

The Effectiveness of Content Marketing Towards Consumers Perspective in the Tourism Industry: A Study Among Young Adults in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

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Abstract:

This study investigates the effectiveness of content marketing from the perspective of young adults in Malaysia, specifically Kuala Lumpur. The research explores the relationships between key variables such as brand awareness, personalization, and emotion, and their impact on the effectiveness of content marketing strategies. The study employs a quantitative research approach, utilizing an online questionnaire to collect data from 149 respondents. The research design is based on positivism and deductive reasoning, focusing on hypothesis testing to determine the relationships between the independent and dependent variables. The findings of this study aim to provide insights for marketers to enhance their content marketing strategies tailored to the preferences of the target audience. Ethical considerations are carefully addressed to ensure the confidentiality and voluntary participation of respondents. Overall, this research contributes to the understanding of content marketing effectiveness and its influencing factors in the digital age, offering practical implications for marketing professionals.

Keywords: *Brand Awareness, Personalisation, Emotion, Content Marketing, Advertising*

1.0 Introduction

Marketing is the process of advertising and distributing items or services to promote and sell them. The purpose of marketing is to first understand the demands of the consumer before developing a marketing mix. Marketing is crucial for a variety of reasons, including increasing brand awareness and visibility, enabling businesses to differentiate their products or services from rivals, and allowing businesses to effectively communicate the value of their products or services to clients.

Traditional and digital marketing are two forms that can be used to spread awareness or advertise. According to Tador (2016), Traditional marketing includes print advertisements (newspapers, magazines), public ads (billboards, posters), broadcast commercials (TV, radio), and brochures.

The advantages of traditional marketing are durability and trust level. This is due to a lot of internet websites being abandoned and because of the growing number of internet scams, consumers are hesitant to trust some of the information hence people still trust the traditional way. But traditional marketing also has its disadvantages such as high cost and metrics measuring difficulties. Most times, the metrics cannot be tracked or measured.

On the other hand, advertising using digital channels such as search engines, websites, social media, email, and mobile applications is referred to as digital marketing. Digital marketing has its own set of advantages such as cost effectiveness and easily measurable metrics. Digital marketing is typically more cost-effective as opposed to traditional and the numbers can be easily measured by monitoring the traffic of the website. But one of the downsides to digital marketing is the slow internet connection, this often causes consumers to get bored and frustrated if it takes too long to load. According to Desai (2019), digital marketing has altered the way brands and organizations utilize technology to promote. As digital platforms become more integrated into marketing strategies and daily lives, and as individuals utilize mobile devices instead of visiting physical stores, digital marketing efforts become more widespread and successful.

A popular element of digital marketing is content marketing. According to Hamdan and Zhen (2021) the term "content marketing" refers to an invitation from companies or marketers to engage with customers at the appropriate point in their decision-making process. Content marketing involves creating, allocating, sharing, and interacting with content to compel customers to buy goods or services. The growing reliance on the internet has altered the way businesses and marketers engage with their customers, and content marketing is one of the best techniques. Content marketing can be a vital tool for companies looking to stand out from the saturated market. Content marketing is a great way to keep the target audience interested, companies need to have quality content that communicates the message and persuades customers to purchase from them than their rivals.

According to Gurjar et al. (2019), content marketing is a significant concept in the tourism industry, given the industry's reliance on information and the increasing influence of digital media on consumer behavior. The tourism industry, being service-based and information-intensive, is particularly affected by these changes. The evolution of web technologies has enabled travelers to access more content, influencing their purchasing patterns and decision-making processes. Content marketing is essential in the tourism industry because the intangible nature of tourism products creates a risk factor for consumers. User-generated content includes text, pictures, videos, and audio files created and shared through social media, often by travel consumers sharing their experiences and influencing others planning trips.

1.1 Problem Statement

COVID-19 caused widespread disruption to several sectors globally and has placed everyone on lockdown. COVID-19 has also impacted marketing, especially traditional marketing, due to the restrictions on physical gatherings and movement measures implemented to slow the spread of the virus. Businesses that relied on traditional marketing methods faced a crisis.

According to Rautela et al. (2020) in the COVID-19 period, everything has undergone significant alteration. It has affected people everywhere. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, some businesses terminated their whole marketing staff, while other companies are being agile by devising fresh approaches to engage and entertain their audience. Many business owners would

prefer to drastically reduce their marketing efforts as, in an uncertain pandemic, playing it safe seems to be the best course of action.

According to Gowda (2020), the spread of COVID-19 has severely hindered all marketing activities for companies. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the gateway for companies and consumers to hop into digital marketing mediums sooner. According to Rautela et al. (2020) and Gowda (2020), this will emerge as the new normal. Technology will now be significantly integrated into marketing, and the best thing a business can do in this pandemic circumstance to get consumers is through digital marketing. Companies that were previously using traditional methods are forced to adopt digital marketing.

One of the popular elements in digital marketing is content marketing, it is the latest trend for businesses to adopt and use. By publishing or syndicating text, photos, videos, and other types of content, content marketing aims to give customers value in the form of ideas and relevant information. It transcends typical marketing campaigns and selling. Consequently, content marketing is transforming how businesses interact with and sell to their target market (Elisa & Gordini, 2014). But what are the factors that are the driving force of the effectiveness of content marketing?

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Content Marketing

According to Hamdan and Zhen (2021) the term "content marketing" refers to an invitation from companies or marketers to engage with customers at the appropriate point in their decision-making process. Content marketing involves creating, allocating, sharing, and interacting with content to compel customers to buy goods or services.

Although content marketing is not new to the marketing industry, it is now the subject of a lot of talk due to its rising trend. The art of content marketing involves producing and distributing relevant and authentic content about businesses to connect with customers and capture their attention. It is accomplished by providing content that is pertinent to customer needs while also being appropriate for the brand's characteristics. Customers should be gradually persuaded and influenced to make a purchase using content marketing.

According to Vinerean (2017), there are a variety of techniques that can be used in content marketing. For example, blog posts, infographics, videos, or podcasts to name a few. According to Kee and Yazdanifard (2015), coming up with fresh ideas and catchy words to capture consumers' attention may be a demanding task for content marketers. Customers may get disinterested and eventually disengage themselves from the brand if marketers consistently similarly share content.

With plenty of content marketing variety out in the market, marketers are encouraged to mix up their routines and look for substitutions. Customers would appreciate the fresh content from businesses.

2.2 Brand Awareness

According to Riyadin and Krisnawati (2022), brand awareness means customers can easily recall and recognize a brand. As soon as the buyer thinks of purchasing a product, the brand name pops into their head. When a product or brand has achieved high awareness when a buyer decides to purchase a product, a particular product or brand will be considered. Furthermore, the most crucial element in brand awareness is the brand name. According to Ilyas et al. (2020), brand awareness affects how consumers choose a product. The greater the level of brand awareness and favorable brand image the brand possesses, it increases the likelihood that consumers will choose the brand over other rivals when making a transaction.

According to Ashrafa et al. (2022), a product that is distinctive and stands out from the competition in terms of quality and features establishes a strong brand and challenges the competition. A product's distinctiveness establishes its brand, and a brand typically drives the market and achieves the best possible consumer outcomes.

According to Ilyas et al. (2020), brand awareness has grown in importance as a factor influencing how consumers see a business. Therefore, it stands to reason that a well-known brand may likewise influence a consumer's likelihood of purchasing or using a product repeatedly. Consumers' desire to make a purchase is also significantly influenced by brand awareness. Some businesses try to shape consumers' perceptions so that customers choose their products over existing alternatives

2.3 Personalisation

According to Chandra et al. (2022) Providing the correct products and services to the appropriate client at the appropriate time and place is known as personalization. Understanding and providing relevant offerings to satisfy client wants at the appropriate moment is another aspect of personalization. Businesses can gain a competitive edge through personalization that involves matching, learning, and providing clients with services and products. Personalization seeks to increase consumer happiness and foster loyalty. Personalized marketing may increase customer value by expanding the scope of the relationship if it is done correctly.

Additionally, personalization has been seen from several perspectives, including strategy, business capabilities, process, individualization of the marketing mix, user participation, and user experience. Businesses use personalization as a tactic to save costs, increase convenience, and enhance customer experience by customizing items, pricing, promotions, and distribution.

2.4 Emotion

Emotions are a set of feelings such as happiness, sadness, anger, or fear (Decker, 2021). According to O'Shaughnessy & O'Shaughnessy (2003), emotion can stimulate a buyer's interest, direct their selections, arouse buying intentions, and influence buying decisions in the future. When it comes to thinking of purchasing, they are not listless mental acts. Buying can be thrilling, with strong likes and dislikes, anxieties, and aspirations.

According to (Zheng, 2020) emotions can be used in marketing. One of the tactics is emotional appeal. Emotional appeal can be achieved by producing a particular advertising picture and instilling emotion in the commercial to pique the consumer's emotional attitude toward the products or services. Businesses may convey a wide range of emotions in their advertising,

including sex, comedy, love, nostalgia, and anger. Furthermore, businesses and marketers also use fear, guilt, sadness, and anger to create emotional appeal with their audience.

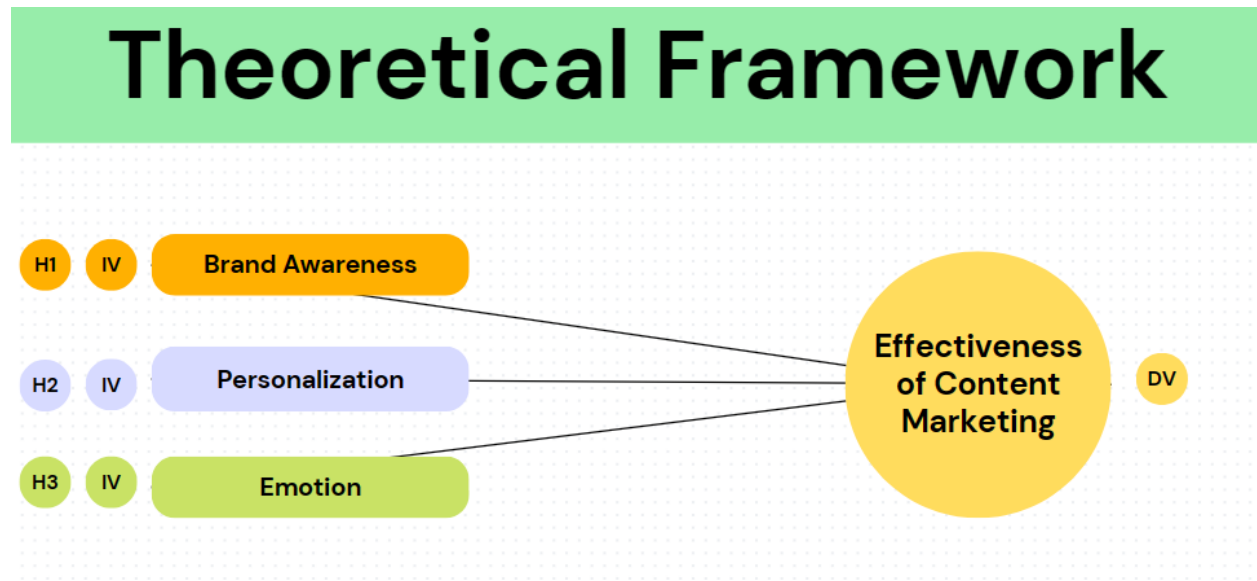


Figure 1: Research Framework

3.0 Methodology

The basic research design of this study will be based on the philosophy of positivism as well as deductive reasoning because the research begins with a hypothesis and is then tested by the collected data to determine if there is a relationship between independent variables and dependent variables. This study will be a quantitative study, with an online questionnaire produced and distributed to collect data for analysis. The sample size necessary for this research will be 129 to get a valid and accurate result at the end of the study.

According to Saunders et al. (2016), a research philosophy is a set of attitudes and assumptions regarding the advancement of knowledge. A positivist researcher develops hypotheses based on existing theory, and these assertions provide hypothetical explanations that may be analyzed and validated, in whole or in part, or challenged, leading to the development of theory, which can then be evaluated by more research. In this research study, hypotheses have been constructed with hypothetical explanations. To further examine the validity of the hypotheses, data will be collected and analyzed to see whether there is a relationship between the hypotheses. For this study, the deductive approach will be utilized for this research. A deductive strategy is used when a study begins with theory, which is typically generated by reading academic literature, and then builds a research plan to test the hypothesis (Saunders et al., 2016).

This study's research approach will be explanatory since explanatory research methods usually serve to evaluate the relationship between variables (George, 2023). Several approaches may be applied to the research strategy. Methods such as experimentation, surveys, case studies, and action research, to mention a few. However, a survey will be utilized in this study to evaluate the three independent factors and the dependent variable. This study is also based on deductive reasoning, it is based on quantitative research. Furthermore, this study involves a small number of variables, making it best suited to quantitative analysis. Time horizons are frequently associated with study

periods or chronological spans of varying widths (Melnikovas, 2018). Time frames are classified into two types: cross-sectional and longitudinal. The time horizon used for this study is cross-sectional, commonly known as the snapshot. Because the purpose of this study is to identify correlations between variables, cross-sectional is the most suited method.

According to Hox & Boeije (2005), primary data are original data acquired for a specific study purpose, whereas secondary data are data collected for a different cause and used for a different research topic. Primary data for this study will be gathered using an online questionnaire and analyzed to identify the relationship between variables. Primary data for this research topic will be obtained via an online questionnaire. The online questionnaire will be provided to participants over the Internet so that they may complete the survey. The online questionnaire will be distributed to 129 people. Once all of the data has been collected, it will be analyzed using SPSS to examine the relationship between independent and dependent variables. To identify a relationship between variables, the data will be examined using procedures such as reliability testing and correlation testing.

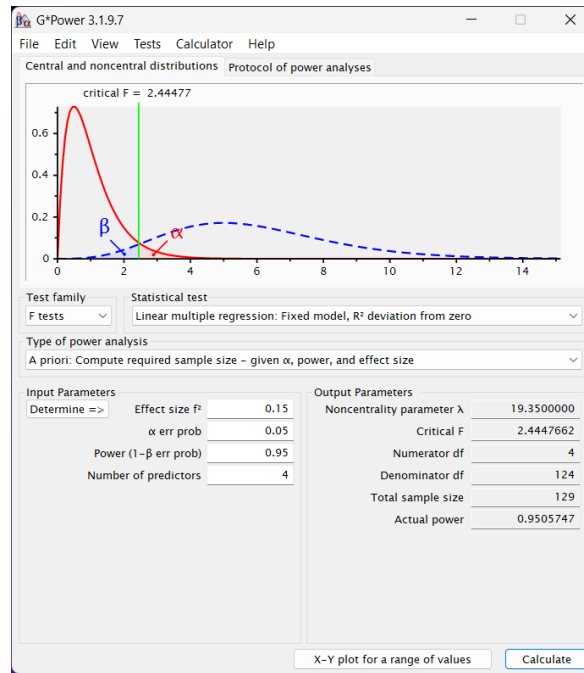


Figure 2: G Power Sample Size Calculation

4.0 Data Analysis

4.1 Normality Testing

To conclude that all variables are normally distributed, a Q-Q plot test was also performed to further demonstrate the data's normality. A normal distribution on a Q-Q plot test is represented as a straight line (Pallant, 2010).

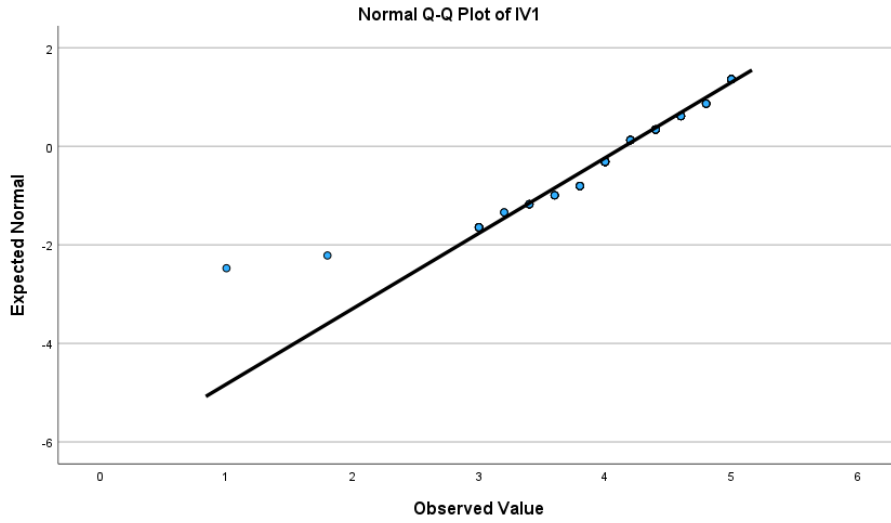


Figure 3: Q-Q Plot of IV1

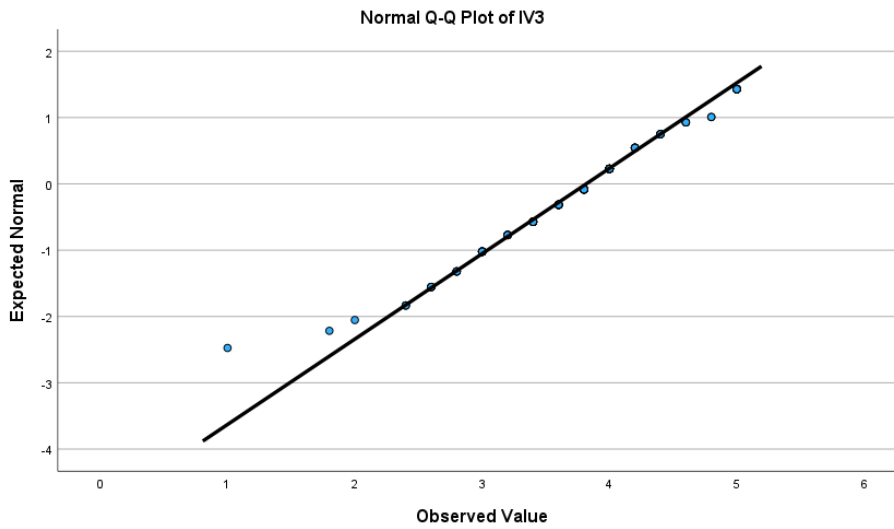


Figure 4: Q-Q Plot of IV2

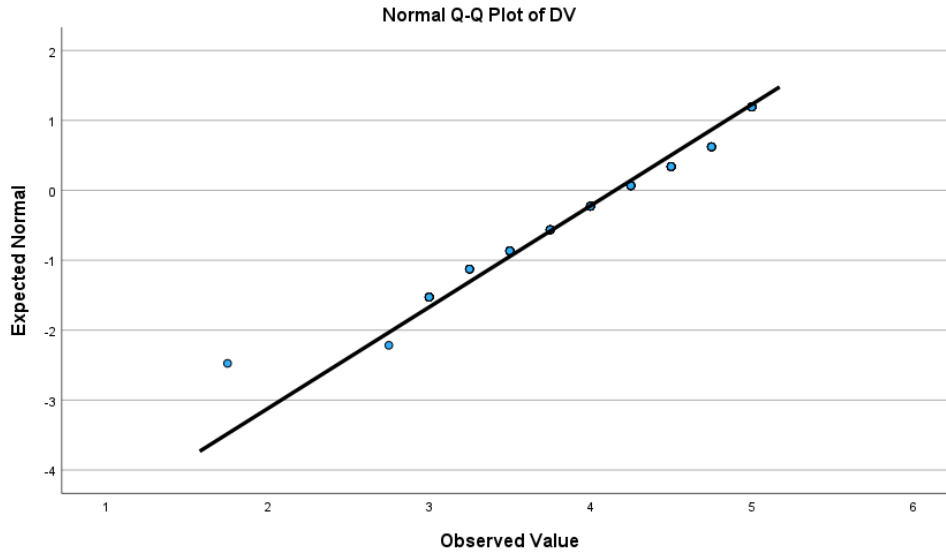


Figure 5: Q-Q Plot of IV3

The Q-Q plot findings in Figures 3 – 5 show straight lines, indicating that the variables are normally distributed.

4.2 Pearson Correlation

		DV	IV1	IV2	IV3
DV	Pearson Correlation	1	.674**	.523**	.390**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	149	149	149	149
IV1	Pearson Correlation	.674**	1	.671**	.484**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001		<.001	<.001
	N	149	149	149	149
IV2	Pearson Correlation	.523**	.671**	1	.519**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001		<.001
	N	149	149	149	149
IV3	Pearson Correlation	.390**	.484**	.519**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001	
	N	149	149	149	149

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Figure 6: Pearson Correlation Findings

The DV has a strong positive correlation with IV1 (0.674) and a moderate positive correlation with IV2 (0.523), Meanwhile, IV3 (0.390) has a low positive correlation with DV.

The N value for all correlations is 149, suggesting a sample size of 149 observations in the analysis. All reported correlations are significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), indicating that they are statistically significant and unlikely to be due to chance.

Overall, the data in Figure 16 suggest that there are positive linear relationships between all of the variables. The strongest correlation is between DV and IV1, followed by the correlation between DV and IV2. The weakest correlation is between the DV and IV3.

4.3 Multiple Regression

This study will use Multiple Regression to determine the predictive potential of each independent variable. The test measures the number of different changes in the dependent variable caused by each independent variable.

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.682 ^a	.466	.455	.50961

a. Predictors: (Constant), IV3, IV2, IV1
b. Dependent Variable: DV

Figure 7: Model Summary of Multiple Regression

The table shows that the model has an adjusted R-squared of 0.455, which means that it explains 45.5% of the variance in the dependent variable (DV) after accounting for the number of predictors in the model. However, 54.5% of the remaining variance is not covered and some variances can be discussed in this study.

4.4 ANOVA Test

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	32.808	3	10.936	42.110	<.001 ^b
	Residual	37.656	145	.260		
	Total	70.464	148			

a. Dependent Variable: DV
b. Predictors: (Constant), IV3, IV2, IV1

Figure 8: ANOVA Test

Based on Figure 8, the significance level, which is the probability of observing an F-statistic this large if the null hypothesis is true. A significance level of less than 0.05 is typically considered statistically significant. The significance level in the table is less than 0.001, which means that we can reject the null hypothesis and conclude that IV1, IV2, and IV3 may have a significant influence on the dependent variable.

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.008	.291		3.465	<.001
	IV1	.607	.089	.575	6.853	<.001
	IV2	.106	.085	.108	1.252	.213
	IV3	.050	.065	.057	.777	.438

a. Dependent Variable: DV

Figure 9: Coefficient

The Beta value represents the change in the DV predicted for a one-unit increase in the corresponding independent variable, while holding all other independent variables constant.

The IV1 beta coefficient of 0.575 indicates a moderate positive relationship between IV1 and the dependent variable (DV). A one standard deviation increase in IV1 is associated with a 0.575 standard deviation increase in DV, on average, while controlling for the other independent variables. IV1 has a sig. value of .001 ($p > 0.05$), this indicates IV1 has a statistically significant positive relationship with the DV.

The IV2 beta coefficient of 0.108 suggests a weak positive relationship between IV2 and DV. A one standard deviation increase in IV2 is predicted to result in a 0.108 standard deviation increase in DV, on average. However, IV2 has the Sig. value of .213 ($p > 0.05$), IV2 suggests a non-significant relationship with DV.

The beta coefficient of 0.057 is very weak, showing a close to negligible positive relationship between IV3 and DV. Even with a one standard deviation increase in IV3, the DV is only predicted to increase by 0.057 standard deviations on average. IV3 has a Sig. value of .438 ($p > 0.05$) for IV3 indicates a non-significant relationship with DV.

5.0 Discussion

The study's findings provide a comprehensive overview of the effectiveness of content marketing toward consumers' perspectives. The study employed a quantitative research approach, using an online questionnaire to collect data from 149 respondents in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The questionnaire was designed to assess the relationships between three independent variables (brand awareness, personalization, and emotion) and the dependent variable (effectiveness of content marketing).

Descriptive and frequency analyses were taken into account to understand the demographic information of the respondents. Among 149 respondents, 53% were females which is 79 female respondents. The majority of the respondents fell into the age group of 18 – 24 at 44.3%, which is 66 out of 149 respondents. With slightly over half the respondents being students at 52.3%, 78 out of 149 respondents. 70 out of 149 respondents, which is 47% of the respondents have the educational level of bachelor's degree.

In this study, an examination of the Skewness and Kurtosis of all variables, as well as their distribution characteristics, was conducted using a normality test. This comprehensive assessment

included skewness and kurtosis tests, as well as the utilization of Q-Q plots to scrutinize each variable individually. As defined by Hair et al. (2010) and Kim (2013), normal data is typically characterized by skewness and kurtosis values falling within the ranges of -2 to +2 and -7 to +7, respectively. Across the variables analyzed in this study, it was observed that the average skewness ranged from -1.158 to -0.383, with an average kurtosis spanning from -0.334 to 1.497. All data points were determined to exhibit a normal distribution.

Following this, a multiple regression analysis was employed to examine the correlation between the three independent variables and the dependent variable, providing insights into whether the hypotheses of the study would be accepted or rejected. Furthermore, ANOVA and coefficient analyses were conducted. In this study, only one out of three hypotheses were accepted. Brand awareness was the accepted hypothesis at a p-value of 0.001 ($P > 0.05$). Simultaneously, personalization and emotion were rejected at p-values of 0.213 and 0.438 respectively.

5.1 Implications of the Study

The objective of this study is to assess what are the factors influencing the effectiveness of content marketing in the tourism industry. The study provides valuable insights into the factors influencing the effectiveness of content marketing in the tourism industry. Furthermore, the findings can contribute to a better understanding of how brand awareness, personalization, and emotion impact content marketing strategies.

5.2 Conclusion and Recommendations

This study was conducted to have a better understanding of the effectiveness of content marketing toward consumers' perspectives in the tourism industry among young adults in Kuala Lumpur. This study sought to evaluate the hypothesized relationship between the independent factors of brand awareness, personalization, and emotion and the dependent variable of the effectiveness of content marketing.

To test the relationship between the dependent variable and independent variable, data was collected through a survey with 149 respondents willingly participating in the survey. The data was collected from respondents from the Kuala Lumpur region. The obtained data was rendered into SPSS and subsequently analyzed. The findings were closely scrutinized through multiple methods for accuracy.

After closely analyzing the output of the data. Brand awareness has a significant relationship with the effectiveness of content marketing. Meanwhile, the findings have rejected the relationship of personalization and emotion to the effectiveness of content marketing.

The rejected variables may be attributed to several reasons such as limited sample size, demographic differences, or regional limitations. Since this area of study is still particularly new, it may be difficult to describe the causes behind the test findings.

The current study provides valuable insights into the factors influencing the effectiveness of content marketing, but there are several avenues for future research to build upon and expand the understanding of this topic. Firstly, future studies could explore the long-term effects of brand awareness, personalization, and emotional content on consumer behavior in diverse market segments. This would help marketers gain a more comprehensive understanding of how these

factors impact content marketing effectiveness across different demographics and cultural contexts, allowing them to tailor their strategies accordingly.

Additionally, future research could incorporate a mixed-methods approach by combining quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. While the current study relied solely on quantitative data from the online questionnaire, incorporating qualitative methods such as in-depth interviews or focus groups could provide deeper insights into the underlying reasons and motivations behind consumer perceptions and behaviors. This would allow researchers to acquire a better grasp of the complex interplay between the independent variables and the effectiveness of content marketing.

Lastly, future studies could investigate the potential moderating or mediating variables that may influence the relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variable.

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