




MOTIVATIONS AND OUTCOMES OF TOURISTS' ENGAGEMENT BEHAVIOURS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Abstract

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Purpose – Social media are increasingly used by tourists for travel purposes. While social media engagement is a complex concept, previous research simplifies it using basic metrics, such as the count of likes or comments. This study adopts a comprehensive framework that measures different levels of tourists' engagement behaviours and analyses thoroughly their motivations and outcomes.

Methodology/Design/Approach – This study collected information from a survey of 454 tourists visiting Hue City – a famous tourism destination that is widely promoted on social media in Vietnam. The hypotheses were examined using partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM).

Findings – The research result reveals that recognition, information, and entertainment are essential motives for tourists' engagement behaviours. Furthermore, behaviours related to consuming and producing content positively affect tourists' destination advocacy and revisit intention, while there is no linkage between contributing behaviours and these outcomes.

Originality of the research – This study deepens our understanding of consumer behaviour on social media and offers valuable guidance for businesses and organisations to better optimise their marketing strategies.

Keywords tourist engagement behaviours; social media; destination advocacy; revisit intention

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INTRODUCTION

Expanding faster than any medium, social media has significantly changed how organisations communicate with customers (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016; X. Y. Leung et al., 2021). In tourism, social media plays a critical role by facilitating information sharing, including photos, videos, and experiences among tourists and potential visitors (Keelson et al., 2024; Paul & Roy, 2017). Therefore, many organisations have transformed their marketing strategies towards social media marketing (Cheung et al., 2020). The engagement of tourists on social media has become an important success metric for tourism marketing managers as it influences tourists' perceptions and attitudes toward tourism destinations and services (Dijkmans et al., 2015; Filieri et al., 2021). It is important to understand tourists' engagement on social media as having a presence on social media does not guarantee success for marketing managers (Villamediana et al., 2019).

The engagement of customers is a complex and multifaceted construct involving three main dimensions: cognitive, emotional, and behavioural (Harrigan et al., 2018; Kanje et al., 2020; Rather, 2020). While the cognitive and emotional aspects have been explored in tourism research (Amani, 2024; Chen et al., 2021; Rather, 2021; So et al., 2020), studies focusing on tourists' engagement behaviours with destinations on social media are fragmented. Various studies simplify the complexity of social media engagement behaviours by utilising basic metrics, for instance, the number of likes, comments, shares, or postings (Bonilla-Quijada et al., 2021; M. Kim & Kim, 2020; Lee et al., 2021; Ruas & Barbosa, 2022; Song et al., 2021). There are some efforts to investigate the tourists' engagement behaviours on social media further by categorising these behaviours into passive and active (Villamediana et al., 2019) or low, medium, and high levels of participation (Grosso et al., 2024). Villamediana et al. (2019) Use valence criteria to divide the popularity, commitment, and virality of posts regarding destinations on Facebook into positive and negative. This study, however, neglects other engagement behaviours, such as reading content or viewing videos, which take a large amount of time using social media. Grosso et al. (2024) applied the Consumers' online brand-related activities (COBRAs) framework to measure the degree of engagement with destination-related content. Nevertheless, this study did not differentiate different levels of engagement to identify the critical groups of engagement behaviours. A deeper understanding of the engagement behaviours of tourists will help tourism and destination managers acknowledge which social media metrics are critical to their marketing campaigns and strategies to efficiently navigate tourists' behaviours on social media.

Furthermore, gaining insights into what drives tourists' behaviours on social media is essential to increasing their engagement (Bambauer-Sachse & Einsle, 2025; Foster et al., 2011). Several attempts focused on destination content and attributes in posting and technical (Blanco-Moreno et al., 2024; Fang et al., 2018; Grosso et al., 2024; Song et al., 2021), or marketing efforts (Abbasi et al., 2023; Bonilla-Quijada et al., 2021; Lee et al., 2021; Sharma, 2023), or the destination authenticity (Kim & Kim, 2020). These

studies considered tourists as passive consumers whose behaviours are influenced by marketing campaigns. In this article, we argue that tourists are active consumers who use social networks to satisfy their needs. Therefore, their behaviours on social media are driven by their inner motivations rather than marketing stimuli. Understanding tourists' motivations to engage with destinations on social media will help tourism marketing managers design better-fitted content and campaigns with their insights.

Moreover, the outcomes or effectiveness of tourist engagement are critical for destination managers. Research has emphasised the pivotal role of engagement in guiding travel intention, destination choice, and tourists' behaviours (Jones et al., 2021; Liu & Chong, 2023; Tham et al., 2020). However, there are calls for greater efforts to gain a more comprehensive understanding of tourists' engagement outcomes, such as their intentions to revisit and advocate for the destination (Kumar & Kaushik, 2020).

This study aims to holistically investigate tourists' engagement behaviours with their destinations on social media. First, this study will examine a full range of social media behaviours of tourists from low to high levels of engagement with tourism destinations. Second, this study will identify which motivations inside tourists drive those engagement behaviours on social media. Third, this study will determine which engagement behaviours influence the outcomes in revisiting intention and destination advocacy. Theoretically, this study will expand the knowledge of the engagement behaviours of tourists, who are very active in the social media environment. Practically, this study will help destination and tourism managers effectively navigate tourists' engagement behaviours and design more efficient marketing strategies.

The paper's organisation is as follows: Firstly, we present the tourists' engagement behaviours on social media, their motivations, and consequences. Next, we formulate hypotheses and propose the research model. After that, we will present the research methodology and research findings. Lastly, we enumerate discussions and the limitations of our research.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

1.1. Tourists' engagement behaviours on social media

Customer is a "psychological state, which occurs by virtue of interactive customer experiences with a focal agent/object within specific service relationships" (Brodie et al., 2011). It is conceptualised as a multidimensional construct encompassing three dimensions- cognitive, affective, and behavioural (Harrigan et al., 2018; Vivek et al., 2014). Cognitive engagement is the mental process of attention and interest towards objects and events (Hollebeek et al., 2014). Affective engagement describes the positive emotions a consumer experiences toward a brand during a specific interaction (Hollebeek et al., 2014). Behavioural engagement refers to the energy, effort, and time a consumer dedicates to a brand during a specific interaction (Hollebeek et al., 2014).

Customer engagement has been identified as a central research priority, with growing attention being paid to their engagement behaviours on social media (Kabadayi & Price, 2014). Social media is a collection of internet-based platforms that enable users to create and share content (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Unlike traditional marketing communication channels, social media is a powerful tool for facilitating customer engagement (Samala et al., 2019). It is more transparent, providing two-way interaction, and often more controlled by consumers than marketers (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004).

There are many different approaches to engagement behaviours on social media. Several studies simplify it using basic metrics such as the number of likes or shares for assessment (Lee et al., 2021; Ruas & Barbosa, 2022). Others used various criteria to categorise social media engagement behaviours into different dimensions or groups. Park & Jiang (2021) divided engagement behaviours into passive and active and named consuming the content (view and read), and contributing to the content (interact and create content). By dividing engagement behaviours into passive and active, Park and Jiang suggested two dimensions: consuming the content (view and read) and contributing to the content (interact and create content) (Khan, 2017, p. 20; Park & Jiang, 2021). Depending on the time and effort devoted to social media, De Vries et al. (2017) use the time and effort put on social media to categorise engagement behaviours into contributing and creating. Notably, Muntinga et al. (2011) categorised the engagement behaviours of consumers towards brands in the digital environment into three groups: consumption, contribution, and creation. Consumption is the most basic form, where activities like reading articles or viewing videos are included. Contribution represents a higher engagement, where users consume content and interact with it or other users. The highest form of engagement is creation, where users proactively generate and disseminate their content (Muntinga et al., 2011; Schivinski et al., 2016).

1.2. Motivations of social media engagement

The use and gratification theory (UGT) explains why individuals use media (Calder et al., 2009) by positing that media users are actively engaged in choosing and utilising media platforms to gratify their specific needs (Leung, 2009). Social media platforms enable customers to take an active role, and their engagement behaviours could be influenced by their motivation to use social media (Dolan et al., 2016). The application of UGT is appropriate in the tourism context as tourists can be considered active in using social media for travelling purposes. Utilising this theory, previous research has underscored several key motivations driving customer engagement in the online context. These motivations include information (Cvijikj & Michahelles, 2013; Dolan et al., 2016), entertainment (Dolan et al., 2016; Men & Tsai, 2013), social interaction (de Silva, 2019), and remuneration (Men & Tsai, 2013). These motivations collectively shape and drive customer engagement in the online environment.

Information

Information motivation is satisfied when the consumers can access practical and valuable content (Jahn & Kunz, 2012). If consumers can find that the brand's post contains sought-after information, it will motivate their customers to be involved in the social media community (de Vries et al., 2012). When customers perceive that a social media page can meet their information needs, it increases the likelihood of eliciting positive engagement toward that page (Jahn & Kunz, 2012). In tourism, information serves as a significant motivation for tourists to utilise social media both before and following their travels (Nemec Rudež & Vodeb, 2015). Tourists are increasingly reliant on destination information available on social media, which drives them to explore and consume content related to those destinations (Fardous et al., 2021; Slocum & Lee, 2022). Besides, tourists' motivation for information might influence their intention to contribute to discussions about destinations by liking or commenting on content related to those destinations that have been created by the tourism community (De Vries et al., 2017). Tourists can also create posts related to their inquiries about destinations to fulfil their information-seeking needs. Therefore, the study proposes the following hypothesis:

H1a-H1c: Information has a positive impact on tourists' (a) consumption, (b) contribution, and (c) creation behaviours on social media related to tourism destinations.

Entertainment

Entertainment motivation includes the desire for relaxation and enjoyment individuals seek when engaging with brands on social media (Dolan et al., 2016). Seeking entertainment encourages consumers to engage with e-commerce brands (Parihar et al., 2018) and enhances virtual interactive experiences and social commerce engagement (Xue et al., 2020). Customers exhibited more responsive positive behaviours, such as liking, when exposed to entertaining content on the brand pages (Tafesse, 2015). In tourism research, entertainment motivates tourists to watch travel vlogs on YouTube (Silaban et al., 2022). Hence, the study proposes the following hypothesis:

H2a-H2c: Entertainment has a positive impact on tourists' (a) consumption, (b) contribution, and (c) creation behaviours on social media related to tourism destinations.

Social interaction

Customers actively seek to derive value from social interactions with individuals of similar interests on social media (Tsimonis & Dimitriadis, 2014). The motivation for social interaction encourages users to create and contribute to digital brand-associated content (Muntinga et al., 2011) and drive overall consumer engagement (Gummerus et al., 2012). The motivation for social interaction is linked to increased levels of customer engagement, which includes a range of activities like consuming, contributing, and creating content related to the brand (Mishra, 2019; Vale & Fernandes, 2018). Hence, the study proposes the following hypothesis:

H3a-H3c: Social interaction has a positive impact on tourists' (a) consumption, (b) contribution, and (c) creation behaviours on social media related to tourism destinations.

Remuneration

Brands have recognised the significance of providing remuneration as a new attraction strategy on social media (Rohm et al., 2013). The motivation to seek economic incentives is pivotal in determining customer engagement with a brand (Enginkaya & Yılmaz, 2014). Muntinga et al. (2011) discovered that customers frequently interact with digital brand-associated content anticipating some reward, and this anticipation was linked to reduced engagement levels. In contrast, Vale & Fernandes (2018) the motive for remuneration was associated with increased levels of engagement, especially when it came to contributing and producing content. Consequently, the study proposes the following hypothesis:

H4a-H4c: Remuneration has a positive impact on tourists' (a) consumption, (b) contribution, and (c) creation behaviours on social media related to tourism destinations.

Recognition

Unlike the other motivations well-researched in UGT, recognition is added to this study to explore other motivations that could influence tourists' engagement behaviours. Recognition can be understood as an expression of "face" in Eastern cultures, which is closely associated with notions of dignity and prestige (Filieri & Lin, 2017). Recognition is an essential motivation for sharing travelling photos on social networks (Li, 2020). In this study, we propose that recognition motivation might influence other engagement behaviours of tourists on social media. Consequently, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H5a-H5c: Recognition has a positive impact on tourists' (a) consumption, (b) contribution, and (c) creation behaviours on social media related to tourism destinations.

1.3 Outcomes of social media engagement

Destination advocacy

Brand advocacy refers to the actions taken to actively support a particular brand or company (Kim et al., 2010). These customers not only make purchases from the brand but also actively promote it, encouraging others to do the same (Huba, 2012). Simple advocacy behaviours from the customers (e.g. feedback or referrals) can play a vital role in maintaining a positive reputation for the company (Wallace et al., 2014). Brand advocacy is of significant importance because it can promote the acceptance of a product or service and contribute to the overall value of the brand (Keller, 1993). In this study, we posit that the social media engagement of tourists can lead to advocacy for a destination. Consequently, we propose the following hypotheses:

H6a-H6c: Tourists' engagement behaviours on social media, including (a) consumption, (b) contribution, and (c) creation, positively influence tourist destination advocacy.

Revisit intention

Revisit intentions denote a visitor's tendency or desire to return to a particular place (Baker & Crompton, 2000). Assessing revisit intentions is crucial for evaluating the success of a tourism destination (Díaz-Pompa et al., 2025; Shonk & Chelladurai, 2008). In various contexts, revisit intentions have been studied as an outcome of marketing efforts (Tanford & Jung, 2017).

In this study, we suggest that tourists actively engaging with a tourism destination on social media are more likely to consider revisiting that destination. Therefore, we present the following hypotheses:

H7a-H7c: Tourists' engagement behaviours on social media, including (a) consumption, (b) contribution, and (c) creation, positively influence tourists' intention to revisit destinations.

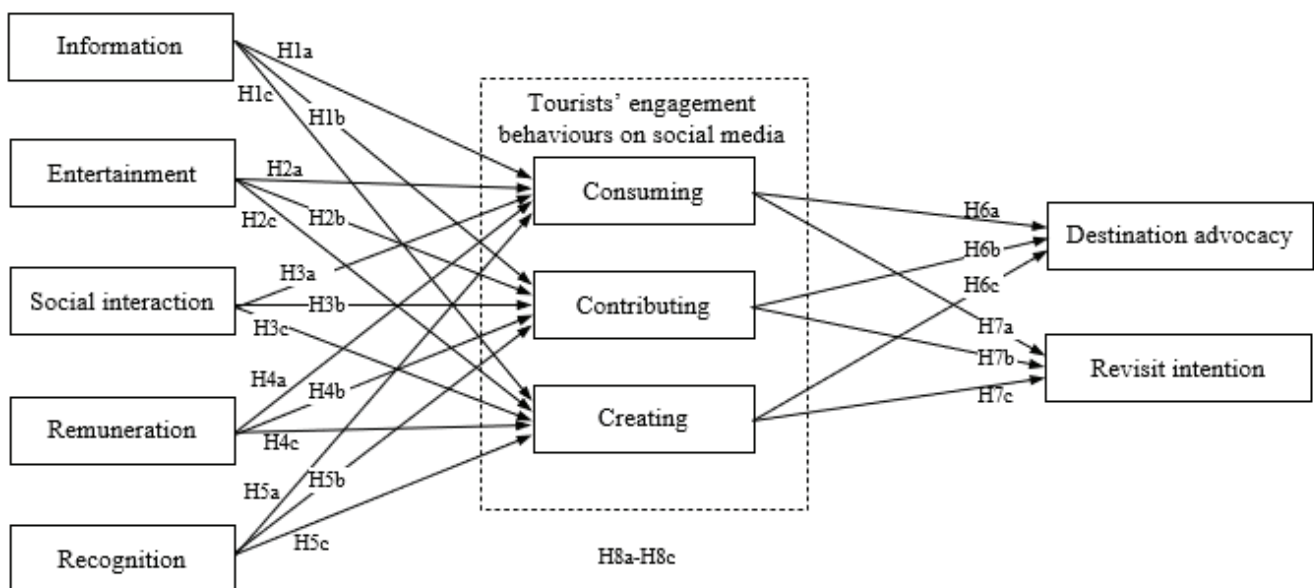
The mediating roles of tourists' engagement behaviours

Customer engagement plays a central role in the process with its antecedents and consequences in the engagement process (Brodie et al., 2013). Customer engagement was found to mediate the relationship between customer perceptions and behavioural intention (Dabbous & Barakat, 2020). In tourism, customer engagement mediated the influence of customer involvement with tourism social media brands on their behavioural intention (Harrigan et al., 2017). Therefore, we argue that tourists' engagement behaviours will mediate their motivations to use social media, including information, entertainment, social interaction, remuneration, and recognition and the outcomes of engagement behaviours, which are destination advocacy and revisit intentions. As such, we propose the following hypotheses:

H8a-H8c: Tourists' engagement behaviours on social media, including (a) consumption, (b) contribution, and (c) creation, mediate the influence of information, entertainment, social interaction, remuneration, recognition on tourists' destination advocacy and revisit intention.

Based on the above hypotheses, we present the conceptual framework as below.

Figure 1: Conceptual research framework



2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Data collection

Hue City was selected as the research location as being a well-known tourist destination, attracting over 2 million tourists annually (Vietnam Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, 2022). This destination possesses 5 world cultural heritage sites, over 500 diverse festivals, royal and folk cuisine, and many traditional handicraft villages (VietnamPlus, 2024). The local authorities and tourism organisations have established various social media pages and activities to promote tourism images on popular social networks (Vietnam Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, 2021).

Data was collected through face-to-face surveys using questionnaires by trained interviewers. The respondents were tourists visiting this destination and using social networks to engage with it. The convenient sampling technique was utilised, which is well-suited for tourist destinations frequently visited by tourists. The survey locations are popular tourist attractions in this destination. Before filling out the questionnaire, tourists were asked two questions to ensure they were suitable for the study: (1) Are they visiting this destination for tourism? and (2) Do they use social media for tourism when visiting this destination?. Data collection took place between July 2022 and September 2022. A total of 470 questionnaires were collected; 16 were excluded from the dataset because they lacked essential information and contained dishonest responses. Consequently, 454 valid questionnaires were retained for further analysis.

2.2. Measurement

The measurement scale for social media engagement behaviour was derived from Schivinski et al. (2016) and underwent some modifications. The variables in this scale measurement were conducted using a 7-point Likert scale, with (1) indicating "Never" and (7) indicating "Very frequently".

Regarding the motivations for engaging with social media, the measurement scales for information, entertainment, social interaction, and remuneration were adopted from de Silva (2019), and the measurement scale for recognition was adopted from Li (2020). The measurement scale for destination advocacy was adopted from Rather et al. (2020). The measurement scale for revisit intention was adapted from Huang & Hsu (2009). The measurement scales used a 7-point Likert scale, where (1) corresponded to "Strongly disagree," and (7) indicated "Strongly agree." Items of these measurement scales are given in the Table 1.

We utilised a back-translation method to compose the Vietnamese questionnaire from English. Initially, we adjusted the measurement scales and formulated the questionnaire using references from English literature. Subsequently, we translated the questionnaire into Vietnamese and performed a preliminary survey involving 30 tourists and 12 experts to detect any ambiguities or discrepancies. Finally, we asked a translator to translate the questionnaire back into English and contrast it with the initial English version to confirm that both versions conveyed identical meanings.

Table 1: Scale measurement

Constructs	Code	Items	Sources
Consuming behaviours	CS1	I read articles related to the Hue tourism destination on social media	Schivinski et al. (2016)
	CS2	I read page(s) related to Hue tourism destination on social network sites	
	CS3	I watch images related to Hue tourism destination	
	CS4	I follow blogs related to Hue tourism destination	
	CS5	I follow Hue tourism destination on social media	
Contributing behaviours	CT1	I comment on videos related to Hue tourism destination	Schivinski et al. (2016)
	CT2	I comment on articles related to Hue tourism destination	
	CT3	I comment on images related to Hue tourism destination	
	CT4	I share Hue tourism destination related posts	
	CT5	I "Like" images related to Hue tourism destination	
	CT6	I "Like" posts related to Hue tourism destination	
Creating behaviours	CR1	I initiate posts related to Hue tourism destination	Schivinski et al. (2016)
	CR2	I initiate posts related to Hue tourism destination on social network sites	
	CR3	I post images related to Hue tourism destination	
	CR4	I write reviews related to Hue tourism destination	
	CR5	I write posts related to Hue tourism destination on forums	
	CR6	I post videos that show Hue tourism destination	

Constructs	Code	Items	Sources
Information	INF1	To seek Hue tourism destination related information	de Silva (2019)
	INF2	To get up-to-date information about Hue tourism destination	
	INF3	Social media is a convenient source of Hue tourism destination information	
Entertainment	ENT1	To entertain	de Silva (2019)
	ENT2	To relax	
	ENT3	To have fun	
Social interaction	SI1	To connect with like-minded tourists	de Silva (2019)
	SI2	To help other tourists	
	SI3	To provide information to other tourists	
	SI4	Because I want to connect with other tourists	
	SI5	To share my ideas with other tourists	
Remuneration	REM1	To get some financial benefits like reductions and presents	de Silva (2019)
	REM2	To get bonuses	
	REM3	To get fast responses	
Recognition	REC1	To be more popular.	Li (2020)
	REC2	To feel more important	
	REC3	To gain attention.	
	REC4	To get more likes.	
	REC5	To get more comments.	
	REC6	To gain status	
	REC7	To look good	
Destination advocacy	DA1	I love to talk about the positive aspects of Hue tourism destination with acquaintances	Rather et al. (2020)
	DA2	I would suggest others to visit the Hue tourism destination	
	DA3	I will persuade others to visit Hue tourism destination	
Revisit intention	RI1	I plan to revisit Hue tourism destination in the coming years	Huang & Hsu (2009)
	RI2	I plan to revisit Hue tourism destination in the coming years	
	RI3	I desire to visit Hue tourism destination in the coming years	
	RI4	It's likely that I will revisit Hue tourism destination in the coming years	

2.3. Data analysis

Data analysis in the current study was conducted using the partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) method with the software SmartPLS version 4. This method is popular in business research because of its adaptable use concerning sample size and unrestricted multivariate normality (Hair, 2019). PLS-SEM can provide highly precise estimates in studies based on large samples and multivariate normality (Hair, 2017).

The analysis process involved two stages, which included a 5,000-bootstrap procedure to assess the measurement model and the structural model (Hair, 2017). In this study, hypothesis testing utilized a two-tailed test, with a hypothesis considered supported if the t-value exceeded the critical value (i.e., $t \geq 1.96$, $p \leq 0.05$) in the structural model.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Descriptive statistics

The profiles of the respondents are displayed in Table 2. Female respondents were slightly higher, with 176 individuals (60.7%). Regarding age, the largest group consisted of tourists between 18 and 30 years old, making up 63.3% of the sample, followed by respondents aged 30 to 50 years (24.0%), while those under 18 years old and over 50 years old constituted smaller segments at 8.8% and 3.9%, respectively. Regarding income, 33.4% of respondents reported an income of under 5 million VND, while 26.6% fell in the 5 – 10 million VND range. Additionally, 19.6% of tourists had incomes between 10 – 15 million VND, with 11.4% in the 15 – 20 million VND range and 9.0% reporting incomes exceeding 20 million VND. Regarding the frequency

of social media usage, 9.0% of respondents spend less than one hour per day on social media, while the majority, constituting 31.1%, use social media for one to less than three hours daily, with smaller percentages dedicating more time, ranging from three to less than five hours (32.6%) and over five hours (27.3%). The survey also presents the social media platforms they currently use. Facebook emerged as the dominant platform, utilised by 99.5% of the sample. Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube also demonstrated significant user bases, with usage rates of 57.8%, 58.5%, and 59.6%, respectively. Despite being less prominent, Tripadvisor still had 2.2% of the respondents engaging with the platform.

Table 2: Profiles of respondents (measured by the number of tourists)

Criteria	Category	n	%
Gender	Male	179	39.3
	Female	176	60.7
Age	< 18 years old	40	8.8
	18 - 30 years old	288	63.3
	30 - 50 years old	109	24.0
	> 50 years old	18	3.9
Monthly income	Under 5 million VND	152	33.4
	From 5 to less than 10 million VND	121	26.6
	From 10 to less than 15 million VND	89	19.6
	From 15 to less than 20 million VND	52	11.4
	Over 20 million VND	41	9.0
Frequency of social media usage	Less than 1 hour / day	41	9.0
	From 1 hour to less than 3 hours per day	141	31.1
	From 3 hours to less than 5 hours per day	148	32.6
	Over 5 hours per day	124	27.3
Social media platform	Facebook	438	99.5
	Instagram	263	57.8
	Tiktok	266	58.5
	Youtube	271	59.6
	Tripadvisor	10	2.2
Total		454	100.0

3.2. Measurement model results

In the measurement model, each item loading is greater than 0.7 and demonstrates statistical significance ($p < 0.001$) (Hair, 2019). The results in Table 3 show that the lowest item loading is 0.773, which is higher than 0.7. These indicators exhibited stronger loadings on their respective constructs compared to other constructs, eliminating concerns about cross-loadings. The findings demonstrate a good internal consistency, as the minimum Cronbach's alpha is $0.872 > 0.8$, and the minimum composite reliability is $0.873 > 0.8$.

Table 3: **Measurement model results**

Constructs	Items	Loadings	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	AVE
Information	INF1	0.925	0.872	0.873	0.797
	INF2	0.885			
	INF3	0.868			
Entertainment	ENT1	0.930	0.919	0.923	0.861
	ENT2	0.949			
	ENT3	0.905			
Social interaction	SI1	0.787	0.905	0.909	0.725
	SI2	0.873			
	SI3	0.890			
	SI4	0.855			
	SI5	0.850			
Remuneration	REM1	0.913	0.881	0.883	0.809
	REM2	0.925			
	REM3	0.860			
Recognition	REC1	0.861	0.952	0.954	0.778
	REC2	0.875			
	REC3	0.900			
	REC4	0.890			
	REC5	0.905			
	REC6	0.885			
	REC7	0.896			
Consuming	CS1	0.835	0.909	0.911	0.733
	CS2	0.883			
	CS3	0.875			
	CS4	0.838			
	CS5	0.849			
Contributing	CT1	0.887	0.923	0.925	0.724
	CT2	0.910			
	CT3	0.901			
	CT4	0.830			
	CT5	0.791			
	CT6	0.778			
Creating	CR1	0.868	0.931	0.937	0.746
	CR2	0.913			
	CR3	0.925			
	CR4	0.895			
	CR5	0.773			
	CR6	0.797			
Destination advocacy	DA1	0.924	0.918	0.921	0.858
	DA2	0.949			
	DA3	0.906			
Revisit intention	RI1	0.938	0.951	0.954	0.871
	RI2	0.935			
	RI3	0.944			
	RI4	0.916			

Notes: AVE = Average variance extracted

Next, this study examines the convergent and discriminant validity. Convergent validity was established, as all the average variance extracted (AVE) values were above 0.50. Regarding discriminant validity, the Fornell & Larcker (1981) criterion was applied, revealing the square root of the AVE values was greater than the respective correlations, thus satisfying discriminant validity (see Table 4).

Table 4: Assessment of discriminant validity in the measurement model

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
INF	<i>0.893</i>									
ENT	0.417	<i>0.928</i>								
SI	0.379	0.344	<i>0.852</i>							
REM	0.300	0.237	0.688	<i>0.899</i>						
REC	0.180	0.271	0.569	0.645	<i>0.882</i>					
CS	0.433	0.325	0.260	0.234	0.289	<i>0.856</i>				
CT	0.258	0.274	0.267	0.288	0.379	0.567	<i>0.851</i>			
CR	0.246	0.233	0.360	0.370	0.464	0.476	0.634	<i>0.864</i>		
DA	0.265	0.212	0.332	0.285	0.183	0.311	0.221	0.312	<i>0.926</i>	
RI	0.276	0.239	0.266	0.192	0.119	0.326	0.172	0.259	0.736	<i>0.933</i>

Notes: Diagonals (italics) indicate the square root of AVE; Non-diagonals indicate the correlations.

3.3. Structural model results

Hypothesis testing was conducted by analysing the t-values and the standardised beta coefficients derived from the results of the structural model. Out of the 21 proposed hypotheses, 12 were supported.

Both the information and recognition significantly and positively affected all three engagement behaviours. Specifically, the information motive had a significant impact on consuming ($\beta=0.357$, $p=0.000$), contributing ($\beta=0.151$, $p=0.002$), and creating ($\beta=0.124$, $p=0.012$), which validates H1a to H1c. The recognition motive had a significant impact on consuming ($\beta=0.224$, $p=0.000$), contributing ($\beta=0.315$, $p=0.000$), and creating ($\beta=0.366$, $p=0.000$), thus confirming H5a to H5c.

On the other hand, entertainment significantly impacted consuming ($\beta=0.131$, $p=0.008$) and contributing ($\beta=0.131$, $p=0.008$). Its impact on creating was found to be non-significant ($\beta=0.025$, $p=0.313$), which means that while H2a and H2b are supported, H2c is not.

The social interaction and remuneration did not show any significant impact on the three aspects of tourist engagement behaviours on social media. The effects of social interaction on consuming ($\beta=0.029$, $p=0.650$), contributing ($\beta=-0.039$, $p=0.572$), and creating ($\beta=0.055$, $p=0.426$) were not statistically significant. Likewise, the remuneration motive's influence on consuming ($\beta=-0.029$, $p=0.656$), contributing ($\beta=0.036$, $p=0.599$), and creating ($\beta=0.046$, $p=0.519$) were also not significant.

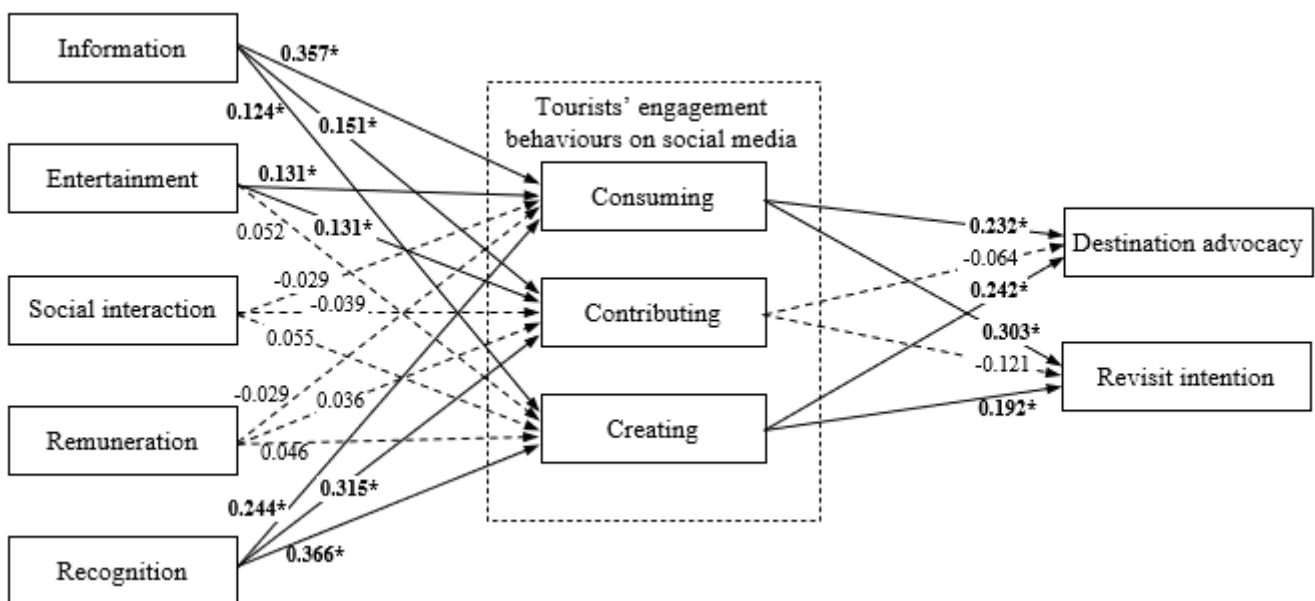
We investigated how tourists' engagement behaviours on social media influenced their destination advocacy and revisit intention. The consuming behaviours had a significant positive effect on both destination advocacy ($\beta=0.232$, $p=0.000$) and the revisit intention ($\beta=0.303$, $p=0.000$), thereby confirming the hypotheses H6a and H7a. Similarly, creating behaviours had a significant positive impact on destination advocacy ($\beta=0.242$, $p=0.000$) and the revisit intention ($\beta=0.192$, $p=0.003$), endorsing H6a and H6c. Conversely, contributing behaviours did not show a significant effect on destination advocacy ($\beta=-0.064$, $p=0.306$) or on the revisit intention ($\beta=-0.121$, $p=0.063$), meaning H6b and H7b were not supported.

Table 5: Results of the direct relationships of tourists' engagement behaviours, motivations and outcomes

Hypothesis	Paths/Relationships	Standardised beta	p-value	Confidence intervals	Conclusion
H1	(a) Information → Consuming	0,357	0,000*	[0.268; 0.449]	Supported
	(b) Information → Contributing	0,151	0,000*	[0.054; 0.246]	Supported
	(c) Information → Creating	0,124	0,012*	[0.028; 0.222]	Supported
H2	(a) Entertainment → Consuming	0,131	0,008*	[0.031; 0.229]	Supported
	(b) Entertainment → Contributing	0,131	0,008*	[0.034; 0.225]	Supported
	(c) Entertainment → Creating	0,025	0,313 ^{ns}	[-0.049; 0.152]	Not supported
H3	(a) Social interaction → Consuming	0,029	0,650 ^{ns}	[-0.150; 0.104]	Not supported
	(b) Social interaction → Contributing	-0,039	0,572 ^{ns}	[-0.172; 0.100]	Not supported
	(c) Social interaction → Creating	0,055	0,426 ^{ns}	[-0.077; 0.192]	Not supported
H4	(a) Remuneration → Consuming	-0,029	0,656 ^{ns}	[-0.160; 0.088]	Not supported
	(b) Remuneration → Contributing	0,036	0,599 ^{ns}	[-0.101; 0.164]	Not supported
	(c) Remuneration → Creating	0,046	0,519 ^{ns}	[-0.099; 0.181]	Not supported
H5	(a) Recognition → Consuming	0,224	0,000*	[0.101; 0.346]	Supported
	(b) Recognition → Contributing	0,315	0,000*	[0.185; 0.447]	Supported
	(c) Recognition → Creating	0,366	0,000*	[0.237; 0.497]	Supported
H6	(a) Consuming → Destination advocacy	0,232	0,000*	[0.121; 0.341]	Supported
	(b) Contributing → Destination advocacy	0,064	0,306 ^{ns}	[0.194; 0.411]	Not supported
	(c) Creating → Destination advocacy	0,242	0,000*	[-0.182; 0.064]	Supported
H7	(a) Consuming → Revisit intention	0,303	0,000*	[-0.247; 0.008]	Supported
	(b) Contributing → Revisit intention	-0,121	0,063 ^{ns}	[0.116; 0.359]	Not supported
	(c) Creating → Revisit intention	0,192	0,003*	[0.059; 0.315]	Supported

Notes: *p < 0.05, ns = not significant

Figure 2: Results of the structural model



Notes: → Significant effects ($p \leq 0.05$); → Non-significant effects ($p > 0.05$)

Next, the mediating role of consuming, contributing, and creating behaviours is evaluated (H8a-H8c). The researchers followed the mediation-testing approach of Nitzl et al. (2016) and utilised a bootstrapping procedure with 5000 re-samples. If the confidence interval did not include zero value, there is significant mediating effect. The results from Table 6 showed that consuming behaviours mediated six relationships and creating behaviours mediated three relationships among three motivations (information, entertainment, and recognition) and outcomes (destination advocacy and revisit intention). Consuming behaviours mediated the linkages between information-seeking motivations and both destination advocacy (indirect effect = 0.084, $p < 0.001$) and revisit intention (indirect effect = 0.109, $p < 0.001$). Similarly, consuming behaviours mediated the relationships

between entertainment motivations and destination advocacy (indirect effect = 0.031, $p = 0.030$), as well as revisit intention (indirect effect = 0.040, $p = 0.019$). Creating behaviours mediated the relationship between recognition motivations and both destination advocacy (indirect effect = 0.088, $p = 0.001$) and revisit intention (indirect effect = 0.070, $p = 0.008$). Additionally, creating behaviours mediated the relationship between information-seeking motivations and destination advocacy (indirect effect = 0.030, $p = 0.044$). In contrast, contributing behaviours did not show significant mediation effects in the relationships between motivations and outcomes. Thus, H8a and H8c were supported, but H8b was not supported.

Table 6: Mediating effects of tourists' engagement behaviours on social media

Paths/Relationships	Indirect effect	P-value	Confidence intervals	Conclusion
Information → Consuming → Destination advocacy	0.084	0.000*	[0.041, 0.131]	H8a: Supported
Information → Consuming → Revisit intention	0.109	0.000*	[0.061, 0.162]	
Entertainment → Consuming → Destination advocacy	0.031	0.030*	[0.008, 0.065]	H8b: Not supported
Entertainment → Consuming → Revisit intention	0.040	0.019*	[0.010, 0.077]	
Social interaction → Consuming → Destination advocacy	-0.005	0.657 ^{ns}	[-0.038, 0.023]	
Social interaction → Consuming → Revisit intention	-0.007	0.654 ^{ns}	[-0.047, 0.030]	
Remuneration → Consuming → Destination advocacy	-0.007	0.668 ^{ns}	[-0.040, 0.022]	
Remuneration → Consuming → Revisit intention	-0.009	0.663 ^{ns}	[-0.050, 0.027]	
Recognition → Consuming → Destination advocacy	0.052	0.006*	[0.021, 0.096]	
Recognition → Consuming → Revisit intention	0.068	0.002*	[0.030, 0.118]	
Information → Contributing → Destination advocacy	-0.009	0.352 ^{ns}	[-0.035, 0.008]	
Information → Contributing → Revisit intention	-0.018	0.125 ^{ns}	[-0.048, -0.000]	
Entertainment → Contributing → Destination advocacy	-0.008	0.350 ^{ns}	[-0.032, 0.006]	
Entertainment → Contributing → Revisit intention	-0.015	0.124 ^{ns}	[-0.044, -0.001]	
Social interaction → Contributing → Destination advocacy	0.002	0.704 ^{ns}	[-0.005, 0.027]	
Social interaction → Contributing → Revisit intention	0.004	0.625 ^{ns}	[-0.009, 0.033]	
Remuneration → Contributing → Destination advocacy	-0.002	0.714 ^{ns}	[-0.023, 0.005]	
Remuneration → Contributing → Revisit intention	-0.004	0.647 ^{ns}	[-0.030, 0.009]	
Recognition → Contributing → Destination advocacy	-0.021	0.341 ^{ns}	[-0.067, 0.018]	
Recognition → Contributing → Revisit intention	-0.039	0.104 ^{ns}	[-0.094, 0.000]	
Information → Creating → Destination advocacy	0.030	0.044*	[0.007, 0.067]	H8c: Supported
Information → Creating → Revisit intention	0.024	0.078 ^{ns}	[0.004, 0.059]	
Entertainment → Creating → Destination advocacy	0.012	0.335 ^{ns}	[-0.009, 0.043]	H8c: Supported
Entertainment → Creating → Revisit intention	0.009	0.359 ^{ns}	[-0.007, 0.038]	
Social interaction → Creating → Destination advocacy	0.015	0.451 ^{ns}	[-0.020, 0.051]	
Social interaction → Creating → Revisit intention	0.012	0.469 ^{ns}	[-0.014, 0.045]	
Remuneration → Creating → Destination advocacy	0.011	0.542 ^{ns}	[-0.020, 0.053]	
Remuneration → Creating → Revisit intention	0.008	0.549 ^{ns}	[-0.016, 0.045]	
Recognition → Creating → Destination advocacy	0.088	0.001*	[0.044, 0.148]	
Recognition → Creating → Revisit intention	0.070	0.008*	[0.024, 0.129]	

Note(s): * $p < 0.05$, ns = not significant

4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Although tourist engagement is being emphasised as essential in tourism literature and social media are serving as critical communication channels where tourists can express their relationship with tourism brands through various activities, less research has deeply examined the diverse engagement behaviours of tourists with destinations on social media. This study holistically investigated tourists' engagement behaviours at different levels, from the lowest level (consuming) to the medium level (contributing) to the highest level (creating). Specifically, it examined the motivations, including information, entertainment, social interaction, remuneration, and recognition, and the outcomes, which are destination advocacy and revisit intention, of such engagement behaviours on social media.

Regarding motivations to engage on social media, recognition could be considered as the strongest driver, significantly influencing all three engagement behavioural groups: consuming, contributing, and creating. Although recognition is a dominant motivation for sharing travel photos (Li, 2020), this study has emphasised the importance of this motivation to a wider range of engagement behaviours. Moreover, recognition was not popularly considered as a variable in other research utilising UGT (Bambauer-Sachse & Einsle, 2025; Kaur & Kathuria, 2024; Moon & An, 2022); this study showed its critical role in comparison with other motivations. Information is a strong motivation to engage with destinations, indicating that tourists who turn to social media primarily for information are more likely to engage with destinations. This motivation was also found to encourage users to engage with fast-moving consumer goods brands or sports tourism (Bambauer-Sachse & Einsle, 2025; Cvijikj & Michahelles, 2013).

This is in line with Cvijikj & Michahelles (2013)'s discovery that content rich in information encouraged users to interact with fast-moving consumer goods brands. Similarly, Muntinga et al. (2011) deduced that the motivation to obtain information played a role in steering customers to engage with a brand. Entertainment is also another important motivation for the engagement behaviours of tourists as it motivates consumers to consume and contribute to the destination discussion on social media. It is a primary factor motivating consumers to engage with brand-associated social media pages (Pöyry et al., 2013). Yet, in contrast to Cheung et al. (2020) and Piehler et al. (2019), who posited that entertainment plays a crucial role in co-creating value, our findings suggest that entertainment does not significantly motivate tourists to create content on social media. This disparity might be attributed to the unique nature of Hue destination, renowned for its historical and cultural significance rather than being an entertainment hub.

Remuneration and social interaction were not found to have linkage with tourists' engagement behaviours on social media. Remuneration was neither establishing a relationship between the motive for incentives and involvement in tourism Facebook pages (Ben-Shaul & Reichel, 2018). This contrasts with the broader literature, which generally indicates that the remuneration motive plays a positive role in encouraging engagement within online brand communities. As for social interaction, the research findings aligned with Ben-Shaul & Reichel (2018) perspective, which suggests that customers might not view social media pages as primary platforms for social interaction. This is contrary to Kujur & Singh (2019), who emphasised that increased social interactions within Facebook brand pages can lead to higher levels of user activities such as likes, comments, and shares.

Our study found that tourists' engagement behaviours on social media have a positive influence on their destination advocacy and revisit intention. This study contributes to the current body of academic literature by empirically analysing different dimensions of tourist engagement behaviours - specifically consuming, contributing, and creating on their destination advocacy and revisit intention. The results of our study are consistent with those of De Vries & Carlson (2014) and Piehler et al. (2019), who pinpointed the positive effects of both consuming and producing brand-associated content on social media in promoting customer loyalty. However, we observed that contributing had a non-significant impact on destination advocacy and revisit intention. This is consistent with de Silva (2019), who argued that customer engagement might have a limited impact on repurchase intention. However, this results differ from prior studies, such as those by Jahn & Kunz (2012), which emphasised the significance of contributing in driving consumers' behavioural intentions.

Furthermore, this study highlights the mediating roles of consuming (lowest level of engagement) and creating behaviours (highest level of engagement). However, it also reveals that contributing behaviours (middle level of engagement) did not significantly mediate the relationships between motivations and outcomes. Traditionally, contributing behaviours, such as actively participating in discussions or sharing content, have been presumed to positively influence engagement outcomes by fostering community interaction and enhancing brand loyalty. The results suggest the effects of engagement behaviours may vary depending on the context and motivations. This finding challenges assumptions about the uniform impact of all engagement behaviours on tourists' advocacy and revisit intentions. It prompts further exploration into why contributing behaviours may not exert the same influence and whether other factors, such as social norms or perceived benefits, moderate these relationships.

The results of this research provide significant insights for tourism businesses and destination management organisations to execute marketing campaigns more effectively and efficiently and establish stronger relationships with tourists. Given the importance of recognition, it is advisable to prioritise strategies that boost tourists' online presence and visibility. This could involve creating beautiful places for tourists to capture their best moments in pictures or videos. Moreover, tourism destinations should place a strong emphasis on composing information-rich and entertaining content to capture and maintain tourists' engagement behaviours. Tourism businesses might reconsider the inclusion of remuneration and social interaction elements in their campaigns, as these motivations do not significantly influence tourists' engagement behaviours. Tourism businesses and organisations should also carefully and strategically choose which indicators of tourists' engagement on social media when estimating tourists' intentions and behaviours. Figures related to consuming and creating content, such as the number of views and the number of posts, can be valuable metrics to gauge tourists' levels of tourism destination advocacy and their intention to revisit. However, it is essential to be cautious when using data related to contributing, as they might not accurately predict tourists' intentions and behaviours. While likes and comments can indicate some level of engagement, they may not necessarily reflect the relationship to tourists' commitment in the future.

There are limitations associated with this study. Firstly, the findings might not be directly transferable to other destinations as it is limited to a specific tourism destination, which possesses unique characteristics and social media strategies. Future research should encompass a broader range of destinations within Vietnam or globally to enhance generalisability. Secondly, the questionnaires were exclusively collected from domestic tourists. As a result, the conclusions drawn from this study might

not indicate the perspectives of other types of tourists with distinct attitudes, cultural backgrounds, and behaviours. Subsequent research should strive to include diverse sources of tourists to gain a more comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon.

In preparing this paper, the authors used ChatGPT and Grok for enhancing the readability and language of the manuscript. Following the use of these tools/services, the authors have reviewed and edited the content as necessary and take full responsibility for the content of the published article.

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