
**THE IMPACT OF PROMOTING BANGLADESH TOURISM THROUGH
SOCIAL MEDIA: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES AND EMPIRICAL
EVIDENCE**

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Abstract

The use of social media has engendered a new era throughout the globe and has now turned into a significant aspect of an individual's everyday life. The tourism industry is not an exception to that. Thereby it has become vital to examine the impact of promoting Bangladesh tourism through social media. The objective of this study is to measure the impact of social media-based marketing strategies for promoting Bangladesh Tourism. The paper highlighted the problems and prospects of using social media as a promotional tool in advocating the potentiality of Bangladesh in the tourism industry. It is assumed that the findings and analysis of this study would be appropriate for the researchers, academicians, government authorities, tourism businesses, politicians, and all the other stakeholders, etc. to understand the importance of employing social media platforms to introduce Bangladesh as one of the worth visiting tourist destinations. The paper concluded with some strategic guidelines regarding the use of social media as a promotional tool in near future.

Keywords: Tourism Industry, Tourist Destination, Social Media, Promotional Tool, Bangladesh.

1. Introduction

Tourism industry is gaining importance all over the world. In Bangladesh, tourism is a developing foreign currency earner. In 2010, it was forecasted by World Tourism Organization that the total world tourist arrivals will be 1,006.4 million and it will increase to 1,561.1 million in 2020. Also as per World Trade Organization (WTO) the earnings from tourism will rise to US\$ 2 trillion a year by 2020 (Global World, 2020). In fact the contribution of tourism industry of Bangladesh in the economic development of the country as a whole is incredible. Bangladesh is a developing country in Asia, holding high potentiality for tourism. There are hills, vales, deep and mangrove forests, rivers and the longest beach in the world. In this country, the scope of nature based tourism, research based tourism, culture based tourism and eco-tourism is quite evident (Ahmmmed, 2013). In today's world of digitalization, internet has an essential impact on tourism marketing also as the real business behind travel is information (Pollock, 1995). Digital technologies are a crucial part of modern life. Consumers' lives, in today's ever-changing world, are inextricably intertwined with digital technologies. There may be hardly any part of our life that has not been touched by technology. In the last few decades, there is a shift in our life from "bricks" to "clicks", a transition from analog or physical dimension to the digital world.

Increasing technological advancements, lifestyle changes, and growing consumer demands are now driving the worldwide application of social media platforms. Bangladesh is no exception in this regard. On its way to becoming "Digital Bangladesh", this country had 66.44 million internet users, 36 million social media users, and 163 million mobile connections in January 2020 (Kemp, 2020). The country has witnessed more than twice the number of internet subscribers in the last five years (BTRC, 2020). Communication network has become more efficient and informative with the use of the internet. As smartphones and internet connectivity have become more available, people in Bangladesh are now progressively utilizing social media platforms. The social media has now proved to be a major communication vehicle that spread across the region like wildfire. The social media has not only changed the face of politics but also has a major influence on the world of travel and tourism. There can be little doubt that the explosion of social media impacts every form of business including the world of tourism. Social media such as Facebook, Instagram, and Myspace, provide instant ways to reach thousands or millions of people, Twitter is a fast way to get a few words out, and social media, such as LinkedIn connect people interested in business relationships. The social media allow people to speak about great and not so great experiences, to become instant critiques and via YouTube to even become instant stars. In the world of tourism, people now use social media platforms to research tourist destinations and trips, take precise decisions about their travels and share their personal experiences of a particular hotel, restaurant, or airline. As the competition in the global tourism market is rising day by day, tourism operators are bound to investment more in promotion, resources, knowledge and quality in order to achieve satisfactory growth. As people are getting more accustomed to social media platforms, it's a great opportunity for tourism organizations to use social media platforms to spread essential information about the distinctive features and attributes, and services of a tourist destination not only rapidly but also at a lower cost. Besides, social media helps build awareness, increase destination loyalty, allow flexibility of messages, ensure speedy information transfer and retrieval, and improve interactive relationships. Tourism entities, be they attractions, hotels, transportation systems, restaurants or communities may use social media as a personalized form of advertising. Hence it's evident that combining social media platforms and tourism marketing will surely prompt astounding outcomes for tourism operators and will help them to respond to the challenges of global competition.

The initial section of the paper explains the social media platforms, the use of social media platforms in Bangladesh, how the social media platforms are being used as a promotional tool in the tourism industry, and the level of impact that social media has as a promotional tool. The literature review section then discusses the process of employing social media platforms in the promotion of Bangladesh as a tourist destination and the current condition of Bangladesh as a tourist destination. Thereafter, the research methodology section describes the data collection method and the findings and analysis section presents the main ideas derived from the results and their implications for management. The final part of the part describes the limitations of the study and suggests the future scope of research to engender this rising field.

Overall, this paper contributes to the existing body of knowledge by clarifying how social media platforms have significantly affected tourism businesses mainly through enabling new marketing strategies.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Even though the use of social media as a promotional tool is highly connected with the promotion of Bangladesh as a tourist destination, a lot of hindrances are affecting the relationship. It has been identified that even though the social media-based promotional initiatives are offering potential benefits, tourism companies in Bangladesh adopt these initiatives on a very limited scale. Also, some of the tourism companies are uncomfortable with the integration of social media with tourism services and prefer to remain conventional promotional activities' followers (Martins, Oliveira & Popovic, 2013). The time has come that the adoption of social media-based promotional initiatives must be emphasized by both public and private tourism firms. The high acceptance and adoption rate of the social media platforms by the customer urges tourism companies in Bangladesh to promote Bangladesh as a tourist destination through social media (Moorthy & Pradeepa, 2014). In terms of increasing customer awareness, information sharing, opinion formation, and evaluating experiences, social media has become a significant push for consumers (Mangold & Faulds, 2009). Faced with this problem, the need to analyze and see if the use of social media can help to promote Bangladesh as a tourist destination has been detected. However, the use of social networks as promotional tools is indispensable in this modern tourism era (Desmal. J.A, 2017). Hence, the impact of using social media platforms in promoting Bangladesh as a tourist destination has been studied in this paper. The importance attached by tourists for different features of social media was revealed by the analysis and thus the findings can be considered as an important source of information for tourism companies to uplift Bangladesh as a tourist destination. As the present study attempts to explore the impact of social media in promoting Bangladesh as a tourist destination, it will surely be beneficial for the present-day tourism industry in Bangladesh. The potentiality of Bangladesh as a tourist destination is huge and the appropriate use of social media as a promotional tool can elevate Bangladesh to a new level. Therefore, an attempt to explore the impact of using social media as a promotional tool in promoting Bangladesh as a tourist destination is felt needed by the authors.

1.2 Importance of the Problem

Even though social media has been a trending concept in Bangladesh, little is known regarding the impact of the application of social media platforms in promoting Bangladesh as a tourist destination. Therefore, it is crucial for practitioners and academics to more readily comprehend this fact. There is still no comprehensive study on the social media-based promotion of Bangladesh as a tourist destination. The literature on the tourism industry diverges in its focus. While the majority of literature analyzes the impact of this sector on the growth of the economy, others have analyzed the most efficient marketing methods. Some authors have examined the level of customer satisfaction. Some papers have tried to explore the causes and solutions of the management problems of the tourism business in Bangladesh (Tulim, 2014). Some studies have discussed the current growth and development of the tourism industry (Parveen, 2013). Another area of research has studied the motivation and satisfaction dimensions of sightseeing tourists (Dunn & Iso-Ahola, 1991). The use of search engines, on-line sources, and social media by travelers when evaluating a destination has also been studied (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). Hence, this study will contribute to filling the gap of current knowledge on the impact of using social

media as a promotional tool in promoting Bangladesh as a tourist destination. This study will also help envisage future researchers to undertake further intensive and conclusive research on how the social media platforms will help promote Bangladesh as a tourist destination in a cost-effective way in comparison to other forms of traditional promotional tools. An evaluation of the factors that influence the performance of social media platforms can also be done based on this study. The findings, limitations, and recommendations incorporated in this study are anticipated to help the policy-planners of the Bangladesh tourism industry to make strategic and effective decisions in this regard.

1.3 Relevant Scholarship

Tourism is a mixture of activities through which tourists acquire gratification during their spare-time. The passion for visualizing the beauty of the world and gaining new experiences are the key motivators of traveling.

Tourism has become one of the key players in international trade, and for many developing countries, it is one of the main income sources (UNWTO, 2015). There is a close connection between modern tourism and socio-economic progress. Tourism contributes to the socio-economic development of a country by providing social benefits, generating employment opportunities, attracting foreign investment, and increasing infrastructure development. In fact, for many developing countries like Bangladesh, it is the most viable and sustainable economic development possibility (Altaee, H., Tofiq, A.M., & Jamel, M.M., 2017).

Tourism is an economic sector which creates additional employment opportunities by supplying the tourism products and services both directly and indirectly. Tourism is an element of community enrichment and cultural incorporation. Also, tourism can also contribute to the preservation of the natural environment by protecting green and natural areas (Nazrul, 2009 & Zaei&Zaei, 2013).

The enormous natural beauty of Bangladesh has made it a common visitor place. The tourism industry of Bangladesh consists of the precious natural and cultural heritage of the country. Every year a lot of nature lovers from all over the world visit here. In fact, for Bangladesh, archaeological and chronological tourism, being the main portion of the larger tourism business, contribute most to total tourism earnings. Tourists appreciate the archaeological and chronological sites along with the scenic beauty of the country (Chowdhury & Ahmed, 2015). Bangladesh is a country surrounded by rivers, coasts, and beaches, hills and mountains, archaeological sites, religious places, forests, waterfalls, tea gardens, etc. To enjoy this beauty, every year around six-lakh tourists visit Bangladesh (Roy & Roy, 2015).

In the year 2019, the contribution of travel and tourism to GDP (% of GDP) for Bangladesh was 4.4 %. Even though the contribution of travel and tourism to GDP has swung substantially in recent years, the growth is visible through the 2000 - 2019 period ending at 4.4 % in 2019 (Knoema, 2020).

In Bangladesh, there is a positive trend in tourist arrivals and foreign earnings and to increase this trend to a higher level, appropriate promotional measures must be adopted by tourism businesses. To upgrade the quality of the promotional materials, creative people need to be employed and proper training should be given (Masud, 2015)

The tourism industry in Bangladesh plays a vital role in the socio-economic development of the country through GDP contribution, employment generation, foreign currency earnings, infrastructure development, investment opportunities, poverty alleviation, government earnings, and cultural development (Redwan, 2014).

As Bangladesh is a tourism-friendly nation, the government should subtly monitor the factors related to the growth of the tourism sector in Bangladesh and renew the tourism policy conforming to the new national financial, social, environmental policies (Masud, 2015).

To fully explore the potentiality of Bangladesh as a tourist destination and introduce it as a significant heritage intention in the world, proper promotion of the features of Bangladesh should be initiated (Hasan & Jobaid, 2014)

Different media such as newspapers, magazines, television, and radio, etc., along with some of the popular social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, Blog, and YouTube are being used by the tourists to search for information about the tourism destinations.

A set of internet-based applications on which Web 2.0 is being used as ideological and technological platforms for evolution and that allow users to create and exchange user-generated content is known as social media (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). In more simple words, internet applications that enable their users to create, share, and consume Consumer-Generated content are referred to as social media (Lange-Faria & Elliot, 2012). It is impossible to deny that the most popular, cheapest, and dynamic version of communication is social media. (Sultana.S & Shil.M, 2019).

Online communications that use special techniques involving participation, conversation, sharing, collaboration, and linkage are known as social media platforms (Dominick, 2012)

There is a total of nine different categories of social media which include (1) social networking sites (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.); (2) social news sites (Digg, Reddit, etc.); (3) social bookmarking sites (Delicious, Magnolia, etc.); (4) social sharing sites (YouTube, Flickr, etc.); (5) social events sites (Eventful, Meetup and Upcoming); (6) Microblogging (Twitter); (7) Wikis (Wikipedia); (8) Blogs; and (9) Forums and message boards (Evans, 2010). It has been reported that in each second, 510,000 comments are posted, 293,000 statuses are updated, and 136,000 photos are uploaded on Facebook. Over 40,000 search queries per second are being processed by Google around and around 6,000 tweets per second are being processed by Twitter. (Tiago et al., 2015).

The internet has always been considered an ideal promotional tool for the tourism industry and the internet has changed the way tourism business operations are being operated (Liu, 2000). Activities which are used to communicate the products or services and its merits to target customers and persuade them to buy are known as promotion. It consists of company messages designed to stimulate awareness of, interest in, and purchase of its various products and services. Companies use various promotional tools such as advertising, sales promotion, salespeople, the internet, and public relations to disseminate messages designed to attract attention and interest. (Kotler, 2019)

The accurate blend of advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations, and direct marketing tools that the company uses to pursue marketing objectives is known as the promotion

mix. If effectively employed and communicated, promotional activities can spread awareness about a destination's existence, its distinctive features, and how a person can experience it to the highest level of satisfaction. Promotional activities have been reported to have a positive impact on customer satisfaction (Hossain & Khan, 2018).

As a promotional tool, social media is playing both an active and passive role. In the passive approach, social media is being utilized as a potential source of customer's voice (Anderson, 2007). Whereas the active approach is social media is being utilized as communication tools, direct sales, customer acquisition, and customer retention (Bryan et al., 2007).

Tourism marketing is an integrated effort to satisfy tourists by ensuring the best possible services available for them (Musa, 2013). Also, a tool that converts potential tourists into actual tourists and contributes to demand generation and expansion of tourism businesses is known as tourism marketing (Sultana, 2016)

Social media platforms play a vital role in sharing information about goods and services in every industry. Especially small firms in the tourism industry are being benefited most by the social media platforms as these platforms are both time and cost-efficient. Bangladesh's tourism industry is no exception to this. Perhaps Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube are the best known and effective social media platforms for marketing in the tourism and hospitality industry. (ALSarayreh et al., 2011).

The increasing popularity of social branding has made social networking sites a global phenomenon. Social networking sites not only allow its users to connect with people all over the world but also help different businesses to provide low cost, but effective customer care and support. Tourism businesses can generate two-way communication with their customers through social media platforms and motivate them to share their travel experience and information with the world in a faster and more cost efficient way. Customers on the other hand utilize the social media platforms as a research tool in choosing their next vacation destination and getting more ideas about the location. There was a time when social networking sites were used only for entertainment purposes, however, the rise in the use of the Internet and internet-based applications over the past few years has transformed the way people communicate with each other, mainly in the hospitality and tourism industries (Assenov & Khurana, 2012; Clark & Roberts, 2010).

Popular social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest, and LinkedIn allow their users to connect globally and most importantly at free of cost by sharing posts, commenting on posts and also replying to the comments, uploading photos, chatting, and so on. These features help companies to get an authentic and quick response from the customers. Most of the companies now use advertisements on social networking sites as online advertisements appear to be more reliable than advertisements from mass media like televisions, radio, newspaper, and magazines. It has been reported that customers are more likely to buy products recommended by people who have already used the product rather than a search. As per the researchers, this strategy can also be implemented in the tourism industry (Manap & Adzharudin, 2013). Satisfied tourists are more likely to revisit the destination and spread positive word of mouth which ultimately helps the tourism business to be successful (Bhat & Qadir, 2013).

Social media platforms help the tourism business to survive and grow. It is the best and cheapest way to promote business. Customer feedback can help tourism businesses to improve their products and services. Tourism businesses can also develop new services, harvest customer ideas, opinions, and insights through social media platforms. Customers can get to know about the new products and offers through E-Newsletters and blogging. If properly utilized social media platforms can be a new route for the tourism businesses for attracting new customers and retaining the previous ones. In the tourism business, Bangladesh is considered to be an attractive market, but unfortunately, most of the tourism companies in Bangladesh employ traditional promotional strategies. But to keep pace with this era where almost everyone is dependent on the internet and social media, it has now become necessary for the tourism companies to cope-up with the technology-based customers (Rahman. T.M 2016).

Social media is not only an online distribution channel, but also an effective tool to perform service recovery, develop customer relationships, and build brand loyalty within the community. If effectively used, social media could help a business to harness the power of the brand advocates, and obtain both strategic and operational benefits ("Meet the Tweet," 2009; Palmer & Koenig-Lewis, 2009).

Information technologies allow tourists to instantly share their memorable tourism experiences on social media during the timespan of a trip (Munar & Jacobsen, 2014).

People enjoy sharing both positive and negative travel experiences throughout the pre-trip, during-trip, and post-trip stages (Jung & Cho, 2015). When people plan a trip or make a hotel or restaurant reservation, they are highly dependent on social media reviews (Jeong & Jang 2011; Kim, Mattila, & Baloglu 2011). Furthermore, when it comes to reliable information, tourists trust the messages and comments posted by general people on social media more than the reviews of the actual travel agents (Pantelidis, 2010).

Social media has transformed the communication and promotional ways of the tourist companies, which are also being utilized by the tourists while selecting their tourist destinations and making the final decision.

In essence, tourism marketing has been reconstructed through the use of social media by the hospitality and travel sectors. Accordingly, the tourists' potential destination search process greatly depends on how tourism companies are using social media such as Facebook Instagram, Snapchat, and Twitter, etc. to influence the destination choice of the tourists. (Asongu.S and Odhiambo. M.N, 2018)

In the last few decades, the growth of social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram has been incredible. The transition of these platforms from a basic online tool to content-sharing media is praiseworthy. (Singh, Lehnert & Bostick, 2012). As per the statistics, in January 2015 globally there were 2.078 billion active social media accounts, among which a total of 1.4 billion people were Facebook users (Kemp, 2015; Statista, 2015). Social media platforms are now being more preferred than traditional information sources by tourists (Lyu and Wang, 2015). It has also been found out that the influence of social media on the travel industry is tremendous (Fotis, Buhalis & Rossides, 2011; Hays, Page & Buhalis, 2013; Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). The role of social media in distributing travel-related information can no longer be ignored by tourism marketers (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). The rising popularity of

social media has forced many tourism organizations such as hotels, airline companies, and travel agencies to employ social media as one of their important marketing and communication strategies (Sahin & Segun, 2015).

At present, the major social networking websites are Facebook, LinkedIn, MySpace, blogs, YouTube, Scribd, Flickr, microblogs, Twitter, collaborative projects Wikipedia, Wikitravel, and consumer review and rating sites such as Trip Advisor (Fotis et al., 2012). It has been reported that TripAdvisor which is a popular rating site for visitors has a broad-spectrum influence on the tourism industry. It is one of the most reliable sources for visitors and every month about 50 million visitors visit this site to get authentic travel information. With million reviews and opinions posted on a site like TripAdvisor and millions of active Facebook users on posting updates and sharing images, the tourism industry is being dominated by social media (HospitalityNet, 2015)

There is a profound implication of social media in the hospitality and tourism industry. One of the primary features of social media is that it allows information sharing among people from different parts of the world. This feature is perfectly aligned with the travelers' needs. The intangible and ossified nature of the travel products reinforces the consumers' need for information and social media platforms provide consumers with unfiltered information (O'Connor, 2008).

It has also been identified that there are both positive and negative influences of social media on the tourism sector. The young generation often takes their travel decisions based on the comments and personal experiences of other users on social media (Sahin & Segun, 2015). The influence of word-of-mouth to spread opinions and recommendations is quite intense in the tourism industry. It has been reported that many people have even changed their travel plans based on the information they got over social media. Surprisingly, some of the Facebook users mentioned that they took a vacation after seeing the photos of their friends. (Bennett, 2012)

On the other hand, if the travelers notice any negative comments or experiences of others on social media, they do not even hesitate to change the destination. Hence the employment of social media is not only limited to strategic decision making but also as a sharp sword for marketing (Karim. Z, 2019)

It has now become ineluctable for the tourism companies to adapt to the demands of tech-savvy consumers. In the hospitality and tourism industry, the popularity of social branding strategy is increasing day by day as it is one of the quick and efficient ways to connect with the customers and employees at the same time (Rahman, 2016)

1.4 Research objectives

The primary objective of this paper is to determine the impact of promoting Bangladesh tourism through social media.

The specific objectives of this study are:

1. To explore the nature and extent of the usages of different social media platforms by the Bangladesh tourism industry to promote Bangladesh as a tourist destination.

2. To set guidelines for effective promotion of Bangladesh as a tourist destination through social media.
3. To find out the problem and prospect of using social media as a promotional tool in the tourism industry of Bangladesh.
4. To suggest social media-based promotion strategies for the tourism industry in Bangladesh.

1.4 Hypotheses Formulation

Hypotheses have been developed to analyze the impact of social media as a promotional tool and a descriptive research approach has been used. The following hypotheses have been developed

Hypothesis (1):

H_0 : Social media promotion can play good role in tourist destination promotion.

H_1 : Social media promotion cannot play good role in tourist destination promotion.

2. Method

The present research is quantitative nature. Quantitative research is the collection of data that includes larger, more respondent's samples and numerical calculation of results. The study designs used in the study are descriptive research design. With an emphasis on descriptive type, in the data analysis part of the research, information is provided descriptively with relevant figures and statistics. Information used to prepare this paper has been collected from both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources have provided the study with reliable data and information relating to the topic. On the other hand, the secondary sources have been an indispensable source of information regarding the historical background of the social media role on tourist destination promotion. The sample selection at this stage has been done by following a non-probability convenience sampling technique to select the population elements according to the researchers' convenience (Malhotra, 2010).

Primary data have been collected employing a survey, using self-administered questionnaires distributed to the respondent through Google Form. As people are now more available online. So here, Google Form has been used to conduct online survey. The questionnaires included questions concerning the socio-economic profile of the Respondent (e.g. name, age, gender, nationality, Occupation, Family income) as well as their opinion regarding social media uses of tourists and its promotional impact. Questions regarding importance are asked to the respondents through a question in the Likert Scale using strongly agree to strongly disagree. (1= strongly agree, 2= Agree, 3= Neutral, 4= Disagree, 5= Strongly Disagree). All the questions were close ended.

Data analysis has been done quantitatively. To analyze the data collected through questionnaires, statistical software of SPSS has been used widely. Appropriate statistical analyses such as correlation, descriptive, regression model-fit were used to satisfy the major objectives. Highlights of some data were presented in tables.

3. Results

Here the study has tried to find out the correlation between social media marketing for tourist destination promotion.

Correlations					
		Social Media Ad	Tourist awareness	Tourist service experience	Traditional media ad
Social Media Ad	Pearson Correlation	1	-.011	.880**	.633**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.811	.000	.000
	N	474	474	474	474
Tourist awareness	Pearson Correlation	-.011	1	-.146**	-.281**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.811		.001	.000
	N	474	474	474	474
Tourist service experience	Pearson Correlation	.880**	-.146**	1	.661**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.001		.000
	N	474	474	474	474
Traditional Media Ad	Pearson Correlation	.633**	-.281**	.661**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	474	474	474	474

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Interpretation:

There is a very strong degree of positive correlation between tourist service experience and social media ad with a value $r=0.880$. There is a positive correlation between social media ad and traditional media ad. So this two way of promotion complement each.

It means a relationship exists between tourist service experience and social media ad as well as between social media ad and traditional media ad. The closer the correlation coefficient is to +1 or -1, the stronger the relationship. So, the strength of the association in both the relationships is high. A positive correlation indicates that as one variable increases, the other tends to increase which means if tourist service experience increases, social media ad will also increase. Similarly, social media ad increases, traditional media ad will also increase.

Directional Measures							
			Value				Value
Nominal by Interval	Eta	Traditional Media Ad Dependent	.783	Social Media Ad	.937	Tourist awareness Dependent	.627
		Tourist service experience Dependent	.450	Tourist service experience Dependent	.829	Tourist service experience Dependent	.177

Interpretation:

Eta is a measure of association between a continuous variable and a categorical variable. The calculated Eta value of tourist service experience (.450) indicates a moderate degree of association between traditional media ad and their tourist service experience. The Eta value (.829) indicates a very strong degree of association between tourist service experience and the social media ad. Finally, the association between tourist service experience and tourist awareness is very low.

For this study, the independent variables are the social media promotion benefits for tourist which has been online, time convenient, comparison, customer online review, 24/7 information availability, enriched website, virtual tour, picture, and video, and the dependent variable is tourist destination promotion. The model equation is like:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \dots + e$$

Where:

Y- Tourist Destination promotion

X1- online, time convenient

X2- Comparison website

X3- Customer online review

X4- 24/7 information availability

X5- enriched website

X6- virtual tour

X7- picture and video

e- error

Model Summary ^b						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.807 ^a	.751	.661		8.658	1.723
a. Predictors: (Constant), online, time convenient, comparison, customer online review, 24/7 information availability, enriched website, virtual tour, picture and video						
b. Dependent Variable: Tourist Destination promotion						

Interpretation:

As we can see that the value of R² is .651, that means 65% of the total variance in tourist destination promotion is explained by the predictors online, time convenient, comparison, customer online review, 24/7 information availability, enriched website, virtual tour, picture, and video. In the above table, the value of R is 0.751 which is greater than .050 and this value indicated the high extent of the positive relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. The R² represents the variance of the analysis of independent variables. Here the R² value is 0.661 which indicates social media promotional benefits have 66% variation on tourist destination promotion building up. The adjusted R² represents the goodness-of-model fit whereas R²>Adjusted R² (75%>66%). This indicates a good regression model. Besides the gap between the R² and Adjusted R² (0.751-0.661) is very low so that the number of non-significance variables is minimal in this analysis. So Hypothesis 1 is proved that social media play a great role in tourist destination promotion.

ANOVA ^b					
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	419.002	4	104.751	1.397	.408 ^a
Residual	224.873	3	74.958		
Total	643.875	7			
a. Predictors: (Constant online, time convenient, comparison, customer online review, 24/7 information availability, enriched website, virtual tour, picture and video					
b. Dependent Variable: Tourist destination promotion					

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	87.141	132.824		.656	.559
	Online media time convenient	.153	2.365	.038	.065	.952
	Comparison internet site	.409	.622	.885	.657	.558
	Customer online review	3.360	5.830	.568	.576	.605
	Virtual tour	-11.090	7.870	-1.001	-1.409	.254
a. Dependent Variable: Tourist destination promotion						

Interpretation:

Here, the estimated value of the intercept is 87.141(constant) which means that the respondents have tourist destination promotion of 87% regardless of online, time convenient, comparison, customer online review, 24/7 information availability, enriched website, virtual tour, picture and video of the. And the value of the slope for the Online media time convenient variable is .153, for the Comparison internet site variable is .409, for the Customer online review 3.360 and the Virtual tour -11.090.

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects					
Dependent Variable: Tourist destination promotion					
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	408.950 ^a	7	58.421	5.654	.005
Intercept	34362.050	1	34362.050	3325.360	.000
Social Media	247.750	3	82.583	7.992	.003
Traditional media	161.200	4	40.300	3.900	.030
Error	124.000	12	10.333		
Total	34895.000	20			
Corrected Total	532.950	19			
a. R Squared = .767 (Adjusted R Squared = .632)					

Interpretation:

The P-value corresponding to social media (.003) is highly significant at a 1% level of significance and the P-value corresponding to traditional media (.03) is statistically significant at a 5% level of significance. There is a difference in the units of tourist destination promotion among social media factors and traditional media factors.

Multiple Comparisons						
Dependent Variable: Tourist Destination promotion						
LSD						
(I) social media benefits	(J) social media benefits	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Online media time convenient	Comparison internet site	4.40	2.033	.051	-.03	8.83
	Customer online review	-3.80	2.033	.086	-8.23	.63
	Virtual tour	4.80*	2.033	.036	.37	9.23
Comparison internet site	Online media time convenient	-4.40	2.033	.051	-8.83	.03
	Customer online review	-8.20*	2.033	.002	-12.63	-3.77
	Virtual tour	.40	2.033	.847	-4.03	4.83
Customer online review	Online media time convenient	3.80	2.033	.086	-.63	8.23
	Comparison internet site	8.20*	2.033	.002	3.77	12.63
	Virtual tour	8.60*	2.033	.001	4.17	13.03
Virtual tour	Online media time convenient	-4.80*	2.033	.036	-9.23	-.37
	Comparison internet site	-.40	2.033	.847	-4.83	4.03
	Virtual tour	-8.60*	2.033	.001	-13.03	-4.17
Based on observed means.						
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = 10.333.						
*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.						

Interpretation:

It can be observed that

1. The effect on tourist destination promotion of online media time convenient is not equal to virtual tour.

2. The effect on tourist destination promotion of comparison internet site is not equal to customer online review.
3. The effect on tourist destination promotion of customer online review is not equal to customer online review.
4. The effect on comparison internet site and virtual tour.
5. The effect on tourist destination promotion of virtual tour is not equal to online media time and customer online review.

o Multiple Comparisons						
Dependent Variable: Tourist destination promotion						
LSD						
(I) Social media	(J) social media	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Facebook	Instagram	-4.00	2.273	.104	-8.95	.95
	Twitter	3.75	2.273	.125	-1.20	8.70
	website	2.50	2.273	.293	-2.45	7.45
	Pop-up ad	-2.00	2.273	.396	-6.95	2.95
Instagram	Facebook	4.00	2.273	.104	-.95	8.95
	Twitter	7.75*	2.273	.005	2.80	12.70
	website	6.50*	2.273	.014	1.55	11.45
	Pop-up ad	2.00	2.273	.396	-2.95	6.95
Twitter	Facebook	-3.75	2.273	.125	-8.70	1.20
	Instagram	-7.75*	2.273	.005	-12.70	-2.80
	website	-1.25	2.273	.592	-6.20	3.70
	Pop-up ad	-5.75*	2.273	.026	-10.70	-.80
website	Facebook	-2.50	2.273	.293	-7.45	2.45
	Instagram	-6.50*	2.273	.014	-11.45	-1.55
	Twitter	1.25	2.273	.592	-3.70	6.20
	Pop-up ad	-4.50	2.273	.071	-9.45	.45
Pop-up ad	Facebook	2.00	2.273	.396	-2.95	6.95
	Instagram	-2.00	2.273	.396	-6.95	2.95
	Twitter	5.75*	2.273	.026	.80	10.70
	website	4.50	2.273	.071	-.45	9.45
Based on observed means.						
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = 10.333.						
*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.						

Interpretation:

In this table the two most important columns in this table are (I) GROUP and (J) GROUP Each row involves the comparison of one group to each of the remaining four.

The impact of Instagram on tourist destination promotion as social media is not similar to Twitter and websites. Besides, the significance of Twitter is not equal to Instagram and pop-up ads. Furthermore the significance of Facebook is not equal to pop-up ad and hence hence the impact is not similar to instragram. For the Facebook and website comparison, the significance level is .293. Since this value is greater than the .05 level required for statistical significance, these two groups are not significantly different. Applying this same procedure to pop-up ad and Twitter comparison, the results would indicate a statistically significant difference since the significance level is .026 which is less than .05.

4. Discussion

Limitations of social media-based tourism promotion:

Even though there are various advantages of social-based promotion of Bangladesh as a tourist destination, the full potential of social-based promotion can't be exploited due to the following reasons:

1. Reliability of information:

The information that people obtain from social media platforms is not always trustworthy. Even sometimes just to grab attention, people give misleading and fabricated information on social media platforms.

2. Direct communication:

For specific types of products and services, consumers prefer direct communication such as tourism destinations, hotel services, etc. as it's quite difficult to evaluate based on information and pictures provided over the social media platforms.

3. Increasing competition:

Due to the rising level of competition, various tourist destinations are trying to adopt different types of promotional tools other than social media platforms. Thus it has become very convoluted to deal with the worldwide intensity of completion.

Recommendations:

To ensure the effective promotion of Bangladesh as a tourist destination, the tourism industry of Bangladesh should utilize the time and cost efficiency feature of social media-based promotion. To introduce the potential tourists to the attractiveness of Bangladesh as a tourist destination, the following policy guidelines are recommended

1. Rational social media-based promotional programs should be designed for disseminating information about Bangladesh as a tourist destination to achieve the best benefits.
2. Distinctive features and characteristics of Bangladesh as a tourist destination should be highlighted through sharing photographs and videos over social media platforms.

3. Accounts in the social media platforms with the highest users such as Facebook, Instagram YouTube, etc. should be created and operated to ensure proper communication with the tourists with authentic information.
4. Social media-based promotion requires a proper understanding of the features and attributes of the social media platforms and intensive training in these areas should be provided.
5. Innovative and distinct ways of using social media as a promotional to should be initiated.

Future Research Opportunities:

This study has shown the application of social media in promoting Bangladesh as a tourist destination. Future research can be done to identify the key factors which influence the ways of executing the social media-based promotion. The extent of the impact can be measured. Due to resource and time constraints, the study is being confined to only social media platforms. Future research can be done by considering other internet-based applications. Besides, when the social media-based promotion will be spread out more actively among tourism organizations with large customer awareness, future researchers can focus on a particular social media platform. Qualitative research like focus group or case study can also be done for both the providers and receivers of tourism facilities.

Conclusion

The tourism industry is one of the most information-intensive industries. It has been found out that the most important factor affecting the tourists' destination choices and other services is information and the most available source of information is social media. The multi-dimensional characteristics of social media compared to other traditional media like newspapers, television, radio, etc. have made social media platforms more popular among tourists. Due to these reasons, tourism companies are using social media platforms as an effective promotional tool. As per the findings of the study, the impact of using social media as a promotional tool in promoting Bangladesh as a tourist destination is very strong. The findings of the study also highlighted that the potentiality of Bangladesh as a tourist destination can be explored through the proper and adequate application of social media platforms. There are enormous opportunities for Bangladesh to successfully establish itself as an attractive tourist destination. Even though it has been proved that social media play a great role in tourist destination promotion, the full potentials of social media-based tourism promotion have not been seized yet. To keep pace with the global competition and changes in the market trend, adopting proper strategies to promote Bangladesh as a tourist destination through social media is significant.

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