# Strategic Digital Drift: An Empirical Analysis of Tourists

# Satisfaction

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# Abstract

Robotics, artificial intelligence, and machine learning have significantly sped up the development of all industries. These cutting-edge technologies have predominantly been discussed in industrialised economies; however digital interventions are still in their infant stages in emerging economies. The preferences of ecotourism's tourism stakeholders have experienced remarkable change. Digital platforms have simplified access to information about nature's hidden treasures. This study investigates the role of digital media in facilitating ecotourism development in Velas village, Konkan, Maharashtra, India. This research investigates empirically the function of digital platforms in facilitating ecotourism in the village. For this purpose, three characteristics were established and investigated in this study: "source of information about the village and the turtle conservation process," "utility of social media platforms" in directing tourists, and "sharing of experiences" after the visit. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was performed to validate the factor structure of a set of observed variables to determine the preferences of tourists regarding the usefulness of digital platforms. SPSS (version 22) was applied for the data analysis. Intriguingly, the findings indicated that platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Travel Blog, Planeta.com, Trip advisor, and The International ecotourism society were extremely effective for increasing the tourist experience leading to ecotourism development.

*Keywords:* social media; Ecotourism; Digital; Technology; Turtle; Conservation.

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### Introduction

Ecotourism experiences have been altered by technological advancements. In the modern day, technology is also crucial to the success of tourism service providers as these services play a crucial role in enhancing the ecotourism experience for tourists. Ecotourism and technology are increasing popularity every day, partly because of greater environmental consciousness, sustainability, and environmental repercussions (Cheung et al., 2020). It is imperative to understand the concept of ecotourism. The International Ecotourism Society defined ecotourism in 2015 as "responsible travel to natural places that involves the conservation of natural resources and the betterment of the lives of indigenous people" (TIES, 2015). Ecotourism is also known as the management and conservation of tourism and natural resources (Sarkar, 2016). The ecotourism development approach emphasizes preservation, protection, and knowledge production as its primary objectives (Chiu et al., 2014). According to the World Travel and Tourism Council, tourism accounts for 8.7% of total employment and is projected to account for 9% of total employment by 2026. (WTTC India, 2016). The roots of ecotourism are dated back to Four pillars of responsible tourism that were identified by Hetzer (1965). One of the cornerstones was "raising the satisfaction of tourists. "With the growing awareness and technological advancements, the tourism industry has experienced great disruptions. Ecotourism is no longer untouched from the technological advancements. Hai and Liang (2011) utilized geographical information system (GIS) to study the management and development of ecotourism geography. This technology was utilized for the data collection, performing spatial analysis, and mapping economic values. Another study by Chaudhary et. al., (2021) in Garhwal district of Himalayan region (Uttarakhand) utilized geographical information system- Remote sensing (GIS-RS). This technology was deployed to identify the potential ecotourism sites in that region. Such techniques are aligned with the United Nations sustainable development goal-15 (SDG-15). It includes preservation of natural heritages, wilderness, local culture, generation employment for the natives and developing the socio- economic condition of the native community. However, the advent of technology in India is still at the nascent stage. Present study area is situated in the 720-kilometer-long Konkan belt in Maharashtra along the western coast of India. The Konkan belt is surrounded by the Arabian Sea on one side and mountain ranges on the other, making it a biodiverse paradise for nature enthusiasts. The villagers of Velas have been working towards the protection of (endangered) Olive Ridley Sea turtles. The release of these turtles is commemorated with a festival called Turtle Festival. This study focuses on the technological intervention in the Velas settlement. The village encourages community participation by providing inexpensive home stays and Konkani cuisine to visitors. The locals are protecting

the nests and hatchlings of the critically endangered Olive ridley sea turtles. The hamlet celebrates the release of the hatchlings with a turtle festival that attracts thousands of ecotourists.

In this village, digital tools provide a foundation for ecotourism that is sustainable. Six sources of information about the village and its ecotourism concept were investigated: the website of the Maharashtra tourism development corporation (MTDC), an online social network, tourism websites, travel agencies, friends and family, and print media. Facebook and Twitter were two of the six characteristics used to investigate the effectiveness of social media for tourism. The International ecotourism society. Planeta.com, TripAdvisor, and Travel Blog. Friends/family/relatives, Blogs, Facebook, Twitter, MTDC, and Tourism websites were utilized to articulate the experience of tourists. The locals made the switch from consuming turtle eggs to conserving them. The villagers were able to reach a broader audience in a shorter amount of time because to technology. Such digital interventions are defining a new way to enhance the tourists' experiences and supporting the native community in India.

### **Review of Literature**

Ecotourism has been described as a type of tourism that emphasizes unique tourist attractions, natural destinations, biodiversity conservation, knowledge production, and the emancipation of the local inhabitants. It is seen as a crucial approach for the growth of ecotourism and tourism in general (Kumavat, 2021). According to Ayala (1995), ecotourism is "a type of tourism that promotes enjoyment and understanding of the natural world and the host culture, including environmental preservation and economic growth." One definition of ecotourism management describes ecotourism as "a successful and ecologically sustainable industry that provides fulfilling experiences for tourists and economic development for the local community" (Lim & McAleer, 2005). The trip experience is quite complex. Variations within market sectors and the various ways in which tourists can be gratified add to the complexity. When conducting customer satisfaction research, it is essential to appreciate the components of a site that travelers value or prefer. To meet tourist requests and expectations, it is necessary to identify these locational qualities (Lee et. al., 2013).

In their systematic research, Carter et al. (2015) discovered that nature-based tourism is more popular in Cambodia. Lepp (2002) investigated the significance of ecotourism in Kibale National Park, Uganda. Better housing, education, employment opportunities, and collective engagement were highlighted as the essential factors in the growth of ecotourism. In Botswana, Moswete and Thapa (2015) investigated community-based tourism (CBT). They

investigated the people' knowledge and perceptions of the "Transfrontier park" in Kgalagadi. Botswana's CBE was shown to be significantly influenced by the environmental, economic, and sociocultural factors of ecotourism. A study centered on Kaziranga National Park (KNP) in Assam, in the north-eastern area of India, revealed the possibility for incorporating residents in increasing ecotourism operations. It also altered the earnings of the involved parties (Hussain & Mahavidyalaya, 2021).

Awondirad, Tolkach, and King (2020) did research into the management of Indonesia's maritime resources. Locals and marine ecotourism enterprise operators were interviewed for their study. Their research revealed that for sustainable practices in the region, both tourists' knowledge of the marine habitat and locals' participation in traditional fishing are essential. The value of ecotourism has been acknowledged on a global basis. Multiple activities are being taken on a global scale to preserve biodiversity and promote the expansion of ecotourism.

### Digital platform and ecotourism

Globally, information and communication technology (ICT) has played a significant influence in reshaping the contemporary tourism business (Buhalis & Law, 2008). According to Buhalis and Deimezi (2004), ICT-enabled travel led to the digitization of all commercial operations in the travel and hospitality industries. The ever-increasing demand for ecotourism around the globe has sparked considerable interest in studies on ecotourism service quality (ESQ). Involvement of technology enhances the overall experience of travellers (Fang et al., 2019). By incorporating digital platforms, Aseres & Sira (2020) proposed an updated version of the ECOSERV model with 7 ESQ dimensions and 28 attributes to enhance the overall service quality and ecotourism in Ethiopia. In his dissertation, Iva Vali (2019) highlighted the significant relationship between service quality, destination image, and ecotourists' behavioural intentions. These pathways had a significant correlation with the utilisation of digital media platforms.

Ecotourism has harmful effects, according to a study conducted in Pahang national park in Malaysia. Compared to comparable natural settings, the light intensity and soil compaction on the hiking trail were found to be higher. Their findings identified activities such as hiking and camping that would have a negative influence on the forest regions in the protected region, such as trekking and camping (Sabri et. al., 2018). From 2006 to 2020, Khanh and his colleagues successfully mapped the land and forest coverage in Vietnam. They used multi-temporal satellite data in GaoGiong park. Their findings revealed that a Multi-temporal Landsat image with a 30m spatial resolution was exceptionally useful for detecting changes in vegetation coverage (Khanh et. al., 2021). In his work, Hetzer emphasised the importance of tourist satisfaction in the

ecotourism industry. The contentment of tourists in the modern era is greatly determined by the technology's usability and accessibility. Figure 1 reflects the four pillars of Hetzer model



# Figure 1: Compiled from, Hetzer (1965), four 'pillars' or principles of responsible tourism

Hetzer's fourth characteristic plays a crucial influence in the development of each destination's ecotourism model. Greater customer happiness may result in repeat visits and referrals, and technology plays a crucial part in this. Gretzel and crew worked on marketing approaches for tourists using consumer-generated media decades ago (CGM). Their work on various aspects of Web 2.0 focused primarily on four tourist markets. Their findings indicated that technology greatly affected travellers' decisions, and that these effects were country specific (Gretzel et. al, 2008). It was also shown that social media platforms such as Trip advisor had a substantial impact on tourists' decisions. The impact of social media on the prosperity of the destination's natives was substantial (Miguens, Baggio and Costa, 2008). Pillar and his team investigated the influence of social media-facilitated word-of-mouth communication. Their research revealed that "poor mouths" on social media had a detrimental impact on the ecotourism destination's company development Piller et. al (2011).

A study conducted in Nigeria revealed that travellers utilise the internet and social media in tourist destinations. They viewed the use of Information and Communication Technologies as a novel approach to addressing the difficulties of sustainable tourism (Oyebode, Adeyemo & Oladeji, 2022). Sarkar (2016) investigated the effect of social networking platforms in the development of urban ecotourism destinations in Kuala Lumpur. According to the study's findings, the Internet is the most effective medium for communicating travel information. Facebook and Twitter were the most major social media platforms for tourism marketers to raise awareness, share information, and promote their products. Travel 2.0 and Travel 2.0 are indicators of the influence of social media and digital platforms on the tourism industry (Green, 2007). A study based on Consumer Generated Media (CGM) discovered several trends indicating country-specific digital domain elements for tourism development (Gretzel et. al., 2008). Okech (2009) examined the role of Tripadvisor in destination image creation. It was an extremely important web 2.0/social media tool. The studies also indicated that the Tripadvisor community has a substantial impact on customer behaviour. This was found to be associated

with enhancing the destination's image and tourism marketing efforts. The tourists' personal experiences published on social media had a significant impact on the other travellers. Tourists viewed it as more authentic and reliable than any other tourism marketing material/service (Weaver, 2009). Facebook and Twitter were discovered to be extremely beneficial to travellers. The information offered on these platforms was extremely helpful for travellers in planning their trip, lodging, and other activities (Karanasios & Burgess, 2008). Additionally, travel blogs were highly valuable for revealing many facets of tourist operations. The travel blog as a Web 2.0 instrument was widely employed for destination marketing (Donohoe & Needham, 2008). Hidayati (2016) works at a Bangsring district beach community. The study highlighted criteria for websites and social media platforms for niche market media campaigns targeting nature lovers. Sadig and Adil (2020) analysed travellers' online search patterns for ecotourism-related information. They adopted the technology acceptance paradigm and emphasised that the simplicity of use and utility of electronic information had a significant impact on travellers. In their study, user-friendly interfaces were recommended. Balist, Heydarzadeh, and Salehi (2019) evaluated the land's potential for ecotourism planning and development using technology. Their research revealed the ecotourism destination in Iran (Marivan county). Fahana and Handoko (2018) investigated the function of gamification in the tourism industry. As a result of their research, it was determined that the amount of data required for ecotourism development was far greater than the amount of data available online for conventional tourist. They suggested using digital tools for knowledge creation and dissemination.

### **Research** gap

There is a scarcity of scholarly research on the characteristics that strengthen India's ecotourism activities. Even little is known about ecotourism techniques aided by technology in India. Globally, varied techniques have led to the comprehension of the utility of digital platforms in the ecotourism area. The current research aims to bridge this gap. This study in the field of ecotourism in the Indian context will aid comprehension of the platform for technology-led ecotourism development.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The objective of this study was to comprehend the many technology-enabled processes involved in enhancing ecotourism services in the community of Velas. It intends to investigate the three dimensions, including the source of information, the efficiency of social media, and the way travellers share their experiences. The report also attempts to identify the leading technological variables that contributed to the village's ecotourism development. The data analysis revealed that these elements have a substantial impact on enhancing the ecotourism experiences of Velas's visitors.

### **Research Methods**

This research is descriptive in nature. The study's major purpose was to comprehend the digital platforms that supported ecotourism practices in the velas community. The present study addressed three aspects: the source of information about the village and the turtle conservation process, the usefulness of social media platforms in directing tourists, and the sharing of post-visit experiences. In the months of February and March 2022, data was collected from 412 tourists who visited the area during the turtle festival of Velas village.

Utilizing a standardised questionnaire, primary data has been gathered. The collection of secondary data involved a thorough examination of research papers, articles, dissertations, books, and government publications. The study area is the village of Velas in the Ratnagiri district of Maharashtra's Konkan coast. There are endangered Olive Ridley Sea turtles on the shore. The entire community of the village is committed to protecting the turtle nests.

A method of random sampling was utilised to acquire data from guests to comprehend their experience with the digital platforms included in the ecotourism concept of the village. On a 7-point Likert scale, "1" represented "very strongly disagree" and "7" represented "very strongly agree." The Cronbach's Alpha (R) value of (0.810) indicates that the research instrument is noteworthy.

Following hypotheses were formulated for the present study:

a) H01: There is no significant relationship between the digital source of information and tourists' experiences
 H11: There is a significant relationship between the digital source of information and

H11: There is a significant relationship between the digital source of information and tourists' experiences

- b) H02: There is no significant difference between utility of social media platforms and tourists' experiences
  H12: There is significant difference between utility of social media platforms and
- c) H03: There is no significant difference between digital sharing of experiences and tourists' experiences
  H13: There is significant difference between digital sharing of experiences and tourists'

experiences

tourists' experiences

The three main statistical techniques employed for data analysis were inferential statistics, correlation, and factor analysis.

### **Data Analysis and Interpretation**

The data derived from the 412 tourists was empirically analysed to understand the technology enabled methods and measures at velas ecotourism. The three dimensions were examined for this purpose. These dimensions were: The source of information about the village and the turtle conservation process, utility of social media platforms in guiding the tourists and sharing of experiences post the visit. Variables under each dimension were identified through an extensive review of literature. The source of information about the village and the turtle conservation process aspects included factors like- Maharashtra tourism development corporation (MTDC) website, online social network, tourism websites, travel agencies, friends/ relatives, and print medium. Utility of social media platforms in guiding the tourist's aspects included factors like- Facebook, Twitter. Travel Blog, Planeta.com, Trip adviser and The International ecotourism society. Sharing of experiences post the visit included factors like Friends/ family/ relatives, Blogs, Facebook, Twitter, MTDC and Tourism websites. A significantly reliable Cronbach's Alpha value was obtained (0.810).

Table 1. Cronbach's Alpha

Reliability Statistics				
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items			
0.810	18			

The descriptive statistics highlighted those 257 male tourists, and 155 female tourists visited the village during the turtle festival 2020. Approximately 90% of the tourists were below 40 years of age. The tourists were mostly graduate (75%). 117 tourists were married, and majority (295) were unmarried. The tourists were mostly employed in private sector (212). Table 2 represents the descriptive statistics of the respondents.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics on demographic variable
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		Ν	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Gender	Male-257, Female -155	412	0	1	0.43	0.479
Age	Upto 30 years- 280, 31 to 40 years- 110, 41 and above- 22	412	1	5	1.61	0.941

Marital Status	Married- 117, Unmarried - 295	412	1	2	1.60	0.439
Education	Up to 12th- 40, Graduate- 310, Postgraduate- 62	412	1	3	1.42	0.764
Occupatio n	Students – 70, Private Employee- 212 Government Employee – 120, Other - 10	412	1	3	1.63	0.910
Valid N		412				

Chi square test was utilized to test the Hypotheses. Table 3 depicts the summary of the chisquare test for all the three hypotheses devised for the study. The level of significance alpha  $\alpha$  = 0.05 and the confidence interval was 95%.

#### Pearson Asymptotic N of Valid **Hypotheses** Factors Chi-Square df Significanc Cases e (2-sided) value Source of 84.717<sup>a</sup> $H_01$ 412 8 .000 Information Effectiveness $H_02$ of social 412 45.466<sup>a</sup> 8 .000 media Digital H₀3 sharing of 412 48.421<sup>a</sup> 8 .000 experiences

### Table 3 Chi-square test

 $H_01$  - It is highlighted in table 2 that the p value (0.000) is less than the alpha value (0.05). Hence, the author rejects the null hypothesis and accepts the alternate hypothesis. It is interpreted that there is existence of a significant statistical relationship between the factors of source of information and enhancing the ecotourism experiences.

 $H_02$  - It is highlighted in table 2 that the p value (0.000) is less than the alpha value (0.05). Hence, the author rejects the null hypothesis and accepts the alternate hypothesis. It is interpreted that there is existence of a significant statistical relationship between the factors of effectiveness of social media and enhancing the ecotourism experiences.

 $H_03$ - It is highlighted in table 2 that the p value (0.000) is less than the alpha value (0.05). Hence, the author rejects the null hypothesis and accepts the alternate hypothesis. It is interpreted that there is existence of a significant statistical relationship between the factors of digital sharing of experiences and enhancing the ecotourism experiences.

Pearson correlation was done to study the relationship among the identified 18 variables. The results of Pearson correlation reflected a significant relationship between Experience through Facebook and travel Blog (.825). Travel agencies and Twitter were also found to have significant relationship (.756). Table 4 represents the most significant correlation values.

Correlation Table						
Variables	Pearson's correlation	Sig.(2- tailed)				
Experience through Facebook and travel Blog	0.825	0.000				
Travel agencies and Twitter	0.756	0.000				
Experience through Tourism websites and Planeta.com	0.714	0.000				
Experience through Facebook and online social network	0.698	0.000				

### **Table 4: Pearson Correlation**

All the 18 factors included under the three aspects of technology intervention were considered to identify the topmost contributing intervention according to the tourists. Factor analysis was utilized for this purpose. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy value was 0.811 through KMO and Bartlett's Test. Table 5 indicates the KMO and bartlett's test.

### Table 5: KMO and Bartlett's test

KMO and Bartlett's Test						
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy811						
	Approx. Chi-Square	11403.381				
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Df	595				
	Sig.	.000				

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure value is significant (0.819). The values more than 0.75 are considered statistically good. It indicates that all the factors considered in this study were relevant. The top significant factors identified by factor analysis are reflected in table 6 and are mentioned below:

- a) Experience through Facebook
- b) Online social network

- c) Experience through Twitter
- d) Travel agencies
- e) Travel Blog

Factor 2 comprising of four attributes was also significant with 20.5% variance. Factor two comprised of three factors mentioned below:

- a) Experience through Tourism websites
- b) TIES
- c) Twitter
- d) Friends/ relatives

Rotated Component Matrix <sup>a</sup>						
	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	
Experience through Facebook	.812	.151	.053	.219	.180	
Online social network	.766	.072	.315	049	.219	
Experience through Twitter	.728	.071	.061	.042	.101	
Travel agencies	.633	.071	.410	.112	.212	
Travel Blog	.631	.152	.123	.021	-0.11	
Experience through Tourism	491	728	163	138	332	
websites	. 101	.720	.100	.100	.002	
TIES	.041	.619	.100	212	.211	
Twitter	.052	.548	.056	.117	.101	
Friends/ relatives	.118	.483	.220	.161	.115	
Planeta.com	.212	.029	.626	.102	.123	
Facebook	.411	.157	.611	086	.211	
Experience through Friends/	- 051	321	529	104	092	
family/ relatives	.001	.021	.020	.104	.002	
Experience through Blogs	.102	.193	.209	.625	.234	
MTDC website	.212	.121	.234	.624	.114	
Tourism websites	.313	.191	.311	.623	.214	
Experience through MTDC	.213	.034	.021	.233	.683	
Print medium	.211	.233	.031	.212	.512	
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.						
Rotation Method	Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.					

# **Table 6: Rotated Component Matrixa**

When all the items were taken together and their importance to tourists was taken as 100%, then the above listed five items constitute 27%. This is of highest importance to tourists with respect to digital intervention as reflected in table 7. It is also observed that factor two with four attributes (Experience through Tourism websites, TIES, Twitter, Friends/ relatives) constitute 20.5% of the variance. Together factor 1 and 2 constitute 46% of the total variance.

Total Variance Explained							
				Extraction			
Component	Initial Figanyalyas			Sums of			
Component	nponent Initial Eigenvalues		Squared				
		Loadings					
	Total	% of	Cumulativ	Total	% of	Cumulative	
	TOLAT	Variance	e %		Variance	%	
1	3.865	27.165	27.165	3.865	27.165	27.165	
2	3.077	20.514	46.279	3.077	20.514	47.679	
3	2.136	14.242	60.521	2.136	14.242	61.911	
4	1.872	12.478	72.999	1.872	12.478	74.389	
5	1.077	7.180	80.179	1.077	7.180	81.569	

Table 7: Total variance explained

## Findings

The findings reveal that the integration of technology is supporting the development of ecotourism at the velas village through enhancing the tourists' experiences. The knowledge creation and information sharing became very easy. The turtle festival dates and other information like booking of rooms, type of food etc. was readily available to the tourists. The tourists identified that they were able to acquire the necessary information through the website of Maharashtra tourism development corporation (MTDC). The online social networks helped them in identifying the food facilities and availability of accommodation. Tourism websites, travel agencies, friends/ relatives and print medium were also effective in providing the required information to the tourist as well as the local natives. All the six attributes (Maharashtra tourism development corporation (MTDC) website, online social network, tourism websites, travel agencies, friends/ relatives, and print medium) of sharing information were found to be very useful to the tourists.

The six attributes of Effectiveness of social media for tourists were explored. The platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Travel Blog, Planeta.com, Trip adviser and The International

ecotourism society were found to be very useful towards supporting the ecotourism development at the village. The natives posted their accommodation options, their home stay facilities, local Konkani food and other eating options, details of transportation options from Mumbai to velas village. These rates were same across all the houses in the village. Tourists could also look for special rooms and book them in advance. This made it very convenient for tourists as well as the natives.

The tourists shared their experience post their visit through Friends/ family/ relatives, Blogs, Facebook, Twitter, MTDC and Tourism websites. Tourists wrote descriptive experience related to the nature walks, village life, art, and culture. They also shared about the beach, nearby fort, and cashew plantation around the village. The hatcheries and the turtle hatchlings were captured through digital means as memories for the tourists.

Various pictures and videos were shared by the visitors on Facebook and other platforms. The tourists and the villagers had good experience through the intervention of technology. Experience through Facebook, online social network, Experience through Twitter, Travel agencies and Travel Blog along with Experience through Tourism websites, TIES, Twitter, Friends/ relatives were the top digital interventions that were helpful towards development of ecotourism in the velas village.

### **Managerial Implications**

Ecotourism is the preferred choice of younger generation. Today tourists are aware of the carbon footprints and are more responsible. They preferred using digital mode of knowledge and information sharing about ecotourism.

The service providers in the tourism industry may revisit their products and services. Service quality can be enhanced through utilization of digital platforms.

The tourists and other stakeholders may consider visiting the review pages and experiences shared by other tourists before making a travel plan and analysing a destination.

MTDC and other supporting bodies can appreciate regular updating of website and creating more visibility to the experience posts.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Digital interventions have supported the development of ecotourism at the velas village on the Konkan coast of Maharashtra. Present research has highlighted that the social media platforms are increasingly being used by the tourists. The information about the natural environments, biodiversity conservation, unique villages etc. are mostly available on the digital platforms. It is easy to have information about the destination with texts as well as pictures and videos. These attributes have attracted various national as well as international tourists to the village. The tourists shared their experiences on the tourism blogs, Twitter, Facebook, and other digital platforms. The key recommendations of the study are –

- 1) Ecotourists can look forward to such ecotourism services and awareness about the conservation process through ease of access via digital platforms.
- 2) Other ecotourism destinations must identify such digital attributes that were most preferred by the tourists.
- 3) Socio- economic development of the local community must be supported through use of technology and
- Stakeholders like tour operators, NGO (Sahyadri Nisarga Mitra) and government organisations (Maharashtra tourism development Corporation) must support the top five digital attributes identified at Velas village.

This would enable the development of a digital ecotourism model for all such ecotourism destinations through enhancing the tourists' experiences. It is indicative that technology can transform the future of such ecotourism destinations. The community participation in the velas village to support ecotourism services to the tourists has transformed the fate of the villagers. They have economically prospered, the endangered turtle hatchlings are saved, and customers are happy and satisfied. This is creating a win-win situation for all the stakeholders in the ecotourism development at the village. The post pandemic scenario has also changed the landscape of tourism. Further academic studies may explore the interventions of these digital technologies to benefit the travel and tourism stakeholders.

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