

The Role of Tourism Marketing In Changing Perceptions of the Kingdom
Of Saudi Arabia: Stakeholder Perspectives

By

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
award of the degree of Master of Tourism and Events

College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

Flinders University

2022/06/19

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Abstract

Tourism is the world's most popular and fastest-growing service. It is generally accepted as an important factor in economic progress. Due to its Islamic background, Saudi Arabia is one of the oldest and most well-known destinations for pilgrimage travel. However, there is a real need to find out what people think about tourist marketing and development in Saudi Arabia. This is because there are overlapping roles and conflicting priorities among the concerned stakeholders. In this context, the research attempted to evaluate how tourism marketing may influence international tourists' perceptions of Saudi Arabia. Using a case study and qualitative methods, the researcher was able to gather important tourist stakeholders' perspectives on marketing in Saudi Arabia. According to the survey, tourist marketing is important for Saudi Arabia's economic development. A first look at the survey demonstrates how tourism marketing has evolved and changed across the nation. As a result, potential tourists are better informed of their possibilities. This boosts Saudi Arabia's global attractiveness. Tourism marketing is also essential due to increased tourist numbers. It is also a powerful tool for promoting tourism and attaining industrial aims. Thus, tourism marketing is crucial in educating tourists about the nature and value of tourist attractions. This will increase tourist visits and stay. It also helps the Kingdom's 2030 tourism investment goal.

Keywords

Stakeholders, tourism marketing, tourism development, Saudi Arabia

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I hereby certify that the dissertation is original and the result of my research in full, does not contain earlier published sections, and as such does not infringe upon anyone's copyright nor violate any proprietary rights; the used bibliographical references are clearly stated in the dissertation itself and the list of references.



, 2022/06/19

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The completion of this dissertation could not have been possible without the assistance and support of so many people around me.

Foremost, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Saudi Government (SACM) for giving me a great opportunity to study abroad at Flinders University and their support during my journey in Australia. This experience helped me to learn another language, appreciate other cultures, overcome the challenges of living in another country and gained a greater understanding of the world.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my parents for their endless love, care and supporting me spiritually throughout my life. Also, I would like to thank my siblings for their encouragement and assistance during my Masters study.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

Saudi Arabia is the most prominent Arab state by geographical area in Western Asia, encompassing the vast majority of the Arabian Peninsula (Ekiz, Öter & Stephenson, 2017). The country's major tourism activities are focused on numerous religious activities, notably the Annual Hajj, which attracts an estimated 1 – 4 million local and international tourists each year (Johnson, 2010). As a result, tourism is currently the third biggest industry in the Kingdom, behind energy and manufacturing, and is regarded as the second greatest generator of foreign currency and a job-creating sector. These latest results demonstrate that the Kingdom's tourism sector is receiving significant government attention, including preliminary steps for its growth.

In recent decades, Saudi Arabia has grown to welcome many changes in the tourism sector. Although the monarchy maintains a firm position on Islam and Sharia law, the Kingdom is gradually opening up to tourists. According to statistics, the number of tourists in Saudi Arabia increased from 14.4 million in 2013 to 25.1 million in 2018 (Business wire, 2018). While this does not show a high tourist rate, it is increasing, and most of the gain may be attributed to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's attempts to enhance these numbers. However, in the past ten years, the monarchy was hesitant to open up tourism to the West. The lack of tourists was due to two issues. "The administration was worried about the 'corrupting' impact of foreign visitors and the potential offense their conduct or clothing would cause to conservative local culture." Furthermore, due to the significant oil resources of the Kingdom, there was little motivation to develop tourist activities in the region (Aldakhil, 2020).

Although the need to diversify the economy has been recognized for more than three decades, the Kingdom has addressed this problem by establishing a more extensive export base, developing petrochemicals, and promoting the growth of a diverse range of industrial activities oriented to the local market. Because the tourism industry was perceived as more socially desirable and productive, it was viewed as industrial development rather than service development. Furthermore, many Saudis consider employment in tourism dishonorable, if not demeaning (Yusuf, 2014). This mindset is changing, and the transition is seen today, ten years later, as the Kingdom and the monarchy recognize the country's potential as a tourist capital.

Currently, Saudi Arabia has seen a tremendous increase in the outbound tourism business in recent years, including the number of visits and total nights spent abroad. Studies indicate that Saudi tourists spent just 26 million nights abroad in 2006 but more than 250 million in 2015. Saudi Arabia's primary motivation for spending a night in a foreign nation is a lack of entertainment in the country (Aldakhil, 2020). Additionally, the rapid evolution of smartphones and increased internet access has resulted in a significant increase in tech-savvy consumers in Saudi Arabia. The increased usage of web-based social networking websites and the simplicity with which online platforms can be used have contributed to the development of tourism marketing in the region. Hence by the end of 2025, it is estimated that the Saudi Arabian outbound tourism industry will exceed USD 43 billion (Renub Research, 2019). This research examines the role of tourism marketing in changing the perception of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

1.2 Problem statement

Recent surveys show that Saudi Arabia is recognized as a unique tourism destination; yet, its potential is untapped (Ekiz, Öter & Stephenson, 2017). Interestingly, the research found that Saudi Arabia is not projected to be a significant worldwide tourism destination despite the country's various natural beauties. To dispel this myth, tourism marketing has long been considered ideal for capturing people's attention if it is well-designed and integrated into the local community and presented to the general public (including local and foreign tourists) in the appropriate tone.

According to Aldakhil (2020), tourist marketing attempts to address two significant issues in the Saudi tourism sector: first, the lack of entertainment in the Kingdom that has resulted in economic leakage from outbound Saudi tourists visiting other Middle Eastern countries such as the UAE, Egypt, Bahrain, and other international destinations such as London, Paris, and Istanbul; and second, the insufficient tourist attraction centers like those located in tourism leading countries like the US, Italy, Germany, and France. Prince Mohammed bin Salman initiated a project worth thirteen billion dollars. The project intends to grow the Aseer region so that the place can attract about ten million tourists by 2030. By 2025, it is predicted that the Saudi Arabian outbound market will reach \$43 billion (Globe Media Insights, 2019).

Besides, almost 60% of foreign visitors visiting Saudi Arabia do so for religious reasons (MAS, 2019). Hence when vision 2030 began to shift its strategy away from focusing solely on religious tourism, it was the first time that it opened its doors to international non-religious visitors by issuing an e-visa to 49 countries, including the United States, Canada, Germany and China. The country proposed strategies to ensure that by 2030, the country diversifies its economy and focuses on improving sectors like tourism, recreation, education and others. The government expects tourism to contribute about ten percent of the country's GDP by 2030. This move was made to help stimulate the economy and attract foreign investment (Export.Gov, 2018). Because of this, the government established The General Entertainment Authority (GEA)

in 2016, which is responsible for the nation's expanding entertainment sector. This was followed by announcing policy changes such as easing the dresscode and gender segregation, removing female travel restrictions, and allowing public musical festivals and concerts to occur. This implies that tourist marketing has both direct and indirect economic and social impacts on the country, discussed in detail.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The study's main objective is to investigate the role of tourism marketing in changing the perceptions of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. As such, the study will assess Saudi Arabia's tourism marketing campaigns and will then gather honest feedback on tourists' reactions to the new tourism marketing strategy and associated experiences. Specifically, this research intends to better understand tourists' responses to tourist marketing in terms of acceptability, perceptions, and obstacles to develop potential solutions to enhance it.

1.4 Research Questions

The research intends to answer two questions to attain the objective of the study. In addition, the paper will answer various questions related to tourism marketing to offer an in-depth answer to the research question. The questions are;

1. What are the strategies the country can apply to change the perceptions of the people
2. How effective is Saudi Arabia's tourism marketing campaign towards 2030 vision?

The following additional research questions are discussed:

- a) What is tourist marketing?
- b) What are different techniques used in tourist marketing?
- c) What are benefits and importance of tourist marketing in Saudi Arabia?
- d) How is tourist marketing perceived in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia?
- e) How has the rapid evolution of tourism marketing influenced public opinions on tourism in Saudi Arabia?

1.5 Significance of study

Tourism creates a variety of occupations and contributes to the reduction of unemployment. Still, there is a fundamental imbalance between the labor market and accessible national human resources (Spiess, 2012). Short-term nationalization of tourism staff may result in labor shortages and a danger to the tourist industry's growth. Besides, employment in the tourist business may be hampered by a high degree of conservatism in Saudi Arabia (Al-Amarneh and Stephenson, 2012). There is a need to recruit and engage Saudi citizens in tourism for reasons other than simple employment rules. Hence, the adoption of tourist marketing would enhance Saudi Arabia's legitimacy as a destination. Since tourists want accurate representations, and they may see Saudi tourism personnel as cultural ambassadors for the kingdom. Local personnel provides value to tourism goods by enriching the visitor experience. Some of these professionals have been formally educated as cultural brokers, such as tour guides. Their primary objective is to portray their society and culture to tourists as narrators and as embodied Saudi images.

Furthermore, the study would help people learn more about the dynamics of travel and tourism in Saudi Arabia and how they relate to the country's 2030 vision for travel and tourism. In addition, the research looks at the importance of tourism marketing on tourism activities in Saudi Arabia. This will give important information about how the tourism industry is changing now, how it will change in the future and its implication in changing the perception of the kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Also, the research looks at why tourists go to Saudi Arabia and how cultural differences can significantly impact how to market Saudi Arabia as a potential tourist destination. The findings of this study would be used to help people better understand how Saudi Arabians travel and what it is like to be a tourist there.

1.6 Organization of study

This study is divided into five chapters: the first chapter is an introduction that includes the study's background, problem statement, goal, aims, research questions, and importance. The second chapter is a review of the literature. This included the meaning of tourism marketing, the different techniques used to market a destination, the benefits, and importance of tourism marketing, and the benefits of tourism marketing in the Middle East. The third chapter discusses the research design, the area that was studied, the target population, the instruments used, the degree to which the tools used were reliable and valid, the methods used when collecting data, the methods used to analyze the information that was collected, the ethics that a researcher should consider, and the operationalization of variables. The fourth chapter demonstrates how data is analyzed, presented, and interpreted. Finally, there was a summary, findings, suggestions, and topics for additional investigation in chapter five.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This part of the research involves reviewing the literature by various scholars who have researched the Role of Tourism Marketing in Changing Perceptions of The Kingdom Of Saudi Arabia. For the literature review, the researcher used secondary sources. This was divided into subtopics which included; a description of tourism marketing, the different ways/techniques used to market a destination, the benefits of tourism marketing and why it is essential, and the benefits of tourism marketing for emerging destinations, especially those in the Middle East. In that regard, this section offers explanations about the various aspects of tourism marketing and its role in changing the perceptions of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

2.2 Tourism marketing

Tourism marketing refers to the numerous marketing tactics employed by firms in the tourism sector as a whole (Freeman & Glazer, 2015). Tourism marketing may also be defined as the act of creating voluntary exchanges between tourists and organizations – visitors interested in purchasing products and services and organizations that provide such items and services (Knowles & Westcott, 2015). According to Avraham. Ketter, & McMillan, (2016) tourism marketing usually entails developing a trip package, advertising the package, and selling the package. Hence, tourism marketing may alternatively be defined as a process that begins with identifying tourist (consumer) requirements that can be met by providing an appropriate product or service such as a tour package (Avraham. Ketter, & McMillan, 2016). Besides, the notion of tourist marketing consists of two terms: tourism and marketing. Tourism may be characterized as a critical social phenomenon that involves "moving individuals from and to areas distant

from their areas of origin (Chang & Katrichis, 2016). On the other hand, marketing may be characterized as a management process to discover, expect, and meet client needs (Sharpley & Pearce, 2014). Consequently, this promotes consumption as more people visit the marketed destinations.

Tourism marketing is different from other marketing concepts. According to Jönsson (2005), the tourism marketing concept is applied to at least seven significant sub-sectors or dimensions. These include travel, transportation, lodging, food service, tour operators, attractions, and merchandisers. Each of them necessitates the use of marketing services, in whole or in part, that is distinct from one another yet must be coordinated and integrated. Customers, for example, use travel services to get to a specific location where they are fed, housed, and amused by a range of businesses and services. As a result, Jönsson (2005) suggests that the marketing efforts must be diverse and targeted towards various client segments. Besides, due to the importance of the role that foreign tourism can play in many dimensions such as foreign exchange earnings and GDP growth, the source of income for the government, the head of job creation, and improved social services, one of the most important applications of information technology, communications, and the internet is in the tourism industry.

Tourism marketing is also a management process that includes anticipating and satisfying present and future visitor demands (Chang & Katrichis, 2016). Thus, given that the primary goal of marketing is to add value, marketing research is critical in developing a tourist marketing strategy. All strategies begin with a thorough understanding of the client, which leads to the product being tailored to the destination environment, the type of cuisine served, the design of lodgings, and even the travel and destination mix, according to customer profiles.

Only when this understanding has been absorbed can the marketer develop promotional tactics, distribution methods, and pricing depending on the market's willingness to pay.

Studies also indicate that tourist marketing comprises hundreds of different individuals, each with their purpose and need-satisfaction goal. Each of these individuals views their needs and desires, and each recognizes the worth of the product or service being given. Each segment of the tourist business must add value to customers' perceptions of their unique product. But, the critical question is whether tourist marketing can play an essential part in sustainable development at the target level (Higham & Moyle, 2016:163-166). For instance, if the marketers advertise a destination without considering the carrying capacity of the location itself, the marketing process will be short-lived (Mckellar & McNamara, 2016: 3). Thus the quality of tourist destinations is the key to success for tourism growth. The marketers need to identify the function of tourism marketing and management in enhancing the quality of touristic destinations (Lei, Kostopoulou & Huibin, 2014:17). In light of this, it is important to examine how tourist marketing influences the sustainability of a location. The policy settings of destinations should not to focus on quality and sustainable tourism destinations but the quantitative increase in visitor numbers (Hall, 2016:365-368; Brennan, & Binney, 2013:269). This positive or negative effect impacts the perceptions of the tourist marketer of the sustainable destination in their daily advertising of a place.

2.3 The different techniques used to market a destination.

2.3.1 Internet

Studies show that tourism marketing is a significant sector, and it employs a wide range of tactics and approaches to promote places and destinations (Avraham & McMillan, 2016). One of the marketing tactics used is the internet. The internet is used in many tourism marketing techniques, with websites, online advertisements, email, and social media platforms playing a significant part (Mwinuka, 2017). Many tourist marketing methods involve the internet and play a considerable role with websites, online advertising, emails, and social media.

Besides, the stakeholders in the travel and tourism sector are adjusting marketing techniques to maximize their exposure and preserve competitive advantage in the face of widespread internet use via online and mobile platforms at all phases of the trip experience. According to Murphy (2013), stakeholders refers to groups of people attached to a business and without them, the organization would not exist.

Furthermore, there is a noticeable change in booking habits toward mobile and tablet devices. According to Bethapudi, (2013) the use of information and communication, technology has greatly influenced the tourist system by establishing an information environment for each tourism institution and a data structure that allows the entire system to function. Various areas of this industry gets handled within this information environment, including finding market possibilities, building cooperative relationships with producers and intermediates, and establishing informal organizations to promote tourism and offer services (Bethapudi, 2013). As a result, additional benefits accrue to the shareholders due to technological advancements fostering successful collaboration and giving the global tourism sector a tool to prosper.

However, using the internet for tourism marketing can be less convenient if it takes a long time to prepare. Thus the content can be transformed into a brief piece behind the computer. According to Ketter et al., (2016), it's a lot easier than writing a paper, and one gets many chances to revise it. Ketter et al., (2016), further suggests that using internet for tourism

marketing allows the customer to share information and ideas, as long as they are trustworthy. The people in the tourist business may also profit from IT by having a reliable tool for transferring data and promoting it in the tourism industry (Ketter et al., 2016). This is because long-term planning cannot respond to major issues in tourism, hence the need to examine big problems with separation and simple solutions for their stage.

2.3.2 E-tourism

A common tourism marketing tactic is E-Tourism or virtual tourism. E-Tourism is defined by Gretzel et al. (2020) as a field that encompasses the design, implementation, and application of information technology in the travel and tourism industry. According to Gretzel et al. (2020), e-Tourism is an area that has grown into a considerable body of knowledge and addresses crucial and significant questions about the role of technology in advancing tourism and society.

Also, in many aspects, e-Tourism is considered one of the most common techniques used in tourism marketing. This is because it emphasizes the use of information technology, particularly the internet. It is also seen as an appropriate instrument for marketing tourism and tourists, and many of the issues encountered in tourism marketing (Gretzel et al., 2020). People in the tourist business can also profit from Information Technology by having a good tool for transmitting data and promoting it in the tourism industry (Kasemsap, 2015). By using the E-tourism platform, it helps in the digitalization of the whole tourist sector by including processes and value chains, infrastructure, services, and other related activities. It also leverages technology to allow customers to identify, personalize items and make a purchase. It also provides knowledge about tourist attractions in various destinations, which may boost tourist satisfaction. As a result, consumers and tourists can gain direct access to reliable information, communicate with suppliers, and ultimately get the best price.

In addition, information and communication technology influences the tourist system by establishing an information environment for each tourism institution and a data structure that

allows the entire system to function. Various areas of this industry may be handled within this information environment, including finding market possibilities, building cooperative relationships with producers and intermediates, and establishing informal organizations to promote tourism and offer services. As a result, because technological advancements foster efficient collaboration and provide a tool for the global tourist sector, the stakeholders profit even more. In the current world, information and communication technology has paid attention to strengthening, enhancing, and protecting global supply and demand in the tourism industry by providing adequate means for customers to identify and buy suitable products and for manufacturers to develop, manage, and distribute their products globally (Kasemsap, 2015).

2.3.3 Public relations

Public relations are also a key component for tourism marketing. Rather than depending on more expensive above-the-line advertising efforts it deals with the county's reputation. The core concept is that a good reputation is formed when the creative topic and content are in touch with a country's particular values and personalities (Kasemsap, 2015). Therefore the generation of economic value and rivalry for reputation becomes a key driving factor in tourism marketing.

2.3.4 Destination marketing

Destination marketing is a form of marketing that involves promoting a destination to potential visitors (Kotler & Levy, 1971). Such marketing strategy helps give directions to a certain place for potential customers and related benefits. Unlike other strategies, destination marketing does not specify the products or services offered. It is not utilized to persuade customers to shun a location or a product. One might wonder why someone would not wish to outline the products offered. It is possible that the answer to this issue is to make sure that the tourist industry's product base is safeguarded for the future.

De-marketing helps enhance destination marketing which further improves the tourism sector. People, peak periods, and places are the three primary strategies to de-market tourism, known as the 3Ps (Swarbrooke, 2002). Though it has adverse effects on profitability, de-

marketing may be a policy choice and management tool to regulate demand among tourist marketers (Tse & Qiu, 2016). This helps provide a high-quality visitor experience while preserving a high quality of life in the local community. Tse & Qiu, (2016) argues that tourist destination marketing should focus on the destination's long-term viability, and that the private sector should be more involved in long-term tourism destination marketing rather than being profit-driven.

It is also a strategy that is used to communicate items and services to potential tourists. Tour operators, travel agents, and airlines, for example, provide information on how and where to purchase products and services (Dwyer & Tanner, 2002). Also destination marketing helps establish a favorable environment for salespeople; in which consumers may order straight from advertisements in some cases. Also, de-marketing is targeted towards those who have already interacted with the company. It offers the opportunity to reach people interested in what the company provides. Destination marketing can be carried out through social media platforms, Google AdWords, etc (Freeman & Glazer, 2015). For the strategy to be effective, stakeholders in the industry should be motivated. The stakeholders include the media, business associations, local companies, tourism developers, local residents, tourists, employees, government and competitors.

2.3.5 Market research

On the other hand, tourist marketing involves finding out what visitors desire. This is accomplished through market research, which is used to design relevant goods and services. These items and services are advertised and promoted to potential tourists. Tour operators, travel agencies, and airlines, for example, provide information on how and where to get items and services. The foundation of advertising is to raise awareness and reinforce a company's position or image (Dwyer & Tanner, 2009). The second function of tourist marketing is to establish a favorable environment for salespeople, with the ultimate goal of generating sales. Marketing research is also critical in the development of tourist marketing strategies. All strategies begin with a thorough understanding of the client, which leads to the product being tailored to the

destination environment, the type of cuisine served, the design of lodgings, and even the travel and destination mix, according to customer profiles (Ketter et al., 2016). Only when this understanding has been absorbed can the marketer develop promotional tactics, distribution methods, and pricing depending on the market's willingness to pay.

2.3.6 Using focused market methods

On the other hand, one of the fundamental ways of tourism marketing is by focusing more on consumers in the local region or neighboring nations. This is due to the travel limitations in place and the general unwillingness to go overseas, making domestic clients a safer target audience (Khan, et. al., 2020). The use of interactive marketing strategies allows providers to be aware of the opinions of tourists. Knowledge of tourist attitudes and internal aspirations is beneficial in delivering customized products and creating creative items that will meet the demands of tourists (Freeman & Glazer, 2015).

After defining the target markets, Freeman & Glazer, (2015) suggests that one may use the methodologies used to determine the target market and deploy specific programs to attract tourists to this location for this reason. Freeman & Glazer, (2015) further adds that to take advantage of regular competition, will require employing software systems to track tourist packages and furnishings. This will allow the possibility to decrease delays in waiting periods at tourist sites or travel routes. These devices will also enable authorities to identify the instantaneous position of tourist vehicles, reducing the time required for the movement of packages from one plane to another.

This reduction in airport wait times is also related to entry and exit in residential areas and hotels that established by the application of entry and exit systems, integration based in all locations of hotel and even provides the possibility of sending bills via message or Bluetooth techniques to customers' cell phones and prompt payment of bills via mobile phones and electrification (Freeman & Glazer, 2015). Therefore using information technology to end unnecessary procedures and reduce waste activities can improve visitor service and also offer

information on travelers who have visited the country in the past and cut many formalities for their input and output.

On the other hand, marketing content is, for a variety of reasons, one of the most excellent marketing tourist tactics. Engaging in content marketing may aid a tourist marketer in bringing to the tourist attention about the business and its website. Search engine optimization (SEO) methods can also be employed to improve exposure via an excellent content marketing plan. According to Freeman & Glazer (2015), the secret to success is to generate valuable, high-quality material. Consider the skills one may need to share, update clients, and provide information on attractions, events, and experiences.

According to Freeman & Glazer (2015), every tourism firm should also consider influencer marketing as part of the tourism marketing plan. Influencer marketing comprises partnerships with people or companies that impact a certain demographic to promote your products or services. It exploits the power of social media and partakes in support marketing similarities, as people are more confident in the word of the influential person. A restaurant may be promoted by uploading photographs of the food they enjoyed there or sharing a video of their stay in a hotel. Marketing via influencers can also take various forms, such as blog articles or social media material (Appel et al., 2020).

2.3.7 Employing voice search techniques

The growth of speech recognition technology has provided new opportunities for marketers to promote their products. Hotels, in particular, are utilizing smart hubs to provide voice search capabilities within rooms, thus giving a handier source of visitor information. Meanwhile, travel agencies are making it easier to book using voice control. One of the finest tourism marketing strategies is to use SEO techniques to focus on voice search results on platforms such as Google. In addition, voice search may be used to connect clients with a chatbot (Garlick, 2019).

2.3.8 Focus on personalization

Modern clients expect to be regarded as personalities, where marketing for personalization is provided. The fundamental concept is that more pertinent marketing communications target consumers interested on individual levels. For example, sending a personalized email may show you a product you like. For personalization marketing to be effective, you need to gather and use user data using AI and automation. These data may include prior reservations, online browsing patterns, or social media activities (Freeman & Glazer, 2015). It is also vital in tourist marketing to remember that most clients do not pay for goods or services; they pay for the experience. In this context, several of the most helpful marketing ideas for tourism should emphasize the necessity of competition based on customer experience. Hotels may do so, while airlines may compete for meals and entertainment by providing intelligent room controls (Freeman & Glazer, 2015).

It may also be good to promote as much user-generated material as possible about budget-oriented tourist marketing. This includes an image(s), video, blog entries, comments, and more. User-generated content refers to any content that originates from internet users, not from marketers. A digital shopping stand could inspire tourists to take pictures from their position, and a company name or a hashtag may be added to the images. One may also create an area on the site that allows people to post their films while encouraging conversation about their business blog and social media platforms (Freeman & Glazer, 2015).

2.3.9 Provide review marketing

Customer reviews impact the current travel and tourism sector. There are also various ways to manage tourist marketing efforts that must also be focused on review management. According to Freeman & Glazer (2015), a person may send guest reviews by e-mail to ensure that they have plenty of input and little effect from poor evaluations. One may also concentrate on upgrading profiles on examination sites. Trends should be discovered early within unfavorable reviews, and the fundamental problems addressed to safeguard the company's reputation.

While the increased realism is comparable to virtual reality, overlaying digital information in real-world situations is more important than replacing it with whole new 3D surroundings. Virtual reality may be utilized in review marketing marketing. This is often carried out via smartphones and mobile applications. For example, specific travel applications now allow users to show online reviews and observe their telephone on the screen at restaurants or attributes in the real world. Some hotels include interactive wall maps, which can provide more tourist information if seen via a smartphone (Flavián, Ibáñez-Sánchez & Orús, 2019).

2.4 The benefits and Importance of tourism marketing

2.4.1 Benefits of tourism marketing

Ideally, marketing in the tourism sector is a helpful consumer approach to tourism locations (Sharpley & Pearce, 2014; Chhabra, 2015). Tourism marketing is becoming an essential topic of the sustainable tourism agenda (Tse & Qiu 2016). Yet, tourism marketing as a whole still seems to be a "blank" place for sustainable tourism academics (Donohe, 2012). Tourism marketing strategies also provide marketers with the opportunity to understand the sentiments of tourists. Knowledge of tourist attitudes and internal aspirations is beneficial in delivering customized products and creating creative items that will meet the demands of tourists. The techniques define the target market and use specific programs to attract tourists to this location for this reason, after explaining the target markets. Taking advantage of regular competition, employing software and systems to manage the tour information, customer details and back office activities decreases delays in waiting periods at tourist sites or travel routes (Kasemsap, 2015).

According to Cooper and Hall (2008), strategic tourist marketing also provides the destination with a standard structure and purpose, with the consumer at the center. Similarly, Middleton and Clarke (2012) stated that strategic tourist marketing provides a direction, a commercial structure, and a competitive strategy for the growth and administration of a destination. According to these perspectives, strategic tourist marketing is a complete, comprehensive, focused, dynamic, and continuous strategy for managing a destination.

Moreover, when tourist performance is at its peak, marketing strategy concentrates on sustaining growth, retaining a competitive edge, and being fashionable. The arsenal of marketing resources is used to achieve these goals, including different marketing strategies, public relations tools, and branding the tourism region. While some of these tools may have been utilized in previous phases, they are now being exploited to their full potential. This pattern is similar to Kotler and Armstrong (2010), who claimed that products in later stages of life should invest more resources in marketing to extend their lives and avoid a drop in demand. This is especially true in

the tourism sector, as visitors are looking for new, fresh, and creative locations and resorts (Mill & Morrison, 2012)

Tourist marketing research also identifies market groups whose interests fit the destination's image and offerings and creates tourism products and services to satisfy the audiences' expectations and deliver a pleasant experience (Murphy, 2013). Destinations may analyze if they can fulfill their resources and capabilities by researching these characteristics and getting vital insights for tourism strategy and development.

2.4.2 Importance of tourism marketing

Several studies have been performed on the importance of tourist marketing. Some of these are examined to emphasize the significance of this issue. According to Mwinuka (2017), tourism marketing aims to promote a business, distinguish it from competitors, attract consumers, and raise brand recognition. In that sense, tourist marketing is a vital component of tourism, as it entails developing strategies and communications tailored to specific target audiences to create revenues (Donohoe, 2012). However, tourism marketers might endanger the sustainability of a tourist destination if they do not incorporate sustainability while promoting such locations (Albrecht, 2016). As a result, tourism marketers and managers play an essential role in facilitating sustainable activities and behaviors in visitor development at the destination as part of their marketing operations (Jamal & Camargo, 2014). But, sustainability grows only when quality tourism services and settings are provided while also creating possibilities for people to enhance their quality of life at the tourist location. This reflects on tourists' marketers' and managers' objectives and those who promote tourism destinations to meet both tourists and residents (Esparon et al., 2015). Tourist marketing of places is thus essential to tourism, as travelers revisit the same destination (Kozak & Kazol, 2016). But, the imperatives of tourist marketing offer the marketing push aimed at selling the location' (image marketing) and 'landing' the visitor (destination marketing), with image marketing promoting the sense of place' and destination marketing focusing on selling the product.

On the other hand, tourism marketing is an essential component of the growing footprint of tourism (Truong & Hall, 2016). It is a concept that utilizes the four ps of marketing, namely, people, packaging, programming, and partnership, which applies to both destinations and individual companies. Thus, marketers can use the marketing concept in the tourism and travel industries (Ketter & McMillan, 2016). However, tourism marketing has focused on boosting tourists and treating tourism as a commodity to date, which is seen as an enemy of sustainability (Pomeroy, Noble & Johnson, 2012). Thus tourism marketing is a cooperative effort, as customers seldom use "one brand" to consume tourist experience in general (Liu & Chou, 2016).

Besides, the tourism business is very competitive since it is one of the world's major industries. This implies that firms in the field must discover ways to differentiate themselves from competitors, market themselves as the most outstanding alternative for visitors, and emphasize some aspects that set them apart or make them superior. Marketing is critical to achieving this, and many of the most exemplary tourist marketing ideas focus on assisting businesses in identifying and promoting their unique selling point. Of course, keeping up with the current trends is critical for marketers who want to develop a broad marketing mix and employ the most effective means for getting their message out.

Similarly, tourism marketing has a massive impact on people's lives, making it a powerful instrument. This may be employed in ways that lead to more sustainable forms of tourism, which is something that tourism stakeholders should be concerned about. De-marketing is a marketing approach that may be utilized in the quest for sustainability (Swarbrooke, 2002). In that regard, study findings indicate that adopting the proper marketing tactics for tourism may be a key element in maximizing income and creating awareness of a business.

2.5 The benefits of tourism marketing in the Middle East

The Middle East has evolved into a worldwide tourist and leisure powerhouse during the last decade. In terms of tourism destinations, the Middle East is the world's least developed area. Many experts feel that the region is taking the lead, a situation that will inevitably change. That said, Saudi Arabia is one of the countries with significant tourist potential that has yet to be realized. The government has recently redoubled its attempts to promote itself as a tourism destination. The region's tourist attractions include hotels, beaches, and unique experiences, such as a journey to the top of the Burj Khalifa, the UAE's Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque, Qatar's Museum of Islamic Art, and Oman's old-fashioned souks, which draw visitors to this region (Abuhjeeleh, 2019).

Besides, the Middle East has long had a tremendous appeal for visitors due to its world-class blend of cultural and natural features. It has transformed tourism into a significant source of revenue and growth. In 2011, the industry provided an estimated US\$107.3 billion, accounting for 4.5 percent of the region's Gross Domestic Product, and employed 4.5 million people, accounting for over seven percent of total employment (Ladki, Abimanyu, & Kesserwan, 2020). Thus, as a result of tourist marketing, companies can connect with existing and potential consumers, opening up substantial growth prospects for them. Therefore, tourist marketing is not limited to giving information about tourism offerings and increasing demand for products in a specific area; it also improves the welfare of tourists by allowing them to get the most out of their vacation by utilizing distinctive regional products and services.

Furthermore, tourist marketing is a constant and well-organized process for promoting tourism products, such as goods and services, in attractive tourist destinations. This also helps create a good image of tourism regions in both domestic and international tourism markets, attracting more visitors in the future by generating a different product image in the minds of tourists. The tourist marketing efforts do not entice the current tourist at a particular time (Liu & Chou, 2016). It also becomes the visitor's word of mouth, which spreads across the tourist's

mother country/place and serves as a source of attracting future tourists.

In Dubai, a city in the United Arab Emirates, tourism marketing is carried out by the Tourist and Commerce Marketing Department. It is the principal government agency in charge of tourism regulation in Dubai (DTCM). The DTCM markets and promotes Dubai worldwide as a tourist and commerce destination, define the sector's strategic direction, analyzes its performance, and licenses and categorizes tourism services like hotels and tour operators. It has 20 offices across the world to do this. The DTCM aims to attract 20 million visitors and "position Dubai as the premier destination for global travel, business, and events by 2020," as part of its purpose of "strengthening Dubai's economy by attracting tourism and inbound investment" to the emirate (Mauron, 2011). Meanwhile, in Saudi Arabia, the country is known for its diverse tourism resources, including visits to two holy sites in Makkah and Madina. Because of its proximity to the Kingdom's capital city, Riyadh, Al-Kharj governorate has a particular place on the Kingdom's tourism map. Second, Al-Kharj is a historical city with the oldest palace of King Abdulaziz, the founder of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the oldest well, which draws many people.

Al-Khateeb & Al-Hazmi, (2016) also analyzes the role of the media in Saudi Arabia's tourist marketing. He believes that the media, particularly newspapers and magazines, play a limited role in promoting tourism. As a result, it is necessary to encourage tourist culture in the media and to use contemporary media to distribute tourism culture in local communities by producing complete tourism message content. According to Damado (2010), the lesser growth of local tourism is due to an inadequate promotional mix, unsuitable promotional tactics, and a lack of synergy between promotional strategies and operational plans. He suggests that a thorough advertising mix and detailed information on national tourism sites can help boost local tourism in the Middle East. In Syria, Barhom (2010) analyzes the effectiveness of tourism promotion. He believes that tourism has little impact on economic growth. Due to the inefficiency and ineffectiveness of promotional messages about the tourist sector, its contribution is minimal. He

suggests that tourist culture and awareness be raised, new tourism destinations are explored, and electronic media such as the internet promote tourism.

According to Husain (2011) and Milode (2011), tourism marketing also has a vital role in stimulating demand and improving the quality of tourism services. The researcher's focus is on e-marketing, which should be carried out to produce content for marketing communications since this may considerably attract tourists and train marketing staff in this respect. In a similar study by Abdurrahim (2010), the significance of tourism marketing is that it contributes to the growth of craft industries. He believes that tourist marketing plays an essential role in developing craft industries and attaining rapid economic growth.

Budalah (2011) also determines the function of tourist marketing in tourism development and reducing the tourism sector's problem. He believes that tourist marketing by tourism institutions is an essential component in attaining the goal of tourism development and suggests that tourism marketing be expanded to achieve more meaningful pursuits. The role of marketing in tourist promotion in Iran is also discussed by Gilaninia and Mohammadi (2015). They believe that each market has unique features that must be considered in tourist marketing, and they conclude that tourism marketing has a beneficial influence on tourism marketing in Iran.

Masud-ul-Hassan (2015) also investigates the impact of the marketing mix on Bangladesh tourist promotion. They have discovered that a lack of marketing experience is becoming a key barrier to tourist promotion. Therefore, there is no question that tourism marketing plays an essential role in informing tourists about the nature and significance of tourism products accessible in any location. Tourism marketing is a way of communication between the tourism product and the tourists. It serves tourism by informing visitors about the various tourism activities and programs available in a specific location. It also influences their tourism spending decisions, resulting in a rise in demand for tourist items. But, the capacity of promotional programs to impact target groups through various promotional activities is critical to their effectiveness. This can be regarded as a primary source of information for visitors. The

advertising also strengthens the mental image/picture of the area's appealing tourism destinations and traditional items. This will assist in increasing the number of tourism visits, but it will also help increase the number of days that visitors remain.

2.6 Conclusion

The purpose of this literature study was to add to the current body of knowledge about the role of tourism marketing in the establishment of successful, long-term tourist destinations. It's a study that focuses on the function of tourism marketing in creating profitable, long-term tourist destinations. The literature review has identified some of the underlying issues facing tourist marketing and some areas where future research should focus on assisting the continued tourism growth in Saudi Arabia. It shows that understanding the distinctions between marketing products and marketing services is crucial in the tourist marketing process. Also, to succeed in tourism marketing, organizations must grasp the specific qualities of their tourist experiences, traveler motivations and behaviors, and the fundamental contrasts between selling products and services. Training may assist in dispelling misconceptions about sustainable tourist destinations and the role of marketing and promoting innovative methods. The findings from the literature review show that tourism marketers must share their experiences to coordinate their efforts and communicate their findings while working with sustainable tourist locations (Sharpley & Pearce, 2014). Thus the concerns shared here are crucial and opens up many possible future review pathways for comparative research.

3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The research uses a qualitative method in conjunction with a case study approach. The case study approach was chosen because it reveals a relationship between actions meant to show the role of tourism marketing in changing perceptions of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In that regard, this research aims to investigate the role of tourism marketing in fostering positive perceptions of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). It seeks to capture the views and opinions of key tourism stakeholders towards shifting perceptions through marketing channels. The data is acquired from both primary and secondary sources. The data will be collected from In-depth interviews, which served as the major source of information for the researcher. The in-depth interviews carried out as part of this study are semi-structured, with the interviews being directed by pre-prepared questions and answers. The major areas of discussion in the interviews include tourism marketing and its perceptions. In that regard, this section includes research design, data collection methods, data analysis, sampling methods, and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Method

According to Igwenagu, Chinelo (2016), a research method is the general research strategy that outlines how a research project is to be carried out and, among other things. It is a process that helps identify the methods used in the project. Easterby-Smith, et al. (2021), suggests that a research design involves arranging research activities, including data collection, to attain study goals. Furthermore, Sutton & Austin (2015) suggests that qualitative research may assist researchers in gaining access to the ideas and emotions of participants selected for the

study. It allows for a better understanding of individuals' meaning to their experiences. While quantitative research techniques may be used to ascertain the number of individuals who engage in specific behaviors, qualitative research methods can assist researchers in comprehending how and why such behaviors occur (Moser & Korstjens, 2018).

In this research, qualitative methods have been used to examine the role of tourism marketing in changing the perception of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The qualitative research approach involved structured interviews in addressing the research objectives on the effect of tourism marketing on how the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is seen. The use of semi-structured interviews allows for both structured and unstructured interview approaches (Zoiceska, 2018). Besides, the interviews are advantageous when a researcher is doing a formative program evaluation and wishes to interview key personnel in the tourism industry. As a result, interviewers have the freedom to pick the language used in semi-structured interviews and probe. It also enables the examination of sensitive issues while allowing interviewers to investigate and clarify contradictions within respondents' stories. Nevertheless, the type of interviews have limitations. It requires more time to sit down and conduct an interview with respondents. In addition, the type of dialogue is challenging because it is difficult to find the right personnel to conduct the interview.

Additionally, follow-up questions are one of the benefits of a semi-structured interview method since they enable the collection of detailed information on the respondent's first response (Roulston & Choi, 2018). It also provides the most direct interaction between researcher and participant about the subject of study. Participants are allowed to express their opinions, and researchers may delve into the meanings of the participants' ideas and feelings.

3.3 Sources of data

The collected data comprises both primary and secondary sources of information. The primary data was collected using in-depth interviews. The semi-structured in-depth interviews as part of this research were guided by guidelines created before the interviews. The topics explored

in the interviews included various aspects of tourism marketing and their role in changing the perception of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The secondary sources of information were obtained from analyzing literature on tourism marketing. This included the usage of peer-reviewed academic articles and other online resources that assisted the researcher in gaining a better grasp of the subject matter. Some of the articles used are “Tourist Responses to Tourism Experiences in Saudi Arabia. conservation and sustainable development”, Exeter 2012 Gulf Studies Conference, 16-20”, Rethinking tourism in Saudi Arabia: Royal vision 2030 perspective. African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure, 8(5), 1-16., and Tourism development in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Determining the problems and resolving the challenges. In International Tourism Development and the Gulf Cooperation Council States (pp. 124-139), among others

3.4 Sample

The sampling plan specifies the study's sampling unit, sampling frame, sampling techniques, and sample size. Martinez-Mesa et al. (2016) define a sample as one that meets the criteria of efficiency, representativeness, dependability, and adaptability. A random sample of sixteen people was chosen from the general public. As a result, the sample for this study comprises tourism industry researchers, a teacher and specialist in the subject, an airline sales person, an administrator, tourists, Saudi citizens, and a tourism ministry official who was chosen to participate.

3.5 Target Population

According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2003), a population is defined as a group of people and things that share observable traits. Kothari (2017) also agrees that the term "population" refers to all elements in a specific area of research. On the other hand, the term "target population" refers to the entire group of individuals, events, or items of interest that the researcher is interested in learning more about or investigating (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010).

In that regard identifying the target group or groups from semi-structured interviews involves

picking respondents from the target group (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). The researcher compiled a comprehensive list of all participants in this study by searching thoroughly for persons working in the tourist business and civilians. Due to the availability of tourist-related companies and activities in the area, the participants were picked at random from a list of all relevant tourism firms. The participants' email addresses and phone numbers were obtained, and they were contacted by email and an introductory phone call.

3.6 Sampling method

The data sources were selected via the technique of purposive sampling. In qualitative research, purposeful sampling is often employed to identify and choose information-rich examples linked to the topic of interest. Even though several deliberate sampling procedures exist, purposeful sampling seems to be the most widely utilized in research (Palinkas et al., 2015). The populations selected for this study are categorized in this way: Job descriptions and their respective contributions to tourism activities. This helps researchers in finding informants. For this study, ten informants were questioned, including three representatives from local governments, four representatives from professional tourism groups, and three owners of tourism businesses.

3.7 Instrumentation

The researcher obtained original data from first-hand sources. These comprised of researchers in the tourist business, a teacher and an expert in the sector, an airline sales representative, an administrator, and a tourism ministry official were selected to participate in the study. This is because they are actively involved in tourism development. The primary data were selected for this study because it is more accurate, provides up-to-date information, and knows the owner of the information. It is particular to the research topics (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Therefore the instruments utilized for data collecting included interviews.

.3.7.1 Interviews

An interview was used as the method of data collection. The interviews were used

because the entire target population could be contacted at a relatively low cost in a short period while collecting a large amount of data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). The interview questions were open-ended to allow the respondents to give adequate information, which was important to the research questions. The structured interviews were well-suited for gathering respondents' viewpoints and opinions on complex and often sensitive subjects. Additionally, they permit further analysis of additional information and clarify responses (Fox, 2009). It was critical to have some freedom to examine respondents' perspectives, discuss exciting and pertinent issues, acquire knowledge, and dig into delicate subjects throughout each interview.

Besides, interviews are exhaustive in that respondents can respond to the open-ended questions. The questions in this scenario were designed to be completed in 30 minutes. Therefore, the researchers must make the most use of their interview time, which is made possible by using interview guides. Interview guidelines enable researchers to examine various replies more systematically and completely and keep the interview focused on the planned course of action (Bryman, 2016). Therefore, the questions were designed to elicit information on the role of tourist marketing in Saudi Arabia.

The interview involved ten participants, lasting between 15-30 minutes. The researcher wrote the interviews on the designated form that contained seven questions regarding the role of tourism marketing in changing the perceptions of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The researcher remained in touch with the interviewees throughout the study by communicating to them through email and making phone calls. Since the researcher was observing the coronavirus protocols, the questionnaires were sent to the respondents online. All the interviewees agreed because it was flexible, convenient and efficient. The seven questions that were asked to the participants were as follows:

1. What do you think of tourism marketing in achieving tourism development in Saudi Arabia, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a tourist destination, in light of the Saudi Tourism Guidance Scheme and the Kingdom's 2030 vision?

2. In your view, does tourism marketing in the Kingdom have a role in raising the local economy?
3. Do you think tourism marketing will serve the local economy in the future and provide opportunities for local investors to expand their businesses?
4. What are the positive and negative effects of tourism marketing from your point of view?
5. What do you think is the best effective way to market and promote tourism in Saudi Arabia (social media - TV - newspapers - the Internet)? Why?
6. From your point of view, do you think the tourism marketing style is appropriate for the culture of the Islamic community?
7. Do you think that the methods of tourism marketing may change in the future?
8. Do you think Saudi Arabia's tourism marketing campaign will be effective?
9. Were your visits to Saudi Arabia more enjoyable or unpleasant?

3.7 Data collection procedure

The data collection began immediately upon the approval of the proposal. According to the researcher, the questionnaires would be given to the respondents.

3.8 Data analysis

After collecting the data, the researcher analyzed and presented it to see whether any patterns emerged (Sutton & Austin, 2015). The returned questionnaires were first reviewed for accuracy. This was followed by sorting the collected data to ensure they are comprehensive and consistent. The pre-processing of acquired data included editing to identify mistakes and omissions and correcting as needed. Data were then coded according to research factors to limit the number of classes of responses. After coding, the data were categorized by common traits and properties. The raw data was then compiled into statistical tables for additional study. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze both quantitative and qualitative data.

In this case, the purpose of qualitative data analysis is to condense large volumes of data into smaller, more understandable chunks of information. This enables the researcher to uncover

patterns among the precise observations. Therefore, the qualitative analysis involves transcribing the audio and reading to identify the various codes of data (DeCarlo, 2018).

Following the recording of the interviews, the transcripts of the responses were generated. The transcriptions were then subjected to a thorough analysis and repeated rereading of the discussions. This approach assisted in gaining a thorough understanding of the descriptions provided by the respondents. The key themes were thoroughly understood due to repeated exposure to the data. As a result, coding became iterative, as increased exposure to data aided in identifying data and themes with each interview conducted (Elliott, 2018). The presentation of detailed data charts and frequency tables illustrates various measures of central tendency and regression.

3.9 Ethical considerations

The researcher will seek informed consent from the respondents before collecting the data from the field. The study's objectives shall be presented and made known to the respondents to obtain their informed consent. A high degree of confidentiality on the information supplied by respondents via interviews or questionnaires will be maintained. In that regard, the research took these issues into account: data gathered is kept secret, and surveys are completely anonymous so that respondents' identities are not revealed. The researcher also acknowledged and mentioned other writers' contributions without engaging in plagiarism.

4. Findings

4.0 Overview

The findings of this study offer a lot of information about how the local communities perceive tourism marketing and how it can change the way people think about Saudi Arabia. Murphy, (2013) defines local community as a group of individuals interacting and living within a particular place. The study looked at this issue in the context of Saudi Arabia. The data was collected using in-depth interviews, which served as the researcher's primary source of information. Alamri (2019); Eriksson and Kovalainen (2015) believe that semi-structured interviews should be used to learn more about attitudes, values, beliefs, and motivations. This will help researchers better understand how respondents think and feel about certain issues than when structured interviews are used. In that regard, the in-depth interviews conducted as part of this research were semi- structured, with pre-prepared questions and responses directing the interviews. The focus was on Tourism marketing and related attitudes. Besides, the people who were selected to participate in the study either study or work in tourism or are experts in the area but don't work in the tourism field. Based on how quickly the respondents earn income, they see tourism development differently.

In that regard, the results of the data analysis are presented in this part of the report. After that, the results were addressed in both illustrative and inferential data. The researcher sought to investigate the role of tourism marketing in fostering positive perceptions of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) amongst potential local and international visitors. The goal was to describe the various aspects of tourism marketing and its role in changing the perceptions of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In this chapter, the researcher looked at the demographic data and descriptivestatistics of the people who responded to the survey.

Many of the people who took part in the study said that when tourism started to grow in their area, they didn't see many positive effects. However, when tourism marketing was introduced in the area, it changed their perspective about tourism in the region. It was, therefore, more

important to them that some members were aware of the impacts of tourism marketing and its implications on the tourism industry in Saudi Arabia. Nevertheless, the researcher met the study's goals by interviewing all ten people.

4.1 Response Rate

This research involved a total population of 16 participants. These included three local governments, four people from professional tourism groups, three tourists, three civilians, and three people who own tourism businesses. The study investigated the rate at which respondents partook in the study

Table 4.1: Response Rate

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Responses	16	100
Non-Responses	0	0
Total	16	100

Source: Research Data (2021)

Table 4.1 indicates the response rate. The respondents were given seven questions, all correctly completed, resulting in a 100% response rate. This response rate appropriately reflects the research population from which results, suggestions, and analyses were drawn.

4.2 Demographic data of the participants

Several factors were considered in the collection of demographic data, such as age group, nationality, gender, roles and business type. According to Saeed et. al. (2021) respondents' nature and qualities may be discerned from demographic data. After collecting demographic data, it is easy to determine if the researcher will get reliable replies. The demographic information of participants is shown in the table below (Table 4.2).

Table 4.2 Summary of Participants

Participant #	Age group	Nationality / Gender	Position/Business type
1	45-50	Saudi / Male	Administrative in the tourism sector
2	40-45	Saudi / Male	A teacher and an expert in the region
3	30-35	Saudi / Male	An employee in a tourism company
4	30-35	Saudi / Male	Administrator at the Ministry of Tourism
5	30-35	Saudi / Male	Airlines Sales Officer
6	30-35	Saudi / Male	Front Desk Supervisor in a hotel
7	30-35	Saudi / Male	A researcher in the tourism field
8	30-35	Saudi / Male	A researcher in the tourism field
9	40-45	Egyptian / Male	A teacher an expert in the region
10	40-45	Saudi / Male	A researcher in the tourism field
11-13	45-50	South African male, American and Brazilian females	Tourists
14-16	30-40	2 Saudi males and 1 female	Civilians born and residing in Saudi Arabia

4.3 The role of tourism marketing in achieving tourism development in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

In the first question of the survey, the researcher sought to investigate the respondent's perception of tourism marketing in achieving tourism development in Saudi Arabia. The goal was to analyze the respondent's perspective on Saudi Arabia as a tourist destination in light of the Saudi Tourism Guidance Scheme and the Kingdom's 2030 vision. According to Mwinuka (2017), tourism marketing aims to promote a business, separate it from its competitors, attract customers, and build brand recognition. As such, tourist marketing is an important part of tourism because it involves developing strategies and communications tailored to specific groups of people to make money (Schroeder et al., 2013). However, if tourism marketers don't think about sustainability when they promote a place as a good place to go, the place might not last long (Abuhjeeleh, 2019; Abrecht, 2016). So, tourism marketing and management play an important role in encouraging visitors to do and think about things that are good for the place they're visiting as part of their marketing (Jamal & Camargo, 2014). Then, sustainability grows only when high-quality tourism services are provided, and settings are set up in a way that allows people to improve their quality of life at the tourist site. This shows that the people who market and manage tourism places want it to be a good experience for tourists and locals (Esparon et al., 2015).

Therefore, during the study period, the study involved individuals from local governments, professional tourism groups, civilians, tourists, and people who owned tourism businesses. Most participants agreed that tourist marketing plays a vital part in enhancing the external community's experience of the Kingdom. P1 reveals that "tourism marketing plays a significant role in promoting customer awareness and thus opening up a wide array of opportunities to potential tourists. This help increase the popularity of Saudi Arabia Kingdom to the international community." Therefore given the increasing number of tourists in the region, it calls for tourism marketing in the region.

Also, to make Saudi Arabia a great tourist destination by 2030, the Vision 2030 initiatives view tourism marketing as a vital component. Based on the viewpoints of P2, the respondent suggests that tourism determines the economic development of any given country worldwide. P2 says tourism accounts for about eleven percent (11%) of the total GDP of Saudi Arabia. As the government plans to expand its territories to the external world, Saudi Arabia promotes tourism to increase its overall GDP in 2030. The issuance of over 3500 tourism licenses by the Saudi Kingdom is a promising strategy towards marketing the tourism industry within and outside the country. This shows why a majority of the respondents would agree that tourism is slowly becoming the main service industry globally and a critical element in the economic improvement plans in various countries.

"As an old and famous spot for pilgrimage tourism, Saudi Arabia should incorporate increased tourism marketing to promote tourism development to achieve vision 2030 as per the Saudi Tourism Guidance Scheme. One way to achieve tourism development through tourism marketing is by softening the visa procedures and fees to attract many visitors who ensure positive and advanced development in the country" (P3).

Tourism marketing also can connect individuals to their neighborhood, nation, and region's history and customs (Gössling, et. al., 2016). P4 agrees that tourism marketing is very important because it helps people in the Kingdom become more aware of what tourism offers and boosts the local economy.

'If you go on social media, you can learn about places to go and what to expect.

Promoting tourism in Saudi Arabia without marketing would be a very difficult task to do. Saudi Arabia wants to grow tourism in cities like Abha and Al Baha, and they want to do this. Tourists don't know about many cities in the kingdoms with beautiful natural scenery. Tourism marketing would help the people in those cities learn more about the places (P4)

It is also one of the most effective tools used to promote tourism and achieve the objectives of

this industry. It also helps secure employment opportunities for thousands of workers in different fields (P5). Meanwhile, P6 and P7 say that the way tourism is marketed in the Kingdom is very important to the growth of the international community through tourism.

"Tourism marketing, in my opinion, plays a critical role in strengthening the international community through tourism in the Kingdom. It is not easy to develop tourism in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia while leaving out tourism marketing. Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 has made tourism a core development subject. As the Kingdom steadily opens its doors to travelers worldwide, its inhabitants are regarded as one of the fastest-growing segments in the world travel sector. The influence of the Saudi tourist is tremendous, as evidenced by the recently finished Jeddah International Travel and Tourism Exhibition (JITX), which drew numbers of Saudis from across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) area. The event is billed as the Kingdom's leading travel business fair, with external locations for Saudi tourists and travel agencies displaying a variety of lucrative alternatives, "(P7).

From these viewpoints given, we learn that in Saudi Arabia, it's hard to grow tourism in the region if there is no tourism marketing. Masud-ul-Hassan (2015) reveals that a lack of marketing experience is a key barrier to tourist promotion. Therefore, there is no question that tourism marketing plays an essential role in informing tourists about the nature and significance of tourism products accessible in any location. This will assist in increasing the number of tourism visits, but it will also help increase the number of days that visitors remain.

Besides, a big part of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 is making tourism a big part of the country's growth. As stated by Avraham, et. al., (2016), to attract foreign investment, tourist marketing is one of the primary areas contributing to sustainable development. The marketing of the Kingdom as a tourist destination to attract investment will help increase foreign exchange reserves, enabling funding for developmental projects, decreasing dependence on oil revenues, and encouraging investments in manufacturing (P5). Therefore, as the Kingdom opens its doors

to more and more people worldwide, its residents are seen as one of the fastest-growing parts of the world travel industry.

P8 also mentions that tourism marketing has a very important role in enriching the external community from tourism within the Kingdom. Without tourism marketing, it isn't easy to promote tourism in Saudi Arabia because there is a vision for developing tourism in Saudi Arabia in the next few years in several cities such as the city of Abha, Taif, and Al Baha. Such cities are characterized by their picturesque nature, but they are not known to tourists from abroad, unlike Riyadh and Jeddah. P9 and P10 also share the same sentiments. The respondents believe that "the role of marketing is very pivotal, important and effective in achieving and developing tourism in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and achieving Vision 2030 in the tourism aspect."

In that regard, most of the respondents believe that tourism marketing is an essential component in enhancing tourism development in Saudi Arabia. Many believe that tourism marketing seeks to promote the tourism industry while attracting more people from different nations and generating brand awareness of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a tourist destination; this enhances tourism development in the Kingdom. It is also a strategy that builds on the Kingdom's 2030 vision aim to enforce an abundant amount of efforts and investments into the tourism sector. Thus given that Saudi Arabia is a popular tourism destination, incorporating tourism marketing would help promote tourism development in the region and at the same time help in achieving vision 2030 as per the Saudi Tourism Guidance Scheme.

4.4 The role of tourism marketing in raising the local economy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

A majority of the respondents believe that tourism marketing is one of the most important things for tourism development. This is because it helps local governments to meet their goals for the local community and enables them to understand its economic value to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. P1 believes that tourism marketing has a big impact on a city's economy. It helps people know about towns and cities, making them more appealing to tourists. Besides, tourism marketing also ensures that information about local businesses like hotels and restaurants can be quickly accessed (P2).

P2 also says that Saudi Arabia's tourism industry has grown a lot thanks to a lot of the country's marketing to tourists. Most countries around the world, at least in the short term, have tourism as their main source of income. However, in Saudi Arabia, there is a disparity game in which tourism only makes a small contribution to the country's economic growth. It also promotes businesses, attracts customers, and stimulates brand awareness. It ensures that previous and new visitors are reached and made aware of the new facilities. As more tourists visit the Kingdom, the levels of expenditure increase, therefore, boosting the local economy with the foreign currency that they leave behind.

However, it is essential that the items that form the main focus of the marketing strategy can compete with what other countries are providing to become preferable (P3). P4 also says that Tourism marketing promotes economic growth by attracting more tourists to discover places highlighted by marketing teams. According to P4, engaging in tourism marketing allows communities to view pictures and videos of discovered places and then visit buying local goods and services, promoting the economy. As such, communities in the Saudi Arabia kingdom can sell their products to tourists, which earn them a living. Such business activities promote tourism.

While some respondents believed that tourism marketing is an effective tool used by key tourism personnel to attract foreign investment, consequently, it leads to the development of

local industries at different levels. It will, in turn, increase employment opportunities for both nationals and foreigners in various job categories. It will also reinforce the country's national economy (P5). The same sentiments are shared by P6, who says:

'Tourism marketing in Saudi Arabia plays a crucial role in attracting foreign tourists from other nations to the famous spots for pilgrimage tourism located in Saudi Arabia due to its Islamic heritage. Marketing promotes the Kingdom cultural heritage and diversity to the outside community, which helps generate brand awareness for the tourism present' (P6).

P7 also shares the same thought regarding the role of tourism in raising the local economy. The respondent suggests that tourism marketing in the Kingdom plays a role in increasing the local economy. It is viewed as a strategy to spur economic growth and poverty alleviation in underdeveloped nations, complementing other conventional areas of the economy like industry. Similarly, P9 reveals that tourism marketing plays a very important role in raising the economy through which tourists will discover the places announced by tourism marketing.

As a result, tourism marketing is positively reflected in attracting visitors to Saudi Arabia and marketing its various destinations. Consequently, it contributes to creating jobs and job opportunities while also raising the local economy. Based on these viewpoints, it reveals that the respondents share a common perception of the role of tourism marketing in boosting the local economy. This is in line with the current literature on tourism marketing, as Middleton and Clarke (2012) stated that strategic tourist marketing provides a direction, a commercial structure, and a competitive strategy for the growth and administration of a destination. According to these perspectives, strategic tourist marketing is a complete, comprehensive, focused, dynamic, and continuous strategy for managing a destination.

4.5 The role of tourism marketing in serving the local economy in the future and providing opportunities for local investors to expand their businesses

Tourism Marketing has a very important role in serving the local economy in the future and providing opportunities for local investors to expand their businesses. Studies indicate that tourism marketing allows the key personnel to advertise a destination while promoting related local business enterprises within the tourism destination. P1 says that tourism marketing will promote local investments such as pubs, hotels, and airline companies and their services and, in turn, attract more visitors. More visitors will promote their growth, and as a result, provide job opportunities to Saudi residents. Therefore, it is vividly clear that tourism marketing will sway many people into the tourism industry shortly (P2). However, P3 suggests that this can only be achieved if there are proper strategies for tourism marketing which will provide chances for the local investors to expand their businesses. This includes the digitization of business models, which promote technology uptake. In the long run, it will provide opportunities for domestic investors to pursue their business and expand their business in different sectors of the economy while contributing to the development of the national industry, which is growing at a rapid pace. The youths will face many job opportunities in different sectors of the economy, contributing to maintaining local economic growth (P5). Meanwhile, P10 believes it will increase the opportunities because the tourists will increase and need more services. Also, providing these services will provide job opportunities, projects, and production for the country's people (P10).

From the responses given, it is undoubtedly clear that tourism marketing acts as the focal point for providing investment opportunities to local investors to expand their businesses near tourism sites by providing guides and accommodation to tourists. Consequently, it helps raise the country's economic income, creates thousands of professions, and nurtures cultural exchange amongst outsiders and communities. Therefore, Lei, Kostopoulou & Huibin (2014) suggest that the quality of these tourist destinations provides an opportunity for local investors to pour in their resources and expand their businesses.

4.6 The positive and negative effects on tourism marketing

The study also sought to investigate the inherent effects of tourism marketing. P2 believes that tourism marketing helps create awareness for the customers and locals of a given place. Creating awareness for hotels, restaurants, attraction sites, and transportation forms the critical pillars of the tourism sector. However, tourism marketing can be expensive in terms of cost, time, and other resources; thus, giving one of the adverse effects in the tourism industry (P2). Meanwhile, P3 reveals that the positives of tourism marketing are 'identifying, understanding and predicting the needs of tourists and thus availing the required facilities to increase visitors' morale and plan for more visits. With increased visits, revenues for a country increase. When customers are satisfied, they spread the good word increasing the number of visitors in the future. The local businesses often rise with increased foreign traffic since the economic activities are heightened.' However, one of the negatives of tourism marketing, according to P3, emanates from failing to meet the visitors' expectations where what is advertised is not available. Such a case can be detrimental since the visitors end up being disappointed. Increased visitor flow and situations where animals get exploited to entertain the tourists are some negatives that come with tourism, a product of tourism marketing (P3).

On the other hand, P10 suggests that the positive effects of tourism marketing are introducing the world to a culture in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and our heritage, and our Islamic and Arab history, and highlighting the most different places from the rest of the neighboring regions and the Middle East regions. The negatives include entering other cultures that contradict our values, beliefs, and principles (P10). Despite the positive and negative effects of tourism marketing, most of the respondents believe that tourism marketing contributes significantly to the economic development of any country. For this reason, P2 believes that tourism marketing has more positive impacts than its negative impacts on the same course of economic growth.

4.7 The best effective way to market and promote tourism in Saudi Arabia

Ideally, tourist marketing is helpful consumer approach to tourism locations (Sharpley & Pearce, 2014; Chhabra, 2015). As Liu & Chou, (2016) suggests tourism marketing is a significant sector, and it employs a wide range of tactics and approaches to promote places and destinations. Some of effective tourist marketing techniques help define the target market and the use of specific programs to attract tourists to a particular location (Kozak, 2016). A majority of the respondents think that the best way to convey tourism marketing information across Saudi Arabia is via Social media, Television, newspapers, and the internet. All three media channels provide suitable channels for the transmission of advertisement in Saudi Arabia, especially in this digital era (P2). Similarly, P4 says that the social media is by far the best way of marketing tourism in Saudi Arabia. The influence of social media in the current world cannot be disregarded. Many people around the world spend lots of time on social media sites every day. By engaging social media users on different platforms, marketing efforts are bound to reach huge numbers of people. But P3 suggests there needs to be consistent engagement with the target market to understand their demands and needs to align the products and services on offer to meet the demands (P3)

Besides, as research portrays, most youths are computer literate and spend much of their time on the internet. Consequently, it justifies the use of the internet. As P7 reveals the best way to market and promote tourism in Saudi Arabia is through the Internet.

‘Internet marketing is a significant characteristic of encouraging tourism industries all over the globe. Internet marketing for the tourism business may help you improve your performance and interact with customers from all around the world. It will also allow you to display visual information about the destination, attracting more people and increasing your exposure’ (P7)

Similarly, in the current literature, Bethapudi (2013) suggests that information and communication greatly influence the tourist system by establishing an information environment

for each tourism institution and a data structure that allows the entire system to function.

Therefore using the digital platform would be more beneficial to aged people who spend much of their time on TVs and sitting reading journals and different newspapers (P2).

P8 also mentions that the current effective method around the world is such media, as it has many programs that the Saudi community follows daily, such as (Twitter, Snapchat, WhatsApp, and Instagram). Millions of Saudi society follows these programs, so P8 believes that these are the practical techniques for tourist marketing to the Saudi community or abroad (P8)

From the response given, we can learn that most agree that social media and the internet would be the best way to market a destination. Even though tourist marketing employs a wide range of tactics and approaches to promote places and destinations (Avraham & McMillan, 2016), one of the most preferred marketing tactics is the internet and social media. According to Ketter et al. (2016), the internet is used in many tourism marketing techniques, with websites, online advertisements, email, and social media platforms playing a significant part (Mwinuka, 2017). Many tourist marketing methods involve the internet and play a considerable role with websites, online advertising, emails, and social media. Besides, the travel and tourism sector stakeholders are adjusting marketing techniques to maximize their exposure and preserve competitive advantage in the face of widespread internet use via online and mobile platforms at all phases of the trip experience.

4.8 Appropriateness of tourist marketing to the culture of the Islamic community

The study also sought to investigate the influence of tourist marketing on the culture of the Islamic community. The participants had varied opinions regarding the appropriateness of tourist marketing to the culture of Islamic. For instance, P1 thought internet tourism marketing would interfere with Islamic culture. After all, this tourism marketing style is only meant to create awareness and attract more tourists. Also, Saudi society is hospitable, and therefore it can accommodate tourists irrespective of their cultural affiliation. P2 believes that choosing the appropriate tourism marketing method is not necessarily in line with the religious prospect, even

though they affect it to some extent. According to the respondent, most spiritual prospects detour youths from using social media; however, that has never been the case. Many children still use social media and the internet, irrespective of religious commands. Therefore, for business interest, religious rulings can be slid off slightly. Hence, a good tourism marketing model should cover all the media channels (P2).

However, P3 gave a contrary opinion on tourist marketing to the culture of Islamic. P3 says: Tourism marketing is essential to attract varied customers and is not in any way in contravention of the culture of the Islamic community. With proper strategies that can reach large numbers, tourism marketing is a sure way of improving the local economy and people's living standards. Of course, it is expected that the tourist that will visit will have varied cultures that might be different from those of the locals. However, the world is becoming smaller every day through globalization and technological advancements. It calls for tolerance for all cultures as people become increasingly integrated (P3).

P4 believes that tourism is about enjoying nature. Hence, tourist marketing involves inviting people to view character, art, and science. The marketing involves promotions, tourism information, and tour guidance, among others, thus appropriate for the Islamic culture. Tourism marketing is just upgrading tourism which has been happening over the years without negatively affecting Islamic culture. Marketing tourism will bring new opportunities for the Islamic communities to showcase their culture and share it with the world. Islamic communities in Saudi Arabia use social media platforms for personal reasons without compromising their culture. Tourism marketing will not affect their culture negatively. P5 also believes that tourism marketing does not affect the culture of the Islamic community in the Kingdom. According to P5, Spirituality in Islam is a private matter that has nothing to do with specific marketing techniques that may be used to appeal to a particular target group to achieve a specific objective. Tourism marketing aims to attract more visitors to the country, contributing to improving sales and sales revenues of industries locally and nationally. I believe that tourism marketing has an

essential role in developing our economy and aims to create local initiatives such as hospitality, tourism, entertainment, and services such as restaurants, hotels, and transportation means for locals and foreigners.

P6 and P7 also share the same views. They both agree that tourism marketing is fashioned so that it does not affect the Islamic community cultures. Hence it is an appropriate marketing tool.

‘In my view, tourism marketing is a tool used to enhance tourism development in the Kingdom. Thus it being a tool, it is fashioned in a way that still protects the culture of the Islamic community while still increasing tourism awareness and distributing the tourism culture among citizens. I believe tourism marketing will enrich the Islamic community's culture more as tourists will be more attracted to it through marketing and will want to study it more, enhancing its value and preservation’ (P6)

‘I believe that the tourism marketing style is appropriate for Islamic culture. Regarding client (tourist) behavior and supplier (host) behavior and the connection between them, religion is linked to tourism. However, the study is scarce on this subject. Furthermore, in light of the current competition between tourism marketers and the crowded market, tourism marketing objectives must be led by studying visitor motivation and its relationship with tourist satisfaction. According to tourist views, location marketers should position and differentiate themselves’ (P7)

Several respondents believe that the Islamic culture is sacred hence cannot be compromised by tourist marketing. As far as they are concerned many believe that tourist marketing is appropriate and helps conserve the old customs and traditions of the Islamic culture. As suggested by P8 it encourages the desire to travel, commute, spend vacations and entertainment, and search for tourism, travel, hospitality, and entertainment services that suit all cultures. Hence this may not have a negative effect on the Islamic community culture.

4.9 Future Changes in the tourism marketing methods

When the respondents were asked about the future changes in the tourism marketing methods, P1 stated that innovative marketing strategies are on the way. Just like how digitization has evolved in the last decade, marketers can develop more sophisticated programs that can be more appealing to Saudi Arabia. According to P1, we live in an innovative world, where everyone is competing to invent new platforms that can deliver information to customers, and in this case, to the tourists in a more efficient manner (P1). P2 also suggests that the standard marketing methods would not change; however, the people using them may choose which marketing method is appropriate in tourism marketing. Today, globalization continues to cover wider regions of the world; thus, promoting common cultures of doing things, such as ways to conduct tourism marketing.

P3 also responded by saying that the strategies used in the future for tourism marketing will undoubtedly change as people move to the digital era. Countries will be forced to adopt better ways to reach their consumers as the competition increases with the growing digital space. The marketing strategies will become more visual as people understand what is being offered. There will be an increased need for customer relationships, fresh content, and brand awareness. At the same time, P4 and P5 believe that technological advancement has led to the innovation of social media platforms such as Instagram and WhatsApp.

I think the innovative nature of human beings will continue considering there were no social media platforms in the last 15 years. There is a possibility that several other social media platforms will be created, and the Saudi Arabia communities will use them. The world will continue to experience technological changes in the future from one generation to the other. People will develop new, better ways to share information affecting marketing in all departments' tourism in Saudi Arabia and the world (P5).

Therefore based on the sample responses given, it is clear that it is possible to expect elements of change in the future when it comes to tourism marketing methods. This comes when there is a

growth of technology which also affects the tourist marketing methods.

The beauty of the current generation is the evolution of technology and infrastructure. Vast knowledge is present at this age bringing new developments in every sector of life. The world is in a different phase today compared to a decade ago. Thus, tourism methods will change in the future with new efficient techniques being created. The social media programs well-known to the Kingdom people may change in the future with other programs equipped with artificial intelligence able to bring tourism marketing at home (P6) effectively

Based on this response, it is possible to conclude that the methods of tourism marketing will change due to improvements in technology. As P7 reveals, there would be several programs that will facilitate the marketing and promotion of various tourist destinations.

4.10 The Effectiveness of Saudi Arabia's Tourism Marketing Campaigns

In 2021, Saudi Arabia proposed a strategy of offering travel incentives to people willing to visit places believed to be unprofitable. The major aim was to link tourists from global countries to the cities. With the aim of attracting about a hundred million visitors yearly by 2030, the drivers of the initiative believed that the opportunity would open doors for many tourists. The program intended to compensate the airlines operating in the kingdom to cover for the losses incurred. The government signed a deal to provide incentives for airlines operating in Barcelona and Zurich. P11, 12, and 13 believed that the move by the government is the best measure to diversify the nation's economy to enable it attain the 2030 vision. In addition, they believed that the country's economy will grow by 2030, with the tourism sector contributing 10% of the economy from the current 4%. Again, the respondents believed that Riyadh will become a leading business center after the construction of the airport. The respondents were only concerned with the improvement of the economy through tourism.

4.11 Tourists' Views about their Visits

Before 2019, it was difficult for people of other religious backgrounds to enter the kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The introduction of the e-visa system opened doors for international travelers

emerging from all backgrounds. The system generates more than forty-nine nationalities within thirty minutes. P14, 15, and 16 said that if an individual is looking for a better place to visit then they should prioritize Saudi Arabia since the nation is large and diverse. They said they came across lakes, oases, mountains, sand, valleys, deserts, and forests. The tourists were amazed when the country allowed non-religious visitors into the country. They said the country is secure and welcoming; therefore, nobody should be afraid to visit the place. It is believed that Eve's tomb is located in Jeddah, the country's largest city. Eve is the first woman and the grandmother of humanity. Jeddah is an Arabic term meaning grandmother and the place has been receiving legends since the twelfth century.

Conclusion, Recommendations and Limitations

5. Conclusion

This study looked at the role of tourist marketing in changing the perception of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. To sum up, tourism marketing is vital to Saudi Arabia's economic success. Several recommendations were made for boosting tourism in the area using tourist marketing approaches. Firstly, the study covers important research topics and depicts the country's travel and tourism sector's advancement and evolution in tourist promotion. A tourist marketing and management strategy should encourage visitors to do and think about activities that benefit the destination (Jamal & Camargo, 2014). It also promotes consumer awareness, allowing prospective travelers to explore various possibilities. This increases Saudi Arabia's global appeal. Tourism marketing is thus required due to the rising number of visitors. Hence a great way to promote tourism is to meet industrial goals.

Furthermore, tourism marketing is important for the region's growth. Tourism marketing is unquestionably important to enlighten travelers about the nature and importance of tourism goods. This will help improve tourist visitation as well as guest stay days. It also aligns with the Kingdom's 2030 aim to increase tourism-related spending. Due to the popularity of Saudi Arabia as a tourist destination, embracing tourism marketing will assist in encouraging regional tourism growth and help achieve Vision 2030.

In addition, the combined feedback from all stakeholders implies that tourism marketing concepts that include input from multiple stakeholder groups are required. Tourism marketing, as a whole, covers the ideals: promoting the value of cultural heritage and customs, empowering local people, conserving biodiversity, and preserving and strengthening the economic, social, and environmental system. This should be fostered in Saudi Arabia, through a partnership between the public and commercial sectors, with the help of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and essential input from local communities and interest groups.

A further advantage of Saudi Arabia is its unrivalled status as a pilgrimage destination.

Even though the country's infrastructure has not yet been fully developed, the profits from the oil industry are enormous. The monarchy can use its will to create a tourist-friendly environment. There is grandeur in this place; intense historical and religious traditions characterize Saudi Arabia, thus making it an excellent tourism destination. As a result of all of its resources and the monarchy's wise leadership, which is easing the country into the new millennium with relative ease, the monarchy will be forced to do so in today's globalized world if it continues to promote itself aggressively and sell itself aggressively. Because of significant infrastructure improvements, the country is an excellent destination for tourists. It is past time for the rest of the world to recognize the importance of the wonder and beauty of this country and its people, as well as the continuous right to vote. As a consequence of its long-term strategic plan, Saudi Arabia will soon become one of the world's most popular tourist destinations.

5.1 Recommendation and Future research

The following suggestions and recommendations are based on the feedback and evaluated findings of interviews with stakeholders in the tourism sector. While they are not confined to a single agency or organization but rather to several organizations, important stakeholders should collaborate to set goals and create partnerships to promote sustainable tourism marketing practices. To begin with, they should reconsider and restructure the present lease contract system to reduce the loss of private sector investments in Saudi Arabia.

It is also important to create public-private partnerships to fund tourist marketing campaigns. There is also a need to incorporate non-governmental organizations (NGOs) into tourism management practices and provide formal duties and responsibilities while raising awareness of tourism marketing within each stakeholder group. The concerned stakeholders should also collaborate with academic institutions and universities to create visitor management and experience design rules. This will include creating educational incentive programs and formal certification programs for tourist marketing organizations.

The researcher also discovered that tourism activities in Saudi Arabia are thriving, and it

is expected that this trend will continue. The country's monarchy has a strategic purpose in the near future; it can become a significant tourist destination for visitors from around the Middle East. However, given there has been a change in the administration, it must prioritize public image and enhanced marketing of the country. The survey findings also indicated that tourism in Saudi Arabia has been increasing in a good way. This seems to be the case, and speculations indicate that it will continue. Despite this, there is a need for additional reading to evaluate other potential tourism advantages.

Furthermore, research should be carried out to establish the practical actions that need to be taken. As observed, the government has harnessed the industry's potential. Tourists are flocking to Saudi Arabia, where the industry is thriving. They are extensively engaged in the export of petroleum. Hence, several changes are required, and several have already been implemented. Therefore, it is believed that Saudi Arabia can become a global power if it receives sufficient financial assistance and support from the monarchy.

Future research should also examine the role and potential of tourism marketing in conserving biodiversity and promoting socio-economic development in Saudi Arabia's diverse economy. The COVID-19 epidemic should cause a rethinking of the worldwide volume development strategy for tourism, both for safety and climate change considerations. There is an overarching silence on pandemic and other threats the global tourist industry imposes on itself and the world economy (Scott et al., 2019). Individuals and huge corporations gaining from volume expansion goals seem to be driving them (Gössling et al., 2016; Hall, 2019).

The COVID-19 situation also presents a chance to reassess tourist marketing strategy. This may start with an assessment of the COVID-19 pandemic's successes. Due to the considerable drop in demand, airlines have started retiring ageing and inefficient aircraft (Simple Flying, 2020). Videoconferencing is now commonly used by home office employees, students, and business travellers. This presents a long-missed opportunity due to low transportation demand. According to Cohen et al. (2018), many business travellers will welcome reduced

flying. Even high-level interactions, like the G20 Leaders meeting on March 26, 2020, have been scheduled by videoconference for the first time (European Council, 2020). More broadly, perspectives on mobility may have shifted the demand for tourism.

Nonetheless, this may have brought bigger shifts that would realign the global tourism sector towards the SDGs rather than "growth" as an abstract concept benefiting few (Piketty, 2015). The zero-carbon imperative must be considered in conjunction with destination models to prevent leakage and better capture and distribute tourist value (Gössling et al., 2016). Overcapacity in air transport and lodging, related to subsidies, market liberalization, and the seeming unwillingness of policymakers to handle disruptive technologies such as the worldwide emergence of Airbnb, may be an insight.

Consumer and travel demand changes should be discussed in addition to business and regulatory changes. Changes in cost perceived health concerns and modified consumption capacity due to pandemic limits all impact behaviour (Lee & Chen, 2011). Intensive media coverage may cause communities to overreact to mild pandemics, according to Fan et al. (2018, p.132), confirming that news and social media heavily affect behaviour and perception about a place (Kantar, 2020).

5.2 Limitations

In recent years, Saudi Arabia has grown in popularity as a tourist destination, and the government has increased its marketing efforts to attract more foreign tourists to the Kingdom. Although this research emphasized the tourism industry's challenges, the government feels that it can be the second most rapidly growing business in the country, behind the oil industry. The selection of experts was one of the most important obstacles faced when researching this project. A discussion of the panellists and their expertise and how they interacted with one another became a statistically significant variable.

Another limitation was the subjective nature of the interview approach. There was no uniform technique for selecting panellists, and the number of rounds in which they were chosen

varies. Besides, while there may be cultural differences that will make certain aspects of this transition difficult for the employees, fortunately, it is not an insurmountable obstacle in the country. The country has shown what its citizens are capable of overcoming enormous barriers to meet the requirements of global change. This involves learning to see travel as an adventure.

This research paper aimed to raise awareness of the concerns and obstacles associated with tourist marketing as seen by different stakeholders. However, incorporating input from a diverse range of stakeholders is a relatively new strategy and should be explored further. While participants included the public sector, the corporate sector, and non-governmental organizations, not all stakeholders were involved. As a result, the chosen participants may not reflect all associated organizations or all of the organization's thoughts and attitudes regarding the researched issue. A future study might include more organizations and people to go further into specific site-level difficulties.

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