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Leveraging Promotional Marketing Tools to Drive Market Penetration in Tourism Destinations Within Nigeria's Southwest Region

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Abstract

Market penetration in tourism destinations is a key indicator of success for regions seeking to grow their visitor numbers and economic benefits through targeted promotional marketing strategies. Despite these initiatives, many global destinations are seeing a drop in penetration due to heightened competition, evolving tourist preferences, and market saturation. Effective promotional tactics on traditional and digital platforms can quickly shape tourists' decisions and behaviors, driving up visitation and revenue, but intense rivalry often results in stagnant or declining visitor figures. The rising demand for personalized and sustainable experiences underscores the importance of innovative marketing to expand reach; however, destinations that do not adapt to these shifts risk further erosion of penetration. Ultimately, while promotions are vital for building awareness and engagement, failure to align with changing consumer trends perpetuates declines in market penetration. The study adopted a survey research design. The population comprise 431 marketing employees across top, middle, and lower levels in 10 tourism centers in South-West Nigeria. A total enumeration method was used. Data were collected using a structured and validated questionnaire with Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients ranging from 0.70 to 0.92. Data analysis involved descriptive and inferential statistics, specifically multiple linear regression, conducted using SPSS version 27. This represents a response rate of 98.4%, which is deemed satisfactory for data analysis and interpretation. The study found that marketing promotional tools have positive and significant effect on market penetration of tourism centers in South-West Nigeria ($\text{Adj. } R^2 = 0.279$; $F(4,420) = 33.796$, $p < 0.05$). The study concluded that marketing promotional tools enhanced the market penetration of selected tourism centres in South-West, Nigeria. The study recommended that management of tourist centres should prioritize the integration of these promotional tools into comprehensive marketing strategies, focus on digital platforms like social media for targeted campaigns, while combining them with public relations efforts to improve market penetration.

Keyword: Market penetration, Public relations, Social media marketing, Sales promotion, Telemarketing, Transit advertising

Introduction

Market penetration in tourism destinations serves as a critical measure of success for regions aiming to expand their visitor base and economic impact through strategic promotional marketing tools (Kotler et al., 2022; Lee & Chang, 2023). However, despite these efforts, many destinations globally face a decline in market penetration due to increasing competition, shifting tourist preferences, and market saturation. Globally, effective promotional tactics using both traditional digital platforms rapidly influence tourists' choices and behaviors, which boosts visitation and revenue, yet the intensity of competition sometimes leads to a stagnation or decline in visitor numbers (Smith & Chen, 2021; Müller et al., 2024). The evolving preferences for personalized experiences

and sustainable tourism have further emphasized the need for innovative promotional marketing to deepen market reach, but failure to adapt to these trends has caused some destinations to experience reduced penetration (Johnson et al., 2023; Thompson & Wilson, 2022). Thus, while promotion plays a decisive role in shaping tourists' awareness and engagement, a decline in market penetration persists where promotional strategies fail to keep pace with consumer changes (Brown & Taylor, 2024).

In the United States, tourism market penetration has been significantly driven by integrated marketing strategies combining experiential advertising, digital outreach, and event promotions. Yet, certain segments and destinations have witnessed a decline in market penetration attributed to over-



reliance on traditional promotion methods and under-engagement with emerging tourist demographics (U.S. Travel Association, 2025; Simpson & Lee, 2024). Although the U.S. tourism sector recorded a robust growth trajectory overall, targeted promotional campaigns sometimes struggle to reverse declining visitation in less prominent locales. Cities like New York, Orlando, and Las Vegas have managed to counter declines through multimedia advertising, social media engagement, and event tourism partnerships, but other regions face challenges in maintaining market share (Peters et al., 2023; Thomas & Ramirez, 2022). Moreover, despite the rise of sustainable and slow travel trends, some destinations lag in promotional focus on authenticity and community-based tourism, which correlates with declines in niche market penetration (Green & Parker, 2025; Hall & Baker, 2023). Consequently, promotional marketing tools must continually evolve to arrest and reverse declines in market penetration within U.S. destinations (Walker et al., 2024).

Similarly, European tourism destinations have embraced diverse promotional marketing tools to maintain and grow their market share in an increasingly competitive global industry. Nevertheless, certain European destinations have experienced a decline in market penetration due to saturated markets and the slow recovery from pandemic-related travel restrictions (European Travel Commission, 2023; Meyer & Schmitt, 2022). While the continent's tourism market places strong emphasis on digital marketing, cultural heritage promotion, and post-pandemic recovery efforts, destinations unable to innovate rapidly or leverage new media have seen diminishing visitor engagement. Key countries such as Spain, Italy, and France use social media influencers, virtual tours, and sustainable tourism endorsements to boost loyalty, though uneven adoption of these tools has contributed to market share erosion in some areas (Hofer & Keller, 2024; Schmidt & Lawson, 2023). Promotional events like festivals and gastronomy fairs remain valuable but have not fully offset the declines in market penetration experienced in less frequented locales (Braun & Vogel, 2021; Garcia & Rossi, 2022). These marketing initiatives highlight the challenge of reversing downward trends while pursuing market penetration growth (Larsen et al., 2024).

Africa's tourism sector, while still developing, has identified promotional marketing tools as crucial for driving market penetration amidst challenges such as infrastructure deficits and competitive external markets. Despite recent gains, certain destinations in Africa face a decline in market penetration due to limited access to advanced promotional technologies and insufficient marketing budgets (Muriithi & Banda, 2022; Osei-Tutu & Nyarko, 2023). Countries like Kenya, South Africa, and Ghana have begun leveraging influencer marketing, eco-tourism promotion, and targeted sales promotions to capture new market segments, but these efforts have yet to fully counteract overall declines linked to inadequate infrastructure and global competition (Adams & Mwangi, 2024; Nkosi & Dlamini, 2023). The persistence of promotional marketing barriers contributes to fluctuating tourist arrivals and uneven market penetration across the

continent (Acheampong & Boateng, 2021; Mensah & Owusu, 2023). Therefore, effective and sustained promotional marketing is essential to arresting and reversing declines in African tourism market penetration.

Focusing on Nigeria, the southwest region represents a significant tourism market with diverse cultural, historical, and natural attractions. However, the penetration of this market remains constrained by underutilization of modern promotional marketing tools and a noticeable decline in market penetration fueled by limited coordinated marketing efforts and infrastructural challenges (Kabuoh et al., 2024; Adegboye & Salami, 2023). Empirical evidence suggests that public relations, social media marketing, telemarketing, transit advertising, and sales promotion have shown positive and significant effects on competitive advantage and customer acquisition within select tourism centers in Southwest Nigeria (Ndiulo, 2024; Oladipo & Adewale, 2023). Nevertheless, the current decline in broader market penetration underscores the urgency of expanding investment and strategic planning in promotional marketing. These tools increase awareness, attract diverse tourists, and build loyalty, which are essential for reversing declines and fostering market growth in a region with rising tourism potential (Ajayi & Ojo, 2022; Balogun & Fasola, 2023). Hence, pragmatic investment in promotional marketing can transform the tourism landscape in Southwest Nigeria by enhancing market penetration and counteracting the recent downward trends.

Different studies have been carried out on marketing promotional tools and market penetration of organisations in different countries and regions (Hanaysha, 2022; Husain et al., 2020; Iqbal et al., 2022; Laksamana et al., 2025; Terrance et al., 2017). Despite this, the linkage between marketing promotional tools and market penetration of tourist centres in Nigeria has not been well established due to discrepancies and lack of attention to details exhibited by these tourist centres. There are many reasons why marketing promotion of tourism centres in Nigeria is poor. Scholars such as (Ajayi & Ojo, 2022; Kabuoh et al., 2024) have noted that the Nigerian government has not placed a high priority on marketing and promoting the country's tourism industry. As a result, there are few government initiatives or campaigns to promote tourism in Nigeria. These have led to poor market penetration of tourist centres. Furthermore, Osinubi et al. (2021) have observed that the market penetration of tourism centres in Nigeria is quite low. This is due to various reasons such as the lack of awareness of the tourism potential of the country. Poor market penetration in the tourism industry has led to significant negative consequences for destinations, businesses, and local economies. Limited reach and visibility have resulted in lower tourist numbers, reduced revenue streams, and underutilization of tourist centres. This has often led to financial strain for local businesses, fewer job opportunities, and hindered economic growth (Adebayo & Butcher, 2023). Additionally, insufficient market penetration has weakened the destination's brand and competitive edge, making it difficult to attract investment and maintain a positive reputation. As competitors in other nations gain market share,

local tourist centress risks losing its appeal and becoming overshadowed, resulting in a downward spiral of declining interest and decreased viability in the global tourism market (Osinubi et al., 2021).

2.1 Literature Review

The literature review examined thoughts from various literature on conceptual clarifications, empirical findings and theoretical support in line with the study's variables.

2.1.1 Marketing Promotional Tools

Marketing promotional tools encompass various strategies and techniques used by tourism businesses and destinations to communicate with prospective travelers and influence their buying decisions. According to Li and Wang (2023), marketing promotional tools refer to integrated tactics such as advertising, public relations, direct marketing, and sales promotions aimed at increasing brand awareness, stimulating demand, and ultimately driving sales within the travel and tourism sector. Another perspective defines promotional tools as the strategic communication channels and incentives utilized to engage customers, foster loyalty, and gain a competitive edge in the crowded tourism marketplace (Jamal & Budiono, 2022). The advantages of marketing promotional tools in tourism are profound; they enable destinations and service providers to create differentiated brand identities that attract diverse tourist segments, enhance customer engagement through personalized and interactive campaigns, and build long-term relationships that encourage repeat visits (Awad & Alharthi, 2025). Moreover, these tools help manage tourist perceptions during crises and adapt to shifting travel behaviors through agile and data-driven marketing approaches (Chen et al., 2024). Importantly, marketing promotional tools facilitate efficient resource allocation, allowing tourism operators to optimize their promotional mix and maximize return on investment (ROI) in highly competitive markets (Sun et al., 2023). Collectively, these benefits underscore the critical role of promotional tools in driving sustainable tourism growth and economic development.

2.1.2 Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing refers to the use of digital platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter by tourism businesses and destinations to promote travel experiences, engage audiences, and influence consumer travel decisions. Singh et al. (2025) define social media marketing as strategic content creation and targeted communication on social networks aimed at attracting, influencing, and retaining tourists through real-time interaction and user-generated content. Similarly, Okazaki and Taylor (2022) describe social media marketing as a dynamic communication process that leverages peer-to-peer recommendations, influencer partnerships, and visual storytelling to enhance tourists' perceptions and drive bookings. For the tourism industry, social media marketing offers numerous advantages. It significantly increases brand visibility by reaching a broad and diverse audience with relatively low costs compared to traditional media channels (Singh et al., 2025). These platforms facilitate real-time, two-way engagement with

audiences, enhancing customer relationships and loyalty by allowing tourists to share experiences, post reviews, and provide immediate feedback (Bennett, 2023). Moreover, social media channels empower small and lesser-known destinations to compete globally by providing an equal platform to showcase their unique attractions through viral content and influencer endorsements (Okazaki & Taylor, 2022; Tan et al., 2024). Additionally, the data analytics tools available on these platforms allow marketers to tailor campaigns efficiently, targeting specific demographics and measuring campaign effectiveness, which improves return on investment and market adaptability (Wu & Chen, 2023). Overall, social media marketing has become indispensable for tourism, shaping consumer behavior, boosting pro-tourism actions, and fostering sustained growth in this digital age (Singh et al., 2025; Tan et al., 2024).

2.1.3 Telemarketing

Telemarketing in tourism is a direct marketing method where businesses use telephone calls to communicate with potential or existing customers to promote travel-related products and services. According to Smith and Brown (2025), telemarketing involves personal, direct communication aimed at generating leads, building customer relationships, and closing sales through persuasive conversations. In a similar vein, Lee and Thompson (2023) define telemarketing in tourism as the systematic use of phone calls to enhance customer engagement, provide personalized travel information, and offer tailored promotions. The advantages of telemarketing in the tourism industry include immediate and direct interaction with customers, enabling tourism businesses to address inquiries, customize offers, and obtain instant feedback, which improves customer satisfaction and loyalty (Smith & Brown, 2025). Telemarketing also allows cost-efficient communication compared to mass advertising and facilitates the generation of quality leads by targeting specific customer segments interested in travel products (Lee & Thompson, 2023). Additionally, it supports relationship marketing by maintaining contact with past tourists and encouraging repeat bookings, which is vital for sustaining tourism revenues in competitive markets (Kumar & Verma, 2024). Telemarketing's adaptability to include follow-up calls and integration with digital channels further amplifies its effectiveness in the evolving tourism marketing landscape (Fernandez et al., 2025).

2.1.4 Transit Advertising

Transit advertising is the practice of placing advertisements on public transportation vehicles and infrastructure, such as buses, trains, taxis, and stations, to promote products or services. As defined by Martinez and Lopez (2025), transit advertising leverages the mobility and high regional exposure of transit systems to deliver repetitive and wide-reaching marketing messages. Similarly, Ruiz and Chen (2023) describe transit advertising as a strategic outdoor advertising medium that integrates with urban commuter flows to create continuous brand visibility, especially effective for local and regional tourism promotion. For the tourism industry, transit advertising offers distinct advantages by reaching both

residents and tourists during their daily travel routines, thereby increasing brand awareness and stimulating interest in travel destinations or services (Martinez & Lopez, 2025). Its mobility ensures ads are seen across diverse neighborhoods and tourist hotspots, creating opportunities for spontaneous travel decisions and reinforcing destination branding (Ruiz & Chen, 2023). Additionally, transit ads tend to have high engagement due to prolonged exposure and captive audiences during commutes, providing tourism marketers with cost-efficient and impactful channels to reach varied demographic groups including locals, commuters, and visitors (Wang et al., 2024). This exposure is particularly valuable in urban centers with high tourist footfall, enhancing recall and prompting bookings (Jackson & Patel, 2025). Furthermore, transit advertising's integration with digital technologies, such as interactive displays and QR codes, adds interactivity and data collection advantages for tourism campaigns (Liu & Zhao, 2024).

2.1.5 Public Relations

Public relations (PR) in tourism is the strategic management of communication aimed at building and preserving a positive image of destinations, travel brands, and services among their target audiences. Roper and Salcedo (2024) define public relations as the deliberate effort to establish and maintain mutual understanding and favorable relationships between tourism organizations and their stakeholders through media relations, community engagement, and crisis management. Likewise, Weber and Zhang (2023) view PR as a holistic communication strategy that enhances credibility, manages reputation, and facilitates positive storytelling to influence public perception and drive tourist interest. The advantages of PR in tourism are multifaceted; it enhances destination branding by generating earned media coverage and fostering emotional connections with travelers, which traditional advertising cannot achieve alone (Roper & Salcedo, 2024). PR helps manage crises such as natural disasters or health outbreaks by ensuring transparent communication that preserves tourist confidence and destination resilience (Weber & Zhang, 2023). Furthermore, PR builds long-term stakeholder relationships, encourages local community support, and promotes sustainable tourism practices, all crucial for maintaining a tourism destination's positive image and competitiveness (Kim & Lee, 2025). Through media events, influencer collaborations, and storytelling, PR amplifies authentic narratives that enhance tourist engagement and loyalty, thus driving economic benefits across the tourism value chain (Harrison & Nguyen, 2025).

2.1.6 Sales Promotion

Sales promotion in the tourism industry refers to short-term incentives or activities designed to stimulate immediate customer interest and boost sales of travel products and services. As described by González and Martínez (2024), sales promotions include discounts, coupons, contests, loyalty programs, and special offers that encourage tourists to make quick bookings or purchases. Another definition by Evans and White (2023) characterizes sales promotion as a tactical approach to enhance product visibility, attract new customers,

and generate trial usage through time-limited deals or value-added propositions. The benefits of sales promotion in tourism are significant; it encourages early or off-season bookings, helping to stabilize demand fluctuations and improve cash flows for tourism businesses (González & Martínez, 2024). Sales promotions also attract price-sensitive travelers and increase market penetration by enticing repeat visits or upselling complementary services (Evans & White, 2023). Additionally, these promotions support brand differentiation in competitive markets and can create a sense of urgency among consumers, leading to quicker decision-making and increased revenue generation (Kaur & Singh, 2025). When combined with other promotional tools, sales promotion enhances overall marketing effectiveness by driving consumer engagement and providing measurable short-term sales lifts (Singh & Roy, 2025).

2.1.7 Market Penetration

Market penetration is a growth strategy aimed at increasing sales of existing products or services within an existing market through increased market share or consumer usage. As defined by Lee and Park (2024), market penetration involves leveraging pricing strategies, promotional activities, and increased distribution efforts to outcompete rivals and attract more consumers in the current market segment. Similarly, Sharma and Gupta (2023) describe market penetration as an approach focused on gaining higher brand adoption and usage intensity, often by emphasizing value propositions and improving product accessibility. In the tourism industry, market penetration strategies offer advantages such as strengthening the market position of destinations and tourism service providers through enhanced brand awareness and customer loyalty (Lee & Park, 2024). By targeting current tourists with tailored promotions, improved customer experiences, and loyalty incentives, tourism operators can increase repeat visits and extend the length of stay, which directly boosts revenue and profitability (Sharma & Gupta, 2023). Moreover, successful market penetration helps tourism businesses optimize resources and generate economies of scale, enabling sustainable growth even in competitive or saturated markets (Patel & Kumar, 2025). This strategy is particularly relevant for managing destination maturity phases by reinforcing customer relationships and maximizing market share before exploring new markets or products (Verma & Joshi, 2024).

2.1.8 Theoretical Framework

The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) is relevant as an underpinning theory for this study because it provides a robust framework to understand and predict human behavior by focusing on individuals' intentions, which are shaped by attitudes and subjective norms (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Ramdan et al., 2017). TRA posits that behavioral intention precedes actual behavior, influenced by the person's positive or negative evaluation of the behavior (attitude) and perceived social pressure or expectations from important others (subjective norms). In the context of tourism, TRA is useful for analyzing tourists' decision-making processes, such as destination choice, travel intentions, and promotional

responsiveness, by clarifying how attitudes toward tourism products and the influence of social groups affect intentions to visit or recommend destinations (Ramdan et al., 2017). This theory's explanatory power has been validated in various tourism studies, showing that it effectively predicts tourists' intentions influenced by factors like electronic word of mouth and destination image (Ramdan et al., 2017). Applying TRA in this study enhances the understanding of the psychological and social drivers behind tourist behaviors and supports the development of targeted, behaviorally informed marketing strategies that can effectively influence travel choices and promote tourism growth. Thus, TRA provides a sound theoretical basis for examining and shaping tourists' behavioral intentions critical to the study's aims.

2.1.9 Conceptual Model

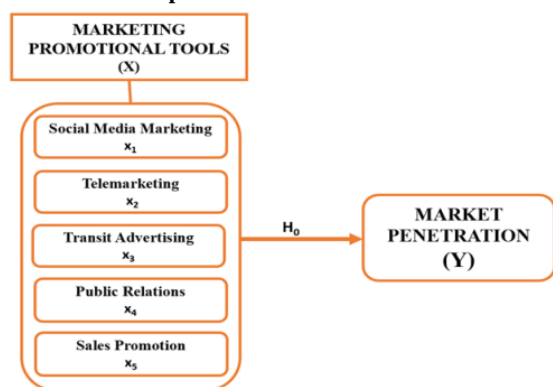


Figure: Conceptual Model for Marketing Promotional Tools and Market Penetration

Source: Researcher's Conceptualization (2025)

3.1 Methodology

The study employed a survey research design, targeting a population of 431 marketing employees across top, middle, and lower levels in 10 tourism centers in South-West Nigeria. A total enumeration method was used. Data were collected using a structured, validated questionnaire with Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients ranging from 0.70 to 0.92. Data analysis involved descriptive and inferential statistics, specifically multiple linear regression, conducted using SPSS version 27.

Functional Model

Table 1: Summary of multiple Regression of marketing promotional tools and market penetration of selected tourism centres in south-west, Nigeria.

N	Model	B	Sig.	T	ANOVA (Sig.)	R	Adjusted R ²	F (4,420)
424	(Constant)	2.385	.179	1.347	0.000 ^b	0.537 ^a	0.279	33.796
	Social Media Marketing	-.008	.902	-.123				
	Telemarketing	.154	.010	2.588				
	Transit Advertising	.231	.000	4.638				
	Public Relations	.179	.001	3.227				

In this study, there were two constructs: independent and dependent variable. The independent variable is marketing promotional tools which was measured with sub variables such as social media marketing, telemarketing, transit advertising, public relations, and sales promotion, while the dependent variable is market penetration which was measured as a whole. The model for the variables is denoted in the equations below:

Operationalization of Variables

The variables of this study are operationalised as shown below:

X = Marketing Promotional Tools (MPT)

Y = Market Penetration (MP)

$$Y = f(X)$$

Variables Identification

$$X = (x_1, x_2, x_3, x_4, x_5)$$

x_1 = Social Media Marketing (SMM)

x_2 = Telemarketing (Telem)

x_3 = Transit Advertising (TA)

x_4 = Public Relations (PR)

x_5 = Sales Promotion (SP)

Y = Market Penetration (MPA)

Hypothesis

$$Y = f(x_1, x_2, x_3, x_4, x_5)$$

$$MP = \alpha_0 + \beta_1 SMM + \beta_2 Telem + \beta_3 TA + \beta_4 PR + \beta_5 SP + \mu_i \dots \dots \dots (1)$$

Where:

Beta (β) = the degree of change in the outcome variable for every 1-unit of change in the predictor variable.

ϵ_i = error term

4. Data Analysis, Results and Discussion

A total of 431 questionnaires were distributed to employees at selected tourism centers in South-West Nigeria. Of these, 424 were accurately completed and returned, yielding a response rate of 98.4%, which is considered sufficient for data analysis and interpretation.

4.1 Restatement of Research Hypothesis

H₀: Marketing promotional tools have no significant effect on market penetration.

	Sales Promotion	.305	.000	5.687				
	Predictors: (Constant), Social Media Marketing, Telemarketing, Transit Advertising, Public Relations, Sales Promotion							
	Dependent Variable: Market Penetration							

Source: Researcher's Findings, 2023

Interpretation

Table 1 shows the multiple regression analysis results for the marketing promotional tools on market penetration of selected tourism centres in south-west, Nigeria. The results showed that telemarketing ($\beta = 0.154$, $t = 2.588$, $p < 0.05$), transit advertising ($\beta = 0.231$, $t = 4.638$, $p < 0.05$), public relations ($\beta = 0.179$, $t = 3.227$, $p < 0.05$) and sales promotion ($\beta = 0.305$, $t = 5.687$, $p < 0.05$) all have positive and significant effect on market penetration of selected tourism centres in south-west, Nigeria. However, social media marketing ($\beta = -0.008$, $t = -0.123$, $p > 0.05$) is the only factor that shows a negative but insignificant effect on market penetration. This implies that, telemarketing, transit advertising, public relations, and sales promotion are important factors in the tourism centres which in turn yields an increase in market penetration.

The R value of 0.537 supports this result and it indicates that marketing promotional tools has a moderate positive relationship with market penetration of selected tourism centres in south-west, Nigeria. The coefficient of multiple determination $\text{Adj } R^2 = 0.279$ indicates that about 27.9% variation that occurs in the market penetration of the selected tourism centres can be accounted for by the marketing promotional tools while the remaining 72.1% changes that occur is accounted for by other variables not captured in the model. The predictive and prescriptive multiple regression models are thus expressed:

$$\text{MP} = 2.385 - 0.008\text{SMM} + 0.154\text{Telem} + 0.231\text{TA} + 0.179\text{PR} + 0.305\text{Promo} + U_i \text{---Eqn(i) (Predictive Model)}$$

$$\text{MP} = 2.385 + 0.154\text{Telem} + 0.231\text{TA} + 0.179\text{PR} + 0.305\text{Promo} + U_i \text{---Eqn(ii) (Prescriptive Model)}$$

Where:

MP = Market Penetration

SMM= Social Media Marketing

Telem = Telemarketing

TA = Transit Advertising

PR = Public Relations

Promo = Sales Promotion

The regression model shows that holding marketing promotional tools to a constant zero, market penetration would be 2.385 which is positive. In the predictive model it is seen that of all the variables, social media marketing is negative and insignificant, so the management of the company can downplay this variable and that is why it was not included in the prescriptive model. The results of the multiple regression analysis as seen in the prescriptive model indicate that when all other variables of marketing promotional tools (telemarketing, transit advertising, public relations and sales promotion) are improved by one-unit, market penetration

would also increase by 0.154, 0.231, 0.179 and 0.305 respectively and vice-versa. This implies that an increase in telemarketing, transit advertising, public relations and sales promotion would lead to an increase in the rate of market penetration of selected tourism centres in south-west, Nigeria. Also, the F-statistics ($df = 4, 420$) = 33.796 at $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$) indicates that the overall model is significant in predicting the effect of marketing promotional tools on consumer acquisition which implies that marketing promotional tools except social media marketing are important determinants in the market penetration rate of selected tourism centres in south-west, Nigeria. The result suggests that such tourism centres should pay more attention towards developing the components of the marketing promotional tools especially telemarketing, transit advertising, public relations, and sales promotion to increase market penetration. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) which states that marketing promotional tools has no significant effect on market penetration of selected tourism centres in south-west, Nigeria was rejected.

Discussion of Findings

The aggregated results of multiple regression analysis for hypothesis two showed that marketing promotional tools (social media marketing, telemarketing, transit advertising, public relations and sales promotion) have positive and significant effect on market penetration of selected tourism centres in south-west Nigeria ($\text{Adj. } R^2 = 0.279$; $F(4,420) = 33.796$, $p < 0.05$). Thus, the combination of the independent sub variables was significant in predicting market penetration of selected tourism centres in south-west Nigeria. Put in differently, social media marketing, telemarketing, transit advertising, public relations and sales promotion combined have statistically significant effect on market penetration of selected tourism centres in south-west Nigeria.

The result of this study has been supported by findings of various empirical studies on marketing promotional tools. Maina and Afande (2015) found that sales promotion was the highest ranked promotional mix element with regards to its effect on sales volume, personal selling was ranked second, advertising was ranked third, and public relations was ranked fourth while direct marketing was the least ranked. Results from Williams et al. (2018), revealed that customer trust had significant and positive relationship with adoption of point of sale (POS) of selected business organisations who are SMEs in Lagos State, Nigeria. Findings from Kim et al. (2019), demonstrate that consumer perception of CSR is an antecedent to corporate brand trust, which fully mediates the relationship between consumer perception of CSR and corporate reputation. Arefayne et al. (2021) found that

advertisement and sales promotions have influence on initial purchase. However, advertisement is the most influential promotion-mix element on the foreign tourists' mental images. Ranked second is personal selling and the third is public relations. However, sales promotion is the least influential promotion-mix element on the foreign tourists' mental images. The findings also indicate that Tigray tourism office frequently used television and radio promotional media which are the most traditional, but infrequently used modern promotional tools (Websites, Short Mobile Messages (SMS), word of mouth, public relation). Sales promotion and public relations mixes are mostly applied promotional elements in Tigray tourism sites.

It was revealed in the study of Yadav and Rahman (2017) that perceived social media marketing activities (SMMA) positively influenced purchase intention and brand equity; which endorses the nomological validity of the developed scale. In the same vein, results from the study of Chen and Lin (2019) indicated that social media marketing activities indirectly affect satisfaction through social identification and perceived value. At the same time, social identification and perceived value directly affect satisfaction that then influences continuance intention, participation intention and purchase intention. Similarly, the analytical results of Ansari et al. (2019), indicated that brand awareness has a weak positive significant relationship with consumer purchase decision whereas, social media content marketing has a moderate positive significant relationship with the consumer purchase decision. Laksamana (2025) found that social media marketing leads to purchase intention and brand loyalty. Hence, brand loyalty is affected by purchase intention. The study of Iskandar and Komara (2018) found that the implementation of search engine optimization SEO strategy is very useful in improving product marketing. Similarly, results from the study of Terrance et al. (2017), revealed that the comparison study of SEM and SEO help to understand the marketing and technical aspect of the website in the digital marketing. Through the analysis of data, the study of Iqbal et al. (2022), found that through search engine optimization (SEO), college website has been well promoted, and the popularity of the website has been improved, and a good brand effect has been established. In the study of Husain et al. (2020) revealed that applying search engine optimization SEO strategy appropriate for online shop holder can potentially increase visitor traffic and rankings in a relatively short time. Likewise, in Hoque et al. (2018), this study shows that keywords in the Meta description, content related headings, longer and unique content with useful information, webpage loading speed, SSL certificates, mobile responsiveness of a website, Links to relevant local sites and online reputation improve organic ranking and organic traffic to websites. Also, Gopiseti and Linganna (2017) found that television is the powerful factor which influenced the buying behaviour of consumers and followed by quality and brand loyalty and new entrants in the fast moving consumer goods (FMCG). Sharma (2017) found that satisfaction significantly mediated the relationships between service quality and customer loyalty. On the contrary, Hanaysha (2018) found that social media

marketing has an insignificant effect on the perceived value. Additionally, the results showed that sales promotion has a significant positive effect on the perceived value, but its effect on customer retention was insignificant.

Conclusion and Recommendation

In conclusion, the study reveals that marketing promotional tools, including social media marketing, telemarketing, transit advertising, public relations, and sales promotion, exert a substantial influence on the market penetration of tourism centers in South-West Nigeria. These tools enhance visibility, attract diverse visitor demographics, and foster greater engagement with potential tourists, ultimately driving increased footfall and revenue for destinations such as Lagos beaches, Osun Osogbo Sacred Grove, and Idanre Hills. By leveraging digital and traditional channels, tourism operators can overcome barriers like limited awareness and competition from international sites, underscoring the pivotal role of strategic promotion in sustaining and expanding the regional tourism sector amid evolving consumer behaviors and economic challenges.

Based on these findings, it is recommended that tourism stakeholders in South-West Nigeria, including government agencies, private operators, and local communities, prioritize the integration of these promotional tools into comprehensive marketing strategies. Investments should focus on digital platforms like social media for targeted campaigns, while combining them with public relations efforts to build authentic narratives and sales promotions to incentivize visits during off-peak seasons. Additionally, training programs for tourism professionals on effective tool utilization, coupled with collaborative partnerships for resource sharing, could amplify impact. Regular evaluation of these strategies through metrics such as visitor numbers and satisfaction surveys will ensure adaptive and evidence-based approaches to maximize market penetration and long-term growth.

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