1) affective, cognitive, conative;
- 2) affective, cognitive, overall.

Nevertheless, these approaches exhibit limitations. The overall image is a fusion of both the affective and cognitive aspects, while the conative aspect, proposed in certain studies (Gartner, 1993; Konecnik & Gartner, 2007), lack empirical validation. Moreover, conceptually, it appears to be very similar to the concept of "travel intentions" (Jeong & Holland, 2012).

Other studies (Beerli & Martin, 2004) have delved into the relationship between different components of the perceived image, investigating the factors influencing the structure and formation of this image. To measure the cognitive facet of the image, the authors developed a Likert scale consisting of 24 items (a wide variety of flora and fauna; places of historical or cultural interest; richness and beauty of the landscape; unique lifestyles and customs; cultural activities of interest; shopping opportunities; good nightlife; varied gastronomy; sporting activities; well-developed infrastructure; luxury; fashionable; exotic; a good name and reputation; a good quality of life; personal offerings; safety; cleanliness; hospitable, friendly; people; good beaches; good weather; good hotel and apartment infrastructure). Meanwhile, the method applied to measure the affective component of the image involved a Likert scale embracing two pivotal emotional attributes (pleasant/unpleasant place, exciting/boring place), providing a comprehensive representation of the affective domain of the image.

2.3. Sustainable Destination Image

In recent decades, there has been a growing concern about the consequences of tourism activity on the environment (Hanna et al., 2018). In this regard, sustainable management is acknowledged as a key element in empowering Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) to improve a touristic destination's competitiveness (Almeida-Santana & Moreno-Gil, 2019).

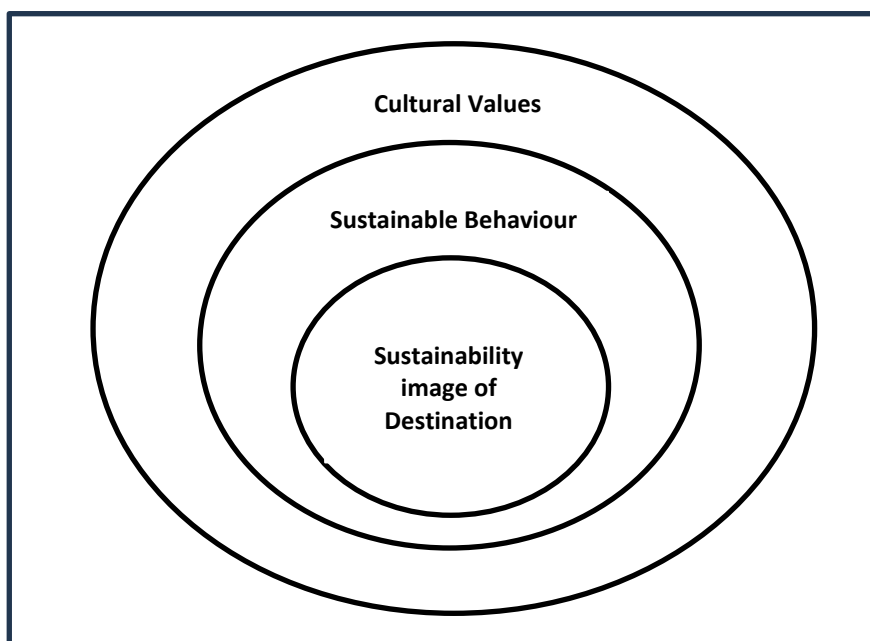
In the current landscape, organizations competing within the tourism sector may gain competitive advantages by pursuing sustainable development goals. An effective approach in this realm focuses on cultural and naturalistic itineraries, in terms of inclusive and sustainable economic growth; social

inclusion; employment and poverty reduction; resource efficiency; environmental protection and climate change; cultural values, diversity and heritage; mutual understanding, peace, and security (Cardia, 2018).

Sustainable tourism marketing, both textually and visually, has the potential to significantly influence a consumer's perception of a destination (Hanna et al., 2018). Shaping the image of a sustainable tourist destination necessitates careful consideration of all stakeholders: tourists, tourism businesses, local communities, urban development, and environmental safety (Palazzo et al., 2021; Ivanov et al., 2018). Within the context of tourism, the elements of the image (information and impressions that an individual possesses about an object) revolve around the identity of the place to be visited, consequently leading the individual to a preconceived interpretation of the place itself (De Souza et al., 2014).

Previous studies hypothesize that the image created related to the sustainable attributes of a specific place results from a mental process rooted in the intrinsic values of society (De Souza et al., 2014). The varied interpretations of the sustainability of tourist destinations across different social groups are directly linked to a society's inclination towards sustainable behaviour. The following figure illustrates a simplified relationship model suggested by the authors for this study's development.

Figure 1. Sustainability and the tourist destination's image



Source: de Souza et al., 2014

The researchers hypothesize that the consumer (tourist) operates within a broader environment that surrounds - and precludes - the individual's experience with a tourist destination. In this sense, the aforementioned cultural dimensions are posited as directly linked to sustainable behavioural intentions by consumers, consequently influencing the interpretation of a destination's sustainability.

Utilising primary and secondary destination images, motivations, tourists' cultural backgrounds, and sociodemographic features, the model derived from previous research (Almeida-Santana & Moreno-Gil, 2019) delineates the perception of a sustainable destination image. The richness of previous experiences (primary image) within the destination increases the likelihood of travellers adopting a sustainable destination image (SDI). Furthermore, the interpretation of sustainability by tourists from different national backgrounds influences the creation of the sustainability image of tourist destinations (Almeida-Santana & Moreno-Gil, 2019; De Souza et al., 2014). These findings

imply that both primary and secondary destination images influence the perception of SDI. Notably, three motivational factors (“Fashion, fun, and friends”, “Sun, beach, relaxation, and family”, and “Sports and nature”) are statistically significant for the SDI; age, nationality, and level of education determine the SDI.

2.4. Travel information

The importance of the quantity, quality, and variety of travel information sources has been emphasized across various studies (Almeida-Santana & Moreno-Gil, 2019; Lian & Yu, 2019; Jeong & Holland, 2012; Beerli & Martin, 2004).

Previous research (Jeong & Holland, 2012) has explored the extent to which exposure to travel information influences optimal outcomes by analysing the effects of exposure time to travel information on the destination image. The results provided empirical evidence of a saturation effect on the formation of perceived destination images. To measure the relative impact of distinct information sources on the destination image, the study categorised them into four categories: professional advice (tour operators, travel agencies, and airlines); word of mouth (friends, relatives, and social circles); advertising (print or TV broadcast media); and books/films/news. Word of mouth and advertising had significant effects on the overall image. Travel information emerges as a crucial determinant affecting the cognitive and/or the overall destination image. Additionally, the impact of travel information on the destination image tends to be positive.

When individuals seek external travel information (e.g., websites, travel guides, or word of mouth) for their potential trips, their cognitive and affective images are influenced. Therefore, exposure time to travel information positively influences both images, generating a favourable impact.

Previous studies (Beerli & Martin, 2004) have concentrated on the factors influencing the formation of perceived images, both primary and secondary information sources and stimuli that affect the creation of perceptions and assessments of destinations pre and post visit. These encompass motivation, cumulative tourism experiences (evaluation of the individual’s level of interaction with the destination based on the number of personally known places of interest), and sociodemographic characteristics (gender, age, level of education, social class, and country of origin).

Several studies have demonstrated the substantial influence of primary sources on the cognitive image of the destination (Almeida-Santana & Moreno-Gil, 2019; Beerli & Martin, 2004). Regarding the influence on the cognitive dimension of secondary information sources used by tourists in selecting destinations, earlier research (Beerli & Martin, 2004) revealed significant variations in the behaviour of individuals seeking external information, depending on the number and type of sources employed. Similarly, different types of information sources can contribute in different ways to the post-visit image, depending on significance that travellers attribute to the information provided. The schema proposed by Gartner (1993) classifies the nine sources of information into: induced (tourist brochures released by the public authorities of the destination, brochures for tour operators, mass media advertising campaigns, agency staff, and the Internet); organic (friends and family); and autonomous sources (guides, news, articles, reports, documentaries, and destination programs across various media).

3. Materials and methods

The aim of this study was to comprehend the perception of Sardinia from the viewpoint of opinion leaders and operators involved in the cultural and spiritual routes of the “Noi camminiamo in Sardegna 2023” event. To achieve this goal, a mixed-method QUAL-QUAL approach was employed. Two types of qualitative data informed the current analysis. The primary data sources were the photographs and videos provided by the participants and analysed using the method of auto-photography. These perspectives were further enriched with insights gathered through participant observation. The

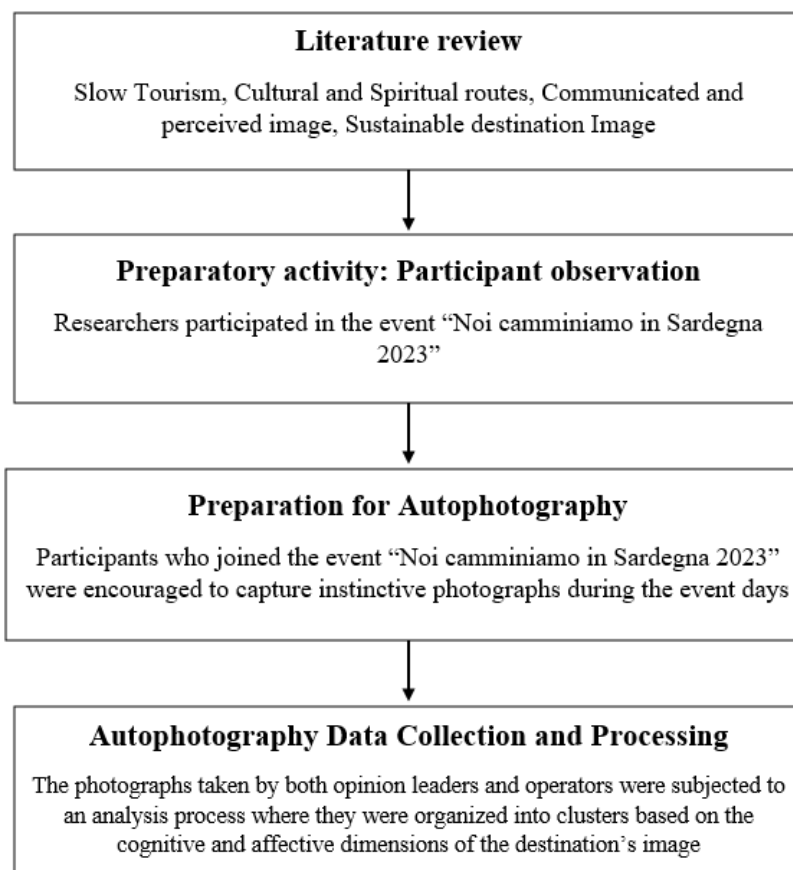
combination of auto-photography and participant observation allowed for a more comprehensive and authentic understanding of the perceptions held by these opinion leaders and operators in relation to Sardinia’s cultural and spiritual routes.

Auto-photography is an ethnographic research method that enables the researcher and the audience to perceive the world through the eyes of the participant using photography (Thomas, 2009). It allows researchers to capture and express how identity influences human actions and thoughts. This method can produce more authentic data as it allows researchers to see the world from the participants’ perspectives. Auto-photography achieves this because participants themselves choose and capture the static images they believe best represent them. Photographs go beyond mere mechanical records as they involve thought and choice on the part of the photographer, especially when asked by a third party to capture representations of their self (Noland, 2006).

In addition to auto-photography, participant observation was conducted to enrich the study's insights by directly engaging with and observing the experiences of the participants. Participant observation is a powerful method that enables researchers to validate and complement the findings derived from auto-photography. This methodology allows researchers to immerse themselves in the environment and examine various aspects, including the definitions of terms used by participants during interviews, observing events that participants might be unwilling or unable to share, and directly witnessing situations described by the participants (Marshall & Rossman, 1995).

The following figure shows the various steps of the methodology followed (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Research process and methodology



Source: author elaboration

Preparatory activity: Participant observation

In the pursuit of our research objectives, a team of researchers actively engaged in the event as participants in order to capture aspects that might not emerge through auto-photography. The researchers followed two routes:

- The Route of Sant’Eufisio, which took place between October 3, 2023, and October 6, 2023.
- The Route of Orgosolo, which took place between October 4, 2023, and October 6, 2023.

Participants were recruited among the attendees of the two routes selected. Nineteen individuals, including both opinion leaders and operators, agreed to be involved in the study. The sample was represented as follows:

Table 2. Distribution of participant roles

Role	Number
Journalists	5
Influencers	2
Photographers	2
Regional representatives	2
Councillor	1
Founder of Cammini d’Italia	1
Experienced walker	1
Mayor	1
Archaeological guide	1
Video maker	1
Environmental hiking guide	1
Procession prefect	1

Source: author elaboration

This sample represents a variety of professions and expertise related to sustainable tourism and the destination’s image. The inclusion of individuals from various fields contributes to a comprehensive understanding of the perceptions and viewpoints regarding the image of the region’s sustainable tourism, specifically within the context of cultural and spiritual routes.

During the event, participants captured photographic images and videos to document visible elements including people, activities, environments and objects of interest. The approach used was auto-photography, in which participants captured what they considered relevant or intriguing through the use of their cameras or smartphones. In addition to capturing photographic images and videos, the participants were required to provide a comment for each file they sent to the researchers. The comment could be a thought or emotion evoked by the image or video, or a detailed description.

Following the collection of the images and videos, two data processing steps were carried out:

- *Image selection:* A careful sorting process identified the most relevant photos for analysis, excluding any irrelevant images.
- *Categorisation:* The images and videos were then categorised according to the type of opinion leader they belonged to and renamed based on their nature, distinguishing between cognitive and affective images.

This organisation aimed to simplify the subsequent analysis of the collected material.

Preparation for auto-photography

Participants who took part in the “Noi camminiamo in Sardegna” event were encouraged to spontaneously capture photos during the event days and share them in a WhatsApp group created by the researchers for the two routes. Opinion leaders and operators contributed by capturing essential aspects of the event and the visited destinations, reflecting their perceptions and representations of the destination’s image.

Auto-photography data collection and processing

The images and videos were gathered into a shared folder and distributed among the researchers. The photos and videos taken by the opinion leaders and operators then underwent an analytical process, where they were categorised into clusters based on the cognitive and affective aspects of the destination’s image. This analytical phase allowed us to pinpoint fundamental elements that shaped the image of Sardinia according to the viewpoints of the participating opinion leaders and operators. The clustering of the collected photos was carried out on the basis of the destination model of the tourism image and the dimensions/attributes identified in the literature (Beerli & Martin, 2004; Jeong & Holland, 2012; Wise, 2020). The categorisation of the photos into clusters helped to understand the perceptions and emotions associated with the destination, providing a detailed and comprehensive framework of Sardinia’s image as a sustainable tourist destination.

4. Results

4.1. Participant observation

The researchers completed the Orgosolo and Sant’Efisio routes alongside the participants, actively participating in all planned activities. This provided the researchers with an opportunity to observe and gather valuable insights into the different dynamics involved in this context (verbatim R1, R2, R3, R4, R5).

R1: “The idea is to involve the local community and small B&Bs, with the aim of allowing them to work all year round.”

The verbatim R1 shows that a noteworthy finding was the local community’s active involvement and engagement in the tourism sector, with a noticeable lack of detachment between the resident community and the tourist activities. Despite tourism being fundamental for the region’s development, the satisfaction and well-being of the local community appeared to be prioritized over the needs of tourists.

R2: “We want to sell what we are, that is, to make tourists always find what we have.”

This emphasis on balancing the local community’s needs and the opportunities offered by tourism represents a conscious effort to maintain their cultural integrity and overall well-being while participating in activities that could potentially drive the region’s economic growth. The importance of selling and presenting the authenticity of the place is further emphasised, with participants suggesting avoiding large-scale initiatives and structures that could compromise the original identity. A tourist guide states that Sardinia does not want to offer tourists big things, but simply the authenticity of the place (R2).

R3: “We want to expand the tourist offer with walking routes that give tourists the opportunity

to have an experience. Tourism is asking for more and we want to give the right answers.”

Moreover, participants highlighted the need to create an engaging and appealing narrative to generate interest and expectations among potential visitors, focusing on storytelling to create a sense of anticipation. Itineraries should not only be tourist attractions but also significant experiences, aligning with the increasing demand for experiential tourism by visitors.

R4: “There is a lack of a person who is the face, who specifically takes care of the trails and a figure who takes care of communication”.

Participants highlighted several deficiencies and challenges along the routes. The Verbatim R4 underscores the need for competent individuals who can not only monitor the route conditions but also ensure effective communication, providing appropriate information and guidance for visitors.

R5: “The presence of institutions pushes to do better; new professionals could be brought in to develop the destination”.

It is clear from the verbatim R5 that enriching the tourism offerings could be achieved through the contribution of specialized and targeted skills. Both perspectives (R4 and R5) point to the need for a more specialized and targeted approach in managing the trails and supporting the overall visitor experience. They emphasise the demand for qualified figures responsible for managing the trails to ensure proper usage and actively contribute to the continuous development and enhancement of the tourism offerings, guaranteeing a fulfilling and enriching experience for visitors. Additionally, participants also highlighted the absence of essential services and infrastructure such as public restrooms, informational material, an English-language website, and weather alert systems, factors that represent significant obstacles to tourism development. There is also a need to adapt laws to favour sustainable tourism activities and increase involvement and support from institutions to improve the overall quality of the tourism offer.

Another interesting aspect observed by researchers concerns the limited presence of tourism during the period under examination. Despite the favourable October temperatures in Sardinia, conducive for seaside activities, researchers noted a minimal influx of tourists along the coasts. This observation uncovered an interesting revelation. Although a minimal presence of tourists might initially seem indicative of failure, it highlights the delicate balance between fostering growth in the tourism sector and ensuring sustainable practices. It underscores the paramount importance of aligning growth objectives with long-term environmental and social sustainability. This alignment guarantees the thriving of the region’s tourism without adverse impacts on its ecological integrity or imposing excessive burdens on local communities. It poses an engaging challenge in guiding tourism endeavours towards a path that integrates growth with sustainability.

4.2. Interpretation of photography

By employing auto-photography, a comprehensive analysis of the images captured during the routes was conducted. In order to interpret the photographs and understand the underlying dimensions and attributes, the established image model of the tourist destination was employed (Beerli & Martin, 2004). The analysis revealed that opinion leaders and operators tend to convey more of the destination’s cognitive dimension (67%) (e.g., beautiful scenery, gastronomy, religion). In contrast, 33% of the collected photographs portrayed attributes associated with the affective dimension (e.g., enjoyable experiences offered, pleasant place). Additionally, a number of photographs communicated both cognitive and emotional aspects of the destination’s image (9 photographs).

The following table (Table 3) summarises the findings from the photographs analysis,

highlighting the emerging dimensions and the corresponding attributes conveyed by the opinion leaders and operators.

Table 3. Dimensions and Attributes of Destination Image

Dimensions of Destination Image	Attributes of Destination Image	N. photography	%
Cognitive Image	Beautiful scenery	11	67%
	Variety of fauna	10	
	Religion	8	
	Art	7	
	Gastronomy	7	
	Historical buildings	6	
	Culture	4	
	Local customs	3	
	History	3	
	Variety of flora	1	
	Tourist infrastructure	1	
	Tourist marketing	1	
Affective Image	Enjoyable experiences offered	11	33%
	Pleasant place	6	
	Fun	4	
	Interesting experience	4	
	Relaxing	2	
	Mystic atmosphere	1	
	Excitement for an adventurous experience	1	
	Pleasant memories	1	
Love of nature	1		






Source: our elaboration

With regard to the cognitive dimension of the tourist destination’s image, influenced by knowledge and objective information (Gartner, 1993), it’s evident that opinion leaders and operators predominantly highlight the beauty of the scenery (11 photographs), the local fauna (10 photographs) and religious elements (8 photographs). The beauty of the scenery often encompasses photographs featuring mountain settings (particularly along Orgosolo route), as well as sea places (particularly along Sant’Eufisio route). Religion is more prominently depicted in the photographs taken along the Sant’Eufisio route, as this journey encompassed more stages with a distinctly pronounced religious context compared to Orgosolo route. Beyond the most prevalent attributes, the destination’s image is also conveyed through photographs depicting the artistic expressions found in the villages along the routes (e.g., the renowned murals of Orgosolo), the appreciated Sardinian gastronomy by the participants, and historical structures, visited by the walkers. Though to a lesser extent, some photographs also illustrate facets of the local culture, customs, and history of Sardinia.

Regarding the affective dimension, opinion leaders and operators predominantly convey their pleasant experiences along the routes (11 photographs). This attribute often emerges through photographs capturing different groups of participants at the most beautiful and suggestive spots along the trails. Attributes such as “Pleasant place”, “Fun”, and “Interesting experience” also emerge. Participants express strong emotions at pleasant places, exhibit their enthusiasm for the experience and, in certain instances, convey moments of fun experienced during the route. Finally, some exhibit stronger emotions, such as their profound appreciation for nature.

The table below (Table 4) presents the most notable photographs utilised by opinion leaders and operators to communicate the destinations. Drawing from the data in Table 3, the following table presents the key attributes of the destination’ image conveyed through the highlighted photographs.

Table 4: Emblematic photos of image dimensions

	Photography	Dimension	Attribute	Description	Communicator
1		Cognitive dimension	Beautiful scenery	The image shows a panorama seen during one of the paths walked in Orgosolo	Operator (photographer)
2		Cognitive dimension	Variety of fauna	The image shows fauna found along a path	Opinion leader (influencer)
3		Cognitive dimension	Religion	The image shows the crypt of Blessed Antonia Mesina	Opinion leader (journalist)
4		Affective dimension	Enjoyable experiences offered	The image shows an enjoyable experience at a suggestive place among the route of Sant'Eufisio	Opinion leader (video maker)
5		Affective dimension	Pleasant place	The image portrays the pleasure of walking the route of Sant'Eufisio	Operator (archaeological guide)

Source: our elaboration

4.3. Interpretation of videos

In addition to photographic content, opinion leaders and operators utilise videos to communicate the destination's image. An analysis of the videos reveals a prevalent communication of the cognitive dimension (63%). In contrast, 37% of videos focus on elements associated with the affective dimension.

Influencers primarily drive the communication of the destination's image through videos, predominantly via Instagram stories, with an average duration not exceeding one minute. Therefore, social media is the predominant platform for video communication. The majority of videos incorporate a narrative voice and subtitles to enhance the conveyed message. When the narrator's voice is absent, videos are complemented by music, often featuring Sardinian songs and, on some occasions, relaxing songs, especially when showcasing beautiful vistas.

The video analysis underscores the prevalence of the cognitive dimension in the representation

of the tourist destination's image. Notably, the videos predominantly focus on capturing beautiful sceneries (15 videos), primarily mountain sceneries. These scenes are typically accompanied by music rather than voice narration (e.g., relaxing, engaging, or Sardinian songs). Several videos aim to provide general information about the routes, the featured, or the landscape (9 videos). There is also an emphasis on sharing anecdotes about the visited places, the history of Sardinian villages (6 videos), local customs (3 videos), and traditions (2 videos). Some videos highlight the historical aspects of specific Sardinian villages, emphasizing how these routes engage the senses and necessitate a respectful and a slow pace. Moreover, the videos also often showcase animals, shepherds' houses, ancient burial sites, shelters, local cuisine, and historical structures.

Conversely, 37% of the videos delve into the affective dimension. These videos often narrate pleasant experiences during the walks (14 videos), portraying moments of entertainment and relaxation. Many feature participants in the event, aiming to convey the joy of experiencing the journey alongside them.

The following table provides a summary of the conducted video analysis. This comprehensive analysis involved extracting information related to the media type, video creator, duration, primary and secondary message, composition and music. Finally, an interpretation was offered based on the represented image dimension in the video (cognitive or affective dimension).

The complete video analysis table is in the Appendix.

5. Discussion, conclusions, and future implications

The research findings enable a comprehensive delineation of the overall image of the tourist destination, particularly exploring the spiritual and cultural routes of Sardinia. The tourism model adopted by the Region of Sardinia, as demonstrated by the results, embodies a slow, experiential, and sustainable approach, yet it still needs further development to fully unleash its potential.

These routes, pilgrimage destinations, and villages, alongside hospitality, represent an innovative tourism proposal aimed at integrating traditional coastal tourism. Notably, the emerging forms of slow and sustainable tourism have a significant impact, especially in the development of rural, inland, and marginal areas (Trono, 2017). The comments provided by participants on the images and videos reveal a deep attachment to the region. Opinion leaders and operators expressed their intention to promote the Sardinian hinterland beyond its traditional association solely as a summer beach destination.

In this study, the analysis illustrates how in the case of Sardinia, the communicated image is represented as a tourist experience that balances environmental sustainability and the well-being of local communities with the beauty of landscapes, the religious dimension, the authenticity of cultural experiences, and the importance of preserving the identity and authenticity of the place. It also emphasises the desire to introduce tourists to both the material and immaterial heritage of their territory and extend an invitation for them to engage with the local communities. However, the analysis reveals that stakeholders are still communicating the image of the destination in a very conventional manner. Communication is predominantly based on cognitive aspects related to nature and fauna. Furthermore, participant observation results indicate that participants recognised the several challenges faced by the island's inland areas while observing the events (e.g., limited development, lack of regulations to facilitate tourism, the need for new professional roles, slow bureaucracy), hindering the existing routes from realizing their full potential. The Region of Sardinia aims to embrace slow and sustainable tourism, as demonstrated by the "Noi camminiamo in Sardegna 2023" event. However, there is a need for greater alignment between the region's objectives and the current tourism offering. Consequently, this affects the image communicated by stakeholders. The initial image conveyed by opinion leaders and operators is not that of a sustainable destination, but one where the landscape or fauna takes precedence. Therefore, despite the considerable potential and suitability for slow and sustainable tourism, the cultural and spiritual itineraries of Sardinia still require strategies to encourage development in that direction. This might prompt stakeholders to communicate the image of a

sustainable destination more clearly, broadening the spectrum of dimensions and attributes being conveyed.

From a theoretical perspective, this study allows us to understand how the image of a sustainable destination is communicated by opinion leaders and operators. Furthermore, our findings contribute to the body of knowledge regarding slow and sustainable tourism, as well as the portrayal of a sustainable tourist destination. From a managerial standpoint, comprehending the perception of sustainable destinations by stakeholders becomes of paramount importance as it directly influences the promotion, development, and sustainability of these itineraries. Considering the different and essential elements for the region, such as culture, environmental conservation, and community involvement, the objective is to lay the foundation for strategies that support sustainable tourism practices while preserving the cultural integrity of the area.

This research, by studying and delving into the perspectives and values of different stakeholders, aims to provide insights into how such routes are perceived, embraced, and how they can be optimally developed to ensure a balance between tourism development and sustainable preservation of the region. In this context, it is essential that communication effectively conveys an idea and an image of the destination consistent with the authentic essence of the locale in the eyes of tourists. Understanding the disparities between the conceived and perceived image of the destination allows for adjustments in strategies to align communication with the authentic essence of the region.

The study focused on two specific paths, the Sant'Eufisio route and the Orgosolo route, thereby limiting the scope of observations and perceptions gathered. Future research could expand its scope by incorporating a variety of events or seasons to provide a more comprehensive and diverse view of the image of sustainable destinations. Furthermore, the limited number of participants involved represents an additional constraint; expanding and diversifying the sample by involving a broader range of opinion leaders and operators could offer a more inclusive perspective of the image of sustainable destinations. Finally, it is essential to acknowledge that perceptions of the destination image can vary over time and in different contexts. Building upon the limitations of this paper, future research opportunities could be explored.

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Nothing to declare

Conflict of interest

Nothing to declare

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Annex 1. Interpretation of Videos: Messages and Dimensions

	Typology of media	Creator	Duration	Main message	Secondary message	Video composition	Music	Cognitive or affective dimension
Video 1	Website/Instagram post	Journalist	1'3''	History of Orgosolo's murals	Journey involving the 5 senses; routes to be taken with respect and at a slow pace	Voice narration Subtitles	Joyful (Sardinian song)	Cognitive dimension (culture) Affective dimension (pleasant place)
Video 2	Social media (Instagram story)	Influencer	53''	Tradition marries new generation (Sardinian music)	N/A	Subtitles	N/A	Cognitive dimension (customs) Affective dimension (pleasant place)
Video 3	Social media (Instagram story)	Influencer	12''	Peace of landscapes	Showing animals	Subtitles	Relaxing	Cognitive dimension (beautiful scenery) Affective dimension (Relaxing)
Video 4	Social media (Instagram story)	Influencer	27''	Description of the landscape (pastures and shepherds' houses)	N/A	Voice narration	N/A	Cognitive dimension (natural resources, traditions)
Video 5	Social media (Instagram story)	Influencer	10''	Fun in the mountains	Show shepherd's house	Voice narration	N/A	Affective dimension (Fun)
Video 6	Social media (Instagram story)	Influencer	21''	The beauty of the landscape (mountain)	N/A	N/A	Engaging	Cognitive dimension (beautiful scenery)
Video 7	Social media (Instagram story)	Influencer	15''	The beauty of the landscape (mountain)	N/A	N/A	Relaxing	Cognitive dimension (beautiful scenery)
Video 8	Social media (Instagram story)	Influencer	22''	Communicating the start of the Orgosolo walk to your followers	Show participants	Voice narration Subtitles	N/A	Affective dimension (enjoyable experience offered)
Video 9	Social media (Instagram story)	Influencer	27''	Showing its appreciation for Sardinian food and wine culture	N/A	Voice narration Subtitles	N/A	Cognitive dimension (gastronomy) Affective dimension (pleasant place)
Video 10	Social media (Instagram story)	Influencer	54''	The birth of the village of Orgosolo	Appreciation towards the tourist guide	Voice narration Subtitles	N/A	Cognitive dimension (history)
Video 11	Social media (Instagram story)	Influencer	53''	Recounting the family tradition of silk harvesting	N/A	Voice narration Subtitles	N/A	Cognitive dimension (traditions)
Video 12	Social media (Instagram story)	Influencer	17''	Description of the route	Show participants	Voice narration Subtitles		Affective dimension (enjoyable experience offered)
Video 13	Social media (Instagram story)	Influencer	21''	The beauty of the landscape (mountain)	N/A	N/A	Joyful (Sardinian song)	Cognitive dimension (beautiful scenery)
Video 14	Social media (Instagram story)	Influencer	14''	Description of the route	Sardinian music	Voice narration Subtitles	Joyful (Sardinian song)	Affective dimension (enjoyable experience offered)
Video 15	Social media (Instagram story)	Influencer	17''	The beauty of the landscape (mountain)	N/A	N/A	Relaxing	Cognitive dimension (beautiful scenery)
Video 16	Social media (Instagram story)	Influencer	59''	Telling tradition of using stones to mark routes	N/A	Voice narration Subtitles	N/A	Cognitive dimension (customs)

Video 17	Social media (Instagram story)	Influencer	29''	Irony on the steepness of the path	Showing animals	Voice narration Subtitles	N/A	Affective dimension (fun)
Video 18	Social media (Instagram story)	Influencer	19''	The beauty of Sardinia's hinterland compared to the sea	N/A	Voice narration Subtitles	N/A	Affective dimension (pleasant place) Cognitive dimension (beautiful scenery)
Video 19	Social media (Instagram story)	Influencer	24''	The beauty of the landscape (mountain)	N/A	Subtitles	Engaging	Cognitive dimension (beautiful scenery)
Video 20	Social media (Instagram story)	Influencer	56''	Describing the murals of Orgosolo	History of Orgosolo; how its reputation has changed for the better	Voice narration Subtitles	N/A	Cognitive dimension (history and art)
Video 21	Social media (Instagram story)	Influencer	47''	Showing its appreciation for Sardinian food and wine culture	Route description	Voice narration Subtitles	N/A	Affective dimension (enjoyable experience offered)
Video 22	Social media (Instagram story)	Influencer	31''	Showing fauna	N/A	Voice narration Subtitles	N/A	Cognitive dimension (fauna) Affective dimension (enjoyable experience offered)
Video 23	Social media (Instagram story)	Influencer	59''	Description of ancient burials	N/A	Voice narration Subtitles		Cognitive dimensions (history and archaeology)
Video 24	Social media (Instagram post)	Journalist	1'47''	Collection of images of all the stages covered	N/A	N/A	Relaxing	Affective dimension (enjoyable experience offered) Cognitive dimension (beautiful scenery)
Video 25	Social media (Instagram post)	Journalist	1'28''	Collection of images from a day on the route	N/A	N/A	Relaxing	Affective dimension (pleasant)
Video 26	Social media (Instagram post)	Journalist	58''	Describing the murals of Orgosolo	N/A	N/A	Joyful (Sardinian song)	Cognitive dimension (beautiful scenery, art)
Video 27	Social media (Instagram post)	Journalist	2'39''	Collection of images from a day on the route	N/A	N/A	Joyful (Sardinian song)	Cognitive dimension (beautiful scenery) Affective dimension (pleasant)
Video 28	RaiNews24	Journalist	2'18''	Orgosolo becomes one of Sardinia's route tourism destinations. Slow and sustainable tourism (which seeks a relationship with people before it seeks a relationship with places)	Hidden treasures (trails, shepherd and animal refuges, ancient burials, landscapes, music)	Voice narration	N/A	Cognitive dimension (history, beautiful scenery, art) Affective dimension (pleasant)
Video 29	Social media (Instagram story)	Founder of an Instagram community dedicated to Italian routes	42''	Event description: "We walk in Sardinia"	N/A	Voice narration	N/A	Cognitive dimension (general information)
Video 30	Social media (Instagram story)	Founder of an Instagram community dedicated to	38''	Description of his role and its colleagues' participation in organizing routes in Sardinia	N/A	Voice narration	N/A	Cognitive dimension (general information)

Video 31	Social media (Instagram story)	Italian routes Founder of an Instagram community dedicated to Italian routes	23''	Explaining the reason for the frequent presence of flamingos in salt pans	Showcasing salt pans	Subtitles	N/A	Cognitive dimension (variety of Fauna)
Video 32	Social media (Instagram story)	Italian routes Founder of an Instagram community dedicated to Italian routes	06''	Showing a segment of the route	N/A	Subtitles	Relaxing	Cognitive dimension (beautiful scenery)
Video 33	Social media (Instagram story)	Italian routes Founder of an Instagram community dedicated to Italian routes	32''	Introducing the second stage of the route - Church of San Girolamo	Updating followers on colleagues' progress	Voice narration	N/A	Cognitive dimension (general information)
Video 34	Social media (Instagram story)	Italian routes Founder of an Instagram community dedicated to Italian routes	22''	Displaying participants during the route	N/A	N/A	Engaging	Cognitive dimension (general information)
Video 35	Social media (Instagram story)	Italian routes Founder of an Instagram community dedicated to Italian routes	29''	Appreciation for Sardinian hospitality	Update on colleague Gianluca's start of the journey in Orgosolo	Voice narration	N/A	Cognitive dimension (general information/ beautiful Scenery)
Video 36	Social media (Instagram story)	Italian routes Founder of an Instagram community dedicated to Italian routes	46''	Explanation of the connection between Sardinia and Fabrizio De André	N/A	Voice narration	N/A	Cognitive dimension (music)
Video 37	Social media (Instagram story)	Influencer	1'	Interview with the tourism assessor of Orgosolo explaining the event's goals	Appreciation for Sardinian gastronomy	Voice narration	N/A	Cognitive dimension (general information)
Video 38	Social media (Instagram story)	Founder of an	1'	Interview with a journalist describing the Sant'Eufisio	N/A	Voice narration	N/A	Cognitive dimension (religion)

		Instagram community dedicated to Italian routes		procession					
Video 39	Social media (Instagram story)	Founder of an Instagram community dedicated to Italian routes	29''	Interview with the Mayor of Nora explaining the historical importance of San Macario Tower and Nora Tower in territorial defense	N/A		Voice narration Subtitles	N/A	Cognitive dimension (history)
Video 40	Social media (Instagram story)	Touristic guide	1'21''	Description of historical foot pain-relieving plant used by Orgosolo walkers	Description of ancient walker attire		Voice narration	N/A	Cognitive dimension (local customs)
Video 41	Social media (Instagram story)	Influencer	23''	Showing the view after climbing a mountain	N/A		N/A	Joyful	Affective dimension (pleasant, enjoyable experience offered)
Video 42	Social media (Instagram story)	Founder of an Instagram community dedicated to Italian routes	22''	Appreciation for Sardinian food and culture	N/A		Voice narration	N/A	Cognitive dimension (gastronomy) Affective dimension (enjoyable experience offered)
Video 43	Social media (Instagram story)	Influencer	17''	Showing the lunch location	N/A		Voice narration	N/A	Cognitive dimension (gastronomy) Affective dimension (enjoyable experience offered)
Video 44	Social media (Instagram story)	Founder of an Instagram community dedicated to Italian routes	1'	Interview with an archaeology guide explaining the nuraghe (Sardinian historical structures)	Showing Monte Mereu		N/A	N/A	Cognitive dimension (historical structures)
Video 45	Social media (Instagram story)	Founder of an Instagram community dedicated to Italian routes	1'23''	Interview with an archaeology guide introducing crowdfunding for monument recovery and park creation	Call for fundraising participation		Voice narration	N/A	Cognitive dimension (attractiveness of the city)
Video 46	Social media (Instagram story)	Founder of an Instagram community dedicated to Italian routes	1'	Interview with an experienced walker explaining the route to Sant'Efisio's final stage	Appreciation for nature		Voice narration	N/A	Cognitive dimension (general information) Affective dimension (pleasant)

Video 47	Social media (Instagram story)	Influencer	31''	Interview with a journalist explaining the schedule of the day	N/A	Voice narration	N/A	Cognitive dimension (general information) Affective dimension (fun experience offered)
Video 48	Social media (Instagram story)	Influencer	32''	Explanation of how Sardinian culture is influenced by various peoples and telling the story of how the polenta was introduced in the region	Appreciation for the guide Fatigue from the hilly path	Voice narration	N/A	Cognitive dimension (culture and history, Sport/Physical Activities) Affective dimension (enjoyable experience offered)
Video 49	Social media (Instagram story)	Founder of an Instagram community dedicated to Italian routes	06''	Showing the beauty of the panorama	N/A	Subtitles	Engaging	Cognitive dimension (beautiful scenery)
Video 50	Social media (Instagram story)	Guida	1'56''	Guide's explanation of how plants defend against animal attacks	Displaying the shapes that plants take on to defend themselves.	Voice narration	N/A	Cognitive dimension (fauna and flora)
Video 51	Social media (Instagram story)	Founder of an Instagram community dedicated to Italian routes	28''	Showing participants on the last day of the Sant'Eufisio route and a collection of images from the main stages	N/A	Subtitles	Relaxing	Affective dimension (enjoyable experience offered)
Video 52	Social media (Whatsapp)	Social media manager of the region	17''	Showing traditional Sardinian dances	N/A	N/A	Joyful (Sardinian song)	Affective dimension (enjoyable experience offered)
Video 53	Social media (Instagram story)	Procession Prefect	3'21''	Showing the event's final conference	N/A	N/A		Cognitive dimension (general information)
Video 54	Social media (Instagram story)	Journalist	41''	Displaying a collection of photos from the Sant'Eufisio route's last day	N/A	N/A	Relaxing	Affective dimension (enjoyable experience offered, pleasant)
Video 55	Social media (Instagram story)	Journalist	40''	Narrative of the path taken to reach Torre del Diavolo	Explaining the historical connection between towers and nuraghe	Voice narration	N/A	Cognitive dimension (historical structures, beautiful scenery)
Video 56	Social media (Whatsapp)	Experienced walker	17''	Displaying a typical Sardinian song in a church	N/A	N/A	Relaxing (Sardinian song)	Affective dimension (enjoyable experience offered, pleasant)
Video 57	Social media (Instagram story)	Influences	1'	Narrate the history of how smoked cheese originated in the homes of shepherds	N/A	Voice narration	N/A	Cognitive dimension (historical structures)

Source: our elaboration