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Investigating the role of tourism promotion in marketing the trademark of tourism companies in the governorate of holy Karbala

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Abstract

Effective branding is crucial for successful advertising campaigns in tourist firms, given the fierce rivalry in the tourism sector. The study focuses on the role of tourism promotion in building the brand of tourism companies, improving their competitive position, retaining customers, attracting new ones, and influencing purchasing behaviour. It applies this study to tourism companies in the holy city of Karbala, Iraq, to address challenges and risks, stimulate sales, expand market share, achieve uniqueness, and build an identity and organizational culture. The aim is to achieve continuity and growth in the tourism market, serving tourists and visitors to the holy city of Karbala. A descriptive analytical approach was employed to analyze and characterize the study variables, while an applied approach was implemented by distributing electronic questionnaires to the study sample. The research instrument was a questionnaire administered to a sample of 200 randomly selected employees of tourism companies in the holy city during the period from 1/5/2024 to 2/15/2024 AD. The analysis findings indicated that the tourism promotional mix components have a statistically significant correlation with the brand marketing strategies employed by these companies. In order to better serve tourists and society as a whole, the study suggests that tourism organizations implement a brand development strategy, streamline legal processes about trademark ownership rights, and devise methods of promoting tourism.

Keywords: Tourism promotion, trademark, marketing, tourism companies

1. Introduction

Tourism marketing strategies' effectiveness depends on the level of investment in promotional efforts by tourism organizations, which aim to disseminate industry information, enhance tourism understanding, and build trust with clients (Bodrich and Bouhafs, 2019, p. 875) ^[15]. Tourism activities involve both tangible and intangible aspects, necessitating the provision of a suitable promotional combination to cater to consumers' needs, desires, and preferences (Al-Barzanji, 2010, p. 360) ^[5]. Tourism promotion extends beyond informing and persuading customers about tourism products to foster relationships, stimulate tourists' desires, facilitate their aspirations, and fulfil their present and future needs (Biba, 2017, p. 22) ^[13]. The brand is crucial for promoting the tourism industry and ensuring distinctiveness and exclusivity as competition intensifies (Jamal al-Din Rushdi, 2018, p. 253) ^[16]. The brand enhances the standing of entities by highlighting their unique attributes and qualities, and by establishing a distinctive brand identity and implementing effective marketing strategies, the likelihood of achieving market dominance and expansion is increased (Kavoura, 2014, p. 33) ^[30]. Hence, the brand has emerged as the crucial factor for achieving success in the tourism sector by aligning with customer desires and needs and prioritizing customer-centricity over product-centricity (Pike, 2010, p. 124) ^[37]. This approach emphasizes the brand's distinct and exclusive identity, leading to a competitive edge (Apostolakis, *et al.*, 2015, p. 200) ^[24].

Tourism companies face numerous challenges due to increased competition and evolving tourist preferences. The main challenge is not the information revolution but the inability to adapt promotional policies to current trends rather than focusing on the information revolution (Al-Ukaili, 2011, p. 112) ^[9]. The problem of the study is embodied in the following question: "How does tourism promotion affect the brand marketing of tourism companies in the holy city of Karbala?" Five hypotheses are set to achieve the aim of the current investigation.

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The study's main hypothesis states, "There is a statistically significant relationship between the elements of the tourism promotional mix and the brand marketing of tourism companies in the governorate of holy Karbala." The following sub-hypotheses branch out from the main hypothesis:

1.1 The first hypothesis: There is a statistically significant relationship between advertising and brand marketing for tourism companies in the holy city of Karbala.

1.2 The second hypothesis: There is a statistically significant relationship between personal selling and brand marketing for tourism companies in the holy city of Karbala.

1.3 The third hypothesis: There is a statistically significant relationship between sales activation and brand marketing for tourism companies in the holy city of Karbala.

1.4 The fourth hypothesis: There is a statistically significant relationship between advertising and brand marketing for tourism companies in the holy city of Karbala.

1.5 The fifth hypothesis: There is a statistically significant relationship between public relations and brand marketing for tourism companies in the holy city of Karbala.

2. The Background

2.1 Tourism Promotion

Kotler and Armstrong define promotion as all persuasive actions and marketing efforts that meet consumers' demands, attract their attention, and convince them to purchase the product or service being marketed (Kotler & Armstrong, 2004, p. 470) ^[31]. Tourism marketing is exactly what it says. Actual and effective contact with customers to deliver new goods and services, access future markets, and fund promotional advertising campaign activities (Kaura, 2013, p55) ^[29]. Tourism promotion is also defined as organizational communication efforts that employ methods and means of advertising, personal selling, sales activation, publicity and public relations. In achieving the organization's tourism marketing objectives (Issa, 2021, p. 22) ^[17].

2.2 The Importance of Tourism Promotion

2.2.1 The significance of tourism promotion is demonstrated below

- Disseminating tourism knowledge and influencing consumer behaviour, trends, and attitudes towards the organization and the tourism product, as well as offering information about tourist locations, programmes, and services offered by tourism organizations (Bodrich and Bouhafs, 2019, p. 878) ^[15].
- Informing customers about the tourism organization's activities, the products and services, and the value it represents in society, such as sales outlets, prices, and brands (Al-Ukaili, 2011, p. 116) ^[9].
- Persuading present and potential clients about the benefits of goods and services in meeting their wants and aspirations (Patel, 2013, p. 3) ^[36].
- Reminding customers about tourism products and services influences their purchasing behaviour and

directs them to repurchase using various communication activities (Al-Kariwi *et al.*, 2019, p. 82) ^[8].

- Enhancing the tourism movement is the main goal of tourism promotion efforts, which involve the promotional activities of various tourism agencies, bodies, companies and organizations (Al-Batouti, 2015, p. 42) ^[6].
- Enhancing the mental image of the organization and enhancing its reputation and brand through marketing objectives and in accordance with the needs and aspirations of actual or potential customers (Alayan and Al-Samarrai, 2006, p. 208) ^[11].
- Identifying the organization's competitive advantage by building customer trust and retaining their loyalty increases its market share and superiority over competitors (Qasim *et al.*, 2013, p. 317) ^[21].

2.3 Tourism Promotional Mixture

The promotional mixture is the collection of components that work together and integrate to fulfil the company's promotional policy in view of the integrated marketing plan that the company has implemented (Kotler & Keller, 2012, P19) ^[32]. The tourism promotional mixture also refers to the marketing channels organizations use to reach customers, influence their purchasing decisions, and strengthen the brand position (Macharia, 2017, p. 13) ^[33]. According to (Kotler & Armstrong, 2004, p.474) ^[31], the tourism promotional mixture consists of the following:

2.3.1 Advertisement

Tourism advertising is a crucial promotional strategy tourism organizations use to market their products and services, aiming to attract tourists (Jian & Yazdanifard, 2015, p. 596) ^[28]. Tourism advertising influences consumer behaviour by stimulating demand, supporting purchasing decisions, attracting brand attention, and strengthening positive attitudes towards the destination (Biba, 2017, p. 27) ^[13]. Tourism promotional advertising includes educational, informational, reminder, persuasive, and competitive advertising. Educational advertising promotes new products, informational advertising focuses on known products or trends, reminder advertising reminds customers of available products and services, persuasive advertising stimulates sales and corrects false opinions, and competitive advertising strengthens the position of products and services against competitors in the market (Abdullah, 2016, pp. 298-299) ^[3].

2.3.2 Personal Selling

Personal selling is one advertising strategy specializing in direct selling to consumers via the face-to-face communication process between sellers and customers (Sunday & Bayode, 2011, p. 345) ^[39]. Personal selling in tourism aims to accomplish qualitative objectives, as stated while offering services to clients. Goals that are quantifiable and include growing revenue, reaching profitability for the company, and gaining market share (Abdel Hafeez, 2010, p. 93) ^[1]. During internal or external tourism conferences, exhibitions, and tourism-related events and activities, personal tourism selling operations are conducted to convince customers to purchase tourism programmes, embark on tourist trips, and visit the designated tourist destinations (Onis, 2016, p. 41) ^[19].

2.3.3 Stimulating Sales

Fimulating tourism sales refers to unusual, temporary promotional methods to attract the largest number of tourists and increase demand for purchasing tourism programs (Qarziz and Zayan, 2019, p.599) ^[20]. To increase tourism sales, efforts are directed towards retailers, intermediaries, sales representatives, and end customers. Retailers are encouraged to purchase tourism programs in exchange for commissions. Sales representatives intensify promotional activities to persuade intermediaries and customers to buy in exchange for appropriate commissions. End customers are encouraged to repeat the purchase process by reducing prices, offering gifts, or improving after-sales services (Suwaidan and Haddad, 2010, p. 338) ^[22].

2.3.4 Publicity

It refers to intentional, planned and directed efforts and practices to influence customers and persuade them to buy the product or service by consolidating positive ideas and trends towards the product or changing negative ideas and trends broadcast by competitors (Issa, 2021, p. 25) ^[17]. Tourist promotion is separated into that which is aimed at other countries to provide Tourism marketing aimed at home to boost domestic tourism demand and the attractive and favourable image of the tourist destination to entice visitors to come (Al-Bakri, 2014, p. 62) ^[4]. Tourism advertising includes several types, including print, advertising, projection, and mounted advertising, in addition to personal advertising that seeks to increase tourism demand rates and achieve tourist satisfaction (Al-Barzanji, 2010, p. 369) ^[5].

2.3.5 Public Relations

Tourism public relations activities involve communication practices, reception ceremonies, and welcoming customers. They organize internal and external communications, prepare targeted media materials, and strengthen relations with target markets. They collect and classify tourism data, publish it in media outlets, and consolidate customer relationships by answering inquiries, resolving problems, and following up on events (Al-Barzanji, 2010, p. 365) ^[5]. The functions of tourism public relations include researching and measuring public opinion trends, planning by setting promotional goals and developing a tourism advertising policy, coordinating with relevant authorities at home and abroad, assisting management by providing accurate and sufficient information and producing media materials directed to internal clients (employees) and external clients (clients) (Al-Jundi, 2021, pp. 35-36) ^[7], and tourism public relations seeks to stimulate tourism activity in the targeted tourist sites, enhance cooperation with governmental and private domestic tourism bodies, and coordinate marketing efforts with external parties such as international tourism and travel agencies, tour operators, embassies and consulates in The outside (Bobbidi, 2022, p. 166) ^[14].

2.4 Trademark

According to the definition of the American Marketing Association, a trademark is the name, term, symbol, design, or sign that pertains to the product or service of one of the producers and distinguishes it from other competitors (Mualla, 2013, p. 70) ^[18], while the British Marketing Institute links the definition of the trademark to the

customer's reaction, as It represents the sum of the physical characteristics and characteristics that distinguish the product or service and constitutes the beliefs, trends and expectations that the name or special logo refers to in the minds of customers (Abdul Hamid, 2012, p. 75) ^[2]. The brand is also defined as the group of assets associated with the organization, its name and symbol, which add value to customers (Allam *et al.*, 2021, p. 5) ^[10].

2.5 The Importance of Tourism Trademark

2.5.1 The significance of the tourism trade mark is demonstrated below

- The concept being referred to is the value of the tourist service as perceived by the tourists themselves and the degree to which they are cognizant of it. This is in opposition to the pictorial logo, which merely encapsulates the visual representation of the tourist service and fails to encompass the entirety of the brand's emphasized values (Abdul Hamid, 2012, p. 77) ^[2].
- Providing innovation and creativity in the product or service and developing it to add greater perceived value to customers faster than competitors according to a modern vision consistent with customer aspirations, market variables, and marketing requirements (Taye, 2015, p. 17) ^[23].
- Concerning the competitive position of products and services in the market by consolidating the advantages, benefits, and benefits gained from dealing with the organization and linking them to customer values (Kotler & Keller, 2012, p. 296) ^[32].
- Identifying the competitive position of products and services in the market by consolidating the advantages, benefits, and benefits gained from dealing with the organization and linking them to customer values (Kotler & Keller, 2012, p. 296) ^[32].
- Improving sales by distinguishing goods and services, lowering advertising expenses, and improving profits since customers are ready to pay the highest price for the favoured brand (Cho, 2011, p. 11) ^[26].
- - Providing value to customers by helping them access products and services that are consistent with their values and needs, which makes them feel the achievement of self-worth (Aoyoun, 2012, p. 62) ^[12].
- Gaining customer loyalty by directing customer consumption behaviour towards the specific product or service and stimulating purchasing decision-making, which achieves customer loyalty, considering the brand as the point of reason in directing purchasing decisions, and the emotional bond with the customer (Suhartanto *et al.*, 2019, p.1) ^[38].

2.6 The Dimensions of Trademark

A trademark is characterized by three basic dimensions: trademark name, trademark value, and trademark reputation (Melewar, *et al.*, 2006, p.410) ^[34].

2.6.1 Trademark Name

The basis for identifying a brand is that it is the organization's most valuable asset and the most crucial in the branding mix since it is difficult to change in the future. (Tulin, *et al.*, 2006, p. 71) ^[40]. The trade name must be unique, distinct, not used in the market, and easy to remember and distinguished from other competing names,

which attracts customers' attention, influences their purchasing decisions, and forms a close bond with the organization (Yin, 2011, p. 24) [41].

2.6.2 Trademark Value

It refers to the benefits perceived by the customer of the brand, evaluated in terms of the financial price that the customer pays to obtain the product or service, or it is the extent to which customers evaluate the benefits they obtain in exchange for what they give up to obtain the product or service (Allam *et al.*, 2021, p. 6) [10], and it affects the value of the brand. Significantly in customer loyalty and trust and then in the repurchase process and thus in the extent of the organization's success in the market (Hashem, 2020, p. 1249) [27].

2.6.3 Trademark Reputation

It describes the total mental and emotional as well as the psychological and mental impressions of customers regarding the name, design, price, distribution, promotion, and all other aspects of the company's products and services (Xiao & Hawley, 2009, p. 364) [42].

It improves the image of the company by raising demand for its services, which increases market share, gives it more pricing control because of client loyalty, and maximizes earnings since the expenses of starting the business are quickly recovered (Omar & Williams, 2016, p. 65) [35]. The organization's reputation also contributes to Facing the

challenges of fluctuating demand and facing competitors in the market (Brakus, 2019, p. 81) [25].

3. Methodology

In this research, the descriptive analytical approach was employed to analyze and characterize the study variables and the applied approach for distributing questionnaire forms to the study sample.

3.1 The Instrument of the Study

The research instrument was a questionnaire administered to a sample of randomly selected employees of tourism companies in the holy city of Karbala. The questionnaire was designed with six axes consisting of (30) questions. The first axis was concerned with promotional advertising practices in tourism companies. It consisted of (5 questions), the second axis was concerned with personal selling practices in tourism companies. It consisted of (5 questions), and the third axis concerned Sales promotion practices in tourism companies, consisting of (5 questions). The fourth axis concerned advertising practices in tourism companies (5 questions). The fifth axis concerned public relations practices in tourism companies, consisting of (5 questions). The sixth axis was concerned with tourism promotion and marketing. The brand of tourism companies consists of (5 questions). The response scale to the questionnaire was built according to a five-point Likert scale, as shown in Table (1).

Table 1: Questionnaire scale

The Answer	Completely Disagree	Disagree	Partially Agree	Agree	Completely Agree
The Degree	1	2	3	4	5
The Extent	From 1.0 to 1.8	Higher than 1.8 to 2.6	Higher than 2.6 to 3.4	Higher than 3.4 to 4.2	Higher than 4.2 to 5.0

4.2 The Validity and Reliability of the Questionnaire

The reliability of the questionnaire scale was assessed

utilizing the Cronbach Alpha coefficient in conjunction with the statistical software SPSS (version 24).

Table 2: The Validity and Reliability Coefficients for the Questionnaire

Axis	The Topic	Number of questions	Reliability coefficient	Validity coefficient
First	Promotional advertising practices in tourism companies	5	0.744	0.985
Second	Personal selling practices in tourism companies	5	0.965	0.982
Third	Sales promotion practices in tourism companies	5	0.931	0.964
Fourth	Advertising practices in tourism companies	5	0.966	0.983
Fifth	Public relations practices in tourism companies	5	0.633	0.795
Sixth	Tourism promotion and brand marketing for tourism companies	5	0.951	0.975
Total		30	0.961	0.980

Table (2) shows that the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for all aspects of the questionnaire, which consisted of 30 questions, reached 0.961, indicating a high degree of reliability. The reliability of the questionnaire scale, which is equal to the square root of the Cronbach's alpha, reached 0.980, which indicates High degree of validity of the scale for the questionnaire.

4.3 The Sample of the Study

The investigation was limited to tourism companies in Karbala, Iraq. A random sample of workers in tourism companies in the holy city of Karbala amounted to (200) individuals. The electronic questionnaire was distributed through Google Forms from 1/5/2024 to 2/15/2024 AD. The study sample size was determined using Moser's law: $n d = h^2 / (h \times d)^2$

Where $n d$ refers to the size of the sample to be measured, $p \times d$ points out the confidence limit or degree of significance, p is standard deviation, and px represents the confidence limit or significance degree of the arithmetic mean of the study population/confidence level assuming that the standard deviation of the study population = 14, and where the significance degree equals 2, and confidence level is 95 (1.96).

So,

$$p \times d = \text{significance level} / \text{confidence level} = 2 / 1.96 = 1.$$

$$nd = (14)^2 / (1)^2 = 196 / 1 = 196.$$

To approximate the number, the study sample size was set at 200 individuals working in tourism companies.

4.4 The Statistical Analysis of the Study

The first axis: Promotional advertising practices in tourism companies.

Table 3: Statistical analysis of the study sample's opinions concerning promotional advertising practices in tourism companies.

The Question		Completely Disagree	Disagree	Partially Agree	Agree	Completely Agree	SMA	standard deviation
The company uses advertising to introduce customers to new tourism programs	Repetition	0	6	45	82	67	4.05	0.82
	%	0	3.1	22.5	41.0	33.5		
The advertising campaigns provided by the company include sufficient information about tourism services	Repetition	0	8	36	85	71	4.09	0.83
	%	0	40.0	18.0	42.5	35.5		
The company is keen to repeat advertising materials to remind customers of the tourism services it provides	Repetition	0	3	16	65	116	4.47	0.70
	%	0	1.5	8.0	32.5	58.0		
The company relies on promotional advertisements to strengthen sales volume	Repetition	0	0	15	49	136	4.60	1.59
	%	0	0	7.5	24.5	68.5		
The company considers promotional advertisements as one of the competitive means in the market	Repetition	0	0	11	55	134	4.61	0.59
	%	0	0	5.5	27.5	67.0		

Table (3) displays the high degree of response to employees' opinions about promotional advertising practices in tourism companies, where the paragraph (the company uses advertising to introduce customers to new tourism programs) came with an arithmetic average of 4.05, and the paragraph came (the advertising campaigns provided by the company include sufficient information about tourism services) with a arithmetical average of 4.09, and the paragraph (the company is keen to repeat advertising materials to remind customers of the tourism services it provides) came with a arithmetical average of

4.47, and the paragraph (the company relies on promotional advertisements to strengthen sales volume) came with a arithmetical average of 4.60, and the paragraph came (the company considers promotional advertisements as one of the means Competitiveness in the market) with an arithmetic mean of 4.61, and thus the answers fall between the range of agree, which ranges between (3.40-4.20) and strongly agree, which ranges between (4.20-5.00).

The second axis: Personal selling practices in tourism companies.

Table 4: Statistical analysis of the study sample's opinions concerning the personal selling practices in tourism companies

The Question		Completely Disagree	Disagree	Partially Agree	Agree	Completely Agree	SMA	standard deviation
The company uses personal selling to persuade customers to purchase tourism programs	Repetition	0	5	30	73	92	4.26	0.80
	%	0	2.5	15.0	36.5	46.0		
The company relies on personal selling to gain the trust of new customers	Repetition	0	0	8	48	144	4.68	0.54
	%	0	0	40.0	24.0	72.0		
The company encourages personal selling to strengthen relationships with brokers and suppliers	Repetition	0	10	22	50	118	4.38	0.87
	%	0	5.0	11.0	25.0	59.0		
The company supports personal selling to strengthen customer relationships	Repetition	0	9	44	85	62	40.0	0.84
	%	0	4.5	22.0	42.5	31.0		
The company relies on personal selling to provide after-sales services	Repetition	2	14	26	88	70	4.05	0.92
	%	1.0	7.0	13.0	44.0	35.0		

Table (4) shows a high degree of response to employees' opinions about personal selling practices in tourism companies, where the paragraph (the company uses personal selling to persuade customers to buy tourism programs) came with an arithmetic mean of 4.26, and the paragraph came (the company relies on personal selling to gain the trust of new customers) with an arithmetical average of 4.68, and the paragraph (the company encourages personal selling to strengthen relationships with intermediaries and suppliers) came with a arithmetical average of 4.38, and the

paragraph (the company supports personal selling to strengthen relationships with customers) came with an arithmetical average of 4.00, and the paragraph (the company relies on personal selling to provide services After sales) with a mean of 4.05, and thus the answers fall between the range of agree, which ranges between (3.40-4.20) and strongly agree, which ranges between (4.20-5.00). The third axis is sales promotion practices in tourism companies.

Table 5: Statistical analysis of the study sample's opinions concerning the sales promotion practices in tourism companies.

The Question		Completely Disagree	Disagree	Partially Agree	Agree	Completely Agree	SMA	Standard deviation
The company considers stimulating sales one of the reasons for increasing profits	Repetition	0	0	13	57	130	4.58	0.61
	%	0	0	6.5	28.5	65.0		
The company offers lucrative commissions to brokers to stimulate sales.	Repetition	0	0	5	60	135	4.65	0.67
	%	0	0	2.5	30.0	67.5		
The company reduces prices during periods of tourism recession to attract tourists	Repetition	0	0	22	76	102	4.40	0.67
	%	0	0	11.0	38.0	51.0		
The company offers offers and gifts to stimulate tourist demand	Repetition	2	19	35	89	55	3.88	0.95
	%	1.0	9.5	17.5	44.5	27.5		

The company participates in tourism exhibitions to promote its products and services	Repetition	0	5	25	51	119	4.42	0.80
	%	0	2.5	12.5	25.5	59.5		

Table (5) shows the high degree of response in employees' opinions about the practices of stimulating sales in tourism companies, where the paragraph (the company considers stimulating sales as one of the reasons for increasing profits) came with an arithmetic mean of 4.58, and the paragraph (the company provides lucrative commissions to intermediaries to stimulate sales) came with a arithmetic mean of 4.65. The paragraph (the company reduces prices during periods of tourism recession to attract tourists) came with a mean of 4.40, the paragraph (the company offers and

gifts to stimulate tourist demand) came with a mean of 3.88, and the paragraph (the company participates in tourism exhibitions to promote its products and services) came with a mean of 4.42. Therefore the answers fall the range is agree, which ranges from (3.40-4.20), and strongly agree, which ranges from (4.20-5.00).

The fourth axis: Advertising practices in tourism companies.

Table 6: Statistical analysis of the study sample's opinions concerning advertising practices in tourism companies

The Question		Completely Disagree	Disagree	Partially Agree	Agree	Completely Agree	SMA	Standard deviation
The company specifies the necessary material and human resources for advertising campaigns	Repetition	0	18	28	62	92	4.14	0.97
	%	0	9.0	14.0	31.0	46.0		
The company distributes publications to customers to introduce its tourism programs	Repetition	0	7	34	61	98	4.35	0.86
	%	0	3.5	17.0	30.5	49.0		
The company has a website that displays its advantages, experiences, and tourism vision	Repetition	0	7	10	88	95	4.35	0.73
	%	0	3.5	5.0	44.0	47.0		
The company uses social media to promote tourism products and services	Repetition	0	11	34	67	88	4.16	0.89
	%	0	5.5	17.0	33.5	44.0		
The company uses content promotion to advertise on electronic platforms	Repetition	4	19	28	50	99	4.10	1.09
	%	2.0	9.5	14.0	25.0	49.5		

Table (6) shows the high degree of response to employees' opinions about advertising practices in tourism companies, where the paragraph (the company allocates the necessary material and human resources to advertising campaigns) had a mean of 4.14, and the paragraph (the company distributes publications to customers to introduce its tourism programs) had a mean of 4.25. The paragraph (The company has a website that displays its advantages, experiences, and tourism vision) came with a mean of 4.35, the paragraph (The company uses social media to promote tourism

products and services) came with a mean of 4.16, and the paragraph (The company uses content promotion for advertising on electronic platforms) came with a mean of 4.10. Therefore, the answers fall between the range of agree, which ranges between (3.40-4.20) and strongly agree, which ranges between (4.20-5.00).

The fifth axis: Public relations practices in tourism companies.

Table 7: Statistical analysis of the study sample's opinions concerning the public relations practices in tourism companies.

The Question		Completely Disagree	Disagree	Partially Agree	Agree	Completely Agree	SMA	standard deviation
The company relies on public relations in coordination with tourism agencies and bodies at home and abroad	Repetition	0	3	8	79	110	4.48	0.64
	%	0	1.5	4.0	39.5	55.0		
The company is keen to use public relations to identify the needs and desires of customers	Repetition	0	0	10	67	123	4.65	0.58
	%	0	0	5.0	33.5	61.5		
The company's public relations studies changes in customer tastes and trends	Repetition	0	7	18	96	79	4.23	0.75
	%	0	3.5	9.0	48.0	39.5		
The company's public relations follows up on tourism news and competitors' offers	Repetition	0	7	13	66	114	4.43	0.76
	%	0	3.5	6.5	33.0	57.0		
The company relies on public relations to identify customer problems	Repetition	0	4	15	56	125	4.51	0.72
	%	0	2.0	7.5	28.0	62.5		

Table (7) shows the high degree of response to employees' opinions about public relations practices in tourism companies, where the paragraph (the company relies on public relations in coordination with tourism agencies and bodies at home and abroad) came with an arithmetic average of 4.48. The paragraph came (the company is keen to use public relations In identifying the needs and desires of customers) with a arithmetical average of 4.56, the paragraph (the company's public relations studies changes in customer tastes and trends) came with an arithmetical

average of 4.23, the paragraph (the company's public relations follows up on tourism news and competitors' offers) came with an arithmetical average of 4.43, and the paragraph (the company relies on. Public relations in identifying customer problems) with a mean of 4.51. Thus, the answers fall in the strongly agree range, which ranges between (4.20-5.00).

The sixth axis: Tourism promotion and brand marketing for tourism companies.

Table 8: Statistical analysis of the study sample's opinions concerning tourism promotion and brand marketing for tourism companies.

The Question		Completely Disagree	Disagree	Partially Agree	Agree	Completely Agree	SMA	Standard deviation
The company is interested in advertising its brand on an ongoing basis	Repetition	0	11	19	62	108	4.33	0.86
	%	0	5.5	9.5	31.0	54.0		
The company uses personal selling to influence customers and convince them of its brand	Repetition	0	8	13	75	104	4.37	0.77
	%	0	4.0	6.5	37.5	52.0		
The company provides sponsorship for community events to stimulate sales and spread its brand	Repetition	0	7	10	88	95	4.35	0.73
	%	0	3.5	5.0	44.0	47.0		
The company is keen on the quality of production of advertising publications and brochures as an expression of the distinguished brand	Repetition	0	0	5	60	135	4.65	0.52
	%	0	0	2.5	30.0	67.5		
The company's public relations places brand marketing as its top priority	Repetition	0	5	30	73	92	4.26	0.80
	%	0	2.5	15.0	36.5	46.0		

Table (8) shows a high degree of response to the opinions of employees regarding tourism promotion and brand marketing for tourism companies. The paragraph (the company is interested in constantly advertising its brand) came with a mean of 4.33, and the paragraph (the company uses personal selling to influence customers and convince them of its brand) came with a mean of 4.33. My calculation was 4.37, and the paragraph (the company provides sponsorship for community events to stimulate sales and spread its brand) came with a mathematical average of 4.35. The paragraph (the company is keen on the quality of

producing advertising publications and brochures as an expression of the distinguished brand) came with a mathematical average of 4.65. The paragraph (the company's public relations develops marketing The brand is a top priority) has a mean of 4.26. Thus the answers fall in the strongly agree range, which ranges between (4.20-5.00).

4.5 Results and Discussion

The Pearson correlation coefficient was used to test the validity of the study hypotheses using (SPSS, V.24) at a significance level (0.01).

Table 9: Correlational coefficients between the elements of the promotional mix and brand marketing.

Variables	Advertising	Personal Sales	Simulating Sales	Publicity	Public Relations	Trademark Marketing
Advertising	1	0.744	0.631	0.647	0.744	0.610
Personal Sales		1	0.688	0.629	0.711	0.633
Simulating Sales			1	0.755	0.624	0.734
Publicity				1	0.511	0.630
Public Relations					1	0.619
Trademark Marketing						1

Table (9) shows the presence of strong correlations between the elements of the promotional mix and brand marketing, as the relationship between advertising and brand marketing reached (0.610). Thus, the first hypothesis is accepted that a statistically significant relationship exists between advertising and brand marketing for tourism companies in the holy city of Karbala. Between personal selling and brand marketing (0.633), the second hypothesis is accepted, which is that there is a statistically significant relationship between personal selling and brand marketing for tourism companies in the holy city of Karbala and between sales activation and brand marketing (734). Therefore, the third hypothesis is accepted: a statistically significant relationship exists between stimulating sales and brand marketing for tourism companies in the holy city of Karbala, and between advertising and brand marketing (0.630). Therefore, the fourth hypothesis is accepted that there is a statistically significant relationship between advertising and brand marketing for tourism companies in The holy city of Karbala, and between public relations and brand marketing (0.619), and thus accepting the fifth hypothesis that there is a statistically significant relationship between public relations and brand marketing for tourism companies in the holy city of Karbala.

5. Conclusion

5.1 According to the findings of the current investigation, the following conclusions are drawn

- According to the results of analyzing the first element of the promotional mixture (promotional

advertisement), it is displayed that the samples participated significantly, where the arithmetic mean ranged from (4.05) to (4.61). This shows that the replies ranged from agreed to absolutely agreed (3.40-5.00), indicating the existence of a high level of promotional advertising activities in tourist organisations.

- The results of analyzing the second element of the promotional mixture (personal selling) reflected a high degree of response from the study sample, as the arithmetic mean ranged from (4.00) to (4.68), which indicates that the responses fell in the range between agree and completely agree, which ranges from (3.40) to (5.00), this indicates a high degree of personal sales practices in tourism companies.
- The research sample responded well to the third element of the promotional mix (sales activation), with arithmetic mean values ranging from 3.88 to 4.65. The responses of agree to absolutely agree represent (3.40) and (5.00), referring to extensive sales marketing processes in tourist companies.
- The results displayed that the three are significantly high responses to the fourth element of the promotional mixture (advertising). Thus, the arithmetic mean was (4.10-4.35), indicating that answers were between agree and fully agree (3.40–5.00). This suggests tourist firms advertise heavily.
- The results of interpreting the fifth element of the promotional mixture (public relations) indicated a high

degree of response from the study sample, as the arithmetic mean ranged between (4.23) and (4.56), which indicates that the responses fell in the completely agreed range, which ranges between (4.20-5.00). This indicates a high degree of public relations practices in tourism companies

- The findings regarding the influence of tourism promotion practices on the brand marketing of tourism companies revealed a substantial number of responses from the sample under study. The arithmetic mean for the responses varied from (4.24) to (4.65), suggesting that the responses fell within the range of complete agreement, which spans from (4.20) to (5.00). This suggests that tourism companies employ a significant level of brand marketing in their tourism promotion practices.
- The results of testing the validity of the study hypotheses showed a statistically significant relationship between the elements of the tourism promotional mix and the brand marketing of tourism companies in the holy city of Karbala.

6. Recommendations

6.1 Concerning the findings of this study, the researcher offers some recommendations as follows

- Promoting the legal processes incentivising tourism enterprises to establish their unique brand as a long-term competitive advantage investment.
- Brand promotion should be a priority of tourism promotion practices and activities to consolidate the principles, values and culture of tourism companies in society.
- Inviting tourism companies to contribute to sponsoring special events such as sports tournaments, conferences, environmental protection, and community campaigns to consolidate corporate social responsibility and help promote their tourism services and programs.
- Increased interest in promotion based on customer relationships to enhance the brand position of tourism companies in the tourism market.
- Adopting modern tourism promotion methods, such as content marketing on digital platforms, to express the brand's strength and keep pace with modern marketing requirements.
- Continuously updating tourism programs in line with current customer aspirations and changes in customer tastes and desires in the future.

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