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An Assessment of Public Awareness and Perception Towards Kerala Tourism Development Corporation (KTDC), Trivandrum

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of promotional activities on public awareness and analyzes the influence of demographic factors on awareness and perception towards Kerala Tourism Development Corporation (KTDC), Trivandrum. Primary data were collected from 384 respondents using a structured questionnaire. One-Way ANOVA was used to examine the influence of age and service perception, the Independent Sample T-Test was employed for gender-wise comparison, and Spearman Rank Correlation was applied to examine the relationship between promotional activities, public awareness, and customer satisfaction. Results indicate that age significantly influences awareness of KTDC across key service dimensions, while gender does not create any meaningful difference. A strong positive correlation ($r = 0.754$, $p < 0.01$) was found between promotional activities and public awareness, and a moderately strong positive correlation ($r = 0.710$, $p < 0.01$) was found between public awareness and customer satisfaction. These findings underscore the importance of targeted promotional strategies for enhancing brand awareness and strengthening public perception of KTDC.

Keywords: ANOVA, Brand Perception, Customer Satisfaction, Kerala Tourism Development Corporation, Promotional Activities, Public Awareness, Spearman Correlation.

Introduction

In today's competitive tourism industry, branding has become a decisive factor in influencing customer decisions. Unlike physical goods, tourism services are intangible, meaning customers cannot evaluate them before use. Consequently, they rely heavily on the reputation, image, and awareness of an organization when selecting tourism services. A strong brand image builds trust and supports the long-term growth of an organization.

Public awareness refers to how well people recognize and recall an organization, its offerings, and its identity. In the tourism sector, this is particularly crucial because customers depend on what they have heard or seen about the brand before making decisions. Brand perception, on the other hand, captures how the public thinks and feels about the brand based on their experiences and information received from various sources. Together, awareness and perception shape the overall position of an organization in the minds of the public.

Kerala Tourism Development Corporation (KTDC) is a government-owned public sector undertaking established in the 1960s to promote and manage tourism in Kerala, popularly known as ‘God’s Own Country.’ Operating under the Government of Kerala with its head office in Thiruvananthapuram, KTDC provides a wide range of services including accommodation, transportation, tour packages, houseboat experiences, and food and beverage services.

Literature Review

The study by Mohammed Umer J and Dr. Naveen G (2023) examined the influence of brand awareness and perception on customer preference toward Bisleri International Private Limited. The findings showed that promotional activities and product quality play an important role in improving customer recognition and positive perception of the brand.

Dr. A Kamaruniza (2025) studied consumer perception regarding brand awareness, preference, satisfaction, and repurchase intention toward Mamaearth products. The research concluded that higher brand awareness increases customer satisfaction, preference, and repurchase intention.

The research by Fitri Diana Pupasari and Andyan Pradipta Utama (2024) analysed the impact of brand image, price perception, and brand awareness on customer loyalty toward Wardah facial cleanser products. The study found that strong brand awareness and positive brand image improve customer loyalty and perception.

The study conducted by Dr. R. Jeyalakshmi, Dr. N. Kengatharan, Gopalakrishnan, and Manikandan (2020) examined the influence of brand awareness on customer buying behaviour. The study revealed that positive brand image and reliable product quality help in building customer trust and strengthening buying decisions.

The study by Midhat Nadeem, Taha Jamal, Masood Hassan, Muhammad Asad Ullah, and Dr. Abdul Rasheed (2019) focused on the relationship between brand message and brand perception. The research highlighted that customer trust and satisfaction are essential in creating positive brand perception and influencing consumer behaviour.

Research Design

This study employs a descriptive research design to analyze public awareness and brand perception towards KTDC among general respondents in Trivandrum. The study was conducted over a period of three months from January 2025 to April 2025.

Sample Design

The population comprises the general public who have exposure to or awareness of tourism services in Kerala. Using the standard formula for sample size determination at a 95% confidence level with a 5% margin of error:

$$n = Z^2 \times p \times q / e^2 = (3.8416 \times 0.25) / 0.0025 = 384$$

A sample size of 384 respondents was arrived at. Convenience sampling was employed as the sampling technique, selecting respondents based on their availability and willingness to participate.

Data Collection

Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire covering demographic details, brand awareness levels, service quality perceptions, and responses to promotional activities. Secondary data were obtained from tourism reports, academic journals, and official KTDC and Kerala Tourism publications.

Objectives of the Study

- To analyze the impact of promotional activities on public awareness of KTDC.
- To identify factors influencing public perception of KTDC.

Statistical Tools

One-Way ANOVA: Applied to examine significant differences in awareness levels across different age groups and differences in service quality perception and trust across occupational groups and income levels.

Independent Sample T-Test: Used to compare awareness and perception levels between male and female respondents, assessing whether gender creates a statistically significant difference.

Spearman Rank Correlation: A non-parametric technique used to measure the strength and direction of association between promotional activities, public awareness, and customer satisfaction, particularly suitable given the ordinal nature of the data.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	Below 20	73	19.0%
	21–30	203	52.9%
	31–40	58	15.1%
	41–50	28	7.3%
	Above 55	22	5.7%
Gender	Male	191	49.7%
	Female	187	48.7%
	Others	6	1.6%

The majority of respondents belong to the 21–30 age group (52.9%), reflecting a sample dominated by young adults who are typically more digitally engaged and travel-oriented. The gender distribution is nearly equal, with 49.7% male and 48.7% female respondents, ensuring an unbiased gender representation. A significant majority are highly educated, with 48.4% postgraduates and 33.6% undergraduates. Employees form the largest occupational segment (48.4%), while the income distribution reveals that most respondents fall under the lower and middle-income categories (36.5% earning below ₹10,000).

One-Way ANOVA – Influence of Age on KTDC Awareness

H_0 : There is no significant difference in the level of awareness and perception towards KTDC among different age groups.

Table 2 One-Way ANOVA – Influence of Age on KTDC Awareness

Awareness Factor	Below 20	21–30	31–40	41–50	Above 55	F value	P value
KTDC Name Awareness	4.33	4.32	4.66	4.61	3.68	5.745	.000**
KTDC Logo	3.97	4.16	4.22	3.93	3.95	1.555	.186
KTDC as Govt Organization	3.68	4.18	4.34	4.04	3.27	10.543	.000**
Accommodation Services	3.38	4.05	4.55	4.04	3.50	15.814	.000**
Houseboat & Backwater Tourism	3.96	4.18	4.41	4.07	3.00	11.146	.000**
Online Booking & Website	3.81	3.97	3.95	4.21	3.73	1.078	.367
Location of KTDC Properties	3.59	4.10	4.14	4.00	3.55	6.438	.000**
Digital Presence	3.70	4.18	4.09	4.00	3.45	6.051	.000**
Promotional Activities	3.75	4.02	4.16	3.96	3.55	2.889	.022*

* Significant at 5% level ** Significant at 1% level

The one-way ANOVA results reveal that age significantly influences awareness for several key KTDC dimensions. Factors such as KTDC name awareness ($F = 5.745, p < 0.01$), KTDC as a government organization ($F = 10.543, p < 0.01$), accommodation services ($F = 15.814, p < 0.01$), houseboat and backwater tourism ($F = 11.146, p < 0.01$), location of KTDC properties ($F = 6.438, p < 0.01$), and digital presence ($F = 6.051, p < 0.01$) are all statistically significant at the 1% level. Promotional activities show significance at the 5% level ($p = 0.022$). Respondents in the 31–40 age group consistently report the highest mean awareness scores across most dimensions, while the above 55 group tends to show comparatively lower awareness. Factors such as KTDC logo and online booking and website show no significant difference across age groups ($p > 0.05$), indicating uniform recognition regardless of age. Based on these results, the null hypothesis is rejected for most awareness factors, confirming that age plays a significant role in shaping public awareness of KTDC.

Independent Sample T-Test – Gender-Wise Comparison of Awareness

H_0 : There is no significant difference between male and female respondents in their level of awareness and perception towards KTDC.

Table 3 Independent Sample T-Test – Gender-Wise Comparison

Awareness Factor	Male Mean	Male SD	Female Mean	Female SD	t-value	p-value
KTDC Name	4.35	0.950	4.35	0.831	0.035	0.972
KTDC Logo	4.18	0.852	4.03	0.786	1.793	0.074
KTDC Govt Organization	4.11	0.920	4.01	0.886	1.068	0.286

Accommodation Services	3.92	1.015	4.04	0.888	-1.181	0.238
Houseboat & Backwater Tourism	4.07	0.990	4.15	0.873	-0.850	0.396
Online Booking	3.87	1.100	3.98	0.939	-1.040	0.299
Locations of KTDC	3.90	0.968	4.05	0.812	-1.662	0.097
Promotional Activities	4.04	0.951	3.93	0.880	1.182	0.238
Digital Platform Presence	4.08	0.967	3.96	0.888	1.213	0.226

The independent sample t-test results indicate that gender does not create a statistically significant difference in KTDC awareness levels across any of the examined factors. All p-values are greater than 0.05, confirming the absence of significant gender-based variation. Although marginal differences are visible—females report slightly higher mean values for accommodation services, houseboat tourism, online booking, and location awareness, while males show marginally higher awareness for logo and digital presence—these differences are too small to be statistically meaningful. The consistently small t-values further support this conclusion. The null hypothesis is therefore retained, indicating that awareness of KTDC is uniformly distributed across gender, reflecting balanced and gender-neutral reach of KTDC’s communication efforts.

Spearman Rank Correlation Analysis

H₀: There is no significant relationship between promotional activities and public awareness of KTDC.

Table 4 Spearman Rank Correlation – Promotional Activities, Public Awareness, and Satisfaction

	Promotional Activities	Public Awareness	Satisfaction Score
Promotional Activities – Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.754**	.682**
Promotional Activities – Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
Public Awareness – Correlation Coefficient	.754**	1.000	.710**
Public Awareness – Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000
Satisfaction Score – Correlation Coefficient	.682**	.710**	1.000
Satisfaction Score – Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.

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

The Spearman correlation analysis reveals strong and statistically significant positive relationships among all three variables. The correlation between promotional activities and public awareness is 0.754, indicating a strong positive relationship significant at the 1% level ($p < 0.001$). This confirms that more effective promotional efforts are closely associated with higher public

awareness of KTDC. The correlation between promotional activities and satisfaction score is 0.682, also significant, suggesting that promotional strategies not only inform customers but also enhance their overall satisfaction. Furthermore, the correlation between public awareness and satisfaction score is 0.710, a strong and significant positive association, demonstrating that customers who are more aware of KTDC and its offerings tend to report higher satisfaction levels. Since all p-values are 0.000, these relationships are highly reliable and not attributable to chance. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected, confirming a significant positive relationship between promotional activities, public awareness, and customer satisfaction. These findings indicate a strong interconnected chain: effective promotions drive awareness, and greater awareness contributes to improved satisfaction.

Findings

- Age significantly influences awareness for key dimensions such as KTDC name, government identity, accommodation services, houseboat tourism, property locations, digital presence, and promotional activities.
- Respondents in the 31–40 age group consistently demonstrate the highest awareness levels, while those above 55 show comparatively lower awareness, pointing to a generational gap.
- Gender does not create a statistically significant difference in awareness across any of the examined factors, indicating gender-neutral reach of KTDC’s promotional efforts.
- A strong positive correlation ($r = 0.754$, $p < 0.01$) exists between promotional activities and public awareness, confirming that effective promotion directly enhances awareness.
- A strong positive correlation ($r = 0.710$, $p < 0.01$) between public awareness and satisfaction score demonstrates that increased awareness positively influences customer satisfaction.
- Promotional activities also show a significant positive correlation with customer satisfaction ($r = 0.682$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that promotion contributes to satisfaction beyond awareness alone.

Suggestions

- KTDC should design targeted promotional campaigns for older age groups, particularly those above 55, who exhibit comparatively lower awareness levels.
- Digital marketing strategies, including social media and online platforms, should be strengthened to effectively engage younger and tech-savvy audiences.
- Continuous improvement in service quality, especially in hygiene, complaint handling, and staff professionalism, should be prioritized to enhance customer experience and perception.
- Affordable pricing strategies and customized tour packages should be introduced to attract the low and middle-income groups, who constitute the majority of the target audience.
- KTDC’s identity as a government organization should be more prominently communicated to enhance credibility and trust among the public.
- The online booking system and official website should be made more accessible and user-friendly to facilitate seamless customer interactions.
- Unique offerings such as houseboat and backwater tourism and cultural programs should be aggressively promoted to differentiate KTDC from private competitors.
- Collaboration with digital content creators and tourism influencers can enhance brand visibility and attract a broader, younger audience.

Conclusion

This study clearly establishes that promotional activities, public awareness, and customer satisfaction are strongly and positively interlinked in the context of KTDC. The Spearman

correlation analysis confirms that effective promotional strategies are the primary driver of public awareness, which in turn contributes to higher satisfaction levels among customers. The ANOVA findings reveal that age is a significant determinant of awareness, with middle-aged respondents demonstrating higher awareness compared to younger and older groups, highlighting the need for more inclusive and age-targeted promotional strategies. The absence of significant gender differences in awareness suggests that KTDC's existing communication initiatives are uniformly effective across male and female audiences, which is a positive indication of the organization's outreach consistency. Overall, KTDC should focus on bridging the awareness gap among older demographics, strengthening its digital and social media presence, maintaining service quality consistency, and deploying targeted promotional campaigns to enhance its brand perception and market position in Kerala's competitive tourism sector.

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