

Articles - Tourism and Society

Narratives of disappointment with tourism urbanization megaprojects: a reflexive analysis based on social media

Narrativas de desapontamento em megaobras de urbanização turística: uma análise reflexiva a partir de mídias sociais

Narrativas de decepción en megaproyectos urbanos turísticos: un análisis reflexivo basado en redes sociales

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Keywords:

Coastal tourism destinations;
Beach nourishment;
Sun-and-sea tourism;
User-generated content;
Urban governance.

Abstract

Although tourism urban megaprojects and beach nourishment interventions are commonly promoted as technical solutions to coastal erosion and territorial development, their effects on user experience and the social tensions generated by such interventions remain underexplored. This article examines disappointment and dissatisfaction narratives associated with a large-scale coastal intervention carried out in Brazil between 2022 and 2025. A qualitative approach was adopted, based on Reflexive Thematic Analysis of 361 excerpts collected from Facebook communities. The findings indicate that disappointment is not restricted in relation to technical or operational failures, but it operates as a broader social framework structured around four interrelated dimensions: (1) criticism of the intervention in terms of its materiality and effectiveness; (2) territorial inequality; (3) ontological conflict between urbanization and nature; and (4) public management and governance. The study contributes to tourism planning and management literature by positioning social media content as a political device and counter-discursive arena that challenges technocratic and spectacularized narratives of megaprojects, proposing disappointment as a psychosocial indicator of discrepancy between expectations and tourism-driven urban transformations.

Palavras-chave:

Destinos turísticos costeiros;
Engordamento de praia;
Turismo de sol e praia;
Conteúdo gerado pelo usuário;
Governança urbana.

Resumo

Embora as megaobras de urbanização turística e engordamento artificial de praias sejam frequentemente promovidas como soluções técnicas para a erosão costeira e o desenvolvimento territorial, seus efeitos sobre a experiência dos usuários e as tensões sociais geradas por essas intervenções permanecem subexploradas. Este artigo analisa as narrativas de desapontamento e insatisfação associadas a uma grande intervenção costeira realizada no Brasil entre 2022 e 2025. Adotou-se uma abordagem qualitativa baseada na Análise Temática Reflexiva de 361 excertos coletados em comunidades do Facebook. Os resultados indicam que o desapontamento não se restringe a falhas técnicas ou operacionais, mas se estrutura em um quadro mais amplo, organizado em quatro dimensões interligadas: (1) crítica à intervenção em sua materialidade e eficácia; (2) desigualdade territorial; (3) conflito ontológico entre urbanização e natureza; (4) gestão pública e governança. O estudo contribui para a literatura de planejamento e gestão do turismo ao posicionar o conteúdo de rede social como dispositivo político e arena contradiscursiva que desafia as narrativas tecnocráticas e espetacularizadas das megaobras, propondo o desapontamento como indicador psicossocial de desalinhamento entre expectativas e transformações urbanas orientadas pelo turismo.

Palabras clave:

Destinos turísticos costeros;
Alimentación de playas;
Turismo de sol y playa;
Contenido generado por el usuario;
Gobernanza urbana.

Resumen

Aunque los megaproyectos turístico-urbanos y las intervenciones de alimentación de playas suelen promoverse como soluciones técnicas a la erosión costera y al desarrollo territorial, sus efectos en la experiencia de los usuarios y las tensiones sociales generadas por dichas intervenciones permanecen poco explorados. Este artículo examina narrativas de decepción e insatisfacción asociadas a una intervención costera a gran escala llevada a cabo en Brasil entre 2022 y 2025. Se adoptó un

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enfoque cualitativo, basado en el Análisis Temático Reflexivo de 361 extractos recolectados de comunidades de Facebook. Los hallazgos indican que la decepción no se restringe a fallas técnicas u operacionales, sino que opera como un marco social más amplio estructurado en torno a cuatro dimensiones interrelacionadas: (1) crítica a la intervención en términos de su materialidad y efectividad; (2) desigualdad territorial; (3) conflicto ontológico entre urbanización y naturaleza; y (4) gestión y gobernanza pública. El estudio contribuye a la literatura sobre planificación y gestión turística al posicionar el contenido de las redes sociales como un dispositivo político y arena contradiscursiva que desafía las narrativas tecnocráticas y espectacularizadas de los megaproyectos, proponiendo la decepción como un indicador psicosocial de desalineación entre las expectativas y las transformaciones urbanas impulsadas por el turismo.



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1 INTRODUCTION

Coastal destinations have been the focus of multimillion-dollar tourism urbanization and artificial beach nourishment projects aimed at enhancing tourism dynamics and mitigating coastal erosion (Mullins, 1991; Clavé, 1998, 2023; Minasi & Tricárico, 2021; Paiva, 2014; Silva, 2021; Miura et al., 2023). These are large-scale interventions that emphasize a logic in which, from a political standpoint, the territory is managed as a financial and real estate asset. At the economic level, the city is expected to adopt an entrepreneurial logic and become a competitive tourist destination in the travel market. Conversely, research on erosion and the effects of sea-level rise and on how these processes affect and will continue to affect coastal communities has raised concerns about the persistence of anthropogenic interventions on sandy beaches.

Such interventions in beach ecosystems, particularly those affecting sandy beaches, have become significant and frequent along the U.S. Atlantic coast, as well as in the Gulf of Mexico. Considering the past century, Griggs (2024) reports US\$15.7 billion in beach nourishment (or artificial nourishment) projects, which resulted in the deposition of more than 1 billion cubic meters of sand. During this period, approximately 470 coastal communities were involved, with a substantial concentration in four U.S. states.

The benefits arising from beach nourishment projects initially include greater flexibility in interventions and, above all, positive outcomes in terms of activating or reactivating tourism and recreational flows. Nevertheless, the analysis conducted by Griggs (2024), focusing on beaches in the United States, indicates that the volume of investment required has been increasing, while the durability of a significant proportion of these projects has been decreasing. From the standpoint of ecological effects, consistent changes that may potentially compromise ecosystem structure have also been observed.

Regarding the Brazilian coast, between 2018 and 2023, Scortecchi and Nogueira (2024) identified 24 artificial beach nourishment and erosion control interventions (Table 1). Projects of this kind expand the surface area of the sandy beach strip, redevelop the surrounding areas with infrastructure and facilities intended for leisure, and implement landscaping measures. During the period considered, the largest project was carried out in Matinhos, a municipality with 41,000 inhabitants (IBGE Cidades, 2024), on the coast of Paraná. The intervention began in 2022 and encompassed 6 km of coastline along an urbanized stretch traditionally associated with sun-and-beach tourism on the Paraná coast, characterized by the predominance of tourist second homes.

BOX 1 - Overview of beach nourishment and erosion control projects (2018-2026)

(continue)

ID	Location	State	Project Status	Notes
1	Caucaia	CE	Completed (2018-2023)	Beach erosion control and widening interventions
2	Fortaleza	CE	Completed (2018-2023)	Artificial nourishment of the sandy beach strip on urban beaches.
3	Natal	RN	Completed (2024-2025)	Beach widening planned since 2013, following partial interventions that worsened local erosion conditions.
4	João Pessoa	PB	Suspended / Under Discussion	Project suspended due to technical and environmental concerns.
5	Jaboatão dos Guararapes	PE	Planned	Beach nourishment planning.
6	Cabo de Santo Agostinho	PE	Completed (2018-2023)	Local interventions to control erosion processes.
7	Maceió	AL	Completed (2018-2023)	Installation of concrete blocks to retain and contain shoreline advance.

BOX 2 - Overview of beach nourishment and erosion control projects (2018-2026)

(conclusion)

ID	Location	State	Project Status	Notes
8	Itaparica	BA	Completed (2018-2023)	Coastal readjustment and waterfront protection works.
9	Guarapari	ES	Completed (2018-2023)	Beach widening and tidal containment.
10	Itapemirim	ES	Completed (2018-2023)	Coastal stabilization and protection work.
11	Praia do Camburi (Vitória)	ES	Completed (2018-2023)	Environmental restoration and beach nourishment.
12	Praia do Iate (Vitória)	ES	Planned	Waterfront expansion and protection project.
13	Cabo Frio	RJ	Completed (2018-2023)	Interventions to stabilize and contain the sandy barrier.
14	Ilhabela	SP	Planned	Project focused on coastal reorganization and protection.
15	Matinhos	PR	Completed (2018-2023)	Sediment volume of 3.2 million m ³ .
16	Guaratuba	PR	Planned/ Under Study	Studies and proposal for beach nourishment.
17	Itapoá	SC	Underway (2023–2026)	Largest beach widening project planned nationwide. The project envisages the use of 12 million m ³ of sediment, at an estimated cost of R\$480 million.
18	Barra Velha	SC	Planned	Study and project for beach nourishment and waterfront protection.
19	Praia das Canasvieiras (Florianópolis)	SC	Completed (2018-2023)	Artificial beach nourishment has already been completed to expand public space and provide protection against high tides.
20	Praia dos Ingleses (Florianópolis)	SC	Completed (2018-2023)	Beach widening completed to restore the usable beach area
21	Praia de Jurerê (Florianópolis)	SC	Completed (2018-2023)	Beach nourishment works to mitigate erosion along the urbanized waterfront.
22	Balneário Piçarras	SC	Completed (2018-2023)	Periodic artificial nourishment to maintain the coastal waterfront.
23	Navegantes	SC	Completed (2018-2023)	Coastal stabilization and protection of dunes/waterfront.
24	Balneário Camboriú	SC	Completed (2018-2023)	Beach nourishment engineering project at Praia Central, aimed at restoring beach space and mitigating tidal encroachment.

Source: Scortecchi e Nogueira (2024) and Folha de S. Paulo (s.d.).

These interventions, which represent substantial investments, are often undertaken amid controversial revitalization and beautification projects, regulatory and legal violations, environmental impacts (Miura et al., 2023), and intensive publicity promoted by governments, contractors, and directly benefiting stakeholders. In addition to the widespread dissemination of images and videos depicting the promised outcome, progress and development for the local area are ideals that underpin discursive strategies aimed at securing social acceptance.

The project in question followed this same pattern and was carried out amid extensive media coverage, after years of discussion and in the face of technical analyses indicating high costs and the low effectiveness of some of the interventions. Researchers working in the coastal zone of Paraná endorsed a technical note in 2020 raising questions and criticisms regarding the project that was subsequently implemented (UFPR, 2020).

Given their scale, these projects involve heavy engineering and cause significant transformations, often irreversible, in places imbued with affective meaning and significant to the social memory of territories. The outcomes are rarely subject to opinion surveys and feedback, which could provide a basis for adaptations aimed at improving uses, respecting meanings, and enhancing user satisfaction. The literature devotes greater attention to impacts in terms of cost-effectiveness and the intervention models adopted. The tension between tourism urbanization megaprojects and beach nourishment, on the one hand, and social perceptions, on the other, remains underexplored. Therefore, this study addresses a theoretical gap by examining how large-scale coastal interventions generate disappointment, even when presented as unquestionable successes in territorial development.

In this context, this research aimed to identify the criticisms and key factors underlying disappointment and dissatisfaction with the Matinhos Waterfront Restoration Project (2022–2025), from the users' perspective. The data were identified and extracted from two Facebook communities, a social network selected for its relevance, particularly in the context of everyday life in the city, as well as because of the substantial volume of data available. Negative comments posted by participants on the social network were analyzed and identified as affective responses resulting from the misalignment between projected imaginaries and lived spatial practices.

The selected comments constitute user-generated content, a free and non-invasive source of information (Baka, 2016; Lu & Stepchenkova, 2015), voluntarily posted and with potential applications in tourism planning and management (Chemin et al., 2025), due to its potential to represent the lived experiences of residents and tourists. In the case of the project under analysis, the article presents the dimensions of tension in social perceptions that run counter to the triumphalist and technocratic tone that dominates the discourse surrounding the coastal megaproject.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Coastal tourist destinations

From a geological perspective, the beach is an extremely fragile morphodynamic ecosystem whose form and stability result from the constant interaction among wave energy, marine currents, and sediment availability (Calliari et al., 2003; Ribeiro et al., 2015). These natural processes, responsible for shaping the coastline across different time-scales, ranging from seasonal variations to long-term changes, interact with the increasing historical, social, and economic value attributed to coastal territory.

Through the publication of the book *The Last Beach*, Pilkey and Cooper (2014) sought to draw attention to the process of destruction of this ecosystem, driven by four main factors. The first involves the construction of hard structures, whether those associated with urbanization (especially tourism urbanization) or marine protection structures. Both interfere with the natural dynamics of beaches and contribute to perpetuating the erosion process, triggering successive cycles of intervention.

The second factor is related to sand mining, which leads to the depletion of a finite and essential resource. The third factor involves increasing pollution and waste accumulation, which cause contamination of both the water and the sand, as well as cumulative harmful effects, particularly those associated with plastics. The fourth and final factors concern other activities, among which artificial sand replenishment stands out (Pilkey & Cooper, 2014).

Regarding artificial sand replenishment, the authors emphasize its short-term, palliative effect and classify it as ineffective in addressing the erosion process (Pilkey & Cooper, 2014). This position aligns with the central importance that Griggs (2024) attributes to climate change and sea-level rise as critical factors in relation to the currently dominant paradigm of coastal engineering works, both in North America and in various other locations around the world.

These factors directly affect tourism dynamics in coastal regions, where the value attributed to beach landscapes has become an extremely important asset in determining destination attractiveness. It is worth noting that, unlike the medieval conception, which associated the coast with a hostile and marginal environment (Corbin, 1989; Urry & Larsen, 2021), from the nineteenth century onward, the beach became a space for leisure, well-being, and therapeutic practices, subsequently establishing itself as one of the main pillars of tourism (Boudou, 2017). However, intensive tourism exploitation poses complex challenges for beach management and requires an integrated approach that considers both the fragility of natural processes and anthropogenic pressure, which is fundamental to destination sustainability (Bombana & Polette, 2022).

Coastal tourist destinations are characterized as privileged territories for tourism development and have undergone, over time, profound transformations in their physical, social, and economic dimensions (Zoreda de la Rosa, 2007; Rebollo & Baños Castiñeira, 2010). In Brazil, sun-and-beach tourism expanded in the 1970s. Currently, this tourism segment constitutes the main driving force of tourism activity nationwide, particularly due to favorable climatic conditions throughout the different seasons.

The attractiveness of coastal destinations is associated with a set of natural and cultural elements. In this regard, it is important to consider that they combine products, services, and experiences. Recognizing that landscape plays a fundamental role, its transformation or alteration may be so profound as to compromise the quality of resources (Arias González, 2019; Añana et al., 2017).

A common principle in the literature is the strategy of addressing the destination's needs so as to preserve its attractiveness while ensuring and balancing sustainability (Silva & Soriano-Sierra, 2015; Arias González, 2019). However, the reality is characterized by a range of problems arising from the lack of territorial planning and from political and technical shortcomings in the management of tourism and tourist flows (Yázigi, 2009; Carlos, 2018).

Cases of real estate speculation, irregular occupation, precarious housing and employment, extensive informal commerce, spatial segregation, and irregular waste and sewage disposal are increasingly common. This situation drives environmental degradation (such as water pollution and coastal erosion), places pressure on public services (healthcare, sanitation, and public safety), and increases the cost of corrective measures, in direct proportion to the development model adopted (Yázigi, 2009; Costa, 2011).

Deficient or nonexistent planning focused solely on quantitative growth multiplies negative impacts and results in a decline in the destination's original tourism attractiveness. Consequently, it generates economic and social losses, as tourism comes to be viewed as a merely market-oriented activity due to its economic importance. Destinations ultimately reinforce their dependence on tourism demand, relegating both the needs and the quality of life of the local population to a secondary position (Abrahão; Tomazzoni, 2017 and 2018; Del Alcázar Indarte; Ferrandis Martínez, 2021; Lima et al., 2023).

The predominant principle is that the availability of natural resources guides the development of places as tourist destinations, which, in turn, increases the relevance of cultural elements and territorial identity in the process of spatial organization. Nevertheless, both in Brazil and internationally, particularly in peripheral territories of capitalism, there is a recurring paradox of destinations that combine remarkable natural resources, predatory tourism exploitation, and social vulnerability.

The impacts of this pattern affect both the environment and everyday social life. This reality stems from the very exclusion produced by certain patterns of disorderly and speculative tourism growth (Del Alcázar Indarte; Ferrandis Martínez, 2021; Lima et al., 2023).

2.2 Tourism urbanization

Tourism urbanization constitutes a distinctive process of spatial production, defined by the creation of urban environments planned for recreational consumption and leisure experiences. Unlike conventional urbanization, which is grounded in industrial production and the satisfaction of basic needs, this model is structured around the commodification of the landscape and the provision of services that transform the territory into a platform for entertainment and consumption (Clavé, 1998, 2023).

According to Mullins (1991), its distinctive characteristics include a high density of temporary accommodation, accelerated demographic dynamics, and the replacement of traditional logics of centrality by the valorization of symbolic and environmental attributes. The trend in tourism urbanization points to a complex metamorphosis in which mature destinations evolve from simple “holiday enclaves” into functional and hybrid “seaside cities” (Clavé, 1998, 2023).

Although still undergoing a transition, tourism urbanization remains grounded in leisure practices and in the spatial consumption of services and goods associated with tourism activity. This process increases the circulation of people and their access to destinations, intensifying consumption and fostering profit generation for the various stakeholders involved, particularly local businesses and tourism service providers (Minasi & Tricárico, 2021).

The relationship between territorial interventions and social imperatives throughout history demonstrates that each period presents distinct models of spatial organization. Such configurations are conditioned by the ways in which societies produce, structure, and use territory to meet their needs, resulting in significant transformations (Yázigi, 2009).

The characteristics of the spatial organization of tourism urbanization influence not only how people interact with the territory but also the relationships among them, particularly between tourists and local residents. The process of tourism-oriented urbanization seeks to incorporate into the territory elements that correspond to tourists' expectations and imagined representations (Minasi & Tricárico, 2021; Honório & Rocha, 2021).

Tourism appropriates previously constituted urban spaces resulting from earlier stages of the urbanization process, while simultaneously re-signifying and restructuring them according to its specific dynamics (Silveira & Rodrigues, 2015). This process promotes the adaptation of pre-existing spatial structures to the logic of tourism, resulting in the production of new spatialities and the intensification of intra-urban and metropolitan flows (Honório & Rocha, 2021; Beier et al., 2021).

A clear example of the appropriation and intensification of spatial use, associated with the “sun-and-beach” tourism category, is the intervention in and use of coastal territories during peak seasons. This generates significant impacts on seaside cities, which must adapt to accommodate the additional number of people and their demands. Historical

anthropogenic interventions along the coastal strip have followed this pattern and have been drivers of transformation, particularly along waterfronts and in areas closest to the shoreline (Paiva, 2014; Correa, 2016).

The consolidation of tourism exploitation along the Brazilian coast has occurred through the valorization of its natural attractions, as well as through the development of elements that enhance this activity (Pereira, Galvão Júnior & Santos, 2019) and actions serving the interests of the real estate market. Urbanization, the establishment of industrial and port complexes, and tourism activity itself represent forms of anthropogenic interference in the coastal zone. When undertaken without qualified planning and management processes, supervision, and rigorous oversight, these transformations generally compromise the integrity of natural tourist attractions and ecosystems, exacerbating their impacts (Silva, 2021; Xie & Zhang, 2021).

According to Souza (2009), socioeconomic pressure on the coastal zone has caused an accelerated and disorderly process of land use and occupation, accompanied by severe degradation of natural resources. Therefore, the intensification of tourism activities in coastal areas often produces zones of uneven development, with limited effective attention to sustainability and quality of life (Garzo et al., 2025).

In this regard, although tourism urbanization promotes considerable economic dynamism and growth in Brazilian coastal cities, it also places a burden on urban infrastructure and poses territorial management challenges that require integrated public policies and long-term planning (Silva, 2021; Silveira & Rodrigues, 2015).

At the current stage, the real estate market and its agents actively promote and advocate tourism urbanization. Driven by the financialization of the economy, platform capitalism, and the rise of real estate investment funds, this sector finds in cities sought after by traveler flows a territorial base for generating and multiplying profits. Its interest is narrowly focused on profitability, disregarding housing agendas and the right to the city, while targeting the most highly valued areas, which combine the physical attributes of land subdivision with the symbolic prestige of urban space.

From this perspective, it has become evident that megaprojects associated with tourism urbanization frequently exhibit planning deficiencies. Additionally, economic interests are prioritized at the expense of social well-being. By turning space into a financial asset, a kind of tourism-oriented façade is created that promotes territorial inequality rather than contributing to socioeconomic development (Barbieri, 2016; Sachs, 2009; Gomes et al., 2026; Xavier, 2021).

Discussions concerning innovation in public management have been emphatic in revealing that the absence or insufficiency of dialogue with communities, as well as reactive conflict management, are characteristics of public management that lacks entrepreneurial and innovative approaches. Another relevant issue concerns the rapid deterioration of public works, indicating that the focus is more on the spectacle of project delivery than on long-term functionality. This aspect is linked to what is known as the culture of contract amendments and to poor or insufficient budgetary planning, indicators that reveal the low effectiveness of Brazilian infrastructure governance (Sachs, 2009; Gomes et al., 2026; TCU, 2023; Gurski e Souza-Lima, 2018; Pompermayer, 2024).

2.3 User-generated content

The advancement of digital technology and the growth of social media have transformed social and cultural behavior through a new logic of production and organization based on the consumption of information and attention. Within this context, user-generated content (UGC) stands out as a spontaneous and participatory form of communication that directly influences destination choice and reputation (Muniz & Santos, 2019), across different channels, platforms, and purposes.

According to Lima Júnior et al. (2016), UGC consists of data, information, or comments posted free of charge on the internet that express satisfaction or dissatisfaction with an experience, and these voluntary records have considerable potential for application in tourism management (Chemin et al., 2025). Posted reviews, images, and videos serve as valuable references for understanding the perspectives of different actors and individuals, as well as for informing other users' choices (Muniz & Santos, 2019a).

UGC is produced and disseminated through multiple channels: social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram, as well as forums, applications, and, particularly, review platforms such as TripAdvisor, the world's largest travel review platform (Su, Teng, 2018). In tourism, UGC is considered one of the most relevant sources of information.

Wang et al. (2021) point out that UGC plays a decisive role in shaping destination image. Photos, accounts, and reviews shared in online communities both influence and reveal topics related to collective perceptions. Its impact is significant because it influences user behavior insofar as such behavior becomes shaped by the experiences of others (Aboalghanam, Alfraihat & Tarabieh, 2025).

The internet enables rapid exchange of information, which encourages engagement and the expression of views on a wide range of topics, depending on the channel used. Mendes Filho et al. (2018) emphasize that this content empowers tourists by providing diverse and personalized information and enabling more informed decisions. In the institutional context, however, many challenges remain.

According to Stankov, Lazic and Dragicevic (2010), the use of UGC and its potential is not standard practice among tourism organizations. For this reason, some authors have conducted studies to demonstrate its importance and effectiveness not only for tourist destination management but also for the planning, evaluation, and improvement of tourism facilities and attractions.

The study by Su and Teng (2018) examined negative online comments posted on TripAdvisor to identify service failures in museums. The authors analyzed 301 comments concerning 15 museums located in the United States, the United Kingdom, France, the Netherlands, New Zealand, and Buenos Aires. Their findings provided managerial guidance regarding 12 dimensions of museum service quality. The study thus provided a diagnostic framework that supports the prioritization of interventions addressing the main complaints. In this regard, such findings help managers recognize shortcomings within their institutions in order to continuously improve tourists' experiences during their trips and visits.

Tao et al. (2022) investigated the popularity of Australian beaches. They analyzed 32,383 Flickr images posted by Australian and international visitors to understand spatial use and seasonality through textual and visual analysis. The results showed that Australians visit beaches more frequently according to clear seasonal patterns, whereas tourists are less influenced by this variation. The images reveal positive emotions associated with beaches, and the research reinforces the value of social media data as an efficient tool and complementary approach for large-scale monitoring, offering a rapid, remote, and low-cost alternative for identifying high-demand areas and supporting coastal management strategies.

Gursoy, Akova and Atsiz (2021/2022) investigated heritage experiences through 5,212 TripAdvisor user reviews of World Heritage Sites in Istanbul. The analysis revealed 59 items grouped into six dimensions (authenticity, importance of tour guides, cultural values, sense of heritage, local hospitality, and admiration) as key components affecting tourism experiences. The authors emphasize the importance of planners taking destinations' cultural values into account in order to attract and satisfy tourists. They also stress that it is essential to identify the dimensions with the greatest impact on the experience in order to guide effective practices aimed at meeting and exceeding visitors' expectations and ensuring the provision of quality services.

Although UGC has a more direct application in travel planning and tourists' choices of services and attractions, as social content it goes beyond a merely informational function and offers potential for analyzing the production of meanings, symbolic disputes, and the visibility of socio-territorial conflicts, as exemplified by the approach adopted in this study. Beyond consumption decisions, this content expresses users' perceptions, effects, and political positions regarding urban transformations and can be understood as a particularly valuable analytical device for accessing tensions between technical projects and lived experiences.

3 MATERIAL AND METHODS

This article presents the results of a study based on a qualitative, exploratory approach (Creswell, 2017). The investigation focused on the digital environment of social networks, defined by Félix et al. (2024) as a form of representation characterized by groups of actors and individuals who interact virtually based on common interests and affective and professional relationships.

3.1. Study area

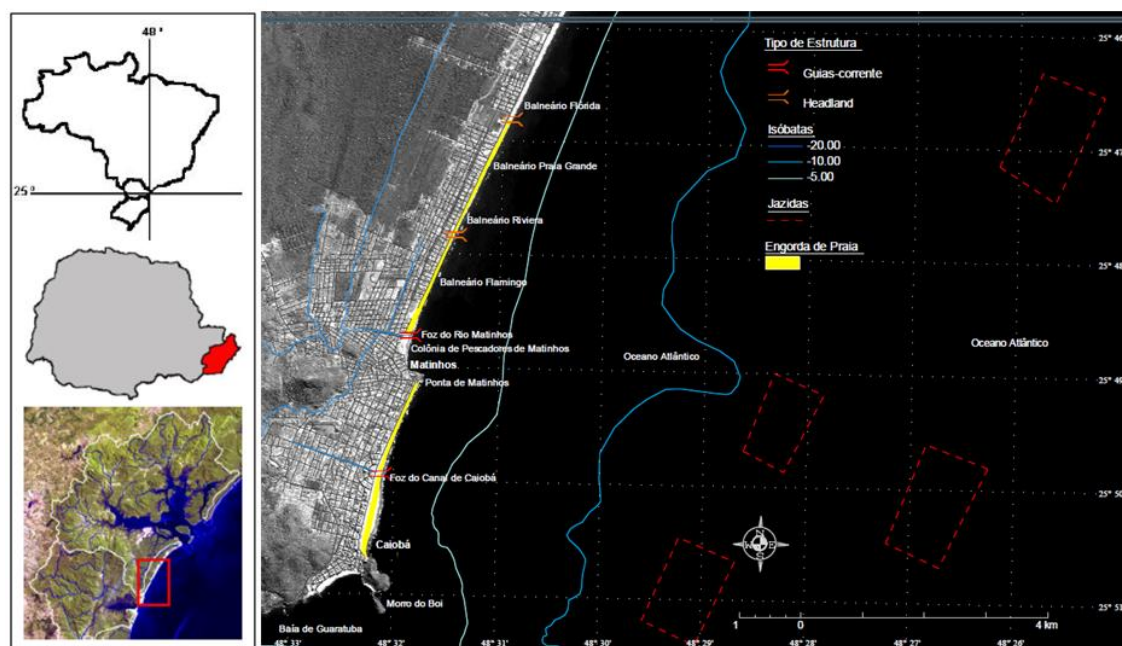
Matinhos is one of the seven municipalities that make up the coastal plain of the state of Paraná, in southern Brazil. It has a population of 41,000 inhabitants (IBGE Cidades, 2024). Its development as a seaside resort began in the 1920s; therefore, it is a traditional coastal tourist destination (Abrahão; Tomazzoni, 2017). Its beaches extend along

approximately 20 km of coastline and have diverse characteristics that attract different visitor profiles, particularly during the summer seasons.

From the 1960s onward, Matinhos experienced a significant increase in the number of visitors, received migration flows from other regions of the state, and saw its population grow, which contributed to the consolidation of the seaside city. This urbanization advanced toward the ocean, resulting in the occupation of the beach area and zones influenced by coastal dynamics, which affected the balance between retrogradation (reduction of the sandy beach strip) and progradation (expansion of the sandy beach strip) processes. One of the consequences of this process was the emergence of problems related to coastal erosion (Novak, 2015).

Its selection as the study area is due to the implementation of the Matinhos Waterfront Restoration Project (Fig. 1), carried out by the State Government from 2022 to 2025. This intervention, budgeted at R\$345 million, involved artificial beach nourishment and the redevelopment of approximately 6 km of waterfront, as well as coastal protection measures and micro- and macro-drainage works. At the beginning of the study, it was considered the largest project of its kind in Brazil, according to a survey conducted by Scortecci and Nogueira (2024).

Figure 1 - Location of Matinhos (PR) and beach nourishment area and marine structures



Source: RIMA – Matinhos Waterfront Restoration, adapted by the authors.

Tourism urbanization targeted the waterfront through the upgrading of paving, signage, wooden and metal pergola structures, lighting, and landscaping. The artificial beach nourishment replenished the sandy beach strip with marine sediments. Resources were allocated to protect the widened beach through coastal structures, such as groynes, jetties, and headlands, along 5.75 km of coastline, from the Caiobá seaside resort to Flórida (Angulo, 2010).

3.2. Data source

Posts and comments were obtained from communities on the social networking platform Facebook (Meta Platforms), specifically the “Matinhos Agora” (<https://www.facebook.com/Matinhosagora>) and “Linda Matinhos” (<https://www.facebook.com/Lindamatinhos.Pr>) profiles. The two communities were selected because, during the community screening and selection phase, they showed the greatest prominence in terms of posts and comments concerning the “Matinhos Waterfront Restoration Project (PR)”.

Matinhos Agora was founded in June 2015 and describes itself as a news and media page. It is publicly accessible to any Facebook user. It has 266,000 followers, corresponding to 6.5 times the population of Matinhos, which provides evidence of its reach and visibility among tourists, summer visitors, and residents of the region. Linda Matinhos was founded on June 23, 2013, and describes itself as a page for posting photos, videos, live streams, and information. It is publicly accessible to any Facebook user and has 67,000 followers.

3.3 Data collection and processing

Relevant posts published between September 7, 2024, and April 23, 2025, were considered, provided that they were directly related to the topic under investigation and contained textual and/or visual content pertinent to the Matinhos Waterfront, specifically the section affected by the project. During this period, the project had already reached more than 95% completion, with the remaining work predominantly related to the installation of micro-drainage infrastructure, an intervention with a more diffuse presence in the urban landscape, extending into the blocks adjacent to the waterfront.

Regarding the comments, the selection criterion included content expressing disappointment, dissatisfaction, criticism, and disillusionment with the consequences and outcomes of the project. Comments indicating a perception of harm or negative interference with social practices and forms of use, as well as effects on the landscape and other territorial dynamics, were also selected. Comments that were neutral or complimentary, consisted exclusively of pictograms (known as emojis), or were unrelated to the effects of the intervention were excluded from data collection. Relevant comments were manually selected and extracted, without interaction with their authors.

Subsequently, relevant posts and comments were entered and processed in Google Sheets, part of Google's cloud-based file storage and synchronization service. The synchronization and sharing features were important factors in the choice of this tool. The spreadsheet was organized to characterize and manage the comments using the following columns: Platform; Community; Post (P)/Comment (C); Date; Post [Text (T)/Photograph (F)/Video (V)]; Post [link]; Author; Comment (full text). Additional columns were added for coding and thematic analysis.

3.4 Data analysis

The comments were analyzed and interpreted based on the foundations and principles of Bardin's Content Analysis (2016), Braun and Clarke's Reflexive Thematic Analysis (2006), and the strategies proposed by Byrne (2022). Following familiarization, themes and units of meaning were interpreted within a previously defined coding unit. This initial coding, based on the project documentation, enabled a rigorous assessment of the extent to which the selected comments were relevant to the project.

The initial categorization was based on the seven areas of intervention presented in the project's descriptive documentation, thus giving this stage a deductive character: Beach Nourishment/Riprap; Coastal Protection; Urban Revitalization; Paving; Waterfront Restoration; Road Restoration; and Others.

Subsequently, subtopics and a more specific, second-level grouping were applied based on the project's sub-actions: Paving; Lighting; Landscaping; Metal Structures; Microdrainage; Cleaning and Vegetation Removal; Artificial Beach Nourishment; North Groin (Praia Brava); Complementary Structures; Pergola Structures; Waterfront Restoration.

Once technical validation (relevance to the project) had been completed, the main stage of the thematic analysis transitioned to an inductive and reflexive approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006). At this stage, the aim was to understand the subjective dimension of the discourses. Thus, based on the content of the comments mapped at the previous levels, new analytical categories emerged focusing on the objects of criticism and the reasons for users' dissatisfaction and disappointment. The comments selected for the study were independently read and interpreted by two researchers, and disagreements were resolved in meetings.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The investigation identified 51 posts in the "Matinhos Agora" and "Linda Matinhos" communities. These posts addressed aspects, themes, and elements of the project and were composed in different ways, combining text, photographs ($n = 41$), and/or videos ($n = 10$) about the project. Each post selected based on its relevance to the project generated a set of opinion-based comments regarding the topic depicted.

Across the 51 posts, 295 comments expressing disappointment with and opposition to the project and its outcomes, or posted as replies to other comments, were identified and selected, representing 242 different authors across the two communities. One user authored 11 comments, while another 31 users posted between 2 and 5 comments.

The remaining users (n = 209) posted one comment each. This result reflects variability in the number of individuals who expressed their perceptions.

After extraction and repeated reading to become familiar with the data, it was observed that some comments contained more than one expression of disappointment, which required an adaptation in data processing. Comments containing more than one critical reference to the project were therefore separated and classified as polythematic (n = 53). Comments containing only one object of criticism were classified as monothematic (n = 242).

Each polythematic comment was segmented, and at the end of the process, the investigation comprised a total of 361 critical excerpts concerning the project under examination ("Matinhos Agora" n = 244; "Linda Matinhos" n = 117). Thus, in this study, the comments were analyzed in their entirety rather than solely in terms of their main criticism (Gursoy et al., 2022).

The comments comprised a total of 4,580 words. The longest comment consisted of 152 words, and the shortest consisted of 2 words. Table 1 presents the results of the thematic analysis of the critical comments.

Table 1 - Systematization of the thematic analysis (continue)

Object of criticism	Number	Topics of disappointment/dissatisfaction
Matinhos River Bridge	120	• Unsuitable material for the region • Overly simplistic architecture, falling short of what was deserved • Fragile and structurally inadequate • Delayed execution • Uneven flooring (water pooling) • Defective • Poor finishing • Poor workmanship • Incomplete (no lighting) • Questionable product quality • Disappointing/unsatisfactory outcome given the cost • Restricted to pedestrian use • Costly project • Incompetence in execution • Lack of planning and creativity • Visual incongruity • Disrespect/harm to nature
Waterfront Tree Planting	79	• Inappropriate planting and site preparation strategies • Absence/scarcity of trees • Lack of care in preserving and protecting seedlings during periods of high visitation • Negligence by those responsible • Lack of shade • Outcome different from what was advertised • Poorly executed • In the future, it will obstruct the view of the sea • Unsuitable species • Waste of public resources due to improper execution • Planting in unsuitable locations (hindering mobility) • Loss of planted seedlings (environmental crime!) • Need for better distribution • Ineffective and irresponsible management • Flaw in the project • Removal of the former shade trees
Selective Redevelopment	54	• Other areas outside the project boundaries: neglected and in poor condition • Unequal investment across the municipality • Need for improvements in other areas of the municipality • Unequal/non-equitable treatment • Lack of visibility of other municipal problems in areas outside the project • Investments concentrated in Caiobá while other neighborhoods are neglected • Misplaced priorities • Electoral motivations • Caiobá neighborhood favored • Encouragement of real estate speculation • Hostile destination (dirty sand, "horrible" city, pothole-ridden streets, and lack of drainage) • Lack of beautification in areas outside the project • Contrast with other areas of the municipality

Table 1 - Systematization of the thematic analysis

(continue)

Object of criticism	Number	Topics of disappointment/dissatisfaction
Waterfront Restoration Project	22	• No benefits for the local population • Disappointing results • Rapid deterioration of the newly completed project (damaged grass, vegetation growing on walkways, damaged paintwork) • Misleading publicity, electorally motivated project • Uninnovative project • Poorly designed project that failed to respect nature • “Barren/unappealing” waterfront • “Desert-like” waterfront • Lack of maintenance (lawns, restinga vegetation protection, restrooms, side-walks) • Deterioration of the waterfront and beach • Poor imitation of Balneário Camboriú • Chaotic project management • Deterioration of renovated areas • Destruction of Matinhos’ bucolic atmosphere • Degradation of revitalized areas due to infrastructure for the season’s mega-events • Arid/desert-like appearance • Excessive reliance on concrete and asphalt • Low level of qualification among those responsible for and involved in project execution
Public Lighting	20	• Excessive number of lighting poles • Small/low-quality floodlights • Lack of maintenance • Disappointing outcome • Oversized number of poles and lighting infrastructure (evidence of corruption) • “Hydroelectric plant” waterfront • “Power station” waterfront • Installation in an unsuitable location • Insufficient lighting (Bridge/Fish Market)
Infrastructure/Street Furniture	18	• Lack of benches • Infrequent maintenance and upkeep • Need for infrastructure/street furniture: showers, restrooms, benches, trash bins • Scarcity of benches in shaded areas
Restinga Vegetation	13	• Absence of restinga vegetation • Areas of tall and undesirable restinga vegetation • “Detrimental” to the landscape • Area associated with insecurity, disease, dirt, and excessively tall vegetation • (“overgrowth,” “weeds”) • Unnecessary planting • Planting of “weeds” instead of typical restinga vegetation
Waterfront Restoration Project as an investment	11	• Waste of public resources • Costly project • Unsatisfactory outcome given the cost • Electorally motivated project
Walkway/Promenade	6	• Conflict between accessibility and different types of use • Delayed execution • Delays in completion • Numerous negative impacts from construction work (noise, dirt, damage to walkways and streets, illegal practices)
Seafront Avenue	6	• Lack of parking spaces for cars • Disappointing results • Uneven surface

Table 1 - Systematization of the thematic analysis (conclusion)

Object of criticism	Number	Topics of disappointment/dissatisfaction
Beach Nourishment	5	• Arid beach • Worsened the beach • “Rebound” effect of beach nourishment • Benefits exclusively for businesses in the project area and tourists • Aesthetic Appreciation of the Unmodified Area
Misleading Advertising	3	• Contrast between the project as presented and the actual outcome • Excessive publicity
Jetties/Headlands	3	• “Wall effect” of the groynes (hindering movement from one end of the beach to the other) • Lack of integration between beaches due to the “wall effect” of the groynes
Tourism Management of the Waterfront	1	• Tourism management model with numerous negative impacts on residents (e.g., mega-shows)

The results indicate that the criticisms encompass all six areas of intervention of the megaproject. The most prominent items are: the Matinhos River Bridge, Tree Planting, Public Lighting, Walkway/Promenade, Infrastructure/Street Furniture, Seafront Avenue, and Jetties/Headlands.

The construction of the bridge over the Matinhos River (Fig. 2) was planned as an urban and tourism mobility facility intended to connect the different sections of the waterfront, providing greater safety and smoother pedestrian movement. However, it was criticized for the material used, lack of architectural boldness (“rickety footbridge,” “bridge of shame”), delays in execution, among other issues.

C21022025: “Horrible walkway, all crooked and ugly, with puddles of water. Unfortunately, they got even this small project wrong.”

C24022025: “All crooked and ugly. Considering the amount of money invested, it could have been better”

Figure 2 - Bridge over the Matinhos River

Source: Research archive (2025).

Tree planting was part of the landscaping measures, and the project envisaged the extensive planting of trees along the promenade and within the coastal protection structures (Fig. 3). The criticisms emphasized that the seedling planting process was fraught with basic errors in both technical preparation and execution, with particular criticism

directed at the waste of thousands of seedlings that failed to survive, as well as the repetition of the same mistakes (lack of planting-hole preparation, watering, and the use of very small seedlings) during the second round of planting.

Figure 3 - Projected waterfront after completion (left), delivered outcome (right)



Source: Still from the project's promotional video (left), authors' drone image (right).

The lack of shade was repeatedly highlighted. In particular, it was perceived as exacerbating excessive heat along the waterfront, which, according to the comments, causes discomfort and poses risks to older adults and children.

C24042025: "It looked beautiful in the project, but what was delivered was an absurd failure. They are planting among rocks and gravel. Where are the larger plants? Where are the JERIVÁ palms shown in the project, which are part of the Atlantic Forest? They planted them and almost all of them died. A beach without palm trees is not a beach. Planting a seedling that will take 20 years to grow is not enough either [...] the company has to deliver this project with healthy, taller trees and suitable soil [...]"

The purpose of the lighting was to install light poles and fixtures to improve nighttime visibility and increase the sense of safety, allowing the waterfront to be used at night as well. The installation (Fig. 4) altered the waterfront landscape. In the view of some users, it gave the area the visual appearance of a "power station".

C20122024: "They have even said that it looks like a hydroelectric power plant."

C27122024: "[...] There are more light poles than people! This is so ugly!"

Figure 4 - Public lighting



Source: Research archive (2025).

Infrastructure/street furniture, the avenue, and the promenade/walkway are fundamental elements in making the space more attractive and functional for users' leisure and circulation. Complaints addressed the lack of basic street furniture along the waterfront, such as benches, as well as the lack of care for those that had already been installed and the rapid deterioration of the completed section.

C30122024: "It's a shame there are no drinking fountains, benches, or showers, only paths for cycling and walking."

C03112024: “More benches to rest on, renovate the restrooms, and repair the sidewalks [...]”

Finally, the beach nourishment and jetties were criticized for hindering movement between the ends of the beach arc at Praia Brava de Caiobá, as well as for creating a visual barrier with implications for the enjoyment of the landscape.

C24022025: “I thought it would be on the sand so that we could continue walking, and it is also missing in Matinhos, but the walkway should be built on the sand so that we can continue walking from one end to the other. Right now, we have a wall of rocks. What they have done is horrible”

C13102024: “Unfortunately, they ruined the beach with the beach nourishment”

These elements of the project are directly related to recreational practices and the municipality’s tourism image, as they directly involve the beach and its resources that enable social use. Another aspect of disappointment concerns the project as a political intervention, a questionable choice by public authorities in light of other needs and priorities. In this regard, the use of the project in government communications as a form of political marketing stands out.

C05022025: “It only looks like that in the photo.”

C26122024: “They are engaging in misleading advertising about Matinhos.”

In addition, the dissatisfaction of permanent residents with the lack of public works in the neighborhoods, particularly in peripheral areas, is evident. While the waterfront was given a “new lease on life,” the city streets continue to experience flooding, potholes, and a lack of maintenance of basic services, while the neighborhoods remain neglected, as does the rest of the waterfront outside the project boundaries.

This socio-spatial inequality was interpreted by part of the population as a sign that the project prioritized the “tourist façade” at the expense of everyday needs. Users described this disparity as “regrettable” and “horrible.”

C22102024: “Matinhos is beautiful. It’s a shame there isn’t a single standard. The impression you get is that, from the Flórida seaside resort to Monções, on the border with Pontal do Paraná, it’s a different city with no government! If anyone thinks I’m wrong, just go and take a look around there! I hope that someday Matinhos will become an equitable city”

C24012025: “The seaside resorts farther away from this area are completely neglected, and don’t come telling me that “we’re working on it.”

Environmental issues were another focus of attention. Prior to the implementation of the project, the Caiobá seaside resort had areas of restinga vegetation. This vegetation elicits mixed feelings among users, as it evokes both feelings of aversion, since its presence is perceived as a source of insecurity and as “visually detrimental” to the beach, while, on the other hand, it is recognized for its role in providing natural protection against the advance of the sea and as a permanent preservation area.

Although the replanting of restinga areas was included within the scope of the planned actions, visitors’ comments indicate feelings of rejection and apprehension regarding what may occur in the revitalized areas.

C15112024: “If it weren’t for this restinga vegetation, the view would be much more beautiful! I want to see what happens when it takes over all the sand. And what about its height, who is going to maintain it? Make the environmentalists clean it up.”

C23092024: “Don’t forget the restinga vegetation! That’s the vegetation along the seashore! It holds the sand in place! Without the restinga, the sea will destroy and wash all of this away!”

Overall, the analysis indicates that the comments identified reveal contradictions inherent in tourism urbanization and beach nourishment interventions. The first contradiction is between **quality and publicity**, insofar as users identify a conflict between the “postcard” and “Instagrammable” image portrayed in the project and the technical reality of the solutions delivered and adopted. Sources of disappointment include execution errors, questionable finishing, and materials considered unsuitable.

Another contradiction is between **centrality and periphery**. In this regard, the comments strongly reflected a perception that the tourist destination of Matinhos is a fragmented and clearly segregated city. The area benefiting from tourism urbanization and beach nourishment serves as a showcase, receiving attention and the largest share of investment, whereas other areas, even neighboring ones, remain neglected and overlooked by the public administration.

Appearance and functionality constitute the third contradiction interpreted in the analysis. In this case, it is important to understand that such urban intervention projects are the subject of intense debate regarding the choices made. Users do not remain passive in the face of the solutions adopted and express their views on both aesthetic

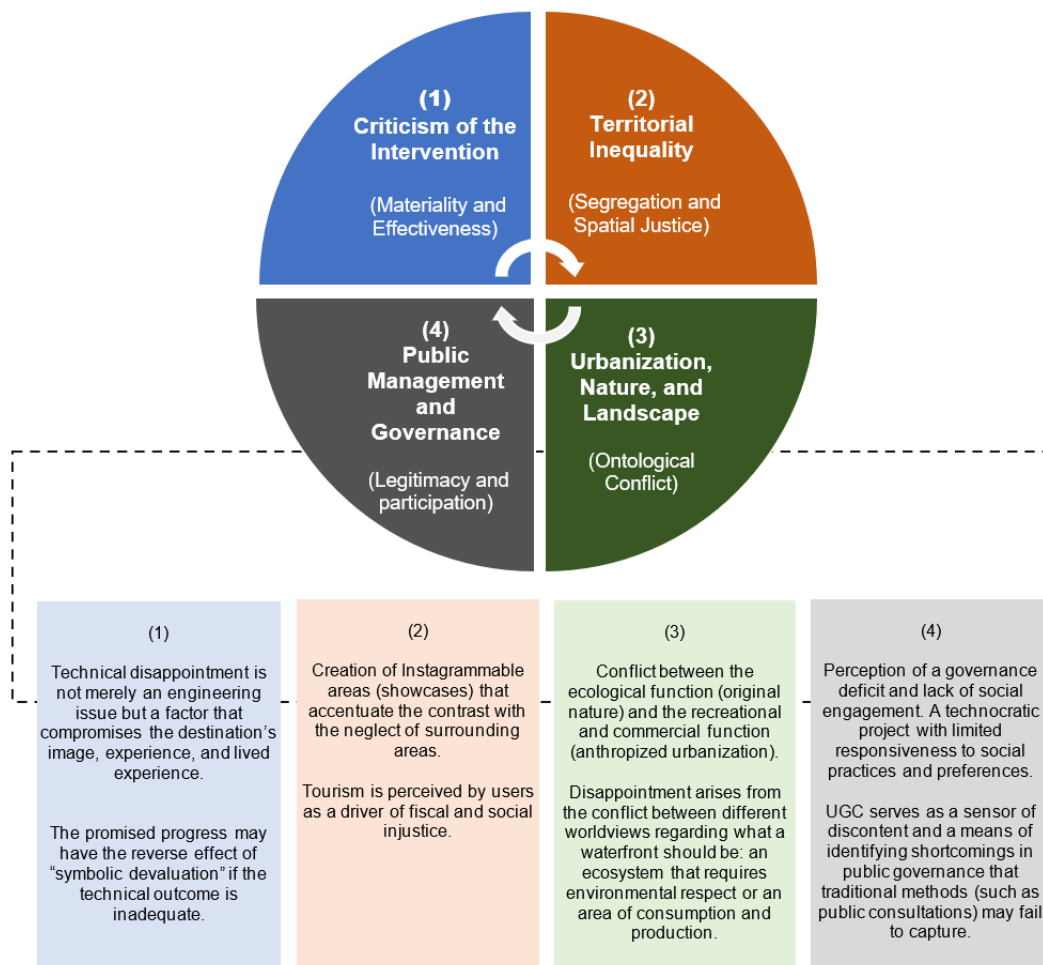
outcomes and functionality. This highlights the fundamental importance of attention to project design in aspects involving user comfort in their everyday practices within the intervention area.

From another perspective, the data analysis makes it possible to identify four dimensions that articulate the topics of disappointment regarding tourism urbanization and beach nourishment (BOX 2):

BOX 3 - Dimensions and Synthesis of Expressions of Disappointment

Dimension	Synthesis
Criticism of the Project	The focus is on the intervention itself and its materiality, from planning through implementation and actual delivery. The outcomes are also evaluated. The choices that define the project, delays and effects of implementation, the low technical quality of the works, and final adjustments are questioned. The comments indicate a sense of technical and operational inefficiency regarding the materials used, some of which are considered unsuitable for the coastal environmental context. Other targets of criticism include poor finishing, structural defects, imitation of projects in other destinations, high financial costs, fragility, and rapid deterioration of newly delivered elements.
Territorial Inequality	The unequal distribution of public investment is questioned. Sources of dissatisfaction include the concentration of resources in showcase areas and tourist façades, perceived as historically privileged areas, the neglect of neighborhoods, and the failure to address broader, urgent, and longstanding problems. The comments address spatial segregation and the division of the destination between Instagrammable areas and a geography of neglect that characterizes neighboring areas. The intervention generates feelings of injustice, exclusion, and devaluation and is therefore criticized for benefiting only a limited number of people. The intervention is perceived as selective and associated with decisions that do not address priorities but rather serve electoral purposes and the interests of real estate speculation. A prominent issue is the lack of equity in the distribution of investments and the sense of fiscal injustice, whereby everyone pays but few benefits.
Urbanization, Nature, and Landscape	This dimension portrays the dispute between environmental protection and the rejection of the ecological function of restinga vegetation. Perceptions are based on comparisons with other destinations regarded as exemplary and "clean," as well as on the predominance of a logic of controlled landscaping along waterfronts. Another issue concerns the effects of the works on the landscape, since the waterfront and beach are regarded as special areas strongly influenced by natural dynamics. Ecological and environmental disregard is understood as a risk to local identity and the landscape, as well as a source of waste of public resources, with the idea that a rebound effect from artificial beach nourishment is inevitable. The elements that define landscaping and architecture and interfere with the landscape are direct sources of disappointment because of the role they play in tourism aesthetics, but above all because of what they represent in terms of functional and visual comfort and support for activities in the affected areas. The aridity resulting from unsuccessful tree planting, the poor taste of architectural choices, the proliferation of public lighting poles, and the excessive reliance on asphalt result in a hostile, environmentally impoverished landscape, with uncreative and simplistic street furniture and architectural elements.
Public Management and Governance	Public management is questioned regarding its capacity to make fair decisions and carry out technically efficient and environmentally responsible interventions. The intervention model, tourism management, and socio-spatial effects are also addressed. The criticism extends to the project's alleged electoral motivations, a perception of misleading publicity, and the lack of oversight during project implementation. Different levels of government (municipal and state) are mentioned. There is explicit condemnation of the lack of ongoing maintenance and upkeep that should be provided along the waterfront. Public administration is also questioned for encouraging a tourism development model that concentrates benefits on tourists, privileged areas, and a select few merchants, while residents bear the negative impacts, the degradation of urban and natural areas, and the loss of quality of life.

Overall, users' comments on social media indicate forms of disappointment that do not operate in isolation but rather reinforce one another, forming a comprehensive critical picture of the intervention carried out. The tension between the development of the megaproject and the social perceptions identified in the comments is illustrated in the framework presented in Fig. 5.

Figure 5 – Disappointment with a coastal megaproject (Paraná/Brazil)

Organization: The authors (2026).

Overall, the analysis revealed a variety of tones, shaped by expressions of indignation, irony, and aggressiveness. When examined through rigorous methodological procedures, social media content can provide potential courses of action for public administration (Félix et al., 2024) and for tourist destination planning and management (Chemin et al., 2025). In this regard, the results presented highlight the importance of UGC as a spontaneous and participatory form of communication, in line with Muniz and Santos (2019).

UGC contributes to the construction of destination image (Wang et al., 2021) and to the assessment and perception of specific situations (Arias González, 2019), such as urban and territorial interventions. Tourism urbanization is based on leisure and the consumption of space, services, and objects (Minasi & Tricárico, 2021), and these initiatives tend to perform better when projects develop a deeper understanding of social experiences and practices.

By considering the beach as a complex and multidimensional system, UGC makes it possible to capture users' perceptions in real time, providing qualitative and quantitative data. This approach facilitates the identification of conflicts of use, the mapping of leisure patterns, and the assessment of satisfaction regarding quality, infrastructure, safety, and the impacts of coastal interventions, which can support integrated planning. Incorporating digital information into management enhances decision-making based on social evidence and promotes management that is more responsive and better adapted to the contemporary dynamics of coastal space use (Bombana & Polette, 2022).

Furthermore, the results can also be interpreted as critical aspects of the governance model for public works, as indicated by Barbieri (2016), Sachs (2009), Gomes et al. (2026), and Xavier (2021). Users not only highlight factors such as uneven paving and insufficient shaded areas but also explicitly identify a pattern of public-sector action that prioritizes the media spectacle surrounding public works at the expense of technical quality, territorial justice, and social participation.

Narratives concerning the waste of resources or the perception that the project was electorally motivated reflect a crisis of legitimacy in public management. Public management is perceived as inefficient and captured by private interests, particularly those of the real estate sector. This perception is corroborated by the literature on the subject, as observed in Pompemeyer (2024) and Gurski and Souza-Lima (2018). In this regard, the failure of the tree-planting initiative reveals a symptom of environmentally fragile and ill-prepared management that neglects project monitoring and oversight.

Thus, users' disappointment constitutes a critical indicator of the gap between the technocratic discourse of development and the reality of public management, which proves unable to reconcile the ambitions of megaprojects with the social, environmental, and urban complexity of tourist destinations.

5 RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

One limitation of the research concerns the data collection period selected, as the study opted to examine perceptions of the final outcomes of the interventions, which, in theory, are expected to be more enduring. Had data collection focused on the initial stages of the project in 2022 and 2023, it would have provided access to a more complete chronology of users' views, including comments on the merits of the project, its environmental impact, considerations regarding regional priorities, and the development model. These topics were identified during the initial stage of screening and familiarization with posts about the intervention, when the images and videos in the posts emphasized a scenario of profound transformation, with heavy machinery in operation, the demarcation of restricted-access areas, and hundreds of workers interacting within a "construction site" landscape.

6 FUTURE RESEARCH AGENDA

Further qualitative research is recommended, considering a longer data collection period, which may help to understand underlying dimensions of complaints and criticisms expressed in the comments. Such investigations could elucidate users' perceptions before, during, and after the official inauguration of the project, revealing a profile of criticisms according to broader themes. They could also incorporate other social networks, websites, or applications currently available. Another aspect that could be explored is the diversification of methodologies.

In this regard, it would be pertinent to develop more targeted and precise surveys based on the findings of this research, administered to users in loco. Su and Teng (2018) investigated service failures in museums through negative online reviews and developed surveys based on findings from social media. These strategies contribute to improving tourism management and planning. Another opportunity is the development of expert panels aimed at identifying technical solutions to address the sources of dissatisfaction, following the example of the study on destinations conducted by Laesser et al. (2025).

7 PRACTICAL AND MANAGERIAL CONTRIBUTION

Public and private managers can use this study as a basis for understanding the importance of UGC as an indicator of real problems related to infrastructure, mobility, accessibility, and tourism services, enabling them to address problems more quickly and in a more targeted manner. In terms of managerial implications, the results may assist the agencies responsible for designing public opinion instruments and conducting on-site inspections of the issues identified, considering the need for adaptations and improvements to the project.

For example, Figure 6 shows users seeking alternative routes to the solutions provided by the project in response to the groynes' wall effect, a criticism identified in the comments.

Figure 6 – Paths created by users

Source: Research archive (2026).

It would be pertinent to develop an instrument to map, monitor, and integrate UGC into the planning cycle of urban interventions and management processes. In addition, digital platforms could be used as sources of continuous information, allowing public agencies and companies to monitor user satisfaction and thereby reduce conflicts.

However, UGC not only provides information about problems but also reveals users' expectations and values and contributes to the acceptance of processes, thereby strengthening the legitimacy of public decisions. By identifying sources of disappointment and dissatisfaction, managers can plan interventions that minimize negative environmental, social, and economic impacts, in line with sustainability and the preservation of cultural and environmental heritage.

8 THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Regarding the theoretical contributions of research with this focus, they can be said to lie at the intersection of tourism in coastal destinations, tourism urbanization, coastal interventions, and UGC. First, this research demonstrated that the use of UGC extends beyond its practical and more widely recognized role as a travel planning tool. It is worth recalling that most published studies address services and lived experiences, revealing tourists' feelings, evaluations, and recommendations.

Thus, it was possible to demonstrate that UGC can be investigated to identify sources of and reasons for social dissatisfaction related to territorial and urban projects and interventions. Second, this research contributes to studies on coastal tourism and tourism urbanization, which are increasingly present in discussions concerning public works and public resources, particularly along the Brazilian coast.

Furthermore, the findings of this research corroborate and expand the thesis of Mullins (1991) and Clavé (2023) on tourism urbanization by demonstrating that the production of coastal space, although guided by the discourse of modernization and development, frequently neglects subjective dimensions and the use value attributed by residents and regular users. The narratives of disappointment identified on Facebook reveal a critical gap between the "projected image" promoted by government authorities focused on the spectacularization of infrastructure and the "perceived" or lived image (Wang et al., 2021), manifested through dissatisfaction with landscaping and spatial selectivity.

Theoretically, this suggests that User-Generated Content (UGC) functions not only as a tool for marketing analysis but also as a mechanism of symbolic resistance and denunciation. Thus, the study contributes to the literature by proposing that "disappointment" be understood as a psychosocial indicator of the failure to manage expectations in large-scale urban interventions, in which the aesthetics of the tourism commodity take precedence over the social functionality of the territory.

The methodological strategy applied in this study can contribute to the understanding and systematization of narratives of dissatisfaction that question the effectiveness, management, and impacts of these interventions. For this

reason, the importance of considering the perceptions of residents and tourists in matters related to coastal planning is reinforced, demonstrating that digital platforms function as spaces for the visibility and validation of social opinions.

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Data Availability Statement

The data should be requested from the author via email at marcelochemin@ufpr.br

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