The digital media engagement and sustainable travel choices of millennials in Oriental Mindoro: A political consumerism perspective

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ARTICLE INFO

DOI:10.46223/HCMCOUJS.soci.en.16.11.4342.2026

Received: April 30th, 2025

Revised: June 09th, 2025

Accepted: July 01st, 2025

Keywords:

digital media engagement; eco-friendly destinations; environmental conservation; ethical practices; sustainable travel behavior

ABSTRACT

This study examines the influence of digital media engagement on Millennials' sustainable travel choices through the lens of political consumerism. Anchored in the Uses and Gratifications Theory, Political Consumerism Theory, and Theory of Planned Behavior, the research explores how digital media usage frequency, platform preference, and content type affect Millennials' travel decisions concerning environmental conservation, ethical practices, and eco-friendly destination preferences. Utilizing a descriptive-correlational design, data were collected from 169 respondents in Oriental Mindoro through a validated, structured questionnaire. Statistical tools, including weighted mean and Spearman's Rho correlation, assessed the relationship between digital media engagement and sustainable travel behavior. The results indicated significant relationships in all cases. Frequency of use showed a statistically significant correlation with environmental conservation ($r = 0.318$, $p < .001$) and ethical practices ($r = 0.366$, $p < .001$). However, the correlation with preference for an eco-friendly destination was not significant ($r = 0.101$, $p = 0.19$). Results indicate that Millennials highly engage with digital content related to sustainable travel, significantly influencing their environmental and ethical choices. However, the impact on destination preference is comparatively lower. Limitations involve the specific geographic focus and sample size, suggesting further research across diverse populations. The insights contribute to sustainable tourism promotion by demonstrating how digital engagement can foster ethical and environmentally conscious travel behaviors among Millennials.

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Millennials increased political, social, and environmental awareness has influenced their travel habits, favoring eco-friendly options. Digital media platforms like Instagram and TikTok promote sustainable practices, strengthening their commitment to sustainable tourism. Businesses and tourism organizations can adapt their marketing strategies to align with this generation's values, leading to a more sustainable tourism industry.

Digital media, particularly VR and AR, significantly influences Millennials' travel choices, especially in sustainable tourism. AI and smart wearables enhance cultural tourism, while social networks promote eco-conscious content and political consumerism perspectives, influencing travel behavior throughout the journey.

Political consumerism involves using consumer behavior for political, ethical, or environmental goals, influencing boycotts and lifestyle choices. Its prevalence varies regionally and is influenced by factors like beliefs, education, and digital media. Schema theory categorizes consumers by motivations, and social media plays a crucial role in mobilizing citizens for boycotts and buyouts.

Romanian Millennials, born in the Information Age, are the largest group of internet users and digital natives. They spend an average of 7.39 hours online, contributing to the promotion of anytime, anywhere social participation. Social media influences their travel preferences, as they consider travel a way of life. The introduction of smartphones has increased screen time, further influencing their travel preferences.

Travelers are sharing experiences online, enhancing social aspects but not dictating destination choices. Social media is crucial for travel inspiration and community engagement, reshaping leisure travel.

1.2. Research gap

Calapan City in Oriental Mindoro faces challenges in promoting sustainable tourism due to mixed messages and a lack of targeted content. Low engagement with sustainability-focused content leads to minimal changes in travel behavior. Addressing these challenges is crucial for fostering responsible tourism and safeguarding environmental and cultural resources for future generations.

This study aims to fill a gap in existing literature by examining the relationship between digital media engagement and Millennials' sustainable travel choices, particularly in the context of political consumerism. It aims to provide a deeper understanding of the impact of eco-conscious content on platforms and the ethical and political decisions made regarding sustainable travel.

1.3. Objectives

The study aims to assist tourism stakeholders in understanding how digital media engagement influences Millennials' sustainable travel choices through the lens of political consumerism. By examining the impact of eco-conscious content on social media platforms, the research will provide valuable insights into Millennials' expectations and perceptions regarding sustainable tourism options. Researchers conducted a study on tourism to enhance local businesses' marketing strategies for eco-conscious travelers. The findings will improve digital marketing effectiveness and raise awareness of sustainable travel among Millennials, supporting the growth of eco-friendly tourism initiatives.

2. Theoretical basis

The theories that serve as the foundation of the study are (1) the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) proposed by Katz et al. (1973), (2) the Political Consumerism Theory by Stolle et al. (2005), and (3) the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) developed by Ajzen (1991).

The Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) explains how individuals engage with media to fulfill their needs and desires, such as personal identity building, entertainment, and information seeking. This study uses UGT to analyze how Millennials use digital media to inform sustainable travel choices, aiming to understand the motivations behind these platforms and provide a framework for sustainable travel behaviors.

The Political Consumerism Theory, proposed by Stolle et al. (2005), posits that individuals make purchasing decisions based on ethical, political, and environmental concerns,

rather than price or quality. It views consumption as activism, where consumers support companies aligning with their values and reject those that do not. The theory highlights consumers' awareness of the broader implications of their consumption habits.

The study uses Political Consumerism Theory to examine how Millennials' ethical values influence their travel choices through digital media engagement, specifically on platforms advocating for sustainable travel, shaping their consumption patterns.

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) suggests that an individual's behavior is influenced by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Attitudes influence an individual's intention to perform a behavior, subjective norms pressure them to perform or not, and perceived behavioral control eases their belief in their ability to perform the behavior. TPB has been used to predict various behaviors, including ethical consumption, environmentalism, and sustainability.

The study employs the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) to examine how Millennials' attitudes, social norms, and perceived control influence their sustainable travel choices, focusing on digital media engagement, digital content, peer influences, and accessibility of sustainable travel options.

Nonomura (2016) found education to be a stronger predictor of consumer activism, challenging stereotypes about youth involvement. Malmros (2023) explored political consumerism's impact on democracy, while Hong and Li (2020) found that alignment between consumer beliefs and brand stances influences boycott/buycott behavior. Copeland and Boulianne (2022) found lifestyle politics theories most effective in explaining political consumerism.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research design

The study used a descriptive correlational method to examine the relationship between digital media engagement and Millennials' sustainable travel choices, identifying trends and patterns in the data to understand their travel choices.

Spearman's rank correlation coefficient (Spearman's rho) was the primary statistical method applied in the study. Spearman's rho is the measure of rank correlation, which is non-parametric about the strength and direction of association that has occurred between two ranked variables. According to Hauke et al. (2011), Spearman's rho is optimal for determining relations that are not required to follow a linear distribution or when your data are ordinal.

This study uses Spearman's rho and descriptive statistics to analyze how digital media engagement influences Gen-Y's sustainable travel behaviors, integrating both qualitative and quantitative approaches to understand demographic characteristics and political consumerism.

3.2. Population and sample

The study will involve 159 travelers from Oriental Mindoro, selected using the Raosoft sample size calculator. These travelers are digital media-savvy and interested in sustainable travel. They visited popular tourist destinations like Infinity Farm, Tamaraw Falls, and Mindoro Heritage Museum. Their experiences and digital media engagement will provide insights into sustainable travel perceptions and online sharing. Researchers will use purposive sampling to select participants, but this method may limit generalizability due to the sample being drawn from a specific location and demographic group.

3.3. Research instrument

The study will employ a researcher-designed, printed survey questionnaire featuring closed-ended, four-point Likert-scale items: Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Agree (3), and Strongly Agree (4). This structured format allows participants to provide quantified responses that reflect their attitudes toward the study's focal topics. The survey will be administered directly to the target audience, with the intention of fostering honest and thoughtful responses. This approach is anticipated to support the collection of a valid and representative sample of data relevant to the research objectives.

Table 1

4-point Likert Scale

Option	Score Range	Description
4	3.50 - 4.00	Strongly Agree
3	2.50 - 3.49	Agree
2	1.50 - 2.49	Disagree
1	1.00 - 1.49	Strongly Disagree

Note. https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Likert-Four-Point-Scale-Range-Interpretation_tbl1_342103471

3.4. Validity and reliability

The research will be validated by three experts, including two tourism management specialists and one language expert, to ensure accuracy in grammar. A test-retest will be conducted to assess questionnaire reliability, with repeated tests in 10 days. The 4-point Likert Scale will be used to analyze data. The study aims to understand how digital media engagement influences Millennials' sustainable travel choices from a political consumerism perspective.

The researchers will use Cronbach's Alpha to investigate reliability in more detail. A method for assessing internal consistency, or the level of interdependence among a group of elements. It is regarded as a scale reliability measure. Even if alpha has a "high" value, the unit of measurement might not be one-dimensional.

Table 2

Result of Cronbach's Alpha

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Internal Consistency	Interpretation
Digital Media Engagement of Millennials			
Frequency of Use	0.738	Good and Acceptable	Reliable
Platform Used	0.743	Good and Acceptable	Reliable
Types of Content Related to Sustainable Travel	0.732	Good and Acceptable	Reliable

Note. https://www.statisticalaid.com/cronbachs-alpha/

Table 3

Result of Cronbach's Alpha

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Internal Consistency	Interpretation
Millennials' Sustainable Travel Choice			
Environmental Consideration	0.703	Good and Acceptable	Reliable
Ethical Practices	0.711	Good and Acceptable	Reliable
Preference of Eco-friendly Destinations	0.766	Good and Acceptable	Reliable

Note. https://www.statisticalaid.com/cronbachs-alpha/

3.5. Data collection

This study will gather data from interested respondents in sustainable travel choices in Oriental Mindoro through an in-person questionnaire, with announcements made to engage individuals interested in travel before data collection.

The researchers ensured the voluntary participation of respondents by including a consent form at the beginning of the survey. The questionnaire is designed to take approximately 10 - 15 minutes to complete, and reminders will be sent halfway through the data collection period to maximize response rates.

3.6. Statistical analysis

The weighted mean will be calculated to determine the average perceived impact of tourism on employment opportunities and income generation. This will account for the varying frequencies of responses on the Likert Scale.

Standard deviation will be calculated to measure the dispersion or spread of responses, standard deviation will be calculated. This will provide an indication of how much the individual responses vary from the mean.

Spearman's Rho will be used to assess the relationship between tourism phenomena (as a poverty alleviation strategy) and its perceived impact on employment opportunities and income generation. This non-parametric test is appropriate for ordinal data, such as Likert scale responses.

3.7. Ethical consideration

The study involved participants who were informed about the purpose, scope, and key concepts of digital media engagement and sustainable travel choices, and provided with clear information about their voluntary participation, ensuring their voluntary decision without coercion.

The researchers followed the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (RA 10173) (National Privacy Commission, 2012) to ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents' personal information. The data was used solely for research purposes, and measures were taken to prevent unauthorized access. The researchers also ensured no physical or psychological harm to the participants.

4. Result and discussion

Extent of Digital Media Engagement of Millennials. This section presents the extent of

digital media awareness of Millennials in terms of knowledge of frequency of use, platform used, and types of content related to sustainable travel, as shown in Tables 4 to 6 below.

4.1. Result

4.1.1. Frequency of use

Table 4 illustrates the extent of digital media engagement of Millennials in terms of frequency of use.

Table 4

Frequency of Use

Statement	Weighted Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank	Verbal Interpretation
1. I frequently use digital media when planning my travels.	3.95	0.23	1	Strongly Agree
2. I regularly seek information about sustainable travel on digital platforms.	3.87	0.34	2.5	Strongly Agree
3. I engage more with travel-related content than other types of content on digital media.	3.82	0.38	7	Strongly Agree
4. I often view content explaining eco-friendly travel practices.	3.76	0.43	8	Strongly Agree
5. I frequently use digital media to stay updated on sustainable travel trends.	3.86	0.35	5	Strongly Agree
6. I spend a lot of time on digital media researching travel options.	3.86	0.36	5	Strongly Agree
7. I regularly check digital media for updates on sustainable travel trends.	3.87	0.34	2.5	Strongly Agree
8. I consult digital media sources multiple times when planning a sustainable trip.	3.86	0.34	5	Strongly Agree
Overall Mean	**3.86**			**Strongly Agree**

Note. Data analysis result of the research

Table 4 showed that the item "I frequently use digital media when planning my travels" gained the highest weighted mean of 3.95, verbally interpreted as Strongly Agree. This implies that Millennials frequently use digital media when planning travels. This may be associated with the discussion of Leung et al. (2013), social media play a significant and growing role in online travel planning, as evidenced by their substantial presence in search engine results for travel-related queries.

The study found that while some Millennials often view content explaining eco-friendly travel practices, others do not, indicating a lack of awareness. This aligns with Devendra's (2024) research, which suggests that influencers' authenticity, credibility, attractiveness, and concern for environmental and social issues significantly influence followers'travel decisions.

The study indicates a high frequency of digital media engagement among Millennials in Oriental Mindoro, particularly those interested in sustainable travel. This is consistent with

Vogels'(2019) findings that 86% of Millennials regularly use social media and over 90% own smartphones, indicating their significant engagement with digital technologies and frequent interaction with digital platforms.

The nearly universal internet accessibility of nearly 100% demonstrates a strong reliance on these technologies for communication, connectivity, and information access.

4.1.2. Platform used

Platform Used illustrates the extent of digital media engagement of Millennials in terms of platform used

Table 5

Platform Used

Statement	Weighted Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank	Verbal Interpretation
1. I use specific platforms (e.g., Instagram, YouTube) to find sustainable travel options.	3.85	0.36	3	Strongly Agree
2. I rely on social media platforms to research eco-friendly destinations.	3.83	0.38	4	Strongly Agree
3. I often use travel blogs or websites focused on sustainable tourism.	3.83	0.38	4	Strongly Agree
4. I watch videos on platforms like YouTube to learn about sustainable travel.	3.86	0.35	2	Strongly Agree
5. I use various platforms to explore sustainable travel content.	3.81	0.39	8	Strongly Agree
6. I use travel booking sites that highlight sustainable or eco-friendly options.	3.83	0.38	4	Strongly Agree
7. I engage with sustainability-focused travel channels on video streaming platforms.	3.88	0.32	1	Strongly Agree
8. I rely on travel apps that provide information about eco-friendly accommodations and activities	3.83	0.37	4	Strongly Agree
Overall Mean	**3.84**			**Strongly Agree**

Note. Data analysis result of the research

Table 5 Platform Used showed that the item "I engage with sustainability-focused travel channels on video streaming platforms" gained the highest weighted mean of 3.88, verbally interpreted as Strongly Agree. This implies that people around Oriental Mindoro who are active in digital media and interested in sustainable travel engage with sustainability-focused travel channels on video streaming platforms. This may be associated with the discussion of Qiu et al. (2021), who state that live streaming in tourism has been effectively used to promote sustainable tourism practices, including sustainability themes.

The study found that some people in Oriental Mindoro, who are active on digital media, do not often view content explaining eco-friendly travel practices. This aligns with Katalin et

al.'s (2021) discussion on the role of platforms like Instagram and Facebook in marketing sustainable destinations and practices, highlighting the significant impact of user-generated content on eco-friendly tourism behaviors.

The study shows Millennials in Oriental Mindoro are highly engaged with digital media, particularly in sustainable travel, aligning with Choi et al. (2022) research on the transformative role of online travel platforms in travel planning, influencing destination perceptions, and enhancing tourists' psychological well-being.

4.1.3. Types of content related to sustainable travel

Table 6 illustrates the extent of digital media engagement of Millennials in terms of types of content related to sustainable travel.

Table 6

Types of Content Related to Sustainable Travel

Statement	Weighted Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank	Verbal Interpretation
1. I regularly read articles or blogs about sustainable travel practices.	3.90	0.30	1	Strongly Agree
2. I often watch videos or vlogs focused on eco-friendly travel.	3.89	0.32	2.5	Strongly Agree
3. I read social media posts promoting sustainable tourism.	3.88	0.33	4	Strongly Agree
4. I follow influencers who share content about ethical and sustainable travel.	3.82	0.38	8	Strongly Agree
5. I read news or research about sustainable travel practices.	3.85	0.36	6.5	Strongly Agree
6. I seek out reviews or ratings that focus on the environmental impact of travel options.	3.87	0.34	5	Strongly Agree
7. I follow content that features sustainable travel guides or itineraries for different destinations.	3.89	0.31	2.5	Strongly Agree
8. I look for infographics or visual guides that explain sustainable travel practices.	3.85	0.36	6.5	Strongly Agree
Overall Mean	**3.87**			**Strongly Agree**

Note. Data analysis result of the research

Table 6 showed that the item "I regularly read articles or blogs about sustainable travel practices" gained the highest weighted mean of 3.90, verbally interpreted as Strongly Agree. This implies that people around Oriental Mindoro who are active in digital media and interested in sustainable travel regularly read articles or blogs about sustainable travel practices. This may be associated with the discussion of García-García et al. (2023), who state that digital content, such as articles, blogs, and user-generated content on platforms like TripAdvisor, is effective in influencing tourists' decisions, particularly in terms of sustainable choices.

The study found that some people in Oriental Mindoro, who are digital media active

and interested in sustainable travel, do not often view content explaining eco-friendly practices. This aligns with Kilipiri et al.'s (2023) discussion that social media influencers have become key players in influencing travel decisions, with their recommendations and content significantly affecting followers' travel planning behavior.

The study shows high digital media engagement among Millennials in Oriental Mindoro, particularly in sustainable travel content. The mean engagement is 3.87, aligning with Sultan et al.'s (2020) research on user-generated content promoting environmentally responsible behavior in sustainable coastal tourism. This encourages eco-friendly travel choices in coastal areas.

4.2. Extent of millennials' sustainable travel choice

This section presents the extent of Millennials' sustainable travel choices in terms of environmental consideration, ethical practices, and preference for eco-friendly destinations as shown in Tables 7 to 9 below.

4.2.1. Environmental consideration

Environmental Consideration illustrates the extent of practices of the Millennial's sustainable travel choice in terms of environmental consideration.

Table 7

Environmental Consideration

Statement	Weighted Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank	Verbal Interpretation
1. I prioritize destinations that make efforts to protect the environment.	3.96	0.19	1	Strongly Agree
2. I prefer destinations known for eco-friendly practices.	3.83	0.38	8	Strongly Agree
3. I avoid destinations that have a high environmental impact.	3.90	0.30	3	Strongly Agree
4. I consider the environmental impact of my travel plans.	3.88	0.33	4	Strongly Agree
5. I research the environmental policies of destinations before visiting.	3.85	0.36	7	Strongly Agree
6. I prefer accommodations that practice eco-friendly measures.	3.88	0.32	4	Strongly Agree
7. I minimize waste during my travels.	3.93	0.25	2	Strongly Agree
8. I avoid activities that harm local ecosystems.	3.88	0.32	4	Strongly Agree
Overall Mean	**3.89**			**Strongly Agree**

Note. Data analysis result of the research

Table 7 showed that the item "I prioritize destinations that make efforts to protect the environment" gained the highest weighted mean of 3.96, verbally interpreted as Strongly Agree. This implies that people around Oriental Mindoro who are active in digital media and interested in sustainable travel prioritize destinations that make efforts to protect the environment. This may be associated with the discussion of Aydin and Alvarez (2020), who state that an increasing

number of tourists consider sustainability as a critical factor in their travel choices. This trend includes a preference for destinations that demonstrate efforts toward resource preservation, community benefits, and proper environmental management.

On the other hand, it was shown that the item "I prefer destinations known for eco-friendly practices" attained the lowest weighted mean of 3.83, verbally interpreted as Strongly Agree. This implies that some people around Oriental Mindoro who are active in digital media and interested in sustainable travel do not often view content explaining eco-friendly travel practices. This finding aligns with the discussion by Nowacki et al. (2021), that while many tourists express interest in environmentally friendly practices, their willingness to pay a premium for such destinations often remains limited. This disconnect might explain why eco-friendly practices are valued but sometimes prioritized less in decision-making.

The study reveals a high level of digital media engagement in environmental conservation among Millennials in Oriental Mindoro, with a mean of 3.89. This aligns with Hamid et al.'s (2017) research that social media platforms can significantly enhance environmental sustainability awareness. The study highlights the effectiveness of platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram in disseminating information, engaging travelers in sustainability discussions, and encouraging pro-environmental behavior in educational settings.

4.2.2. Ethical practices

Table 8 illustrates the extent of Millennial's sustainable travel choices in terms of ethical practices.

Table 8

Ethical Practices

Statement	Weighted Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank	Verbal Interpretation
1. I prefer travel companies that have ethical practices.	3.84	0.37	5	Strongly Agree
2. I support local businesses when traveling.	3.82	0.39	8	Strongly Agree
3. I choose tours or accommodations that promote ethical labor practices.	3.83	0.38	6	Strongly Agree
4. I participate in travel activities that support cultural preservation.	3.83	0.37	6	Strongly Agree
5. I consider the ethical impact of my travel choices, such as minimizing waste.	3.88	0.32	1	Strongly Agree
6. I avoid destinations that harm local communities.	3.88	0.32	1	Agree
7. I prefer destinations that protect cultural landmarks.	3.86	0.35	3	Disagree
8. I select activities that respect local traditions and communities.	3.86	0.35	3	Strongly Agree
Overall Mean	**3.85**			**Agree**

Note. Data analysis result of the research

Table 8 showed that the items "I consider the ethical impact of my travel choices, such as

minimizing waste" and "I avoid destinations that harm local communities" gained the highest weighted mean of 3.88, verbally interpreted as Strongly Agree. This implies that people around Oriental Mindoro who are active in digital media and interested in sustainable travel prioritize destinations that I consider the ethical impact of my travel choices, such as minimizing waste and avoid destinations that harm local communities. Han et al. (2018) found that vacationers' pro-environmental intentions, particularly regarding waste reduction and recycling, are influenced by social and personal norms. The research investigates how travelers' willingness to sacrifice conveniences can shape their intentions towards sustainable practices.

On the other hand, it was shown that the item "I support local businesses when traveling" attained the lowest weighted mean of 3.82, verbally interpreted as Strongly Agree. This implies that some people around Oriental Mindoro who are active in digital media and interested in sustainable travel do not often support local businesses when traveling. This finding aligns with the discussion by Graci (2020), local businesses, and local communities are essential for achieving tourism practices that are both environmentally and economically sustainable.

The study reveals a significant digital media engagement in environmental conservation, especially among Millennials in Oriental Mindoro, indicating a strong interest in sustainable travel and ethical practices in the tourism industry, which are often marketed and commodified.

4.2.3. Preference for Eco-friendly destinations

Table 9 illustrates the extent of Millennial's sustainable travel choice in terms of preference for eco-friendly destinations.

Table 9

Preference for Eco-friendly Destinations

Statement	Weighted Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank	Verbal Interpretation
1. I prefer destinations with eco-friendly accommodations.	3.91	0.29	6.5	Strongly Agree
2. I look for destinations known for sustainable tourism initiatives.	3.88	0.33	8	Strongly Agree
3. I am willing to pay extra for eco-friendly accommodations and services.	3.92	0.28	4.5	Strongly Agree
4. I revisit destinations that prioritize sustainability.	3.93	0.26	1	Strongly Agree
5. I actively choose destinations that promote responsible tourism.	3.91	0.29	6.5	Strongly Agree
6. I choose destinations known for supporting local and sustainable food sources.	3.93	0.25	1	Strongly Agree
7. I choose transportation with a lower environmental impact.	3.92	0.27	4.5	Strongly Agree
8. I prefer destinations that limit tourist numbers to protect natural habitats	3.93	0.25	1	Strongly Agree
Overall Mean	**3.92**			**Strongly Agree**

Note. Data analysis result of the research

Table 9 showed that the item "I revisit destinations that prioritize sustainability" gained the highest weighted mean of 3.93, verbally interpreted as Strongly Agree. This implies that people around Oriental Mindoro who are active in digital media and interested in sustainable travel prioritize destinations revisit destinations that prioritize sustainability. This may be associated with the discussion of Goffi et al. (2019), who state that sustainability is a crucial factor in enhancing the competitiveness of tourism destinations in developing countries. The study explores how sustainable practices can help these destinations differentiate themselves in the global tourism market, attract more visitors, and ensure long-term economic and environmental benefits.

On the other hand, it was shown that the item "I look for destinations known for sustainable tourism initiatives" attained the lowest weighted mean of 3.88, verbally interpreted as Strongly Agree. This implies that some people around Oriental Mindoro who are active in digital media and interested in sustainable travel do not often revisit destinations that prioritize sustainability. The study supports Cucculelli and Goffi's (2016) argument that sustainable practices enhance tourism destinations' competitiveness by improving environmental and social performance and enhancing their market competitiveness.

The study indicates a high level of digital media engagement among Millennials in Oriental Mindoro, particularly those interested in sustainable travel. This high engagement may be linked to factors such as environmental consciousness, personal values, and perceptions of authenticity associated with eco-friendly destinations, as suggested by Prebensen and Lee (2013).

4.3. Is there a significant relationship between the extent of digital media engagement of millennials and the extent of millennial's sustainable travel choice?

Table 10

Spearman's Rho Correlation Test: Relationship between the Extent of Digital Media Engagement of Millennials and Millennial's Sustainable Travel Choice

Extent of Digital Media Engagement of Millennials	Extent of Millennial's Sustainable Travel Choice	R - value	P - value	Interpretation
Frequency of Use	Environmental Conservation	0.318	< .001	Significant
	Ethical Practices	0.366	< .001	Significant
	Preference for Eco-friendly Destination	0.101	0.19	Not Significant
Platform Used	Environmental Conservation	0.294	< .001	Significant
	Ethical Practices	0.392	< .001	Significant
	Preference for Eco-friendly Destination	0.157	0.042	Significant
Types of Content	Environmental Consideration	0.201	0.009	Significant
	Ethical Practices	0.373	< .001	Significant
	Preference for Environmental Destination	0.139	0.072	Not Significant

Note. Data analysis result of the research

The Spearman rank coefficient was employed to assess whether a correlation exists between digital media engagement and the sustainable travel choice of Millennials. This statistical method was chosen for its ability to determine relationships between ranked variables, helping to explain patterns in ecological, conservation, and environmental-protective behaviors.

The results indicated significant relationships in all cases. Frequency of use showed a statistically significant correlation with environmental conservation ($r = 0.318$, $p < .001$) and ethical practices ($r = 0.366$, $p < .001$). However, the correlation with preference for an eco-friendly destination was not significant ($r = 0.101$, $p = 0.19$). The study by Sarkar and George (2018) suggests that environmental conservation doesn't significantly influence eco-friendly travel preferences. The research emphasizes the role of social media in promoting sustainable tourism development, with frequent user engagement influencing travelers' decisions towards eco-friendly and ethical practices. The study also found that higher digital media engagement is associated with increased preference for environmental conservation and ethical tourism practices.

Similarly, platform used was significantly correlated with environmental conservation ($r = 0.294$, $p < 0.001$), ethical practices ($r = 0.392$, $p < 0.001$), and preference for eco-friendly destinations ($r = 0.157$, $p = 0.042$). To support this data, Rezaei and Shobeiri (2017) found that the use of social networks, particularly Telegram, played a significant role in promoting pro-environmental behavior among tourists. The study emphasized that social media platforms effectively disseminate information that encourages users to engage in eco-friendly practices and make sustainable travel choices. The study indicates that digital engagement can boost pro-environmental behaviors, promoting sustainable tourism destinations and ethical practices, based on the observed correlation between platform usage and environmental behavior.

Lastly, types of content showed significant correlations with environmental conservation ($r = 0.201$, $p = 0.009$) and ethical practices ($r = 0.373$, $p < 0.001$). However, the correlation with preference for an eco-friendly destination was not significant ($r = 0.139$, $p = 0.072$). These results suggest that while environmental conservation impacts ethical preference, its effect on preference for eco-friendly travel is minimal. To support this data, Pop et al. (2022), highlighted the significant role of social media influencers in shaping consumer travel decisions. The study highlights the influence of social media content on followers' perceptions and behavior, particularly trust and ethical travel choices. It suggests that sustainability-promoting content is linked to pro-environmental behaviors, but has less influence on eco-friendly destinations.

The study reveals that Millennials' engagement on digital media, influenced by frequency, platform, and content type, significantly promotes sustainable tourism behaviors, mitigating the ecological impact of rising travel demands. Digital word of mouth also influences sustainable content, encouraging responsible travel practices and ethical tourism.

Proposed Program Plan

Digital Engagement for Sustainable Travel Choices.

Program Title: Empowering Millennials: Seminars and Workshops on Digital Media for Travel Planning.

Proponents: Mercy Grace Maming, Lyra Mae M. Castillo, Asser N. Codon, Ayra Camille M. Dimayuga, Ma. Angeliegh Benisse S. Gonzales, Mirasol M. Manalo.

Location: Key municipalities in Oriental Mindoro (e.g., Calapan City, Puerto Galera, Baco) Recipients: Millennial travelers, local tourism stakeholders, and digital influencers.

Time Frame: January - December 2025.

Rationale

Millennials are driving sustainable tourism trends in Oriental Mindoro, enhancing travel experiences and promoting eco-friendly practices. A program aims to equip them with digital media knowledge and tools to make informed, sustainable travel decisions, bridging the gap between awareness and action.

Objectives

1. To raise awareness about the role of digital media in sustainable travel planning.

2. To train Millennials in Oriental Mindoro on how to maximize platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and travel apps for better travel experiences.

3. To foster a community of tech-savvy, sustainability-conscious travelers.

4. To promote local destinations and eco-friendly travel practices through digital media.

Program Description

The Seminars and Workshops on Digital Media for Travel Planning program aims to teach Millennials in Oriental Mindoro how to use digital media for sustainable travel planning. It includes seminars on eco-friendly practices, practical workshops on creating travel blogs, and interactive activities to build an online community for responsible tourism.

Program Phases and Activities

Table 11

Program Phases and Activities

Phase	Time frame	Activities
I: Planning and Preparation	January - February 2025	• Develop training modules and content for seminars and workshops. • Collaborate with Local Government Units (LGUs), travel agencies, and influencers. • Identify and coordinate with speakers, facilitators, and resource persons.
II: Seminar Series Launch	March - May 2025	• Conduct seminars across key municipalities in Oriental Mindoro. • Topics include: 1. Harnessing Digital Media for Travel Decisions 2. Millennials as Advocates for Responsible Tourism

Phase	Time frame	Activities
III: Hands-On Workshops	June - August 2025	• Interactive workshops on travel blogging, vlogging, and maximizing travel apps. • Live demonstrations on creating engaging social media content for tourism promotion.
IV: Evaluation and Impact Assessment	September - December 2025	• Collect feedback from participants through surveys and interviews. • Measure program outcomes using metrics such as engagement rates and social media reach. • Publish a summary report highlighting success stories and program impact.

Note. Data analysis result of the research.

Expected Outcomes

The program aims to enhance Millennials' digital literacy in Oriental Mindoro, promoting sustainable travel and eco-friendly practices. It will create local digital content promoting sustainable destinations, boost tourism competitiveness, and build a sustainable tourism community. The program aims to bridge awareness and influence sustainable travel choices.

5. Conclusion & recommendations

The study reveals that digital media significantly influences Millennials' sustainable travel choices, promoting environmental conservation and ethical tourism practices. Despite awareness, strategies to enhance awareness and action are crucial. Targeted digital engagement encourages eco-consciousness and practical action towards sustainability, highlighting the need for more sustainable travel choices.

The strategy involves promoting sustainability through digital content distribution, eco-conscious influencer collaboration, virtual sustainability tours, local initiatives, incentives, and user-generated content. This will extend sustainable tourism campaigns, encourage ethical consumption, and attract Millennials to support responsible tourism.

SCIENTIFIC CONTRIBUTION

The manuscript clearly identifies a research gap; the manuscript proposes a new theoretical or analytical model; the manuscript presents statistically and practically significant findings; the manuscript offers policy/managerial/technological implications; the manuscript opens new directions for further research.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

CRediT: **Mercy Grace A. Maming**: Conceptualization, Methodology, Software, Validation, Formal Analysis, Investigation, Resources, Data Curation, Writing - Original Draft, Writing - Review & Editing, Visualization, Supervision, Project Administration, Funding Acquisition; **Lyra Mae M. Castillo**: Conceptualization, Methodology, Software, Validation,

Formal Analysis, Investigation, Resources, Data Curation, Writing - Original Draft, Writing - Review & Editing, Visualization, Supervision, Project Administration, Funding Acquisition; **Asser N. Codo**: Conceptualization, Methodology, Software, Validation, Formal Analysis, Investigation, Resources, Data Curation, Writing - Original Draft, Writing - Review & Editing, Visualization, Supervision, Project Administration, Funding Acquisition; **Ayra Camile M Dimayuga**: Conceptualization, Methodology, Software, Validation, Formal Analysis, Investigation, Resources, Data Curation, Writing - Original Draft, Writing - Review & Editing, Visualization, Supervision, Project Administration, Funding Acquisition; **Ma. Angeliegh Benisse S. Gonzales**: Conceptualization, Methodology, Software, Validation, Formal Analysis, Investigation, Resources, Data Curation, Writing - Original Draft, Writing - Review & Editing, Visualization, Supervision, Project Administration, Funding Acquisition; **Mirasol M. Manalo**: Conceptualization, Methodology, Software, Validation, Formal Analysis, Investigation, Resources, Data Curation, Writing - Original Draft, Writing - Review & Editing, Visualization, Supervision, Project Administration, Funding Acquisition.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The researchers express their gratitude to all individuals and institutions who contributed to the successful completion of their study on Millennials' sustainable travel choices in Oriental Mindoro.

The study expresses gratitude to Oriental Mindoro millennials for their valuable input, which provided real-world context and relevance to the findings. The research team, including Mercy Grace A. Maming, Lyra Mae M. Castillo, Asser N. Codon, Ayra Camille M. Dimayuga, Ma. Angeliegh Benisse S. Gonzalese, and Mirasol M. Manalo, deserve gratitude for their collaboration and dedication. The authors acknowledge the invaluable support and inspiration from all those who believed in their study, stating that there is no potential competing interest.

FUNDING

This research received no external funding.

NO CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

All authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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