T.C.

ANTALYA BILIM UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE OF POSTGRADE EDUCATION

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

MASTER'S THESIS

THE IMPACT OF DIGITAL MARKETING PRACTICES ON THE PERFORMANCE OF TOURISM COMPANIES IN PAKISTAN

Zanib SHABBIR

JUNE 2023
ANTALYA

T.C.

ANTALYA BILIM UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE OF POSTGRADE EDUCATION

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

MASTER'S THESIS

THE IMPACT OF DIGITAL MARKETING PRACTICES ON THE PERFORMANCE OF TOURISM COMPANIES IN PAKISTAN

Zanib SHABBIR

JUNE 2023
ANTALYA

T.C.

ANTALYA BILIM UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE OF POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION

THE IMPACT OF DIGITAL MARKETING PRACTICES ON THE PERFORMANCE OF TOURISM COMPANIES IN PAKISTAN

Zanib SHABBIR

This thesis was accepted by the jury (with unanimous vote/majority vote) on the date / /2023 in Master's of Business Administration of Postgraduate Institute.

Prof. Kemal KURTULUS (Supervisor) ----------

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Cem KARAYALÇIN ----------

Doç Dr. Yunus KILIÇ

Director of The Institute

Prof. Dr. Ibrahim Sani MERT ----------

Thesis Submission Date: /0 /2023

DECLARATION

In my master's thesis entitled "The Impact of Digital Marketing Practices on the Performance of Tourism Companies in Pakistan," I affirm that I have adhered to scientific ethical principles throughout the preparation of this study. In instances where I have utilized the work of others, proper references have been provided in accordance with academic standards. There has been no falsification of the data used, and none of the content from this study has been presented as part of any other academic work.

05 / 06 / 2023

Zanib SHABBIR

CONTENTS

ABSTRACT i

ÖZET ii

SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS iii

LIST OF FIGURES iv

LIST OF TABLES v

PREFACE vi

1. INTRODUCTION 6

1.2. Study Problem 7

1.3. Study Purpose 8

1.4. Study Important 8

1.5. Study Limitation 9

1.6. Study Hypotheses 9

1.7. Disposition 9

2. LITERATURE REVIEW 6

2.1. Current Trends and Challenges of Tourism in Pakistan 6

2.2. Marketing 7

2.3. Tourism as a Catalyst for Regional Development 8

2.4. Mobile Technology 8

2.4.1. Mobile Technology and Tourist Behavior 9

2.4.2. Mobile Technology and Destination Management 9

2.5. Impact of Digital Marketing Practices on Customer Engagement 9

2.6. Impact of Digital Marketing Practices on Performance Metrics 10

2.7. Challenges and Opportunities in Implementing Digital Marketing Practices 11

2.7.1. Lack of Knowledge and Expertise 11

2.7.2. Lack of Resources 11

2.7.3. Cultural and Regional Differences 11

2.7.4. Data Privacy and Security 12
2.7.5. Opportunities in Implementing Digital Marketing Practices 12
2.7.6. Targeted Marketing 12
2.7.7. Cost-Effective Marketing 12
2.7.8. Improved Customer Engagement 12
2.7.9. Improved Analytics and Reporting 12
2.8. Dimensions for Digital Marketing and Tourism 13
2.8.1. First Dimension-Information 13
2.8.2. Second Dimension- Trends 14
2.8.3. Third Dimension- Customization 14
2.8.4. Fourth Dimension- Interactivity 15
2.8.5. Fifth Dimension- Word of Mouth 15
2.8.6. Sixth Dimension – Brand Value 16
2.8.7. Seventh Dimension- Purchase Intend 16
3. METHODOLOGY 18
3.1. Research Purpose 18
3.2. Research Approach 18
3.3. Data Collection 18
3.3.1. Questionnaire Development 19
3.3.2. Sample Selection 19
3.3.3. Participant Selection 20
3.4. Survey Methodology and Questionnaire Development 20
3.5. Data Analysis 21
3.6. Statistical Techniques 21
3.7. Quality Standards 22
3.7.1. Reliability 22

3.7.2. Validity 22
3.8. Ethical Considerations 23
4. RESULTS AND FINDINGS 25
4.1. Demographic Profile 25
4.2. Structural Modeling 26
4.3. Statistical Analysis 27
4.4. Measurement Model, Validity and Reliability 27
4.5. Structural Modeling 29
4.5.1. Discriminant Validity 30
5. DISCUSSION 33
6. REFERENCES 35
7. APPENDIX 44
7.1. Appendix A: - Reliability and Validity 44
7.2. Appendix B: - Path coefficient -Matrix 44
7.3. Appendix C: - Fornell- Larcker Criterion 44
7.4. Appendix D: - Cross loadings 45

ABSTRACT

THE IMPACT OF DIGITAL MARKETING PRACTICES ON THE PERFORMANCE OF TOURISM COMPANIES IN PAKISTAN

Zanib SHABBIR

Master's Thesis, Department of Business Administration

Supervisor: Prof. Kemal KURTULUS

June 2023; 47 pages

This research aims to explore the influence of digital marketing on the performance of the tourism sector, focusing on two crucial factors: brand image and customer engagement. The impact of these factors on the performance of the tourism industry is analyzed in this research. The research was done within Pakistan's tourism sector. There are 3 variables in this study where 2 of them, such as customer engagement and brand image are independent and 1 is dependent which is performance. By demonstrating the connection between these three variables. This study aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge by expanding upon the literature and research methods in the field. The tourism sector in Pakistan has faced various challenges, including limited awareness of its remarkable tourist destinations and a persistently negative perception of the country over the years. This quantitative, explanatory study used questionnaires distributed in universities and residents of Kashmir. The results of this study demonstrated a significant impact of customer engagement and brand image on the performance of tourism sector by the help of smartPLS.

KEYWORDS: Brand image, Customer engagement, Performance, Tourism

COMMITTEE: Prof. Kemal KURTULUS

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Cem KARAYALÇIN

Doç Dr. Yunus KILIÇ

ÖZET

PAKİSTAN'DAKİ TURİZM ŞİRKETLERİNİN PERFORMANSINA DİJİTAL PAZARLAMA UYGULAMALARININ ETKİSİ

Zanib SHABBIR

Yüksek Lisans Tezi, İşletme Anabilim Dalı

Danışman: Prof. Kemal KURTULUS

Haziran 2023; 47 sayfa

Bu araştırmanın amacı, dijital pazarlamanın turizm sektörünün performansı üzerindeki etkisini anlamaktır ve ana faktörler olarak marka imajı ve müşteri etkileşimi ele alınmıştır. Bu faktörlerin turizm endüstrisinin performansı üzerindeki etkisi bu araştırmada analiz edilmektedir. Araştırma Pakistan'ın turizm sektörü içinde gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bu çalışmada müşteri etkileşimi ve marka imajı gibi 2 bağımsız değişken ve performans gibi 1 bağımlı değişken bulunmaktadır. Bu üç değişken arasındaki bağlantıyı göstererek, bu çalışma mevcut literatür ve ilgili araştırma tekniklerine dayanarak bilgi birikimine katkıda bulunmayı amaçlamaktadır. Pakistan'ın turizm sektörü, birkaç nedenle gölgede kalmıştır ve bunlardan biri yıllar boyunca ülkenin güzel turistik yerlerine olan farkındalığın eksikliği ve olumsuz imajıdır. Bu nicel, açıklayıcı çalışma, üniversitelerde ve Keşmir'deki yerleşikler arasında dağıtılan anketler kullanmıştır. Bu çalışmanın sonuçları, müşteri etkileşimi ve marka imajının turizm sektörünün performansı üzerinde önemli bir etkisi olduğunu smartPLS yardımıyla göstermektedir.

ANAHTAR KELİMELER: Marka imajı, Müşteri etkileşimi, Performans, Turizm

JÜRİ: Prof. Kemal KURTULUS

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Cem KARAYALÇIN

Doç Dr. Yunus KILIÇ

SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AVE	: Average variance extracted
BI	: Brand Image
CE	: Customer Engagement
DMOs	: Destination management organizations (DMOs)
P	: Performance
PTDC	: Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation
PTEC	: Punjab Tourism for Economic Growth
WOM	: Word-of-mouth

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 4. 1. Comparison of Scale Items 29

Figure 4. 2. Structural Research Model 30

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4. 1. Demographic profile of participants 25

Table 4. 2. Scale Items and questionnaire survey 26

Table 4. 3. Likert scale 27

Table 4. 4. Measurement Model Assessment 29

Table 4. 5. Discriminant Validity of Model 31

Table 4. 6. Sample Statistics and T-Test Results 32

PREFACE

First, thanks to Allah Almighty who gave me the strength and resources to complete my master's thesis in a better manner.

To my supervisor – Prof. Kemal KURTULUS – I am very thankful to you for your ongoing mentorship, support, insightful comments, and advice over the past few months. Without your support, the research and learning that went into this thesis would not have been possible. Your guidance and mentoring have helped me think more clearly, scientifically, and critically about business strategies and my research as a professional Student. Even if I wrote another thesis on everything, I've learned in the past year working with you two, it might not cover everything. I appreciate each of you for sharing your special knowledge with me and assisting me in realizing my full potential, exploring new opportunities, and overcoming obstacles.

Mom, Dad, and my fiancé for as long as I can remember, you have been a loving family that has motivated me to pursue my goals regardless of what they are. You gave me the resources I needed to achieve my goals, whether I wanted to fly or be in the sky. I appreciate you always being there for me and supporting me as I struggled with my health to complete this thesis.

Thanks to all of you who helped me to achieve my goals.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the current landscape of intense market competition, organizations endeavor to identify optimal strategies for product and service distribution, customer attraction, and maximizing overall benefits. In this regard, the marketing process assumes a paramount role as a vital operation for all businesses. According to Nair (2011), there are four fundamental elements that companies should prioritize to enhance the effectiveness of their marketing process. These components encompass various aspects such as the characteristics of the product, pricing strategies, promotional activities, and distribution channels.

In recent years, the science of marketing has undergone a significant evaluation, much like other sciences. This evaluation has been driven by the many changes in the markets across the world, leading many firms to shift from traditional marketing to digital marketing. The conversion to digital marketing has allowed companies to reach a wider audience, interact with customers in real time and improve their overall marketing efficiency. The implementation of digital marketing has become a crucial aspect for companies looking to remain competitive in the ever-changing market landscape.

In the past, firms relied on traditional marketing methods, such as newspapers, television, radio, and face-to-face visits, to reach a limited number of consumers in their local area or region. However, with the rise of globalization and increased market competition, companies have begun to shift from traditional marketing to digital marketing. This shift has allowed firms to interact directly with their target audience and reach new markets using digital mediums like social media, websites, and email. By leveraging these digital channels, companies can connect with their customers in real-time and increase their marketing efficiency. This shift to digital marketing has become essential for companies to remain competitive in today's rapidly changing market landscape.

"Digital marketing has been a catalyst for improvement in company performance, allowing firms to utilize the internet as a critical communication channel. This has enhanced the companies' ability to reach and serve their clients with higher value, thereby improving customer service. (El-Gohary, 2012). The adoption of digital marketing has become essential for companies looking to stay competitive and improve their business operations."

Pakistan is a country that offers a diverse range of tourism products, from beautiful landscapes and cultural heritage to religious sites and adventure tourism. Despite having enormous potential for tourism, Pakistan's tourism industry has not yet achieved its full potential. One possible reason is the lack of effective marketing strategies, including digital marketing.

The tourism sector holds immense significance for the economy of Pakistan as it serves as a catalyst for job creation, foreign exchange earnings, and overall economic

development. However, several challenges hinder the realization of the full potential of Pakistan's tourism industry, including political instability, security issues, and inadequate marketing strategies. In this era of technological advancement, digital marketing has emerged as a critical tool for promoting tourism, leveraging the power of digital technology to overcome these challenges and effectively promote Pakistan as a desirable tourist destination.

Digital marketing has revolutionized the way travel products and services are marketed, providing a cost-effective and targeted way to reach potential customers. It has enabled businesses to reach a wider audience, increase brand awareness, and generate revenue. According to research, digital marketing has a positive impact on tourists' attitudes, intentions, and behavior (Wang et al., 2019).

The adoption of digital marketing in the tourism industry is not without its challenges. For instance, tourism businesses in Pakistan may face barriers such as lack of resources, expertise, and knowledge of digital marketing tools. Furthermore, cultural and social factors influence tourists' perception of digital marketing, and this could be different in Pakistan, which has a unique cultural identity and context.

This research aims to investigate the impact of digital marketing on the performance of tourism in Pakistan. It seeks to identify the factors that influence tourists' decision-making process and analyze the effectiveness of digital marketing in promoting tourism in Pakistan. Additionally, the study aims to identify the challenges faced by tourism businesses in Pakistan in adopting digital marketing, and the ways to overcome these challenges.

The study is significant because it will provide insights into the effectiveness of digital marketing as a tool for tourism promotion in Pakistan, which can help businesses develop effective marketing strategies. It will also help policymakers in formulating policies to encourage digital marketing adoption and promote tourism in Pakistan.

1.2. Study Problem

The tourism industry is a vital sector of Pakistan's economy, contributing to job creation, foreign exchange earnings, and economic growth. However, the sector faces various challenges such as political instability, security concerns, and a lack of effective marketing strategies, which have hindered its growth and competitiveness. The growth of digital technology and its increasing impact on tourism globally have made digital marketing an essential tool for tourism promotion. Digital marketing has transformed the way travel products and services are marketed, providing a cost-effective and targeted way to reach potential customers. It has enabled businesses to reach a wider audience, increase brand awareness, and generate revenue. However, the adoption of digital marketing in the tourism industry is not without its challenges. Tourism businesses in Pakistan may face barriers such as a lack of resources, expertise, and knowledge of digital marketing tools. Therefore, there is a need to investigate the effectiveness of various digital marketing practices in enhancing the performance of tourism companies in Pakistan.

This study aims to investigate the impact of digital marketing on the growth and

competitiveness of tourism companies in Pakistan. The research will focus on exploring the relationship between different digital marketing practices, including social media advertising, email marketing, content marketing, and search engine optimization, and their influence on key performance indicators such as customer engagement, brand awareness, and revenue generation within the tourism sector.

The research will use a mixed-methods research design, including a quantitative survey of tourism companies in Pakistan and in-depth interview with the people who are fond of tourism. The survey will collect data on the adoption of digital marketing practices, the perceived effectiveness of these practices, and their impact on the performance of tourism companies. The interviews will provide insights into the challenges faced by tourism companies in adopting digital marketing and strategies for overcoming these challenges. The research is important as it will provide valuable insights into the potential of digital marketing for improving the performance of tourism companies in Pakistan. The findings will inform strategies for digital marketing in the tourism industry, and help businesses develop effective marketing strategies to increase customer engagement, brand awareness, and revenue generation.

1.3. Study Purpose

The purpose of this research is to analyze the utilization of digital marketing techniques by tourism companies in Pakistan, evaluate their impact on company performance, and identify challenges encountered during implementation. The study aims to offer practical recommendations for optimizing the use of digital marketing within the Pakistani tourism sector, with the goal of enhancing effectiveness and achieving success. By providing valuable insights into the potential of digital marketing, this study aims to contribute to the improvement of performance in Pakistan's tourism companies. The research findings will inform the development of digital marketing strategies in the tourism industry, assisting businesses in enhancing customer engagement, increasing brand awareness, and generating revenue.

1.4. Study Important

The significance of this research stems from recognizing the vital role that digital marketing plays in the success of tourism companies operating in Pakistan. With the advent of the internet and the widespread use of mobile devices, the digital landscape has expanded, presenting tourism companies with opportunities to effectively reach their target customers through various digital marketing channels. However, despite the growing importance of digital marketing, there is a dearth of research specifically focused on its impact on the performance of tourism companies in Pakistan. This study aims to address this research gap by examining how tourism companies in Pakistan employ digital marketing techniques, evaluating the effects of these practices on company performance, and identifying the challenges encountered during the implementation of digital marketing initiatives. The findings of this study will contribute valuable insights into the potential of digital marketing in enhancing the performance of tourism companies in Pakistan. These insights will be particularly useful for tourism companies seeking to enhance customer engagement, increase brand awareness, and drive revenue generation through the strategic application of digital marketing strategies. Additionally, the study will provide practical recommendations for the effective utilization of digital marketing

within the tourism sector in Pakistan, enabling businesses to develop successful marketing strategies and maintain competitiveness in the industry.

1.5. Study Limitation

One potential limitation of this study is the difficulty in accurately measuring the impact of digital marketing practices on the performance of tourism companies in Pakistan. While it is widely accepted that digital marketing has the potential to improve customer engagement, brand awareness, and revenue generation, it can be challenging to isolate the effect of specific marketing strategies on these performance indicators. This is because digital marketing is a multifaceted concept that encompasses a range of practices, including social media advertising, email marketing, content marketing, and search engine optimization.

Moreover, cultural and regional differences in the use of digital marketing practices in Pakistan may impact the generalizability of the findings. The adoption of digital marketing practices can vary depending on the demographics and cultural preferences of the target audience. Therefore, it is possible that the findings of this study may not be applicable to all tourism companies in Pakistan.

Another potential limitation of the study is the reliance on self-reported data from tourism companies. The accuracy and validity of the data collected may be subject to bias and may not accurately reflect the actual use of digital marketing practices by tourism companies in Pakistan.

Despite these potential limitations, this study aims to provide valuable insights into the potential of digital marketing for improving the performance of tourism companies in Pakistan. The study design and methodology have been carefully planned to minimize potential biases and limitations, and the findings of the study will be analyzed and reported objectively.

1.6. Study Hypotheses

For the investigation into how digital marketing strategies affect the success of Pakistani tourism businesses, the following hypothesis might be put forth:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): Tourism companies that implement digital marketing practices are inclined to observe elevated levels of customer engagement in comparison to those that do not adopt such practices.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Tourism companies that incorporate social media advertising as a component of their digital marketing strategy are expected to encounter enhanced levels of brand awareness in contrast to those that do not utilize such methods.

1.7. Disposition

This research consists of five chapters. The first chapter provides an overview of the thesis, encompassing the introduction, the research issue, the study's purpose, goals,

and objectives. In the second chapter, an extensive literature review is conducted, covering relevant prior research, a comprehensive analysis of the Pakistani tourism industry, research methodologies, variables examined, and the research model and its underlying assumptions. The third chapter elucidates the research methodology, outlining the step-by-step procedures employed, sampling techniques, demographic data, and the determined sample size. Moving on to the fourth chapter, the findings derived from the measurement models utilized in the research, the validity and reliability assessments of each variable, as well as the outcomes of the variable effects within the study are presented. The fifth and final chapter concludes the study by discussing the findings, summarizing the findings, and exploring the theoretical and practical consequences of these findings.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In recent years, the usage of digital marketing techniques in the tourist sector has increased dramatically as firms work to stay up with evolving consumer trends and technical developments. The COVID-19 pandemic, according to a report by the World tourist Organization (2020), has had a substantial influence on the worldwide tourist industry, which has caused a shift in consumer behavior towards online channels for research and booking. In order to be competitive in the industry, Pakistani tourist businesses must adapt and use digital marketing methods. With a focus on Pakistan, this chapter offers a review of the pertinent literature on the effect of digital marketing strategies on the success of tourism businesses.

Research consistently demonstrates that online marketing has a substantial influence on travelers' choices. Wang et al. (2019) highlighted the beneficial effects of digital marketing on tourists' attitudes, intentions, and behavioral patterns. In a similar manner, Kaur and Sharma (2019) discovered a significant association between digital marketing and tourists' impressions of a destination, which in turn influenced their decision to travel there.

However, the implementation of digital marketing in the tourism sector is not without challenges. A study by O'Connor et al. (2016) identified several challenges faced by tourism businesses in adopting digital marketing, including lack of expertise, financial constraints, and resistance to change. Furthermore, cultural and social factors also influence tourists' perception of digital marketing. According to Sigala (2014), tourists' cultural backgrounds and attitudes towards technology influence their perception of digital marketing.

Research has shown that digital marketing has a significant impact on tourists' decision-making process. For instance, Kaur and Sharma (2019) found that digital marketing has a significant impact on tourists' perception of a destination, which, in turn, affects their decision to visit the destination. Similarly, Wang et al. (2019) found that digital marketing positively influences tourists' attitudes, intentions, and behavior.

2.1. Current Trends and Challenges of Tourism in Pakistan

The tourism industry plays a vital role in economic development, contributing significantly to the country's economic growth. The nation has a rich cultural and historical heritage, diverse landscapes, and natural beauty, which offer immense potential for tourism development (Khan and Chelliah, 2019). According to the Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation, the country has five main tourist regions: the Northern Areas, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab, Sindh, and Balochistan (PTDC, 2021).

Despite its potential, the tourism industry in Pakistan has faced numerous challenges over the years. These include political instability, security concerns, inadequate infrastructure, and poor marketing efforts (Niazi et al., 2016). Nevertheless, recent years have witnessed proactive measures undertaken by the government to stimulate tourism within the country. Notably, the introduction of a fresh tourism policy

in 2020 serves as a prime example of these endeavors, designed to amplify tourism by bolstering infrastructure, offering incentives for potential investors, and augmenting marketing initiatives (Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation, 2020).

In 2019, Pakistan's tourism industry saw a dominant rise in both domestic and international visitors. The total number of domestic tourists increased by 31.6% compared to the previous year, while the number of international tourists increased by 10.8% (Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic, however, had a potential effect on the tourism industry in Pakistan, with a sharp decline in international tourist arrivals and a temporary halt to domestic tourism.

Considering the obstacles encountered by the tourism sector in Pakistan, there exists a promising scope for growth and advancement through the integration of digital marketing strategies. The utilization of digital marketing presents an avenue for tourism companies to expand their reach, enhance their visibility, and elevate their competitiveness within the market (Niaz et al., 2021). By harnessing digital channels, Pakistani tourism companies can effectively showcase their distinctive offerings, cultivate brand awareness, and foster meaningful customer engagement through novel and inventive approaches.

2.2. Marketing

Marketing encompasses the comprehensive undertaking of generating, conveying, delivering, and reciprocating offerings that possess value for customers, clients, partners, and society (Kotler and Armstrong, 2010). This vital organizational function is instrumental in discerning and satisfying customer needs and aspirations. Ultimately, the primary objective of marketing is to establish enduring customer relationships while fostering sustainable value for the business and its stakeholders.

Marketing can be divided into various subfields, including product marketing, pricing, promotion, and distribution. Product marketing involves designing and developing products that meet customer needs and preferences. Pricing involves setting prices that are competitive and align with customer value perceptions. Promotion involves the communication of the value proposition of the product to customers through advertising, sales promotion, and personal selling. Distribution is related to the availability of that product to customers in the right place and at the right time.

The emergence of digital technology has brought about a significant revolution in the field of marketing, revolutionizing the way businesses engage with customers and provide value. Digital marketing entails leveraging various digital channels, including social media, email, and search engines, to establish connections with customers and facilitate the promotion of products and services. It has evolved into an indispensable aspect of contemporary marketing, enabling businesses to cultivate brand recognition, generate potential leads, and actively engage with their customer base.

Digital marketing has several advantages over traditional marketing methods, including greater reach, lower costs, and higher levels of personalization. It allows businesses to reach a wider audience through digital channels, targeting specific customer segments with tailored messages. It also enables businesses to track and analyze customer

data, allowing for greater insights into customer behavior and preferences.

2.3. Tourism as a Catalyst for Regional Development

Tourism has been recognized as a significant factor in regional development and economic growth (Dwyer & Forsyth, 1997). As a result, many regional and rural areas have turned to tourism as a means of enhancing economic growth and diversifying their economies. The development of tourism in regional areas can lead to a range of benefits, such as increased employment opportunities, improved infrastructure, and increased revenue for local businesses (Hall, 2002).

Similarly, a study conducted by Ritchie and Crouch (2003) in Scotland showed that tourism had contributed significantly to the region's economic growth and development. The study found that tourism had created employment opportunities, stimulated the development of infrastructure, and provided a source of revenue for local businesses.

Tourism has also been identified as a means of promoting cultural and environmental sustainability in regional areas (Mbaiwa, 2005). This is particularly relevant in areas where tourism is based on natural resources and cultural heritage. For example, in Kenya, ecotourism has been used as a means of promoting conservation efforts and generating revenue for local communities (Wamae & Kabira, 2011).

However, the development of tourism in regional areas also presents challenges. These challenges include issues related to environmental degradation, social and cultural impacts, and infrastructure development (KPMG, 2013). Therefore, it is important for regional areas to develop sustainable tourism strategies that consider the social, economic, and environmental impacts of tourism development (Sharpley, 2006).

Tourism has been known as a dominant factor in regional development and economic growth. The development of tourism in regional areas can lead to a range of benefits, such as increased employment opportunities, improved infrastructure, and increased revenue for local businesses. However, the development of tourism also presents challenges that need to be addressed through sustainable tourism strategies.

2.4. Mobile Technology

The tourism industry has undergone a transformative revolution due to the advent of mobile technology, enabling users to access information and services instantly, irrespective of their location or time. The widespread integration of smartphones and mobile applications has facilitated convenient planning, booking, and seamless management of travel experiences. As mobile technology continues to advance, it is anticipated to exert further influence, reshaping and enriching the tourism industry. This literature review endeavors to delve into the effects of mobile technology on tourism, with a specific emphasis on its implications for tourist behavior and destination management.

2.4.1. Mobile Technology and Tourist Behavior

The adoption of mobile technology has transformed tourist behavior in many ways. Tourists are now able to access real-time information about destinations, hotels, transportation, and local attractions, allowing them to plan and customize their trips in a more efficient and personalized manner (Buhalis & Law, 2008). Mobile apps have also made it easy for booking and payment services for tourists, reducing the need for intermediaries and facilitating direct communication between tourists and service providers (Wang & Fesenmaier, 2004). Additionally, mobile technology has made it possible for vacationers to instantly share their trip tales with friends and family (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). This has resulted in the creation of user-generated content and the democratization of travel knowledge.

Traveling, planning and booking trips has been innovated by mobile technologies for people. With the help of mobile devices, tourists can access real-time information about destinations, activities, and accommodations. This information is accessible through mobile applications (apps), websites, and social media platforms. According to a study by Deloitte, 85% of travelers use their smartphones while traveling, with 73% of them using mobile apps to plan their trips (Deloitte, 2021).

2.4.2. Mobile Technology and Destination Management

Mobile technology has also had a significant impact on destination management. Destination management organizations (DMOs) are now using mobile apps and different platforms to promote their destinations and engage with tourists (Govers & Go, 2009). By leveraging mobile technology, DMOs can provide real-time information about events, attractions, and local services, as well as personalized recommendations based on tourists' preferences and behaviors (Sigala, 2012). Mobile technology also allows DMOs to gather data about tourist behavior and preferences, enabling them to better understand and respond to the needs of their target market (Buhalis & Amaranggana, 2013). Additionally, the Pakistani government and DMOs are utilising mobile technologies more and more to advertise the tourism sector of the nation. A mobile app developed by the Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) has been released; it offers details on tourist destinations, lodging choices, and travel itineraries (PTDC, 2021). Additionally, the app enables travelers to make service reservations and post evaluations about their adventures. The Punjab Tourism for Economic Growth (PTEC) initiative has also launched a mobile app that provides information about tourist attractions and services in the province of Punjab (PTEC, 2021).

2.5. Impact of Digital Marketing Practices on Customer Engagement

Implementation of digital marketing has the potential to significantly impact customer engagement, as they provide a way for businesses to interact with customers and build relationships. Social media advertising, for example, has been shown to increase customer engagement by providing a platform for businesses to interact with customers in real-time (Chen et al., 2019). Email marketing has also been found to be an effective way of engaging with customers, as it provides a personalized and direct communication channel (Al-Debei et al., 2013). Content marketing is another strategy that has been shown to increase customer engagement by providing valuable information

and entertainment to customers (Kapoor et al., 2016).

Social media advertising emerges as a potent mechanism for businesses to actively connect with customers in real-time, fostering brand loyalty. Multiple studies affirm the constructive influence of social media advertising on customer engagement, attributed to its ability to facilitate direct communication, deliver personalized messages, and promptly address customer inquiries (Chen et al., 2019; Kim and Ko, 2012). Additionally, prominent social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter present businesses with an avenue to precisely target distinct customer segments through customized advertisements, surpassing the effectiveness of generic advertising approaches (Chen et al., 2019).

Email marketing is another effective way of engaging with customers and building brand loyalty. Research has shown that email marketing is a cost-effective way of reaching customers, as it provides a personalized and direct communication channel (Al-Debei et al., 2013; Yen and Lu, 2016). Moreover, email marketing allows businesses to segment their customer base and provide targeted messages that are more relevant to customers, thereby enhancing customer engagement (Al-Debei et al., 2013).

Content marketing is a proven digital marketing strategy that effectively engages customers. Kapoor et al. (2016) emphasize that content marketing offers customers valuable information and entertainment, resulting in heightened customer engagement and strengthened brand loyalty. Through the delivery of informative and captivating content, businesses can position themselves as industry thought leaders, fostering trust and credibility among their customer bases.

2.6. Impact of Digital Marketing Practices on Performance Metrics

Digital marketing practices have also been found to impact various performance metrics. Social media advertising has been shown to increase brand awareness and website traffic (Kwok and Yu, 2013). SEO has proven to be an efficient way of boosting the website visibility and ranking, leading to increased website traffic and revenue (Chen and Huang, 2018). Content marketing has been shown to improve website traffic and lead generation, resulting in increased revenue (Kapoor et al., 2016). Email marketing has been found to be effective in generating revenue and improving customer retention (Al-Debei et al., 2013).

A study by Arambewela and Hall (2006) found that email marketing was effective in generating repeat business and increasing revenue for moderate sized tourism enterprises. Similarly, a study by Sigala (2011) highlighted the importance of search engine marketing in improving website traffic and revenue generation for tourism companies.

Within the tourism sector, social media marketing has emerged as a crucial component of digital marketing strategy. According to Buhalis and Law (2008), social media marketing could increase customer interaction and help tourism businesses spread good word of mouth advertising. Furthermore, Okazaki's 2009 study shows how social media marketing in the tourism industry helps to raise brand awareness and boost consumer loyalty.

Additionally, it has been discovered that digital marketing strategies influence consumer satisfaction, a critical performance indicator in the tourism industry. According to a study by Lee et al. (2015), digital marketing techniques like social media and mobile marketing can raise consumer satisfaction levels by offering tailored and timely communication channels. In a similar vein, Chen et al.'s (2019) study emphasized the significance of digital marketing in raising customer satisfaction and loyalty in the travel and tourism sector.

2.7. Challenges and Opportunities in Implementing Digital Marketing Practices

Despite the benefits of digital marketing practices, there are also challenges and obstacles that tourism companies may encounter when implementing them. One challenge is the lack of knowledge and expertise among business owners and employees, which can hinder effective implementation and management of digital marketing strategies (Budeva and Sarinova, 2020). Another challenge is the need for a significant investment in technology and infrastructure, which may be difficult for small and medium-sized tourism companies (Gretzel et al., 2015). Additionally, cultural and regional differences may impact the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies, as consumer behavior and preferences may vary across different regions in Pakistan. In the contemporary fast-paced digital landscape, tourism companies acknowledge the significance of deploying efficient digital marketing strategies to connect with their intended audience and enhance their business performance. Nevertheless, the implementation of digital marketing practices in the tourism sector can present a range of challenges and opportunities. This section aims to delve into the diverse hurdles and prospects encountered by tourism companies in Pakistan as they adopt digital marketing practices.

2.7.1. Lack of Knowledge and Expertise

One of the most significant challenges that tourism companies in Pakistan face when implementing digital marketing practices is the lack of knowledge and expertise. Digital marketing is a rapidly evolving field, and many business owners and employees may not have the necessary skills and knowledge to implement and manage effective digital marketing strategies.

2.7.2. Lack of Resources

Another significant challenge that tourism companies in Pakistan face when implementing digital marketing practices is the lack of resources. The implementation of digital marketing strategies requires a significant investment in technology and infrastructure, which may be difficult for up-and-coming tourism firms. A study conducted by Gretzel et al. (2015) found that tourism companies in the United States faced challenges in implementing digital marketing practices due to the lack of resources.

2.7.3. Cultural and Regional Differences

Tourism companies in Pakistan may also face challenges in implementing digital marketing practices due to cultural and regional differences. Consumer behavior and preferences may vary across different regions in Pakistan, and digital marketing strategies

that work in one region may not be as effective in another region. A study conducted by Atchariyachanvanich and Okada (2018) found that tourism companies in Thailand faced challenges in implementing digital marketing practices due to cultural and regional differences.

2.7.4. Data Privacy and Security

Another challenge that tourism companies in Pakistan face when implementing digital marketing practices is data privacy and security. Tourism companies collect a significant amount of data on their customers, including personal and financial information. However, the misuse of this data can lead to significant legal and reputational consequences. Therefore, tourism companies must ensure that they have adequate data privacy and security measures in place when implementing digital marketing strategies.

2.7.5. Opportunities in Implementing Digital Marketing Practices

Despite the challenges and obstacles that tourism companies in Pakistan face when implementing digital marketing practices, there are also several opportunities that these practices present. Some of the opportunities are:

2.7.6. Targeted Marketing

Digital marketing strategies empower tourism companies to tailor their marketing messages and reach specific customer segments effectively. Through the analysis of customer data, tourism companies can craft personalized marketing campaigns that are highly relevant to their target audience. This approach increases the likelihood of resonating with customers and achieving desirable marketing outcomes.

2.7.7. Cost-Effective Marketing

Digital marketing strategies are frequently recognized for their cost-effectiveness compared to traditional marketing approaches. One such example is social media advertising, which can often be considerably less expensive than conventional advertising methods. Additionally, email marketing proves to be virtually free, further contributing to the affordability of digital marketing.

2.7.8. Improved Customer Engagement

Tourism businesses can actively engage with their clients in real-time using digital marketing methods, supporting the development of meaningful relationships. This enables businesses in the tourism sector to interact with clients and better meet their demands. Social media platforms provide a useful platform for tourism businesses to engage with their consumer base and swiftly respond to any questions or problems they might have.

2.7.9. Improved Analytics and Reporting

Digital marketing strategies provide tourism companies with access to detailed analytics and reporting tools. With the aid of these technologies, tourism businesses may

monitor the success of their marketing initiatives and decide on subsequent marketing strategies based on data. Implementing digital marketing practices presents both challenges and opportunities for tourism companies in Pakistan. The challenges include the lack of knowledge and expertise, lack of resources, cultural and regional differences, and data privacy and security concerns. However, the opportunities include targeted marketing, cost-effective marketing, improved customer engagement, and improved analytics and reporting. Tourism companies that can effectively navigate these challenges and take advantage of the opportunities.

2.8. Dimensions for Digital Marketing and Tourism

The use of social networks and mobile technology has become a crucial component of tourism since it gives travelers a way to access and share information before, during, and after their visits.

2.8.1. First Dimension-Information

The first dimension in the use of social networks and mobile technology is information, which includes the availability and accessibility of information about destinations, travel products, and services. This section provides a literature review on the information dimension of social networks and mobile technology in tourism. According to Buhalis and Law (2008), the use of mobile technology and social networks can facilitate access to information, which is crucial for tourists in the planning and decision-making stages of their trips. Moreover, social networks and mobile technology enable tourists to share information and experiences with other travelers, which enhances the quality and accuracy of information available. Young travelers, who are more inclined to rely on information from social networks and mobile technologies than from conventional sources (Gretzel et al., 2007), should pay particular attention to this. Numerous studies have demonstrated how the accessibility and availability of information via social media and mobile technology can have a substantial impact on traveler behavior. For instance, Xiang and Gretzel (2010) discovered that online booking and travel arrangements are more common among vacationers who utilize social media and mobile devices. Like this, Govers and Govers (2009) revealed that consumers' decisions about travel-related goods and services can be influenced by the availability of internet reviews and ratings.

Tourism in Pakistan has seen a rise in the usage of social media and mobile devices. 75% of travelers use mobile applications to access information about travel-related goods and services, according to a survey performed by the Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (2019). The study also discovered that social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are being utilized more frequently by travelers to offer their travel advice and experiences.

The information dimension of social networks and mobile technology has become an essential component of tourism. The availability and accessibility of information through these technologies can significantly influence tourist behavior and decision-making. The second dimension in the use of social networks and mobile technology is "trends." In recent years, there has been a significant increase in the use of social media and mobile technology in the tourism industry, with a focus on providing personalized

experiences to travelers.

One of the major trends in this area is the use of social media platforms for destination marketing. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Pinterest are used to promote tourism destinations, events, and activities to potential travelers (Buhalis & Law, 2008). This has become a key strategy for many tourism destinations around the world, as social media platforms allow them to reach a large audience at a low cost (Munar, 2012).

In Pakistan, the use of social networks and mobile technology has become increasingly popular among tourists, highlighting the need for the tourism industry to integrate these technologies into their marketing and communication strategies.

2.8.2. Second Dimension- Trends

Another trend in the use of social networks and mobile technology is the use of mobile apps for travel planning and booking. Mobile apps such as TripAdvisor, Expedia, and Booking.com allow travelers to search for and book accommodations, flights, and activities on-the-go. These apps also provide travelers with personalized recommendations based on their search history and preferences (Xiang & Du, 2017).

In addition, there is a growing trend in the use of virtual and augmented reality technologies in the tourism industry. These technologies provide travelers with immersive experiences that allow them to explore destinations and attractions in a virtual environment (Neuhofer, Buhalis, & Ladkin, 2015). This trend has been accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, as travelers have been unable to visit destinations in person.

2.8.3. Third Dimension- Customization

The third dimension in the use of social networks and mobile technology is customization. With the rise of technology and the internet, customization has become a key factor in enhancing the overall user experience. This holds true for the tourism industry as well, where travelers are seeking more personalized experiences that cater to their specific needs and preferences.

Customization through social networks and mobile technology can be achieved in various ways. One way is using location-based services that provide tailored recommendations to users based on their current location. For example, the mobile app "TripAdvisor" uses GPS to suggest nearby restaurants, attractions, and hotels based on a user's location.

Another way is using social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram. These platforms allow users to share their travel experiences and connect with like-minded individuals. By leveraging user data, these platforms can also provide customized recommendations and advertisements to users based on their interests and behavior.

Furthermore, mobile technology can also be used to provide personalized customer service. For example, chatbots and virtual assistants can assist travelers in real-time, answering their queries and providing recommendations based on their preferences.

2.8.4. Fourth Dimension- Interactivity

Mobile technology's important component for the tourism industry is interactivity. It speaks to how much interaction travelers have with their mobile devices or applications. Tourists will be more interested and satisfied the more engaging the technology is. The literature on the interactive aspect of mobile technology in tourism will be reviewed in this part.

Mobile technology has the potential to offer more interactive experiences to tourists. Tourists can use mobile devices to search for and access information, book services, and engage with destinations in new and exciting ways. Mobile technology can also provide personalized recommendations and offer real-time communication with tourism providers (Buhalis & Law, 2008).

Research suggests that interactivity through mobile technology can enhance tourist satisfaction and loyalty. For example, Wang and Zhang (2012) found that mobile technology interactivity positively influenced tourist satisfaction in a study of Chinese tourists in Japan. Similarly, a study by Xiang, Du, Ma, and Fan (2017) found that interactivity positively influenced tourist loyalty in a study of tourists using mobile travel applications.

Furthermore, interactivity can lead to increased engagement and enjoyment of tourism experiences. A study by Gretzel, Yoo, and Purifoy (2007) found that tourists who used mobile technology to interact with their destinations reported a higher level of enjoyment and engagement. Additionally, tourists who had more interactive experiences through mobile technology were more likely to share their experiences on social media, leading to increased destination awareness and promotion (Buhalis & Law, 2008).

In Pakistan, the use of mobile technology in tourism is still in its early stages, but there is potential for growth in this area. The Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) has launched a mobile application to promote tourism in the country (PTDC, n.d.). The application provides information on destinations, attractions, hotels, and transportation, and allows users to book tours and services. However, there is still room for improvement in terms of interactivity, as the application could offer more personalized recommendations and real-time communication with service providers.

2.8.5. Fifth Dimension- Word of Mouth

Word-of-mouth is the fifth aspect of how people use social media and mobile technology. Word-of-mouth (WOM) has been noted as a key element in influencing tourists' attitudes and actions (Litvin et al., 2008). The power of WOM has increased because of social networks and mobile technology, which enable people to rapidly share their experiences and thoughts with a bigger audience.

Numerous research has investigated how WOM affects tourism. As an illustration, Buhalis and Law (2008) discovered that favourable WOM on social networks can boost a destination's reputation and draw more tourists. Similarly, Xiang and Gretzel (2010) discovered that WOM in online travel groups influences traveler’s choice of destinations in a favorable way.

Pakistan's tourism industry can also benefit from the amplification of WOM through social networks and mobile technology. The country's tourism industry has been growing in recent years, and the use of social networks and mobile technology can help attract more tourists by providing them with real-time information and recommendations from other tourists.

2.8.6. Sixth Dimension – Brand Value

The sixth dimension of the use of social networks and mobile technology in tourism is brand value. With the rise of social media and mobile technology, the way customers perceive and interact with brands has significantly changed. Customers today have more access to information and more power to share their opinions and experiences with others. As a result, brand value has become a crucial factor in determining a business's success or failure in the tourism industry.

In the tourism sector, brand value is essential for gaining a competitive edge, cultivating client loyalty, and fostering positive consumer perceptions. Brand awareness, brand image, and brand loyalty are three ways to gauge a company's brand value. By enabling real-time engagement with customers and the creation of individualized experiences, social networks and mobile technologies have made it simpler for businesses to develop and enhance their brand value.

Businesses now require social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to advertise their brands and interact with their customers. These platforms give companies the chance to highlight their goods and services, share client comments, and promptly respond to any issues or complaints. Businesses can also build a community of devoted clients through social media, who can serve as brand ambassadors and spread the word about the company to their friends and family.

Mobile technology has also become a critical tool for businesses to enhance their brand value. With the rise of mobile apps, businesses can now offer personalized experiences to their customers, making it easier for them to access information about the business, make reservations, and purchase products or services. For example, mobile apps such as Airbnb and Expedia have made it easier for customers to find and book accommodation and travel services, while loyalty programs such as Hilton Honors and Marriott Rewards have incentivized customers to book directly with the brand.

The usage of social media and mobile technology in Pakistan's tourist sector is still in its infancy. But there has been a noticeable rise in the number of companies advertising their goods and services on social media sites like Facebook and Instagram. Through internet marketing campaigns and smartphone apps like Visit Pakistan and Explore Pakistan, the Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC), for instance, has actively promoted travel within the nation.

2.8.7. Seventh Dimension- Purchase Intend

The seventh dimension of the use of social networks and mobile technology in tourism is purchase intent. With the use of mobile technology and social media platforms, users can easily access and compare information about various products and services,

which can influence their purchase intent.

Research has shown that the use of mobile technology and social media can significantly affect consumers' purchase intent in the tourism industry. A study conducted by Li, Li, and Hudson (2013) found that the use of social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and TripAdvisor positively influenced consumers' purchase intentions for travel products and services. Another study by Sigala and Chalkiti (2014) found that the use of mobile technology positively impacted purchase intentions for hotel bookings.

Moreover, the use of mobile technology can also facilitate impulse buying in the tourism industry. Kim and Kim (2019) found that the use of mobile technology and social media platforms increased the likelihood of impulse buying in tourists. Similarly, a study by Han, Hyun, and Kim (2018) found that the use of mobile technology and social media platforms positively influenced impulse buying behavior in the tourism industry.

The use of mobile technologies and social networking sites in Pakistan has also had a favourable impact on consumers' purchasing intentions in the travel and tourism sector. The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (2020) reported that there are now more than 176 million mobile phone subscribers in Pakistan, reflecting the country's increasing reliance on mobile technology. The survey also claims that some of the most widely used mobile applications in Pakistan include social networking websites like Facebook and WhatsApp. Therefore, it can be concluded that consumer purchase intent in Pakistan's tourist sector can be considerably impacted using mobile technologies and social media platforms.

3. METHODOLOGY

The primary objective of this study is to examine how digital marketing affects Pakistani tourist performance. A thorough study technique has been developed and put into use to accomplish this goal. The methods of investigation utilized to collect and analyze the required data for this study are described in this chapter. We'll talk about the primary and secondary data sources we employed, as well as our sample strategy.

3.1. Research Purpose

The goal is to investigate the relationship between digital marketing strategies and how well tourism businesses perform in terms of elevated consumer interaction, greater brand recognition, and income production. A mixed-methods research approach will be used for the project, which will include a quantitative survey of Pakistani tourist businesses and in-depth interviews with specialists in internet marketing and travel industry players. The goal is to pinpoint the elements that affect tourists' choice-making and evaluate how well digital marketing works to promote travel to Pakistan. The study will also point out the difficulties that Pakistani tourism companies have in using digital marketing and suggest solutions. The study will offer information on how well digital marketing works as a tool for promoting tourism in Pakistan. This information can help businesses create successful marketing plans and policymakers create laws that will encourage the use of digital marketing and advance tourism in Pakistan.

3.2. Research Approach

Saunders (2007) proposed three research approaches: deductive, inductive, and abductive, that should be considered when conducting a study. These approaches are not mutually exclusive and can be used in combination with qualitative or quantitative methods (Creswell, 2014; Yin, 2014).

Deductive approach involves starting with a theory and then testing it with empirical data to confirm or refute it (Creswell, 2014). Inductive approach, on the other hand, involves starting with empirical data and then developing a theory based on patterns and themes observed in the data (Yin, 2014). The abductive approach, which is less common, involves combining both deductive and inductive approaches to generate hypotheses that can be tested with empirical data (Creswell, 2014).

3.3. Data Collection

Every research project must start with data collecting, which can be accomplished through primary or secondary data collection approaches. We used a questionnaire survey as the main method of data gathering for this investigation. Participants in the study had to be active members of online tourist communities. A survey is a trustworthy and efficient way to learn about people's lives, behaviors, values, knowledge, expectations, opinions, and attitudes towards various possibilities, according to Quivy and Campenhoudt (2008). Additionally, surveys have been widely employed in a variety of analytical domains, including the study of consumer behavior (Wimmer & Dominick,

1996).

To ensure that the questionnaire was structured effectively, it was designed to have clear, concise questions that aligned with the research objectives. The questionnaire was designed in a manner that would allow us to collect accurate information that would provide insight into the research problem. As Saunders et al. (2007) state, a questionnaire is a useful tool for gathering primary data through interviews, observations, and questionnaires. However, the design of the questionnaire should be based on clear and unambiguous questions that enable researchers to collect accurate information.

The data collection approach used in this study was a self-completed questionnaire survey that was administered to online tourism community members. The questionnaire was designed to have clear and concise questions that aligned with the research objectives, and it was based on the guidelines provided by Quivy and Campenhoudt (2008) and Saunders et al. (2007).

3.3.1. Questionnaire Development

In order to ensure the collection of high-quality data, it is crucial to develop a well-designed questionnaire with high-quality survey questions. The questionnaire is an important data collection tool in research, and it should be designed to effectively gather information on research objectives. According to Juvan and Dolnicar (2014), a questionnaire consists of two types of questions: queries and returns. The query, which can be in the form of a question or a statement, provides information about the object under study and the object being measured. On the other hand, the return refers to the responses that survey participants provide.

A well-structured questionnaire must be created with careful planning, succinct and clear questions, and appropriate formatting. According to Dillman et al. (2014), the questionnaire design should be based on research objectives and should feature simple-to-understand questions that are clear and explicit. In addition, the questions must be clear and without leading or double-barreled inquiries.

Furthermore, it is important to pretest the questionnaire before administering it to the actual participants. This helps to identify any issues with the questions, formatting, or instructions, and allows for necessary modifications to be made. As highlighted by De Vaus (2014), pretesting can be done by administering the questionnaire to a small group of people who are like the target population. Questionnaire development is an essential aspect of research methodology, and the design of the questionnaire should be based on the research objectives. It is important to use clear and concise questions, avoid leading questions and ambiguity, and pretest the questionnaire before administering it to the actual participants.

3.3.2. Sample Selection

The process of sample selection and size holds great importance in research studies as it ensures the representation of data collected from the target population. This aspect becomes particularly challenging in tourism research due to the industry's diverse nature and the difficulty in identifying a homogeneous population (Moutinho, 2011).

Therefore, researchers must employ appropriate techniques to ensure the validity and reliability of the sample. One commonly used technique to determine the suitable sample size in tourism research is the "rule of thumb" method, which suggests a minimum of 30 respondents to establish statistical significance (Neuendorf, 2016). However, it is important to note that the sample size may vary based on research objectives, the complexity of the research question, and the desired level of accuracy. By employing appropriate techniques and considering these factors, researchers can ensure that their sample is robust and representative of the population under study.

To guarantee that the sample is representative of the target population, the sample selection procedure should also be properly planned. One strategy is to pick study participants randomly, so that every person of the population has an equal chance of being chosen (Saunders et al., 2018). Purposive sampling is a different strategy, where participants are chosen based on standards relevant to the study subject, including age, gender, or employment. As a crucial component of the study's validity and credibility, the sample size and selection method must be justified and disclosed in the research report (Bryman & Bell, 2019).

3.3.3. Participant Selection

The choice of participants is an important component of research methodology since it has a significant impact on the quality of the data collected. Participants in this study were chosen based on their engagement in the travel and tourism sector. This was done to make sure that the participants had enough expertise and experience in the travel and tourism sector to give thoughtful answers to the questionnaire. According to Hair et al. (2018), choosing participants is a crucial component of research design and should be based on the study's population and goals.

The study's participants were chosen from professional tourism internet communities. These areas were chosen because they were related to the goals of the study and because it was likely that people there would have relevant experience in and understanding of the tourism sector. Prior to their involvement in the survey, the participants were made aware of the study's goals and their permission was acquired.

It is significant to note that the generalizability of the results can be impacted by the participant selection. As a result, it is important to carefully analyze the selection criteria and methodologies employed. Participants in tourism research might be chosen based on their affiliation with various tourism-related businesses, such as hotels, travel agencies, and tourist attractions. Additionally, participants might be chosen for studies depending on their age, gender, and socioeconomic status (Hair et al., 2018).

3.4. Survey Methodology and Questionnaire Development

According to Babbie (1999), a survey is a research method that is commonly used in social sciences. It involves examining a sample of the population rather than the entire population, unlike a census. Surveys can serve one of three purposes: description, explanation, and exploration. In the first purpose, the focus is on discovering the distribution of specific traits and attributes of the population. The second purpose is to explain the observed distribution, while the third purpose aims to serve as an exploratory

mechanism.

The questionnaire utilized in this study had two sections. Questions about demographic information and usage patterns of mobile technology were asked in the first section. Based on the Yadav and Rahman scale (2017), which gauges consumer attitudes, was the second section of the questionnaire. Utilizing a recognized scale improves the results' dependability and makes it simpler to compare them to findings from other investigations. A 5-point Likert scale was used to evaluate the scale.

3.5. Data Analysis

After the completion of the survey questionnaire, rigorous procedures were undertaken to clean and prepare the collected data, ensuring its quality and suitability for subsequent analysis. In this process, any illogical or erroneous data points were carefully eliminated, allowing for the utilization of valid and reliable data during the analysis phase. To expedite the analysis process, the collected data was encoded using the software. This software serves as a valuable tool in facilitating data coding, minimizing the time and effort required to prepare the data for analysis (Makowski et al., 2019). Furthermore, for data analysis, well-established statistical techniques like structural equation modeling (SEM) and partial least squares (PLS) were employed. These techniques have gained significant popularity in tourism research and other related fields, owing to their ability to effectively explore intricate relationships between variables (Hair et al., 2019; Shen et al., 2021). By employing these rigorous data cleaning and analysis procedures, the study ensured the reliability, validity, and robustness of its findings, while also aligning with the ethical standards of research integrity.

3.6. Statistical Techniques

Data analysis is typically the following phase in a research project after data gathering. Data analysis is the process of looking at and turning raw data into information that is relevant and can be used to make decisions. There are two types of statistical analysis.

I. Descriptive statistics
II. Inferential statistics

Descriptive statistics are used to evaluate and represent the main points of the data collected, such as mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentage. These techniques help researchers understand the distribution of the data, identify outliers or anomalies, and describe the general patterns and trends in the data.

Inferential statistics, on the other hand, involve using statistical models and tests to construct inferences or make predictions about the population based on the sample data collected. These techniques help researchers test hypotheses, examine relationships between variables, and estimate parameters such as effect sizes and confidence intervals.

To ensure the reliability and appropriateness of the data for analysis, this study initiated with thorough data cleaning and preparation procedures. Subsequently, factor analysis and multiple regression were employed to assess the proposed hypotheses.

Factor analysis facilitated the identification of underlying constructs or dimensions associated with the variables, while multiple regression allowed for the examination of relationships between these constructs and the testing of hypotheses. These statistical techniques are widely utilized in social science research to analyze intricate relationships between variables, as emphasized by Hair et al. (2019).

3.7. Quality Standards

For research to be considered reliable, it is vital to provide that the data collected is valid and accurate. This is particularly important when working with variables that are used to evaluate different constructs. Therefore, prior to testing the hypotheses, the data's quality standards were assessed to ensure its validity and consistency. Ensuring quality standards in research is essential to minimize errors and ensure that the results are reliable and valid (Rabbani et al., 2019). One way to ensure the quality of the data collected is with standardized instruments for data collection, such as questionnaires or surveys (Tourangeau et al., 2014). Additionally, researchers can use statistical techniques such as reliability analysis and validity testing to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the data (Hair et al., 2019).

In tourism research, ensuring the quality of the data is crucial due to the broad nature of the industry (Li et al., 2019). Therefore, using standardized instruments and statistical techniques to assess the quality of the data is critical to ensuring the validity and reliability of the results (Li et al., 2019; Zhang et al., 2019).

3.7.1. Reliability

Reliability is a critical aspect of any research study, as it ensures that the results produced are consistent, trustworthy, and can be replicated in similar settings. According to Bougie and Sekaran (2013), reliability refers to the stability of the measuring device or instrument used to collect data, while Heale and Twycross (2015) define reliability as the consistency of a measure. In this study, reliability was assessed using Cronbach's coefficient alpha, a widely used measure of internal consistency (Larsson and Rosell, 2014). Cronbach's alpha determines the average correlation among the components of a scale, and a higher alpha value indicates greater reliability of the measures being used. However, it should be noted that the number of items in the scale can affect the Cronbach's alpha value, and scales with fewer than ten items may have a lower alpha value (Larsson and Rosell, 2014).

To further enhance the reliability of the study, control factors such as age, gender, and occupation were also considered. This helps to ensure that any observed relationships or effects are not due to random factors or confounding variables. Overall, ensuring the reliability of the research instruments and procedures is crucial for producing credible and trustworthy research findings (Saunders et al., 2007).

3.7.2. Validity

Validity is an important aspect of any study as it determines whether the measures used in the research measure what they are intended to measure (Bougie & Sekaran, 2013). There are several types of validity that need to be considered when evaluating a

research study. According to Hair et al. (2007), three main types of validity are construct validity, content validity, and criterion validity.

Construct validity refers to the degree to which a specific measurement accurately assesses the intended construct it is designed to measure (Bougie & Sekaran, 2013). This form of validity is commonly evaluated using statistical techniques such as factor analysis, which helps establish the relationship between the measures and the underlying construct (Hair et al., 2007). On the other hand, content validity focuses on whether the measures employed in a study adequately represent the entire spectrum of possible indicators related to the construct being measured (Bougie & Sekaran, 2013). Typically, content validity is assessed through a thorough examination of existing literature or by seeking expert judgment.

Criterion validity is concerned with the extent to which the measures used in a study are correlated with other measures of the same construct or with a criterion measure (Bougie & Sekaran, 2013). This type of validity is often evaluated by comparing the results of the measures used in the study with other established measures or criteria.

It is crucial to remember that while these kinds of validity are distinct, they are also interconnected and can impact each other (Bougie & Sekaran, 2013). Therefore, it is crucial to consider all types of validity when evaluating the quality of a research study.

3.8. Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations have a crucial role in any research study as they ensure that the research is conducted in a responsible and trustworthy manner. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), ethical considerations involve the application of moral principles to human behavior within the research process. Ethical principles include respect for human dignity, confidentiality, informed consent, and the avoidance of harm to participants. Researchers must also consider social, economic, legal, and ethical issues when making ethical decisions during the research process.

In tourism research sector, ethical considerations are particularly important due to the potential impact that research findings can have on tourism businesses and communities. For example, researchers must be mindful of the potential consequences of sharing sensitive information about a destination or business that could damage their reputation. Additionally, researchers must ensure that the participants in their study are fully informed about the nature of the research and that their privacy and confidentiality are protected.

To uphold ethical standards in research, it is crucial for researchers to adhere to recognized ethical guidelines and obtain approval from pertinent ethics committees. The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) offers a comprehensive set of guidelines specifically tailored for tourism researchers. These guidelines encompass essential aspects such as obtaining informed consent from participants, ensuring confidentiality of collected data, and taking measures to prevent potential harm to participants. Additionally, the International Association of Scientific Experts in Tourism (AIEST) also provides ethical guidelines designed to assist researchers in the tourism domain. By following these established ethical frameworks, researchers can conduct their studies in

an ethical and responsible manner.

4. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

This section will examine the analysis and the hypothesis. An overview of the demographics will be given first, and then the Factor Analysis and Hypotheses Testing will be covered. This chapter's objectives are to analyze the findings, explain them, provide details, discuss statistical and analytical concerns, and explain the new knowledge that has been gained as a result of the investigation. I conducted a statistical analysis of the collected data using a computer called SmartPLS4.

4.1. Demographic Profile

All the unnecessary and illogical responses are discarded, and a total 113 responses are considered for the analysis. Out of 113 49.56% are female and 50.44% are male participants. The demographic table 4.1 provides information about the frequency and percentage distribution of individuals in different categories. It shows that there are almost an equal number of males and females represented. Most individuals are single, while the employment status reveals that a significant portion are employed, with students comprising a large proportion.

Table 4. 1. Demographic data of participants

Category	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Gender		
Female	56	49.56%
Male	57	50.44%
Marital Status		
Single	59	52.21%
Married	53	46.90%
Divorced	1	0.89%
Employment		
Employed	58	51.33%
Full-time	8	7.08%
Part-time	3	2.65%
Self-employed	4	3.54%
Student	39	34.51%
Retired	1	0.89%
Total	113	100%

4.2. Structural Modeling

The factors were evaluated using a total of 24 questions, all of which were derived from known scales for assessing consumer involvement, brand image, and performance, as given in table 4.2. The scale objects, structures, and authors are listed in Table 2. All independent, dependent variables, and constructs were rated on a Likert five scale (1–5) that incorporates the weight of each item and is structured as strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Table 4. 2. Scale Items and questionnaire survey

Sr.	Variables	Questions	Author
1	Customer Engagement	**(CE1)** Tourism companies that have an active and engaging presence on social media platforms are more likely to attract and retain customers. **(CE2)** The extent to which customers engage with tourism companies on social media platforms is impacted by the caliber and pertinence of the content they provide. **(CE3)** Customers are more likely to interact with and share social media posts from tourism companies that offer exclusive deals and promotions. **(CE4)** Tourism companies that respond promptly and effectively to customer inquiries and feedback on social media platforms are perceived as more customer friendly. **(CE5)** There is a positive correlation between the implementation of digital marketing strategies by tourism companies and the levels of customer engagement and satisfaction they experience.	Kapoor, K. K., & Dwivedi, R. (2018).
2	Brand Image	**(BI1)** Tourism companies that utilize social media advertising as a part of their digital marketing strategy are more likely to be remembered by customers. **(BI2)** Social media advertising helps in creating brand awareness for tourism companies. **(BI3)** Tourism companies that use social media advertising are more likely to attract new customers. **(BI4)** Seeing social media advertisements from a tourism company increases my awareness of the company's brand. **(BI5)** Social media advertising is an effective way for tourism companies to differentiate themselves from competitors.	Nasution, N., Chair, Y., & Suwarno, A. (2020)
3	Performance	**(P1)** The use of digital marketing practices by tourism companies can improve their visibility to potential customers. **(P2)** Digital marketing can help tourism companies reach a wider audience, beyond their immediate geographic region. **(P3)** Digital marketing can help tourism companies better understand their customers' preferences and needs. **(P4)** The use of digital marketing practices can lead to increased customer engagement with tourism companies.	Kaur, H., & Singh, H. (2021)

Table 4. 3. Likert scale

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Source: - Internet of things (Likert scale)

4.3. Statistical Analysis

The study conducted partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) using specialized statistical software to analyze the obtained questionnaire data and evaluate the research hypothesis. PLS-SEM has robustness when coping with small sample numbers and irregular data distributions, making it particularly well suited for complex models (Hair Jr., Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2017). This method has several advantages, including the ability to handle single-structure models skillfully (Ringle, Wende, & Will, 2005).

This study's PLS-SEM program, which boasts strong statistical skills and great graphical visualization choices, proved exceptional efficacy. Additionally, it provides a user-friendly interface, making data analysis for academics both convenient and accessible. This software can be used to evaluate survey results in a variety of research projects, theses, and other academic endeavors. It helps researchers analyze the relationships between variables and come to insightful conclusions.

4.4. Measurement Model, Validity and Reliability

The evaluation of the measurement model involves several critical aspects, such as internal consistency, item loadings, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE) (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006). Assessing internal consistency relies on examining item loadings, where values above 0.7 indicate a satisfactory level (Hair et al., 2007). It is widely accepted to set a minimum threshold of 0.5 for item loadings to ensure reliability (Hair et al., 2006). By considering these factors, the quality of the measurement model can be thoroughly evaluated, guaranteeing the accuracy and validity of the findings.

Researchers commonly use the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and Composite Reliability (CR) metrics to evaluate the convergent validity of a measurement model. Convergent validity is considered established when the AVE value of each construct exceeds 0.5, indicating that the collective impact of the measurement items explains more variance than measurement error (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2006). Furthermore, the CR, which measures the internal consistency of a construct, should exceed 0.7 to ensure reliability, as recommended by Hair et al. (2006). These well-established criteria provide researchers with reliable guidelines to assess the reliability and validity of their measurement model, enabling them to make informed decisions regarding the suitability of measurement items and constructs in their study.

To guarantee the reliability of the measurement model, researchers commonly utilize Cronbach's alpha, which is a widely adopted and effective method. Cronbach's alpha evaluates the internal consistency of a scale by examining the degree to which the items within a construct are interrelated and yield consistent measurements. Generally, higher Cronbach's alpha values indicate stronger reliability, with values exceeding 0.7 typically considered acceptable according to the guidelines presented by George and Mallery (2003). By employing Cronbach's alpha, researchers can ascertain the consistency and dependability of their measurement model, ensuring that the items within the construct are reliable indicators of the intended concept.

Table 4.4 displays Cronbach’s alpha values associated with each study variable. The Brand Image scale reveals a Cronbach's alpha of 0.94, indicating a high level of internal consistency and reliability among the items measuring brand image. Likewise, the Customer Engagement scale demonstrates a Cronbach's alpha of 0.943, indicating a strong degree of internal consistency for the items assessing customer engagement. Lastly, the Performance scale exhibits Cronbach’s alpha of 0.817, suggesting a satisfactory level of internal consistency among the items related to performance.

These high Cronbach's alpha values provide evidence of the reliability of the measurement items and indicate that the scales used in the study consistently capture the intended constructs.

To assess the convergence validity of the measurement model, the average variance extracted (AVE) was examined. The AVE represents the amount of variance captured by the construct's items relative to the measurement error (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Generally, an AVE value of 0.50 to 0.70 or higher is considered appropriate (Hair et al., 2017).

Table 4.4 presents the AVE values for each construct. The Brand Image construct has an AVE of 0.807, indicating that the items collectively explain 80.7% of the variance in the construct, surpassing the recommended threshold. The Customer Engagement construct demonstrates an AVE of 0.817, signifying that the items account for 81.7% of the variance in customer engagement, meeting the convergence validity criterion. Lastly, the Performance construct exhibits an AVE of 0.648, suggesting that the items explain 64.8% of the variance in performance, also meeting the appropriate threshold.

These AVE values indicate that the measurement items for each construct effectively converge and capture a substantial portion of the construct's variance, reinforcing the convergent validity of the measurement model.

Table 4. 4. Measurement Model Assessment

Scale Item	Factors	Loading	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Brand Image	BI1	0.915	0.94	0.941	0.954	0.807
	BI2	0.897				
	BI3	0.915				
	BI4	0.859				
	BI5	0.904				
Customer Engagement	CE1	0.958	0.943	0.946	0.957	0.817
	CE2	0.848				
	CE3	0.911				
	CE4	0.868				
	CE5	0.929				
Performance	P1	0.74	0.817	0.835	0.88	0.648
	P2	0.803				
	P3	0.898				
	P4	0.771				

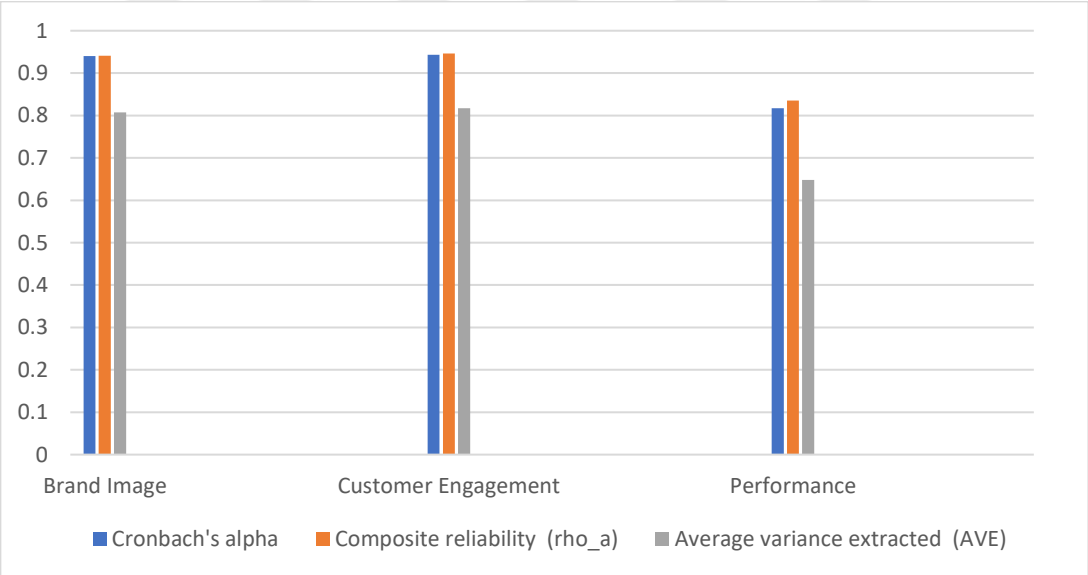

Figure 4. 1. Comparison of Scale Items

4.5. Structural Modeling

In the present research model, customer engagement and brand image were treated as independent variables, whereas performance was designated as the dependent variable, influenced by both customer engagement and brand image. To evaluate the convergent

validity of the measurement model, the average variance extracted (AVE) was examined. The AVE assesses the proportion of variance captured by the measurement items in relation to the measurement error, as proposed by Fornell and Larcker (1981).

It is generally agreed that the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) should be equal to or greater than 0.5 in order to show convergent validity (Nitzl, 2010). According to this criterion, the indicators should explain at least 50% of the variance in the construct. The AVE values for each variable in this study were evaluated, and each variable satisfied the required standard, demonstrating acceptable convergent validity.

Additionally, as previously noted in the study, having AVE values that satisfy the criterion improves the flexibility of the outer loadings. This suggests that the measurement items accurately reflect the underlying constructs and make a major contribution to their measurement. It is significant to note that Nitzl (2010) discussed the criterion of 0.5 or above for AVE as an acceptable threshold, but Fornell and Larcker (1981) proposed the idea of AVE for evaluating convergent validity.

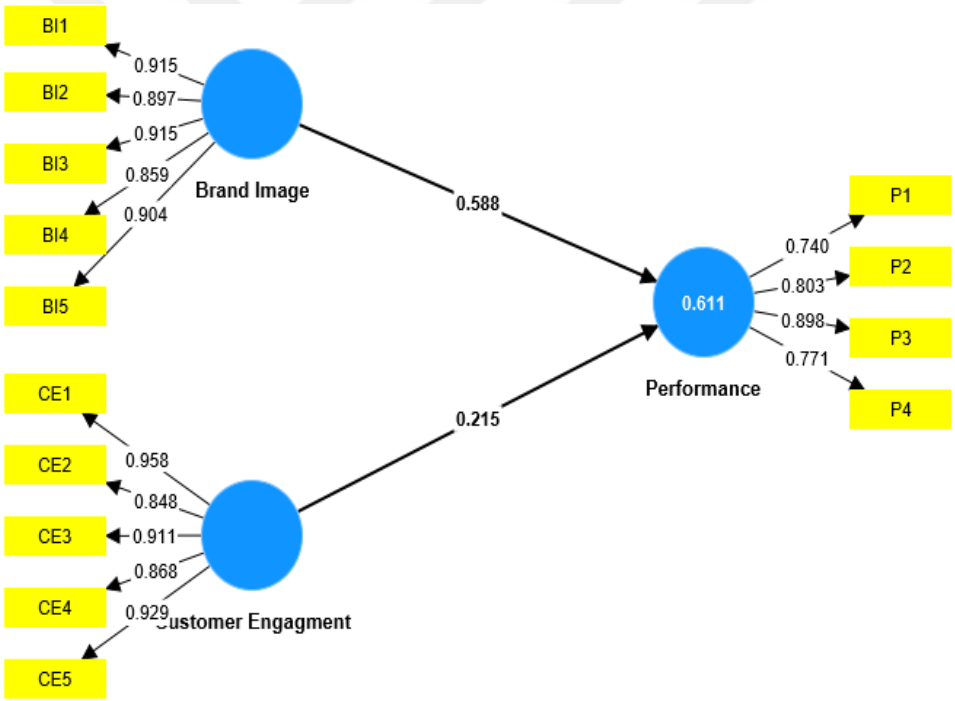

Figure 4. 2. Structural Research Model

4.5.1. Discriminant Validity

To ensure discriminant validity and distinguish between the constructs within the measurement model, an assessment was conducted. This involved comparing the square roots of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values with the correlations among the constructs. The results indicated discriminant validity, as the square roots of AVE were

found to be larger than the correlations. This confirms that the constructs possess sufficient dissimilarity from each other, as outlined by Hair et al. (2017).

The evaluation of discriminant validity in the measurement model was conducted using the Fornell-Larcker criterion (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), and the results are presented in Table 4.5. The diagonal table displays the square roots of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct, while the off-diagonal cells show the correlations between the constructs. According to the Fornell-Larcker criterion, the square root of the AVE for each construct should exceed the correlation coefficients with other constructs to establish discriminant validity. Upon reviewing the table, it is evident that the square roots of the AVE for each construct are higher than the correlation coefficients with other constructs. This indicates that each construct exhibits greater variance with its own measurement items compared to the measurement items of other constructs, confirming the presence of discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2017).

Table 4. 5. Discriminant Validity of Model

Fornell Larcker Criterion	Brand Image	Customer Engagement	Performance
Brand Image	0.898		
Customer Engagement	0.869	0.904	
Performance	0.774	0.725	0.805

To examine the path coefficient in the model, bootstrapping was employed. Bootstrapping is a resampling technique that allows for the estimation of the distribution and variability of a statistic. In this case, it was used to assess the influence of customer engagement and brand image on performance, as well as to test the structural model and hypotheses. Table 4.6 presents the results obtained from bootstrapping, including the path coefficients, t-values, p-values, and the outcomes of hypothesis testing. The path coefficients represent the strength and direction of the relationships between the variables in the model. The t-values indicate the significance of the path coefficients, while the p-values determine if the relationships are statistically significant.

To evaluate the hypotheses of the structural model, bootstrapping was employed to analyze the estimated path coefficients and determine their significance at a significance level of 0.05. The significance of the relationships was assessed using t-statistics, which were calculated by dividing the original sample values by their corresponding standard deviations. This approach provided insights into the strength and significance of the relationships under investigation.

The results obtained from bootstrapping revealed a significant positive relationship between Brand Image and Performance, with a t-value of 4.55 and a p-value of 0.000. This indicates that there is a strong and statistically significant connection

between Brand Image and Performance, supporting hypothesis H1.

Additionally, the relationship between Customer Engagement and Performance was also found to be significant, with a t-value of 1.85 and a p-value of 0.000. This signifies a statistically significant association between Customer Engagement and Performance, providing support for hypothesis H2.

Based on these findings, we can conclude that both hypotheses H1 and H2 are accepted, as the relationships between Brand Image and Performance, as well as between Customer Engagement and Performance, were found to be statistically significant.

Table 4. 6. Sample Statistics and T-Test Results

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P values
Brand Image -> Performance	0.556	0.558	0.122	4.55	0.000
Customer Engagement -> Performance	0.244	0.242	0.132	1.85	0.000

5. DISCUSSION

Numerous studies have been conducted recently on the marketing industry, particularly regarding social media marketing. However, there was a research void about how internet marketing affected Pakistani travel agencies' performance. This gap was important since digital marketing can improve the tourism sector by promoting Pakistan's travel destinations globally and creating a positive image. For tourism businesses to grow and succeed, it is essential that they comprehend the significance of digital marketing. Examining the impact of digital marketing on Pakistan's tourist industry performance was the main goal of this study. Both hypotheses are supported by the study's findings, which also highlight the significant contribution that social media marketing has made to the growth of Pakistan's tourism industry. These results fill a gap in the literature by examining the connection between social media marketing and the Pakistani travel and tourism sector.

As consumers increasingly rely on social media platforms for information and decision-making during the shopping process, the importance of social media marketing has significantly increased in recent years. Businesses can build stronger relationships with their clients and exert influence over their purchasing decisions by utilizing social media channels. The successful application of social media marketing methods by tourism businesses can improve their online presence, interact with their target audience, and ultimately increase customer engagement. Furthermore, it cannot be overstated how much brand image affects customer happiness and buying choices. The results of this study confirm the positive impact of a positive brand image on customer satisfaction, which is in line with earlier studies. Tourism businesses may stand out from rivals and draw in a wider consumer base by aggressively developing and maintaining a great brand image. This will ultimately boost brand recognition and performance.

The results of this study have important ramifications for Pakistan's tourism sector. Tourism businesses may successfully promote the beneficial features of Pakistan's tourist locations to a global audience by utilizing digital marketing tactics, particularly through social media marketing. This may raise awareness, arouse curiosity, and ultimately encourage travelers to visit these places.

The study's findings show a strong correlation between consumer engagement, brand perception, and performance in the tourism sector. According to the investigation, brand perception and customer engagement together explain 61.1% ($R2 = 0.611$) of the performance variance. This implies that the performance of tourist businesses in Pakistan is significantly influenced by both customer involvement and brand image.

The path coefficients also offer greater evidence in favor of hypotheses H1 and H2. With a T value of 4.55, the path coefficient between brand image and performance shows a strong and statistically significant association. A large positive correlation is further confirmed by the path coefficient between customer involvement and performance, which has a T value of 1.85. These results offer strong proof that social media advertising and digital marketing practices used by tourism businesses result in more customer involvement, a better perception of the brand, and ultimately better performance.

Strong reliability and validity results for the variables evaluated in this study were obtained from the examination of the measurement model. High internal consistency was revealed by both the Cronbach's alpha values and the composite reliability coefficients, ensuring that the assessment items accurately captured consumer involvement, brand perception, and performance. Additionally, the variables' distinctive contributions to the model were highlighted by the discriminant validity analysis, which used the Fornell-Larcker criterion to confirm that they were distinct from one another. These solid results offer convincing proof of the important influence of consumer involvement and brand image on the performance of the Pakistani tourism industry.

This study sets the door for further investigations into the field of digital marketing and how it affects the travel and tourist industry. Future research can first focus on identifying the precise digital marketing techniques or strategies that have the most impact on consumer engagement, brand perception, and performance in the travel and tourism sector. Researching the efficacy of influencer marketing, content marketing, search engine optimization, or social media advertising campaigns can provide practitioners with useful information.

Second, the study might be expanded to look at how different variables affect how digital marketing and performance are related. The success of digital marketing strategies in the tourism business may be moderated by elements like organizational size, industry competition, and technical improvements. A deeper comprehension of these moderating elements can help tourism businesses tune their digital marketing tactics for better results and better industry dynamics adaptability.

6. REFERENCES

Articles

Al-Debei, M. M., Al-Lozi, E., & Papazafeiropoulou, A. (2013). Why people keep coming back to Facebook: Explaining and predicting continuance participation from an extended theory of planned behaviour perspective. Decision Support Systems, 55(1), 43-54.

Anwar, M. A., & Alharthi, A. H. (2021). Tourists' adoption of mobile technology: An empirical study in Saudi Arabia. Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology.

Babbie, E. (1999). The practice of social research. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing.

Bougie, R., & Sekaran, U. (2013). Research methods for business: A skill building approach. John Wiley & Sons.

Bryman, A. (2016). Social research methods (5th ed.). Oxford University Press.

Bryman, A., & Bell, E. (2019). Business research methods. Oxford University Press.

Budeva, D., & Sarinova, M. (2020). The role of digital marketing for tourism companies in Bulgaria. Journal of Environmental Management and Tourism, 11(6), 1333-1342.

Buhalis, D. (2003). eTourism: information technology for strategic tourism management. Pearson Education.

Buhalis, D., & Law, R. (2008). Progress in information technology and tourism management: 20 years on and 10 years after the Internet—The state of eTourism research. Tourism Management, 29(4), 609-623.

Buhalis, D., & Law, R. (2008). Progress in tourism management: 20 years on and 10 years after the internet—the state of eTourism research. Tourism Management, 29(4), 609-623.

Buhalis, D., & Law, R. (2008). Progress in tourism management: 20 years on and 10 years after the internet—the state of eTourism research. Tourism Management, 29

Buhalis, D., & Law, R. (2008). Progress in tourism management: Twenty years on and 10 years after the internet—The state of eTourism research. Tourism Management, 29(4), 609-623.

Buhalis, D., & Sinarta, Y. (2019). Real-time co-creation and nowness service: Lessons from tourism and hospitality. Journal of Travel Research, 58(1), 8-19.

Chaffey, D., & Ellis-Chadwick, F. (2012). Digital marketing: strategy, implementation and practice. Pearson education.

Chen, S., & Huang, Y. (2018). The impact of search engine optimization on online advertising market value. Information & Management, 55(1), 87-100.

Chen, Y., Fay, S., & Wang, Q. (2019). The role of marketing in social media: How online consumer reviews evolve. Journal of Interactive Marketing, 45, 70-87.

Cheng, M. L., & Foley, C. (2013). The effects of social media on hospitality and tourism. Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology, 4(3), 177-186.

Creswell, J. W. (2014). Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches (4th ed.). Sage Publications.

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches. Sage publications.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2011). The SAGE handbook of qualitative research (4th ed.). Sage Publications.

Duffett, R. G. (2015). Facebook advertising's influence on intention-to-purchase and purchase amongst millennials. Internet Research, 25(4), 498-526.

Dwyer, L., & Forsyth, P. (1997). Economic impact studies: Instruments for political shenanigans or useful policy instruments? Tourism Management, 18(5), 317-321.

Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F. (1981). Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error. Journal of marketing research, 18(1), 39-50.

Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F. (1981). Structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error: Algebra and statistics. Journal of Marketing Research, 18(3), 382-388.

Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F. (1981). Structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error: Algebra and statistics. Journal of Marketing Research, 18(3), 382-388.

Fowler Jr, F. J. (2014). Survey research methods. Sage publications.

George, D., & Mallery, P. (2003). SPSS for Windows step by step: A simple guide and reference, 11.0 update (4th ed.). Allyn & Bacon.

Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (2017). Discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research. Routledge.

Götz, M., Liehr-Gobbers, K., & Krafft, M. (2010). Evaluation of structural equation models using the partial least squares (PLS) approach. In Handbook of partial least squares (pp. 691-711). Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg.

Govers, R., & Go, F. M. (2009). Place branding: Virtual and physical identities constructed by tourists. In K. D. Gertner & M. C. Laing (Eds.), Tourism, globalization and cultural change: An island community perspective (pp. 187-205). Channel View Publications.

Gretzel, U., Sigala, M., Xiang, Z., & Koo, C. (2015). Smart tourism: foundations and developments. Electronic Markets, 25(3), 179-188.

Gretzel, U., Yoo, K. H., & Purifoy, M. (2007). Online travel review study: Role and impact of online travel reviews. Journal of Travel Research, 46(4), 357-371.

Gretzel, U., Yoo, K. H., & Purifoy, M. (2007). Online travel review study: Role and impact of online travel reviews. Travel and Tourism Research Association.

Gretzel, U., Yuan, Y., & Fesenmaier, D. R. (2000). Preparing for the new economy: Advertising strategies and change in destination marketing organizations. Journal

of Travel Research, 39(2), 146-156.

Hair Jr., J. F., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2017). A primer on partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM). Sage Publications.

Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2007). Multivariate data analysis (Vol. 6). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2018). Multivariate data analysis (8th ed.). Cengage Learning.

Hair, J. F., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2017). A primer on partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM). Sage Publications.

Hair, J. F., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2019). Rethinking some of the rethinking of partial least squares. Journal of Business Research, 100, 166-180.

Hair, J. F., Sarstedt, M., Hopkins, L., & G. Kuppelwieser, V. (2019). Partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM): An emerging tool in business research. European Business Review, 31(1), 106-121.

Hall, C. M. (2002). Tourism development: Managing a fragile industry. Routledge.

Han, H., Hyun, S. S., & Kim, W. (2018). Impulse buying behavior of Chinese tourists: The role of tour leader and mobile technology. Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, 35(3), 325-338.

Hassan, A., & Abuelkhair, A. (2013). Mobile applications for tourism and hospitality in Saudi Arabia. Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology, 4(3), 236-248.

Heale, R., & Twycross, A. (2015). Validity and reliability in quantitative studies. Evidence-Based Nursing, 18(3), 66-67.

Heale, R., & Twycross, A. (2015). Validity and reliability in quantitative studies. Evidence-based nursing, 18(3), 66-67.

Imran, M. K., Rehman, C. A., Ali Shah, S. Z., & Asif, M. (2019). Digital marketing impact on customer experience: Evidence from Pakistan. Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology, 10(3), 463-480.

International Association of Scientific Experts in Tourism. (2015). AIEST code of ethics for scientific work in tourism. Retrieved from https://www.aiest.org/aiest-code-of-ethics

Juvan, E., & Dolnicar, S. (2014). Choosing the right wording of survey questions. Journal of Travel Research, 53(3), 328-340.

Juvan, E., & Dolnicar, S. (2014). Designing likert scales with an assurance of data quality and interpretability for marketing researchers. Journal of Business Research, 67(11), 2321-2327.

Kaplan, A. M., & Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of social media. Business horizons, 53(1), 59-68.

Kapoor, K. K., & Dwivedi, R. (2018). Social media marketing and its impact on customer satisfaction in the hospitality sector. Journal of Tourism Research, 9(2), 43-55.

Kapoor, K. K., Dwivedi, Y. K., Piercy, N. C., & Niranjan, D. (2016). A study of the

factors affecting online marketing and their impact on customer satisfaction. Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 30, 53-67.

Kapoor, K. K., Dwivedi, Y. K., Piercy, N. C., & Niranjan, T. T. (2016). RFID-enabled healthcare service delivery: A social media analytics approach for quality management. International Journal of Information Management, 36(1), 13-24.

Kaur, H., & Singh, H. (2021). A study on the impact of digital marketing on tourism industry. Global Journal of Enterprise Information System, 12(2), 36-43.

Kaur, H., & Soch, H. (2013). Role of social media marketing in tourism industry: A literature review. International Journal of Research in Management, Science & Technology, 1(2), 43-48.

Kaur, P., & Sharma, A. (2019). Effectiveness of digital marketing in tourism industry: A study of tourists visiting Punjab. Journal of Tourism, Hospitality and Sports, 33, 8

Khan, A. S., & Rehman, A. U. (2019). Digital marketing impact on customer satisfaction and loyalty in Pakistan. Journal of Global Marketing, 32(3), 142-157.

Khan, I. U., & Chelliah, S. (2019). Exploring tourism potential in Pakistan. Tourism Management Perspectives, 30, 16-23.

Khan, N. A., Ali, F., & Shaikh, F. M. (2020). An empirical investigation of social media marketing in Pakistan's hospitality and tourism industry. Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology, 11(1), 2-20.

Kim, A. J., & Ko, E. (2012). Do social media marketing activities enhance customer equity? An empirical study of luxury fashion brand. Journal of Business Research, 65(10), 1480-1486.

Kim, J., & Kim, J. (2019). The influence of social media and mobile technology on impulse buying: A study of tourists. Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, 36(1), 29-42.

Kim, W. G., & Gallo, L. A. (2011). Brand value creation: Analysis of the relationship between social media and hotel performance. Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research, 35(3), 364-377.

Kim, Y., & Ko, E. (2012). Do social media marketing activities enhance customer equity? An empirical study of luxury fashion brand. Journal of Business Research, 65(10), 1480-1486.

Kotler, P. & Armstrong, G. (2010). Principles of Marketing. Pearson Education.

Kotler, P., & Armstrong, G. (2010). Principles of marketing. Pearson education.

KPMG. (2013). Tourism strategy for the 2013-2016 period. Retrieved from https://www.kpmg.com/MT/en/Documents/Tourism/Tourism%20Strategy%20for%202013%20-%202016%20Period.pdf

Krosnick, J. A. (1999). Survey research. Annual review of psychology, 50(1), 537-567.

Kwok, L., & Yu, B. (2013). Spreading social media messages on Facebook: An analysis of restaurant business-to-consumer communications. Cornell Hospitality Quarterly, 54(1), 84-94.

Lam, S. Y., & Shankar, V. (2014). Facebook engagement: A driver of brand loyalty and word-of-mouth. Journal of Interactive Marketing, 28(2), 134-144.

Larsson, J., & Rosell, D. (2014). Measuring the quality of web-based questionnaires: A systematic review of psychometric assessments. Journal of Medical Internet Research, 16(11), e267.

Larsson, R., & Rosell, E. (2014). Reliability and construct validity of the Social Vulnerability Index for Nordic municipalities: a comparative analysis using data from Denmark and Sweden. International Journal of Health Geographics, 13(1), 38.

Li, X. R., Li, Y., Wang, D., & Liang, Y. (2016). A mobile tourism app typology. Journal of Travel Research, 55(6), 792-806.

Li, X., Li, D., & Hudson, S. (2013). The impact of social media on travel intentions: A cross-cultural comparison. Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, 30(1-2), 156-170.

Litvin, S. W., Goldsmith, R. E., & Pan, B. (2008). Electronic word-of-mouth in hospitality and tourism management. Tourism Management, 29(3), 458-468.

Mbaiwa, J. E. (2005). Tourism and the environment in the Okavango Delta, Botswana. Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 13(2), 203-227.

Moutinho, L. (2011). Strategic management in tourism. CABI.

Mowforth, M., & Munt, I. (2003). Tourism and sustainability: New tourism in the third world. Routledge.

Munar, A. M. (2012). Social media strategies and destination management. Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism, 12(2), 101-120.

Nadeem, W., & Khosa, M. K. (2021). An empirical analysis of factors affecting digital marketing in the tourism sector of Pakistan. Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change, 19(5), 461-479.

Nasution, N., Chair, Y., & Suwarno, A. (2020). The Influence of Social Media Advertising on Brand Awareness and Purchase Intention of Young Consumers in Indonesia. Journal of Marketing and Consumer Research, 64, 62-70.

Neuendorf, K. A. (2016). The content analysis guidebook. SAGE Publications.

Neuhofer, B., Buhalis, D., & Ladkin, A. (2015). Technology as a catalyst of change: Enablers and barriers of the tourist experience and their consequences. The Routledge Handbook of Transport Economics, 107.

Neuhofer, B., Buhalis, D., & Ladkin, A. (2015). Technology as a catalyst of change: Enablers and barriers of the tourist experience and their consequences. The Routledge Handbook of Transport Economics, 189.

Niaz, S., Qureshi, M. A., Qureshi, I. M., & Naseer, A. (2021). Digital marketing: A way to promote tourism in Pakistan. Tourism Review, 76(2), 339-353.

Niazi, S. K., Mubarik, M. S., Rasheed, M. I., & Raza, M. H. (2016). Challenges faced by tourism industry in Pakistan: An exploratory study. Journal of Tourism & Hospitality Management, 4(2), 34-42.

Nitzl, C. (2010). The use of partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) in management accounting research: Directions for future theory development. Journal of Accounting Literature, 29, 287-301.

Okazaki, S. (2016). Advertising appeals in social media: A cross-cultural study of Facebook use. International Journal of Advertising, 35(4), 666-686.

Pakistan Telecommunication Authority. (2020). Telecom indicators. Retrieved from https://www.pta.gov.pk/en/telecom-indicators

Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC). (2020). National Tourism Policy 2020. Retrieved from https://www.tourism.gov.pk/downloads/NationalTourismPolicy2020.pdf

Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC). (2021). Tourist Regions. Retrieved from https://www.tourism.gov.pk/destinations

Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation. (2019). Pakistan Tourism Statistics 2018. Retrieved from http://www.tourism.gov.pk/pakistan_tourism_statistics

Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation. (n.d.). Discover Pakistan. Retrieved from https://www.ptdc.gov.pk/applications/discover-pakistan-app/#

Prensky, M. (2001). Digital natives, digital immigrants part 1. On the Horizon, 9(5), 1-6.

Quinlan, C., Babin, B. J., Carr, J. C., & Griffin, M. (2019). Business research methods. South Western Cengage.

Quivy, R., & Campenhoudt, L. V. (2008). Manuel de recherche en sciences sociales. Dunod.

Ringle, C. M., Wende, S., & Will, A. (2005). SmartPLS 2.0 (beta). Hamburg: SmartPLS.

Ritchie, J. R., & Crouch, G. I. (2003). The competitive destination: A sustainable tourism perspective. CABI Publishing.

Ryan, D., & Jones, C. (2012). Understanding digital marketing: marketing strategies for engaging the digital generation. Kogan Page Publishers.

Saunders, M. N. (2007). Research methods for business students (4th ed.). Pearson Education Limited.

Saunders, M. N., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2018). Research methods for business students. Pearson.

Shen, S., Huang, S., & Law, R. (2021). An analysis of tourism research using partial least squares path modeling: A systematic literature review. Current Issues in Tourism, 1-25.

Shen, S., Wang, D., & Li, X. (2021). Modeling tourists' destination loyalty: A structural equation modeling approach. Journal of Destination Marketing & Management, 19, 100534.

Sigala, M. (2012). Social media and customer engagement: A review and research agenda. Journal of Services Marketing, 26(3), 205-214.

Smith, P. R., & Zook, Z. (2011). Marketing Communications: Integrating Offline and Online with Social Media. Kogan Page.

United Nations World Tourism Organization. (2005). Guide for the preparation of tourism investment projects. Author.

Wamae, W., & Kabira, W. (2011). Community-based ecotourism as a tool for sustainable development in Kenya. Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa, 13(2), 126-143.

Wang, D., & Zhang, H. Q. (2012). Understanding Chinese tourists' satisfaction with Japanese tourism: An investigation of the relationship among destination image, tourist expectation, and tourist satisfaction. Journal of Travel Research, 51(2), 183-196.

Waseem, A., & Hussain, S. (2019). Digital marketing adoption by Pakistani SMEs: A comparative analysis of manufacturing and services sector. Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development, 26(6), 827-846.

Wimmer, R. D., & Dominick, J. R. (1996). Mass media research: An introduction. Wadsworth Publishing.

Wu, M. Y., & Tseng, L. H. (2016). The impact of social media marketing on brand loyalty. Journal of service science and management, 9(2), 183-197.

Xiang, Z., & Du, Q. (2017). Role of social media in online travel information search. Tourism Management, 58, 50-60.

Xiang, Z., & Gretzel, U. (2010). Role of social media in online travel information search. Tourism Management, 31(2), 179-188.

Xiang, Z., & Gretzel, U. (2010). Role of social media in online travel information search. Tourism Management, 31(2), 179-188.

Xiang, Z., Du, Q., Ma, Y., & Fan, W. (2017). A comparative analysis of major online review platforms: Implications for social media analytics in hospitality and tourism. Tourism Management, 58, 51-65.

Xiang, Z., Du, Q., Ma, Y., & Fan, W. (2017). A comparative analysis of major online review platforms: Implications for social media analytics in hospitality and tourism. Tourism Management, 58, 51-65.

Xiang, Z., Du, Q., Ma, Y., & Fan, W. (2017). A comparative analysis of major online review platforms: Implications for social media analytics in hospitality and tourism. Tourism Management, 58, 51-65.

Yin, R. K. (2018). Case study research and applications: Design and methods (6th ed.). Sage Publications

Books

Bougie, R., & Sekaran, U. (2013). Research methods for business: A skill building approach. John Wiley & Sons.

Chaffey, D., & Ellis-Chadwick, F. (2012). Digital marketing: strategy, implementation and practice. Pearson education.

Chen, S., & Huang, Y. (2018). The impact of search engine optimization on online advertising market value. Information & Management, 55(1), 87-100.

Creswell, J. W. (2014). Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches (4th ed.). Sage Publications.

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches. Sage publications.

Fowler Jr, F. J. (2014). Survey research methods. Sage publications.

Hall, C. M. (2002). Tourism development: Managing a fragile industry. Routledge.

Heale, R., & Twycross, A. (2015). Validity and reliability in quantitative studies. Evidence-based nursing, 18(3), 66-67.

International Association of Scientific Experts in Tourism. (2015). AIEST code of ethics for scientific work in tourism. Retrieved from https://www.aiest.org/aiest-code-of-ethics

Mowforth, M., & Munt, I. (2003). Tourism and sustainability: New tourism in the third world. Routledge.

Neuendorf, K. A. (2016). The content analysis guidebook. SAGE Publications.

Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC). (2020). National Tourism Policy 2020. Retrieved from https://www.tourism.gov.pk/downloads/NationalTourismPolicy2020.pdf

Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC). (2021). Tourist Regions. Retrieved from https://www.tourism.gov.pk/destinations.

Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation. (2019). Pakistan Tourism Statistics 2018. Retrieved from http://www.tourism.gov.pk/pakistan_tourism_statistics

Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation. (n.d.). Discover Pakistan. Retrieved from https://www.ptdc.gov.pk/applications/discover-pakistan-app/#

Ryan, D. (2016). Understanding Digital Marketing: Marketing Strategies for Engaging the Digital Generation. Kogan Page.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2007). Research methods for business students. Pearson Education.

Sharpley, R. (2006). Tourism and sustainable development: Exploring the theoretical divide. Channel View Publications.

Yadav, R., & Rahman, Z. (2017). Measuring consumer attitude towards social media advertising and its impact on consumer decision making: A comparative study of university students from India and Pakistan. Journal of Internet Commerce, 16(2), 139-158.

Yadav, R., & Rahman, Z. (2017). Measuring consumers' perception of mobile advertising: A scale development and validation perspective. Journal of Interactive Advertising, 17(1), 44-56.

7. APPENDIX

7.1. Appendix A: - Reliability and Validity

Construct reliability and validity - Overview

Zoom (77%) Copy to Excel Copy to R

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Brand Image	0.940	0.941	0.954	0.807
Customer Engagment	0.943	0.946	0.957	0.817
Performance	0.817	0.835	0.880	0.648

7.2. Appendix B: - Path coefficient -Matrix

Path coefficients - Matrix

Zoom (77%) Copy to Excel Copy to R

	Brand Image	Customer Engagment	Performance
Brand Image			0.588
Customer Engagment			0.215
Performance			

7.3. Appendix C: - Fornell- Larcker Criterion

Discriminant validity - Fornell-Larcker criterion

	Brand Image	Customer Engagment	Performance
Brand Image	0.898		
Customer Engagment	0.869	0.904	
Performance	0.774	0.725	0.805

7.4. Appendix D: - Cross loadings

Discriminant validity - Cross loadings

	Brand Image	Customer Engagment	Performance
BI1	0.915	0.766	0.706
BI2	0.897	0.873	0.718
BI3	0.915	0.759	0.701
BI4	0.859	0.787	0.675
BI5	0.904	0.712	0.675
CE1	0.833	0.958	0.670
CE2	0.685	0.848	0.604
CE3	0.743	0.911	0.634
CE4	0.806	0.868	0.651
CE5	0.846	0.929	0.711
P1	0.576	0.569	0.740
P2	0.578	0.478	0.803
P3	0.744	0.702	0.898
P4	0.572	0.558	0.771