Intention to Visit Seoul: Factors Influencing Travel Abroad for Holidays

1st Ghassani Herstanti *a
2nd Mohammad Rizan b
3rd Agung Wahyu Handaru c **https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0958-9849**
4th Setyo Ferry Wibowo d **https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1780-506X**

a Management Science Doctoral Program Student, Jakarta State University Postgraduate Program,
b Professors and Lecturers in the Management Science Doctoral Program, Jakarta State University,
c Heads of the Master of Management Study Program and Lecturers of the Management Science Doctoral Program, Jakarta State University,
d Lecturers in Management Science Doctoral Program, Jakarta State University,

Abstract

This paper aims to investigate the relationship between social media marketing activity and visit intention to Seoul, South Korea, among Indonesian travelers. A total of 246 questionnaires were distributed to respondents in Indonesia. Social media marketing activity represented the independent variable and was mediated by destination image, destination attitude, destination awareness, and perceived value. Visit intention represents the dependent variable. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) is a statistical method used to analyze complex interrelationships between observed and latent variables. This finding indicates that the indirect impact of social media marketing activity on visit intention via the mediating factors of destination attitude and destination image is not statistically significant. The indirect effect of destination awareness and perceived value characteristics on social media marketing activity and visit intention is favorable and statistically significant. This is the first paper to investigate the relationship between social media marketing activity and visit intention in Seoul among Indonesian travelers. Moreover, this is a relatively new issue that remains largely undiscovered by researchers worldwide. This paper will help to emphasize its importance and implications for business decisions.

Keywords: Social media marketing activity, Destination, Perceived value, Visit intention.

*Correspondence: ghassaniherstanti@gmail.com

1. Introduction

Research has identified various factors that influence tourists' decisions to visit cities for vacation purposes. A study found that tourists' intention to visit cities is positively influenced by travel motivations, time perspective, and city image (Chi & Phuong, 2021). Another study focused on domestic tourists' emotional response and protective behaviors during and after significant tourism crises like the COVID-19 pandemic and how it affected their holiday intentions or avoidance (Çınar et al., 2022). Additionally, the evolving nature of city tourism holds significant importance for research, with the proliferation of information and communication technologies (ICTs) changing how tourists plan and experience their trips (Bock, 2015).

Moreover, the perception of a city's image and the events it hosts have a substantial impact on tourists' inclination to revisit. Findings from a study indicate that tourists' perceptions of event image, satisfaction, and city image have a positive influence on their intention to revisit the hosting city (Li et al., 2021). Similarly, another study examined the effects of destination social responsibility (DSR) on destination reputation, tourists' perceived trust, and their intention to revisit (Hassan & Soliman, 2021).

The COVID-19 pandemic greatly affected tourism in Seoul, particularly due to its reliance on international tourists (Anguera-Torrell et al., 2021; Ma et al., 2022; Roy, 2020). Efforts are underway to prepare for tourism recovery and improve the urban tourism experience. Smart tourism destinations have gained attention in Seoul, focusing on leveraging technology to enhance visitor experiences and develop smart regions (Cardoso & Ruiz, 2021). Millennials are also shaping the industry with their preferences and behaviors (Bernardi, 2018). The tourism industry is a significant contributor to Seoul's economy, employing a large portion of the city's workforce, alongside the prominent manufacturing sectors (e.g., information technology and electronics) (MacInnes & Reynertson, 2016).

Despite the challenges posed by the C-19 pandemic, Seoul's tourism industry is expected to recover. The strategic response should focus on establishing infrastructure and systems that facilitate flexible adherence to health and safety guidelines, accelerating airport enhancements, and maintaining and enhancing the local community (MacInnes & Reynertson, 2016). When promoting Seoul as a destination, two approaches can be taken based on visitors' previous visits. For those who have been to Seoul before, the goal is to entice them back by providing updates and reminding them of their past experiences. Advertisements should aim to provide accurate information about the city (Djafarova & Andersen, 2008; Phillips & Jang, 2010). Various tourism-related establishments,

including websites and social media channels, have also adapted to changes, allowing travelers to receive recommendations and travel information through social media (Fardous et al., 2021; Pencarelli, 2020).

The utilization of social media plays a crucial role in urging businesses to align with these trends and desires (Isman et al., 2020). Social media have the potential to increase visitor interest through promotional activities, as customers actively engage and provide feedback, which can subsequently enhance their purchase intention (Pratama, Nazief, et al., 2019). Tourist satisfaction holds significant importance in the tourism industry as it affects passenger loyalty, including recommendations from other travelers, and determines their likelihood of returning to a specific destination. Other factors, like attitude towards the destination, also impact behavioral intentions (Kanwel et al., 2019).

The mental image an individual holds about a specific place, including their beliefs, emotions, and general perception, is known as their destination image (Kanwel et al., 2019; Ningrum & Roostika, 2021). Building upon the aforementioned information, a research study aimed to examine the impact of SMMA, destination image, attitude, awareness, and perceived value on visit intentions for Seoul (Hidayat & Alifah, 2022). The conceptual model of this study is based on the Theory TPB (Ajzen, 1989, 1991; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1977), which suggests that a person's intention to engage in a particular behavior strongly predicts their actual behavior. Intention is viewed as a reflection of an individual's motivation and the likelihood of following through with the behavior. The previous research has explored the relationship between visit intention and predictors such as SMMA, destination image, and awareness. It is worth noting that there are a limited number of studies directly measuring visit intention among Indonesian tourists.

This study has the potential to offer valuable insights into SMMA, destination attributes, and their impact on visit intentions for both individuals who have visited Seoul and those who have not (Pramudhita & Madiawati, 2021; Pratama et al., 2019). The research contributes to understanding the influence of SMMA on visit intentions, specifically in the Seoul context, among individuals with varying levels of familiarity with the destination.

2. Empirical Literature Review

Social Media Marketing Activity (SMMA)

SMMA involves using social media platforms and websites to promote products or services, attract website traffic, and gain attention (Sheela & Mohammad, 2018; Trivedi & Malik, 2021). It entails the creation of tailored content for various social media platforms with the aim of increasing brand visibility and driving engagement (Bansal et al., 2014). SMMA encompasses campaign management, governance, defining scope, and establishing the desired social media culture and tone for a business (Al Mahroofa & Al Hamdiya, 2018; Kawade & Dahivale, 2020). This marketing approach incorporates social networks and the analysis of feedback, and conversations on social media platforms for marketing purposes (Tsai & Men, 2013).

Within the tourism industry, SMMA plays a crucial role (Husain et al., 2016; Khan & Abir, 2022; Seo et al., 2020). Tour operators can effectively promote destinations by leveraging popular social media platforms (Yetimoğlu & Uğurlu, 2020). Social media serves as a powerful tool for tour and activity operators to showcase their best moments and experiences, appealing to potential customers (G. Wang et al., 2022). Paid advertisements remain a popular SMMA strategy within the travel industry (Fedoryshyna et al., 2021; Zarezadeh et al., 2018). SMMA in tourism involves leveraging social networks, analyzing consumers' online brand-related activities, and utilizing feedback generated for marketing purposes. It is considered a cost-effective source of market intelligence that enables marketers and managers to address consumer-identified issues and identify market opportunities (Cantallops & Salvi, 2014).

Social media holds significant value for the tourism sector, providing opportunities for hotels, travel agents, and agencies (Zarezadeh et al., 2018; Zhiqi & Rasoolimanesh, 2022). The relationship between social media and the travel industry is mutually beneficial, with social media offering lucrative opportunities for the sector in the future (Baber & Baber, 2022; Khan & Abir, 2022). Additionally, SMMA can impact tourists' purchase intention through brand image (Alsoud, Alfdool, Trawnih, Helalat, Al-Mu'ani, et al., 2023). Social media is also crucial for branding, increasing awareness, and driving visitors to quality informations (Ayeh et al., 2013; Silaban et al., 2022).

SMMA and Visit Intention

Visit intention refers to an individual's personal inclination to participate in tourism-related activities, such as visiting a destination or returning to it (Y. Shang et al., 2021; Yacob et al., 2019). It is a crucial factor for the growth and sustainability of the tourism industry and is influenced by various elements, including destination attractiveness, image, perceived value, personal preferences, expectations, and social media usage (Hennessey et al., 2016; Yacob et al., 2019). The choice to travel undergoes a intricate decision-making procedure that is affected by various elements such as the amount of information one is exposed to, societal expectations, personal perspective, and the perceived ability to control one's behavior (Y. Shang et al., 2021).

Determinants of travel intentions commonly include personal preferences, expectations, attitudes towards travel, perceived behavioral control, subjective norms, and past travel experiences (Jiang et al., 2022; Nguyen et al., 2023; Y. Wang et al., 2020; Yun et al., 2010). The level of certainty towards the destination and inhibiting factors can also impact travel intentions (Yun et al., 2010). The factors like knowledge, perceived risk, identity, and psychological distance can influence intention to visit (Jiang et al., 2022). During the COVID-19 pandemic, factors such as perceived safety, health concerns, and travel restrictions have also been found to influence travel intention (Nguyen et al., 2023).

SMMA strategies may vary for rural and urban destinations due to differences in infrastructure, marketing channels, and target audiences. Rural destinations may face challenges related to internet infrastructure and the absence of dedicated mobile apps, which can limit the effectiveness of SMMA (Adeyinka & Abdullah, 2021). Furthermore, SMMA can positively impact the image and business performance of rural destinations (Tiwasing, 2021).

In contrast, marketing strategies for urban destinations may emphasize convenience, accessibility, and a diverse range of activities and attractions (Le-Klaehn & Hall, 2015; Wu & Cai, 2006). SMMA can be utilized to promote distinct branded destinations and attract new visitors to cities or tourist attractions (Kolb, 2017; Vorobjovas-Pinta & Wilk, 2022). Social media can serve as a means to connect with technologically inclined travelers and provide customized experiences based on their preferences (Kolb, 2017). Social media can be utilized in urban experiential tourism marketing as a communication tool to engage with experiential tourists and promote distinctive experiences that align with visitors' interests (Garcia Henche, 2018). Consequently, the hypothesis derived from the aforementioned discussion is as follows:

Hypothesis 1: SMMA positively influences visit intention.

SMMA and Destination Image

Destination image encompasses individuals' overall perceptions, impressions, biases, imaginative thoughts, and emotional responses towards a place they intend to visit or have already visited (Jenkins, 1999; King et al., 2015). It is a widely studied topic in tourism research and holds significant influence over consumers' purchase decisions due to the abundance of destination choices available. In the tourism marketing research, the term "image" is often used interchangeably with brand image or destination image (Chu et al., 2022).

Destination attributes that shape its image include the travel environment, natural attractions, entertainment options, events, and cultural heritage (Beerli & Martin, 2004). Other factors that contribute to destination image formation include marketing efforts, the preexisting image of the destination, and the process by which destination image is constructed (McCartney et al., 2008).

Different perspectives exist regarding the structure of destination image, with some researchers considering it as a one-dimensional construct and others viewing it as multidimensional. The multidimensional approach is more widely accepted among destination image researchers and recognizes "the cognitive and affective dimensions of destination image". Dimensions of destination image can include primary image construction, representing tourists' initial perception of a destination, as well as cognitive, affective, holistic, and particularistic images of the place (Chu et al., 2022; Jeong & Holland, 2012; Lubbe, 1998; Ryan & Ninov, 2011; Santana & Sevilha Gosling, 2018).

The four dimensions commonly associated with destination image are cognitive, affective, unique, and overall image (Santana & Sevilha Gosling, 2018). The cognitive dimension encompasses factual and objective information about a destination, such as its history, culture, and attractions. The affective dimension captures the emotional and subjective responses tourists have towards a destination, such as feelings of excitement, relaxation, or satisfaction (Agapito et al., 2013; Andersen et al., 2018). The unique dimension highlights the distinct and memorable features that differentiate a destination from others, such as natural beauty, architecture, or cuisine (Ko & Park, 2000; Rousta & Jamshidi, 2020). The overall image dimension represents tourists' overall perception of a destination, influenced by the other three dimensions and impacting their decision-making process (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; K. Lai, 2018).

Research indicates that SMMA can influence destination image. Social media platforms have the power to shape user behaviors and directly contribute to the formation of destination image (Stepaniuk, 2015). Studies have found that SMMA affects tourist intentions through its impact on brand image (Alsoud, Alfdool, Trawnih, Helalat, & Mahrakani, 2023). A separate research investigation examined the impact of e-reputation, destination image, and social media marketing initiatives on tourists' intention to visit, revealing that social media contributes to the development of destination image and e-reputation (Baber & Baber, 2022). Additionally, the caliber of tourism-related information disseminated through social media platforms can shape users' perception of a destination (Kim et al., 2017). As a result, the following hypothesis is put forward:

Hypothesis 2: SMMA positively influences destination image

SMMA and Destination Attitude

Considerable research within the tourism domain has focused on investigating the relationship between SMMA and destination attitude. The emergence of social media platforms as a marketing tool for destinations has spurred numerous studies to explore their influence on destination attitude (Ai et al., 2020; Kasim et al., 2019; Silaban et

al., 2022). These studies consistently indicate that SMMA have a significant impact on destination attitude. For example, the endorsement of destinations by celebrities through social media platforms has been observed to influence tourists' intentions to visit, their affinity towards the destination brand, and their overall attitude towards the destination (Zheng et al., 2022).

Destination attitude refers to the overall evaluation or predisposition of tourists towards a holiday destination, shaped by various factors including their perceptions, emotions, and experiences of the place (Letheren et al., 2017; Pereira et al., 2022; Z. Shang & Luo, 2021; Um & Crompton, 1990; Zheng et al., 2022). It represents a learned inclination to consistently respond favorably or unfavorably towards a particular object, in this case, a destination. Numerous factors can influence destination attitude, including the credibility of the destination, parasocial relationships, travel motivations, and perceived obstacles and facilitators (Lam & Hsu, 2006; Letheren et al., 2017; Zheng et al., 2022).

Um and Crompton (1990) presented a model with three dimensions to explain attitudes towards destinations: need satisfaction, social agreement, and travelability. The need satisfaction dimension encompasses travel motivations such as the desire for novelty, challenges, relaxation, learning, and curiosity. The social agreement dimension reflects individuals' tendency to align their behavior with the opinions of their social groups. The "travelability" dimension describes an individual's inclination to travel to a destination, considering factors such as financial resources, time availability, skills, and health. Baloglu (2014) introduced a similar three-dimensional model of destination attitude that includes cognition (perceptions/beliefs), affect (emotions), and conation (behavioral intentions). These dimensions have been extensively explored by marketing and consumer behavior scholars, contributing to our understanding of the relationship between attitudes and behavior. Consequently, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 3: SMMA positively influences destination attitude

SMMA and Destination Awareness

Social media plays a significant role in the marketing of destinations and increasing the visibility of tourism brands. Extensive research consistently demonstrates that sharing content on social media platforms positively affects the awareness and perception of tourism destinations (Dedeoğlu, Van Niekerk, et al., 2020). By utilizing social media as a marketing tool for tourism services, businesses can achieve remarkable outcomes by harnessing the combined power of social media and tourism marketing (Ghorbanzadeh et al., 2022). Destination marketers can leverage popular social media platforms to expand brand reach and enhance awareness, as they have proven to be highly effective in destination branding (Dedeoğlu, Taheri, et al., 2020). The effectiveness of social media in destination branding surpasses that of other methods, which accounts for its widespread adoption in the marketing field (Basit et al., 2020).

Destination awareness pertains to the level of knowledge and interest individuals possess regarding a specific destination. It encompasses understanding the history, characteristics, local communities, and development of a particular place (Buhalis, 2000; De Klerk & Haarhoff, 2019; W. H. Lai & Vinh, 2013; Milman & Pizam, 1995). Konecnik and Gartner (2007) define it as the recognition or perceived recognition individuals have about a destination. Furthermore, destination awareness can encompass the knowledge and accessibility of a destination via different transportation options. In the realm of tourism management, destination awareness is significant as it can impact future travel intentions, awareness levels, destination image, previous visitation patterns, and risk perception (De Klerk & Haarhoff, 2019)

Within the scope of tourism research, scholars have examined the dimensions of destination awareness to comprehend their constituents and impact. While specific dimensions may vary across studies, certain common dimensions have been identified. These include recognizing the place as a tourist destination, differentiating the destination from others, and being able to imagine or envision the destination (Happy Manurung & Astini, 2020). Consequently, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 4: SMMA positively influences destination awareness

SMMA and Perceived Value

The concept of perceived value holds considerable importance in both traditional consumer behavior and social media marketing, although there is still limited understanding regarding how consumers perceive the value derived from SMMA (Ajina, 2019). Empirical research has been conducted to investigate the perceived value of social media, including the adoption of specific platforms such as Twitter (Cocosila & Igonor, 2012). SMMA can indirectly impact customer satisfaction by influencing factors like social identification and perceived value (S.-C. Chen & Lin, 2019). Perceived value refers to the customer's evaluation of the worth of a product or service based on the benefits it provides in relation to its cost (Bushara et al., 2023).

Customer perceived value plays a significant role in shaping consumer behavior decisions, as it influences how customers assess and evaluate a product or service (Heinonen, 2022). It encompasses the stages of the buying process, from pre-purchase considerations to the final purchase decision (T. Chi & Kilduff, 2011). Recognizing the importance of customer perceived value, businesses are increasingly focusing on this concept in their strategic

planning, and researchers are showing a growing interest in understanding its dynamics (Sánchez & Iniesta-Bonillo, 2009; Zeithaml et al., 1988).

While some scholars argue that customer perceived value can be seen as a one-dimensional concept, others suggest that such a narrow perspective might limit the comprehension of its underlying variables. As a result, these researchers have developed multidimensional models or frameworks that aim to provide a more comprehensive understanding of consumer choices by incorporating multiple dimensions (Sheth et al., 1991; Sweeney & Soutar, 2001). This multidimensional approach has been examined through two research streams: the benefits/costs models and the means-end models (Nguyen et al., 2015). Salem Khalifa (2004) proposes that the benefits-costs model is particularly effective in explaining the exchange of customer value. Hence, the following hypothesis is put forward:

Hypothesis 5: SMMA positively influences perceived value

Destination Image and Visit Intention

Numerous studies have investigated the correlation between SMMA and visit intention, with destination image serving as a mediator (Baber & Baber, 2022; Gaffar et al., 2022; Nunthiphatprueksa, 2017). The influence of destination image on visit intention has been extensively examined. One study assessed destination image by analyzing actual tourists' evaluations and reviews on social media, establishing a significant relationship between country and destination image. Another study explored the impact of e-reputation, destination image, and SMMA on tourists' intention to visit, revealing the role of destination image in this relationship. Social media has proven to be an effective tool for cultivating destination brand awareness and shaping destination image, both of which can impact visit intention. While destination image may not directly affect trust, it still holds the potential to influence intention, with trust and experience also playing a role in this dynamic. As a result, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 6: Destination image positively influences visit intention

Destination Attitude and Visit Intention

Destination attitude refers to how individuals evaluate or perceive a specific destination, while visit intention represents their inclination or desire to visit that destination (Letheren et al., 2017; Zheng et al., 2022). Studies have shown that destination image, which is closely linked to destination attitude, significantly influences both initial visit and revisit intentions (Abbasi et al., 2021). When personals hold a positive attitude towards a destination, they are more likely to express a higher intention to visit, as they view the destination favorably.

A study examining tourists' perceptions found that destination attitude mediates the impact of parasocial relationships on visit intention (Zheng et al., 2022). This indicates that individuals' attitude towards a destination can mediate the influence of other factors, such as parasocial relationships, on their intention to visit. The mediating role of tourist attitude towards destination awareness in influencing future visit intention was examined in another study. The findings suggest that parasocial relationships play a role in shaping both tourists' destination attitude and their intention to visit (Ervina & Octaviany, 2022). The study underscores the importance of destination attitude in subsequently impacting the intention to visit (Lee et al., 2021). As a result, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 7: Destination attitude positively influences visit intention

Destination Awareness and Visit Intention

Numerous studies have demonstrated the significance of destination awareness in influencing tourists' visit intention (Carvalho, 2022; Dai et al., 2022; Um et al., 2006). The research highlights that factors such as destination awareness, destination image, perceived quality, and brand engagement have a substantial influence on tourists' intention to visit (Roostika & Yumna, 2023). Furthermore, studies focusing on medium-sized cities have highlighted the substantial influence of destination awareness, along with other factors, on visit intention (Carvalho, 2022; Ervina & Octaviany, 2022; Junaedi & Harjanto, 2020).

In summary, these articles collectively emphasize the importance of destination awareness in shaping visit intention, while also recognizing the role of other factors such as destination image, risk perception, motivation, and brand engagement. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 8: Destination awareness positively influences visit intention

Perceived Value and Visit Intention

Customer perceived value has gained significant attention in marketing strategies as companies aim to attract consumer interest, leading to extensive research in this area (Lien et al., 2015). According to Zeithaml et al. (1988), consumers base their acceptance and willingness to pay for products on their perceived utility and attributes. While individual perceptions may vary based on factors like quality, comfort, and size, an exploratory study identified four key dimensions of customer perceived value: affordability; meeting personal preferences; desired quality relative to price; and benefits received in relation to sacrifices made (Zeithaml et al., 1988).

In the context of tourism, perceived value has been found to have a significant influence on visit intention (Amin & Tarun, 2019; Sodawan & Hsu, 2022; Wen & Huang, 2021). Research indicates that perceived value positively impacts satisfaction and visit intention among tourists. Additionally, perceived value mediates the relationship between travel website quality and travel intention, while also exerting a discriminant effect on travel intention (C.-C. Chen et al., 2016; Kuo, 2022). Besides perceived value, other factors such as perceived quality, destination awareness, destination image, and brand engagement have been identified as influencing visit intention. Trust and perceived value also play influential roles in the intention to purchase travel products online (Ponte et al., 2015). Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 9: Perceived value positively influences visit intention

Indirect Effect

In this study, the researchers investigated the relationship between SMMA and visit intentions, with four mediating variables: destination image, destination attitude, destination awareness, and perceived value. The proposed hypotheses suggest that each of these mediators has a positive effect on the relationship between SMMA and visit intentions. Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed:

Hypothesis 10: Destination image mediates the positive relationship between SMMA and visit intentions.

Hypothesis 11: Destination attitude mediates the positive relationship between SMMA and visit intentions.

Hypothesis 12: Destination awareness mediates the positive relationship between SMMA and visit intentions.

Hypothesis 13: Perceived value mediates the positive relationship between SMMA and visit intentions.

3. Method, Data, and Analysis

The research method employed in this study is quantitative. For data analysis, the researchers evaluated the reliability and validity of the measures. Reliability was assessed by examining item loadings and composite reliability following the guidelines proposed by Hair et al. (2010) and Bagozzi et al. (1991). Item loadings were evaluated to measure the strength of the relationship between each item and its corresponding construct. Composite reliability, which assesses internal consistency, was also examined. Discriminant validity was assessed using the Fornell and Larcker (1981) approach, comparing correlations between the square roots of the average variance extracted (AVE) for different constructs. The researchers utilized Cronbach's alpha, rho A, composite reliability, and average variance extracted (AVE) to evaluate the reliability and validity of the measurement instrument.

Data Collection

An online survey was carried out in Jakarta, Indonesia, from April 2023 to May 2023, targeting Indonesian consumers. The survey employed a 6-point Likert scale, where 6 represented the most favorable response. The decision to use a 6-point scale was based on its effectiveness in guiding respondents towards specific choices. To measure the variables of SMMA, destination image, destination attitude, perceived value, destination awareness, and visit intention, the questionnaire items were adapted from previous studies.

These items were sourced from various studies, including Seo & Park (2018), Wibowo et al. (2021), Peng et al. (2020), Zheng et al. (2022), Byon & Zhang (2010), Gallarza & Saura (2006), and Verma et al. (2019). A total of 246 survey questionnaires were distributed to respondents selected through purposive sampling. The collected data was then analyzed using SmartPls to assess reliability, validity, test the hypothesis, and address common-method bias through SPSS 25.

4. Result and Discussion

Common method bias

In every cross-sectional survey research study, it is essential to conduct the Harman one-factor test to ensure the absence of common bias or variance approaches that may affect the data. As anticipated, the findings indicated that the data collected was free from any significant bias, with no notable indications of bias observed. Furthermore, the correlation analysis results revealed that there were no excessively high, extreme, or significant correlations exceeding the threshold of 0.90 among the research variables. These outcomes, consistent with the findings of Bagozzi et al. (1991), indicate that common technique bias is not a concern in this study, as supported by the results and validity of the research instruments as noted by Baumgartner et al. (2021) and Podsakof et al. (2003).

Result

Reliability and Validity the Measures

Reliability refers to the consistency and stability of a measurement instrument, while validity pertains to its accuracy and appropriateness in measuring the intended constructs. In this study, reliability was assessed following the guidelines proposed by Hair et al. (2010) and Bagozzi et al. (1991). To evaluate reliability, the researchers examined item loadings and composite reliability. Item loadings indicate the strength of the relationship between each item and its corresponding construct. The findings indicated that all items showed significant and satisfactory loadings of at least 0.5, indicating a strong association between the items and their respective constructs.

Composite reliability, which assesses the internal consistency of each construct, was also evaluated in the study. The researchers adhered to the recommended threshold of at least 0.7 for composite reliability, as suggested by Hair et al. (2017). The results revealed that all constructs exceeded this threshold, indicating favorable internal consistency and reliability of the measurement instrument.; see Table 1.

Discriminant validity, as defined by Hair et al. (2010), refers to the extent to which a set of constructs is distinct from other variables. In this study, the researchers employed the Fornell and Larcker (1981) approach to assess the discriminant validity of the measurement framework. This approach involves comparing correlations between the square roots of the average variance extracted (AVE) for different latent constructs. According to the proposed method, the square root of the AVE for each construct should be greater than the correlation with other constructs. This finding presented in Table 2 and Figure 1 provide support for the assertion that discriminant validity is not compromised but rather established in this study.

Findings

Results of The Hypotheses Testing

The measurement model in this section serves the purpose of ensuring the validity and reliability of the model specification, which aligns with the findings of Hairet al. (2010). In accordance with their guidelines, a valid model should have outer loadings of 0.5 or higher, and the average variance extracted (AVE) should exceed 0.5. Outer loadings assess the reliability of individual items within each construct. It is important to note that when evaluating the path model, Hair et al. (2014) stress that goodness-of-fit indices should not be the sole criterion for validating the framework.

Convergent validity, as discussed in the literature on structural equation modeling (SEM), involves evaluating the reliability of items, composite reliability, and average variance extracted (AVE). This entails ensuring that each item within a construct has statistically significant and sufficiently high factor loadings, typically set at 0.5 or above. Additionally, composite reliability should be at least 0.7, and the AVE should surpass 0.5. These criteria have been emphasized by Bagozzi et al. (1991) and Hair et al. (2013) in their research.

The analysis of outer loadings in this study indicates that a lower p-value (below 0.05) signifies a significant loading, indicating a strong association between the observed variable and the underlying construct.; Table 3.

The results presented in Table 4 display the path coefficients obtained from the SmartPLS analysis. Path coefficients indicate the strength and direction of relationships between latent constructs within a structural equation model. Specifically, the path coefficient of 0.159 between destination attitude and visit intention suggests a positive association, indicating that a favorable destination attitude is associated with a higher intention to visit.

This coefficient is statistically significant, as evidenced by a T-statistic of 2.153 (greater than 1.96) and a p-value of 0.032 (less than 0.05). Similarly, positive coefficients are observed between destination awareness, perceived value, SMMA, and destination attitude, destination image, destination awareness, and perceived value, all of which are statistically significant with T-statistics greater than 1.96 and p-values less than 0.05.

However, the path coefficient for destination image indicates a weak positive relationship with visit intention, as the p-value is 0.048. The coefficient is not statistically significant, with a T-statistic of 0.544 and a p-value of 0.586 (greater than 0.05). Furthermore, the path coefficient for the relationship between SMMA and visit intention is -0.062, suggesting a weak inverse relationship. However, this coefficient is also not statistically significant, with a T-statistic of 1.301 and a p-value of 0.194 (greater than 0.05).

The results of the study include an examination of specific indirect effects in structural equation modeling, which reveal the mediated relationships between variables through intermediate variables. In this particular study, the focus is on assessing the specific indirect effects of SMMA on visit intention. The analysis reveals that the indirect effects mediated by destination attitude (T-statistic: 1.926, p-value: 0.055) and destination image (T-statistic: 0.521, p-value: 0.602) are not statistically significant. This suggests that the influence of SMMA on visit intention, through the mediating variables of destination attitude and destination image, is not supported by the data. However, the indirect effect of SMMA on visit intention, mediated by destination awareness and perceived value variables, demonstrates a positive and highly statistically significant influence; see Table 5.

Discussions

Previous research has examined the association between SMMA and visit intention, particularly in the context of tourism in Seoul. These studies have explored how SMM impacts tourists' intentions to visit Seoul and the mediating factors involved. For example, one study highlighted the use of social media as a destination marketing tool by national tourism organizations, emphasizing the importance of leveraging social media platforms for effective tourism promotion. Another study investigated the role of SMM as a destination marketing tool and its influence on tourists' attitudes and perceptions toward a destination. While not directly addressing the mentioned mediating factors, it provided valuable insights into the impact of SMM on tourists' attitudes and perceptions. Several other studies have examined the effects of SMM on visit intention and related factors in the tourism context.

For instance, one study explored the influence of e-reputation, destination image, and SMM efforts on tourists' intentions to visit a destination, shedding light on the relationship between SMM efforts and visit intention. Similarly, another study focused on SMM activities and their influence on consumer intentions, considering the mediating roles of social identification and satisfaction. Although not specifically targeting Seoul, this study provided valuable insights into the effects of SMM activities on consumer intentions, which can be applicable to the context of Seoul city. These insights contribute to understanding the potential mediating effects of destination image, destination attitude, destination awareness, and perceived value on the relationship between SMM and visit intention.

Implications for Theory

The theoretical implications of the relationship between SMMA and visit intention, mediated by destination image, destination attitude, destination awareness, and perceived value, suggest that SMMA has a strong influence on social identification and perceived value, which subsequently impact satisfaction, continuance intention, participation intention, and purchase intention. This indicates that leveraging social media as a marketing tool can shape consumers' perceptions, attitudes, and intentions toward a destination.

The research findings indicate that the characteristics of social media advertisements can affect consumer perceptions and subsequent purchase intentions. This highlights the importance of content and presentation in social media marketing materials in shaping consumers' intentions to visit a destination. Moreover, SMMA are recognized as effective means of building brand awareness among consumers. In the context of tourism, this implies that effective SMMA can enhance a destination's image and reputation, thereby positively influencing visit intentions.

It is acknowledged that social media-based marketing activities are an effective strategy for building brand equity and fostering lasting relationships with consumers. This indicates that engaging consumers through social media platforms can establish a sense of connection and loyalty, ultimately leading to increased visit intentions. However, it is crucial to consider the mediating factors mentioned earlier in understanding the influence of SMMA on visit intentions more comprehensively.

In conclusion, the results demonstrate the significant impact of SMMA on visit intention, mediated by destination image, destination attitude, destination awareness, and perceived value. By effectively utilizing social media, destination marketers can shape consumers' perceptions, attitudes, and intentions, ultimately increasing visit intentions. Further research focused specifically on the mediating effects within the context of a particular destination, such as Seoul, would contribute to advancing theoretical understanding in this intention.

Implications for Practice

When considering consumer perception, the role of social media advertisements in influencing consumer perception and purchase intention is crucial (KV et al., 2021). Hence, businesses should prioritize the development of impactful social media advertisements that align with consumer preferences and positively affect their perception of the destination. It is important for businesses to actively engage in various SMMA, such as collaborating with bloggers, advertising on social media platforms, and managing user-generated content (S.-C. Chen & Lin, 2019; Jamil et al., 2022). These activities aid in creating brand awareness among consumers and fostering social identification, which ultimately influences their intention to visit (S.-C. Chen & Lin, 2019).

By effectively leveraging social media platforms, brands can reach a larger audience and cultivate a favorable image of their destination. SMMA contributes to the establishment of a positive destination image and attitude among consumers (Zheng et al., 2022). Businesses should focus on showcasing attractive aspects of the destination, such as unique experiences, beautiful landscapes, or cultural heritage, through engaging content on social media. This can positively influence consumers' perceptions and generate a more favorable attitude toward visiting the destination. Social media platforms also provide an excellent opportunity for businesses to increase destination awareness among potential travelers. By regularly sharing relevant and engaging content, businesses can raise awareness about the destination, its attractions, and its unique features. This can contribute to increasing visit intention by making potential visitors more informed and interested in exploring the destination (Jamil et al., 2022).

The focus is on the value proposition of the destination through SMMA. This includes showcasing the benefits, experiences, and value-for-money aspects that consumers can expect when visiting the destination. By effectively

communicating the perceived value, businesses can positively influence consumers' intentions to visit the destination (Zhang et al., 2019). According to this study, businesses should employ SMMA in a strategic manner to improve consumer perception, cultivate a favorable destination image and attitude, raise destination awareness, and highlight the perceived value of the destination. By adopting these strategies, businesses can effectively impact consumers' intention to visit and attract a larger number of visitors to the destination.

Limitations and Future Recommendations

The present study has certain limitations that should be acknowledged, primarily due to its narrow scope, which may limit our comprehensive understanding of the overall influence of SMMA on visit intention and related factors. A significant challenge arises from the absence of suitable measurement scales specifically designed for SMMA constructs, which hampers the accurate examination of these variables. It is crucial to develop reliable and valid measurement scales that are tailored to the variables of interest. Additionally, considering the constantly evolving nature of social media platforms, researchers need to stay updated and adapt their methodologies to effectively investigate the impact of SMMA on visit intention.

For future research, a comprehensive research framework is recommended. Adopting a holistic approach that considers the interplay of multiple factors, such as SMMA, destination image, destination attitude, destination awareness, and perceived value, can provide a more nuanced understanding of their relationships. Longitudinal studies can capture the dynamic nature of SMMA and its long-term effects on visit intention by tracking changes in perceptions and behaviors over time. Applying social network analysis techniques can offer insights into the mechanisms through which SMMA influences consumer attitudes and behaviors through electronic word-of-mouth messages on social media platforms. Additionally, cross-cultural studies can explore cultural variations in the impact of SMMA on visit intention, revealing unique factors that may shape these relationships in different cultural contexts.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, this research found that SMMA has a significant impact on visit intention by influencing several mediating factors. The use of social media platforms to promote destinations affects their attractiveness, image, and awareness, which, in turn, shape individuals' attitudes toward visiting those destinations. SMMA plays a crucial role in influencing the intention to choose a travel destination. It not only stimulates the desire to visit a place but also shapes perceptions of the destination's image and attitude. In summary, these findings indicate that SMMA have a strong influence on visit intention, mediated by destination image, destination attitude, destination awareness, and perceived value.

6. References

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No	Items	Sources
Destination Image		
IMG1	Seoul City is a pleasing travel destination	(Byon & Zhang, 2010)
IMG2	Seoul City is an enjoyable travel destination	
IMG3	Seoul City is an exciting travel destination	
Destination Attitude		
ATT1	Seoul City is pleasant	(Peng et al., 2020)
ATT2	Seoul city is arousing	
ATT3	Seoul city is relaxing	
SMMA		
SMMA1	I post about my travels on social media online because it allows me to share the information with others.	(Seo & Park, 2018; Wibowo et al., 2021)
SMMA2	I posted my travels on social media online because it was possible to have a conversation or share a comment.	
SMMA3	I post my travels on social media because it is easy to deliver my opinion.	
SMMA4	Information sharing is possible on social media.	
SMMA5	Discussion and the exchange of opinions are possible on social media.	
SMMA6	The expression of opinions is easy on social media.	
Destination Awareness		
AWR1	Seeing a tourism destination in Seoul makes me interested in this destination.	(Vila et al., 2021)
AWR2	When I'm watching Seoul, I pay attention to the tourism destination.	
AWR3	I will recommend a visit to a tourism destination in Seoul to my friends and family.	
Perceived Value		
VAL1	Overall, the value of visiting Seoul is valuable.	(Gallarza & Saura, 2006)
VAL1	Overall, the value of visiting Seoul is valuable.	
Visit Intention		
INT1	I am willing to visit Seoul.	(Verma et al., 2019)
INT2	I plan to go on holiday to Seoul.	

Table 1. Construct Reliability and Validity

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Destination Attitude	0.756	0.766	0.861	0.674
Destination Awareness	0.874	0.877	0.923	0.800
Destination Image	0.892	0.902	0.926	0.757
Perceived Value	0.872	0.897	0.912	0.723
Social Media Marketing	0.875	1.026	0.896	0.590
Visit Intention	0.867	0.880	0.937	0.882

Tabel 2. Discriminant Validity

	Destination Attitude	Destination Awareness	Destination Image	Perceived Value	Social Media Marketing	Visit Intention
Destination Attitude	0.821					
Destination Awareness	0.676	0.894				
Destination Image	0.786	0.740	0.870			
Perceived Value	0.670	0.689	0.676	0.850		
Social Media Marketing	0.383	0.438	0.392	0.454	0.768	
Visit Intention	0.645	0.662	0.637	0.751	0.334	0.939

Tabel 3. Discriminant Validity

	(β)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
ATT1 ← DAT*	0.869	0.869	0.021	40.459	0.000

|					
ATT2 ← DAT	0.835	0.836	0.034	24.350	0.000
ATT3 ← DAT	0.754	0.752	0.041	18.209	0.000
AWR1 ← DAW**	0.848	0.845	0.031	27.549	0.000
AWR2 ← DAW	0.932	0.931	0.009	98.215	0.000
AWR3 ← DAW	0.901	0.900	0.014	62.677	0.000
IMG1 ← DIM***	0.889	0.887	0.015	58.058	0.000
IMG2 ← DIM	0.898	0.897	0.017	51.498	0.000
IMG3 ← DIM	0.896	0.893	0.016	55.232	0.000
IMG4 ← DIM	0.794	0.790	0.036	21.820	0.000
SMMA1 ← SMMA****	0.773	0.770	0.039	19.836	0.000
SMMA2 ← SMMA	0.780	0.785	0.029	27.013	0.000
SMMA3 ← SMMA	0.829	0.823	0.031	26.617	0.000
SMMA4 ← SMMA	0.808	0.801	0.043	18.972	0.000
SMMA5 ← SMMA	0.747	0.741	0.048	15.608	0.000
SMMA6 ← SMMA	0.662	0.658	0.050	13.243	0.000
VAL1 ← VAL*****	0.732	0.729	0.042	17.582	0.000
VAL2 ← VAL	0.882	0.881	0.016	54.120	0.000
VAL3 ← VAL	0.906	0.906	0.013	69.794	0.000
VAL4 ← VAL	0.870	0.871	0.016	53.785	0.000
INT1 ← INT******	0.930	0.930	0.013	69.976	0.000

*Destination attitude ** Destination awareness   *** Destination image   **** Social media marketing activity
*****Perceived value ******Visit intention

Tabel 4. Path Coefficients

|	(β)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
Destination attitude → Visit intention	0.159	0.164	0.074	2.153	0.032
Destination awareness → Visit intention	0.200	0.197	0.087	2.300	0.022
Destination image → Visit intention	0.048	0.051	0.089	0.544	0.586
Perceived value → Visit intention	0.502	0.497	0.087	5.743	0.000
SMMA → Destination attitude	0.383	0.388	0.058	6.578	0.000
SMMA → Destination awareness	0.438	0.444	0.054	8.075	0.000
SMMA → Destination image	0.392	0.397	0.056	7.048	0.000
SMMA → Perceived value	0.454	0.460	0.055	8.282	0.000
SMMA → Visit intention	-0.062	-0.063	0.048	1.301	0.194

Tabel 5. Specific Indirect Effects

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P Values
SMMA → Destination attitude → Visit intention	0.061	0.064	0.032	1.926	0.055
SMMA → Destination awareness → Visit intention	0.087	0.087	0.040	2.166	0.031
SMMA → Destination image → Visit intention	0.019	0.021	0.036	0.521	0.602
SMMA → Perceived value → Visit intention	0.228	0.228	0.045	5.100	0.000
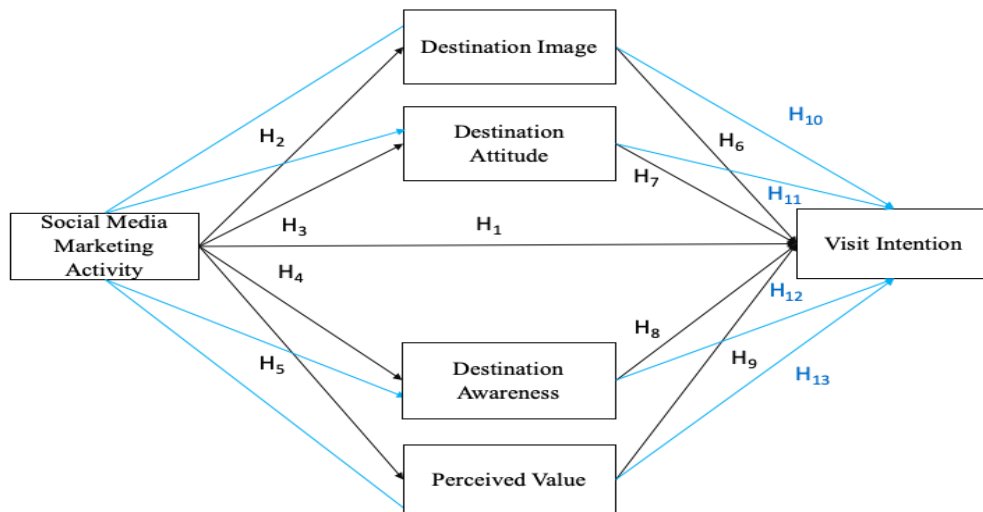
(Source: own ficture, 2023)
Figure 1. Framework research
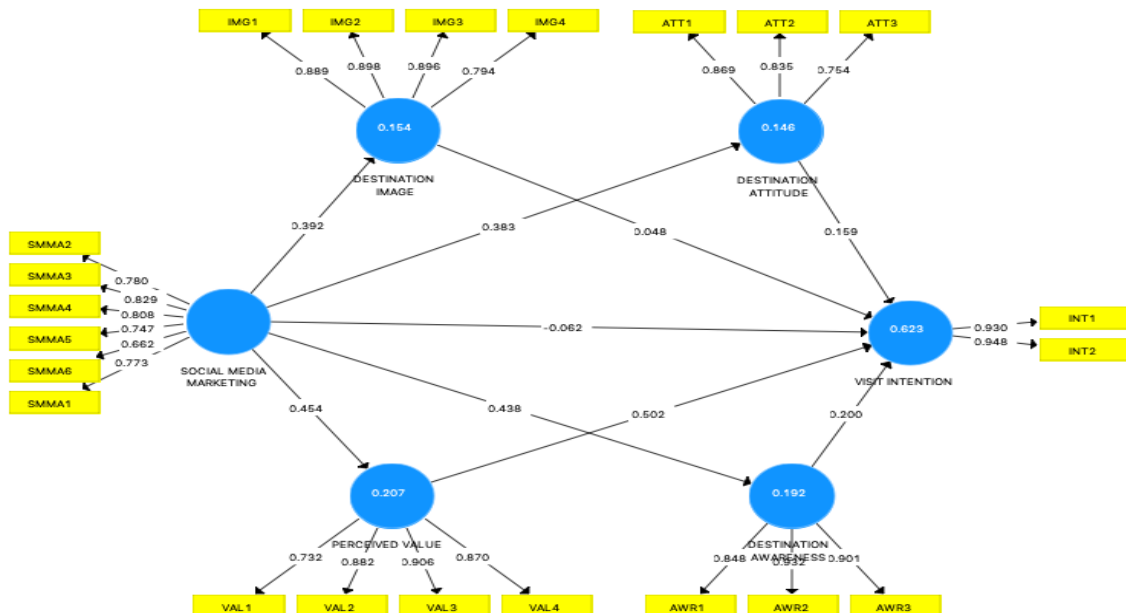
(Source: own ficture, 2023)
Figure 2. Algorithm calculate