



## Journal of Management, and Development Research (JMDR)

ISSN: 3079-2568 (Online)

Volume 2 Issue 1, (2025)

 <https://doi.org/10.69739/jmdr.v2i1.220>

 <https://journals.stecab.com/jmdr>



Published by  
Stecab Publishing

### Research Article

## Digital Detox Tourism: Assessing Tourist Expectations And Experiences

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### About Article

#### Article History

Submission: January 01, 2025

Acceptance: February 04, 2025

Publication: February 08, 2025

#### Keywords

*Digital Detox Tourism, Ghana Tourism, Luxury Retreats, Stress Reduction, Technology-Free Travel, Tourist Expectations*

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### ABSTRACT

In the hyper-connected digital age, digital detox tourism has arisen as a specialized option, allowing tourists to disengage from technology and focus on mental wellness. This research examines the expectations and experiences of tourists regarding digital detox retreats, with an emphasis on participants from Ghana. purposive sample method was utilized to guarantee the inclusion of persons who have heard of or with past experience in digital detox retreats. A total of 324 data were gathered from tourists for a four-month period. Data was gathered by a questionnaire comprising closed-ended and Likert scale questions. The survey was disseminated using social media platforms of some wellness groups (WhatsApp and Facebook), and physically at some wellness centers in Volta, Central and Greater Accra Regions. The data obtained from the completed questionnaires were analyzed utilizing statistical methods, specifically SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 20). Descriptive statistics were utilized to encapsulate tourist expectations, experiences, and satisfaction levels. Inferential techniques, including chi-square analysis, were employed to ascertain significant correlations between tourist attributes and their expectations or experiences. The findings indicate an increasing interest among domestic tourists, especially women, in wellness retreats that reduce stress and enhance relaxation. Participants highlighted a preference for luxurious lodgings, mindfulness practices, and organized initiatives to promote a progressive disengagement from digital devices. Despite difficulties in disengagement, participants demonstrated significant interest in retreats that offer wellness advantages, improved social relationships, and sustained well-being. It is advisable to employ marketing methods that utilize social media to promote leisure, luxury, and customized experiences in order to engage various demographics. The study closes by emphasizing the transformative potential of digital detox tourism in promoting personal growth and arguing for its incorporation into sustainable and health-oriented tourism practices.

### Citation Style:

Quaye, F. J. (2025). Digital Detox Tourism: Assessing Tourist Expectations And Experiences. *Journal of Management, and Development Research*, 2(1), 11-21. <https://doi.org/10.69739/jmdr.v2i1.220>



## 1. INTRODUCTION

It is commonly recognized that in the contemporary hyper-connected environment, technology has become essential to daily existence, resulting in heightened digital dependency and technological tiredness. Constant connectivity through technology in both professional and personal spheres can result in issues such as technological fatigue and social media burnout due to excessive device usage (Egger *et al.*, 2020; Hu & Liu, 2023). The perpetual connectivity may increase the propensity of visitors to undertake digital detox retreats to alleviate these pressures (Conti & Farsari, 2022).

Cai and McKenna (2023) assert that these technological strains may motivate visitors to engage in digital-free activities during their travels to relax without the pressures of technology. Many individuals are pursuing relief from incessant connectivity, leading to the emergence of a niche in the tourist sector termed digital detox. Consequently, it is unsurprising that digital detox has catalysed the emergence of new commercial ventures. In the realm of tourism, tourist products have been redefined as digital detox holidays (Cai *et al.*, 2020) and digital detox camps (Karlsen, 2020), emphasizing their offline position during vacations. Schwarzenegger and Lohmeier (2021) asserted that tourism has emerged as a quintessential commodification of detachment. A burgeoning marketing trend has emerged, promising tourists' immersive sensory, emotional, cognitive, and relational experiences through digital-free activities in non-digital locations (Li *et al.*, 2018).

Digital detox tourism addresses contemporary tourists' aspirations for isolation and self-care, although obstacles persist in reconciling tourist expectations with genuine experiences. Providing digital detox experiences has difficulties. Numerous visitors grapple with the dichotomy of desiring disconnection yet being psychologically tethered to their technology; a problem noted by Kaplan (2020). Moreover, certain retreats may not fulfil the criteria for really technology-free settings, resulting in discontent (Furlan & Schiavone, 2020). Notwithstanding these challenges, the results of digital detox tourism are frequently favorable, with evidence of less stress, increased mindfulness, and enduring well-being (Vickery & Jackson, 2021).

Current research suggests that the need for digital detox services is mostly motivated by visitors' desire to mitigate problems such as technological fatigue resulting from excessive gadget usage in their daily routines (Hassan & Saleh 2024). Their increasing demand for "detox" is satisfied by an expanding array of digital-free wellness packages designed for vacation (Lachance, 2022). Uzut and Güzel (2024) asserted that tourism professionals have endeavored to market digital detox tourism as a burgeoning trend to entice visitors. Furthermore, tourism advocates appear to hold analogous beliefs, as digital detox tourism presents a viable remedy for evading the adverse effects of technology.

According to Hu and Liu (2023), both occupational technology abuse and personal social networking service fatigue significantly enhance tourists' inclination to participate in digital detox retreats. Digital detox resorts pose distinct issues for tourism promotion. It is feasible to assert that the well-being of tourists has grown progressively more demanding for several service providers in the contemporary era of tourism

digitalization, marked by perpetual connectivity via diverse information and communication technologies. Furthermore, balancing the aspiration for disconnection with the realities of guest expectations, including comfort and meaningful experiences, necessitates meticulous planning and strategy to effectively design and market digital detox tourism or retreats that satisfy diverse expectations while providing a rewarding, technology-free experience for tourists.

Existing research has investigated multiple facets of digital detox tourism, with prior studies empirically analyzing the market via the perspectives of motivation, intention, and experiences (Jiang & Balaji, 2021). Uzut and Güzel (2024) concentrated on the visitor experience within the realm of digital detox tourism. Studies by Hu and Liu (2023), Floros *et al.* (2021), Liu and Hu (2021); Egger *et al.* (2020) identified critical factors affecting tourists' motivations and intentions regarding digital detox holidays, including techno-exhaustion, social networking fatigue, and aspirations for escape, personal growth, and health benefits. Furthermore, the research by Cai and McKenna (2023), Rosenberg (2019), Zhang and Zhang (2022), and Syvertsen (2022) offer valuable insights into the methods employed by individuals to counter prevailing technological narratives, including total detachment, nostalgia, and availability management. Various researchers have investigated emotional experiences during disjointed travel (Cai *et al.*, 2020), impressions of diverse visitor demographics (Clark & Nyaupane, 2023; Hassan *et al.*, 2022), and the experiential effects of constant connectedness (Ayeh, 2018; McKenna *et al.*, 2020).

An additional assessment is required to guide the sector in their promotional strategies and practices to accommodate the evolving well-being and wants of tourists (Hassan & Saleh 2024). The gap specifically concerns the ability of digital detox tourism practices to effectively balance guest expectations and experiences with the challenges of disengaging from technology. There is a complete absence of alternative perspectives that emphasize tourists' experiences and expectations. Furthermore, research from this perspective has yet to be established to enhance knowledge and industry in Ghana. These shortcomings limit generalizability and guidance for tourism stakeholders, who increasingly emphasise balanced technological offers throughout tourist experiences.

The study aims to identify the expectations of tourists pursuing digital detox experiences, determine the strategies necessary to cultivate an environment conducive to a rewarding tech-free experience, and evaluate methods for marketing retreats to attract diverse demographics, taking into account varying degrees of digital dependency. Additionally, it seeks to assess the potential long-term effects of digital detox retreats on tourist satisfaction, well-being, and repeat visitation.

This study topic enhances domain knowledge on negotiating technological discourse and fostering resilience against perpetual connectivity. Comprehending these techniques, promotions, and effects can assist tourism enterprises in effectively implementing digital detox programs and activities to attract health-conscious tourists' seeking relief from technological overuse and improvement of well-being.



## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Digital detox tourism

Digital detox tourism has emerged as a specialized travel trend, offering a deliberate retreat from digital technology to enhance well-being, mindfulness, and profound connections with oneself and nature. The term emerges as a reaction to the ubiquitous “always-on” digital society, which is increasingly associated with stress, mental exhaustion, and diminished social contacts (Turkle, 2017). Digital detox tourism pertains to travel experiences designed to temporarily disengage from digital technologies. It encompasses organized events and programs during travel that encourage disengagement from gadgets such as smartphones, laptops, tablets, and social media, facilitating relaxation for tourists’ free from distractions and pressures (Cai & McKenna, 2023).

Digital detox tourism typically offers device-free experiences in natural settings or through mindfulness seminars and retreats indoors (Conti & Farsari, 2022). Examples include screening-free weekend retreats, meditation camps, and technology-free yoga retreats (Li *et al.*, 2020). Furthermore, researchers such as Leung *et al.* (2018) characterize digital detox tourism as an experience tourism modality in which tourists intentionally restrict or forgo digital interactions throughout their journeys. This practice is frequently promoted as a means to achieve wellness, reconnect with nature, and attain mental clarity, indicating a transformation in the priorities of contemporary tourists towards mindfulness and equilibrium.

Tourists are attracted to digital detox experiences by intrinsic and extrinsic motives. Individuals internally pursue stress alleviation, enhanced mental well-being, and avenues for personal introspection. Kaplan (2020) emphasises the emotional revitalisation that several tourists anticipate from a respite from technology. Likewise, Smith and Kruger (2018) underscore mindfulness and self-awareness as fundamental psychological motivators for selecting such situations. The appeal of tranquil, nature-oriented locations is significant. Isolated venues such as eco-lodges and health resorts offer tranquil settings for disconnection, complemented by tailored programs like yoga, meditation, and spa therapies (Black & Crabtree, 2019).

### 2.2. Tourists expectation of digital detox experiences

A multitude of tourists pursuing digital detox anticipate enhancements in mental health, less tension, and personal rejuvenation. Studies demonstrate that continuous digital interaction may lead to cognitive overload, stress, and impaired sleep patterns (Turkle, 2017). Consequently, tourists frequently anticipate relief from these concerns while choosing digital detox vacations. A prevalent expectation is the chance to unwind and alleviate stress, free from the demands of employment and social media. According to Vickery and Jackson (2021), tourists perceive that disengagement will alleviate mental tiredness and enhance emotional well-being. Another expectation is enhanced sleep patterns, as a digital detox offers respite from screen-induced blue light and interrupted sleep cycles (Hirshkowitz *et al.*, 2015). A multitude of tourists pursue restorative sleep and opportunities for hobbies such as yoga or meditation, which they link to digital detoxification. Tourists anticipate engaging in self-reflection, awareness, and a sense

of reconnection with their inner selves. Kaur and Gupta (2020) emphasize that digital detox experiences are frequently promoted as methods to reconnect with one’s inner self, foster mindfulness, and improve personal clarity. Certain digital detox tourists anticipate that the experience will promote emotional development and healing as they disengage from their regular routines and allocate time for introspection over their lives and priorities (Smith & Kruger, 2018).

The allure of the destination profoundly affects tourists’ anticipations. Tourists anticipate locations that prioritize tranquilly, calmness, and engagement with nature (Black & Crabtree, 2019). Wellness resorts, distant retreats, and eco-lodges are frequently marketed as havens from technology, enabling immersion in nature and fostering personal development. Tourists can anticipate a meticulously organized program designed to facilitate a progressive decrease in digital interaction, typically through scheduled activities such as yoga, hiking, or mindfulness classes (Raab & Hoepfl, 2020). The branding of these experiences, which highlights a return to simplicity, might elevate expectations of a transformative encounter. Moreover, visitors pursuing a digital detox anticipate an individual experience, frequently desiring luxury accommodations, tailored services, and wellness amenities that augment their respite from digital obligations (Ehn & Kylén, 2018). This anticipation underscores the aspiration for equilibrium between detachment and solace.

### 2.3. Strategies to create conducive digital detox environment for tourist experience

Businesses frequently establish physical environments, such as eco-lodges, meditation centers, and wellness resorts, where digital connectivity is either absent or deliberately discouraged. Black and Crabtree (2019) assert that rural and nature-based getaways are especially efficacious in this context, as their remote settings inherently restrict internet and phone connectivity. These locations prioritize simple environments to promote serenity and reduce distractions, facilitating tourists’ disconnection. By emphasizing activities such as yoga, hiking, spa treatments, and mindfulness classes, businesses redirect tourists’ focus from their electronics to deep and significant engagements with their environment. Kaur and Gupta (2020) contend that these activities have a twofold purpose: they not only mitigate the absence of digital connectivity but also enhance personal well-being and emotional revitalization. Tourists frequently experience difficulty adapting to a technology-free atmosphere due to anxiety or “fear of missing out” (FOMO). To mitigate this, businesses give pre-arrival guidance, delineating the advantages of disconnecting and providing strategies for preparing for a technology-free environment. Raab and Hoepfl (2020) emphasize that presenting digital detox as an opportunity instead of a limitation can markedly enhance tourists’ receptiveness.

Moreover, improving the atmosphere with tailored, premium services guarantees that tourists do not view the lack of technology as a detriment. Opulent lodgings, organic gastronomy, and diligent personnel foster a favorable environment in which tourists’ feel indulged and assisted. Ehn and Kylén (2018) emphasize that achieving a balance between



simplicity and comfort is essential for providing a memorable digital detox experience. Ultimately, employing deliberate marketing methods that highlight themes of “mindfulness,” “reconnection,” and “self-care” is crucial for luring tourists’ to digital detox resorts. Marketing materials frequently emphasize the advantages of disconnecting, including heightened mental clarity, less stress, and strengthened connections, in accordance with the anticipations of prospective tourists’ (Smith & Kruger, 2018).

#### **2.4. How to market digital detox tourism or retreats to attract tourists**

The promotion of digital detox tourism or getaways necessitates a sophisticated strategy that aligns with the desires and ambitions of contemporary tourists. By implementing methods that prioritize health, mindfulness, and personal transformation, tourism enterprises can successfully draw tourists desiring respite from the omnipresent “always-on” digital society. Marketers often emphasize the physical, emotional, and relational benefits of disengaging from technology. Kaur and Gupta’s (2020) research demonstrate that message focused on stress alleviation, mental clarity, and enhanced interpersonal relationships significantly attracts prospective visitors. Furthermore, presenting testimonies from previous participants regarding transforming experiences enhances the allure of these retreats.

The strategy of targeting specific market segments is equally significant. According to Kaplan (2020), digital detox vacations can be promoted to wellness enthusiasts, corporate entities, and families. For example, individuals pursuing wellness may react positively to initiatives highlighting mindfulness and meditation, but business entities may appreciate the advantages of productivity and collaboration offered by a technology-free retreat. Customized messaging guarantees that the campaign profoundly connects with the target demographic. Moreover, crafting engaging narratives and visual storytelling serves as an effective instrument in digital detox marketing. Vickery and Jackson (2021) assert that the use of pictures depicting quiet landscapes, comfortable lodgings, and captivating activities cultivates a yearning for serenity. Marketing brochures frequently utilize themes like “reconnecting with nature” or “achieving balance,” prompting prospective visitors to envision the personal development attainable through isolation.

In embracing honesty and openness, businesses must ensure their marketing aligns with the actual retreat experience. Raab and Hoepfl (2020) warn that overpromising or employing generic messaging may result in discontent if tourists see the retreat as failing to satisfy their expectations. Explicitly delineating expectations, such as the lack of Wi-Fi or digital devices, guarantees that tourists arrive equipped and receptive to the experience. Moreover, utilizing digital channels to advocate for digital detox may appear paradoxical, however it proves to be remarkably successful. Social media campaigns, blogs, and influencer collaborations frequently operate as the primary contact for prospective tourists. Furlan and Schiavone (2020) contend that celebrities advocating purposeful living or wellness lifestyles are especially adept at recommending digital detox getaways, given that their followers prioritize mindfulness

and self-care. Once interest is established, marketers are urged to guide tourists towards offline engagement, such as personal consultations or printed pamphlets, to ensure alignment with the detox philosophy. Ultimately, providing value-added experiences increases the appeal of digital detox getaways. Integrating the retreat with supplementary benefits, such as yoga sessions, spa therapies, or guided nature excursions, establishes the retreat as a comprehensive wellness offering. Ehn and Kylén (2018) assert that providing time-sensitive discounts or unique packages fosters a sense of urgency, prompting early reservations.

In summary, the marketing of digital detox tourism depends on a comprehensive strategy that integrates emotional resonance, precise message, visual narrative, and the strategic utilization of digital channels. By highlighting the advantages of disconnecting, reconciling expectations with reality, and utilising both online and offline media, businesses can successfully draw tourists in need of relief from digital saturation.

#### **2.5. Impacts of digital detox retreats on guest satisfaction, and well-being**

Digital detox holidays provide instant respite from digital exhaustion and also produce substantial long-term benefits regarding guest happiness, well-being, and return visits. The capacity to endure these repercussions is a crucial determinant of their success and significance in the tourism sector. Vickery and Jackson (2021) emphasize that visitors engaging in digital detox retreats often correlate the experience with significant relaxation, mental clarity, and a feeling of achievement. The favorable consequences are enhanced when the retreat fulfils its commitments to authenticity and personalized services. Furthermore, enduring satisfaction is frequently associated with the understanding that a hiatus from technology has enhanced interpersonal relationships and provided fresh insights into harmonizing the digital and physical realms (Black & Crabtree, 2019).

Kaplan’s research (2020) indicates that participants enjoy sustained decreases in stress levels and enhancements in mindfulness practices for weeks following a retreat’s conclusion. Smith and Kruger (2018) contend that the inclusion of wellness activities, such as meditation and environment immersion, fosters habits that individuals are more inclined to include into their everyday routines. The findings indicate that retreats can act as catalysts for enduring behavioral change, fostering healthier interactions with technology. Moreover, tourists’ who attain substantial personal or interpersonal advantages frequently develop brand loyalty. Raab and Hoepfl (2020) note that enterprises providing customizable and dynamic experiences typically see elevated rates of recurring patronage. Retreats that implement fresh wellness programs or seasonal activities encourage repeat visits, assuring guests perceive the benefit of returning. Moreover, referrals from returning patrons enhance the retreat’s reputation, drawing in new clientele while solidifying loyalty.

Nonetheless, obstacles to maintaining enduring effects are there. Tourists who find it challenging to sustain the practices acquired during the retreat may perceive a decline in the benefits





of the experience over time (Furlan & Schiavone, 2020). This highlights the necessity of post-retreat support, like follow-up materials or online communities, to assist participants in incorporating these practices into their daily lives.

The long-term effects of digital detox retreats on client satisfaction, well-being, and return visitation are significant. By providing genuine, transforming experiences and facilitating behavioral changes beyond the retreat, tourism enterprises can cultivate enduring advantages that strengthen loyalty and advocacy. The lasting impacts not only advantage individual participants but also establish digital detox retreats as a significant and viable niche within the wider tourism sector.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. Sample selection process

This research employed a purposive sampling method to ensure the inclusion of individuals familiar with or having prior experience in digital detox retreats. A total of 324 participants were selected over a four-month period. The target population comprised tourists who engaged in digital detox tourism experiences at various resorts in Ghana.

#### 3.2. Data collection

Data was collected through a structured questionnaire consisting of closed-ended and Likert scale questions. The questionnaire was divided into multiple sections covering demographic information, expectations for digital detox retreats, experiences during the retreat, and overall satisfaction. Surveys were disseminated through social media platforms (WhatsApp and Facebook wellness groups) and in-person at wellness centers across the Volta, Central, and Greater Accra Regions.

#### 3.3. Data analysis

The data collected from completed questionnaires were analyzed using statistical methods, specifically the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS version 25). Descriptive statistics were used to summarize tourist expectations, experiences, and satisfaction levels. Inferential statistical techniques, including chi-square analysis, were employed to determine significant relationships between tourist attributes and their expectations or experiences.

#### 3.4. Ethical considerations

Ethical guidelines were strictly followed to ensure participant confidentiality and voluntary participation. Informed consent was obtained from all respondents before data collection. Participants were assured that their responses would remain anonymous and that they could withdraw from the study at any time without consequences.

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1. Demographic characteristics of respondents

This section analyzed the demographic features of respondents, including age, sex, nationality, work status, and the frequency (in hours) of digital device usage in a typical day. The provided responses and their analysis are displayed below.

**Table 1.** Demographic characteristics of respondents

Age	Frequency	Percent
18-25	81	25
26-35	162	50
36-45	54	16
46-55	18	5.6
Above 56	9	2.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>100</b>
Sex	Frequency	Percent
Male	135	41.7
Female	189	58.3
Total	324	100
Nationality	Frequency	Percent
Ghanaian	171	52.8
Americans	99	30.6
Nigerian	9	2.8
Others	45	13.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>100</b>
Employment Status	Frequency	Percent
Employed	189	58.3
Self-employed	36	11.1
Student	99	30.6
Unemployed	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>100</b>
Use of digital device in hours	Frequency	Percent
Less than 1 hour	18	5.6
1-3 hours	90	27.8
4-6 hours	27	8.3
More than 6 hours	189	58.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>100</b>

According to Table 1, the majority of respondents, one hundred sixty-two (162), comprising fifty percent (50%), were aged between 26 and 35. This was followed by eighty-one (81) respondents, representing twenty-five percent (25%), who claimed they were aged between 18 and 25. Additionally, fifty-four (54) respondents, including sixteen percent (16%), indicated they were aged between 36 and 45. Furthermore, individuals aged 46-55 totaled eighteen (18) respondents, accounting for five-point six percent (5.6%), whereas nine (9) respondents aged over 56 represented two-point eight percent (2.9%). This indicates that the majority of responders in the survey were of a youthful demographic, likely possessing the energy and inclination to engage in digital detox retreats or excursions.



Of the respondents, one hundred eighty-nine (189), accounting for fifty-eight-point three percent (58.3%), identified as female, being the majority. One hundred thirty-five (135), representing forty-one-point seven percent (41.7%), indicated that they were male. The data indicates that the majority of respondents in the survey were female, likely due to a recent surge in females' interest in retreats or retreat centres.

Amongst the respondents, one hundred seventy-one (171), accounting for fifty-eight-point eight percent (58.8%), identified as Ghanaians, whereas ninety-nine (99), representing thirty-point six percent (30.6%), identified as Americans. Furthermore, forty-five (45), constituting thirteen-point nine percent (13.9%), identified as nationals of other countries, including Chad, China, England, and France. Additionally, nine (9), representing two-point eight percent (2.8%), claimed to be Nigerians. This conclusion indicates that a significant number of Ghanaians who are domestic tourists predominated in the survey. Furthermore, it illustrates that a significant number of Ghanaians are increasingly interested in engaging in digital detox tourism.

Of the respondents, one hundred and eighty-nine (189), or fifty-eight-point three percent (58.3%), reported being employed, comprising the majority, while ninety-nine (99), or thirty-point six percent (30.6%), identified as students. Additionally, thirty-six (36) respondents, constituting 11.1%, confirmed their self-employment status, but none reported being unemployed. This verifies that the majority of partakers in the study possess a source of income to engage in digital detox tourist activities.

Regarding respondents' daily usage of digital devices, one hundred eighty-nine (189), constituting fifty-eight-point three percent (58.3%), reported using digital devices for over six hours, forming the majority. In contrast, ninety (90) respondents, representing twenty-seven-point eight percent (27.8%), indicated usage of one to three hours. Twenty-seven (27) individuals, constituting eight-point three percent (8.3%), reported using digital devices for 4-6 hours, while eighteen (18) individuals, representing five-point six percent (5.6%), stated that they use digital devices for less than one hour daily. This indicates that the majority of respondents in the research utilize their digital devices for over six hours daily, suggesting they spend a significant amount of time engaged with these devices.

#### 4.2. Expectations of digital detox experiences

This section discussed the expectation of tourists regarding their digital detox experiences by focusing on what tourists are interested in attending a digital detox retreat, tourists' top expectations from a digital detox retreat, how challenging it will be for tourist to disconnect from digital devices during the retreat, and the kind of activities would enhance your experience at a digital detox retreat.

As per Table 2, the majority of respondents (171) with a mean of (.53) indicated that their interest in participating in digital detox tourism or retreats was primarily for stress reduction. This was followed by 153 respondents with a mean of (.47) who expressed their interest in improving social interaction. Additionally, one hundred and eight (108) respondents, with a mean score of (.33), indicated that their interest in participating

**Table 2.** Tourists interest in attending a digital detox retreat

Issues	Frequency	Mean	Mean rank
Stress reduction	171	.53	1
Mental clarity	90	.28	3
Improved social interactions	153	.47	2
Escape from work demands	108	.33	4
Escape from all destruction	0	00	5

in a digital detox holiday or retreat was to escape from work demands, while ninety (90) respondents, with a mean score of (.28), claimed their motivation was aimed at achieving mental clarity. No one expressed a desire to pursue the option of evading from all destruction. The majority of respondents in the research expressed interest in participating in digital detox tourism or retreats if such experiences would alleviate stress or enhance social connection.

**Table 3.** Tourists' top expectations from a digital detox retreat

Issues	Frequency	Mean	Mean rank
Complete disconnection from all technology	45	0.14	3
Limited use of technology (e.g., only for emergencies)	180	0.56	2
Focus on mindfulness and wellness activities	234	0.72	1

Table 3 indicates that the majority of respondents (234), with a mean of (.72), expressed that their primary expectation from digital detox tourism or retreats is an emphasis on mindfulness and wellness activities. This is followed by a limited use of technology (e.g., only for emergencies), which garnered a response of (180) and a mean of (.56). The complete disconnection from all technology yielded the lowest response (45) and an average of (.14). The majority of respondents in the study anticipate participating in digital detox tourism or retreats centred on mindfulness and wellness activities.

**Table 4.** How challenging it will be for tourist to disconnect from digital devices during retreat

Levels of challenge	Frequency	Percent	Percentage rank
Not challenging	72	22.2	3
Uncertain	81	25	2
Very Challenging	171	52.8	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>100</b>	



Concerning the difficulty tourists face in disconnecting from digital devices during retreats is presented in Table 4 above, one hundred seventy-one (171) respondents, constituting fifty-two-point eight percent (52.8%), confirmed that it is very challenging for them, while eighty-one (81) respondents, representing twenty-five percent (25%), expressed uncertainty. Additionally, seventy-two (72) respondents, representing twenty-two-point two percent (22.2%), said that disconnecting from digital gadgets during retreat is not tough. The majority of responders in the research find it exceedingly challenging to disengage from digital gadgets during a digital detox tourism or retreats.

**Table 5.** Activities that would enhance tourists experience at a digital detox retreat

Issues	Frequency	Mean	Mean rank
Yoga and meditation	99	0.31	4
Nature walks/hiking, and exercise	162	0.50	2
Group discussions	153	0.47	3
Workshops on mindfulness	171	0.53	1
Others	9	0.03	5

According to Table 5, the majority of respondents (171), with a mean of 0.53, indicated that workshops on mindfulness would primarily enhance tourists' experiences at a digital detox retreat. Subsequently, 162 respondents, with a mean of 0.50, expressed a preference for nature walks, hiking, and exercise. Furthermore, one hundred and fifty-three (153) respondents, with a mean score of (.47), indicated that group discussions would enhance tourists' experiences at a digital detox retreat. In contrast, ninety-nine (99) respondents, with a mean score of (.31), asserted that yoga and meditation improve their experience, while nine (9) respondents, with a mean score of (.03), expressed interest in alternative activities such as spa treatments. This indicates that the majority of respondents in the study choose to participate in mindfulness workshops, as these activities are deemed to enhance the tourist experience at a digital detox retreat.

#### 4.3. Strategies to promote digital detox tourism experiences

This section looks into strategies derived from tourists' preferences to enhance the promotion of digital detox experiences. It emphasises the types of accommodations favoured by tourists in a digital detox retreat, the significance of structured activities that facilitate a diversion from technology, and whether access to limited or emergency-use technology increases the likelihood of tourists attending a retreat

Table 6 indicates that 126 respondents, constituting 38.9%, expressed a desire for luxury (resort-style) accommodations in a digital detox environment or retreat, while 99 respondents,

**Table 6.** Accommodations tourists prefer in a digital detox environment or retreat

Accommodation	Frequency	Percent
Rustic (Cabins, camps)	81	25
Luxury (Resort-style)	126	38.9
Moderate (Boutique hotel)	99	30.6
Others	18	5.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>100</b>

representing 30.6%, indicated a preference for midrange (boutique hotel) options. Furthermore, eighty-one (81) respondents, constituting 25%, expressed a preference for rural accommodations (cabins, camps), whereas eighteen (18) respondents, representing 5.6%, showed a preference for alternative lodging such as guest homes and motels for a digital detox environment or retreat. The data indicates that the majority of respondents favoured luxury (resort-style) facilities as their preferred digital detox environment or retreat centre.

**Table 7.** How important is it for retreat to provide structured activities that help you focus away from technology

Level of importance	Frequency	Percent
Very important	234	72.2
Neutral	81	25
Not Important	9	2.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>100</b>

According to Table 7, two hundred thirty-four (234) respondents, accounting for seventy-two-point two percent (72.2%), affirmed the necessity of structured activities in digital detox tourism or retreats to divert attention from technology, while eighty-one (81) respondents, representing twenty-five percent (25%), indicated neutrality regarding the statement. Nine (9) respondents, constituting two-point eight percent (2.8%), indicated that it is not essential for a digital detox holiday or retreat to offer scheduled activities that facilitate a diversion from technology. This indicates that the majority of respondents consider it essential for a digital detox holiday or retreat to offer organized activities that facilitate a diversion from technology.

**Table 8.** Having access to limited or emergency-use technology influence you to attend a digital detox retreat

Issue	Frequency	Percent
Yes	207	63.9
No	36	11.1
Maybe	81	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>100</b>



Asking whether access to limited or emergency-use technology affects the decision to attend a digital detox retreat, two hundred and seven (207) respondents, accounting for 63.9%, affirmed 'Yes', as illustrated in Table 8 above. Additionally, eighty-one (81) respondents, constituting 25%, indicated that access to limited or emergency-use technology might influence their decision to attend a digital detox retreat, whereas thirty-six (36) respondents, representing 11.1%, stated that such access would not influence their attendance at a digital detox retreat. The majority of respondents in the survey indicated that access to limited or emergency-use technology motivates them to participate in a digital detox retreat.

#### 4.4. Marketing to attract tourists for digital detox tourism

This section examines the platforms through which tourists learnt about digital detox retreats, the relationship between tourist age and the promotional platforms utilized for digital detox tourism, and the primary factors that entice tourists to a digital detox retreat. The tables below provide and analyse the collected data.

According to Table 9, the predominant number of respondents (180), with a mean of (.56), reported that they learnt about digital detox vacations or getaways largely from social media.

**Table 9.** Platform tourist heard about digital detox retreat

Platform	Frequency	Mean	Mean rank
Social media	180	0.56	1
Word of mouth	72	0.22	3
Online advertisement	63	0.19	4
Travel agency	81	0.25	2
Other	18	0.06	5

Subsequently, 81 respondents with a mean of 0.25 indicated that they learnt about digital detox holidays or retreats through a travel agency advertisement. Furthermore, seventy-two (72) respondents, with a mean score of (.22), reported discovering digital detox tourism or retreats through word of mouth, while sixty-three (63) respondents, with a mean score of (.19), confirmed learning about digital detox tourism or retreats via online advertisements. Furthermore, eighteen (18) individuals, with a mean of (.06), reported having heard it from alternative sources. The predominant source via which respondents learnt about digital detox tourism or retreat was social media.

**Table 10.** Relationship between tourists' age group and promotional platforms been used for digital detox tourism

Age	Social media	Word of mouth	Online advertisement	Travel agency
18-25	45	45	27	18
26-35	108	18	27	45
36-45	27	9	0	9
46-55	0	0	9	0
56 and above	0	0	0	9
value	42.525	72.321	36.709	36.000
df	4	4	4	4
sig.	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

Table 10 reveals that 108 tourists aged 26-35 acknowledged dependence on social media, whereas 45 tourists aged 18-25 indicated similar reliance. In contrast, 27% of tourists aged 36-45 acknowledged their dependence on social media. Furthermore, none of the tourists aged 46-55 or 56 and above indicated a preference for their reliance on social media. The chi-square analysis ( $X^2 = 42.525$ ;  $df = 4$ ;  $P\text{-value} = .000$ ) demonstrates a statistically significant relationship between the age demographics of tourists and their reliance on social media. This signifies a substantial disparity in social media usage between visitors aged 26-35 and those aged 56 and above. This trend persists across all other age demographics.

Among visitors aged 18-25, 45 individuals reported their dependence on word of mouth. For individuals aged 26 to 35, 18 confirmed their dependence on word of mouth. In contrast, nine tourists aged 36 to 45 indicated that they depended on word of mouth. Furthermore, neither tourists aged 46-55 nor those over 56 recognised their dependence on word of mouth. The chi-square analysis ( $X^2 = 72.321$ ;  $df = 4$ ;  $P\text{-value} = .000$ ) demonstrates a substantial association between tourist age

groups and their dependence on word of mouth. This signifies a substantial disparity in the dependence on word of mouth between tourists aged 18-25 and those aged 56 and above. This pattern is uniform throughout all other age groups as well.

According to Table 10, tourists aged 18-25 (27) and 26-35 (27) reported their dependence on online advertisements for information regarding digital detox tourism or retreats, while those aged 46-55 (9) also verified their reliance on online advertisements. In contrast, none of the tourists aged 36-45 or above 56 expressed reliance on online advertisements for information regarding digital detox tourism or retreats. The chi-square test results ( $X^2 = 36.709$ ;  $df = 4$ ;  $P\text{-value} = .000$ ) indicated a statistical association between different age groups and their dependence on online advertisements for information regarding digital detox tourism or retreats. This indicates that the proportion of tourists aged 18-25 who depend on online advertisements for information regarding digital detox tourism or retreats differs from that of tourists aged 56 and above, following a similar trend for other age groups, except for those aged 26-35.





Table 10 indicates that 45 tourists aged 26-35 relied on travel agencies for information about digital detox tourism or retreats, while 18 tourists aged 18-25 also acknowledged their reliance on travel agencies. Conversely, tourists aged 36-45 (9) and over 56 (9) confirmed their dependence on travel companies, whilst none of those aged 46-55 indicated such reliance. The chi-square result ( $X^2 = 36.000$ ;  $df = 4$ ;  $P\text{-value} = .000$ ) indicates a relationship between the age groups of tourists and their dependence on travel agencies for information regarding digital detox tourism or retreats.

This indicates that the reliance on travel agencies for information regarding digital detox tourism or retreats among tourists aged 26-35 differs from that of tourists aged 56 and above, as well as those aged 36-45, following a similar trend across other age groups.

**Table 11.** What attract tourists most to a digital detox retreat

Statement	Frequency	Percent	Percentage rank
The promise of relaxation and wellness	117	36.1	1
Unique location (e.g., nature-based destinations)	90	27.8	2
Affordable pricing/packages	72	22.2	3
Specialized activities (e.g., yoga, meditation)	45	13.9	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>100</b>	

As shown in Table 11, one hundred seventeen (117) respondents, constituting thirty-six-point one percent (36.1%), confirmed that the allure of relaxation and wellness motivates their participation in digital detox tourism or retreats. In contrast, ninety (90) respondents, representing twenty-seven-point eight percent (27.8%), cited the distinctive location, such as nature-based destinations, as their primary attraction to the digital detox retreat. Seventy-two (72) respondents, representing twenty-two-point two percent (22.2%), indicated that affordable pricing/packages entice them to participate in digital detox tourism or retreats. Additionally, forty-five (45) respondents, accounting for thirteen-point nine percent (13.9%), stated that specialised activities (e.g., yoga, meditation) attract them to such tourism or retreats. This suggests that most respondents in the study are inclined to participate in digital detox tourism or retreats when these activities offer relaxation and wellness.

#### 4.5. Potential long-term effects of digital detox retreats on tourist satisfaction, well-being, and repeat visitation

This section examines feedback from tourists regarding the potential positive effects of attending a digital detox retreat on long-term well-being, the likelihood of recommending digital tourism or retreat to others, and the propensity to return for future visits.

**Table 12.** Attending a digital detox retreat would positively impact your long-term well-being

Issue	Frequency	Percent	Percentage rank
Yes	288	88.9	1
No	0	0	3
Not sure	36	11.1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>100</b>	

Regarding the potential positive impact of attending a digital detox retreat on long-term well-being, two hundred eighty-eight (288) respondents, or 88.9%, indicated 'Yes', as demonstrated in Table 12 above. Additionally, thirty-six (36) respondents, comprising 11.1%, expressed uncertainty regarding the potential positive effects of attending a digital detox retreat on long-term well-being, while none (0) respondents, accounting for 0%, disagreed with the statement. The majority of study respondents indicated that a digital detox retreat would beneficially affect their long-term well-being.

**Table 13.** How likely to recommend digital detox tourism or retreat to others

Level of likeliness	Frequency	Percent	Percentage rank
Not likely	18	5.6	3
Uncertain	45	13.9	2
Likely	261	80.6	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>100</b>	

Table 13 illustrates the likelihood of recommending digital detox tourism or retreats. Two hundred sixty-one (261) respondents, accounting for eighty-point six percent (80.6%), indicated they were likely to recommend it, while forty-five (45) respondents, representing thirteen-point nine percent (13.9%), expressed uncertainty. Furthermore, eighteen (18) respondents, including five-point-six percent (5.6%), said that they were unlikely to suggest. The majority of participants in the study consider it highly probable to endorse digital detox tourism or retreats to others.

**Table 14.** Attending a digital detox tourism or retreat encourage tourist to return for a repeat visit in the future

	Frequency	Percent	Percentage rank
Yes	261	80.6	1
No	27	8.3	3
Maybe	36	11.1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

Assessing the impact of participating in a digital detox tourism or retreat on the likelihood of tourists returning for subsequent visits, two hundred sixty-one (261) respondents, representing 80.6%, indicated 'Yes', as illustrated in Table 14 above. Furthermore, thirty-six (36) respondents, accounting for



11.1%, suggested that participating in a digital detox tourism or retreat might incentivize tourists to return for subsequent visits, whereas twenty-seven (27) respondents, representing 8.3%, disagreed with this assertion. The majority of survey respondents felt that participating in a digital detox tourism experience or retreat would incentivize tourists to return for future visits.

## 5. CONCLUSION

This study underscores the increasing interest in digital detox tourism among Ghanaians, especially female domestic tourists seeking retreat-style experiences to alleviate stress and improve well-being. The study offers critical insights into tourists' expectations, aspirations, and challenges with detaching from technology, highlighting a pronounced preference towards relaxation, interactions with others, and overall well-being. This highlights the potential of digital detox tourism in mitigating problems like techno-exhaustion and social media fatigue. This study's significant contribution lies in its Ghanaian viewpoint, addressing a research gap and providing practical recommendations for tourism enterprises. The results indicate that effective digital detox retreats ought to emphasise opulent environments with organized activities, such as mindfulness classes, to improve the guest experience. Nonetheless, the difficulty of total technology detachment persists, requiring solutions like emergency-use allowances to facilitate the transition.

Social media is crucial in identifying digital detox resorts, highlighting the necessity for focused marketing methods, particularly for younger demographics. Considering the significant interest among women in wellness experiences, tourist enterprises ought to customise their products for this audience. The substantial involvement of domestic tourists offers a chance to advocate for economical and accessible local retreats in Ghana. To provide a seamless transition from technology, retreats must to integrate planned activities that progressively diminish digital interaction while offering robust support mechanisms. Providing luxurious resort amenities can entice wealthy tourists, whereas immersive activities can operate as captivating alternatives to digital diversions. Permitting restricted gadget usage for emergencies may promote engagement while alleviating apprehensions over total disengagement. Also, marketing strategies should portray digital detox retreats as transforming experiences that enhance well-being, alleviate stress, and cultivate significant social connections. Crafting outstanding visitor experiences can foster enduring contentment and return visits, thereby enhancing the significance of digital detox tourism within Ghana's tourism sector.

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