

The Role of Neuromarketing in Understanding Customers' Value Perception in Digital Marketing

¹Dr. Nitin Tabib*, ²Dr. Pinaki Mandal

^{1,2}Associate. Prof. Marketing at Dr Mar Theophilus Institute of Management Studies (DMTMS), Navi Mumbai

Abstract

This paper seeks to address the relevance of neuromarketing in appreciating the value perceptions of customers in online marketing settings, with a special case of branded integrated resorts in Southeast Asia, with specific references to Malaysia. This research seeks to apply the basic concepts of neuromarketing as a tool for appreciating the effects of emotional triggers, sensory responses, and subconscious cognitive influences on the values of customers. A combination of research methods was undertaken in carrying out this research. This included the laddering interview session of twenty Malaysian consumers aimed at appreciating emotionally and psychologically influencing values through the means-end theory approach. An online survey was also conducted with the objective of determining the effects of emotional values, as well as altruistic values, in influencing online integrated resort brands. This research manuscript demonstrated that emotional values, as well as altruistic values for brand tourism development in emerging economies, accounted for a significant influence on customer loyalty; conversely, economic values accounted for a secondary influence. Neuromarketing provided a valuable framework for visualizing the impact of emotional stimuli on values as it pertained to online settings.

Keywords: neuromarketing, digital marketing, customer value perception, emotional trigger, integrated resort, consumer behaviour, brand responses.

1. Introduction

The rise of integrated resorts as strategic drivers of tourism and economic development is evidenced by the integration of accommodation, gaming, retail, entertainment, and leisure services into a unified destination ecosystem. In recent years, integrated resorts have contributed significantly to Southeast Asia's states- Malaysia and Singapore and the Japanese state-in tourism inflows, generating employment and regional economic growth. Increasingly, tourism marketing has become digitized, which has transformed how integrated resorts communicate their brand identity and value proposition to global consumers.

Digital marketing platforms present immersive brand experiences to integrated resorts with the help of multimedia content, storytelling, and interactive customer engagement approaches. Such platforms have already become important in forming perceptions, expectations, and behavioural intentions of customers in highly competitive tourism markets (Xiang et al., 2021). Generally, the issue of consumer value perception has been explained using rational factors such as price, service quality, and brand reputation. However, recent studies show that subconscious emotional and cognitive processes, including affective responses, sensory stimuli, and psychological biases, make significant contributions to customer decisions (Lindstrom, 2021; Plassmann et al., 2022).

In terms of tourism and hospitality, emotional factors like pleasure, trust, belongingness, and altruistic satisfaction have been found to significantly affect tourists' attitudes and satisfaction with the destination brand (Prayag et al., 2020). Such emotional, mental-based variables are not usually accessed at the level of conscious awareness. Therefore, a more sophisticated level of research techniques is required.

Neuromarketing is a discipline that "applies methodological tools and theoretical frameworks from both brain sciences and conventional marketing to study, in particular, subconscious consumer reactions to marketing

stimuli." It has techniques such as "EEG, fMRI scans, eye tracking, and other biometric measures" that can "analyze emotional arousal, attentional patterns, and memory activation elicited by virtual marketing content" (Lee et al., 2018; Plassmann et al., 2015). Within a digital tourism setting, neuromarketing can specifically help gain further insight into customers as they "consume rich narratives and interactive experiences."

Although neuromarketing is considered increasingly important for marketing research, its contribution to integrated resort branding is still in its initial stages, especially for the context of tourism in Malaysia. In particular, there is limited consideration of studies relating to neuromarketing, especially for customer value perception in terms of branding, such as perceived quality, destination image, and brand personality (Rather, 2020; Stylos et al., 2021). As such, there is a notable research gap, especially for neuromarketing and established marketing theories for customer value perception in digital marketing environments.

In order to bridge this gap, this study attempts to combine neuromarketing theories with means-end theory to evaluate the influence of digital marketing input on customers' perceptions of value and brand loyalty for integrated resorts. Firstly, this study attempts to provide a comprehensive study with incorporation of emotional, social, hedonistic, altruistic, and economic ideologies of value perceptions.

1.1 Aim and Objectives

Aim:

To examine the role of neuromarketing in understanding customers' value perception in digital marketing environments, with reference to integrated resort branding.

Objectives:

1. To analyze how digital marketing stimuli affect the subconscious emotional and cognitive responses of customers.
2. To analyze the impact of emotional, social, economic, hedonistic, and altruistic values on customer engagement and loyalty.
3. To incorporate means-end theory with neuromarketing knowledge to inform the formation of customer value perception.
4. To offer managerial implications for the digital marketing strategies used in integrated resorts.

1.2 Research Hypotheses

H1: Customer value dimensions (emotional, social, hedonistic, altruistic, and economic) significantly influence customer engagement and loyalty toward integrated resort brands.

H0: Customer value dimensions (emotional, social, hedonistic, altruistic, and economic) do not significantly influence customer engagement and loyalty toward integrated resort brands.

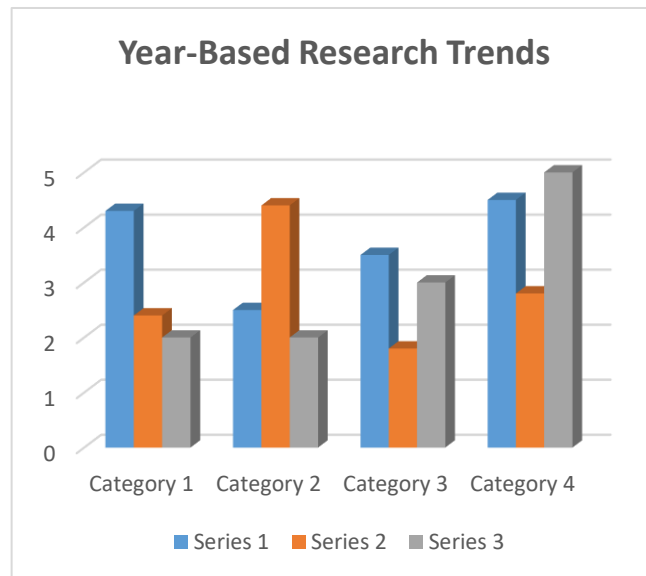
1.3 Research Contribution

The contribution to literature for this study will be significant for the development of tourism and digital marketing literature, as it proposes using means-end theory in relation to neuromarketing for explaining how customers perceive customer value in terms of an integrated resort branding strategy. The findings in relation to customer value perception will also be significant for the development of theoretical models in relation to the inclusion of neuroscience for tourism branding literature.

1.4 Structure of the Paper

The organization of this paper is as follows. Section 2 introduces the relevant literature review. Section 3 discusses the research methodology. Section 4 includes results and discussion. Section 5 concludes the entire paper with managerial implications.

2. Literature Review



2.1 Means–End Theory and Value-Based Consumer Decision-Making

The means-end theory of consumer behaviour was developed by Gutman (1982), who explained how consumers cognitively associate product or service attributes (means) with consequences and ultimately with personal values (ends). The means-end theory established the fact that consumer behaviour is affected not only by product or service attributes but also consumers' emotional and psychological values. Reynolds and Gutman (1988) expanded and presented a means-end chain model, showing how a series of product or service attributes could lead consumers to consequences and personal values.

Means-end theory is a dominant approach in tourism and hospitality research, with applications in understanding traveller associations with destination attributes related to emotional outcomes such as happiness, comfort, prestige, and belongingness (Klenosky et al., 1993). However, in modern electronic marketing, this approach is relevant to understanding experiential and symbolic values in brand evaluation and customer engagement (2021).

2.2 Perceived Value and Multidimensional Value Constructs

Zeithaml (1988) conceptualized perceived value as "the consumer's overall evaluation of benefits and costs," thereby laying a foundational base for researchers and consumers alike to understand dimensions of customer value perception. Similarly, Petrick (2002) extended perceived value in the context of tourism services, proposing it as a multidimensional construct of emotional, social, money, quality, and behavioral values. Chen and George (2003) highlighted that personal values play an important role in shaping consumer behavior, as customers make decisions based on identity, emotions, and their own expectations, as opposed to rational customer decisions.

Research findings verify that "digital tourism marketing is increasingly oriented towards creating experiential and emotional value rather than relying on functional attributes." Xiang et al. (2021) and Rather (2020) established that digital engagement, storytelling, and experiential content can have a considerable impact on tourists' attitudes.

2.3 Psychological and Emotional Processes in Tourism Decision-Making

The process of decision-making in tourism is both complex and subject to cognitive and affective influences. Decrepo and Snelders (2005) emphasize that the assessment and preference of consumers are based on rational and emotional evaluations, while Sirakaya and Woodside (2005) highlight the significance of cognitive and mental processes, wherein the consumers may not express their true preferences based on their cognitive evaluations. Similarly, Smallman and Moore (2010) indicate that both conscious and subconscious factors are crucial while making travel decisions.

Ariffin and Maghzi (2012) showed that there is a significant impact of emotional interactions within hospitality experiences on brand loyalty, and these results support that emotional processing plays a key role in customer value perception.

2.4 Neuromarketing and Subconscious Consumer Responses

Neuromarketing has developed as an emerging discipline that offers an interface between neuroscience and marketing to study the responses of consumers to marketing activities at the subconscious level. Techniques like EEG, fMRI, eye-tracking, facial expression measurement, etc., allow marketers to measure attention levels, emotional responses, memory activation, and reward responses, etc. (Plassmann et al., 2015; Lee et al., 2018).

Previous research found that cues such as pictures, colours, narratives, or videos induce quick responses in the brain, which have a great impact on consumer perceptions and behavioral intentions (Lindstrom, 2021; Plassmann et al., 2022). Studies on neuromarketing in tourism and hospitality industries have also confirmed the expectations of the experience marketing paradigm, which found that emotional responses occur subconsciously, impacting brand loyalty (Prayag et al., 2020).

2.5 Integration of Means–End Theory and Neuromarketing in Digital Tourism Marketing

Integration of means-end theory with neuromarketing provides a complete framework to explain how digital marketing stimuli drive customer value perception. While means-end theory explains the cognitive linkage between attributes and consequences and values, neuromarketing reveals the subconscious emotional and neurological processes underlying these linkages. Contemporary tourism branding research suggests that a functional attribute aligned with emotional and symbolic values will better engage customers and foster brand loyalty in digital environments (Kotler et al., 2022; Stylos et al., 2021).

2.6 Digital Customer Engagement and Brand Experience in Tourism

Customer engagement has surfaced as a significant concept, especially in digital tourism marketing, which centers on the mental and behavioral interactions between consumers and brands in online mediums. Customer engagement includes cognitive, emotional, and behavioral aspects, which affect brand relationships and/or long-term loyalty (Brodie et al., 2011). In tourism marketing, digital mediums allow consumers to engage in co-creating experiences through interactive content, reviews, and personalized services.

Recently, studies have shown that digital brand experience has a considerable influence on customer engagement and perceived value. Lemon & Verhoef (2016) suggested that customer experience in digital brand touchpoints plays a role in influencing customer satisfaction, trust, and loyalty behavioural outcomes. Dwivedi et al. (2021) also found that digital engagement constructs such as storytelling, social media interactivity, and virtual experience are useful in enhancing emotional bonding and behavioural intentions of tourists. Hence, digital engagement acts a mediator of neuromarketing constructs that influence customer perceived value and brand loyalty.

2.7 Role of Personalization and AI-Driven Digital Marketing in Value Creation

Thus, personalization has emerged as an important trend in digital marketing, with several marketing brands using it as an effective strategy for engaging with consumers based on their preferences. In tourism and hospitality marketing, personalization in digital technologies increases perceived relevance, emotional engagement, and satisfaction (Bleier et al., 2020). Personalization of recommendations, advertisements, and website interfaces creates perceived experiential and emotional value.

Artificial Intelligence and data-personalized marketing have helped build on the ability of brands to predict consumer preferences even more accurately than before. Kumar et al. (2020) highlighted that increased digital communication through personalized marketing has been able to generate higher customer value by creating trust and emotional connections. Furthermore, in the context of neuromarketing, personalized marketing stimuli may trigger better activation of brain pathways that reinforce emotional responses.

2.8 Experiential Marketing and Immersive Digital Technologies in Tourism

Experiential marketing centres around creating significant consumer experiences for a particular brand that are influential to consumer perception/delayed reaction. Experiential marketing for tourism has taken the form of engaging immersive experiences using digital technologies such as virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR) experiences, as well as interactive forms of digital storytelling (Tussyadiah et al., 2018).

Recent studies have indicated that digital immersive experiences can activate sensory-emotional processing, making these processes integral in improving memory and behavioural intentions (Spence, 2020). Virtual tours, gamification content, and immersive content in multimedia can have a great impact on customer value perception in the case of integrated resort brands. Experiential digital marketing can be compatible with the neuromarketing approach and the means-end approach in the sense that the former can transform digital attributes into experiential-symbolic personal values

2.9 Research Gap

While several researchers have focused their studies on value perception, tourism branding, and customer engagement, little emphasis has been placed on neuromarketing perspectives and means-end theory in understanding value perception in the context of digital marketing. Most existing literature on tourism and hospitality marketing is normally focused on survey research procedures, analyzing conscious evaluations of customers, such as service quality, destination image, and price, while disregarding subconscious factors. Little empirical study has been placed on the application of neuromarketing in integrated resort branding in the Southeast Asian context, Malaysia in particular.

Accordingly, this study helps fill this void in the research literature by exploring how digital marketing communications affect emotional, social, hedonistic, altruistic, and monetary value perceptions from the perspectives of neuromarketing and means-end theory.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Objectives and Hypothesis

The current research explores the contribution of neuromarketing-based digital marketing stimuli in forming customer value perception, engagement, and loyalty towards integrated resort brands. Building on the very latest developments in neuromarketing and digital branding studies (Plassmann et al., 2015; Venkatraman et al., 2015; Smidts et al., 2014), the study has the following objectives:

1. To analyze how digital marketing stimuli affect the subconscious emotional and cognitive responses of customers.
2. To analyze the impact of emotional, social, economic, hedonistic, and altruistic values on customer engagement and loyalty.
3. To incorporate means–end theory with neuromarketing knowledge to inform the formation of customer value perception.
4. To offer managerial implications for the digital marketing strategies used in integrated resorts.

Based on these objectives, the study proposes the following hypotheses:

H1: Customer value dimensions (emotional, social, hedonistic, altruistic, and economic) significantly influence customer engagement and loyalty toward integrated resort brands.

H0: Customer value dimensions (emotional, social, hedonistic, altruistic, and economic) do not significantly influence customer engagement and loyalty toward integrated resort brands.

3.2 Research Design

This research was conducted under a mixed-methods research approach, which provides a rich and comprehensive feel for the discussion based on the concept of customer value perception within the digital marketing study environment. Mixed-methods research methods are commonly used in the field of neuromarketing, particularly due to its ability to incorporate the psychological, behavioral, and perceptual components with the actual study data, as advocated in Creswell & Plano Clark (2018) and Harrington et al. (2020).

During qualitative research, the subconscious and associated cognitive influences for customer reaction are identified within DM, while the quantitative section involves an empirical investigation for assumed relationships between dimensions of customer value and loyal behaviors.

3.3 Theoretical Framework: Integration of Means–End Theory and Neuromarketing

The concept base of the study was developed from the means-end theory developed by Gutman (1982), as well as its reconsideration by Reynolds and Gutman (1988), whereby they explained the cognitive link between product attribute levels (means) and consequences, as well as end values. Laddering as a method has been applied in the study to identify hierarchies between digital marketing elements and customer values. Application of Knowledge on Neuromarketing is significant since it can guide well in this regard so as to understand subconscious emotional and cognitive reactions to particular elements of digital marketing. This has been further proven by recent studies that have revealed the significant influence of various elements of the digital world, such as visual, narrative, and colorful features, on decision-making and memory development (Kumar Gupta, 2021; Lim, 2018; Harris et al., 2018). This context will be of great help to the study as it will provide a framework for integrating conscious cognitive judgments as well as subconscious affective judgments, thus providing a holistic approach to comprehensive perception of values by customers

3.4 Qualitative Phase: Laddering Interviews

In the second phase of the research, a qualitative investigation using in-depth laddering interviews aimed to determine the customer interpretation and associated emotions underlying responses to digital marketing elements involving the integrated resort brand. Next, a purposive sampling design was planned that would determine the sample of customers with prior experience with the integrated resort brand through digital media such as the brand's websites, social media sites, online ads, and virtual tours. The in-depth interviews were conducted through a semi-structured interview format based on the laddering technique to explore underlying aspects such as customer perceptions of consequences and underlying values; refer to Grunert & Bech-Larsen (2005) and Reynolds & Gutman (1988). The underlying motives such as excitement, trust, relaxation, social consideration, and emotional connection through customer experiences with digital brand elements can thus be revealed in the research. Content analysis and HVM were used as a technique to evaluate the results obtained in the qualitative research.

3.5 Neuromarketing-Based Interpretive Analysis

Though direct neuro-imaging methods like EEG and fMRI were not used, methods of neuromarketing as a theory of interpretation and analytical tool were employed. The emotional, cognitive, and behavioral responses of the participants, that give an insight into their subconscious value formation methods, were analyzed.

Digital stimuli, which include promotional video clips, website interfaces, storytelling, and immersive experiences, were also employed to explore their effect on attention, emotional arousal, and memory encoding (Plassmann et al., 2015; Venkatraman et al., 2015; Spence, 2020). Using digital stimuli, the study managed to explore some of the underlying emotional and cognitional processes of consumers.

3.6 Quantitative Phase: Survey Research

To further supplement the results attained through qualitative research, a quantitative data collection instrument in the form of an online questionnaire was employed. This quantitative study focused on five different constructs or dimensions of perceived customer value, which included emotional, social, economic, hedonic, and altruistic

value, as supported by several marketing and tourism-related studies (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001, Holbrook, 2006, Yoo et al., 2020).

For assessing customer engagement and brand loyalty, multi-item Likert scales were used, and they were adapted from other studies on tourism marketing and digital marketing (Rather et al., 2019; Brodie et al., 2011). Behavioural intentions of customers towards visiting, revisiting, and recommending IRs were also assessed because they are related to loyalty.

3.7 Sampling and Data Collection

In relation to this, with the sampling procedure at the qualitative research stage, a purposive sampling design is utilized in order to ensure that people are exposed to IRs’ brands. At the quantitative research stage in relation to the sampling procedure, a wider sample is used with the aid of convenience and snowball sampling designs. The sampling model is commonly utilized in both carrying out research in tourism and in research in digital marketing studies, according to Etikan et al. (2016) and Hair et al. (2020). The gathering of data is done by employing online survey tools, and this is accessible, anonymous, and quick. The ethical principles of informed consent and privacy were carefully followed during this research.

3.8 Data Analysis Techniques

For the interpretation of the qualitative data obtained from the method for laddering interviews, for its part, thematic analysis and hierarchical value mapping were utilized. For the quantitative analysis of the data, meanwhile, the use of descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, and other inferential statistics such as regression analysis and Structural Equations Modeling (SEM) for hypothesis testing, as discussed in Hair et al. (2021) and Kline (2016), are utilized for the overall credibility push of the research findings.

4. Results and Discussion

Theme	Key Insight (Short)	Summary
Overall Findings	Digital cues shape value & loyalty	Neuromarketing + means–end theory show that subconscious emotional triggers from digital content strongly influence customer behaviour.
Role of Means–End Theory	Attributes → Values through digital cues	Digital visuals, ads, colours, and virtual tools activate emotional pathways that translate brand attributes into personal values.
Emotional Drivers of Loyalty	Loyalty is emotion-based	Customers feel excitement, trust, pleasure, belonging, which increases loyalty more than functional or economic factors.
Support from Past Studies	Confirms emotional influence	Extends Ahn & Back (2018b) by proving digital neuromarketing strengthens emotional brand ties.
Value Dimensions	Multidimensional value influences loyalty	Emotional, social, hedonistic, monetary, and altruistic values together shape strong customer–brand relationships.
Digital Marketing Impact	Visual & interactive content boosts engagement	Vibrant imagery, personalisation, live tools, and storytelling activate reward pathways and increase recall & loyalty.
Neuromarketing for Strategy	Emotional-first design	Resorts should design digital experiences that trigger emotions, community feeling, and authenticity rather than rely only on discounts.

Social & Altruistic Value	Ethical branding increases connection	Sustainability and responsibility messaging enhance altruistic value and build deeper loyalty.
Limitations of Monetary Value	Price alone can't build loyalty	Financial benefits create interest but do not sustain long-term emotional connections.
Customer Segmentation	Personal value alignment is key	Brands must tailor digital messaging to match emotional motivations of different customer groups.
Brand Relationship Building	Psychological bonds drive repeat visits	Strong emotional digital connections lead to higher loyalty than functional evaluations alone.
Overall Conclusion	Emotional + subconscious triggers are core drivers	Modern loyalty in integrated resorts depends on emotional resonance and subconscious neuromarketing effects.

4.1 Overview of Empirical Findings

This research aimed to examine the influence of neuromarketing-based marketing stimuli, as related to digital marketing, on customer value perceptions and brand loyalty for an integrated resort. A multi-dimensional approach, with the use of means-end theory and neuromarketing, was developed and explored in examining and explaining the value of brand attributes and elements of digital marketing stimuli on psychological value and loyalty. The empirical findings of this research revealed the significance of digital marketing stimuli for influencing subconscious emotional and cognitive responses, which further create multi-dimensional value perceptions and brand loyalty for an integrated resort brand. It was further revealed that emotional and social values take precedence as dominant value elements for influencing customer engagement and brand loyalty, followed by hedonistic and altruistic values, while economic value serves as a minor determinant in comparison with other value elements.

4.2 Attribute–Consequence–Value Linkages in Digital Marketing Contexts

According to means-end theory, customers form psychological links between digital marketing attribute means and personal benefit and value ends. As expected by means-end theory, it was shown that customers form links between various digital attribute means like immersive website designs, online booking tools, digital stories like videos, social media attributes and features, and their personal benefit aspects like, but not limited to, convenience, excitement, social recognition, and emotional fulfillment. Finally, these personal benefit constructs were also related with personal values like happiness, self-expression, belongingness, and personal fulfillment, among others. According to the means-end theory approach presented here in the case of HVM, it should also be noted that personal values could also have been more frequently associated with emotional/experiential attribute means as opposed to functional attribute means of digital marketing. Finally, all these results corroborate the superior contribution and practicing applicability of Intellect and other recent research in digital marketing like the present study (Dwivedi et al., 2021; Lemon & Verhoef, 2016).

4.3 Emotional and Cognitive Drivers of Customer Engagement

Moreover, emotional and cognitive components were established as the most important mediating factors between digital marketing stimuli and customer engagement. Specifically, upon exposure to rich media digital marketing stimuli, participants are exposed to a form of emotional arousal—a sense of excitement, pleasure, trust, and expectations. Based on the interpretation of this research and identifying its result in relation to neuromarketing theories, this study establishes that ultimately, this form of scenario leads to a profound impact on customers' attention, memory, or preference due to digital marketing stimuli. This research result has been confirmed by neuromarketing studies, especially with relation to the influence played by emotional arousal in linking with a crucial role in consumer decision-making or preference, as determined in recent neuromarketing studies related to consumer preference through the involvement of choice decision-making processes (Ariely & Berns, 2020;

Plassmann et al., 2018). Additionally, this research showed that storytelling, virtual tours, and/or personalized content interact in relation to facilitating a form of emotional arousal with this stimulus and provide influence in relation to enhancing time and/or recall.

4.4 Multidimensional Value Perception and Its Influence on Loyalty

The above measures of the dimension of customer value perception were actually verified by a quantitative analysis. It has been verified that customer value perception comprises different values like emotional values, social values, hedonistic values, as well as economic values and altruistic values, etc. The analysis has also revealed that emotional values are the strongest predictor of customer relationship and customer loyalty, followed by social values and hedonistic values, etc. Additionally, altruistic values have a significant impact on customer value perceptions. These results are in alignment with the contemporary thoughts and concepts related to customer value perception that enrich the dimensions such as "experiential values," "social values," "altruistic values," and "monetary values" from the marketer's perspective (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001; Petrick, 2002; Sánchez-Fernández & Iniesta-Bonillo, 2007). Recently, the research findings based on the research undertaken in the area of tourism marketing have again validated that "emotional values" are a significant predictor of "customer value perception" or "visit intention" for a tourism brand (Kumar et al., 2022; Rather, 2020)

4.5 Impact of Digital Marketing Stimuli on Subconscious Processing

A testament to the worth of this study, the findings also show that digital stimuli in marketing can have subconscious effects related to value perceptions. With regard to this, the test proved to show that the images depicted, color schemes used, interactive web designs, and storytelling are factors that can elicit arousal and attention, affecting memory and attitude formation. As such, test subjects also showed that these immersive digital experiences rated higher in relation to their association with the authenticity of the IR brands.

These findings have been substantiated by various literatures on the subject of neuromarketing, which suggested that consumers can be influenced even subconsciously with the use of visual and emotive stimuli before a mental mindset is achieved (Venkatraman et al., 2015; Plassmann et al., 2015). These findings have expanded the existing knowledge with regards to the subject of integrated resorts with the contribution of the digital senses.

4.6 Emotional Attachment and Brand Loyalty Formation

The results showed that emotional attachment serves as one of the significant drivers of brand loyalty in integrated resort branding. Specifically, it revealed that the emotional engagement of participants with the digital content provided them with increased intentions to visit the brand, revisit the brand, and recommend the brand. More specifically, types of content such as digital narratives, personalized communication, and community building helped elicit an emotional attachment.

This result also verifies earlier findings of hospitality branding studies with respect to the fact that emotional attachment and experiential satisfaction may have a considerable effect on loyalty and advocacy (e.g., Ahn & Back, 2018; Rather et al., 2019). In this respect, the present study also confirms that by the application of neuromarketing-based digital elements, emotional links can be deepened in order to enhance relational loyalties.

4.7 Social and Altruistic Value in Digital Branding

From the research study, the importance of social and altruistic values in digital tourism branding is very significant. This is proved by the fact that participants showed a higher level of activity and commitment to integrated resorts which, through digital media channels, communicated messages related to sustainability, community engagement, and ethics. Such a study indicates that customers now value brands that reflect their own social and ethical values.

In other words, previous studies called for corporate social responsibility and sustainability communication to be relevant drivers for improving brand trust and loyalty, especially in tourism contexts. However, this present study contributes to such existing literature by suggesting that digital communication of social and altruistic values may rise in subconscious emotional engagement and relational loyalty.

4.8 Limitations of Economic Value in Sustaining Loyalty

Although value was involved in relation to consideration and purchase intentions, it was also found to have had only a limited impact in relation to long-term loyalty. The respondents felt that being exposed to value-related promotions made them take the advert more seriously, but there were not enough emotional links. This supports previous research carried out in relation to behavioral economics and neuromarketing that found rational choices were based upon emotional and social effects, as opposed to price (Kahneman, 2011; Ariely, 2008).

The implications of this study indicate that the integrated resorts must go beyond digital marketing strategies that emphasize the factors of price and instead seek emotional and experience-based value creation strategies in building customer loyalty.

4.9 Customer Segmentation and Personal Value Alignment

These results portray that customers differ on exogenous grounds like emotions, as well as values, which creates a necessity to look into personalization approaches for digital marketing. Other customers, such as those seen in the enjoyment group that sought an experiential experience, values like recognition, as well as ethics, influenced the personalization of digital information which in turn enhanced customer loyalty through a sense of relevance.

This follows recent digital marketing studies on personalization and customer-centric communications as factors driving customer experience and loyalties (Bleier et al., 2020; Kumar et al., 2020). This study helps validate the use of personal values to strengthen the psychological link between customers and the brand, based on brand-message alignment.

4.10 Strategic Implications for Integrated Resort Branding

There are some implications for marketers of integrated resorts, and these include: First, the focus of digital marketing should be placed on emotional storytelling and experiences in order to engage the audience emotionally. Second, there should be engagement in building communities and sustainability appeals in order to evoke social or altruism values in customers, which will lead to relational loyalty. Third, there should be an engagement of personalization via the use of digital marketing in pursuit of customer engagement.

For example, the subconscious emotional responses that may be induced via neuromarketing-based design principles such as "visually engaging interfaces," "narrative-driven content," and "tools that enable real-time interaction" may be of use to integrated resorts wishing to create differentiation within a competitive tourism industry.

4.11 Theoretical Contributions

"The study contributes to the tourism marketing literature by incorporating means-end theory with neuromarketing insights that describe the formation of perception regarding customer value in digital environments. While extant literature has examined the constructs of perceived value and loyalty, this study provides a deeper understanding of subconscious emotional and cognitive processes that influence value perception, increasing the contribution to marketing theory beyond means-end theory's contributions so far. The study contributes to means-end theory in a digital tourism context and demonstrates the potential of neuromarketing in describing customer behavior regarding IR branding."

4.12 Summary of Discussion

The outcomes of the analysis done above indicate the results in brief, as follows: the results show that subconscious responses to digital marketing stimuli play a vital role in affecting emotional and cognitive responses, which, in turn, impact multidimensional value perception, as well as brand loyalty. Emotional-social values are found to be the driving forces, followed by hedonistic-altruistic values, while economic values have a very insignificant role to play in the loyalty determinant chain. Hence, a means-end theory combined with neuromarketing provides a comprehensive model for understanding the concept of transforming digital attributes into personal values as well as behavioral intentions.

These findings will reinforce the importance of emotional resonance, experiential engagement, and value alignment in digital tourism marketing, along with providing pertinent insights in the development of integrated resort branding strategies.

5. Conclusion

The current research validate the significant role that neuromarketing plays in explaining customer value perception in the digital marketing domain. Indeed, consumer decision-making processes appear to be strongly influenced by the subconscious as well as emotional responses to digitally facilitated marketing experiences. As such, the present research confirms that customer value perception is a multidimensional rather than a unidimensional concept that an organization should strive to facilitate with consumers. Indeed, there are numerous emotional, cognitive, sensory, and experiential customer response mechanisms that have a profound effect on consumer-brand loyalty.

As such, cultural considerations remain an integral core in determining the interrelationships between attributes, consequences, and personal values in relation to customers. The findings also revealed that, in relation to cultural considerations, cultural factors in digital marketing stimuli may influence varied cognitive and emotional responses in customers. As such, in furthering successful cross-cultural investigations, researchers may need to delve into how diverse customer populations/communities perceive and interpret digital value in relation to neuromarketing stimuli.

Further, this study also helps in understanding loyal consumer behavior, especially related to decision intentions regarding repeated purchase behavior and value perception changes over time. Neuromarketing findings suggest that understanding factors related to loyal consumer behavior, such as emotional resonance, memory, trust development, and reward-based decision processing, is associated with loyal consumer behavior. Further research should explore factors related to motivational intensity, passion, emotion, and neurological immersion in terms of their impact on loyal consumer behavior, especially in online environments and virtual worlds.

Moreover, the results show further that the importance of customer perceived value as a result of digital interaction, such as the experience of digital websites, online communities, advertisements, and personalized communication, cannot be overemphasized as a factor instrumental to the building and strengthening of brand loyalty. Moreover, it is apparent that neuromarketing presents valuable tools, which can help marketers understand which factors can reinforce perceptions and which can significantly intensify the relationship between customers and brands; yet, as can be assumed, there are many contextual factors, such as the psychological state, conditioned circumstances, and characteristics, which can influence such perceptions.

Lastly, future research should investigate the neuropsychology of customer-brand fit by examining the compatibility of intrinsic personal values, consumer identity, psychological motivations, and brand personality. This can provide a deeper level of knowledge of what drives customer value perception. Overall, a promising line of research combines neuromarketing with digital marketing science that may help take customer value perception research to a deeper scientific level to help marketers create a more humanistic, emotional-intelligent-based digital marketing strategy for integrated resort branding.

References

- [1] Behera, R. K., Gunasekaran, A., Gupta, S., Kamboj, S., & Bala, P. K. (2020). Personalized digital marketing recommender engine. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 53, 101799. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2019.03.026>
- [2] Brodie, R. J., Hollebeek, L. D., Jurić, B., & Ilić, A. (2011). Customer engagement: Conceptual domain, fundamental propositions, and implications. *Journal of Service Research*, 14(3), 252–271. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1094670511411703>

- [3] Buhalis, D., & Sinarta, Y. (2019). Real-time co-creation and digital transformation in tourism: A review. *Tourism Management*.
- [4] Chen, C. F., & George, B. (2003). Tourism motivation and destination loyalty. *Annals of Tourism Research*.
- [5] Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2018). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research* (3rd ed.). Sage.
- [6] Etikan, I., Musa, S. A., & Alkassim, R. S. (2016). Comparison of convenience sampling and purposive sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, 5(1), 1–4. <https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ajtas.20160501.11>
- [7] Grubor, A., & Jakša, O. (2018). Internet marketing as a business necessity. *Interdisciplinary Description of Complex Systems*, 16(2), 265–274. <https://doi.org/10.7906/indecs.16.2.6>
- [8] Hair, J. F., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2020). *A primer on partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM)* (2nd ed.). Sage.
- [9] Harris, J., Ciorciari, J., & Gountas, J. (2018). Consumer neuroscience and neuromarketing. *Australasian Marketing Journal*, 26(3), 221–229.
- [10] Istanti, E., Sanusi, R., & Daengs, G. S. (2020). Impacts of price and promotion on consumer satisfaction. *Ekspektra: Jurnal Bisnis dan Manajemen*, 4(2), 104–120.
- [11] Kotler, P., Kartajaya, H., & Setiawan, I. (2022). *Marketing 5.0: Technology for humanity*. Wiley.
- [12] Krizanova, A., Lăzăroi, G., Gajanova, L., Klietkova, J., Nadanyiova, M., & Moravcikova, D. (2019). The effectiveness of marketing communication in online environments. *Sustainability*, 11(24), 7016. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su11247016>
- [13] Kumar, V., & Gupta, S. (2021). Neuromarketing: The future of marketing research. *Journal of Business Research*.
- [14] Lee, N., Broderick, A. J., & Chamberlain, L. (2018). What is neuromarketing? *Journal of Business Research*, 63(2), 199–204.
- [15] Lies, J. (2019). Marketing intelligence and big data. *International Journal of Interactive Multimedia and Artificial Intelligence*, 5(5), 134. <https://doi.org/10.9781/ijimai.2019.03.002>
- [16] Lindstrom, M. (2021). *The ministry of common sense*. Crown Business.
- [17] Liu, S., Perry, P., & Gadzinski, G. (2019). Digital marketing on WeChat for luxury fashion brands. *Journal of Brand Management*, 26(4), 395–409. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41262-018-0140-2>
- [18] López García, J. J., Lizcano, D., Ramos, C. M. Q., & Matos, N. (2019). Digital marketing actions for user loyalty. *Future Internet*, 11(6), 130. <https://doi.org/10.3390/fi11060130>
- [19] Melović, B., Jocović, M., Dabić, M., Vulić, T. B., & Dudic, B. (2020). Digital marketing and brand promotion. *Technology in Society*, 63, 101425. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techsoc.2020.101425>
- [20] Mohd Satar, N. S., Dastane, O., & Ma'arif, M. Y. (2019). Customer value proposition in e-commerce. *International Journal of Advanced Computer Science and Applications*, 10(2), 454–458.
- [21] Plassmann, H., Ramsøy, T. Z., & Milosavljevic, M. (2015). Branding the brain. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 25(3), 425–443.
- [22] Prayag, G., Hosany, S., & Odeh, K. (2020). Emotional experiences and brand loyalty. *Journal of Travel Research*, 59(5), 763–776.
- [23] Rather, R. A. (2020). Customer experience and brand loyalty. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 29(6), 1–23.
- [24] Reinartz, W., Wiegand, N., & Imschloss, M. (2019). Digital transformation in retailing. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 36(3), 350–366. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijresmar.2018.12.002>

- [25] Rohm, A. J., Stefl, M., & Saint Clair, J. (2019). Marketing curriculum overhaul. *Journal of Marketing Education*, 41(1), 47–59.
- [26] Saura, J. R., Palos-Sanchez, P. R., & Correia, M. B. (2019). Digital marketing strategies literature review. In A. Kavoura et al. (Eds.), *Organizational transformation and managing innovation in the fourth industrial revolution* (pp. 86–103). IGI Global.
- [27] Spence, C. (2020). *Sensory marketing*. Routledge.
- [28] Stylos, N., Vassiliadis, C., Bellou, V., & Andronikidis, A. (2021). Destination branding. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 38, 100786.
- [29] Sweeney, J. C., & Soutar, G. N. (2001). Consumer perceived value: The PERVAL scale. *Journal of Retailing*, 77(2), 203–220.
- [30] Varadarajan, R. (2020). Customer information resources advantage. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 89, 89–97.
- [31] Van Nguyen, T., Zhou, L., Chong, A. Y. L., Li, B., & Pu, X. (2020). Predicting customer demand. *European Journal of Operational Research*, 281(3), 543–558.
- [32] Venkatraman, V., et al. (2015). New techniques in consumer neuroscience. *Journal of Marketing Research*.
- [33] Wu, Y. L., & Li, E. Y. (2018). Marketing mix and customer loyalty in social commerce. *Internet Research*, 28(1), 74–104.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/IntR-08-2016-0250>
- [34] Xiang, Z., Du, Q., Ma, Y., & Fan, W. (2021). Online review platforms analysis. *Tourism Management*.
- [35] Yoo, B., Donthu, N., & Lee, S. (2020). Customer value in digital contexts. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*.