

Improving Consumer Engagement with Airline Brands: A Case of SKYTRAX 100's YouTube Pages

Havayolu markalarında tüketici katılımını artırmak: SKYTRAX 100 YouTube sayfaları örneği

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Received: 05.06.2021; **Accepted:** 12.04.2022

Consumer Engagement (CE) has been a remarkable concept for airlines that carry out many marketing activities such as product/service development and sponsorships on YouTube. This study examines the antecedents of CE in case of airline brands on YouTube and contributes to existing CE research. In this respect, the most popular 10 videos of each SKYTRAX 100's YouTube pages were analyzed by conducting Multiple Linear Regression using Least Squares method. The hypotheses were tested by using 600 video descriptions. The results indicated that interactive descriptions, high-definition videos and captions generated more views. Besides, presentation of destinations and animations is related to CE. These findings revealed that vividness and interactivity were the effective determinants of different engagement scores, and the model gave clues on factors that can be used for building a successful airline channel and made popular videos on YouTube.

Keywords: Consumer Engagement, Youtube, Airline, Regression Analysis, Consumer Behaviour

Tüketici Katılımı (TK) YouTube üzerinden ürün/hizmet geliştirme ve sponsorluk gibi birçok pazarlama aktivitelerini gerçekleştiren havayolları için oldukça dikkat çekici bir kavram haline gelmiştir. Bu çalışma YouTube'daki havayolu markaları için TK faktörlerini inceleyerek alanyazındaki araştırmalara katkıda bulunmaktadır. Bu doğrultuda, en küçük kareler yöntemini kullanan çoklu lineer regresyon yöntemi kullanılarak SKYTRAX 100 içerisinde yer alan her bir YouTube sayfasının en popüler 10 videosu analiz edilmiştir. Toplamda 600 video açıklaması dikkate alınarak hipotezler test edilmiş olup sonuçlar interaktif açıklamaların, yüksek çözünürlüklü videoların ve alt yazıların daha fazla izleme sağladığını ortaya koymuştur. Ayrıca, destinasyon sunumu ve animasyon kullanımı da katılımı ilişkilidir. Bulgular canlılık ve interaktivitenin farklı katılım skorları üzerinde etkili belirleyiciler olduğunu ortaya koymakla birlikte araştırma modeli YouTube'da popüler videolar yayınlamak ve başarılı havayolu kanalları kurmak için gerekli ipuçları da vermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Tüketici Katılımı, Youtube, Havayolu, Regresyon Analizi, Tüketici Davranışı

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1. INTRODUCTION

Social networks, which enable brands to come together with consumers and other stakeholders by sharing their messages, give consumers the opportunity to communicate with companies and other users to obtain information, economic rewards, or aesthetic pleasures (Tsai and Men, 2013). From a business perspective, it is important for consumers to interact with the brand or with each other in response to product, service, sponsorships, and other marketing efforts (Vivek et al., 2012). This, expressed as consumer engagement (CE) in the literature, attracts the attention of researchers as it is associated with many psychological variables such as satisfaction, commitment, loyalty, and trust (Rather, 2019).

With the rise of social networks, brands have started to engage their consumers with the content they create on social media applications (Lujja and Özata, 2017). So, it is possible to reach a wider audience including potential consumers and better social media strategies can be developed depending on the relationships with consumers (Farook and Abeysekara, 2016). Therefore, investigating the reasons that drive consumers to engagement behaviour will also contribute to marketing efforts. In this context, some researchers have defined CE from different perspectives. For example, Vivek et al., (2012) defined the concept as “the intensity of an individual’s participation in and connection with an organization’s offerings and/or organizational activities, which either the consumer or the organization initiate.” Hollebeek et al., (2014), states that consumer brand engagement refers to “consumer's positively valanced brand-related cognitive, emotional and behavioral activity during or related to focal consumer/brand interactions”. Brodie et al., (2011) proposed the definition of CE as “a psychological state that occurs by virtue of interactive, co-creative consumer experiences with a focal agent/object (e.g., a brand) in focal service relationships”. Based on these definitions, the concept of CE refers to the psychological expression of the interaction between the consumer and the brand.

As social media stands out as a platform frequently used by brands, the commitment of consumers to brand related content in social networks has attracted the attention of many researchers both industrially and academically. Accordingly, previous studies successfully investigated the factors, motivations or drivers (de Vries et al., 2012; Rohm et al, 2013; Tsai and Men, 2013; Dhaoui, 2014; Dessart et al., 2016; Schivinski et al., 2016; Tsai and Men, 2017; Schultz, 2017; Demmers et al., 2020), the results (Hollebeek et al., 2014; Lujja and Özata, 2017; Harrigan et al., 2017; Rather, 2019) or the economic value of CE (Klier et al., 2016; Oh et al., 2017). Furthermore, the data can be obtained from surveys and interviews (e.g., Tsai and Men, 2013; Dessart et al., 2016) or social media metrics (e.g., de Vries et al., 2012; Dhaoui, 2013; Schultz, 2017; Demmers et al., 2020) in CE studies.

In social media, CE offers many opportunities to marketers operating in the service sector to produce vigilant strategies and attract consumers’ attentions towards brand activities (Solem and Pedersen, 2016). Encouraging consumers to engage with the content is also an important issue for airline companies operating in the service sector. However, to the best knowledge of author, the concept of CE has rarely been studied in airline sector (Leung et al., 2013a; Thao et al., 2017; Menon et al., 2019; Sigurdsson et al., 2019). In addition, it is important to measure CE and determine the effect of brand’s post types on CE for airlines (Menon et al., 2019). Therefore, this study examining “which” factors affect CE on SKYTRAX 100’s YouTube pages contributes

to the literature. Also, the study plays a guiding role in understanding what makes an airline video popular on YouTube. For this purpose, top 10 videos of each airline page were collected.

This study is organized as follows: Section 2 and 3 reviews the recent literature about CE on social media and hypothesis development. Section 4 presents the methodology, data structure and data collection. The next section reports analysis, results of the empirical model, and presents the discussions. In the end, the last part of the study gives conclusions, theoretical and practical implications, limitations, and some possible directions for future research.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

CE emerges as a broad concept under which communication between the consumer and the business or brand transforms into a behavioural output with various driving forces, and often targets suppliers, the public, regulators, and business employees, including current and potential consumers (Van Doorn et al., 2010). With the rise of social media, brands have started to apply various methods, primarily marketing campaigns and to positively affect this behavioural output of the consumer, which arises as likes, subscriptions, comments and/or ratings (Hoffman and Fodor, 2010). Therefore, one of the firms objectives of marketing managers is to attract the attention of consumers and encouraging them to interact with brand content. Looking at literature, knowing the strategies that arise liking, commenting, or sharing behavior of consumers and redesigning messages can provide advantages such as increasing direct sales and decreasing costs (Hoffman and Fodor, 2010). Moreover, CE may also positively affect the repurchase intention by creating loyalty in consumer behavior (Özcan and Argan, 2014).

Research over the past decade has shown that political, economic, or social brand presentation and message content can positively motivate consumers to engage with brands on social media. In this respect, Brodie et al. (2013), determined that cognitive, emotional, and behavioral factors can trigger engagement and provide consequences such as loyalty, trust, and satisfaction.

In studies conducted on various social media applications, it has been revealed that informational, entertaining, and social content, as well as presentation style (videos, texts, or images), message date or links can increase CE (Cvijikj and Michahelles, 2013; Sabate et al., 2014; Luarn et al., 2015; Tafesse, 2016; Dolan et al., 2016; Schultz, 2017; Demmers et al., 2020). Additionally, recent studies on various industries found that linguistic styles such as certain words (Pezzuti et al., 2021), pronouns (Sela et al., 2012; Barcelos et al., 2018; Chang et al., 2019; Labrecque et al., 2020; Koçak, 2021), adverbs and punctuation marks (Tan and Chen, 2021) have impacts on CE.

Looking at antecedents of CE, de Vries et al. (2012) found that vividness (picture, texts, videos) and interactivity (links) are associated with liking intention of consumers in food & beverages, cosmetic, and mobile phone industries. In another study, Sabate et al. (2014) investigated travel agencies and revealed that pictures and videos can affect the number of likes and messages published on business hours can have an impact on commenting behaviour of consumers. Cvijikj and Michahelles (2013) found that informational or entertaining brand posts, links, media types, and message date can also affect CE. Tafesse (2015) revealed that interactive brand posts in automotive industry can affect CE. As we get closer to the present day, the

literature on the antecedents and consequences of CE has expanded on brands from different sectors (e.g., Luarn et al., 2015; Dolan et al., 2016; Schultz, 2017; Menon et al., 2019; Demmers et al., 2020; Labrecque et al., 2020; Pezzuti et al., 2021).

From a theoretical point of view, CE can be considered as a social and interactive part of consumer-brand communication (Dessart et al., 2016). This interaction is one of the behavioral outputs of consumers (Van Doorn et al., 2010; Kumar et al., 2010; Schultz, 2017) and considering the studies given above, consumers' reactions to brand content may vary at different levels. Although there are models that explain the changes in CE and the message strategies that cause this change (e.g., Brodie et al., 2011; Cvijikj and Michahelles, 2013), the fact that there is a need for structures to express online consumer behaviour more clearly should not be ignored. In this direct, there are very limited studies prepared by considering brand shares on YouTube. In the aforementioned studies, CE is determined by the number of views and popularity (Oh et al., 2017). In addition to the emotional content associated with the brand (Kujur and Singh, 2018; Wang and Chan-Olmsted, 2020; Munaro et al., 2021), the search for information, entertainment, or sociality in consumers (Tafesse, 2020; Wang and Chan-Olmsted, 2020; de Andrade Viera, 2020), cultural values (Paul et al., 2013), brand awareness (Ahmad et al., 2020), and video categories (educational, musical, news, politics etc.) (Tafesse, 2020) may have relationship with CE. For example, Devereux et al. (2020) studied on various social networking pages of small retailers and found that message contents, interactions (picture, video, or text) and the moment these messages were sent had positive effects on the number of likes. Thus, brands in the airline sector increase the use of social media to initiate and sustain consumer brand engagement, which emerges as interaction and sharing in social media, as in almost every sector (Menon et al., 2019). So, CE provides brand evaluation, trust, and loyalty (So et al., 2016) in the service sector, where the airlines also operate.

However, there is lack of studies investigating CE in the airline sector. For example, Leung et al., (2013a) reviewed three budget airline posts from their global and official Facebook accounts and determined CE using number of people talking about the post, shares, comments and likes of user's comments. They categorized the posts into 6 main categories (promotion, sharing, announcement, invite engagement, celebrities at destination, and user involvement). They found that consumers commented within two days and CE varied depending on the message content and different airlines. Thao et al., (2017) listed the reasons for CE as social integration and recognition by determining the CE levels with the data (comments, views, and shares as well as the number of emoji reactions to posts) they obtained. Furthermore, they also revealed that entertaining and informative content influenced CE. Menon et al., (2019) examined design and content factors on Nordic airline's Facebook and Twitter accounts and found that entertaining content was an important determinant of CE in both social media applications. In another study, it was determined that while the message type had different effects on interaction, the message content was not significantly correlated with CE. Also, consumers stated that they engaged with the fan page if the content was associated with their hobbies and stated that they could love the posts containing promotional content and destination images (Sigurdsson et al., 2019). Koçak (2021) investigated the effects of the use of pronouns by Turkish airline brands on CE. Also, Koçak (2022) examined the emoji representation of Turkish airline brands on Instagram and found that different types of emojis affected CE in various levels.

In consideration of results of these previous studies, it is clearly seen that the airline companies engage their consumers with the post type, content, or presentation. However, consumers usually pay more attention to some of these variables, while engaging with the post. On the other hand, the use of YouTube accounts of airlines from different countries and cultures as a data source will undoubtedly contribute to the literature to determine the driving forces affecting CE. Thus, in the following sections, the hypothesis was developed for this study.

3. HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

In this study, factors affecting the CE on airlines' YouTube pages were investigated based on the literature (de Vries et al., 2012; Cvijikj and Michahelles, 2013).

3.1. The Effect of Interactivity on CE

Rafaeli and Sudweeks (1997) defined interactivity as "a process-related, variable characteristic of communication settings" and stated that one of its postulated outcomes is engagement. Therefore, interactive messages can include links, questions, or surveys that encourage consumers to engage with the brand (Demmers et al., 2020). The results of previous studies have revealed that high-level interactive messages have positive (Luarn et al., 2015; Schultz, 2017; Demmers et al., 2020), negative, partial or no (Kujur and Singh, 2017; Cvijikj and Michahelles, 2013) effect on the CE. Thus, I propose the following hypothesis for this study:

H1: The use of interactive links by airline brands on YouTube is associated with the level of CE (views, comments, likes, and dislikes).

3.2. The Effect of Vividness on CE

Vividness is defined as "the representational richness of a mediated environment as defined by its formal features, that is, the way in which an environment presents information to the senses" (Steuer, 1992). As it is known that the increase in the vividness level strengthens the consumer's attitude towards the content (Coyle and Thorson, 2001), it can be asserted that the media type also plays an important role in this sense. In the literature, the vividness is manipulated as low (text), medium (pictures), and high (videos) and affects the CE partially (de Vries et al., 2012; Cvijikj and Michahelles, 2013; Luarn et al., 2015; Demmers et al., 2020). For example, Schultz (2017) found that pictures and videos had a positive effect on likes and shares. However, it was revealed that these variables affected number of comments negatively. Although these studies reported that the level of vividness was determined depending on whether or not the content is in the format of text, picture or video, it is necessary to open a separate bracket for the mention of videos. Vividness level may also vary depending on the video quality. Thus, High definition (HD) videos can indicate the richness of the media. For example, Dobrian et al., (2011) found that HD videos affected the view count, number of viewers, and view time. Also, Furthermore, video quality was related to engagement, especially viewing (Wu et al., 2018). Another important factor that may be related to the richness of the media is adding captions to the videos. In this respect, Scholl (2018) noted that subtitles and captions might be considered to make content more accessible and reach a larger audience who would be exposed to the posts and/or comments in many languages in order to help audiences stay engaged. Thus, I generate the following hypothesis from the above-mentioned information:

H_{2a}: The use of high-definition (HD) videos by airline brands on YouTube is associated with the level of CE (views, comments, likes, and dislikes).

H_{2b}: The use of captions by airline brands on YouTube is associated with the level of CE (views, comments, likes, and dislikes).

3.3. The Effect of Using Celebrities/Influencers on Engagement

Using celebrities can be a powerful instrument to make brand more visible by making use of social relations of fans on social networks (Rosenthal and Brito, 2017). The use of celebrities on brand pages increases the brand engagement (Tafesse, 2016) and also affects the prejudices of the consumers towards the participation and can encourage the product by helping to understand how the celebrity uses the introduced product (Bazi et al., 2020). Additionally, the use of celebrities, one of the strategies of many airline companies (Pásková et al., 2018), positively affects engagement in this sense. Thus, this study forms the next hypothesis as follows:

H₃: Celebrity/influencer endorsement of airlines on YouTube is associated with the level of CE (views, comments, likes, and dislikes).

3.4. The Effect of Animation Usage on Engagement

Animations created by moving still images (people, objects or drawings) step by step may attract the audience's attention and cause cognitive and behavioral responses (Jin, 2011). As one of the important strategies for brands, animations are associated with the social impact of the brand (Ashley and Tuten, 2015). Also, animations can lead to more positive attitudes (Coyle and Thorson, 2001) and increase brand performance (Hassan, 2013; Lalicic and Gindi, 2018). Based on these studies, the following hypothesis can be drawn:

H₄: The use of animations by airline brands on YouTube is associated with the level of CE (views, comments, likes, and dislikes).

3.5. The Effect of Destination on CE

Ali and Frew (2014) define the concept of destination as "the physical space/geographical area, which contains tourism products and services to be consumed by the tourists as part of the experiences and which is managed by an organization". Social media provides important advantages for the strategies that can be applied in destination management (Leung et al., 2013b). In this respect, millions of images and comments are shared on social media everyday (Leung et al., 2013b; Kim and Kim, 2019). Hence, the destinations offered as a number of attractions (Pásková et al., 2018) are the frequently shared on the social media by airlines (Grančay, 2014). Time-dependent engagement in destinations can have high potential (Villamediana et al., 2019). Previous studies have revealed that posts with destination content encourage users to engage in various social media applications (Huertas and Marine-Roig, 2016; Pino et al., 2019). On the other hand, there are also studies stating that the videos about destinations are among the popular videos in airline sector but have a lower number of views than other content (Pásková, 2018). Therefore, the following hypothesis can be developed:

H₅: The use of destination content by airline brands on YouTube is associated with the level of CE (views, comments, likes, and dislikes).

4. METHOD

4.1. Data

In this study, 600 YouTube videos from SKYTRAX world's top 100 airline² pages were collected between 06-07 May 2020. The most popular 10 videos of each airline retrieved by using YouTube API servers³. API was written and called via Google Sheets Apps Script tool. Video title, description, published time, definition, and duration were taken for the model. Numbers of views, comments, likes and dislikes were obtained to measure the engagement.

To determine the celebrities, the author included only the videos in English or Turkish, or with English subtitles, and/or with English descriptions. In total, the data consisted of 600 videos posted by 73 airlines' YouTube pages. Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics of the independent variables.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of the data

Predictive Variables	Code	Total	
		N	%
Interactivity	Yes	266	44.3
	No	334	55.7
Definition	HD	548	91.3
	SD	52	8.7
Subtitle	Yes	68	11.3
	No	532	88.7
Celebrity	Yes	88	14.7
	No	512	85.3
Animation	Yes	36	6.0
	No	564	94.0
Destination	Yes	65	10.8
	No	535	89.2
	Mean	Std. Dev	Variance
Number of views	2389504.37	57101100.95	3.261E+13
Number of comments	280.23	1190.21	1416592.21
Number of likes	6018.19	28148.80	792354949
Number of dislikes	594.15	5108.49	26096707

As can be seen in the table, the videos uploaded by a great majority of the airline companies (91.3%) had high definition (HD). On the other hand, less than half of airline companies (44.3%) shared interactive messages in their video descriptions. These variables were followed by celebrity endorsement (14.7%), the use of subtitle (11.3%), presentation of destination (10.8%), and the use of animation (6%) in the videos, respectively.

² www.worldairlineawards.com/worlds-top-100-airlines-2019/ (retrieved at: 05.05.2020)

³ www.developers.google.com/youtube/v3 (retrieved at: 06.05.2020-07-05.2020)

4.2. Coding Procedure

4.2.1. Interactivity

Links in the descriptions that directed the users to another site were considered before coding the interactive messages. Video descriptions containing links were coded as “high”. Otherwise, it was marked as “non-interactive”. When examining the literature, it can be seen that similar coding structures were used for interactive brand posts (Demmers et al., 2020).

4.2.2. Vividness

Generated content in social media can be classified as text, picture, and video (de Vries et al., 2012). Although it is claimed that the videos represent only high vividness, the richness of the media in question can also be classified as high and low in terms of videos. In this sense, videos that are recorded in HD or include caption can be an indication for richness of such media. YouTube provides some metadata such as the definition (SD or HD) of each video and whether the videos contain captions or not. Thus, videos that were recorded in HD and include captions were coded as dummy variables (1 vs. 0).

4.2.3. Celebrity

Videos including celebrities were labelled as “True” by the author considering the descriptions of the videos. In the most of descriptions of these videos, actors were stated as celebrity. Otherwise, the name of the actor was sought on Google and the coding continued according to whether or not h/she was celebrity or not. Since the celebrities in some videos are known worldwide such as Neymar, Roberto Carlos etc., these people were not mentioned in the descriptions. These videos were also coded as dummy variables.

4.2.4. Animation

Videos containing cartoon or animated characters were coded as “1”. In these videos, the moving animated character was considered. Presentation-style animations and other videos which did not contain animations were coded as “0”.

4.2.5. Destination

Videos containing city representation were coded as dummy variable (1 vs 0).

4.2.6. Control Variables

In this study, the core literature about CE provides emerging evidence of some controlling variables mentioned below.

4.2.6.1. Weekends vs. Workdays

When developing marketing strategies on social media, posting time should be taken into consideration. In this regard, the publication time of the message appears as an effective motivator for CE (Cvijikj and Michahelles, 2013; Sabate et al., 2014; Santoso, 2017; Villamediana et al., 2019). De Vries et al., (2012) stated that brand fans can visit the pages more on weekends compared to weekdays and this may increase the popularity of brand posts. Therefore, in this study, brand posts were divided into weekends and weekdays.

4.2.6.2. Video Duration

It is known that the length of content created by the brand in social media stands out as a control variable on participation (De Vries et al., 2012; Menon et al., 2019). Although the length of the message has been taken into consideration in these studies, there have been also studies determining that video duration affected the user engagement especially in the context of the content produced in the field of education (Giannakos et al., 2016; Wu et al., 2018). Accordingly, the duration of the videos produced by the airline companies has been chosen as the control variable.

4.2.6.3. Use of Hashtags

Another effective way that pushes consumer to engage can be the use of hashtag. In this respect, brands are using hashtags as a means of engagement to convey brand value to actual or potential consumers (Stathopoulou et al., 2017). Also, Stathopoulou et al., (2017) evaluated hashtags as a cognitive and behavioral activity related to the brand in consumer brand interaction, based on the definition of Hollebeek et al., (2014). In the literature, there are also studies revealing that the number of hashtags affected CE positively or negatively (Semiz and Berger, 2017; Han et al., 2019). Therefore, the last control variable in the proposed model was the number of hashtags.

4.3. Model

In this study, the effects of interactivity, vividness, using celebrities, animations and destinations on CE over YouTube were examined. These variables were observed for varying weekdays, number of hashtags, and video length as duration.

Due to the fact that the predictive variables in the model were count data that followed Poisson distribution (Cameron and Trivedi 2005; Menon et al., 2019) and the variance of the number of views, comments, and likes are larger than the means (see Table 1), the author takes the natural logarithms of these dependent variables. Thus, the multiple regressions using least squares method were applied to model to investigate the effect of interactivity, vividness, and video content on consumer engagement. In this respect, the following model is built in Eq. 1.

$$y_{ij} = a + \exp \left(\beta_i \text{interactivity}_j + \beta_i \text{definition}_j + \beta_i \text{caption}_j + \beta_i \text{celebrity}_j + \beta_i \text{animation}_j + \beta_i \text{destination}_j + \beta_i \text{weekend}_j + \beta_i \text{duration}_j + \beta_i \text{tag}_j \right) + \varepsilon_{ij} \quad (1)$$

, where y_{ij} represents logarithmic count dependent variables (views, comments, likes, or dislikes i) for each brand video j , interactivity_j is dummy variable representing that YouTube video descriptions contain links, definition_j is dummy variable representing whether the video is HD or SD, caption_j is dummy variable denoting that the brand video include subtitles, celebrity_j is dummy variable representing whether the video contains celebrity endorsement or not, animation_j is dummy variable denoting whether the video contains cartoon/animated characters or not, destination_j is dummy variable indicating whether the brand video contain city representation or not, weekend_j is dummy variable representing whether YouTube video is uploaded on weekend or not, duration_j is logarithmic count variable indicating the video duration, tag_j is dummy variable representing whether YouTube video descriptions contain

hashtags (#) or not, and ε_{ij} shows normally distributed error terms. For the analysis of these models, StatPlus⁴ were used as a statistical package.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Before the regression analysis, the author checked the collinearity. The correlation coefficients not above 0.40 are indicative of no collinearity (Demmers et al., 2020) (see Table 2).

Table 2. Pearson correlations of the variables

	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i
Interactivity	1								
Definition	.156	1							
Caption	.094	.091	1						
Celebrity	.057	.044	.119	1					
Animation	-.014	-.072	-.024	-.105	1				
Destination	.078	.012	-.006	-.069	-.065	1			
Weekend	.053	-.050	-.000	.103	-.079	-.071	1		
Duration	-.003	-.167	.117	.059	-.029	-.144	.014	1	
Hashtags	-.012	.073	.216	.028	-.039	.006	.084	-.037	1

Table 3 gives details about the five regression models which describe the factors influencing consumer engagement on YouTube. All models including number of views ($R^2=.149$, $p<0.001$), the number of comments ($R^2=.304$, $p<0.001$), number of likes ($R^2=.389$, $p<0.001$), and the number of dislikes model ($R^2=.215$, $p<0.001$) were statistically significant and can explain more than 10% of the variances.

Table 3. Regression results of the independent variables on YouTube engagement

Independent Variables		Dependent Variables							
		Views		Comments		Likes		Dislikes	
		Std. Err.	β	Std. Err.	β	Std. Err.	β	Std. Err.	β
Interactivity		.174	.160***	.176	.060	.166	.048	.189	.053
Vividness	Definition	.313	.162***	.298	.110**	.300	.112**	.358	.080
	Subtitle	.280	.204***	.259	.112**	.267	.131***	.294	.157***
Video Content	Celebrity	.245	.061	.241	.002	.233	-.011	.265	.016
	Animation	.362	.010	.390	-.071	.341	-.088**	.386	-.059
	Destination	.279	.020	.297	-.094**	.264	-.130***	.320	-.114**
Control variables	Weekends	.304	.097**	.283	.077	.292	.082**	.320	.076
	Duration	.083	-.011	.089	.493***	.079	.542***	.090	.367***
	Hashtags	.069	.079*	.068	.081**	.066	.056	.075	.058
Model Summary	N	600		467		583		528	
	F	11.513		22.166		40.607		15.758	
	R2	.149		.304		.389		.215	
	Adj. R2	.136		.290		.380		.201	

*unstandardized coefficient

* $p<0.10$, ** $p<0.05$, *** $p<0.001$ (Nelson et al., 1986)

⁴ StatPlus:mac, AnalystSoft Inc. - statistical analysis program for macOS. Version v7. See <https://www.analystsoft.com/en/>

In the literature, similar results have been obtained in different social media applications (e.g., Facebook, Twitter) (Luarn et al., 2015; Schultz, 2017; Menon et al., 2019), but the variance obtained was low compared to the literature. When considering popular videos on YouTube as data set, the results can be considered to be effective.

Concerning the evaluation of the hypothesis developed for this study, interactive videos significantly predicted a higher number of views ($\beta=0.160$, $p<0.001$). However, it is not significantly related to the number of comments, likes, and dislikes. This is not compatible with the results of the studies demonstrating that interactivity is related to the number of likes (e.g. de Vries et al., 2012; Luarn et al., 2015; Schultz, 2017). Moreover, it was concluded that the videos containing interactive messages were not related to the comments in these studies and the findings of the study do not support this.

HD videos uploaded by airline companies had a positive significant effect on the number of views ($\beta=0.162$, $p<0.001$), number of likes ($\beta=0.112$, $p<0.05$) and the number of comments ($\beta=0.110$, $p<0.05$). On the other hand, it was not related to the number of dislikes. These results supported some studies (e.g., Dobrian et al., 2011; Wu et al., 2018) in case of the number of views.

Captions that enabled the video to reach a larger audience (Scholl, 2018) was marginally significant and positively related to the number of views ($\beta=0.204$; $p<0.001$), comments ($\beta=0.112$, $p<0.05$) likes ($\beta=0.131$, $p<0.001$) and dislikes ($\beta=0.157$, $p<0.001$).

Videos containing celebrities had no effect on CE. If there was animation in the videos, it was negatively and significantly related to the number of likes ($\beta=-0.088$, $p<0.05$). Also, videos representing destinations had negative effects on the number of comments ($\beta=-0.094$; $p<0.05$), likes ($\beta=-0.130$, $p<0.001$), and dislikes ($\beta=-0.114$, $p<0.05$). The findings do not support the results of the study of Pásková et al., (2018) who found that airlines using celebrities and destinations in YouTube videos, achieved considerable number of views.

6. CONCLUSION

Knowing the factors that motivate users help to become an important online player in this social media application by increasing the number of visitors on YouTube (Khan, 2017). In this study, interactive descriptions under videos, four YouTube metadata – definition, caption, duration, published time- and three presentation types of videos – celebrity endorsement, animation, destination- were used to predict the consumer engagement with engagement metrics that are the number of views, comments, likes, and dislikes.

As known, interactivity is expected to increase positive attitudes (Coyle and Thorson, 2001) and is one of the findings of the previous studies indicating that interactivity affects the number of likes and comments that are the reflection of these attitudes on social media (e.g., de Vries et al., 2012; Luarn et al., 2015; Schultz, 2017). The results showed that interactive descriptions under the most popular airline brand videos do not increase the number of likes and comments, which is not compatible with these studies. The most important feature of YouTube is that users consume the created content by viewing videos (Khan, 2017). So, interactive contents increase the number of views of the popular videos in airline sector.

Captions used and the quality of the videos – HD or SD may express the richness of the media, in another saying, vividness. The results also showed that the videos containing captions increased the consumer engagement in all cases. This is a proof supporting the idea of Scholl (2018) that subtitled videos provide a great advantage in reaching larger audiences when considering the number of views. In this regard, even if the language of the speaker in the video is not understood by the viewer, the content becomes more understandable via subtitles. This indicates that the audiences may comment easily by liking or disliking the videos. Another important finding of this study is that HD videos increased the number of views, comments and likes, which is compatible with the previous work (Dobrian, 2011; Wu et al., 2018).

Contents including celebrities/influencers and destinations which trigger the number of views on YouTube are among the main strategies frequently applied by airlines (Pásková et al., 2018). The results showed that the use of celebrities had no effect on the number of views and destination presentation affected the number of comments, likes, and dislikes.

Finally, the use of animations in online environment results in the stronger attitudes (Coyle and Thorson, 2001). In this respect, the results indicated that the use of animation affected the number of likes. Consequently, Table 4 shows the hypothesis results. In this direct, H_{2b} supported, and H₁, H_{2a}, H₄, H₅ are partially supported, and no evidence is found to support H₃.

Table 4. Hypothesis results.

Hypothesis	Views	Comments	Likes	Dislikes
H₁: The use of interactive links by airline brands on YouTube is associated with the level of CE (views, comments, likes, and dislikes).	Supported	Not supported	Not supported	Not supported
H_{2a}: The use of high-definition (HD) videos by airline brands on YouTube is associated with the level of CE (views, comments, likes, and dislikes).	Supported	Supported	Supported	Not supported
H_{2b}: The use of captions by airline brands on YouTube is associated with the level of CE (views, comments, likes, and dislikes).	Supported	Supported	Supported	Supported
H₃: Celebrity/influencer endorsement of airlines on YouTube is associated with the level of CE (views, comments, likes, and dislikes).	Not supported	Not supported	Not supported	Not supported
H₄: The use of animations by airline brands on YouTube is associated with the level of CE (views, comments, likes, and dislikes).	Not supported	Not supported	Supported	Not supported
H₅: The use of destination content by airline brands on YouTube is associated with the level of CE (views, comments, likes, and dislikes).	Not supported	Supported	Supported	Supported

7. THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Organizations should better understand the online user behaviour in accordance with marketing efforts such as product development, creating the image of active audience and reaching higher search-engine popularity (Khan, 2017) to attract maximum engagement - comment or like- on YouTube. In this respect, the most viewed videos can notably provide clues about which factors affect consumer engagement. The present study helps fill this gap in the literature and explores additional variables such as definition of the video and caption used. Existing studies use text, pictures, and videos to examine the level of vividness (e.g. de Vries et al., 2012; Cvijikj and Michahelles, 2013; Luarn et al., 2015; Demmers et al., 2020). In these studies, videos were coded as high vividness. However, videos may represent different levels of vividness depending on the quality (HD and SD) and/or whether they contain subtitles. This study presented evidence that providing HD and/or captions on videos led to different engagement metrics for airline sector.

The findings of this study have practical implications. First, an airline should show its service quality and create impressions to become successful on YouTube (Pásková et al., 2018). Thus, knowing the factors that make a video popular is one of the prerequisites to run a successful airline YouTube channel. For example, airline social media managers can use animations to get more likes. Second, editing the video should not be seen as an unimportant work. Media richness, which points to important details such as high resolution or subtitle use in video, is one of the clues for creating popular content on YouTube. Lastly, as in the basic models in the literature (e.g., de Vries et al., 2012; Cvijikj and Michahelles, 2013; Schultz, 2017; Menon et al., 2019), determining the factors that will increase consumer engagement and improving its presence in the social media in this direction may enable better marketing activities in many sectors. Therefore, testing the model used in this study on other video sharing platforms such as Vimeo, Dailymotion or other social media applications may benefit for airline marketers.

8. LIMITATION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The main limitation of this study is that empirical application was made for Skytrax's 100 airlines. For this reason, it is important for the future studies to test empirically the proposed model for the airlines that are not included in the Skytrax list. Second, knowing the factors that make a video pop-up can lead to higher rankings in the search engine and more effective marketing activities. Thus, the 10 most popular videos on each airlines' YouTube account were used in the study. On the other hand, knowing why some videos get low interaction can compensate for the mistakes made in the preparation or editing process. Therefore, the least viewed videos of airlines can be analyzed in the future studies. Finally, videos including English and/or Turkish content/descriptions were taken into consideration while compiling the data. Thus, further studies can analyze videos with different languages in terms of the generalizability of the results of the model.

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