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## Impact of Travel Blogs and Vlogs in Social Media on Tourism

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### Abstract

Our travel decisions are driven by our environment and the significant people in our life, from our friends and family to strangers we meet on social media . We tend to think of those we follow as part of our inner circle, as close friends whose opinions we value. For today's travel and tourism sector, the young traveller category is a growing market. Students, in particular, are drawn to the advancement of technology . The availability of a wide range of online sources for vacation destinations has made it easier to find travel information, particularly through Travel Blogs and Vlogs. The focus of the present study is on Travel Blogs and Vlogs as online sources that may impact travel decisions. Its goal is to investigate the characteristics and trustworthiness of Travel Blogs and Vlogs that can influence people's travel decisions.

**Key Words:** Social Media, Travel Media, Blogs, Vlogs, Influence.

### 1. Introduction

*“There Is No Happiness for Him Who Does Not Travel.*

*Thus We Have Heard. Living In the Society of Men, The Best Man Becomes a Sinner... Therefore, Wander! The Fortune of Him Who Is Sitting Sits; It Rises When He Rises; It Sleeps When He Sleeps; It Moves When He Moves. Therefore, Wander!” (Rigveda, chapter 12)*

Humans have a natural need to travel and explore their surroundings. That is how the globe began to travel. There might be a particular gene in which the desire to travel is encoded. Previously, man travelled in quest of food. Gradually, as his interest grew, he began to migrate from one location to another for reasons other than food, resulting in massive migrations and exploration. We'd still be in one little location, with no idea what's beyond. Travel is a catalyst that causes significant changes in how we think about and view the world and the surroundings.

Travel blogging and vlogging is the most popular trend in the ever-expanding digital world. A travel writer or a travel blogger is someone who writes about his or her travels. The Travel Vlogger is someone who creates videos of his trips and uploads them on YouTube. The once-exclusive domain of the upper crust has become everyone's cup of tea.

### 2. Development of Travel Blogs and Vlogs in the World

Hiuen Tsang or Xuanzang, a Chinese man, travelled around the world for several years, passing through deserts and mountains, enduring numerous hardships and risking his life. Before arriving in India, he travelled across Central Asia, stopping in Tashkent and Samarkand and following the famed Silk Route.

He travelled across India for 17 years before returning to China. It is amazing that he kept a trip diary back then, in which he chronicled his experiences and observations of the people he met, their culture and customs, the sites he visited, and so on. On the Western Regions, this journal is known as Hsiu-Yu Chi or Great Tang Records. This diary is most likely the forefather of today's Travel Blogs (John, 2011).

As a result, early travelers began writing about their journey experiences to chronicle them. There are numerous examples throughout history of travelers writing down their experiences and eventually publishing their travel journals. Pausanias, a Greek explorer and geographer, authored a travelogue

called "Description of Greece" in the 2nd century AD, which was an account of his own experiences and views of Greece. (Insight, 2019)

Goethe's "Italian Journey" was published in 1816, based on his journeys to Verona, Venice, Bologna, Rome, Naples, Sicily, and many other Italian places of the time. Che Guevara's "The Motorcycle Diaries" is a superb example of a travel journal from more recent times. (John, 2011)

Travel extends back to Antiquity, when affluent Greeks and Romans would travel to their summer residences and villas in towns such as Pompeii and Baiae for recreation. While early travel was slower, more risky, and dominated by commerce and migration, cultural and technical developments over many years have resulted in travel being easier and more accessible.

Since Christopher Columbus travelled to the new world from Spain in 1492, an expedition that took over ten weeks to reach at the ultimate destination; to the twenty-first century, where Aircraft allow travel from Spain to the United States overnight. Travel throughout the Middle Ages was difficult and dangerous, yet it was vital to the economy and society. Pilgrimages were widespread in both the European and Islamic worlds, involving streams of travellers both locally (in the form of the Canterbury Tales) and worldwide. (Demonova, 2012)

Travelling by water was typically more comfortable and faster than travelling by land, at least until the 19th century, when a network of railways was established. Tourism travel is said to have begun about this period, when people began to travel for enjoyment because travel was no longer a difficult and tough endeavor (Demonova, 2012). People like Thomas Cook took advantage of this by marketing vacation packages that included railway tickets and hotel accommodations.

Airships and planes took over most of the job of long-distance surface travel in the twentieth century, particularly following WWII, when there was a glut of both aircraft and pilots. Indeed, in the twenty-first century, plane travel has grown so common that one lady, Alexis Alford, visited all 196 nations before the age of 21. (John 2011)

These people began to write down their trip itineraries and the experiences they had while travelling, which subsequently became documentation of their voyage. We now refer to them as blogs. Vlogs are today's latest social media fad. People are using technology to document their travels in the form of video.

### **3. History of Travel Blogs and Vlogs in India**

Travel is mentioned in the Rig Veda as early as 1500 BC. There is a lovely statement that extols the joys of travel (Insight, 2018). As time passed, Man's inherently curious nature drove him to explore the globe he called home. People began to travel for business, exploration, and conquest. Travel is not about data and figures, but about having a good time. In India, one may spend months researching a location, its weather, seasons, festivals, and the types of tourism available.

But nothing, and we mean nothing, can prepare you for the true sensation of the air, the behavior of the people, or the sense of simply being. As a result, people who have previously gone there are in high demand. India's travel bloggers want assistance. (John, 2011).

Because this is such a varied area, with deserts and high Himalayas, wet marshlands and picturesque backwaters, writings written from a study viewpoint sometimes fail to do justice to the realities of visiting this land.

Allen (2014) examined the top 100 blogs in terms of value in order to examine the overall two features, revenue methods, and social media tactics of successful blogs. He discovered that the majority of prominent blogs are maintained by groups of bloggers who predominantly employ a monetization model based on selling ad space on the site; these blogs also frequently use social media to share content with visitors (Allen, 2014). Blogs are also utilised for marketing management, feedback collecting, and information updates. (Singh, 2008).

Blogging, on the other hand, may be a stumbling hurdle for marketers. Influential bloggers' viewpoints are frequently difficult to shape or conceal (Maurya, 2011). The medium that was previously seen as a legitimate source of information has now been so saturated with marketing

attempts that it is frequently regarded as a true type of word-of-mouth advertising (Maurya, 2011). Simultaneously, the blogosphere has evolved into a platform for entrepreneurs to create successful enterprises. The expansion of the blogosphere beyond simple text and photo blogs has increased the sphere's ability to engage visitors and so attract more customers. (Lahm, 2011).

Because of the multiple applications that blogging offers for, it's no surprise that the field has piqued the curiosity of both academics and businesspeople. However, there is still a vacuum in the study on blogging as an entrepreneurial activity in and of itself, how the space's ongoing development affects those entrepreneurs today, and the space's continued viability for pro-bloggers in light of that transformation. This study will begin to fill this research vacuum by providing insightful, relevant ideas for existing and aspiring professional bloggers. (Hawkins, 2021)

#### **4. History of travel blogging in Karnataka**

Karnataka, blessed with natural wealth, attracts a large number of tourists each year. Karnataka was recognised as India's third most popular tourist destination in 2014. Karnataka boasts numerous beautiful hill stations, including Coorg, Nandi Hills, and Chikmagalur. People looking for pure beaches appreciate its gorgeous coastal sites such as the well-known Blue Lagoon Beach and Ladies Beach in Karwar, which are lined with Casuarina trees. Furthermore, Karnataka is home to UNESCO World History Sites like as Hampi and Pattadakal, which are great for heritage visits. (Tourism.kar.in)

Travel blogging and tourism are two of India's most important and rapidly growing service industries. This industry offers history, cultural, medicinal, commercial, and sports tourism to Indian residents (Mayura, 2011). The goal of this sector is to develop and promote tourism, preserve India's competitiveness as a tourist destination, and enhance and extend existing tourism goods in order to generate employment and economic growth. (Tourism.kar.in).

Travel blogging and Vlogging give information on numerous tourist sites, modes of transportation, lodging, and authorised travel agencies, as well as other related information. Travel Blogging and Vlogging is the excitement of finding new places, experiencing new cultures, and celebrating life on the road that drives some individuals to accept travelling as a way of life and make a profession from it. The blogging and vlogging culture has led to numerous previously unknown and hidden locations in the state. And it has now become a social media fad.

#### **5. Relationship between Social Media and Blogs and Vlogs**

The popularity of social networks is only increasing. Because Facebook is the most popular social media site, platforms such as Facebook and Twitter allow you to create a corporate page for free. Messages may be sent to targeted groups through social media, which is not possible with merely blogging and Vlogging.

Social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter support geo-targeting and include capabilities that allow you to communicate with your target audience using the appropriate material. The pace of reach and reaction on social networks such as Facebook and Twitter is extremely fast.

If you want to spread the word about a store, concept, or inquiry, nothing beats blogging. While a blog may provide comparable input, social media platforms such as Twitter are considerably speedier, sometimes allowing for faster decision making, which is critical in a fast-paced business (John 2011). The ability to network quickly and easily is a big advantage of social media networks. This makes it easy to communicate with customers and raise brand recognition. Both social media networks and blogging have benefits and drawbacks. The important dilemma is which one a marketing agency should utilise to boost their credibility. Both are correct. (Digital Marketing (2018).

#### **6. Tourism and Social media:**

Social media has altered every part of our lives, even how we live. These advancements have had a tremendous impact on organisations, primarily by allowing new marketing methods. Tourism, as one of the most vibrant areas of the world economy, is unquestionably a component of all of these (Sarah, 2019). Combining social media and tourist marketing will yield amazing benefits for your company.

We've gathered information on the fundamentals of social media in tourist marketing: what it is and how it can be utilised effectively. The influence of social media on tourism may be observed in how individuals study before embarking on a vacation. People are now encouraged to share their trip stories. (Sarah, 2019)

As a result, social media has altered the way individuals make decisions. People put their faith in a tourism organisation on the opinions of others. Another important part of the tourist sector that has altered as a result of social media is customer service. Brands and enterprises may now reach out to their customers directly via social media. When individuals are dissatisfied with a tourism service, they can contact the company and hold them accountable. Thus, resolving customer issues in the most considerate manners will result in a company's reputation improving. (Sarah, 2019)

The most major aspect affecting the tourist business may be social sharing. Social media, in particular, allows young people to share the most important moments from their journeys with a large audience. Tourism organisations should understand that this is a more effective means of attracting new visitors than traditional ads, and they should encourage individuals to share their real-life experiences online. (Sarah, 2019).

As with any other business, the Big Three of social media - Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram - have been the leaders in the tourist industry. Despite the fact that each of these channels has its unique audience, travel is one of the most often discussed subjects on all of them. Facebook is a wonderful medium for attracting users from a variety of social groupings. People may share their experiences using Facebook's Recommendations function. It may be utilised efficiently for travel purposes in order to gather information about what consumers are saying about your travel company. Instagram is one of the most effective social media networks due to its emphasis on visual content. (Erikson, 2011) Using Instagram will help you attract individuals, particularly millennials, who are a very active Instagram user base. To increase the popularity of your posts, you should use travel hash tags and develop your own. While Instagram has taken over your visual content, Twitter has taken over your speech. This platform allows you to discuss brief travel advice and promotions.

Although Twitter may be used to share photographs and videos of your company, its true power is in delivering customer care (Erikson, 2011). You must have an active Twitter account in order to participate in conversations. It is a fast expanding social media platform where you may communicate what is going on right now. To attract attention, you might upload captivating images of your tourism business. (Sarah, 2019).

## **7. Impact of Tourism on National Economy**

India offers many historical and natural tourism attractions and is one of the world's tourist hotspots. Many tourists are drawn to this nation because of its rich history and distinctive culture. Historical features such as thousand-year-old structures, museums, and traditional villages have helped India become one of the most popular tourist destinations in the world (Anson & Avni, 2016). India now ranks ninth out of 184 nations in terms of tourism's contribution to GDP, with \$247 billion. There are 20 nations in the world whose GDP growth in tourism has outpaced the worldwide growth rate of 3.9 percent, with India ranking fifth among these twenty (WTTC).

According to the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), India will be the third fastest growing country from 2019 to 2029 in terms of the contribution of Travel & Tourism to GDP (6.8 percent), as well as the third largest country in terms of total share (absolute) of this sector to GDP in 2029, with 511.9 billion dollars (Wikipedia, 2020). The tourism sector in India accounted for 8% of total employment possibilities produced in 2017, creating jobs for around 41.6 million people in the same year. The figure is expected to rise by 2% every year to 52.3 million by 2028. (WTTC Report, 2019). Because tourism is a sort of service business, the money from this sector contributes to the host country's GDP and has a direct impact on its economic growth (Harry, Alexandra & Valentina, 2015). Tourism also has an indirect influence on growth since it displays the complicated effect on the economy as a whole in the form of spill overs or other externality impacts. (Marin 1992).

The tourist business, with its distinct qualities, is seen as a vibrant industry with a promising future.



Tourism investment is increasing in all nations throughout the world (Sarah,2019). Today, attracting foreign tourists has become increasingly competitive among tourism industry entities, because the industry not only contributes to the advancement of the national economy and foreign exchange revenue (John, 2012), but it is also a clean and pollution-free industry that creates new jobs.

Today, it is seen that industrialised nations are using all of their energy to attract tourists, reflecting the industry's position in the economy; the income from tourism is sustainable and can be exploited in the short term; and the opportunity for job creation in this industry is also high, and its human resources do not require long-term training. (Rajasingh, 2020).

### **8. Current Status of Tourism in Karnataka and South Canara:**

In 2014, Karnataka, India's sixth biggest state was listed as the third most popular state for tourism in the country. It is home to 507 of India's 3600 centrally protected monuments, the second-highest number after Uttar Pradesh. Another 752 monuments are protected by the State Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, while another 25,000 (Wikipedia, 2021) have still to be protected. The old sculptured temples, contemporary towns, hill ranges, woodlands, and beaches are all popular tourist destinations. Karnataka tourism may be broadly classified into four geographical regions: North Karnataka, Hill Stations, Coastal Karnataka, and South Karnataka.

Hospitality and tourism are two of the industries worst damaged by the epidemic. Restaurants, airlines, hotels, travel brokers, tour operators, and transportation companies have seen a significant loss in income over the last 15 months, and they have had to recalibrate services twice to comply with health and safety regulations. The industries are anxiously awaiting the new set of Unlock rules, which the state government promises to unveil next week, in the hopes that another wave does not disrupt this expected recovery phase. (The Hindu, 2020)

South Canara is one of Karnataka's most popular tourist destinations. The development of the tourism business in this area has long been a priority for the people and the government. As there are numerous holy temples, hotels are erected to meet the demands of travelers.

### **9. Role of Blog and Vlog as a Vehicle of Tourism**

According to Choi, Hickerson, and Kertstetter before the internet era, travelers relied on conventional media as a way of communication from tourism providers via periodicals, pamphlets, and TVs. However, the roles of these traditional media have become indistinguishable as travel agents/providers are the sole participant in providing information to tourists wherein it portrays different types of visual cues or symbols inferring to the source of information that implies to the tourists travel experience as this information may differ per customer and these customers do not have a vivid picture of the experience on their minds and does not create emulation (Joseph, 2018)

Individuals are exposed to various visual cues or symbols in comparison to travel blogs and vlogs in which an individual can get more reliable information as the blogger/vlogger is sharing first-hand experience wherein it shows a real-life picture of what travelers can experience and that creates a destination image in the mind of the consumer which fills-in information that makes them excited and triggers the consumer purchase decision which are: booking flight tickets. (Joseph, 2018)

Furthermore, visitors rely on internet media as a more accessible and vital source of information, both from tourism operators and other tourists, to exchange travel information through various online platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TripAdvisor, YouTube, travel websites, and so on (John,2018). By utilizing these platforms, it is possible to produce, distribute, and share information for tourists to freely use in which can either contradict or aid the destination image of a certain tourist attraction based on online media vs. traditional media, and as a result, it can help tourists' decision-making experience that will enhance their travel experience. (Mohd, 2018)

Furthermore, travel planners can access feedback, comments, and/or ratings via online media, which increases the reliability rating factor for travelers to consider a specific tourist attraction, booking platform, airline, hotel, etc., which is why tourists regard travel blogs and vlogs as a reliable source of information.

Consumers rely on online media as a credible source of information for the following reasons, in addition to the growth of the digital era: First, only travel providers supply all information, rather than a shared contribution by both travel providers and passengers, since this allows travelers to participate depending on their own interests. Second, internet media produces a destination picture that elicits enthusiasm, resulting in a customer buy choice. Finally, visitors may rely on reviews and remarks since they can utilize this knowledge to prepare ahead of time and improve their vacation experience. (Hillery, 2020)

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