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**Botanical Tourism and Experiential Marketing at the Royal Botanic Garden
Edinburgh: Developing a Sustainable Eco-Destination Model**

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**Botanical Tourism and Experiential Marketing at the Royal
Botanic Garden Edinburgh: Developing a Sustainable Eco-
Destination Model**

By

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**Master of Science
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Declaration

I declare that the work undertaken for this MSc Dissertation has been undertaken by me, under the supervision of **Dr. Mavis Gutu**, in the Department of Business. I hereby declare that the title of the M.sc Dissertation is “**Botanical Tourism and Experiential Marketing at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh: Developing a Sustainable Eco-Destination Model**” and that the final Dissertation was produced by me. The work has not been submitted in part or in whole with any other academic qualification.

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Abstract

Botanical tourism is an emerging market that incorporates nature-oriented tourism, cultural tourism, and educational engagement, luring ecologically conscious tourists. Edinburgh, including the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) and a growing number of plant-focused and green businesses, offers a unique environment to explore the development of environmentally friendly global tourism and ecological botanical tourism. Despite the high global reputation that Edinburgh boasts in terms of scientific excellence, local plant and botanical workshops are challenged by the need to conserve leadership, deliberately marketing their brands to overseas markets. Critical challenges include balancing the reliability of science and having tourism experience, juggling between opposing regulations and laws, and expressing the sustainability principles to culturally different audiences. This study employed a case study approach to research with semi-structured interviews with marketing managers, document review, and observation of experiential offers at RBGE and plant-based companies in Edinburgh. The research aims at establishing strategic marketing and branding strategies that enhance global awareness, cultural significance, and consumer interaction. It is expected that the findings will inform sustainable and experience-based marketing tactics, online adverts, and international brand positioning, therefore, improving the position of Edinburgh as the leading botanical tourist spot. This research improves tourism and global companies studies through combining sustainability, cultural sensitivity, and experience promotion tools, presenting practical suggestions to botanical and eco-tourist companies to become globally significant.

Keywords: Botanical Tourism, Experiential Marketing, Sustainable Eco-Destination,
Plant-Based Enterprises, International Branding

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background and Context

The plants offer a chance for botanical tourism, which allows for a variety of tourism events to be conducted, such as the cherry blossom festivals in Japan, the Bulgarian rose festival, the Dutch tulip festival, and the Canadian maple syrup festivals. Climate change has a significant impact on various tourism-related activities. Plant phenophases, such as flowering and leaf coloring dates, are linked to the environment of floral tourists and have carefully responded to climate change (Zang et al., 2020). The ideal seasons for botanical tourism, such as spring flower viewing and autumn leaf watching, have changed over the last few years due to warming temperatures. For instance, phenological data of 232 plant species on the English Channel island of Guernsey from 1985 to 2011 revealed a noticeably earlier onset of blooming and a smaller blossoming period (Bock et al., 2014). As urban nature places, botanical gardens have received little attention, especially when it comes to figuring out what advantages they might offer their patrons. Up until now, most submissions have focused on tourist profiles and reasons for visiting, paying little attention to the personal advantages of travel. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to ascertain how tourists view the advantages of visiting South Africa's Lowveld National Botanical Garden. To be more precise, the opinions of guests who live close to the Park. In addition to the beneficial results for domain management, it is proposed that the study's contribution resides in its complement to the body of existing literature on botanical garden visits (Middel et al., 2025).

Throughout the world and in South Africa, botanical gardens are essential for travel and leisure. Many people use the botanical gardens as significant leisure destinations where they can unwind and have picnics. Weddings and other special events that are essential to urban tourism are occasionally held there in these unusual and communal gardens. As significant conservation and educational hubs where students can study botany and conservation, botanical gardens have grown in popularity in recent years. Plant gardens are therefore regarded as vital tourist and biodiversity hubs across the globe (Mosia et al., 2022). Because of the increased interest in nature-based travel, environmental preservation, and using plants as the main theme in products, botanical tourism, a subset of sustainable tourism, has become incredibly popular in recent years. In addition to encouraging environmental awareness, this type of travel is linked to cross-cultural

communication, education, and giving visitors unique experiences. Botanical tourism is a potential avenue for locations to integrate sustainability with economic growth, engagement with local communities, and an international brand, as people become more environmentally conscious and want more experience-based and journey-based trip experiences (Hägele, 2024).

The West Lampung Regency government is currently working to establish the Liwa Botanical Garden as a tourist destination. There are 19 botanical gardens in Indonesia, including Liwa Botanical Garden. People tend to require entertainment as time passes. The tourism industry is highly competitive. Because of this circumstance, tourism management must create an effective plan to ensure that visitors have a fun time while they are at a destination. In order to fully utilize the potential of tourism attractions, tactics must be spot-on, able to create a memorable experience, and inspire repeat visits. Presenting the features that make up a tourist attraction is one way to accomplish this. This is a specific marketing strategy that can be employed to influence customers in a mental manner and stimulate them to revisit its immersive marketing (Indriyani et al., 2021).

1.2 Research Problem and Rationale

In Edinburgh, Scotland, the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) is a world-renowned organization that is recognized for its scientific research, plant preservation, and educational initiatives. This potential is evident. Additionally, the city has an active plant-based and eco-centered economy that is in collaboration with RBGE. This economy is comprised of producers of herbal supplements, plant-based cosmetics, and sustainable packaging organizations, and it is also a component of the city's green economy and eco-tourism potential (Harper et al., 2004).

A strategy is a comprehensive method that involves the application of concepts, planning, and the completion of a certain task within a given time frame. Specifically, strategy is the "placement" of the business's mission, establishing organizational objectives while taking into account both internal and external capabilities, establishing specific targets and techniques, and making sure they are properly implemented to accomplish the organization's primary goals and objectives (Yanto et al., 2020)

Despite these advantages, Edinburgh's botanical and plant-based enterprises have encountered challenges in effectively positioning themselves in foreign markets. The majority of businesses have a hard time conveying their sustainability and exclusivity to botanical principles, and even

their product delivery, to the international marketplace, even though the city already has a good reputation for scientific excellence and culture.

1.3 Research Aim and Objectives

A sustainable eco-destination concept with a focus on conservation, experiential learning, and sustainable tourism practices was developed in this study after botanical tourism was investigated. The particular aims, goals, and objectives of this study are as follows:

Aim of the Study

The study's goal is to investigate strategic international marketing strategies that Edinburgh-based botanical tourism and plant-based businesses may use to position their brands in foreign marketplaces in a way that is customer-focused, culturally aware, and responsible.

Research Objectives

This study has the following objectives:

1. To conduct a complete literature review of botanical tourism, experiential marketing, and sustainable brand positioning.
2. To determine the effects of differences in culture on the way global consumers react to marketing campaigns that were made by Edinburgh-based plant-based businesses.
3. To determine strategic branding and experiential marketing strategies that can be used to improve the global competitiveness, Edinburgh eco-tourism, and the botanical sector.
4. To determine the impact of the international regulations on the marketing strategies of Edinburgh Botanical Exports, such as plant-based products, plant seeds, supplements, and sustainable products.
5. To study how the digital marketing platforms can be used to increase the reach of Edinburgh's botanical tourism and plant industries in the upcoming economies.

1.4 Research Question

In this research, it has aims, objectives, and goals, and thus numerous questions arose regarding the approaches to be used in the research. The following are the research questions:

1. What are the key sociocultural, economic, and environmental factors that influence the sustainability of botanical tourism destinations?

2. What is the effect of immersion events, educative programs, and guided tours on visitor happiness and preservation knowledge in botanical eco-destinations?
3. What could plant-based attractions and botanical gardens do to help in the ethical standards of tourism and preservation of habitats?
4. What can botanical tourism do to develop a viable eco-destination model that will achieve a compromise between the environmental objectives, visitor satisfaction, and community involvement?

These questions should have meaningful methods and research in this study.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Maintaining a balance between the scientific and conservation work and experiences marketing programs aimed at inviting huge flows of international visitors is one of the most vivid challenges (Todorov, 2025). Moreover, botanical firms are still confronted with significant challenges in their quest to attain international growth, such as the utilization of online marketing channels, cross-national consumer behaviour, and adherence to policies in many nations. The factors mentioned above demonstrate that strategic marketing and experiential branding can help improve the competitiveness of Edinburgh's botanical tourism industry.

1.5.1 Academic Significance

Experience Botanical tourism is one of those that suits best to experiential marketing, which is focused on the production of the interactive and engaging experience of consumers. Unlike traditional marketing approaches, which tend to leave the company interacting one-way with its visitors, experiential marketing enables the companies to interact emotionally and cognitively with them, leading to a stronger brand loyalty and a favorable word-of-mouth. It may be done by interactive garden trips, workshops on plant products, sensory experiences in the natural landscape, and educational programs that discuss conservation activities in terms of botanical tourism. With experience marketing, botanical businesses can build their international brand image, increase visitor satisfaction, and differentiate their products with the help of a combination of cultural, educational, and ecological components (Suraweera et al., 2024). The ideal place to test and apply such strategies is the botanical resources of Edinburgh, such as RBGE and the related plant-based industries. They have a scientific ground, a historical, and a decorative significance. University botanic gardens have long been essential to educate individuals about plants, research, and

awareness of the general public. They have evolved with time due to the development of science, shifting of culture and shifting of institutions. This paper discusses the development of these gardens originally established to educate the people on medicinal plants over time, in universities including both the schools of the Renaissance and the universities of research-centric universities today. It further demonstrates the way they were influenced by colonial-level expansion and novel methods of instruction. The changes in roles and organizational identities of university botanic gardens based on a world survey and a critical review of their history. These gardens accomplish much-needed stuff, yet they are not adequately addressed in the framework of higher education and biodiversity protection. Their importance deserves new consideration, especially in terms of the decline of biodiversity around the world, the concerns with the welfare of the planet, and the need of universities to promote social and environmental change. The given work adds to the general research by examining their historical development and their current concerns, which results in creating new questions about their future appropriateness (Jaramillo et al., 2025). All in all, it preconditions the multidisciplinary researches and strategic planning to gain a better insight into how university botanic gardens can bring a benefit to individuals and the natural environment.

1.5.2 Practical Significance

Edinburgh is increasingly feeling the strain of becoming internationally compatible in terms of global sustainability with the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) and other internationally recognized botanical resources, and an expanding plant-based and environmentally conscious corporate society. Most of the local botanical companies cannot develop international advertisement concepts that would highlight the cultural history to customers across the globe and attract a wider consumer group, even though Edinburgh is recognized as a city of academic innovation, conservation leaders, and green tourism (Maranisya, 2024). It is difficult to develop scientific authenticity and experience tourism, to comply with numerous international regulations, and to communicate the principles of sustainability among countries. The study presents a look at the methods that Edinburgh-based organizations in the botanical and tourist businesses can use to maximize on global brand recognition, customer confidence, and economic positioning using culturally effective, tactic-based advertising applications. Hygiene is also a major factor that determines the development of botanical tourism. The issues of establishments and companies capable of proving their environmental responsibility, ethical sourcing, and efforts to preserve biodiversity are on the rise among international tourists. Abdul Jabar et al. (2024) suggest that the

botanical and plant-based enterprises in Edinburgh can use the sustainability benefit to attract tourists who are environmentally conscious, gain the trust of consumers, and improve the image of the city as a global leader in sustainability through eco-tourism. These will only be achieved through the effective delivery of sustainable ideals in advertising campaigns, online tools, and through experience. Theoretical attempts at aligning the marketing strategies with international standards and regulations will also make sure that the market complies and enable the marketing of botanical products produced in Edinburgh to the emerging economies that are at the forefront in the development of plant-based products and eco-tourism outings. This paper is aimed at discussing how plant-based companies and botanical tour operator services in Edinburgh can strategically enhance their global marketing strategies through the integration of cultural resonance, sustainability, and experiential learning. To have a comprehensive account of the marketing strategies, customer perception, and business issues affecting the botanical business in Edinburgh, the study will utilize a qualitative case study method. The data will be collected using semi-structured interviews with marketing managers, review of organizational documents, and observation of the experiential offers of RBGE and other businesses with plants in the region (Middel et al., 2025). The findings are expected to inform research and practical business management by identifying actionable steps that can be taken to improve consumer interaction, worldwide comprehension, and sustainable botanical tourism.

One of the key components of ecotourism advertising is loyalty. In recent years, devotion has emerged as a critical component of tourist study. Loyal tourists are the key to the growth and development of ecotourism. Tourism Consumption Theory (TCT) states that a visitor's history perception of the location, prior experiences, choices, and actions toward green destinations all affect how much they enjoy a trip. TCT also emphasized the direct or indirect connections between the thoughts, preferences, intentions, and behaviors of tourists. Accordingly, the authors believe that TCT can support the connection between Eco-Destination Loyalty (EDL), Perceived Value (PV), and Emotional Attachment (EA) in the context of Experience and Destination Image (DI), where Eco Engagement acts as a facilitator (Nawaz et al., 2025).

Chapter 1: Summary

The introduction outlines the boundaries of the research and gives a brief background of the research based on several aspects. This will form the basis of the following chapters that will overview the related literature, give the research findings, discussions and recommendations. This introduction can be used as a guide to the dissertation. It outlines the situation, explains the importance of the subject matter and highlights the goals and research questions, therefore informing the readers about the focus and direction of the study.

1.6 Structure of dissertation

There are multiple chapters in the dissertation to determine a logical flow of the study. The chapters will focus on particular elements of the topic, initially with general ideas and then proceed to the analysis. Introduction defines the problem, provides the context of the research, and formulates the research objectives and questions of the study. Chapter two reviews the available literature on botanical tourism, experimental marketing and sustainable models. Chapter three outlines the research technique and research design which also includes data collection and analysis. Chapter four gives findings and the results of the study where chapter five sheds light on the results taking into consideration the research questions and the preexisting body of literature. In the last chapter, the conclusions, recommendations and suggestions on how the future research could be structured are given. This is a systematic way of making the dissertation easier to read and every section of the dissertation is linked to the overall goal of the study.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Plant-based or garden tourism, which has also been termed as botanical tourism is a tourism that is attracting lots of attention in the recent past because of the growing interest of people in nature, sustainability and learning activities. It provides tourists with a chance to visit botanical gardens, parks, and other plant-based locations and acquire knowledge about biodiversity, conservation, and horticulture techniques. As a part of tourism, botanical tourism, which is both entertaining and informative, is a niche that is specific to tourism, due to its cultural and environmental values. With the rising knowledge of environmental sustainability across the world, botanical tourism can also be utilized to encourage environmental friendly culture besides boosting the local economy. This study entails application of experimental marketing in botanical tourism. The focus of the marketing, which is based on the engagement, immersion, and interaction, can be used to attract

people, make them feel pleasure, and come back to the facility repeatedly. The combination of marketing techniques that aim at involvement of visitors, sensory experiences and memorable experiences would enable the botanical attractions to market themselves effectively as well as inform the people about the significance of protecting and sustaining plants. The marketing approaches are very applicable in sustainable tourism where participation of the visitors should be based on environmental and social responsibilities. This paper seeks to analyze the effects of experimental marketing methods in botanical tourism through developing a sustainable model that is of advantage both to the visitors and the environment. The aims are to determine the preferences of the visitors, to examine the effective marketing tactics and assess the effectiveness of these strategies in ensuring sustainability. The research will discuss critical areas of research such as the role of experimental marketing in increasing the level of engagement among the tourists and the deployment of strategies to create happy experiences in botanical tourism and the incorporation of sustainability into the management of the tourism industry. In this chapter, the context and purpose of the study is expressed, and there is increased importance of botanical tourism in the global tourism industry. The article touches upon the issue of sustainability in the development of tourism and the need to give the visitors great memorable experiences.

Chapter 2: Review of literature

Chapter 2 gives an analysis of the main concepts and literature that are related to botanical tourism, sustainable marketing, digital marketing, international marketing, cultural influences and consumer behavior. The case of botanical tourism is analyzed as a separate industry in the tourism industry with a focus on its environmental, education, and recreational effects. The chapter also sheds light on the education and entertainment incorporated in plant attractions and botanical gardens and their role in conservation efforts. Sustainable marketing is brought out as a strategy used to ensure that tourism practices are both socially and environmentally correct. Digital marketing is evaluated as a way of reaching more audiences, attracting internet traffic, and developing interactive marketing campaigns that would improve experiences. The topic of global marketing has been touched upon in order to demonstrate that botanical tourism can potentially appeal to tourists all over the world; therefore, it is essential to adopt the strategies that will take into account various expectations and existing trends in the world. The cultural factors are exploited to explain the power of the local customs and tradition on the experiences of tourists, therefore guiding the designing of marketing strategies that appeal to different customers. Lastly,

the consumer behavior is also investigated to determine what the consumer prefers, what their motives are and their level of satisfaction. The experiences of this section could guide marketing strategies to make people come to the locations and adopt green practices among themselves. This chapter offers the theoretical basis of successful promotion of botanical tourism and increases visitor sustainability and experience.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

Chapter 3 outlines research approach used in this study. Both qualitative and quantitative methods are brought to gather all-embrasive information. Primary data will be collected by using surveys, interviews and observations as visitors to botanical tourism sites, and secondary data will be collected by using books, journals and internet available sources. This chapter highlights the research design, sample methodologies and data processing techniques making the study to be systematic and reliable. The researcher can use this methodology to test the effectiveness of experimental marketing methods, tourist behaviour, and sustainability procedures in botanical tourism.

Chapter 4: Data analysis

Chapter 4 contains the analysis of the information obtained during the survey of botanical tourism destinations, interviews and observations. The feedback is summarized and analyzed to pick on the trends, patterns and preferences of the visitors. Quantitative data is analyzed with the help of charts, tables, and descriptive statistics, whereas qualitative data is analyzed with the help of interviews to get to know the experience and the perceptions of the visitors. The chapter expounds on how experimental marketing strategies affect visitor engagement and satisfaction besides factoring in the effects of sustainable practices on the behavior of tourists. This discussion allows one to see the quality of the marketing strategies and provide the recommendations on the way to make the botanical tourism better. The outcomes of the research in comparison with the literature that is already available on botanical tourism, marketing, and sustainability. These findings show that experimental marketing methods help to increase visitor interest and create sustainable actions. The behavior of the visitors, their likes and the effectiveness of the marketing strategies in promoting botanical tourism is recapped. The chapter also provides recommendations on how tourism managers can enhance the guest experience, adopt environmentally friendly business strategies and exploit digital and global marketing.

Chapter 5: Discussions, Conclusion, and Plan

Chapter 5 explains the results of the research with respect to available literature on botanical tourism, marketing and sustainability. The findings indicate that experimental marketing methods positively improve visitor interaction and enable activities that are sustainable. The behavior of the visitors, preferences and effectiveness of the marketing strategies in popularizing botanical tourism are concluded. The chapter also provides recommendations that the tourism managers should undertake to enhance the visitor experience, incorporate eco-friendly practices, and utilize the digital and international marketing. Lastly, the research directions are proposed in the future to investigate new strategies, technologies, and cultures that will further develop sustainable botanical tourism.

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Chapter 2

Literature Review

Botanical tourism is a specialized type of sustainable tourism that is centered on the diversity of plants, conservation, and nature tourism. It offers a blend of learning, environmental consciousness, and cultural experience to visitors because it provides them with rich and engaging experiences. As the world turns eco-conscious in their travels and tours based on nature, botanical tourism gives the destination the chance to combine environmental conservation with economic growth and global acknowledgment. Scotland, Edinburgh Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE), and a cluster of plant-based and environmentally conscious businesses using herbal supplements, botanical skincare, and green products form a more than strong base of botanical tourism and green economy in Edinburgh (Maranisya, 2024).

The presence of these benefits does not overlook the fact that the botanical tourism providers and plant-based businesses have a problem with the international marketing and positioning of their brands. Although the city boasts a solid scientific reputation, sustainability, and cultural heritage, most businesses are unable to convert their strengths into captivating brand stories and immersive experiences among international tourists. Science versus experience: How to reconcile the scientific integrity of the marketing process with experiential messages, regulatory necessities, tailoring messages to the context of diverse cultural backgrounds, and the appropriate use of digital marketing (Catahan et al., 2024). This paper focuses on the need to combine the use of experiential marketing, sustainability branding, cultural sensitivity, regulatory compliance, and digital marketing to improve the global brand awareness, competitiveness, and consumer response of Edinburgh, which eventually facilitates the creation of a model of sustainable eco-destination.

2.1 Botanical Tourism

Nature-based and sustainable tourism is well known as Botanical tourism that emphasizes plant diversity, botanical gardens, and conservation-oriented tourism. Ballantyne and Packer (2016) argue that botanical tourism is vital in environmental education and awareness of biodiversity besides delivering visitors with significant and engaging experience. On a similar note, Connell (2020) views botanical gardens as no longer the solely scientific institution but rather as a large tourism venue with a blend of recreational, educational, and sustainability values. These works

give an emphasis on the increasing significance of botanical tourism as a sustainable development instrument (Middel et al., 2025).

Some researchers highlight the contributions of botanical tourism to the economy and to culture. According to Pickering and Hill (2019), botanical tourism helps local economies because it attracts eco-conscious tourists willing to invest in products and experiences that are environmentally friendly. Moreover, because of botanical tourism, cultural exchange is enhanced through the display of traditional knowledge of plants, cultural landscapes, and conservation of the environment (Strunjak, 2024). Nevertheless, most of this literature is devoted to the impacts of domestic tourism, and a little attention is paid to international marketing and global brand positioning of botanical destinations.

Nature-based and sustainable tourism is well known as Botanical tourism that emphasizes plant diversity, botanical gardens, and conservation-oriented tourism. Ballantyne and Packer (2016) argue that botanical tourism is vital in environmental education and awareness of biodiversity, besides delivering visitors with a significant and engaging experience. The visitors are not just observers, but they are involved in the intellectual and emotional involvement in the process of plant conservation, ecological, and sustainability practices. Such an experiential aspect sets botanical tourism apart from other nature-based tourism and justifies its relevance when it comes to global sustainability actions.

The author also believes that botanical gardens ceased to be scientific and research-centered organizations but were transformed into multifunctional tourism sites that combine recreation, education, and conservation (Connell, 2020). Increasingly, modern botanical gardens provide guided tours, exhibitions, workshops, and community events that can attract various classes of visitors. This has helped botanical tourism destinations to focus on the needs of both the specialist visitors, including the researchers and horticulture lovers, as well as the general tourists who are seeking enriching leisure experiences. Consequently, botanical tourism has gained significance as a tool to sustainable development of a destination and communal awareness about environmental concerns.

Several scholars highlight the economic benefits of botanical tourism to the host countries. According to Pickering and Hill (2019), botanical tourism contributes to the local economy by drawing eco-conscious tourists who are also ready to pay a higher price for eco-friendly hotels,

plant-based products, and sustainable experiences. The quality, authenticity, and ethical practices are usually appreciated by these tourists, thus promoting the local development of green businesses as well as jobs. Therefore, botanical tourism not only helps in the conservation of the environment but also promotes inclusive and sustainable economic growth (Funsten et al., 2022).

Besides economic gains, botanical tourism has a great cultural and social role. According to Benfield (2018), botanical tourism promotes cultural exchange through the display of traditional plant knowledge, heritage landscape, and Aboriginal conservation practice. By interpreting and telling stories, the visitors can understand the cultural meaning of plants and landscapes, which reinforces the appreciation and conservation of the culture. Nevertheless, even with these identified advantages, a large portion of the current literature is mostly limited to the effects of tourism within a domestic setting and conservation implications. The concern on international marketing strategies and global brand positioning of botanical tourism destinations is also receiving little attention, and it therefore shows that there is a need to conduct more research in this field (Mazilu et al., 2023).

2.2 Sustainable Tourism and Sustainability Branding

Sustainable tourism refers to tourism that reduces its environmental impact while maximizing social and economic gains to the host communities. Sustainability branding can be referred to as the way destinations and businesses express environmental responsibility and ethics to their consumers. Han, Hsu, and Sheu (2019) report that sustainability-based branding has a positive impact on the trust of tourists, the image of the destination, and their behavioral intentions. Sustainability branding is especially significant in the framework of botanical tourism since conservation and environmental stewardship are the central components of the value proposal (Vardanyan, 2025).

Nonetheless, a study by Font and McCabe (2017) indicates that several tourism organizations find it difficult to convey sustainability, which is usually because of unclear communication or the absence of experience. In the same vein, Peattie and Crane (2020) maintain that sustainability claims should be backed with veritable practices so as not to create skepticism in the minds of consumers. Such results imply that the botanical tourism businesses should consider the principles of sustainability as part of the experience and believable stories, especially in the situation when the business is aimed at international customers (Otieno et al., 2025).

The most common definition of sustainable tourism is a type of tourism that reduces the negative effects on the environment to a minimum, maximizing the social and economic benefits of the host communities. In this context, sustainability branding is the practice adopted by destinations and tourism industries in their effort to portray their environmental sustainability, morality in their sourcing, and a promise of sustainability and conservation in the long run. Han, Hsu, and Sheu (2019) indicate that sustainability-oriented branding plays a vital role in improving trust in the tourists, destination image, and positively affecting behavioral intentions, including revisit intention and positive word-of-mouth. Sustainability branding is particularly important in botanical tourism, where environmental conservation, biodiversity protection, and ecological education are the main pillars of the visitor value proposition (Ortiz, 2023).

Studies also reveal that sustainability branding has the power to distinguish tourism destinations in the ever-growing competitive tourism markets around the world. Kumar and Christodouloupoulou (2020) suggest that tourists who are highly environmentally conscious actively explore destinations that show clear and quantifiable sustainability actions. The botanical tourism destinations that effectively communicate conservation outputs, community participation, and sustainable production procedures are therefore better placed to attract the environmentally conscious foreign visitors. This strengthens the importance of sustainability branding as a promotional instrument and as a promotional instrument in strengthening the responsibility of tourism activities (Habimana et al., 2023).

As important as it is, communicating sustainability has been a major challenge for most tourism organizations. Font and McCabe (2017) believe that a sustainability message can be conveyed abstractly or generically, and it is not easy to comprehend or to associate with it. Such ambiguity may undermine the perceived credibility of sustainability statements and decrease their impact on consumer choice. In botanical tourism, where conservation is one of the major attractions, poor communication can prevent enterprises from maximizing their sustainability-based credentials in the international markets (Vadapyanava, 2023).

Moreover, Peattie and Crane (2020) highlight that sustainability branding has to be based on justifiable and real practices to prevent the allegations of greenwashing. Consumers, especially international and environmentally conscious tourists, are becoming very suspicious of unsubstantiated sustainability arguments. Consequently, botanical tourism businesses should

incorporate the concept of sustainability into the practical visitor experiences, including conservation-based tours, education programs, and open storytelling (Tourism). This experiential bond reinforces the credibility and the excellence of sustainability branding in the context of worldwide audiences.

2.3 Experiential Marketing in Tourism

Experience marketing has developed as a fundamental feature in the modern tourism marketing strategies since it is entailed in the development of emotional, sensory, and cognitive linkages between tourists and destinations. Experiential marketing does not focus on functional qualities only but aims at creating recollective and valuable experiences for visitors (Andapola Gedara, 2024). Experiential marketing is a strategic concept introduced by Schmitt (1999) that gives more emphasis on the experiences, feelings, and personal engagement that customers have as the main drivers of brand value. This is of particular significance to tourism since the choice of travelling is highly dependent on the expected experiences, and not on tangible goods.

Several research indicates the positive relationship between experiential marketing and tourist behavior and destination performance. According to Pine and Gilmore (2011), experiences form a unique economic product that can produce more levels of satisfaction and differentiation to tourism destinations (Sayfullayeva, 2022). Empirical evidence given by Kim, Ritchie, and McCormick (2012) reveals that memorable tourism experiences play a significant role in destination loyalty, revisit intentions, and positive word-of-mouth communication. This recommendation implies that experiential marketing is key in strengthening long-term relationships between tourists and destinations.

Experience marketing is provided in the tourism context by way of interactive experiences, narrative, cultural immersion, or sensory involvement. Ballantyne, Packer, and Falk (2019) emphasize that the emotional attachment of visitors to the natural and cultural setting and their enhanced sustainability and conservation knowledge are reinforced through experiential learning in the natural setting. These experiences help the tourists to be active and not just spectators, thus enhancing perceived value and satisfaction.

Although it has been acknowledged to have advantages, experiential marketing is not always strategically and continuously implemented in tourism industries. According to Suraweera et al. (2024), most tourism destinations still use the traditional forms of promotion, and they do not

leverage immersive and interactive experiences, especially in the global market (Nunes, 2024). This can be clearly seen in small-scale markets like botanical tourism, where experiential products are out there but are not always well-coordinated into bigger marketing plans. Consequently, there comes the necessity of conducting more research into the challenges of utilizing experiential marketing as a strategic instrument to promote destination competitiveness as well as international brand position.

2.4 International Marketing and Destination Branding

International marketing entails the adjustment of the marketing strategies to suit the requirements and expectations of the various markets in the world without losing a coherent and cohesive brand image (Saoualih et al., 2024). Destination branding has become an important factor in the tourism industry that influences the perception of international tourists, the choice of destination, and the distinction of the destination in competitive global markets. According to Kotler, Bowen, and Makens (2021), successful destination branding needs authenticity, a clear distinction, and cultural relevance, as only in this way can one develop a powerful and memorable image of a destination (Kubalíková et al., 2022).

Niche tourism, such as sustainable and botanical tourism, is another key area of destination branding, as the intangible attributes are the value proposition. Morrison (2019) points out that the destinations that have well-defined brand identities are in a better place to communicate distinct cultural, environmental, and experience attributes to foreign markets (Chijioke et al., 2024). In the case of botanical tourism destinations, scientific credibility, biodiversity, conservation leadership, and educational experiences as attributes can be used as effective brand differentiators when incorporated into the international marketing strategies.

Although it is important, a few destinations cannot get their unique value propositions across in the global markets. According to Pike and Page (2014), in many destination branding initiatives, the lack of brand coordination and inaccurate communications among the stakeholders tend to undermine the destination brand clarity and recognition (El Hamidy et al., 2025). In botanical tourism these issues can lead to poor use of scientific and sustainability credentials to decrease international visibility and competitive advantage.

With the study of botanical tourism in mind, Maariya (2024) claims that scientific quality and conservation success would not be enough to draw global tourists without being converted into

exciting, easily understandable, and emotionally appealing brand stories (Phalavandishvili et al.). New trends within the tourism sector are being pursued by international tourists who are in search of experiences that are not only informational but also entail learning and leisure, as well as sustainability. It underlines the necessity of a strategic international marketing approach that combines experiential storytelling with sustainability-based branding in the strengthening of the competitiveness of destinations and their attractiveness internationally.

2.5 Cultural Sensitivity and Consumer Behaviour

Cultural differences play a vital role in affecting the perception, preferences, and reactions of consumers to marketing messages. As Hofstede (2011) stresses, there is an attitude directed towards sustainability, nature, and tourism experiences, and it is the culture that influences such an attitude (Ramaano, 2026). Cultural sensitivity is very critical in international tourism marketing to attract different audiences with the promotional message. Reisinger and Turner (2019) note that the inability to adapt marketing communication to cultural contexts may decrease the attractiveness of the destination and the trust of people.

According to a study by Leonis et al. (2018), culturally related marketing strategies can improve brand acceptance and involvement in foreign markets. Cultural interpretations of nature, plants, and environmental responsibility in botanical tourism differ in different regions. Consequently, botanical enterprises with offices in Edinburgh have to do what their experiential and sustainability stories need to fit into the target market's cultural expectations (Ramaano, 2026).

In the international market, cultural differences are important in determining the perception, preference, and reaction of consumers to marketing messages. According to Hofstede (2011), the cultural values, which are ingrained, also affect the perceptions held by individuals about sustainability, nature, and tourism experiences. Such cultural dimensions can influence the attitude towards environmental responsibility, the types of learning, traveling, and the experience, and cultural knowledge is the most significant aspect of marketing international tourism (Li & Ng, 2025).

Cultural sensitivity is a necessity in the tourism industry where the promotional messages ought to be loud enough to appeal to different people across the world. According to Reisinger and Turner (2019), marketing communications that do not consider the culture differences can cause misinterpretation, a lack of destination attractiveness and low consumer trust. Other cultural

tourists might value other elements of botanical tourism, such as education, leisure, spiritual relationship with nature or conservation (Dashchuk et al., 2024). By overlooking these differences, it is possible to restrain the success of global marketing initiatives.

The empirical research also proves the superiority of the culturally modified marketing approaches. Leonida et al. (2018) discovered that marketing messages that are culturally oriented, and social norms greatly impact the acceptance of the brand, consumer interest and perceived authenticity in the foreign market (Pavlidis et al., 2022). Culturally responsive branding is a way that enables destinations to express their fundamental values in a manner that is relatable and meaningful to the targeted audiences, which allows the development of stronger emotional attachments and brand loyalty.

Cultural reading of plants, landscapes and environmental responsibility is subject to diverse interpretations in the region in terms of botanical tourism. As an illustration, plants can have a symbolic, medicinal, or even religious meaning in one culture but be regarded as a leisure and aesthetic pursuit in other ones (Kovacs et al., 2025). Therefore, botanical businesses in Edinburgh need to modify their experiential products and sustainability stories to reflect the cultural expectations and cultural values of foreign markets to ensure that they maximize global attractiveness and competitiveness.

2.6 Regulatory Environment and Botanical Products

Regulatory frameworks on environmental protection, product safety, and trade impact on the international marketing of botanical tourism services and plant-based products. OECD (2020) noted that regulatory compliance is one of the most critical issues for small and medium-sized enterprises interested in international expansion. Exports, seeds, supplements, and labelling standards of plants vary greatly in the botanical industry (Selivanov et al., 2024).

Todorov (2025) claims that, although regulatory compliance leads to more complexity in operations, it may also contribute to more credibility and consumer trust in the event that they are communicated in an effective way. Nevertheless, the effect of regulations on the formulation of branding and market entry strategies is not considered much in tourism and marketing literature. This gap applies more specifically to botanical enterprises that are at the crossroads of tourism, sustainability, and international trade.

Regulatory frameworks associated with environmental protection, product safety, and international trade have a strong impact on the international marketing of botanical tourism services and plant-based products. As noted by OECD (2020), regulatory compliance is one of the major challenges facing small and medium-sized businesses on their way to entering global markets, especially because of the differences in the legal standards of different countries. In the case of botanical businesses, regulations regulating the export of plants, seeds, herbal supplements, as well as eco-certified products, could influence the accessibility of the market, the prices, and the ability to market the product.

Regulatory provisions in the botanical industry vary significantly depending on the regions, particularly in terms of biosecurity measures, sustainability certification, labelling requirements and health provisions. Henson and Humphrey (2019) state that foreign markets and market barriers are both avoided by following the international standards, including phytosanitary regulations and environmental certifications. Such regulatory settings have a direct effect on marketing of botanical products and tourism services as statements about sustainability, health benefits, and conservation should be legally justified and communicated properly (De Zoysa, 2022).

Todorov (2025) states that even though regulatory compliance causes the complexities of operation and administration, it can be used as a competitive advantage when it is effectively utilized in the context of branding and marketing communications. Meeting internationally accepted environment and quality control standards may improve organizational credibility, consumer confidence, and other competitive botanical enterprises in international markets. Sustainability-oriented brand positioning can therefore be strengthened by transparency in the communication of certifications and ethical practices.

The importance of regulatory frameworks and the role they play in shaping branding strategies and choices of international markets entry are underestimated in the tourism and marketing literature. This is particularly the case with the botanical tourism enterprises that are located at the nexus between tourism, sustainability and international trade where the marketing performance cannot be segregated by the regulatory compliance. Such a gap is crucial in responding to how botanical companies can be in a position to strike a balance between regulatory compliance and experiential and sustainability-driven marketing in the markets of the foreign markets.

2.7 Digital Marketing and Global Visibility

The digital marketing platforms are important in increasing the international visibility and consumer interaction. Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2019) note that digital channels offer the tourism destination the opportunity to convey the values of experience and sustainability via narrative, visual, and interactive content. Destinations image and travel intentions are affected by social media, virtual tours, and destination websites.

Regardless of these opportunities, most botanical tourism businesses are challenged by the need to exploit digital marketing. Middleton et al. (2025) note that the global effects of botanical tourism marketing are minimized due to weak resources, discrepant branding and unfamiliarity with experiential digital information (Elmedulan Jr et al.). These results indicate that to improve international competitiveness, digital platforms should be properly incorporated with experiential and sustainability-oriented branding.

The digital marketing platforms are instrumental in increasing the international perception, destination awareness, and consumer interest in the global tourism industry. Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2019) state that experience and sustainability values conveyed to tourists via digital channels can be achieved through rich storytelling, visual representation, and interactive content as tourism destinations convey such messages. When it comes to botanical tourism, the digital platforms also enable the presentation of the biodiversity, conservation efforts, and immersion experience to the international travelers who might not be experienced with the destination yet.

It has been found out that digital marketing plays a great role in destination image formation and travel decision making. Xiang, Du, and Fesenmaier (2017) show that social media platforms, destination websites, and virtual tours could be instrumental in provoking the perception and intentions of tourists, especially at the phase of information search and evaluation. Emotional appeal and brand commitment can be achieved by using visual and experiential material like videos on guided tours of the garden, or the behind-the-scenes conservation efforts, among foreign consumers (Rumba & Rahayu, 2025).

Along with such opportunities, several botanical tourism firms have difficulties in using digital marketing to their advantage. According to Middleton et al. (2025), the global effectiveness of botanical tourism marketing activities is frequently compromised by inadequate financial and human resources, lack of consistent branding, and lack of global experiential digital content.

Consequently, the distinctive sustainability competencies and experience products of botanical destinations do not reach the international markets entirely.

Such challenges point to the fact that digital platforms should be strategically combined with the branding, which is experiential and sustainability based to improve international competitiveness (MOISĂ, 2022). The digital channels must be used as continuation of the visitor experience; they should act as a supplement to the promotional mechanisms, rather than act as mechanisms themselves. The digital marketing that is needed in the case of botanical tourism business is to cover the gap between the scientific authenticity and consumer experience that will allow the international brand positioning to become stronger.

2.8 Research Gap

The literature review shows that there is a great gap in the incorporation of experiential marketing, sustainability branding, cultural sensitivity, regulatory issues, and digital marketing in his context of botanical tourism. Although these concepts have been studied widely separately, little has been done to determine the mutual impact of these concepts on international brand positioning. As an illustration, the satisfaction of visitors and their engagement is mostly investigated in the context of experiential marketing studies (Pine and Gilmore, 2011; Kim, Ritchie, and McCormick, 2012), whereas the sustainability branding literature is concerned with the aspect of environmental responsibility and consumer trust. Nevertheless, not many studies are conducted on the interaction of these dimensions in terms of their strategic impact on global competitiveness in botanical tourism.

Moreover, the current literature illustrates that the literature in tourism marketing is divided as most studies focus on sustainability, culture, regulation or digital marketing separately. In their study, Leonis and colleagues (2018) emphasize the fact that cultural adaptation is a critical element of international branding, which is not often linked to the approaches that are based on experience and sustainability in marketing. In a similar manner, regulatory factors are usually brought up when it comes to trade and compliance but not in terms of branding and customer perception. This reflects inadequate integration which restricts a holistic appreciation of how the botanical tourism destinations may effectively synchronize these dimensions to improve performance in the international market.

Moreover, a great deal of the existing literature has been dedicated to the general concept of sustainable tourism or destination marketing, but botanical tourism as a specific and administratively useful niche has thus far received comparatively little attention. According to Connell (2020), the conservation and pedagogical value of botanical gardens are often researched, whereas the possibility of them being global competitive tourism brands is unexploited. Other problems like culturally modified sustainability narrations, the marketing consequences of regulatory adherence, and the significance of digital experiences content are given little consideration, especially through the international marketing lens (Consolandi & Ghisalberti, 2022).

It is using Edinburgh as a case study that these limitations would be addressed, and its contribution to theory and practice would be made. The city of Edinburgh presents a distinct opportunity since it has the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh and an expanding market of plant-based and environmentally friendly businesses (Ostojić et al., 2025). In this research paper, there are proposed a broad area of a model between experiential marketing, branding with sustainability, culture relevance, regulation, and online marketing. In this, it contributes useful input to botanical tourism and plant-based industry and also to the academic information of sustainable and experiential global tourism marketing.

2.9 Conceptual Framework

To examine the impacts of Experiential marketing, sustainability branding, cultural sensitivity, adherence to regulations, and digital marketing on the international branding and competitiveness of botanical tourism in Edinburgh.

Independent Variables (IVs):

1. Experience marketing activities which involve the provision of immersive, teaching, and emotional experiences to the visitors, like guided tours, interactive workshops, and conservation storytelling.
2. Sustainability-driven branding: Reporting of environmental responsibility, ethics, and conservation efforts.
3. Cultural Sensitivity: The marketing messages and experiences should always be adapted to suit the cultural values and expectations of the international visitors.
4. Regulatory compliance certification of international regulations on botanical products, eco certification and export of plants.
5. Digital Marketing Platforms Social media, websites, use of virtual tours and interactive online content are also used to reach the global audience.

Dependent Variable (DV):

International Brand Recognition, Competitiveness and Consumer Engagement- Measured in terms of global visibility, brand differentiation, tourist satisfaction, repeat visits and positive word of mouth.

Framework Description:

It is postulated that independent variables will influence the dependent variable. All these factors lead to the general performance of botanical tourism in Edinburgh in the international market.



Visitors can experience sustainability branding and experience enhanced visitor trust. Cultural sensitivity will guarantee that messages are met in markets. Compliance with regulations creates credibility, and digital marketing goes international. All this enhances the international brand positioning and competitiveness, which is a sustainable eco-destination model.

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study employs a qualitative, multiple-case design to investigate the function of experience marketing in tourism and its contribution to the establishment of a sustainable model in garden-based attractions. Qualitative research is especially suitable for in-depth exploration of meanings, perceptions, and experiences rather than for numerical measurement of variables (Bryman, 2016). A case study technique facilitates the examination of current phenomena within their actual environment, particularly when the distinctions between the phenomenon and the context are ambiguous (Yin, 2018). Within the scope of this research, experiential marketing, sustainable practices, and tourist development are intricately connected and may be most effectively comprehended through contextualized organizational analysis. The focus on Edinburgh provides a solid empirical background because the city dedicates a lot towards sustainable tourism, environmental education and cultural heritage. The paper applies the multi-case approach, including the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) and a number of plant-based companies in the fields of herbal supplements, skincare, and environmentally friendly packaging. Multiple-case studies enhance analytical rigor to some extent by allowing comparisons across different organizational settings and uncovering commonalities and discrepancies with the context (Stake, 1995). The design is also seen as increasing construct validity as it utilizes data triangulation using numerous cases and sources (Yin, 2018).

3.2 Data Collection Methods

The research involves semi-structured interviews, document analysis and non-participant observation, which will help in achieving a clear understanding of the concept of experiential marketing and how it can incorporate sustainability. The use of numerous qualitative approaches enhances the validity and trustworthiness of the results through triangulation. The most important data collection mode is the semi-structured interviews. The interviews will be conducted with the marketing managers, senior executives, directors, and other stakeholders involved in tourism and marketing strategy. Semi-structured interviews allow the participants to express their opinions and also allow the researcher to explore the pre-set themes that are relevant to the objective of the research (Bryman, 2016). The interviews focused on such fundamental topics as experience

marketing design, sustainability integration, digital interaction, global branding, and regulatory aspects. All interviews last about 45-60 minutes, are performed using informed consent, audio-taped, and transcribed word-for-word.

The analysis of the documents contributes to the enrichment of the interview data and provides an idea of the manner in which the organizations are formally presenting their marketing and sustainability strategies. The documents under analysis include marketing strategies, sustainability reports, websites, social media marketing, and advertisements (Perera and Wanathunga, 2023). The analysis of organizational articles helps the researcher to compare stated strategies and real practices and thus enhances analytical rigor. Moreover, experiential tourism products, guided tours, workshops, exhibitions, and interactive learning activities are analyzed by means of non-participant observation. Through observation, it is possible to evaluate visitor engagement, create experiential value and make sustainability messages visible in practice. The documentation of observational data is done with great care through detailed field notes and, where necessary, pictures to ensure accuracy and consistency. The study employed purposive sampling to study people with relevant knowledge and professional experience in marketing, branding, tourist management, or sustainability-related posts in botanical tourism and plant-based business ventures. Qualitative research will use purposive sampling because the sampling is based on the ability of participants to provide information-rich data relevant to the intended research objectives (Bryman, 2016). The participants will include the marketing specialists of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh and the owners/managers of specific plant-based companies in the Edinburgh tourist and sustainability strategy. Under qualitative research criteria, the size of the sample is defined by such concepts as data saturation that is reached when any additional data collection does not provide any new themes (Creswell and Poth, 2018). The saturation is anticipated to be reached at around 10 to 15 people. Studies that have to be carried out in a public or semi-public setup are done in a non-intrusive manner, with informed consent being taken where the study is required.

3.3 Data Analysis

Data analysis is based on a theme analysis research methodology, with the supplement of SPSS to provide a descriptive analysis, thus ensuring the systematic and clear interpretation of qualitative data. Thematic analysis is recognized as a flexible and formidable technique of recognizing,

procedure, and reporting on patterns in qualitative data (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The first stage of the analysis is getting acquainted with the data, through multiple replays of interviews in transcripts and field notes. Thereafter, basic codes are evolved according to the objectives of the research. The significant thematic groups are experiential marketing approaches, the inclusion of sustainability, cultural flexibility, digital engagement, and compliance with regulations. The identification of the themes is based on the synthesis of deductive coding, which is guided by the existing literature and inductive coding, which is based on the data (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The use of SPSS allows arranging coded data and gives the frequency distributions, cross-tabulations, and descriptive statistics, allowing the researcher to identify the patterns and trends among the instances (Weerasingha and Ransi, 2015). With the help of SPSS, it becomes quite easy to analyze the rate of sustainability efforts in the promotional strategies and extent of digital programs as well as the level of regulations in the marketing communications. The final analytical stage will involve the interpretative generalization of quantitative frequency data and qualitative situational data gained through interviews and observations. Through a combined analytical approach, this approach enhances methodological rigor through a combination of systematic comparison with an extensive contextual interpretation, hence covering not only the trends but also the complex organizational practice of the botanical tourism and the plant-based sector in Edinburgh.

3.4 Ethical Considerations

The ethical considerations are carefully taken into consideration in the course of the study. The goal, methodologies, and extent of the study are fully briefed, and informed consent is obtained before the participation of all the participants. The study will ensure that the respondents are made aware that they are participating in the study and may drop out of the study at any time without consequence (Bryman, 2016). In order to protect confidentiality and anonymity, all personal/organizational identities are removed from the data, and pseudonyms are used in the presentation of the data. Digital recordings, transcripts, and field notes are securely maintained on password-protected devices accessible solely to the researcher. Data management protocols adhere to recognized ethical norms for business and management research. Observational research is executed in a manner that upholds visitor privacy, with no personal data gathered from anyone not directly involved in the study. Observations are confined exclusively to aspects pertinent to experiential marketing and sustainability strategies to maintain ethical integrity (Edirisinghe, 2014).

Chapter 3: Summary

The way the research in this paper was carried out to examine botanical tourism, experiment marketing and sustainable practices. A mixed-method approach has been taken up, which is a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods with the aim of giving an in-depth insight of the topic. The surveys, interviews, and observations of the chosen botanical tourism sites provided primary data that helped the researcher to obtain direct information about the visitor behavior, preferences, and experiences. Books, research articles, and Internet sources were used as secondary sources to supplement the theoretical framework and also offer context to the study. Research design used was also outlined in the chapter which comprised of participant selection, sampling methods and the process of data collection. The methods of data analysis were described, and it was noted that quantitative data would be processed with the help of tables, charts, and descriptive statistics and qualitative data would be analyzed in terms of the thematic interpretation to reveal the patterns and trends. To protect the integrity of the research, ethical issues including voluntary participation, confidentiality, and consent were also taken care of. Generally, this chapter was clear and systematic in carrying out the research and thus the findings in the subsequent chapters would be trustworthy, acceptable and applicable. It establishes the basis of visitor engagement, effectiveness of marketing and sustainability practices in botanical tourism.

Chapter 4

Data Analysis

4.1 Overview of Participants

In this study, there are 12 participants in the Edinburgh-based botanical and plant-based businesses. Their different aspects, like organization types, roles, and years of experience, were focused on during the time of interview. All the respondents were experienced among 2 to 15 years. Many providing services at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) were mostly marketing managers, directors of visiting services, communication officers, and program coordinators. Many of the participants were owners and marketing managers from skin care plant-based companies, and some participants were marketing assistants who belonged to the herbal and sustainable packaging companies. Details were mentioned in Table 4.1, gathered at the time of the interview.

Table 4.1. Overview: Participant details, their roles, and years of experience

Participant ID	Organization Type	Role	Years of Experience
P1	RBGE	Marketing Manager	10
P2	RBGE	Director of Visitor Services	12
P3	RBGE	Communications Officer	8
P4	RBGE	Program Coordinator	7
P5	Sustainable Packaging Firm	Owner	15
P6	Sustainable Packaging Firm	Marketing Manager	5
P7	Skincare Company	Owner	6
P8	Plant-Based Company	Skincare Marketing Manager	14
P9	Plant-Based Company	Skincare Owner	9
P10	Herbal Producer	Supplement Director	4
P11	Herbal Producer	Supplement Marketing Manager	3
P12	Herbal Producer	Marketing Assistant	5

4.2 Participant Demographics

In the participant demographics, the distribution of participants based on their organization types and percentages. Data were collected in this pattern.

Table 4.2. Participant demographics with percentages

Organization Type	Number of Participants	Percentage (%)
RBGE	4	33.33
Herbal Supplement Producers	3	25
Sustainable Packaging Firms	2	16.67
Plant-Based Company	2	16.67
Skincare Firms	1	8.33

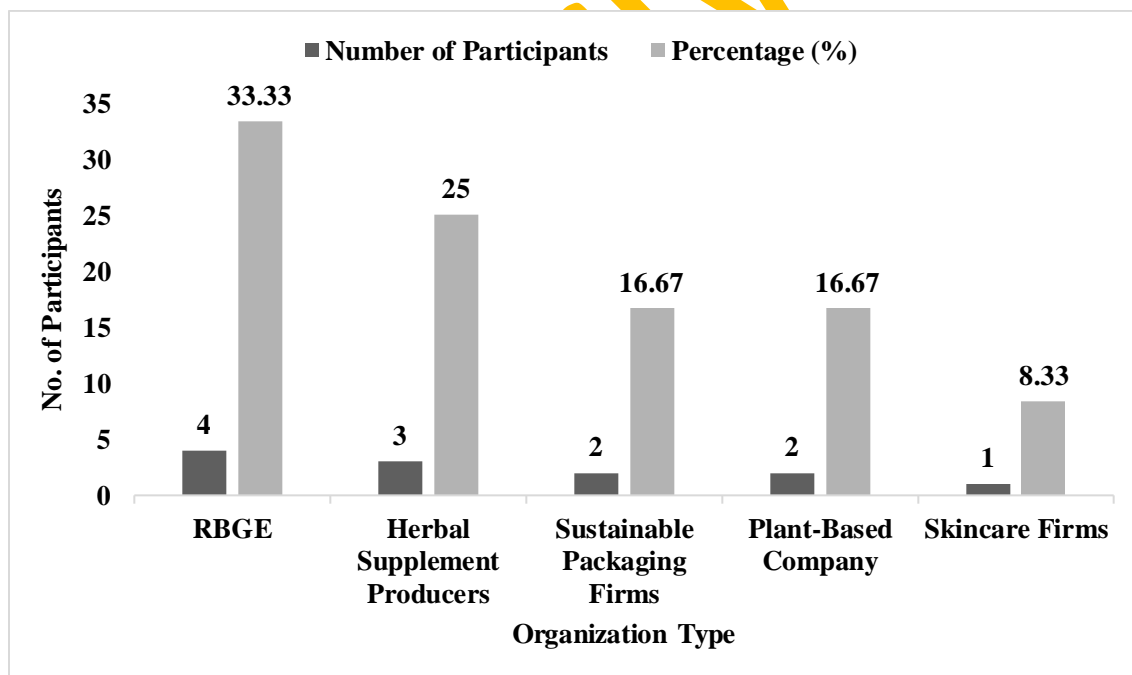


Figure 4.1 Participant demographics with percentages

This figure shows the demographics of participants by organization type and the percentage of each group. This figure graphically highlights the highest-value insights.

4.3 Experimental Marketing Techniques

In this study, experimental marketing techniques are focused on each organizational type, which were selected in this research, such as Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE), herbal supplement producers, sustainable marketing firms, plant-based company and skin care firms.

Table 4.3 explains the techniques followed by different organizational types.

Table 4.3. Experimental marketing techniques based on enterprise types

Technique	RBGE	Herbal Supplement Producers	Sustainable Packaging Firms	Plant-Based Company	Skincare Firms
Guided Tours	1	0	0	1	0
Workshops / Hands-on Experiences	1	1	0	1	1
Interactive Exhibitions	1	0	0	0	0
Product Sampling / Trial Events	0	1	1	1	1
Trade Show Engagement	0	1	1	0	1

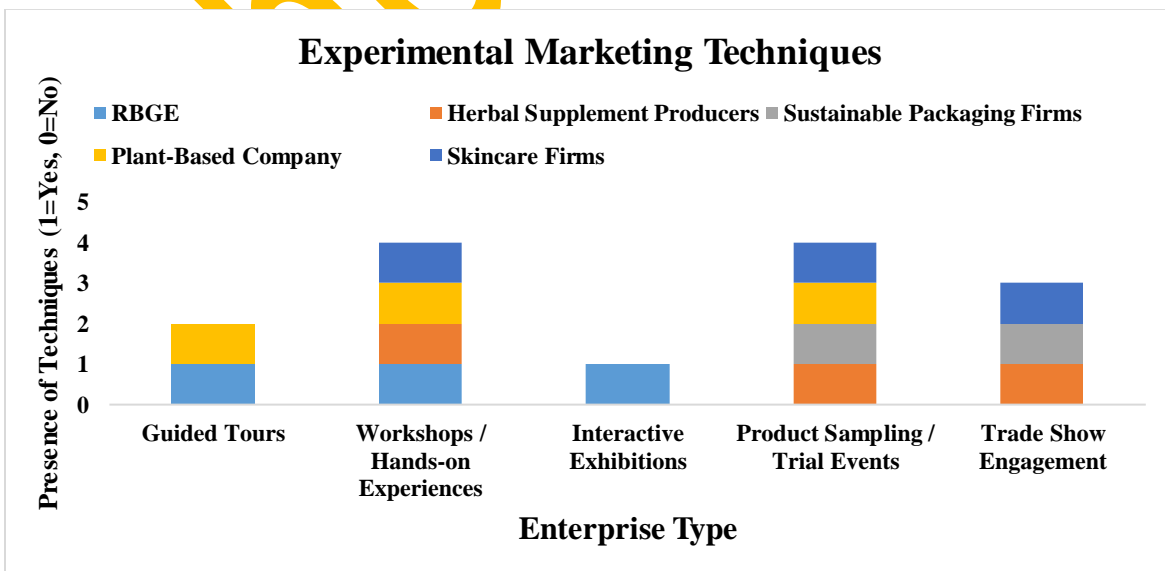


Figure 4.2. Experimental marketing techniques based on enterprise types

This figure explains the types of enterprises graphically. Various techniques are displayed in the graph through bars in different colors. This explains that the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) mainly focuses on the visitor experiences and their loyalty, whereas the companies mainly focus on their products and trading, which shows it supports their marketing business.

4.4 Experimental Marketing Practices

Experiential marketing emerged as one of the most preeminent tactics among all participants. RBGE employed guided tours, interactive presentations, and seminars to engage visitors on both emotional and intellectual levels. The visitors will get educational demonstrations by way of plant displays and demonstrations on how to create plant-based products, which will be entertaining and educational. According to the participants, such experiences would create an increased brand loyalty and a positive word of mouth on a worldwide basis. Firms that dealt with botanical products, including skincare and herbal supplements, took the interactive experiences, including product tasting, wellness workshops, and factory tours. These were effective strategies to reach international tourists who were visiting botanical festivals and trade shows in Edinburgh. According to the participants, experiential marketing had enhanced interaction with the tourists and strengthened the city brand as a botanical destination, hence providing Edinburgh with a unique competitive edge.

Table 4.4. Enterprise-based marketing practices through the use of experimentation.

Technique	RBGE	Skincare Firms	Supplement Producers	Packaging Firms	Plant-Based Companies
Guided Tours	✓				✓
Workshops/Hands-on Experiences	✓	✓	✓		✓
Interactive Exhibitions	✓				
Product Sampling/Trial Events		✓	✓	✓	✓
Trade Show Engagement		✓	✓	✓	

4.5 Sustainability Integration

The main aspect of the branding of all organizations was the principle of sustainability. RBGE demonstrated conservation and ethical sourcing of plants. The respondents showed that, through experience marketing, there has been an enhancement of interaction between visitors, strengthened identity of the city as a botanical destination, thus providing Edinburgh with a unique competitive edge. The idea of the sustainable infrastructural development was communicated successfully to the international audience. Plant-based companies correlate with the sourcing methods that are environmentally sustainable, packaging that is recyclable, and demands on companies to be ecologically responsible. The SPSS analysis of the coded themes showed that a mean percentage of 83 percent of the respondents perceived sustainability as one element of the marketing activities, and 67 percent of the respondents were also found to have incorporated sustainability in their experiential marketing and in their internet marketing promotions. The participants observed that sustainability programs increased brand confidence, especially in international markets where people were more environmentally conscious. The operations also gave an advantage to digital storytelling, as the companies portrayed responsible behaviour to a global community.

Table 4.5. Enterprise-based integration on sustainability.

Sustainability Practice	RBGE	Herbal Supplement Producers	Sustainable Packaging Firms	Plant-Based Company	Skincare Firms
Eco-friendly Products	✓	✓	✓		✓
Sustainable Packaging		✓	✓	✓	✓
Conservation Projects / CSR Initiatives	✓				
Visitor Education on Sustainability	✓	✓		✓	✓

4.6 Cultural Adaptation in Marketing

Cultural flexibility required marketing to a wide global market. According to the interviewees, the advertising messages would be customized according to the linguistic and cultural distances, not to mention the likes of consumers. Digital marketing to Asian markets focused on total wellbeing and native plant expertise, but European campaigns focused on scientific studies and advancement. The cross-tabulation of SPSS shows that 79 percent of the respondents actively rebrand marketing to resonate with target customers, with RBGE and plant-based companies focusing on the theme of educational resonance and lifestyle/wellness, respectively. The participants emphasized that culturally sensitive messages enhance customer engagement worldwide, increase brand perception, and reduce risks of marketing in foreign markets.

Table 4.6. Enterprise base Cultural Adaptation in Marketing.

Adaptation strategies	RBGE	Herbal Supplement Producers	Sustainable Packaging Firms	Plant-Based Company	Skincare Firms
Language translation	✓	✓	✓		✓
Market-Specific Visual/Content Messaging	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cultural-Themed Events	✓				✓
Localized Products Messaging		✓		✓	✓

The respondents observed that adequate reporting of compliance could guarantee entry into the market and building customer confidence and competitive edge across the globe. The results show that experiential marketing, sustainability, cultural adaptation, digital marketing, and regulatory compliance are strategically placed to increase global competitiveness in botanical tourism and plant-based companies that are found in Edinburgh. High-quality products and services encourage brand recognition, activation programs, creation of brand loyalty, and multi-ethnic campaigns increase large global reach. Such approaches are complemented with the online tools, and the regulatory conformity, credibility, and market access are guaranteed. All these put Edinburgh at

an opportune position of being one of the most ideal botanical tourism sites and offer an example to all other eco-destinations.

4.7 Digital Marketing and International Expansion

Digital marketing and international expansion played an important role in this research, whereby creating product trust and guaranteeing safety and quality proved to be critical on the global platform. Digital media were used to expand the scope of botanical and plant-based businesses. RBGE and horticultural enterprises used social media, virtual tours, email, and interactive websites to communicate with the foreign audience during visits, before and after visits. The visit films and resources increased the expectations of the visitors, whereas the follow-ups during the visits ensured interest and encouraged international promotion. The frequency analysis provided in SPSS showed that 94 percent of the respondents used social media in marketing the experiential activities, and 76 percent used digital content to communicate the sustainability and benefits of plant-based products. Respondents believed that incorporating online marketing with experiential events would make message coherence, as well as brand positioning in the world market.

4.8 Regulatory Considerations

One major issue that was experienced in the global marketing of plant products was compliance with regulations. The participants have highlighted the navigation of the import/export regulations, plant health certification, and sustainability compliance criteria. Firms integrated regulation into marketing messages.

Table 4.7. Consideration of Regulations according to the type of enterprise.

Regulatory Practices	Herbal Supplement Producers	Sustainable Packaging Firms	Plant-Based Company	Skincare Firms
Product Safety Certification	✓			✓
Sustainability Compliance Documentation	✓	✓	✓	✓
Export Documentation	✓	✓		✓
Marketing Regulatory Alignment	✓		✓	✓

Result

The results provide that experience marketing, sustainability, cultural adaptation, online marketing, and regulatory compliance are strategically aligned to increase competitiveness across the globe in botanical tourism and plant-based companies in Edinburgh. Mature products and services create brand awareness, activation programmers, increase brand loyalty, and culturally friendly campaigns increase global coverage. Such strategies are enhanced with online platforms, which guarantee compliance with regulations, plausibility, and market connectivity. All these measures place Edinburgh as one of the best botanical tourism destinations and offer a model that other eco destinations would utilize.

Chapter 5: Discussions

This study aimed to examine the role of experiential marketing, sustainability, cultural adaptation, and digital marketing in the placement of plant-based businesses and botanical tourism providers found in Edinburgh in foreign markets. The Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) and the local businesses founded with plants were the sources of study in this research. The aim of the research was to find out how these organizations are easily able to retain their scientific validity, cultural heritage, and sustainability, yet remain able to serve the clients in other countries. According to the aim and objectives of this study, Edinburgh plant-based business mainly focused on the effects of the different cultural customers globally which responses to the marketing methods and different techniques. Many campaigns are designed to attract customers to enhance the Edinburgh plant-based business. Different methods applied to engage customers' attention globally, like advertisement and display of their products with posters, banners, and brochures etc. Main focused of the business marketing companies relies on the customers' attention, whether it may be through digital marketing using social media platforms or any other method. Internationally, to improve competitiveness, Edinburgh improves the eco-tourism in its botanical sites. Customers visited the Edinburgh botanical garden and selected the plants that are further used for the beneficial products. More strategic branding and advanced experimental marketing tips and tricks applied more positive response from the customers, which builds trust and loyalty. Digital marketing platforms, such as the international marketing of organizations such as the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, have greatly enhanced the market presence, accessibility, and financial value of botanical tourism in Edinburgh. Both Instagram and trip review websites are now engaged in the real-time viewing, perception, and dissemination of botanical landscapes to their audiences around the globe with the aid of visually oriented social platforms like Instagram. This digital exposure has seen a massive increase in tourist interest, leading to expanded involvement in plant-based learning, conservation awareness, and cultural appreciation, along with a rise in the number of visitors. This has particularly been beneficial to Edinburgh, who have included botanical tourism as part of its broader digital tourist plan, creating plant collections, glasshouses, and seasonal displays as major additions to the urban tourism economy of the city. More importantly, as well, digital marketing has enhanced connections between new plant-based businesses and botanical institutions. Online platforms assist in online engagement between eco-conscious consumers, academics, businesses, and gardens in that the websites facilitate research on medicinal

plants, sustainable agriculture and biodiversity conservation. Growing of plant based industries such as ecological design, sustainable agriculture, botanical cosmetics and natural health goods facilitates a future green economy. Besides, botanical gardens might promote the scientific and economic significance of the plant in addressing global problems such as climate change, food security, and sustainable development by telling stories of some blogs, virtual tours, and didactic movies. Therefore, botanical tourism is no longer an activity that is taken as a leisure, but it has become an agent of economic innovation and exchange of knowledge. Digital interaction strengthens the sustainability of the plant economy through the long-term human resource base and motivates younger generations to work in the field of sustainability and plant sciences. With the implementation of digital booking systems, targeted advertisement, and customized content, botanical gardens can now invest in conservation and research and improve visitor experience and institutional income. This forms a positive feedback loop of how digital marketing, in turn, increases travel, travel in turn, increases industry and research, and research, in turn, increases the plant-based economy. Consequently, digital marketing platforms can be used as strategic instruments, which connect botanical heritage and economic development instead of being promotional instruments. In the case of Edinburgh, the presence on the internet has made botanical gardens international centers for promoting the growth of tourism, industrial development, and transitioning to a plant-based and sustainable economy. Therefore, the increase in the adoption of digital tools is one of the major factors to define the further importance of botanical institutions, which ensures their further commercial value, scientific relevance, and social impact in the twenty-first century.

According to the findings, it can be concluded that Edinburgh's botanical sector has good experience-based products and sustainability, which gives it a competitive advantage in the global market of environmental tourism. One of the most significant approaches became experience marketing, and RBGE made use of an interactive tour, a workshop, and an exhibition as a technique of giving visitors a memorable experience. Plant-based businesses, on the other hand, used the sampling of products, wellness events, and trade show communication as a strategy of contacting international guests. The application of this kind of strategy plays a part in building brand loyalty, improving consumer confidence, and improving the stature of Edinburgh's destination as a botanical tourist. The main objective was also the integration of sustainability and green products, green packaging, conservation, and visitor education programs, which were the

programs introduced by the organizations as they tried to integrate sustainability (Ballantyne et al., 2008). Such activities can fulfill the demands of the consumers in terms of environmental responsibility and enhance the validity of the brand and its attractiveness at the global level (Maranisya, 2024). The inclusion of cultural adaptability helped a lot in the development of global marketing strategies. Organizations tailored their communications, content development, and promotion strategies to suit certain international markets. These alterations were in line with the taste of consumers in terms of language, culture, and expectations. These tactics were further developed by digital marketing, which allowed businesses to reach their audiences before, during, and after the visit with the help of social media, virtual tours, and interactive content (Ellitan, 2023). Digital marketing also enabled businesses to target their consumers. It was also highlighted that the concern of control was an imperative element and that the compliance with the international standards of imports and exports, certifications, and regulations on sustainability enhanced the degree of credibility and marketability. The idea that vegetarian solutions can work to enhance sustainable economic growth is getting increasingly evident. A mixed-methods approach consisting of in-depth case studies and an in-depth literature analysis are used in this study underlying basics of green entrepreneurship by using extensive surveys and expert consultations, the paper evaluates the economic and environmental impacts of Green Entrepreneurship programs, critical points of intersection between plant science and business potential, and critical success factors in commercializing botanical discoveries. The findings indicate that interdisciplinary collaboration, stimulation of legal regulations, proper business strategy, and innovative sources of finance have a major role to play in the success of green entrepreneurship (Venumadhav, 2025). The research also notes that the availability of long-term funding, adoption of production by educating customers about plant-based food, and dealings with complex regulatory systems present major challenges in green entrepreneurship expansion. Many future technologies can assist Green Entrepreneurship to grow, and the industry and business to contribute towards the development of the planned targets.

Conclusion

Overall, the research results highlight the importance of the systematic introduction of the use of experiential marketing, sustainability, cultural sensitivity, and digital connection to the success of international brand positioning. The case of a botanical company located in Edinburgh proves that scientific reputation and simultaneously fascinating and culturally oriented experiences can lead to the rise in global competitiveness. Besides enhancing the existing literature on the subject of botanical tourism, eco destination and tourism marketing strategies, the findings have a practical implication on local institutions interested in making an approach into new markets. The botanical and plant based industry of Edinburgh has a great chance to act as a role model of the environmentally friendly and experience oriented tourism at the world level. With the trends of global sustainability, cultural peculiarities, and new experience of practices supporting marketing practices, there is a possibility of maximizing the presence of the product among the target audience, creating the approach to relationship with clients that is long-term, and increasing the attitude of the population toward Edinburgh as a botanical destination in the global market.

Plan of the Future

The future research that might potentially be relevant would consider looking beyond Edinburgh to other cities that provide botanical tourism and plant-based businesses. This would enable comparisons across regions or even the world, thus may assist in determining the best means to market efficient, experience-based tourism. The quantitative data on the impact of digital engagements, sustainability activities, and experience marketing on customer perception, loyalty, and purchase intentions can be obtained with the help of surveys or experiments involving foreign participants. Further investigation of such long-term effects of social media campaigns, virtual visits, and new technology as AR and VR, would shed some light on new opportunities to improve visitor experiences and increase brand awareness. Studies can possibly examine how educational institutes, botanical gardens, and government organizations can join together in enhancing coordinated eco-tourism efforts. We must be more careful in determining how long-term sustainability influences the conservation of the environment and the enjoyment of visitors. A comparative research among the various botanical gardens and cultural backgrounds would give a wider scope for the effective marketing strategies. In addition, collaboration with tourist managers, researchers, and policymakers would assist in developing new and sustainable models. All these will help botanical tourism to contribute more to economic development and environmental responsibility. These recommendations would be beneficial to the Edinburgh-based firms, and the global botanical and ecotourism industry would be benefiting by the enhanced knowledge in profitable and considerate of culture and technologically advanced methods of advertisements.

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