Impact of social media on Travel Behavior post Covid-19 Pandemic- Evidence from Bangalore City

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Abstract –

The study aims to understand the impact of social media on travel behavior of people in Bangalore post Covid-19 Pandemic period. The Covid-19 pandemic significantly affected the travel and tourism industry worldwide, leading to changes in travel behavior and preferences. Social media platforms have now emerged as powerful tools of information dissemination, travel planning and decision making. This study seeks to understand how social media has influences travel behavior in Bangalore City.

The study examined various aspects such as social media usage pattern, traveler choice of destination, actual travel experience over online reviews and how consumer learning process has changed in relation to travel decisions as a result of social media content.

Keywords: Post Covid 19 Pandemic, social media, Travel behavior, travel experience.

1.INTRODUCTION

This study attempts to examine the influence of increased social media usage in the tourist sector on customer purchasing behavior. It is an attempt to comprehend the influence of social media on the decision-making process of travelers. Furthermore, this research will attempt to investigate the influence of social media on the operations of a travel agency. The study's guiding premise is the strategic role of social media in promoting and influencing decision-making in the tourist sector throughout the world. This study seeks to get a knowledge of the impact of user-generated information on social media sites on passengers as they plan their trip.

The study's core premise is the contribution provided by social networking sites to potential travelers in efficiently planning their trip and to tourist marketing firms in better promoting their products and services. The purpose of this study is to give actual proof of the impact of social media on tourist purchasing behavior, as well as to investigate the perceived trustworthiness of social media sites in relation to various travel decisions.

Social Media:

Social media networks are the online communities that allow individuals to interact and share their experiences, interests, and activities in today's internet era. Social networking platforms and social virtual communities have created global communication conduits. People may readily allow worldwide populations to read their views and opinions through social media.

Social media platforms offer a wide range of content and engagement options, including text messaging, online chats, blogs, audio and video communications, images, and online reviews. Being one of the two most powerful online networking technologies, social media has become a part of both social and economic life in the physical world. Social media is a defined type of electronic communication in which users create online platforms or communities to share information, ideas, thoughts, personal messages, and other content.

Social media networks provide good images, ratings, and reviews of establishments where visitors and travelers may stay. The experiences that individuals publish on their social media accounts provide a first-hand look at a tourism area. They can also look for hotels and other types of lodgings. According to the analysis 90% of people plan their holiday activities based on information they find online while booking. Obtaining travel material from the Internet has grown more visible, which can either promote or discourage a guest from visiting certain locations.

Positive and negative impact on social media in the tourism industry

Any tourism-related organization or individual can build and utilise these social media sites for free. They can build official accounts and utilise them to deliver useful information, answer queries from users, or connect with people in order to gain a huge following. More importantly, social media sites provide options for sponsored promotion. They have access to an excessive quantity of data about their subscribers. It is significant because it allows travel marketers to execute full marketing campaigns. Marketers may target very specific groups using the platforms' strong targeting features. The influence of social media on tourism is huge. Understanding what individuals do before traveling on a journey is the greatest approach to understand. People are prompted to investigate a tourist site and submit personal images and videos to social media.

Social media doesn't only have positive effects on the tourism industry. It may also have a negative impact on it. The issue with social media is that negative comments spread beyond the following. When potential consumers see these remarks, they may begin to second-guess their decision to travel with or book via the organization.

2. Body of Paper

2.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The basic assumption is that social networking sites help potential travelers in efficiently planning their vacations and help tourism marketing business in more successfully selling their services.

This study will provide actual evidence of the effects of social media on tourist purchasing behavior in addition to evaluating the effectiveness of social media sites in connection to various travel decisions.

2.2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The motivation behind the paper was to look at the variables that are impacting position fulfillment. The paper focused on social media impact on tourism. All variables are to be viewed as structure ensuring position fulfillment. **Hakansson and Witner (2015)** the paper speaks on social media and trust. Researchers used a systematic literature review process to discover, assess, and interpret the existing studies on this issue for this aim. Researchers picked ten studies that might answer their study question "Does social media promote trust?" Eight of the 10 papers suggest that social media has a positive influence on trust, while two say that social media has no effect on trust. Nonetheless, no study found that social media has a detrimental impact on trust. **Pathak (2014)** the paper focused on the use of social networking sites during the 2014 Lok Sabha election by the Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP). The government of India has embraced social networking sites for the first time to engage citizens in conversation and

capture their attention. The data was gathered by the researcher via online questionnaire survey. According to the report, those between the ages of 21 and 35 are the most active on social media, implying that social media is mostly used by young people. Social media was utilized to inspire and motivate young people to vote. The BJP employed Facebook and other social networking sites as a promotional campaigning approach and was successful in creating a leader's larger than life image. According to the study, the BJP is successful in building positive momentum using social networking sites. **Pereira et al. (2017)** with their study examined the influence of three online determinants, website image perceptions, online routine, website knowledge. The research was carried out on a sample of 3188 devoted clients of Portuguese national tourism leaders. Researchers concluded that website image perception, online routine, and website knowledge have a significant impact on e-customer satisfaction using structural equation modelling (SEM), Additionally, this study investigates the moderating effect of gender, age group, and education on online purchase determinants and e-customer satisfaction. Gender and age were shown to have a substantial moderating influence on the link between online purchase determinants and e-customer satisfaction, although education level had no significant moderating effect. **Vethirajan and Nagavalli (2014)** the researcher has concentrated on trends and growth of the tourism sector because of its significant contribution to economic growth. According to the study, social media will play an important role in the tourist business in India in the

next years. Researcher has identified some important point that social media will play any important role in the tourism industry. i.e., Booking through a smartphone is expected to take off, Jet Airways is targeting its consumer via social media marketing, The India Ministry of tourism started using social media to promote tourism sites by joining Facebook, 70% of all - & 5-star hotels in first-tier cities in India had established their presence in social media by August 2013. **Amaro and Duarte (2017)** in their study made an empirical effort to compare cross-cultural use of social media for travel purposes. The study's major goal is to demonstrate how the cultural factor may influence the usage of social media for travel objectives at all phases of travel. The primary purpose of the study is to show how cultural factors impact the use of social media for travel objectives at all stages of trip. A questionnaire was used to obtain primary data using a convenience sampling 68 approach. Sample of 166 respondents comprising of 83 from the UK and 83 from Portugal was considered. The result demonstrated that social media is used during all stages of travel by travelers from both the countries but prominently before traveling for reading hotel reviews. According to **Nezakati et al. (2015),** social media promote the knowledge sharing process. Social Media networks play an important part in pre-trip preparation and decision making. According to the researcher, social media is a key medium for strategy information exchange. The fast advancement of information technology facilitated the exchange of knowledge via social media in the tourist business. **Hua et al. (2017),** The purpose of

this research is to determine the characteristics that may impact consumer behavior while using social media as a tool to pick tourism destinations. They used a quantitative study methodology to analyses Malaysians who use social media sites to get travel information when arranging a vacation. In total, 368 questionnaires were received online. However, perceived risk was found to be significant and negatively influencing the attitude towards social media. **Sotiriadis and Zyl (2013),** performed a study in which they developed a conceptual framework for knowing the foundation of digital communication by visitors via social media. This study examined at how Twitter users make decisions about purchasing tourism services and what factors influence tourist decision-making based on information obtained from Twitter. **Chung et al. (2015),** this study states on travel information adoption of UGC (user-generated content) on social media. Researchers experimentally evaluate a structural equation model using ELM (Elaborated Likelihood Model) to examine the link between the elements that influence social media members' uptake of travel information based on their social presence levels. The degrees of argument quality and source reliability seen by social media users differed according to their level of social presence. **Creevey and Mehta (2015),** conducted a study with the objective ascertaining the use of social media tools by the Destination Marketing Organization (DMO). The study results show that all DMOs have a Facebook presence, although social media activity among DMOs varies greatly. Researchers found two of the most compelling reasons for DMOs to

enter the social media space: growing global social media usage and prospective passengers' online search for possible vacation spots. Researchers recommended that DMOs create and maintain an online network of brand supporters who would work to improve the destination's image in the online forum.

2.3 RESEARCH GAP

Past studies have shown a strong influence of social media on tourist decision making, however, with COVID 19 pandemic there was a fall in tourism throughout the world. With the pandemic now subsiding, tourism is slowly coping up and social media has emerged as a new source of information search among tourists. It is for this reason this study aims to understand the influence of Social Media usage on decision making of tourists.

2.4 OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

1. To Understand about usage pattern of social media of travelers.
2. To determine how social media affects consumers choose their travel destinations.
3. To compare actual travel Experience learning from online reviews.
4. To Analyze how consumer learning process has changed in relation to travel decisions as a result of social media content.

2.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

- This study will cover the influence of social media on tourist decision making behavior. However, there can be other factors which

has an influence, but not covered under this study.

- This study pertains to learning purchase intention of people in Bangalore only.

2.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

Research methodology is a broad concept and includes population, method of data collection, instrument of data collection and questionnaires.

a. DATA COLLECTION METHOD

i) PRIMARY DATA- The data for the survey was directly collected from customers for the first time. Response through structured questionnaire gave the primary data which was used for further analysis to give conclusions.

ii) SECONDARY DATA- Secondary data was used to get more information on the topic of the study. Literature review was done for secondary data. Secondary data was basically collected from different websites on internet, articles, websites journals and also handbooks of the company.

iii) POPULATION- All the potential travelers and people with travel experience in bangalore are the population for the study.

iv) SAMPLE SIZE - The sample size of my study 150 customers and had to make sure that it included all the demographics like age, gender, qualification, experience to get better conclusions.

v) SAMPLING UNIT - Potential travelers and Customers who travelled.

vi) SAMPLING TECHNIQUE - Convenience sampling of travelers with recent travel experience

b. TOOLS FOR DATA COLLECTION –
A structured questionnaire was used in the study

c. DATA ANALYSIS

The information examination was outlined by arranging every one of the reactions in table configuration, and made sense of utilizing pie diagram.

2.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study has covered information from social media as the only factor to learn the changing behavior of travelers. However, post pandemic there are many other factors which still have a impact of changing travelers mindset in addition to social media. Factors like the government promotions for boosting travel behavior, seasonal influence, climate recovery may also be considered for further studies.

TITLE OF THE TABLE: DEMOGRAPHICS

TABLE NO. 1

Demographics	Category	No. of Respondents	Percentage %
Gender	Male	99	66%
	Female	51	34%
	Total	**150**	**100**
Age Of respondent	18-25	84	56%
	26-35	57	38%
	36-45	6	4%
	45+	3	2%
	Total	**150**	**100**
Qualification of the respondent	Student	74	49.3%
	Employed	60	40%
	Self employed	15	10%
	Professional	1	0.7%
	Total	**150**	**100**

Table no. 1 shows the demographic analysis revealed that 99 out of 150 are male and the remaining 51 are female respondents, majority of the respondents are between the age group of 18-25 years, 57 were between 26-35 years, 6 were between 36-45 and the rest were Above 45, 50% of the respondents out of 150 are student, 60 were employed, 15 were self-employed and rest were professional.

TABLE NO. 2

TITLE OF THE TABLE: Do you look for vacation destinations on the internet?

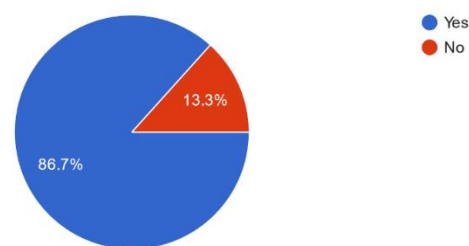| Particulars	No of Respondents	Percentage %
Yes	130	86.7%
No	20	13.3%

ANALYSIS:

From the above table, we can analysis that, 86.7% customers prefer looking for vacation destinations on the internet and just remaining 13.3% people don't look for vacation destinations on the internet.

GRAPH NO. 1

Do you look for vacation destinations on the internet?
150 responses

INTERPRETATION:

From the graph represented above, majority of the customers that is 86.7% will prefer looking for vacation destinations on the internet.

TABLE NO. 3

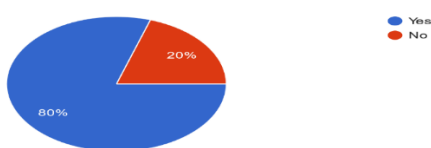**TITLE OF THE TABLE: Do you make use of social media to acquire travel information?**

Particulars	No of Respondents	Percentage %
Yes	120	80%
No	30	20%

ANALYSIS:

From the above table, we can analysis that, 80% customers make use of social media to acquire travel information and just remaining 20% people does not make use of social media to acquire travel information.

GRAPH NO. 2

Do you make use of social media to acquire travel information?
150 responses

INTERPRETATION:

From the graph represented above, majority of the customers make use of social media to acquire travel information.

TABLE NO. 4

TITLE OF THE TABLE: According to you Which of the following source are Helpful to get information about your travel plan?

Particulars	No of Respondents	Percentage %
Newspaper/Magazines	18	12%
Social Media (Instagram, Facebook,...Etc)	119	79.3%
Televisions	11	7.3%
Websites	45	30%
Suggested by Friend & Relatives	24	16%

ANALYSIS:

From the above table, we can analysis that, newspaper/ magazine provides 12% of helpful information about the travel plan, social media provide 79.3%, television provide 7.3%, websites provide 30% and finally suggested by friends and relatives is about 16% through which helpful information is obtained about the travel plan.

GRAPH NO. 3

According to you Which of the following sources are Helpful to get information about your travel plan?
150 responses
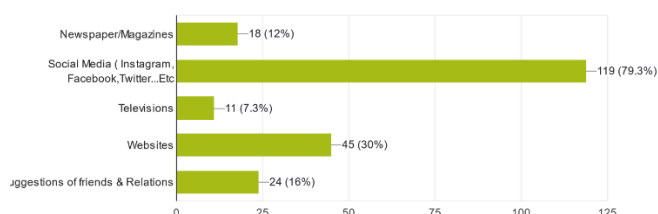
INTERPRETATION:

From the graph represented above, majority of the customers says social media i.e., Instagram Facebook, twitter…Etc. are more helpful to get information about travel plan.

TABLE NO. 5

TITLE OF THE TABLE: To what extent these travel ads are helpful in deciding your travel destination?

RESPONSES	NO OF RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE %
To a great extent	33	22%
To some extent	79	52.7%

|		
Neutral	27	18%
To a less extent	5	3.3%
Not at all	6	4%

ANALYSIS:

From the above table, we can analysis that, 22% respondents say travel ads are helpful to a great extent in deciding your travel destinations and 52.7% people feel it true for some extent and 18% people have a neutral opinion about the travel ads and 3.3% respondents say to a less extent and remaining 4% feel that travel ads not at all helpful in deciding your travel destinations.

GRAPH NO. 4

To what extent these travel ads are helpful in deciding your travel destination?
150 responses
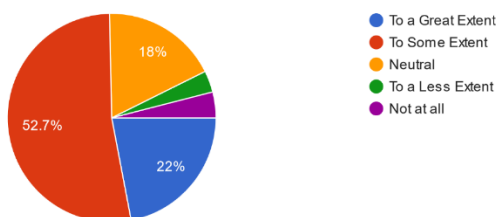
INTERPRETATION:

From the graph represented above, majority of the customers that is more that 50% of people accept to some extent that travels Ads shown in social media are helpful in deciding travel destination.

TABLE NO. 6

TITLE OF THE TABLE: To what extent this travel ads on social media you see change your mind about traveling related decisions?

RESPONSES	NO OF RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE %
To a great extent	35	23.3%
To some extent	85	56.7%
Neutral	19	12.7%
To a less extent	7	4.7%
Not at all	4	2.7%

ANALYSIS:

From the above table, we can analysis that, 23.3% say that travel ads on social media can change their mind about traveling related decisions to a great extent, 56.7% to some extent, 12.7% have neutral opinion, 4.7% to a less extent and remaining 2.7% have no travel ads effect in mind about traveling related decisions.

GRAPH NO. 5

To what extent this travel ads on social media you see change your mind about traveling related decisions?
150 responses
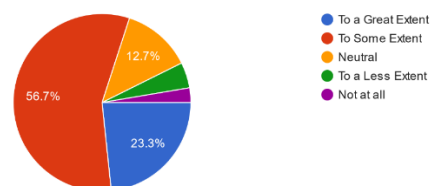
INTERPRETATION: From the graph represented above, majority of the customers that is more that

50% of people accept to some extent that travels ads shown in social media can change their mind about traveling related decisions.

TABLE NO. 7

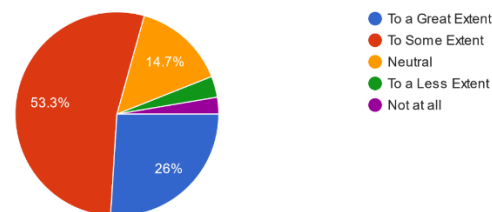**TITLE OF THE TABLE: To what extent social media influenced your travel planning?**

RESPONSES	NO OF RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE%
To a great extent	39	26%
To some extent	80	53.3%
Neutral	22	14.7%
To a less extent	5	3.3%
Not at all	4	2.7%

ANALYSIS:

From the above table, we can analysis that, 26% say that social media has influenced their travel planning to a great extent, 53.3% to some extent, 14.7% have neutral opinion, 3.3% to a less extent and remaining 2.7% have never felt that social media has influenced their travel planning.

GRAPH NO. 6

To what extent social media influenced your travel planning?
150 responses

- To a Great Extent
- To Some Extent
- Neutral
- To a Less Extent
- Not at all

INTERPRETATION:

From the graph represented above, majority of the customers that is more that 50% of people accept to some extent that social media influenced to plan their destination.

TABLE NO. 8

TITLE OF THE TABLE: To what extent do you think your actual traveling experience matched with online reviews?

| RESPONSES	NO OF RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE%
To a great extent	23	15.3%
To some extent	91	60.7%
Neutral	22	14.7%
To a less extent	10	6.7%
Not at all	4	2.7%

ANALYSIS:

From the above table, we can analysis that, 15.3% see that actual traveling experience matched with

online reviews, 60.7% to some extent, 14.7% have neutral opinion, 6.7% to a less extent and remaining 2.7% have never felt that actual traveling experience matched with online reviews.

GRAPH NO. 7
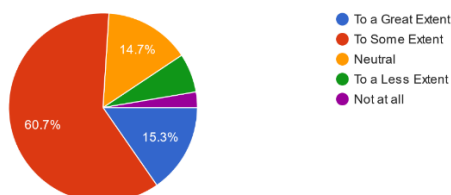
INTERPRETATION:

From the graph represented above, majority of the customers that is more that 50% of people accept to some extent that their actual travelling experience was matched with online reviews.

TABLE NO. 9

TITLE OF THE TABLE: Were you able to find the details mentioned in the online review during your travel visit?

| RESPONSES	NO OF RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE%
Strongly Agree	31	20.7%
Agree	64	42.7%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	47	31.3%
Strongly Disagree	3	2%
Disagree	5	3.3%

ANALYSIS:

From the above table, we can analysis that, 20.7% strongly agreed with the details mentioned in the online review during your travel visit, 45.7% just agree, 31.3% neither agree nor disagree, 2% strongly disagree and 3.3% disagree as they haven't been able to find the details mentioned in the online review during their travel visit.

GRAPH NO. 8
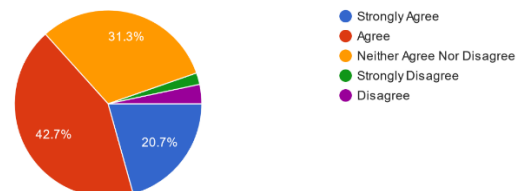
INTERPRETATION:

From the graph represented above, majority of the customers that is more that 42.7% of people agree that details mention in the online review can find the same in travel visit.

TABLE NO. 10

TITLE OF THE TABLE: Do you felt online reviews are Exaggerated about the destination?

RESPONSES	NO OF RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE %
Strongly Agree	28	18.7%
Agree	59	39.3%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	56	37.3%
Strongly Disagree	3	2%
Disagree	4	2.7%

ANALYSIS:

From the above table, we can analysis that, 18.7% strongly agree that online reviews are exaggerated about the destination, 39.3% just agree, 37.3% neither agree nor disagree, 2% strongly disagree and 2.7% disagree that online reviews are exaggerated about the destination.

GRAPH NO. 9

INTERPRETATION:

From the graph represented above, majority of the customer felt online reviews are exaggerated about the destination.

TABLE NO. 11

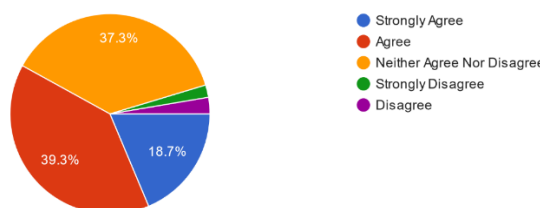**TITLE OF THE TABLE: While using social media, do you notice travel ads?**

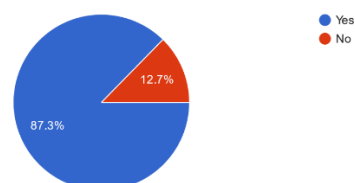| Particulars	No of Respondents	Percentage %
Yes	131	87.3%
No	19	12.7%

ANALYSIS:

From the above table, we can analysis that, 87.3% say yes as they notice travel ads while using social media and rest 12.7% don't see any ads while using social media.

GRAPH NO. 10

INTERPRETATION:

From the graph represented above, majority of the customers that is 87.3% will notice trave ads while using social media.

TABLE NO. 12

TITLE OF THE TABLE: Do you really think that these travel ads are helpful for prospective travelers?
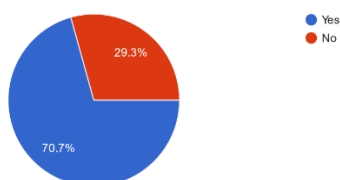
Particulars	No of Respondents	Percentage %
Yes	106	70.7%
No	44	29.3%

ANALYSIS:

From the above table, we can analysis that, 70.7% say yes as the travel ads are helpful for prospective travelers and rest about 29.3% say no to it.

GRAPH NO. 11

Do you really think that these travel ads are helpful for prospective travelers?
150 responses

INTERPRETATION:

From the graph represented above, majority of the customers that is 70.7% says that travel ads shown in social media are helpful for prospective travelers.

TABLE NO. 13

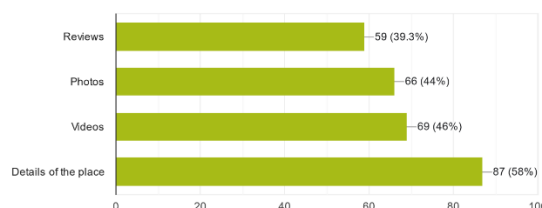**TITLE OF THE TABLE: In this social media travel ads what do you look for?**

Particulars	No of Respondents	Percentage %
Reviews	59	39.3%
Photos	66	44%
Videos	69	46%
Details of the place	87	58%

ANALYSIS:

From the above table, we can analysis that, 39.3% say that people look for reviews in the travel ads, 44% look for photos on the travel ads, 46% prefer videos, 58% prefer content of place to be showed in the travel ads.

GRAPH NO. 12

In this social media travel ads what do you look for ?
150 responses

INTERPRETATION:

From the graph represented above, majority of the customers that is more that 50% will look details of the place in social media travel ads rather than photo, video, Reviews.

TABLE NO. 14

TITLE OF THE TABLE: According to you Which of the following source are Helpful to get information about your travel plan?

Particulars	No of Respondents	Percentage %
Instagram	51	34%
Facebook	8	5.3%
YouTube	33	22%
Google Reviews	25	16.7%
Twitter	0	0
WhatsApp	33	22%

ANALYSIS:

From the above table, we can analysis that, 34% people choose Instagram to Share their travel Experience, 5.3% people chose Facebook, 22% choose YouTube, 16.7% choose Google Reviews, 22% choose WhatsApp to share their travel experience.

GRAPH NO. 13

If you share your travel experience, Which source do u choose ?
150 responses
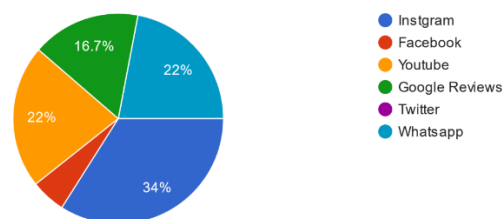
INTERPRETATION:

From the graph represented above, majority of the customers choose Instagram to share their travel experience.

3.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- Larger part of the respondence is male.

- Greater part of the respondence are 18-25 years.

- Most of the respondence are students.

- 86% of customers look for vacation destinations on the internet.

- 80% of customers make use of social media to acquire travel information.

- It is seen that more than 75% says that social media sources are Helpful to get information about travel plan.

- 50% of customers accept to some extent that travel ads are helpful in deciding travel destination.

- 56% of customers accept to some extent that travel ads on social media can change their mind about traveling related decisions.

- 53% of customers accept to some extent that social media influenced their travel planning.

- 60% of customers accept to some extent customers can match online reviews with an actual travel experience.
- 42% of customers agree with the details mentioned in the online review during their travel visit.
- 39% of customers agree that online reviews are Exaggerated about the destination.
- 87% of customers they see travel related ads in social media.
- 70% of customers says ads in social media are helpful for prospective travels.
- 50% will look details of the place in social media travel ads rather than photo, video, Reviews.
- Majority of the customers choose Instagram to share their travel experience.

5.2 CONCLUSION

The fact confirms that social media has impact on decision making process of the customers of Greenline travels and holidays. During the COVID 19 pandemic there was a fall in tourism throughout the world. With the pandemic now subsiding, tourism is slowly coping up and social media has emerged as a new source of information search among tourists. It is for this reason this study aims to understand the influence of Social Media usage on decision making of tourists.

From above findings it can be conclude that there is high degree of association between social media and Decision-making process of travellers. Social media have a strong impact on the decision-making process of travellers. It has become an important tool for travellers to gather information about destinations, reviews, and details of the place. Social media has made it easier for travellers to connect with other travellers who have shared travel experience and will get recommended by them. Social media have both positive and negative impacts on the decision-making process of travelers. It's very important for travelers to be careful of the information they receive on the internet they need to verify it from other sources.

So, it can be concluded that, social media is one of the most important attributes that every organization to look upon and pay attention on it. It is also important for organizations to keep updating marketing team according to the business environment.

5.3 **APPENDIX**

Questionnaire:

1). Age of the customer

- 18 – 25
- 26 – 35
- 35 – 45
- Above 45

2). Gender of the customer

- Male
- Female

3). Occupation of the customer

- Student
- Employed
- Self Employed
- Professional

4). Do you look for vacation destinations on the internet?

- Yes
- No

5). Do you make use of social media to acquire travel information?

- Yes
- No

6). According to you Which of the following source are Helpful to get information about your travel plan?

- Newspaper/Magazines
- SocialMedia(Instagram,Facebook,Google+...Etc
- Televisions
- Websites
- Suggested by Friend & Relatives

7). To what extent these travel ads are helpful in deciding your travel destination?

- To a Great Extent
- To Some Extent
- Neutral
- To a Less Extent
- Not at all

8). To what extent this travel ads on social media you see change your mind about traveling related decisions?

- To a Great Extent
- To Some Extent
- Neutral
- To a Less Extent

- Not at all

9). To what extent social media influenced your travel planning?

- To a Great Extent
- To Some Extent
- Neutral
- To a Less Extent
- Not at all

10). To what extent do you think your actual traveling experience matched with online reviews?

- To a Great Extent
- To Some Extent
- Neutral
- To a Less Extent
- Not at all

11). Were you able to find the details mentioned in the online review during your travel visit?

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree

12). Do you felt online reviews are Exaggerated about the destination?

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree

13). While using social media, do you notice travel ads?

- Yes
- No

14). Do you really think that these travel ads are helpful for prospective travelers?

- Yes
- No

15). In this social media travel ads what do you look for?

- Reviews
- Photos
- Videos
- Content of place

16). If you share your travel experience, which source do u choose?

- Instagram
- Facebook
- YouTube
- Google Reviews
- Twitter
- Google +

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