



ISSN Print: 2394-7500
ISSN Online: 2394-5869
Impact Factor (RJIF): 8.4
IJAR 2024; 10(6): 303-314
www.allresearchjournal.com
Received: 05-03-2024
Accepted: 09-04-2024

Safdar Khan
Research Scholar, Department
of Business Administration,
Aligarh Muslim University,
Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh, India

Dr. Asad Rehman
Associate Professor,
Department of Business
Administration, Aligarh
Muslim University, Aligarh,
Uttar Pradesh, India

Corresponding Author:
Safdar Khan
Research Scholar, Department
of Business Administration,
Aligarh Muslim University,
Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh, India

Social media influences consumer choices in the travel industry: Examining the decision-making process of travelers

Safdar Khan and Dr. Asad Rehman

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.22271/allresearch.2024.v10.i6d.11858>

Abstract

The tourism sector helps tourists and visitors by providing information on various social networking sites. Before the tour is finished, the consumer decision-making process in tourism marketing via social media goes through several steps. Self-Congruity Theory and Traveler Destination Selection, Consumer Choice Bettman Information Processing Model, and stages of travel trips clarify the process of the consumer decision-making process, and rarely when offered a choice, do consumers thoroughly research all of the available possibilities, Secondary data from reliable sources and first-hand observations are used in research procedures. A variety of secondary data is available in books, government studies that have been published, journal articles, and newspapers. Through social networking sites and trip stages, this study aims to pinpoint the key influencing factors that affect decisions on family tours. The findings indicate that social media marketing has a significant impact on how consumers decide what to buy tour packages, marketing on social media websites will be a useful strategy for attracting tourists. Tourists share both favorable and bad comments on social media networks, thus hotels, resorts, and other travel service companies must offer the best services possible. Positive evaluations will surely boost future revenue, while negative ones will undoubtedly affect their future sales. The practical and theoretical consequences, as well as suggestions for future research, are discussed in this quickly evolving digital environment.

Keywords: Social media, consumer decision making process, travel sector, consumer behavior

Introduction

Current customers heavily utilize social media to make decisions. Consumers understand social media promotion's changing attempt. Access to accurate travel information has greatly influenced travel decisions. Tourism information on social media has changed lives 10 years after its introduction. Our everyday lives are more influenced by real-time information (Mukherjee and Nagabhushanam, 2016) ^[56]. This is a social network where people may discuss ideas, stories, and opinions. Social media allows businesses to advertise and sell goods and services at any time and place, based on supply and demand (Llach *et al.*, 2013) ^[49]. This novel phenomenon can be defined in numerous ways. Blossom (2009), for example, social media is a platform that enables everyone, from individuals to organizations, to engage with one another. Similarly, Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) ^[51] define social media as "a collection of web-based apps that rely on ideological and technological origins and facilitate the creation and exchange of user-generated content."

Every June 30, World social media Day is celebrated. To minimise time and evaluate various tourist offers, social networking sites provide a lot of travel-related information, especially in the planning stage. All social media platforms spread, receive, and share knowledge freely. Marketers should expect clients to consider several travel companies before choosing one. Most emblem interactions include post-purchase usage. However, social networking has complicated client-agency relationships. Putter (2017) ^[65] estimates that about 1.5 billion people accessed social media networks globally in 2017, or around one out of every four persons. Three years later, two billion people were using social media, according to GlobeStat (2020) ^[82]. This shows that recent years have seen an increase in social media usage. In addition, Alnsour *et al.* (2018) ^[2] predict that social media usage will increase by 7% per year.

According to Milano *et al.* (2011) ^[5], Social media experiences of tourists include pre-, on-, and post-travel. Customers may check social media about the finest destinations before buying a vacation package. Travellers are finding social media handy for information and support. Entrepreneurs watch how social media users behave, but they care less about how it affects retail behaviour. Most online purchase research ignores the influence of online reviews on top customer decision-making ranks (Darley *et al.*, 2010) ^[23].

YouTube and Instagram Influencers

Diipa Büller Khosla has 1800k followers and is first in Instagram followers, with 1711 posts and sixth in Instagram posts. She co-founded Post for Change and is a fashion and beauty influencer. Nitibha Kaul ranks second on Instagram with 3783 posts and 935k followers. She is an Indian model, TV personality, YouTuber, Instagrammer, and social media star. Her 2016 Bigg Boss 10 appearance is famous. Abhinav

Chandel ranks third on Instagram with 187k followers. He has 7201 Instagram posts and leads the list. Travel photographer from Uttarakhand. His contemplative photography makes him an Instagram lover. Shramona Poddar ranks 4th on Instagram with 165k followers. She has 2041 Instagram posts, ranking 3rd. She is an Indian model, TV personality, YouTuber, Instagrammer, and social media star. Her 2016 Bigg Boss 10 appearance is famous. Instagram user @mishti.and. meat blogs about travel and lifestyle. She is an Instagram star and ad trending celebrity. A renowned Instagram star, she is. Shivya Nath ranks 5th on Instagram with 108k followers. She ranks 4th on Instagram with 1867 posts. She scrapped and rebuilt her life around travel. She became a vegan nomad and wrote a book, founded a sustainable travel-inspired apparel line that plants trees in Uttarakhand, and promoted slow, thoughtful travel. Shivya shares her travels, opinions, and advice with her big online network on Instagram, as seen in Figure 1.

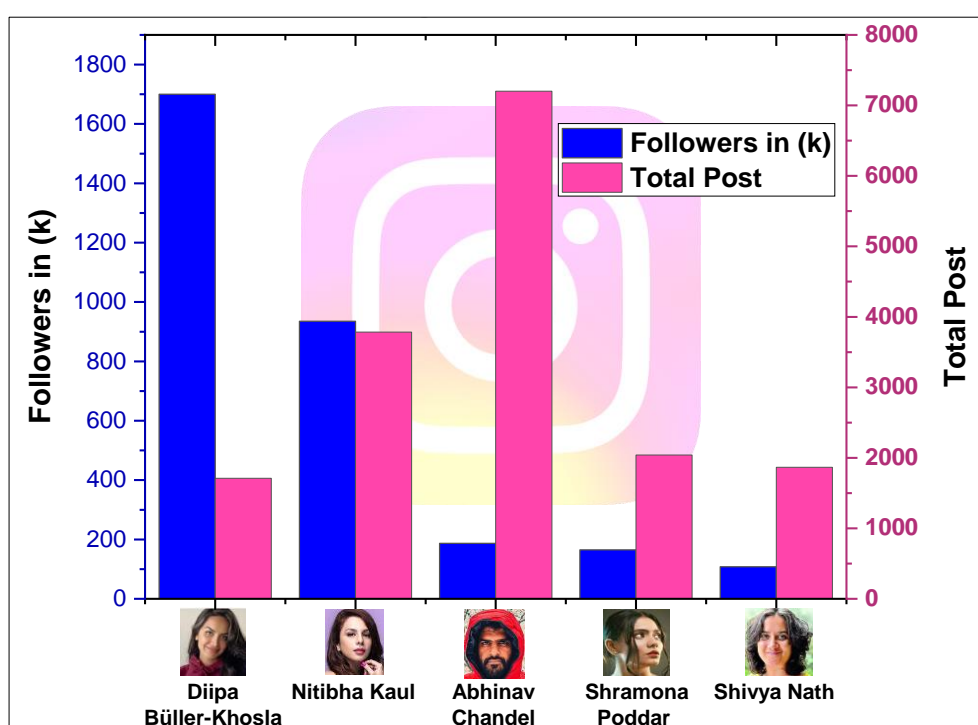


Fig 1: Instagram Influencer

As per the details given in Figure 2, On YouTube, Mumbiker Nikhil (Nikhil Sharma) has 3920K followers and 1859 uploaded videos, ranking #1 in the video uploaded category. He is a famous Mumbai moto-vlogger. His YouTube handle comes from Mumbai, his hometown. Full name: Nikhil Anil Brijal Kumar Sharma. Varun Vagish, better known as Mountain Trekker, has 1550K YouTube subscribers and 540 videos, ranking second in video posted. Now He travels full-time (he resigned his work for his goals). He likes solo travel and meeting new individuals. He left Incredible India and discovered the world's beauty after years of travel! The Indian government awarded him the 'National tourist Award' for tourist promotion. Kritika Goel is third in YouTube subscribers with 410K and third in

video posted with 310 videos. Mumbai-based motorbike vlogger is famous. After quitting her job, she travelled the world and documented her adventures on YouTube. Rohan Thakur & Bharati Bahrani (Ronnie & Barty) has 320K followers and sixth in video posted rank on YouTube. Both live Himalayan. Ronnie and Barty's episode-driven stories span untouched Himalayan regions and make use of storytelling editing, vlogging, cinematic flare, and drone shots. Rohith Ashok (Toll-Free Traveller) with 136K followers ranks fifth on YouTube with 190 videos and fourth in video uploaded. He loves bikes, photography, and adventure as a traveller and multimedia maker from Chennai, India. His blog, Instagram, and YouTube channel include travel adventures.

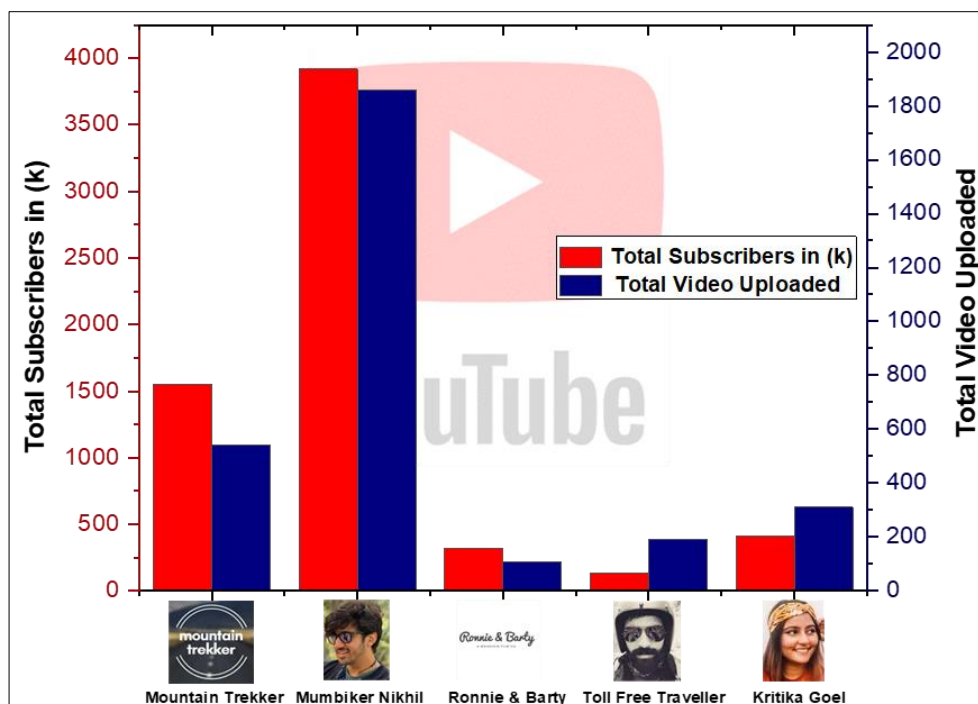


Fig 2: YouTube Influencer

Self-Congruity Theory and Traveler Destination Selection:

Although the concept of the self has Greek philosophical roots, many of its beliefs are credited to American philosopher William James for providing the groundwork for them (Beerli *et al.*, 2007.)^[60]. One definition states, "The whole of what a man believes of himself, encompassing his body and brain, as well as his possessions, family, reputation, and work" (Loudon and Della Bitta as cited in Berrli *et al.*, 2007.)^[60]. The self-congruity hypothesis explores how one's perception of oneself (or concept) affects one's choices. The decision-making process entails evaluating a product's value-expressive or personality-related features in addition to its utilitarian or functional aspects. (Chon, 1990)^[15]. Similar to this, the brand image may be described as "useful" or "symbolic." Symbolic images are buyers' preconceived ideas about a product's personality, whereas functional images are the actual advantages of the product (Chon, 1990)^[15]. According to Litvin and Goh's (2002)^[50] study, which is cited in Kabli's research, self-image congruity enhances a consumer's pre-trip interest in a place and raises the possibility that they would make a purchase there. The likelihood of a tourist recommending a trip to another is increased, by Kastenholtz's findings, when they have a positive self-image of the destination. In Tunisia, a well-known tourist destination in North Africa, Kabli interviewed 442 people for a qualitative study. The outcomes validated the hypothesis that tourists' "want for the location" is increased by personality qualities that are congruent across a range of dimensions.

Consumer Choice Bettman Information Processing Model

In his approach, Bettman (1979)^[8] states that consumers can't process much information. He says people rarely evaluate complex possibilities while making judgments and use simple strategies. The Bettman Information Processing Model limits consumer information processing. When

offered a choice, buyers rarely weigh the options. Customers usually make quick decisions using heuristics. The customer can choose without having to evaluate all the information about all the options using these decision-simplifying principles.

Processing Capacity: In this stage, the author assumes that the consumer's ability to process information is restricted and that they are not interested in intricate calculations or in-depth information processing. Customers are inclined to choose choice techniques that simplify the process of choosing a product to address this issue.

Motivation: At the core of the Bettman Information Processing Model, motivation plays a key function in deciding the focus and intensity of a consumer's information search as they consider their selections. With the help of a hierarchy of objectives mechanism, which offers several distinct sub-goals to make the decision-making process easier, motivation is offered. This mechanism shows that customers have experience in a certain market segment and don't always need to go through the same hierarchy to make decisions, hence it serves as an organizer for consumer decision-making. Religious motivations and how they might influence the consumer's choice were not addressed.

Attention and Perceptual Encoding: The component of this phase is intimately related to the consumer's hierarchy of goals. There are two types of attention; the first is voluntary attention, which is a deliberate decision to direct processing resources toward the desired outcomes. The second is involuntary attention, which is a reflexive reaction to upsetting circumstances (e.g., newly acquired complex information). Both sorts of attention have an impact on how people proceed with setting objectives and making decisions. The perceptual encoding takes into account the many steps the consumer must take to perceive the stimuli and whether he requires more information.

Information gathering and evaluation: If the customer thinks the information available is insufficient, he will start looking for additional information from outside sources. It is examined and its applicability or usefulness is determined for newly acquired information. The customer keeps asking for additional information until he has learned that gaining more information will take more time and money or until he has learned all the information that is relevant.

Memory: This component is where the consumer keeps all of his information and will be his first port of call when he needs to make a choice. He will surely start looking for new sources if this information is insufficient.

Decision Process: According to this stage of the Bettman Information Processing Model, various decisions are typically taken in relation to additional circumstances that may arise. This section focuses on how to choose and

evaluate certain brands using heuristics or "rules of thumb." It is doubtful that the same consumer will make the same decision in the same situation as another consumer because the specific heuristics they use are influenced by both individual characteristics (such as personality traits) and situational factors (such as the urgency of the decision).

Consumption and Learning Process

After the purchase has been made, the model describes the results that will come later. Following consideration of the alternative, the consumer will obtain knowledge in this step. The consumer receives knowledge from this event to use in future decision-making situations. In his model, Bettman places a strong emphasis on how consumers process information and their ability to use it for decision-making, but he makes no mention of the standards by which they accept or reject the processing of a particular piece of information.

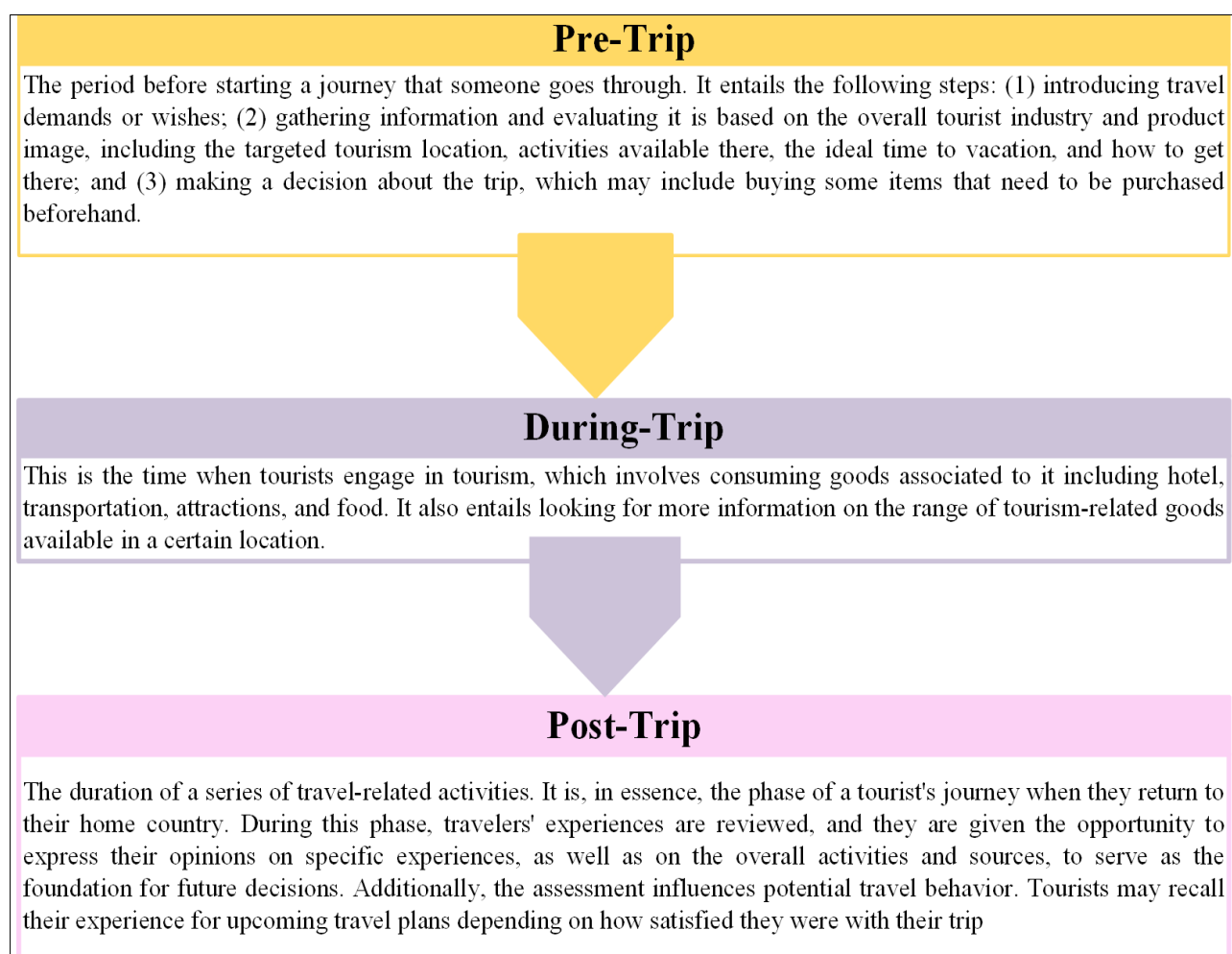


Fig 3: Stages of Travel Trips

Literature review

According to Sahin & Sengün, (2015) ^[66] the youth of today are especially impacted by social media evaluations and comments. They also share their trip experiences through media tools like photographs and videos. Social media has both beneficial and negative effects on the travel and tourism sector, as comments and reviews there can have a big impact on travelers' choices (Sahin & Sengün, 2015) ^[66]. According to Sahin & Sengün's (2015) ^[66] study on the effects of social media, both positive and negative reviews can have a big influence on travelers' decisions. Positive

social media remarks about vacation spots affected 41.1% of all respondents, while negative social media comments about the same places influenced 47.8% of all respondents. Destination pictures influence traveler behavior during and after the journey, in addition to the pre-travel phase (Tavitiyaman & Qu, 2013) ^[73] as described in Figure 3. For instance, Bigne *et al.* (2001) ^[10] conclude that the destination's reputation positively affects traveler pleasure, the want to return home, and the desire to suggest. Images of places have a considerable influence on trip quality and behavioral intent, according to Chen and Tsai's 2007 ^[16]

research (repetition and recommendation intent). Chi and Qu (2008) ^[17] concluded that the perception of the destination has an impact on both attribute and total satisfaction. According to Assaker *et al.* (2011) ^[3], tourists are happier and more likely to return to a destination in the future when they have a more favorable perception of it.

The influence of the group on social networks affects consumers' purchase inclinations (Yoong and Lian, 2019) ^[81]. Social networking sites have made it feasible for people to shop with others and in groups, which is the same as friends making purchases at actual stores. Thus, thought leaders and affinity groups have an impact on how people behave on social media, influencing their purchasing decisions. Customers buy what other customers are buying because they naturally want to fit in. Yoong and Lian (2019) ^[81] found a statistically significant correlation between consumer intention to buy and social media group purchases.

Social media posting can be a useful tool for gathering feedback and ideas. In addition to Sahin and Sengün (2015) ^[66], a survey by Expedia found that Gen Z and Millennials are more impacted by social media posts (2020). A countrywide poll found that 27% of millennials promote potential vacation spots on social media to solicit feedback before making a reservation. Additionally, according to the same survey, 36% of Gen Z visitors chose their travel destination in part because of what other people had to say about it on social media.

The majority of social media users were young adults and kids, with the elderly making up the minority (Putter, 2017) ^[65]. Lilima discovered a strange study on the relationship between a person's age and their use of social media (2020). Lilima (2020) ^[83] discovered that although people between the ages of 20 and 30 were more likely to use social media, senior members of the community had a high proportion of new users (aged between 40 and 50 years). The results of Ricardialiono's (2020) ^[84] analysis of the relationship between age and social media use show that there are

substantial differences across age groups and that each age group uses social media differently.

How advertisers connect their products with tourists purchasing the decision-making process determines the success of a brand. They can create a successful strategy that encourages the customer to buy the good or service to address their issue by using information about how buyers or consumers make decisions. The consumer decision-making process is modeled in five stages, proposed by Cox *et al.* in 1983, and is one of the most well-known models of this process. These include identifying the problem or need, acquiring data, weighing your options, making a purchase, and then giving the item a thorough assessment. The study depicted in Consumer Decision-Making Process, based on Kotler *et al.*, 1(998) ^[43] Figure 4, refers to the steps Customers must first identify the goods and services they need, get information about those goods and services, consider all of their options, either decide to buy or not. Based on an analysis of around 18000 client purchases across eight categories. According to their research, instead of steadily removing options until they had made a decision, visitors include and remove firms from a group under consideration throughout a lengthy review stage. After completing a purchase and posting about it on social media, people frequently develop a self-initiated, long-term relationship with a company. The steps of the consumer decision-making process are problem identification, searching, analyzing, and selecting an alternative for purchase. Consumption's ability to make people happy or unhappy influences how they behave after making a purchase. Whenever a customer perceives a need or a problem, or when the demand arises, the purchasing process starts. It responds to both internal and external triggers.

The five journey phases of the consumer decision are: (A) Need Recognition (B) Search of Information; (C) Alternatives Evaluations; (D) Product & Services choice and (E) Post-Purchase Evaluation.

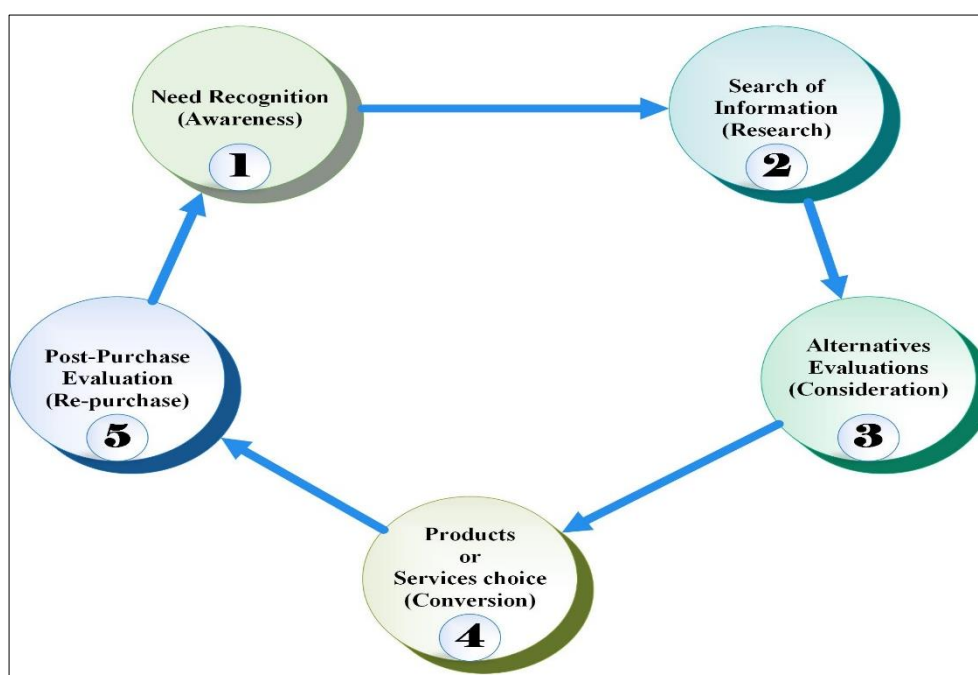


Fig 4: Consumer Decision-Making Process (Based Kotler *Et al.*, 1998) ^[43]

The "Zero Moment of Truth" (ZMOT), a term coined recently to describe the way in which marketers must compete for customers' attention on social media long before they make a purchase decision, was highlighted in this study by revising the model to emphasize its significance (Lecinski, 2011) ^[46].

The process of choosing a buyer begins with the need identification phase. The client notices a requirement or problem and makes a contrast between the actual situation and the ideal situation. They hunt for things that would satisfy these desires. As a result, the second step of product/service/ service information research is completed. The consumer wants to learn everything they can about the product's numerous brands. The third stage involves the consumer evaluating competitor brands utilizing the data. In the fourth stage, the customer selects the best product to purchase. The fifth and most significant stage, the post-purchase assessment, has been finished. Depending on their level of happiness or dissatisfaction, customers may actively keep clear of a company, encourage others to do the same via online evaluations and word-of-mouth, or risk developing a loyal consumer base.

1. Problem/Need Recognition

A need or issue is first determined by the model. Bruner (1993) ^[86] asserts that the instant one recognizes the difference between the actual and ideal state, the problem has been identified. Neal and Quester (2006) ^[85] go on to say that the identification of issues and requirements is influenced by a variety of circumstances, such as personal or professional circumstances, and that this identification results in purchase ideas. For example, if a buyer needs to ship their purchase to various locations and utilize it there, they may discover they need to purchase a laptop. Compared to a desktop computer, this is more practical. According to Solomon *et al.* (2006) ^[87], we classify human wants into two groups based on their nature. There are two different kinds of demands mentioned: psychological and practical or physical needs. The author claims that while functional or physical demands are frequently the outcome of need, mental wants are the result of customer emotions. Tyagi (2004) ^[88] asserts that the need for reputation frequently arises when a product is seen in some circumstances in numerous sectors. To put it another way, Tyagi (2004) ^[89] is a "window shopping," media marketing, or a collection of many circumstances.

2. Information Search

Oliver (2011) ^[90] differentiates internal search and exterior search as the two components of the information retrieval process. Internal comparisons of possibilities are made by customers while conducting internal searches based on their own knowledge, memory, and prior knowledge. For instance, a fast-food search is an example of an internal search since customers typically use their expertise and taste to select the right products, they need rather than asking for assistance from others. On the other side, external searches are related to significant purchases of electrical and domestic products. People typically ask their friends for advice or research a topic in journals or the media before making major purchases, such as new furniture or mobile phones. Winer (2009) ^[80] claims that more individuals are using a range of online sites to learn about different product categories or specific companies as the Internet's

significance in people's personal and professional lives grows. The author underlines the importance of online user evaluations and forums among Internet users in the information discovery phase of the consumer decision-making process. Kahle and Close identify friends, family, classmates, and coworkers as additional significant information sources (2006). The choice of what defines the relationship also generally influences the type of influence peers, friends, and family have on statistical searches and client decision-making, according to Kahle and Close (2006) ^[91]. Dimension of inclusion Personal sway, how much a certain individual is an "opinion leader," etc.

3. Evaluation of Alternatives

Ha *et al.* (2010) ^[92] claim that customers may find the process of weighing their options to be challenging, time-consuming, and stressful. This is because finding the best good or service that satisfies the customer's needs might be challenging due to a number of factors that obstruct the consumer's decision-making process. For instance, it can be exceedingly challenging to evaluate a furniture buy or book a hotel online. Before choosing a product to buy, there are a few things to think about. The consumer's decision-making is influenced by factors like age, culture, interests, and finances. When evaluating the level of options available to customers during the decision-making process, celebrity endorsements are also taken into consideration as additional information with excessive capacity consequences. In addition to their willingness and eagerness to imitate them, Kant *et al.* (2010) ^[93] demonstrate the gratification of movie star support for the imagined grandeur that people experience in their heroes.

4. Purchase Decision

The customer makes the buying selection indicated for the most critical degree of the entire approach after completing the statistical search and evaluation procedure. After reaching the final decision stage, the consumer considered all of his or her options and made the purchase. Additionally, purchases can be divided into three categories: planned purchases, partial purchases, and impulsive purchases (Kacen, 2002) ^[42, 52]. Hoyer and Macinnis (2008) ^[94] argue that choices can affect the purchasing process, which strengthens Kasen's position. For instance, the top priority item might not be available. The buying procedure is slowed down in this instance, and customers can further recall that they bought the thing online as opposed to in a conventional physical store. From an industrial standpoint, income helpers surely have a significant role in influencing clients' purchasing decisions, claim Wiedmann *et al.* (2007) ^[79]. However, Wiedmann *et al.* (2007) ^[79] warn that this can be counterproductive and that the impact is no longer present.

5. Post-Purchase Evaluation

The customer decision-making process ends with the post-purchase evaluation phase. This stage, which comes after a transaction is complete, is commonly ignored by businesses. However, given that it directly influences how consumers may decide to purchase the same items in the future, this stage may be the most crucial. As a result, this expression accurately describes the customer's experience following a transaction. According to this point of view, decision-making by customers is a continuous process, and to reduce

ambiguity while choosing to purchase the same commodity or service again, it is critical to have a positive experience. One of the major determinants of a post-purchase assessment's outcome, according to Perrey and Spillecke, (2011) ^[62] is the decisions made by coworkers, friends, and family regarding purchases. This idea is connected to Trehan and Trehan's (2011) ^[95] argument that peer product assessments, regardless of objectivity, have an impact on consumer happiness. According to Brink and Berndt, the post-purchase review process is important (2009). According to the author, a customer's satisfaction or dissatisfaction with a purchase depends on how they evaluate it and how it stacks up against their own expectations. The result has an impact on the customer's enjoyment, and ultimately, whether or not they decide to buy the same thing from the same supplier is determined by their level of enjoyment. Put bluntly, a transaction can be repeated if the customer is satisfied with their purchase. However, a customer who has a negative purchasing experience is unlikely to make the same purchases from the same supplier or even make any purchases at all.

Naturally, not all purchases run through the model in its entirety. Customers can decide to buy something right away after assessing their needs in the typical after-sales scenario. The main advantage of this strategy is that it recognizes that the decision-making process for purchases starts long before the actual transaction and may go on after. This highlights the value of marketers paying attention to the entire shopping process rather than just the options for making purchases (Kotler *et al.*, 1998) ^[43]. Consumers must first identify their problems and needs before moving on to the buy selection process. After determining their needs, customers are encouraged to use information retrieval to hunt up more information; they may then be driven to actively seek out information or pay attention to relevant sources, including advertisements, in light of this situation (Kotler, 1998) ^[43]. Marketers must first comprehend where customers get their information in order to influence their decision-making (Gartner, 1993) ^[33]. The need identification phase of the buying decision-making process starts when a consumer detects a need. The emergence of needs is caused by the following two factors:

1. Inside stimuli are frequent and include physiological or emotional requirements such as hunger, thirst, illness, tiredness, despair, and jealousy.
2. External stimuli, such as advertisements on social media, user comments, the aroma of delectable food, etc.

Assistance must be accessible whenever a customer starts looking for a solution. Where do consumers today look for solutions? Hey Google, how are you doing? Because both parents are employed, they attempt to take time off on holidays that fall during the same period. The time of the children's holidays is often taken into consideration while planning a family vacation. As soon as a date is chosen, family members discuss the location, and social media services like Trip Advisor, Make My Trip, Trivago, ClearTrip, etc. are used to research other options and affordable accommodations. Both the location's attractions and the amenities offered by the resort are quite important in the decision-making process. Since kids will be joining the family on the trip, the youngsters conduct some online research to learn more about the local tourist attractions, the

resort's activities, and other features like a pool and games. Resorts now employ trained entertainment to amuse children and couples with varied activities, bonfires, excursions, music, and other events after realizing the importance of doing so. Similar findings to those of consumer researchers have been made by tourism and leisure researchers who are interested in travel purchase decisions. It has been acknowledged that traveling is a multi-phase activity rather than a single one. (Clawson and Ketch, 1966; Chon, 1990) ^[18, 15]. They found a five-phase process in their model of recreational behavior:

1. Anticipation: planning and organizing the vacation excursions.
2. Getting to the tour location: how to reach the location of the site.
3. On-site behavior: behavior in the region or location of the destination.
4. Arrival journey: after the journey, coming back.
5. Reminiscence: reviewing, considering, and keeping in mind the journey.

The tourists have finished their search, so it's time to review their options to determine whether any of them are visually appealing. Customers who are already aware of your brand and use social media to visit your website can assist you in choosing between working with you and your competitors.

To reduce the danger of making a bad investment, tourists use social networking websites to assist them in making decisions that are only based on what possibilities are available and best suit their needs.

Two important aspects determine their evaluation:

1. Goal: capabilities, usefulness, affordability, and ease of use.
2. Subjective: Evaluations of a product (primarily based on preceding revel in or enter from beyond clients).

The trip selection process comprises responsibilities like need information mining gathering during the anticipation stage. Depending on the mode of transportation, getting to the destination may require a variety of experiences and service encounters. In some circumstances, such as when traveling vast distances internationally or taking a luxurious train ride, the journey to and from the destination may be a significant part of the overall travel experience. Booking transportation services is possible on social media platforms like Make my Trip, Clear Trip, IRCTC, and others. We should now discuss money and social media. After deciding what they want to buy and where they want to buy it, tourists are prepared to make a purchase. They may be eager to make a credit card purchase because social networking services like Phonepe, Google Pay, and Paytm all accept payments. The accommodation facility, the entertainment venue, the company offering goods and services, and interactions with other visitors are just a few of the service providers that have an impact on visitor behavior on the website. The idea that remembering and recalling the experience includes the post-purchase evaluation component of the choice may have a substantial impact on future purchasing behavior (Clawson and Ketch, 1966) ^[18]. During this phase of the decision-making process, travelers occasionally consider their most recent purchase. They recall their opinions on it, including whether they believed it to be a reasonable purchase and, more crucially, whether they would do business with the company again

and suggest it to their friends and relatives. The likelihood that customers will connect with your business again in the future will be increased if tourists implement a post-purchase strategy at this time. Don't miss the chance to increase your e-commerce conversion rate by getting repeat business from visitors, which makes up around one-third of an average store's daily sales. The professionalism, knowledge, and attitude of the service team are essential elements in providing effective service. As a result, how service is provided by the businesses that hire, manage, and develop their staff has a direct impact on customer satisfaction. According to Zeithaml, Parasuraman, and Berry (1985) [61], diversity, or a lack of consistency, is the third distinguishing feature of services. The kids' enjoyment of the trip has an impact on the family's willingness to return. As a result, destinations that offer family-friendly attractions and resorts that offer quality service and a full range of recreational amenities will encourage families to travel there again. Children will also tell their friends about the place, and parents will post reviews of the place on social media sites like YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Whatsapp, etc. with their friends and relatives.

Objectives

- To study the major social networking sites' influences on the decision-making process for family vacations.
- To study the steps in consumers' decision-making process.
- To study the stages of travel trips.
- To study the influences of social media on the tourism industry.
- To study the role of social media travel websites in tourists' decision-making process.

Data Analysis: The "Glance Spotlight on Travel 2021 Report" examines the travel landscape and client behavior in India. The "Spotlight on Travel 2021 Report" examines the travel landscape and client behavior in India. Barriers are being removed, and more people are motivated to travel to new and historic locations, which has led to a noticeable increase in travel in recent months. Over 1400+ Indian cell phone buyers were surveyed for the "Glance Spotlight on Travel 2021 Report" on the excellent mobile client intelligence platform In Mobi Pulse. The results have been chosen and weighted to represent the phone population of India. The turns were examined on October 15 and October 21, 2021. Even though domestic travel has become more popular after the outbreak, it was discovered that India still favors domestic destinations over those abroad. Other eye-opening results from the campaign included:

- Younger audiences are more receptive to touring, with 56 percent of those between the ages of 18 and 30 actively arranging travel arrangements.
- The number of tours will increase in December 2021, with 46% of respondents planning to travel to at least one location.
- Family vacations are the most well-known type of vacation. They are 37% more prevalent than solo and group tours.
- Less time is spent traveling on average, with 54% of respondents planning trips that will last much less than a week.
- Beaches are also the most sought-after travel locations, with 22% of respondents wishing to travel to coastal areas.
- When it comes to means of transportation, 48 percent of respondents said they preferred flying over other options.

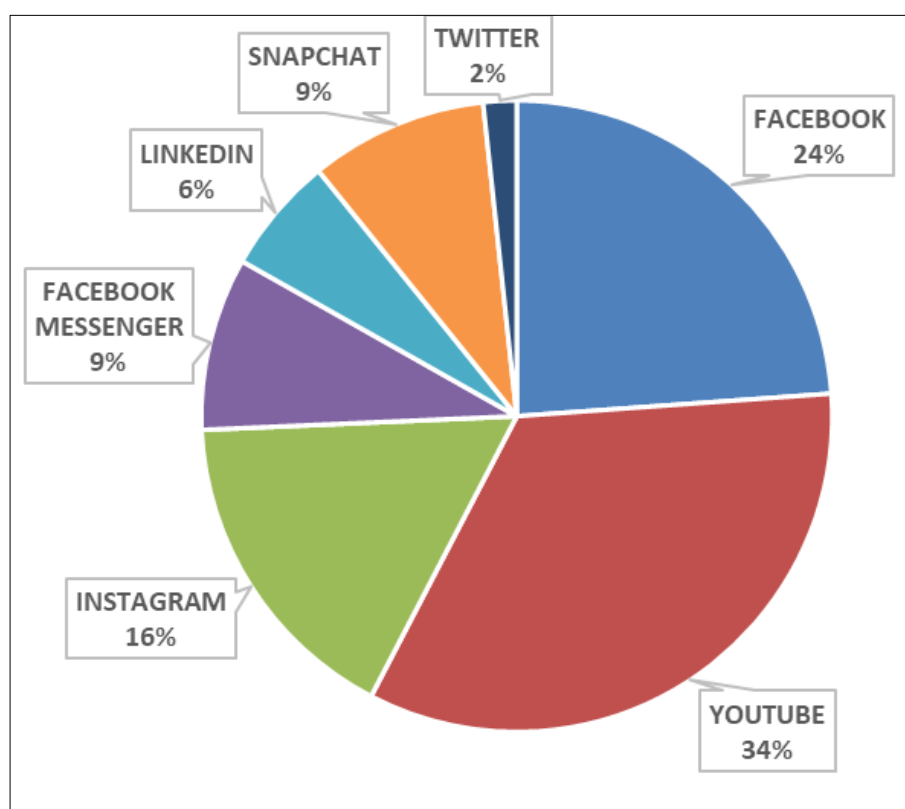


Fig 5: Indian Social Media Users (In Million) Jan 2022, Source: Datareportal, Digital 2022

Influence of social media on the tourism industry

You may distribute information about your company and manage your brand using social media channels. By providing consumers with a window into the diverse regions of the world and promoting travel, social media marketing for travel businesses has fundamentally changed the market. People are increasingly using search engines on websites like Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube to determine where to go and when as given in Figure 5. Users can quickly locate what they're looking for thanks to Instagram's geographical and trending hashtags. You can promote and make it easier for clients to find your company in a few seconds if you use them effectively. The next step is to provide customers with content they'll find interesting in order to maintain their interest. Despite national restrictions, visitors are making travel plans for 2021-even before international travel is once again widely accessible. This demonstrates how crucial having a social media presence is for tour operators and leisure providers. When you're engaged on social media, it's simple to show that you're open for business, interested in your customers, and friendly to outsiders. Set aside 20 minutes every day to check in, answer comments, and offer valuable information about your industry. Make a conscious decision to be deliberate with how you use your online time. You can find out what is important to you via social media as more travelers try to link their travel choices to their values. Social media can affect decision-making throughout the trip-planning process. Although traveling is exciting, there are a lot of unknowns when people first start assessing their alternatives. Concentrate on creating plans for addressing questions and staking out ideas while people are only starting to consider their options. Visitor attention is increased by attractive photos. By using engaging, real-life photos along with text that is full of personality, you may capture your audience's attention. Building a great guest experience may involve responding to frequently asked queries and offering helpful advice.

Contribution of the policy implications

Understanding how consumers make decisions is crucial because it enables you to foresee their needs and develop marketing or sales tactics around them. The following are some additional benefits of comprehending consumer decision-making: gives you leverage versus rivals, provides details on the customer, and expands the consumer base and sales. For marketers and salespeople, consumer behavior concepts and theories are the most crucial. The needs and wants of customers are taken into account while designing products and services. In order to properly accomplish the objectives of the organization, they must be appropriately marketed. Businesses can understand the different aspects influencing customers' purchasing decisions by studying consumer behavior. Business managers won't achieve their goals if they don't comprehend the issues. Companies must analyze consumer behavior to the fullest degree or within acceptable bounds. Unproductive investments can significantly reduce revenues in an era where businesses are cutting corners. Understanding how people think, feel and make decisions can help businesses decide how to sell their products and services most successfully. This helps forecast consumer behavior and supports the promotion of businesses' already-available goods and services.

Additionally, it enables innovative businesses to spot emerging opportunities before rivals.

Conclusion

The majority of local family tourists, who go once or twice a year, choose the tour's destination solely through social networking sites, according to the tourist industry's application of the consumer choice process model is based on five stages which include Problem/Need Recognition, Information Search, Evaluation of Alternatives, Purchase Decision, and Post-Purchase Evaluation as given in figure 4. The important thing to remember is that parents prioritize their children's happiness while making decisions about their vacations. As a result, since they are so important in making decisions, entertainment is required to keep kids satisfied while on the trip. Thornton, Shaw, and Williams (1997) ^[75] look into the characteristics of travel decision-making and the role that kids play in this process. Through their requirements and negotiating prowess in the social media tourism industry, they reach a conclusion that affects decisions. Children are a significant factor when it comes to family travel, as the statement emphasizes. The wife typically decides on the tour budget, and the husband books accommodations and arranges for transportation using social media sites like Make My Trip, Clear Trip, etc. Nearly all tourists prioritize safety when choosing a destination, and they also prioritize having more entertainment options, better lodging, more attractions, and affordable rates. Many tourists feel it's a significant factor. Because booking hotels and travel can all be done on social media platforms, viewing other travelers' remarks and obtaining tourist information are all essential factors in tourists' decision-making. As a result, marketing on social media websites will be a successful strategy for attracting tourists. Tourists share their remarks, both favorable and unfavorable, on social media networks, thus hotels, resorts, and other travel service companies must offer the best services possible. Positive evaluations will surely boost future business, while negative ones will undoubtedly affect their future sales. Quantitative research in the form of questionnaire surveys will support future studies to obtain insight into how social media tourism marketing affects consumer decision-making.

Limitation and Future Research Direction

Limitations of the Study

- 1. Limited Scope of Analysis:** The study primarily focuses on the influence of social media on the tourism industry, neglecting other factors that may also impact consumer decision-making in the travel sector, such as economic conditions, cultural preferences, and personal experiences.
- 2. Single-Method Approach:** The study relies heavily on qualitative analysis and anecdotal evidence, such as case studies and expert opinions, without incorporating quantitative data or statistical analysis to validate findings. This lack of methodological diversity may limit the depth and reliability of the study's conclusions.
- 3. Sampling Bias:** The sample population used in the study may not be representative of the broader demographic diversity within the tourism industry. Over-reliance on specific social media platforms or tourist demographics could skew results and limit the generalizability of findings.

4. **Temporal Relevance:** The study's conclusions may be time-bound, as the dynamics of social media platforms and consumer behavior in the tourism industry are subject to rapid change. Failure to account for evolving trends and emerging platforms may undermine the study's long-term relevance.
5. **Limited Geographic Coverage:** The study may lack a global perspective, focusing primarily on specific regions or markets where social media penetration is high. Neglecting the experiences of tourists from diverse cultural backgrounds or regions with limited internet access could restrict the applicability of findings.

Future Research Directions

1. **Mixed-Methods Approach:** Future research should adopt a mixed-methods approach, integrating qualitative and quantitative techniques to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the complex interactions between social media and consumer decision-making in the tourism industry.
2. **Longitudinal Studies:** Conducting longitudinal studies can help track changes in social media usage patterns and their impact on tourist behavior over time. By capturing trends and fluctuations, researchers can identify underlying patterns and anticipate future shifts in consumer preferences.
3. **Cross-Cultural Analysis:** Investigating the influence of social media on tourism decision-making across different cultural contexts can offer valuable insights into the universality versus cultural specificity of online engagement strategies. Comparing diverse markets can help identify best practices and tailor marketing strategies accordingly.
4. **Experimental Designs:** Implementing experimental designs, such as randomized controlled trials or A/B testing, can provide causal evidence of social media's effects on consumer decision-making in the tourism sector. By controlling for confounding variables and isolating specific interventions, researchers can establish causality more convincingly.
5. **Big Data Analytics:** Leveraging big data analytics and machine learning techniques can uncover hidden patterns and correlations within large datasets of social media interactions and travel behavior. Mining user-generated content and sentiment analysis can reveal nuanced insights into consumer preferences and sentiment.
6. **Geospatial Analysis:** Integrating geospatial analysis tools with social media data can enhance understanding of spatial patterns in tourist behavior and destination choices. Mapping user-generated content and travel-related hashtags can identify popular destinations and emerging trends in real time.
7. **Ethnographic Studies:** Conducting ethnographic studies and in-depth interviews with tourists can provide rich qualitative data on their experiences and decision-making processes. By delving into individual narratives and motivations, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of the role of social media in shaping travel decisions.
8. **Policy Implications:** Exploring the policy implications of social media marketing in the tourism industry can inform regulatory frameworks and industry guidelines

aimed at promoting ethical and responsible online engagement practices. Understanding the potential risks and benefits of social media use can help policymakers strike a balance between consumer protection and business innovation.

References

1. Algesheimer R, Dholakia UM, Herrmann A. The social influence of brand community: Evidence from European car clubs. *Journal of Marketing*. 2005;69(3):19-34.
2. Alnsour M, Ghannam M, Alzeidat Y. Social media effect on purchase intention: the Jordanian airline industry. *Journal of Internet Banking and Commerce*. 2018;23(2):1-1.
3. Assaker G, Vinzi VE, O'Connor P. Examining the effect of novelty seeking, satisfaction, and destination image on tourists' return pattern: A two factor, non-linear latent growth model. *Tourism Management*. 2011;32(4):890-901.
4. Azazi NAN, Shaed MM. Social Media and Decision-Making Process among Tourist: A Systematic Review. *Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication*. Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia Press: Bangi, Malaysia; c2020. p. 36.
5. Bagozzi RP, Dholakia UM. Antecedents and purchase consequences of customer participation in small group brand communities. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*. 2006;23(1):45-61.
6. Baloglu S, Brinberg D. Affective images of tourism destinations. *Journal of Travel Research*. 1997;35(4):11-15.
7. Barwise P, Meehan S. The one thing you must get right when building a brand. *Harvard Business Review*. 2010;88(12).
8. Bettman JR. Memory factors in consumer choice: A review. *Journal of Marketing*. 1979;43(2):37-53.
9. Blank C. Facebook leads to hotel room revenue. Retrieved from <http://www.hotelnewsnow.com/Articles.aspx/5225/Facebook-leads-to-hotel-room-revenue>. March 23, 2011.
10. Bigne JE, Sanchez MI, Sanchez J. Tourism image, evaluation variables and after purchase behavior: inter-relationship. *Tourism Management*. 2001;22(6):607-616.
11. Birtwistle G, Clarke I, Freathy P. Customer decision making in fashion retailing: a segmentation analysis. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*; c1998.
12. Bray JP. Consumer behavior theory: approaches and models; c2008.
13. Brink A, Berndt A, editors. Relationship marketing and customer relationship management. Juta and Company Ltd.; c2009.
14. Chan NL, Guillet BD. Investigation of social media marketing: how does the hotel industry in Hong Kong perform in marketing on social media websites? *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*. 2011;28(4):345-368.
15. Chon KS. The role of destination image in tourism: A review and discussion. *The Tourist Review*; c1990.
16. Chen CF, Tsai D. How destination image and evaluative factors affect behavioral intentions? *Tourism Management*. 2007;28(4):1115-1122.

17. Chi CGQ, Qu H. Examining the structural relationships of destination image, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty: An integrated approach. *Tourism Management*. 2008;29(4):624-636.
18. Clawson MARION, Knetsch JL. Economics of outdoor recreation. *Natural Resources Journal*. 1966;8(13):738.
19. Clawson M, Knetsch JL. Economics of outdoor recreation. RFF Press; c2013.
20. Court D, Elzinga D, Mulder S, Vetvik OJ. The consumer decision Journey. Retrieved from http://www.mckinseyquarterly.com/The_consumerdecision_journey_2373. June 2009.
21. Cruz B, Mendelsohn J. Why social media matters to your business. Retrieved from http://www.cmbinfo.com/cmb-cms/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/Why_Social_Media_Matters_2010.pdf. 2010.
22. Dann GM. The language of tourism: A sociolinguistic perspective. Cab International; c1996.
23. Darley WK, Blankson C, Luethge DJ. Toward an integrated framework for online consumer behavior and decision-making process: A review. *Psychology & Marketing*. 2010;27(2):94-116.
24. Demystifying social media. Retrieved from http://www.mckinseyquarterly.com/Demystifying_social_media_2958.
25. Dholakia UM, Durham E. One café chain's Facebook experiment. *Harvard Business Review*. 2010;88(3):26.
26. Dudovskiy J. Consumer decision-making process: a detailed analysis. *Research Methodology*; c2013.
27. Echtner CM, Ritchie JB. The meaning and measurement of the destination image. *Journal of Tourism Studies*. 1991;2(2):2-12.
28. Edelman DC. Branding in the digital age. *Harvard Business Review*. 2010;88(12):62-69.
29. Erasmus AC, Boshoff E, Rousseau GG. Consumer decision-making models within the discipline of consumer science: A critical approach. *Journal of Consumer Sciences*; c2001. p. 29.
30. Fodness D. The impact of the family life cycle on the vacation decision-making process. *Journal of Travel Research*. 1992;31(8):8-13.
31. Fuller D, Armstrong B, Hanlan J, Wilde SJ, Mason S, Edelman JR. Destination choice-visitor behaviors in a coastal tourism destination on Australia's east coast; c2005.
32. Gartner WC. Image formation process. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*. 1994;2(2-3):191-216.
33. Gartner WB. Words lead to deeds: Towards an organizational emergence vocabulary. *Journal of Business Venturing*. 1993;8(3):231-239.
34. Goodrich JN. The relationship between preferences for and perceptions of vacation destinations: Application of a choice model. *Journal of Travel Research*. 1978;17(2):8-13.
35. Helble M, Park CY, Won HC. Can vaccination help restart tourism; c2021.
36. Holt DB. How consumers consume: A typology of consumption practices. *Journal of Consumer Research*. 1995;22(1):1-16.
37. Hudson S, Thal K. The impact of social media on the consumer decision process: Implications for tourism marketing. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*. 2013;30(1-2):156-160.
38. Hudson S, Thal K. The impact of social media on the consumer decision process: Implications for tourism marketing. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*. 2013;30(1-2):156-160.
39. Hudson S, Thal K. The impact of social media on the consumer decision process: Implications for tourism marketing. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*. 2013;30(1-2):156-160.
40. Hudson S, Huang L, Roth MS, Madden TJ. The influence of social media interactions on consumer-brand relationships: A three-country study of brand perceptions and marketing behaviors. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*. 2016;33(1):27-41.
41. Inman JJ, Winer RS, Ferraro R. The interplay among category characteristics, customer characteristics, and customer activities in in-store decision-making. *Journal of Marketing*. 2009;73(5):19-29.
42. Kacen JJ, Lee JA. The influence of culture on consumer impulsive buying behavior. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*. 2002;12(2):163-176.
43. Kotler P. A generic concept of marketing. *Marketing Management*. 1998;7(3):48.
44. Kumar GS. Vacation Decision Making Process of Domestic Family Tourists. *International Journal of Applied Engineering Research*. 2015;10(2):3857-3870.
45. Kumar GS. Vacation Decision Making Process of Domestic Family Tourists. *International Journal of Applied Engineering Research*. 2015;10(2):3857-3870.
46. Lecinski L. Winning the zero moments of truth. Retrieved from <http://www.zeromomentoftruth.com>. August 5, 2011.
47. Lee D, Kim HS, Kim JK. The impact of online brand community type on consumer's community engagement behaviors: Consumer-created vs. marketer-created online brand community in online social-networking websites. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*. 2011;14(1-2):59-63.
48. Lee JA, Kacen JJ. Cultural influences on consumer satisfaction with impulse and planned purchase decisions. *Journal of Business Research*. 2008;61(3):265-272.
49. Llach J, Marimon F, Del Mar Alonso-Almeida M, Bernardo M. Determinants of online booking loyalties for the purchasing of airline tickets. *Tourism Management*. 2013;35:23-31.
50. Litvin SW, Goh HK. Self-image congruity: A valid tourism theory? *Tourism Management*. 2002;23(1):81-83.
51. Kaplan AM, Haenlein M. Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of Social Media. *Business Horizons*. 2010;53(1):59-68.
52. Kacen JJ, Lee JA. The influence of culture on consumer impulsive buying behavior. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*. 2002;12(2):163-176.
53. Madrigal R, Kahle LR. Predicting vacation activity preferences on the basis of value-system segmentation. *Journal of Travel Research*. 1994;32(3):22-28.
54. Makudza F, Mugarisanwa C, Siziba S. The effect of social media on consumer purchase behavior in the mobile telephony industry in Zimbabwe. *Dutch Journal of Finance and Management*, 2020, 4(2).
55. Milano R, Baggio R, Piattelli R. The effects of online social media on tourism websites. In: ENTER; c2011 Jan. p. 471-483.

56. Mukherjee A, Nagabhushanam M. Role of social media in tourism marketing. *International Journal of Science and Research*. 2016;5(6):2026-2033.
57. Munyaradzi P. Social Media Impact on the Purchase Behaviour of Consumers in the Mobile Telephony Industry. *Advance Journal of Management, Accounting and Finance*, 2022, 7(2).
58. Nichols CM, Snepenger DJ. Family decision making and tourism behavior and attitudes. *Journal of Travel Research*. 1988;26(4):2-6.
59. Nichols CM, Snepenger DJ. Family decision making and tourism behavior and attitudes. *Journal of Travel Research*. 1988;26(4):2-6.
60. Pan B, MacLaurin T, Crotts JC. Travel blogs and the implications for destination marketing. *Journal of Travel Research*. 2007;46(1):35-45.
61. Parasuraman A, Zeithaml VA, Berry LL. A conceptual model of service quality and its implications for future research. *Journal of Marketing*. 1985;49(4):41-50.
62. Perrey J, Spillecke D. Retail marketing and branding: A definitive guide to maximizing ROI. John Wiley & Sons; c2011.
63. Pickett-Baker J, Ozaki R. Pro-environmental products: marketing influence on consumer purchase decision. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*. 2008;25(5):281-293.
64. Pizam A, Mansfeld Y, Chon KS. Consumer behavior in travel and tourism. Psychology Press; c1999.
65. Pütter M. The impact of social media on consumer buying intention. *Marketing*. 2017;3(1):7-13.
66. Sahin GG, Sengün G. The effects of social media on tourism marketing: a study among university students. *Management and Administrative Sciences Review*. 2015;4(5):772-786.
67. Seddighi HR, Theocharous. A model of tourism destination choice, a theoretical and empirical analysis, *Tourism Management*. 2001;13:475-487.
68. Sirakaya E, Woodside AG. Building and testing theories of decision-making by travelers. *Tourism Management*. 2005;26(6):815-832.
69. Sixt M. Social Media in the Tourism Industry: How Social Media and the Self-Congruity Theory Affect Destination Choice; cs2013.
70. Surugiu C, Surugiu M, Mazilescu R. Social Media and Destination Marketing: Today Advancements for Tourism Future. *Manager*. 2019;(29):83-90.
71. Svatosová V. Motivation of online buyer behavior. *Journal of Competitiveness*, 2013, 5(3).
72. Tasci AD, Gartner WC. Destination image and its functional relationships. *Journal of Travel Research*. 2007;45(4):413-425.
73. Tavitiyaman P, Qu H. Destination image and behavior intention of travelers to Thailand: The moderating effect of perceived risk. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*. 2013;30(3):169-185.
74. The trouble with travel distribution. Retrieved from http://www.mckinseyquarterly.com/The_trouble_with_travel_distribution.
75. Thornton PR, Shaw G, Williams AM. Tourist group holiday decision-making and behavior: The influence of children. *Tourism Management*. 1997;18(5):287-297.
76. Tussyadiah IP, Fesenmaier DR. Mediating tourist experiences: Access to places via shared videos. *Annals of Tourism Research*. 2009;36(1):24-40.
77. Van Raaij WF, Francken DA. Vacation destinations, activities, and satisfaction. *Annals of Tourism Research*. 1984;1(1):101-112.
78. Wen I. Factors affecting the online travel buying decision: a review. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*; c2009.
79. Wiedmann KP, Hennigs N, Siebels A. Measuring consumers' luxury value perception: A cross-cultural framework. *Academy of Marketing Science Review*. 2007; c2007, 1.
80. Winer RS. New communications approach in marketing: Issues and research directions. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*. 2009;23(2):108-117.
81. Yoong LC, Lian SB. Customer engagement in social media and purchase intentions in the hotel industry. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*. 2019;9(1):54-68.
82. GlobeStat. Consumer behaviour report; c2020.
83. Lilima. Marketing strategies analysis; c2020.
84. Ricardialiono. Economic trends and impacts; c2020.
85. Neal C, Quester P. Consumer behaviour: Implications for marketing strategy. Sydney: McGraw-Hill; c2006.
86. Bruner G. Marketing scales handbook. Chicago: American Marketing Association; c1993.
87. Solomon M, Bamossy G, Askegaard S, Hogg M. Consumer behaviour: A European perspective. 3rd ed. Harlow: Pearson Education; c2006.
88. Tyagi C. Consumer behavior in the digital age. New Delhi: McGraw-Hill; c2004.
89. Tyagi C. Marketing management. New Delhi: McGraw-Hill; c2004.
90. Oliver R. Satisfaction: A behavioral perspective on the consumer. 2nd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill; c2011.
91. Kahle L, Close A. Consumer behavior knowledge for effective sports and event marketing. New York: Routledge; c2006.
92. Ha J, Janda S, Muthaly S. The effect of advertising spending on brand loyalty in services. *Eur. J Mark*. 2010;44(11/12):1547-1570.
93. Kant R, Ahuja J, Singh D. Consumer behavior analysis in the hospitality industry. *Int. J Hosp. Manag*. 2010;29(3):345-355.
94. Hoyer W, Macinnis D. Consumer behavior. 5th ed. Mason: South-Western Cengage Learning; c2008.
95. Trehan H, Trehan M. Advertising and sales promotion. New Delhi: V.K. (India) Enterprises; c2011.