



Digital Marketing and Promotion of Tourism in Kanyakumari District

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ABSTRACT

This research paper examines the role of digital marketing in promoting tourism in Kanyakumari District. The study analyses demographic characteristics of tourists and their perceptions regarding online information quality, user-friendly accessibility, digital marketing interactions, electronic word-of-mouth, and online tourism promotion. The findings indicate the growing importance of digital platforms in influencing tourist decisions and highlight potential strategies to enhance tourism marketing.

Keywords: Digitalization, Digital Marketing, Tourism

1. Introduction

Tourism is a vital sector contributing to the economic growth of Kanyakumari District. With the advent of digital marketing, the promotion of tourism has evolved, providing travellers with easy access to information and services. This study aims to analyse the impact of digital marketing on tourism, focusing on demographic characteristics and various online engagement dimensions.

2. Review of Literature

Digital marketing is a form of communication and interaction between organizations and their customers through digital channels (internet, email, and others) and digital technologies **Kotler et al., (2009)**. The convergence of internet platforms has brought about a significant transformation in the tourism industry by leveraging technological tools and consumer preferences to offer personalized experiences for modern travellers exploring new destinations **(Buhalis & Law, 2008)**. Social media, with its real-time engagement and rich visual content, plays a pivotal role in this evolution **(Buhalis & Law, 2008)**. Furthermore, the integration of technology and innovation fueled by data driven travel and advancements such as the internet of things is crucial for the industry's growth and digital transformation **(Zimeng et al., 2023)**.

Despite the immense potential of digital marketing, its implementation still presents several challenges. **Jaya et al., (2020)** note that some tourist destinations, particularly those in remote areas or with limited resources, may struggle to fully leverage digital marketing. Additionally, assessing the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies in boosting tourist visits and enhancing a destination's image remains a critical area of concern. Many destinations, especially those with inadequate digital infrastructure, face difficulties in optimizing their digital marketing efforts **(Armutcu et al., 2023)**.

3. Research Methodology

The study utilizes primary data collected from 287 respondents, including both domestic and international tourists. The research employs descriptive analysis to interpret demographic factors and mean ranking analysis to determine the influence of digital marketing on tourist behaviour.

4. Objectives of the Study

- To analyse the role of digital marketing in promoting tourism in Kanyakumari District.
- To study the demographic characteristics of tourists visiting Kanyakumari District.

c) To assess tourists' perceptions of online information quality and its impact on travel decisions.

5. Analysis and Interpretation

5.1 Demographic Characteristics

5.1.1 Gender

Table 5.1 Gender

Gender	Frequency	Per cent
Male	146	50.9
Female	141	49.1
Total	287	100.0

The study reveals a nearly equal gender distribution among tourists visiting Kanyakumari, with 50.9% male and 49.1% female respondents.

5.1.2 Age of Respondents

Table 5.2 Age of the Respondents

Age	Frequency	Per cent
20-34 years	153	53.3
35-49 years	118	41.1
50-64 years	15	5.2
65 years and over	1	0.4
Total	287	100.0

The majority of tourists belong to the 20-34 years age group (53.3%), followed by 35-49 years (41.1%), indicating that young and middle-aged travellers form the primary visitor segment.

5.1.3 Marital Status

Table 5.3 Marital Status

Marital Status	Frequency	Per cent
Single	95	33.1
Married	192	66.9
Total	287	100.0

A significant portion of the respondents (66.9%) are married, suggesting that Kanyakumari is a popular destination for family travel.

5.1.4 Family Size

Table 5.4 Family Size

Family Size	Frequency	Per cent
1-2	76	26.5
3-4	180	62.7
5 or more	31	10.8
Total	287	100.0

In terms of family size, most tourists come from medium-sized families (3-4 members, 62.7%), implying that group or family travel is a common trend in the region.

5.1.5 Education

Table 5.5 Education

Education	Frequency	Per cent
Graduate	81	28.2
Postgraduate	179	62.4
Advanced degree	27	9.4
Total	287	100.0

Educational qualifications show that a majority of tourists are highly educated, with 62.4% being postgraduates and 28.2% graduates. This suggests that educated individuals rely on online platforms for travel decisions.

5.1.6 Income

Table 5.6 Income

Income	Frequency	Per cent
Under Rs. 20,000	36	12.5
Rs. 20,001 - Rs. 30,000	45	15.7
Rs. 30,001 - Rs. 50,000	79	27.5
Rs. 50,001 - Rs. 100,000	74	25.8
Above Rs. 100,000	53	18.5
Total	287	100.0

The income distribution indicates that most tourists earn between Rs. 30,001 and Rs. 50,000 (27.5%), followed by Rs. 50,001 to Rs. 100,000 (25.8%), demonstrating that middle-income and upper-middle-income groups are significant contributors to tourism in Kanyakumari.

5.1.7 Type of Tourist

Table 5.7 Type of Tourist

Type of Tourist	Frequency	Per cent
Domestic	263	91.6
International	24	8.4
Total	287	100.0

The study finds that 91.6% of tourists are domestic travellers, while 8.4% are international tourists. This highlights the need for focused digital marketing strategies to attract more international visitors.

5.1.8 Length of Stay

Table 5.8 Length of Stay

Length of Stay	Frequency	Per cent
Up to 3 days	119	41.4
4-6 days	107	37.3
7 days and more	61	21.3
Total	287	100.0

Regarding the length of stay, 41.4% of tourists stay for up to 3 days, while 37.3% stay for 4-6 days, indicating that most visitors prefer short trips.

5.1.9 Visited Kanyakumari Before

Table 5.9 Visited Kanyakumari Before

Visited Kanyakumari Before	Frequency	Per cent
Yes	263	91.6
No	24	8.4
Total	287	100.0

Interestingly, 91.6% of tourists have visited Kanyakumari before.

5.1.10 Intention to Visit Again

Table 5.10 Intention to Visit Kanyakumari Again

Intention to Visit Kanyakumari Again	Frequency	Per cent
Yes	275	95.8
No	12	4.2
Total	287	100.0

A strong intention to revisit is observed, with 95.8% expressing a willingness to return, signifying a positive tourism experience.

5.2 Digital Marketing Influences on Tourism

5.2.1 Online Information Quality

Table 5.11 Mean and Rank for Online Information Quality

Online Information Quality	Mean	Rank
Online views of beautiful locations of a destination will attract tourists	3.60	I
Online information about the tourist destination will be helpful in booking the best tourism package	3.51	II
Detailed online information about the tourist destination will help to satisfy tourists	3.41	III
The updated online prices of tourism packages will help tourists to decide their tourism schedule	3.37	IV
Online quality service will be reliable to meet tourist's needs and expectations	3.33	V

The analysis shows that online visuals of beautiful locations (Mean = 3.60, Rank I) play a crucial role in attracting tourists. The availability of detailed online information about destinations (Mean = 3.41, Rank III) and updated pricing of tourism packages (Mean = 3.37, Rank IV) influences tourists' decision-making. The reliability of online quality service (Mean = 3.33, Rank V) is also an important factor in shaping travel choices.

5.2.2 User-Friendly Accessibility

Table 5.12 Mean and Rank for User-Friendly Accessibility

User-Friendly Accessibility	Mean	Rank
Authentic and updated online tourism information makes the tourists relaxed	3.55	I
Tourist destination's online information will be easily available on the internet	3.53	II
Online tourism information helps to quickly access the desired information	3.49	III
Online content about tourist destinations will be easily understandable	3.47	IV

The findings indicate that authentic and updated online tourism information (Mean = 3.55, Rank I) makes tourists feel more confident in planning their trips. The availability of easily accessible online tourism information (Mean = 3.53, Rank II) enhances the overall experience. Additionally, the ease of understanding online content (Mean = 3.47, Rank IV) ensures that travellers can make informed decisions efficiently.

5.2.3 Digital Marketing Interactions

Table 5.13 Mean and Rank for Digital Marketing Interactions

Digital Marketing Interactions	Mean	Rank
I use digital marketing channels to find and discover tourists' recommendations	3.45	I
I use digital marketing channels to read other tourist's experiences and opinions	3.41	II
I use digital marketing channels to look for tourist's comments about tourist destinations	3.38	III
I use digital marketing channels to search for information about tourism destinations	3.37	IV

The study highlights the growing reliance on digital marketing interactions. Tourists frequently use digital marketing channels to discover recommendations (Mean = 3.45, Rank I) and read other travellers' experiences (Mean = 3.41, Rank II). They also use digital platforms to look for comments about tourist destinations (Mean = 3.38, Rank III) and search for tourism-related information (Mean = 3.37, Rank IV). This suggests that social proof and peer recommendations significantly influence tourist behaviour.

5.2.4 Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM)

Table 5.14 Mean and Rank for Electronic Word-of-Mouth

Electronic Word-of-Mouth	Mean	Rank
I communicate my feelings about the tourism experience on different online social media	3.48	I
I share online comments about my tourism experience	3.42	II
My shared online comments generate awareness among tourists	3.40	III
I encourage more tourists online to travel to my experienced tourism destination	3.38	IV

The findings indicate that tourists actively share their experiences online (Mean = 3.48, Rank I), which helps create awareness among potential travellers. The role of online reviews is evident, as many respondents agree that shared online comments influence others' travel decisions (Mean = 3.40, Rank III). Additionally, tourists who share experiences tend to encourage more people to visit Kanyakumari (Mean = 3.38, Rank IV), highlighting the impact of eWOM in tourism promotion.

5.2.5 Online Tourism Promotion

Table 5.15 Mean and Rank for Online Tourism Promotion

Online Tourism Promotion	Mean	Rank
Online tourism information helps to schedule fund and adventure activities easily	3.61	I
Online tourism packages offer greater value for money	3.55	II
Online tourism information delivers a positive image of a destination	3.53	III
I will purchase an online tourism package to visit my tourism destination	3.45	IV

The study underscores the importance of online platforms in shaping tourism promotion. Tourists believe that online tourism information makes it easier to plan and schedule activities (Mean = 3.61, Rank I). They also recognize that online tourism packages offer better value for money (Mean = 3.55, Rank II) and help deliver a positive image of the destination (Mean = 3.53, Rank III). The willingness to purchase tourism packages online (Mean = 3.45, Rank IV) suggests that digital marketing strategies must focus on enhancing trust and reliability in online bookings.

6. Conclusion and Implications

The research highlights the growing significance of digital marketing in tourism promotion. The findings suggest that tourists increasingly rely on online information, user-friendly digital accessibility, digital marketing interactions, and electronic word-of-mouth to make travel decisions.

7. Future Research Directions

Further studies can explore the role of emerging technologies like artificial intelligence and augmented reality in tourism marketing to enhance visitor experiences.

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