

Citation: Anwar, M. N., & Syed, H. R. (2023). Role of Social Media in Branding Tourism Destinations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: A Quantitative Analysis. *Global Digital & Print Media Review*, VI(II), 88-108. [https://doi.org/10.31703/gdpmr.2023\(VI-II\).08](https://doi.org/10.31703/gdpmr.2023(VI-II).08)

- Vol. VI, No. II (Spring 2023)
- Pages: 88 – 108
- p- ISSN: 2788-4988
- e-ISSN: 2788-4945

▪ URL: [http://dx.doi.org/10.31703/gdpmr.2023\(VI-II\).08](http://dx.doi.org/10.31703/gdpmr.2023(VI-II).08) ▪ DOI: 10.31703/gdpmr.2023(VI-II).08



Cite Us



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Role of Social Media in Branding Tourism Destinations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: A Quantitative Analysis

Abstract: *E-commerce has spurred digital tourism entrepreneurship. Digital tourism companies must create unique and shareable destination brands to attract customers. Scholars advocated increasing brand perceptions as value enhancers to increase destination brand equity (DBE) which has been previously overlooked in research. This study examines digital tourism entrepreneurship's digital media marketing. This study shows how companies' marketing communications boost the destination's brand and less-studied traits like digital tourism entrepreneurial trust. This study employed a quantitative or deductive method to map communicative and branding features that decrease tourist visits since previous work covers integrated marketing communication and brand equity. The study employed deductive hypotheses in a quantitative quasi-experimental research design. An online survey was conducted with 497 participants who were international travellers. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) results indicated a significant relationship between destination brand equity and visitor intention. Our study highlights the significance of social and digital media in promoting tourism through digital tourism entrepreneurs in Pakistan's lesser-known areas.*

Key Words: Social Media, Tourism, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Entrepreneurship, E-commerce

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Introduction

Social networking helps individuals focus on goals. Social media web pages, mobile apps, sales promotion websites, interactive marketing, e-word of mouth, and digital media advertising sites transmit messages. Internet and social media users trust and

accurately spread information. Mobile applications are another way to promote online. These applications effectively contact internet users and encourage tourist trips. Social media interactive marketing is another excellent approach to promoting businesses and services internationally. Management

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may have struggled with these web pages' service feedback options. Social media builds trust in products and services, encouraging tourists to visit Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Tourism depends on social and environmental conditions. "Digital Tourism Destination entrepreneurship" is a growing subject of research (Nyurenberger et al., 2022). Digital tourism destination entrepreneurship is economical, societal, and environmental (Wang et al., 2021). Many tourism companies utilize it to attract tourists. Responsible practices affect travellers' impressions of tourism brands, but little research has examined the effects of each facet of digital tourism destination entrepreneurship (Su et al., 2021). Instead, they assessed the destination's social responsibility as a one-dimensional category (typically environmental). These publications don't employ experiments like other research.

Social media has made EWOM part of customers' decision-making (Verma et al., 2021). Tourism is heavily influenced by EWOM (Erkan & Evans, 2018) and location choice (Kanje et al., 2020). EWOM of digital tourism destination entrepreneurship is becoming more important in destination choice (Kanje et al., 2020; Zhou, 2021). Modern marketing includes internet advertising. Many companies offer their items on social media. Marketers' Twitter and Facebook connections provide them with a competitive edge. Customers use social media to research and rate firms (Deng et al., 2021). The Internet and social media have boosted people's usage of EWOM to express their thoughts on various issues. EWOM is more important to Asian consumers, particularly in China and Pakistan. Marin and Nilă (2021) examined how different communication channels affect information credibility. They identified four information channels: paid (advertising), earned (news articles), shared (customer reviews), and owned (company blog). Additionally, customers trusted social media platforms the most. Customers regularly ask their colleagues about product quality (Schultz, 2020). EWOM may provide brand insights, for instance, popular e-commerce platforms like Flipkart,

Amazon, and Snapdeal offer a rating and review system. To understand what you're buying online, read the product description and EWOM. EWOM helps consumers decide whether to buy a brand by revealing its usefulness.

Pakistani consumers value word-of-mouth (EWOM) recommendations. Pakistani consumers are vocal on social media, making it harder for local e-commerce enterprises to compete. Brand equity aspects are affected when customers read a lot of trustworthy EWOM about a brand and try to understand it (Sadek et al., 2018). Brand equity connects credible EWOM to the impulse to buy in this setting. EWOM's impact on consumers' destination brand equity to make a purchase has been studied, but brand equity factors have not been examined as mediators. Some prior studies examined EWOM's impact on brands but did not include the reviews' credibility (Raji et al., 2020). Theoretical explanations for EWOM-brand relationships have been overlooked in current research. This study investigates which Aaker's brand equity characteristics mediate believable EWOM and purchase DBE. Mediation—the impact of an independent variable on a dependent variable—is a key component of this research (Goldstein & Carpenter, 2021).

The 2020 \$90 billion digital travel e-commerce industry demands this. Marketing and branding help digital tourism enterprises attract travellers. Thus, identifying unique, communicating destination branding qualities is a constant challenge. Digital tourism requires promotion. This study examines how tourism companies distribute marketing content on many digital platforms. This work may illuminate a neglected issue and examines how tourism businesses' digital marketing communication affects destination brand equity and visitor intent. Thereby, this research proposes an integrated marketing communication framework research indicates that tactical marketing communication tools can promote destination branding and brand equity. They are innovating digital tourism enterprises. It covers the seldom studied phenomena that might help new tourism

entrepreneurs sell locations utilising digital technologies like virtual reality. In conclusion, digital tourism entrepreneurs' marketing communication activities, including digital media advertising and interactive marketing, encourage tourism. How digital tourism entrepreneurs' marketing communication activities like digital media advertising or interactive marketing implicitly impact Pakistan's tourist sites' destination brand equity. Digital tourism entrepreneurs in Pakistan, a lesser-known country, use social and digital media to promote tourism.

Literature Review

Understanding Digital Entrepreneurship

The digital revolution, second to the industrial revolution, has transformed the globe (Ganichev, [2021](#)). Digital-driven entrepreneurship has helped this economy grow (Jafari-Sadeghi, [2021](#)). These technologies have changed everyday living outside the business (Lynch, [2021](#)). Digital start-ups are currently among the top enterprises due to the digital revolution. Airbnb, Uber, Apple, booking.com, and others have transformed entrepreneurship's physical and temporal bounds (Anwar et al., [2023](#)). Digital technologies are changing several businesses, from retail, travel, and lodging to entertainment, media, and advertising (Zaman et al., [2021](#)). Digital business model advancements have changed market dynamics (Hui et al., [2023](#)). E-commerce, online gaming, digital health solutions, e-learning, e-farming, and social media are new business models that challenge traditional entrepreneurship. As of November 2021, a Google search for "start an online business" yielded 10 million results. Low entrance and exit expenses make digital entrepreneurship a popular career choice. Capital, regulatory, and marketing expenses can prevent entrepreneurship (Garcia, [2020](#)). Digitalization's impact on this job choice's contextual limits is crucial since context influences entrepreneurship.

Digital technology lowers entry barriers and generates new opportunities with huge social and economic potential (Zaman et al.,

[2022](#)). Start-up costs, sunk costs, and firm formation problems have decreased. Most administrative tasks have been minimized, which require a lot of time and resources. The Internet's various administration choices make client connections and market access simpler. Customers want more informational products, which requires new business skills and a mindset. 3D printing is changing the "print sector" and giving entrepreneurs new business opportunities. Similar evidence has also been discovered in artificial intelligence, simulation, connected items, and blockchain (Cooper, [2020](#)). Given the discussion, more people may consider digital business. Due to Internet use and educational and regulatory measures, a large resource pool of informed and experienced people will establish digital enterprises.

Theoretical Framework & Hypotheses Building

Theory of CBBE

CBBE assumes that a brand's strength comes from what people have learned, experienced, seen, and heard about it through time. Thus, a brand's strength originates from its position in the target audiences' hearts and thoughts (Hodson, [2021](#)). Marketers must ensure that customers interact with products, services, and marketing campaigns to associate the brand with the desired emotions, ideas, thoughts, beliefs, perceptions, opinions, and experiences (Belanche et al., [2021](#)). Cambra-Fierro ([2021](#)) defines "customer-based brand equity" as brand awareness's unique impact on consumers' marketing responses. Customers with positive customer-based brand equity react favourably to a product and its advertising (Cambra-Fierro & J, [2021](#)). Price hikes and advertising losses may not bother customers. A corporation with strong customer-based brand equity may be more open to a new brand extension or seek it in a new distribution channel. However, imagine people respond less favourably to brand marketing than to a nameless or fake product variation. The brand has low consumer-based brand equity (Roy et al., [2022](#)). Aaker ([1996](#))

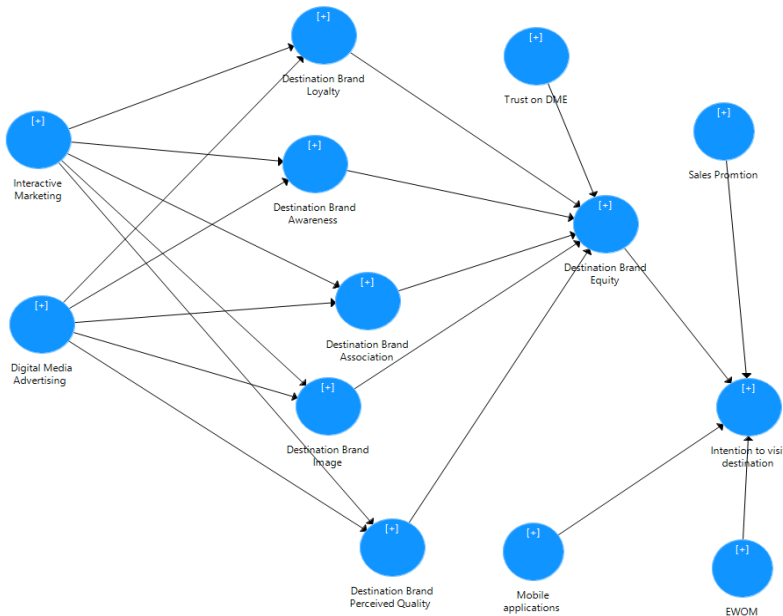
established five CBBE elements: brand loyalty, awareness, perceived quality, brand association, and brand image (Langga, 2021). Bose (2022) claimed that brand familiarity drove CBBE. Brand knowledge is customers' awareness and assessment of a brand's power, attraction, and individuality. Brand awareness and image make up brand knowledge. Brand image assesses customers' favourable and distinctive brand connections. Brand awareness is customers' ability to recognize the brand in different contexts. CBBE dimensions (Kumail, 2022).

CBBE-Social Media Word-of-Mouth Relationship, research on how social media

affects brand equity has focused on customers (Langaro, 2015). Most of this research has used different methods to examine social media users' brand equity building. Researchers are still studying how WOM affects CBBE. However, little is known about how social media WOM influences brand impression. Most social media research has examined how consumer involvement, engagement, and WOM affect CBBE dimensions (Bose, 2022). WOM evaluations on CBBE, especially for high-involvement items like car brands, have received minimal attention (Roy et al., 2022). Given the preceding considerations, the following conceptual model (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

Conceptual Model



Hypotheses Development

Destination Brand Loyalty (DBL)

Tourists' destination brand loyalty (DBL) is measured. DBL influences tourist locations (Xu, 2021). The DBL is most extreme when a person creates an emotional connection to and advocates for a region based on their own positive experience or exposure to other people's positive experiences. DBL members show their commitment to the destinations

and others by recommending them to friends. DBE thinks establishing and maintaining strong views of the image, characteristics, quality, attachments, and familiarisation may help separate it from competitors (Vinyals-Mirabent, 2019).

Consumers' attitudes toward a destination brand and their willingness to buy more determine brand loyalty (Ranjbarian & Ghaffari, 2018). These researchers related visitors' delight to positive attitude creation.

Behavioural loyalty is connected to recurring brand purchases (Tran, 2021). Loyalty is a key notion in marketing research, although destination branding is still developing (Vinyals-Mirabent, 2019). Tourism marketing study shows that brand loyalty influences tourist brand choices. Visit intention and multiple location recommendations have been used to measure venue loyalty. Brand equity comprises brand loyalty, attitude, awareness, performance, and image. Brand equity affects purchasing intentions and loyalty. Destination marketers define brand equity as quality perception, brand loyalty, and brand awareness. These traits improve DBE. Awareness and image affect a destination's brand equity (Ranjbarian & Ghaffari, 2018). Thus, the DBE study values these components highly. Hypotheses based on early prognosis:

H1: Destination brand (a) awareness, (b) image, (c) associations, (d) perceived quality, and (e) loyalty positively contribute to overall DBE.

Influence of Brand Equity on Intention to Visit a Destination

According to Ajzen and Fishbein's (1975) theory of reasoned behaviour, the purpose is a person's inclination and tendency. Thus, a person can choose an action. Purpose has been used to predict consumer behaviour in marketing literature. Travel literature (Soulard & McGehee, 2022) defined intention to visit as the possibility of visiting a destination within a certain timeframe. According to Casquero (2022), the larger an individual's objective to visit a place, the greater their favourable predisposition reaction inclination to visit. Tourist literature uses IVD to predict behaviour. Thus, multiple studies examined the IVD's influence and found many branding antecedents, such as DBE (Kumail et al., 2022) and marketing communication efforts (Schultz, 2020).

In this study, IVD is an individual's intention and predisposition to visit a certain country (e.g., Pakistan) due to brand equity, trust, and marketing communication activities. Brand equity has been found to improve performance. Academics have found many

equity factors that affect IVD, including perceived quality (Ali et al., 2021), destination associations (Vinyals-Mirabent, 2019), and destination loyalty (Ferns & Walls, 2012). Thus, DBE is crucial to IVD proliferation. Destinations, we hypothesized that brand equity improves foreign tourists' IVD. This study predicts that consumer segmentation, market potential, and tourism destination image are all benefits. Destination marketing is to build a unique, effective, and compelling branding image to attract tourists and turn them into repeat visitors (Aktan et al., 2022; Khan et al., 2022). Loyalty strategies have become popular for assessing customers' likelihood to buy more. Brand loyalty benefits tourism destinations by encouraging tourists to return or suggest the region to others. Beck's (2019) tourism study found that customer loyalty positively affects future travel intentions. Brand equity influences travel plans.

This study's hypotheses are based on prior research: (no hypothesis) Behavioral loyalty is associated with frequent visits (Liu, 2020). Brand equity, which affects marketing efficacy and profitability, has garnered attention from marketing and management experts (Deepa & Baral, 2021). Thus, Prados-Pena and del Barrio-Garcia (2021) believed brand equity would assess the destination brand's efficacy. Brand equity motivates social media users to travel (Feng, 2021). This suggests:

H2: DBE positively influences the intention to visit a destination.

Digital Media Advertising

Advertising messages can create positive brand associations and lead to valuable behavioural feedback (Raza et al., 2020). Previous research has indicated a positive correlation between advertising expenditure and various aspects of consumer perception, such as brand image, awareness, quality, and positive association (Lee & Cho, 2020). Alalwan (2018) stated that social media could be a component of globally integrated marketing communication (GIMC) in international advertising. Previous research indicates that companies implementing GIMC

are more inclined to conduct global advertising campaigns across multiple countries than those that do not integrate. The Internet has led to the widespread adoption of social media advertising by corporations and firms globally (Khan et al., 2021; Yousaf et al., 2022). Web 2.0 facilitated customer-product interaction and brand equity, enabling individual content creation, modification, and publication.

Entrepreneurs in Pakistan and other regions utilise social media advertising to promote their firms, as consumers frequently access social media for vital information. Tourism-related advertisements are predominantly featured on various social media platforms. Social media ads promote Pakistani tourist destinations to online users. Social media advertising aids brand recall and recognition among clients, particularly when they purchase or contemplate product categories (Gómez-Vega & Picazo-Tadeo, 2022; Raza et al., 2020). Advertising messages can impact the brand's image and generate positive consumer reactions. Jin (2019) found that increased spending on social media advertising is positively associated with growth in brand equity, as influenced by consumer behaviour, experience, and attitude. The study suggests that social media ads impact tourists' decisions to visit certain destinations.

H3: Digital media advertising has a positive influence on destination brand (a) awareness, (b) image, (c) associations, (d) perceived quality, and (e) loyalty.

Social Media Interactive Marketing

"Interactive marketing" uses social media to reach consumers (Raji, 2020). In commercial communication, social media's interactivity is a major benefit. Interaction distinguishes digital marketing communications from traditional ones (Ji, 2021). Wang (2021) defines interactivity as the ability to communicate and engage despite minor physical distance and time disparities. Interactive marketing lets organisations engage with customers more personally by introducing interactivity to marketing. A social media campaign is timely

and effective. Social media interaction helps firms communicate and provide a visual experience. Many companies now include social media links on their websites. Interactive marketing involves interaction, customisation, personalisation, timely information, traceability, and responsibility (Zhang, 2021). These qualities resemble social media advertising (Raza et al., 2021). Interactive marketing and DBE have rarely been linked (Ji, 2021). The researchers hypothesise:

Social media interactive marketing, stimulus-based or event-based marketing, uses both sides of communication networks to allow customers to directly connect with the company through Facebook pages or other channels (Wang, 2021). Social media marketing has transformed consumer-business interactions. Thus, Voorveld (2019) stated that DBE and social media interactive marketing are a sort of digital communication applicable to social media. Social media's key marketing advantage is interaction. Interactivity distinguishes social media marketing from traditional marketing (Schultz, 2020). Marketers may build brand-customer relationships through social media interaction. Social networking is the best interactive marketing tool since it's easy to utilise. Interactive social media marketing includes linking social media pages to company websites, providing a visual experience, and providing immediate access. Interactive marketing involves timely information interchange, interactivity, personalisation, traceability, customisation, and accountability (Kim, 2021). Recent research links DBBE to interactive marketing (Wang, 2021). The foregoing arguments suggest the following:

H4: social media interactive marketing has a positive influence on destination brand (a) awareness, (b) image, (c) associations, (d) perceived quality, and (e) loyalty.

EWOM Intention to Visit Destination

EWOM is major in holiday location selection (González-Rodríguez, 2022). Consumers

process information sequentially and concurrently, including cognitive and emotional factors (Bilal, [2022](#)). SOR implies that information is handled in order of receipt (González-Rodríguez, [2022](#)). Cognitive or emotional information-processing organisms interloop with sensory responses (Aakash & Gupta Aggarwal, [2022](#)). Leung et al. ([2022](#)) examined how social groups affect tourist DBE. Scholars started with the same ideas. Social media stimuli can influence customers' views and values, according to Bilal et al. ([2022](#)). Target demographic involvement directly affects the effect. According to the ELM model, high- and low-participation consumers may react differently to the same information sources, such as EWOM, which might affect their trip plans. These information sources may potentially influence client behaviour. Participation fosters understanding (González-Rodríguez, [2022](#)). eWOM might help tourism marketers grow. Positive eWOM strongly influences travel.

EWOM helps people choose experience-based items like tourism because they can't pre-evaluate them, and consumer-generated content influences tastes and purchases. Even first-time travellers can be influenced by EWOM (Zhou, [2021](#)). Tourists get travel information from several sources. EWOM instead (Zhou et al., [2021](#)). EWOM influences traveller preferences and boosts DBE (Kanje, [2020](#)). Aakash and Gupta Aggarwal ([2022](#)) add that EWOM influences travellers' destinations. EWOM quality makes people like the area (Verma et al., [2021](#)). Few research works have examined how EWOM affects PI, even though online communications are becoming more significant in the tourist business (Mtapuri, [2022](#); Quoquab, 2020).

Brand success depends on positive word-of-mouth; travellers often talk about their trips in person. Intention to visit is the rational evaluation of the costs/benefits of a set of alternative destinations based on external information sources like eWOM or travellers' blogs. EWOM on social media boosts hotel revenues and room bookings (Assaker & O'Connor, [2021b](#)). Thus, social media has impacted people to plan a trip. According to scholars, positive social media eWOM, like ads

and social media marketing, increases bookings and room sales (Mtapuri, [2022](#); Quoquab, 2020). Thus, social media has impacted people to plan a trip. This perspective is used to hypothesise and test this investigation.

H5: EWOM has a positive influence on the intention to visit the destination.

Trust in Digital Media Entrepreneurship and DBE

Tourism information providers' credibility boosts their influence. The mass media was expected to increase consumer value by influencing trust, morality, and attractiveness (Robson & Farquhar, [2021](#)). Cognitively and normatively specialised media impact. Cognitively specialised impact includes knowledge sharing through blogs and wikis. However, normatively specialised influence has positive and negative information about any service-related or consulting firm (Robson & Farquhar, [2021](#)).

Business websites' trust is key to company branding (Robson & Farquhar, [2021](#)). "Trust agents" develop networks and social capital for the firm through Internet media (Hafez, [2021](#)). Hafez ([2021](#)) indicates that accessing reviewer profiles as a social media approach may lower travel advice credibility and value. Due to information availability, social media can affect trust. Ibrahim & Aljarah ([2021](#)) emphasised that a well-organized message is more credible and effective. Reappearance boosts message credibility. The presenter's fluency and confidence also boosted credibility. Lou and Yuan ([2019](#)) found that communication quality affects attitude transformation. Trust moderates the relationship between brand equity and destination intention. From this standpoint, we hypothesize and test this study:

H6: Trust in digital media entrepreneurship has a positive influence on DBE.

Mobile Apps

A mobile application is software created for mobile devices, including smartphones, tablets, and digital watches (Techopedia, [2018](#)). Smartphone applications often provide

similar services to those accessed on desktop computers for the community. Mobile apps are typically compact software modules that offer limited functionality. Apple's operating system, the App Store, popularised mobile applications. It provides thousands of iPad, iPod touch, Mac, and iPhone applications.

Tourism-specific mobile applications assist tourists in navigating to their destinations optimally. Visiting an unfamiliar place can be a distressing experience. Modern technology can enhance tourists' travel experiences by providing efficient and enjoyable transportation. Various mobile applications, such as TripIt and Pakistan Tourism, assist tourists in exploring tourist destinations worldwide.

H7: Mobile applications of tourism entrepreneurs positively influence the intention to visit the destination.

Social Media Sales Promotion

Sales marketing uses several methods to urge customers to buy. Sale promotions seldom build long-term consumer relationships. Social networking is best for firm sales marketing. Social media marketing efforts benefit from user-generated and controlled communication on the Web. Through content sharing, social networking, collaborative authoring, and bookmarking, social media platforms instantly involve users in information creation and distribution. Social media boosts viral marketing by letting customers share their product reviews with a wider audience. Social marketers use appropriate social apps to promote.

Sales promotions aim to boost product sales, boost profitability, and build brand loyalty (Helmi et al., 2022). Sales promotions help purchasers make rapid decisions, leading to more frequent purchases. B2B marketers employ trade exhibits, event marketing, sponsorships, special rates, and discounts but use technology less (Ruiz-Meza et al., 2022).

Sales promotion is second only to advertising in generating sales (Chen, 2021). Sales promotion's influence on brand equity has been debated, notably from the consumer's standpoint. Sales promotion decreases brand

equity, according to several studies. A product with high brand equity shouldn't need sales promotions like discounts to move units. Price influences customers' product quality (Kushwaha & Kar, 2021). Social media and other digital marketing allow you to reach many potential customers and use various strategies, including digital self-promotional tools, product reviews, price-based promotion campaigns, loyalty programs, drop shipping incentives, and reseller promotion (Lim, 2022). Social media traffic makes digital sales promotion constant and widespread, resulting in cheaper costs and faster returns than traditional sales marketing (Lim, 2022).

Other research shows that advertising boosts brand equity. These findings imply that sales promotions may also help individuals like firms. Sales promotions' influence on a destination's brand value is unknown. Social media marketing tactics often include sales promotions (Chen, 2021). Despite this trend, little study has examined how social media sale marketing affects DBE.

H8: Social Media Sales Promotion positively influences the intention to visit the destination.

Method

This study pertains to the effectiveness of marketing communication efforts by various digital travel platforms. These mobile digital platforms primarily depend on digital resources and are utilised by digital media consumers. Online data collection was a suitable method for gathering data from participants. This study leveraged a broad participant pool and effectively gathered data from digital platforms, including social media. Previous studies have established that online data collection is reliable for gathering data from online sources. Online forms and digital crowdsourcing systems, like MTurk, may have less reliable data and lack demographic diversity compared to traditional data collection methods (Buhrmester et al., 2011). Buhrmester et al. (2011) found that digital responses met or exceeded psychometric standards associated with published research. This study suggests an online data collection method involving 497 respondents, utilising

Google Forms and the digital sphere crowdsourcing system.

Instrumentation

After conducting a literature review and operationalizing the selected constructs, this study focuses on three key elements: Digital Media Advertising (DMA), Destination Brand Image (DBI), and Destination Brand Association (DBAS). (4) DBA, which stands for Destination Brand Awareness. (5) DBL (Destination Brand Loyalty) (6) DBPQ (Destination Brand Perceived Quality) This study examines Interactive Marketing (IM), DBE (DBE), Trust in digital media entrepreneurship (TDME), and Social Media Sales Promotion (SMSP). The study measured E-Word of Mouth (E-Wom), Mobile applications (MA), and Intention to Visit Destinations (IVD). This section details the selected variables used to map communicative and branding elements influencing the intention to visit tourist places. These variables were derived from prior literature and theories, such as integrated marketing communication and brand equity, but were adapted to the context of tourism. The subsection below outlines the procedure for selecting stimuli.

Selection of Stimuli for quasi-experiment

To achieve the goals of this research, 8 stimuli were first combined. These stimuli include (1) four images of the KPK's destinations; (2) two digital media advertisements representing the fictitious travel website name; and (2) two online positive written reviews (E-WOM) of previous visitors about their experiences with the fictitious travel website name. These stimuli are specific to this research's needs based on the variables' nature and purpose. The images mostly depict the futuristic travel destinations of the various KPK tourist sites. The independent variables of this study, which the digital media advertisements were intended to represent, are the following: (1) a message promoting the region to draw tourists from abroad, (2) the capability of interactive marketing, (3) the accessibility of the mobile

application, and (4) sales promotions by a fictitious travel website. Similarly, former guests wrote favourable written reviews (E-WOM) online outlining their pleasant experiences. Following pilot research, which was largely carried out to identify the most appropriate stimuli, the six selected stimuli—detailed in this chapter's following section—were verified by professionals and academicians.

Results

Partial Least Squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM)

PLS-SEM is being employed in marketing (Sarstedt, 2014). Many researchers feel PLS-SEM delivers a more accurate structural model estimation (Purwanto & Sudargini, 2021). PLS-SEM is an alternative to CB-SEM if its distributional assumptions cannot be met. This dissertation evaluates the research model using partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) and defined analytic criteria. Specifically, these factors influenced this choice:

1. This dissertation doesn't measure model invariance. Instead, social media-induced technostress indicators are highlighted. Thus, latent variable scores are necessary to determine the relationship between LVs. (2) PLS works for large, sophisticated models with numerous latent variables (Henseler & Schubert, 2022). This thesis uses several LVs and a complex research model. This thesis uses theoretical knowledge to analyse correlations. PLS-SEM can measure residual correlations and model impact.

Partial Least Squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM), a variance-based social research method, was used because it can verify latent variables using multiple procedures to detect measurement errors, suit nested models, and predict multiple paths simultaneously. Scholars prefer PLS-SEM over regression (Hair et al., 2017). PLS-SEM also employs variance-based processing for composite models. This study employed Smart PLS.3's variance-based PLS-SEM.

We estimated PLS-SEM parameters in four phases, following the literature (Hair et al., 2017):

2. Composite construct scores
3. Indicator deletion within 10-15% (if needed for model fitness)
4. Discriminant/convergent validities and reliability estimate
5. Bootstrapping inferential analysis

PLS.3 was used to estimate measurement model fitness for six constructs: DMA, DBI, DBAS, DBA, DBL, DBPQ, IM, EWOM, TDME, DBE, and IVD. Based on fitness indices SRMR=.The PLS-SEM measurement model was satisfactory at 076, NFI=0.94, and dG =

0.38. Model fitness required deleting one TR item.

Reliability and Parameter Estimation

The study then moved on to the dependability estimate after achieving model fitness. The results of the investigation showed that all of the constructs for DMA, DBI, DBAS, DBA, DBL, DBPQ, IM, EWOM, TDME, and IVD had appropriate reliability estimates on several indices, including Dijkstra-Henseler's rho (A), Jöreskog's rho (c), and Cronbach's alpha shown in Table 1. To cross-validate the reliability estimates, we employed several reliability indices.

Table 1

Reliability Estimates Analysis

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
DBAS	0.784	0.784	0.874	0.700
DBA	0.815	0.818	0.878	0.643
DBE	0.843	0.861	0.893	0.676
DBI	0.799	0.804	0.881	0.713
DL	0.867	0.868	0.909	0.714
DBPQ	0.814	0.814	0.890	0.730
DMA	0.886	0.896	0.916	0.687
EWOM	0.732	0.755	0.849	0.653
IVD	0.822	0.829	0.894	0.737
IM	0.841	0.856	0.903	0.756
MA	0.596	0.744	0.754	0.509
SP	0.694	0.704	0.830	0.619
TDME	0.856	0.858	0.912	0.776

DBE: Destination Brand Equity, EWOM: E-word of Mouth, IVD: Intention to Visit Destinations, IM: Interactive Marketing, DMA: Digital Media Advertising, TDME: Trust in digital media entrepreneurship.

Validity Assessments

The Average Variance Extracted (from now on AVE) was measured to evaluate the convergent validity of the measurement model. According to the PLS-SEM findings, all AVE predictions for SMA, IM, EWOM, TR, DBE, and IVD constructs were within the necessary range (0.5). Table 2 also provides the loading of the indicators for the SMA, IM,

EWOM, TR, DBE, and IVD constructions. Two indications (one from DBAS and DBPQ) were removed to achieve validity.

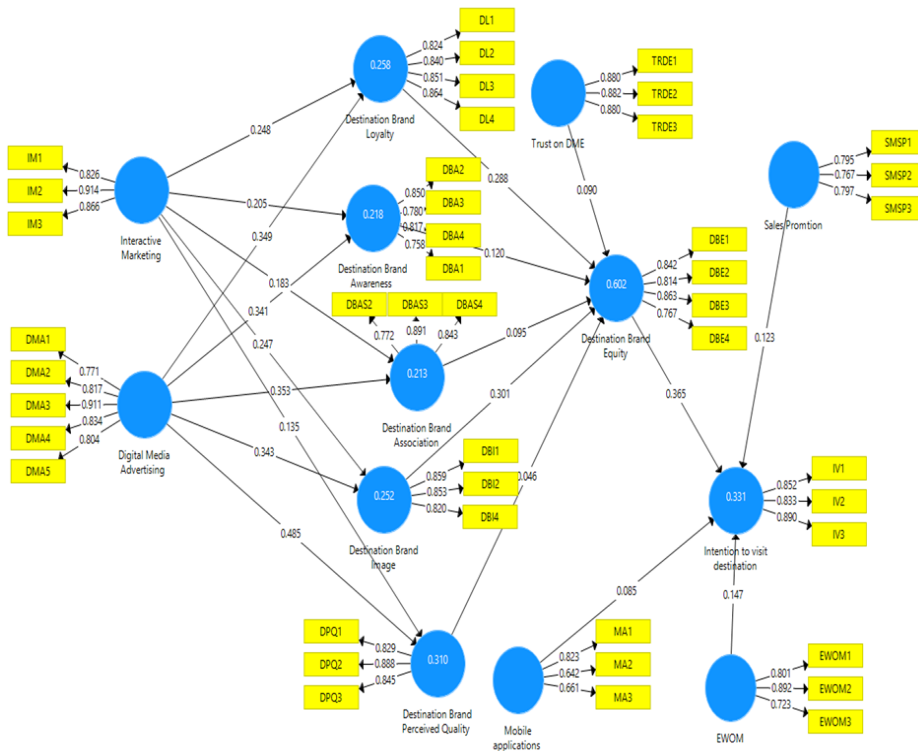
The study used the HTMT and Fornell-Larcker criterion-based (henceforth FLC) approach with bootstrapping to determine the validity. The discriminant and convergent validity was assessed using the HTMT and FLC approach (Hair et al., 2017). The HTMT readings were determined to be below the 0.9 upper limits.

Table 2

Discriminant Validity FLC.

FLC	DBAS	DBA	DBE	DBI	DBL	DBPQ	DMA	EWOM	IV	IM	MA	SP	TDME
DBAS	0.83												
DBA	0.37	0.80											
DBE	0.42	0.59	0.82										
DBI	0.37	0.65	0.74	0.84									
DBL	0.36	0.66	0.74	0.96	0.84								
DBPQ	0.62	0.48	0.47	0.47	0.45	0.85							
DMA	0.43	0.42	0.44	0.44	0.45	0.54	0.82						
EWOM	0.44	0.30	0.35	0.32	0.32	0.42	0.46	0.81					
IVD	0.29	0.49	0.52	0.57	0.56	0.36	0.31	0.37	0.85				
IM	0.33	0.35	0.38	0.39	0.39	0.34	0.43	0.46	0.37	0.86			
MA	0.38	0.53	0.60	0.67	0.75	0.45	0.71	0.38	0.42	0.44	0.71		
SP	0.49	0.40	0.44	0.41	0.42	0.49	0.63	0.51	0.40	0.48	0.50	0.78	
TDME	0.370	0.29	0.35	0.31	0.30	0.37	0.30	0.59	0.39	0.33	0.25	0.39	0.88

Figure 2



Similarly, the three conditions recommended in the literature were used to assess the convergent validity:

1. Indicator factor loadings must be more than 0.70.
2. All variables' composite reliability (CR) must be greater than 0.7.

3. All variables' average extracted variances (AVE) must exceed 0.5.

The outcomes shown in Tables 2 and 3 (also see picture 1) showed that good convergent and discriminant validity was attained after removing two items.

Table 3

Discriminant Validity FLC.

HTMT	DBAS	DBA	DBE	DBI	DBL	DBPQ	DMA	EWOM	IV	IM	MA	SP	TDME
DBAS	1												
DBA	0.46	1											
DBE	0.50	0.68	1										
DBI	0.46	0.81	0.47	1									
DBL	0.43	0.79	0.83	0.35	1								
DBPQ	0.77	0.59	0.55	0.58	0.54	1							
DMA	0.51	0.49	0.50	0.52	0.51	0.63	1						
EWOM	0.56	0.38	0.42	0.40	0.38	0.53	0.56	1					
IVD	0.36	0.59	0.61	0.70	0.66	0.43	0.36	0.47	1				
IM	0.41	0.47	0.43	0.46	0.45	0.40	0.48	0.53	0.42	1			
MA	0.57	0.66	0.74	0.82	0.62	0.66	0.43	0.61	0.51	0.59	1		
SP	0.64	0.52	0.55	0.54	0.53	0.64	0.78	0.70	0.52	0.62	0.79	1	
TDME	0.45	0.34	0.41	0.37	0.33	0.44	0.34	0.75	0.46	0.39	0.36	0.51	1

Hypothesis Testing

This study tested 18 hypotheses in the order listed below: Five hypotheses (H1a to H1e) propose that the destination brand has a direct impact on DBE, namely on (1) awareness, (2) image, (3) associations, (4) perceived quality,

and (5) loyalty. One theory is that H2 uses the DBE's direct effect on IVD. In addition, five hypotheses (H3a to H3e) propose that DMA directly affects the destination brand in the following ways: (1) awareness; (2) image; (3) associations; (4) perceived quality; and (5) loyalty.

Table 4

Path Analysis

Paths	β	T Statistics	P Values	Hypotheses
DBA -> DBE	0.120	3.987	0.000	H1(a) Supported
DBI -> DBE	0.301	3.848	0.007	H1(b) Supported
DBAS -> DBE	0.095	2.779	0.036	H1(c) Supported
DBPQ -> DBE	0.046	0.247	0.805	H1(d) Not Supported
DL -> DBE	0.288	13.176	0.000	H1(e) Supported
DBE -> IVD	0.365	11.870	0.000	H2 Supported
DMA -> DBA	0.341	6.320	0.000	H3(a) Supported
DMA -> DBI	0.343	13.380	0.000	H3(b) Supported
DMA -> DBAS	0.353	5.950	0.000	H3(c) Supported
DMA -> DBPQ	0.485	8.985	0.000	H3(d) Supported
DMA -> DBL	0.349	6.910	0.000	H3(e) Supported
IM -> DBA	0.205	4.580	0.000	H4(b) Supported
IM -> DBI	0.247	5.469	0.000	H4(b) Supported
IM -> DBAS	0.183	3.082	0.002	H4(c) Supported
IM -> DBPQ	0.135	2.484	0.013	H4(d) Supported
IM -> DBL	0.248	5.124	0.000	H4(e) Supported
EWOM -> IVD	0.147	4.852	0.000	H5 Supported
Trust in DME -> DBE	0.090	2.208	0.028	H6 Supported
MA -> IVD	0.085	2.415	0.052	H7 Supported
SMS -> IVD	0.123	2.166	0.031	H8 Supported

Similarly, five hypotheses (H4a to H5e) propose that IM will directly impact the destination brand's awareness, image, associations, perceived quality, and loyalty.

According to one theory, H5, the EWOM directly impacts IVD. Finally, H6 examines TDME's direct effect on DBE. Due to the complexity of this model, PLS 3.2 used the

PLS-SEM approach to run a structural model to verify the hypotheses via bootstrapping. The path analysis showed that destination brand awareness, image, associations, and loyalty predict the DBE ($\beta = 0.120$, $\beta = 0.301$, $\beta = 0.095$, $\beta = 0.288$). H1(d)'s DBPQ-DBE relationship was negligible ($\beta = 0.046$ and $p=0.805$). H1e was rejected (Table 5).

The path analysis showed that DMA predicts destination brand (1) awareness, (2) image, (3) associations, (4) perceived quality, and (5) loyalty, with ($\beta = 0.341$, $\beta = 0.343$, $\beta = 0.353$, $\beta = 0.485$, $\beta = 0.349$ and p was equal or below 0.05 and H3(a) to H3(e) accepted. IM

predicts destination brand awareness, image, associations, perceived quality, and loyalty, respectively, with ($\beta = 0.205$, $\beta = 0.247$, $\beta = 0.183$, $\beta = 0.135$, $\beta = 0.248$, and $p>0.05$). H4(a)-H4(e) were approved. H5 was chosen since the consumer engagement component EWOM also predicts IVD ($\beta = 0.147$ and $p>0.05$). TDME predicted the DBE ($\beta = 0.89$ and $p>0.02$), confirming H6. MA also predicted the IVD ($\beta = 0.85$ and $p>0.05$), hence H7 was approved. Finally, SMPS predicted the IVD ($\beta = 0.123$ and $p>0.03$), confirming H8. In IVD, a rational ($R^2 = 0.331$) retrieved 33.1% of the variance, while in DBE, over 60.2% (see Table).

Figure 3
Structural Model

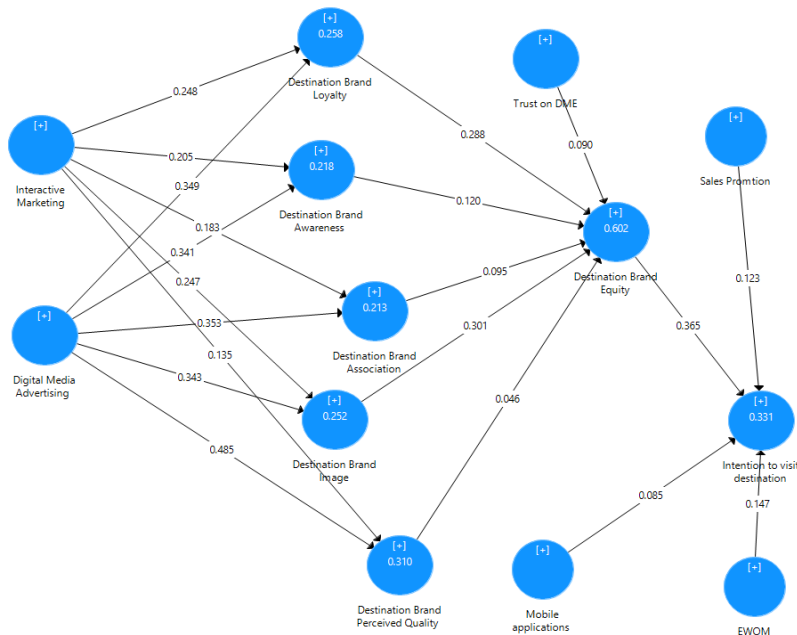


Table 5
R Square

Dependent Variables	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Destination Brand Association	0.213	0.210
Destination Brand Awareness	0.218	0.215
Destination Brand Equity	0.602	0.597
Destination Brand Image	0.252	0.249
Destination Brand Loyalty	0.258	0.255
Destination Brand Perceived Quality	0.310	0.308
Intention to visit the destination	0.331	0.326

Discussion and Conclusion

New tourist company websites have recently emerged in developing nations like Pakistan. These websites offer valuable services to clients that are engaging. Many of these businesses are new to the tourism e-commerce industry, and most tourist destinations are currently less well-known (Ingrassia et al., 2022). The study topics were conceptualised from a digital technology perspective, leading to a revised understanding of how DTE founders initiate and pursue new ventures, owing to the unique characteristics of digital technologies (Opute et al., 2020). Opute et al. (2020) suggest that digital technologies are interconnected with society and materiality, implying that entrepreneurs are closely linked to the digital technologies examined in our research. Integrating physical and digital resources and skills facilitates a more flexible entrepreneurial process, even in the context of highly digitised goods and services. Elia et al. (2020) found that incorporating digital elements in marketing communication activities by tourism entrepreneurs can enhance the perception of the destination, resulting in a higher degree of DBE, supporting hypotheses H3 and H4. We posit that future studies will be grounded in the socio-material nature of digital technologies through the digital technology approach.

The study's findings indicate that marketing communication activities significantly influence the destination brand's awareness, image, associations, perceived quality, and loyalty, ultimately resulting in a higher degree of Destination Brand Equity ($R^2 = 0.58$). The study indicates that enhancing the perception of trust in a firm's digital practices can further improve the DBE. Newcomers in the digital tourism industry should prioritise establishing credibility and employing advanced marketing communication strategies.

The impact of context on digital entrepreneurship is demonstrated by the role of DBE in initiating and facilitating entrepreneurial endeavours and establishing the infrastructure for promoting brand

recognition and destination brand image (Khan et al., 2022). Brand equity significantly influences digital entrepreneurs' inclination to visit a destination, enabling them to perceive the context as either an asset or a hindrance, thereby impacting the digital tourism entrepreneurship (DTE) they generate. Alford and Jones (2020) assert that resources and DTE skills are equally crucial for enabling tourist organisations to explore new opportunities in dynamic circumstances. This data supports the assertion. Brand equity and digitalization competencies are gaining importance in Pakistan, comparable to entrepreneurship competencies.

Digital technology offers immense potential for developing novel business models. Digital entrepreneurship entails leveraging novel media and internet technologies to recognise and exploit commercial prospects. According to Mubarak et al. (2021), a creative and innovative mindset is necessary to recognise the possibility of developing and providing new products and services using modern digital tools and platforms. Technology-enabled entrepreneurship utilises technology to expand businesses and access customers beyond traditional means. Digital entrepreneurs can generate substantial value and drive meaningful change by proactively adopting and leveraging digital advancements. (Khan et al., 2022).

Traditional and digital entrepreneurship share similarities in identifying business opportunities, creating innovative solutions, and successfully introducing products or services. Both types of entrepreneurship necessitate a blend of inventiveness, tactical reasoning, and commercial expertise to transform concepts into prosperous enterprises that can stimulate economic development and enhance individuals' well-being. Digital entrepreneurship can achieve greater impact and foster innovation and growth by utilising advanced technology and staying up-to-date (Goduscheit et al., 2021).

The tourism industry heavily depends on modern technologies to maximise the benefits of tourism promotion. Technological

advancements have contributed significantly to the sector's expansion in recent years, serving as a means of development. The tourism industry has been significantly impacted by innovation. This study's results suggest that innovative technology is crucial in tourism. It is crucial to anticipate the future. Implementing robotics in the hospitality

industry is anticipated to be a significant development. Further research is necessary to investigate the development of start-ups utilising robots in the tourism industry. Furthermore, reviewing additional case studies pertaining to successful start-up development would be prudent.

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