

## The Future of Rural Tourism in Bali, Indonesia: The Role of Social Media Platform

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### Abstract

Digital transformation in Indonesia encourages the development of rural tourism as an instrument for local economic recovery. This study aims to test a Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)-based model that integrates the role of Social Networking Sites (SNS) on the intention to participate in rural tourism and its impact on sustainability. The research method uses a quantitative survey with a convenience sampling approach. Data was collected through a Google Form which was distributed to 130 student respondents. Data analysis was carried out using SmartPLS to test structural models and relationships between variables. The results of the analysis showed that attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control had a significant effect on the intention to participate in rural tourism. The use of social media has been shown to moderate the relationship between the SDG variables and the intention to participate. These findings confirm the validity of the proposed model. The implications of the research provide a theoretical contribution to the development of the SDG model in the context of digital tourism and practical for rural destination managers in designing social media-based marketing strategies. The limitations of research related to the use of convenience sampling require careful interpretation of the results regarding their external validity.

**Keywords:** rural tourism; intention to visit; attitude; perceived behavioral control; subjective norm; social networking sites; trip experience sharing

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## INTRODUCTION

### Background

In the current era of globalization, tourism has become one of the most

significant sectors in the world. The tourism industry has consistently proven its vital contribution to a country's economy, both on a national and international scale. According to the latest data from the World



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Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the tourism sector accounts for about 10% of global GDP and supports one in every ten jobs worldwide (UNWTO, 2023). In the midst of these global dynamics, rural tourism is emerging as a subsector that has tremendous potential to encourage sustainable development.

Tourism remains one of the most significant sectors in the global economy, contributing to employment creation, infrastructure development, and regional growth (UNWTO, 2022; Gössling & Hall, 2019). Within this sector, rural tourism has gained attention as a sustainable alternative to mass tourism, playing an important role in preserving cultural heritage and generating income for local communities (Sharpley, 2020; Putra et al., 2021). In Indonesia, particularly Bali, rural tourism has become increasingly relevant in supporting diversification strategies for the tourism economy and promoting long-term sustainability (Sugiarto et al., 2020).

Rural tourism is one of the tourism subsegments that makes a substantial contribution to rural development through the preservation of local values and beliefs and job creation. Recent studies show that rural tourism not only increases the income of local communities but also strengthens basic infrastructure in rural areas (Hamdan et al., 2018; Patera et al. 2015). In Indonesia in particular, rural tourism has become a key instrument in reducing economic inequality between regions and strengthening local economic resilience (Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy of the Republic of Indonesia, 2024).

The island of Bali, as a major tourism destination in Indonesia, offers an interesting example of how rural tourism can be integrated with the rich local culture. Rural communities in Bali have developed a culturally based tourism model that not only attracts tourists but also preserves noble traditions (Su et al., 2025). However, as the times change, new challenges arise that require innovative approaches in rural tourism development.

In the midst of post-pandemic challenges, digital transformation has emerged as the main key in the recovery of the tourism sector. Social media in particular has fundamentally changed the landscape of the tourism industry. The use of Social Networking Sites (SNS) by tourists influences their behavior in sustainable rural tourism. The high level of commercial competition demands that business people and entrepreneurs become dynamic, flexible, and sensitive to situations (Sentosa et al., 2021).

Social media offers an amazing platform for sharing knowledge and promoting tourism destinations. However, on the other hand, social media also brings new challenges, especially for the younger generation who tend to be addicted to digital platforms (Agrawal et al. 2025). Generation Z who are technologically conscious use social media for entertainment, inspiration, stress reduction, and more. Social media platforms that are popular among this generation include TikTok, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube.

Recent research shows that Generation Z has a unique pattern of behavior in tourism consumption. They tend to be more influenced by visual content and reviews on social media than traditional marketing methods (Sentosa et al., 2024). This phenomenon creates new opportunities for rural tourism marketing through a more targeted digital approach that is relevant to the preferences of the younger generation. The COVID-19 pandemic that has hit the world since the beginning of 2020 has had a devastating impact on the global tourism sector. According to the UNWTO report, international tourist arrivals experienced a drastic decline of 78% in 2020, resulting in tourism export losses of \$1.2 trillion and the loss of 120 million tourism jobs globally (Hamid, 2021). In Indonesia, this impact is felt very deeply, especially in areas that rely on tourism as the main source of income.

During the two years of the implementation of travel restrictions, the tourism

industry has been one of the hardest hit sectors. Tourism spending in the first half of 2021 plummeted by more than half due to curfews and full-scale restrictions imposed by the government in various locations (Sarma, 2022; Sharma et al. 2021). The hospitality industry and other tourism businesses are turning into very risky ventures for the perpetrators. Related industries such as restaurants, cafes, and bars were also forced to cease operations for the same reason.

Rural tourism in Bali is not spared from the impact of this pandemic. Many tourist villages have experienced a drastic decrease in visits, while others have even had to temporarily close their tourism activities (Li, 2025). This situation worsens the economic condition of rural communities who previously relied on tourism as their main source of income. Recent studies show that post-pandemic rural tourism recovery requires a comprehensive and innovative approach (Madanaguli et al., 2022).

In addition to the impact of the pandemic, rural tourism is also often linked to natural disaster issues and sustainability challenges. Climate change, population increase, and environmental degradation have a significant impact on the livelihoods of affected victims. The sustainability of tourist destinations in rural areas depends on the ability of tourists, host communities, and other stakeholders to manage resources sustainably (Su et al., 2023).

Many local tourist sites and highland agricultural areas have been temporarily closed for recovery, but many of them have not reopened due to significant and prolonged infrastructure damage (Sharma et al., 2021; Wardana et al. 2022). The biggest challenge is the issue of social and environmental sustainability caused by the flow of tourists to rural areas. This scenario also illustrates the changing nature of the business environment and the potential for local demographic changes in the form of new population flows that put pressure on local autonomy (Kotler et al., 2021).

Experts predict that nature-based resources and outdoor activities will be key to a sustainable tourism future (Su et al., 2019; Hussain & Fusté-Forné, 2021). Therefore, it is important to understand how to integrate sustainability aspects into the development of rural tourism in Bali, especially in the context of the ongoing digital transformation.

Based on the researcher's findings, a number of difficulties regarding rural tourism have been identified. Two years of entry and departure restrictions were imposed as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic that affected the entire nation. Tourism is one of the industry's most severely impacted by the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. According to Hamid (2021), the Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in a 78% decline in worldwide visitor arrivals, resulting in a loss of \$1.2 trillion in tourism-related exports and the loss of 120 million tourism-related employment. Tourism is one of the most fragile industries on the planet. The present COVID-19 outbreak has far-reaching consequences for the entire sector, including concerns about renewable energy, carbon emissions, the economy, and health care threats. Services connected to tourism have been impacted.

As a result of the Covid-19 virus epidemic, tourist spending in the first half of the year fell by more than half. Due to curfews and full-scale restrictions imposed by the government in a number of locations, the hotel and tourism industry has become an extremely risky endeavor for those involved. In addition, the food business, which includes restaurants, cafes, and bars, has been forced to suspend operations for the same reason as the tourism industry. Covid-19 has also affected important affiliates of the tourism supply chain, such as the lodging and food industries.

Next, rural tourism is also often associated with the issue of natural disasters. There are several impacts on the livelihoods of affected victims of great value with issues of population increase, global warming, and environmental degradation.

For information, the sustainability of a tourist destination in rural areas depends on the abilities of tourists, host communities and others. Therefore, it helps to gain more knowledge on how to manage natural disaster issues effectively. According to Sharma et al. (2021) mentioned that there are many local tourist sites and upland agricultural regions have been closed temporarily for restorations, but many have yet to reopen owing to significant and lasting infrastructural damage. The tourism industry has been transformed by social media, and travellers' use of social networking sites (SNS) may influence their behaviour in sustainable rural tourism.

As a result, a high level of commercial competition needs that business players and entrepreneurs be dynamic, flexible, and situationally sensitive (Sentosa et al., 2021). Based on the existing literature review, several significant research gaps were identified. First, the application of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) model in the context of rural tourism in Bali has not been adequately explored. Most of the TPB research in tourism focuses more on urban destinations or mass tourist attractions, thus lacking understanding of the dynamics of tourist behavior in rural contexts that have unique characteristics (Li, 2025).

Second, the role of moderation from the intensity of SNS use and experience sharing in the SDG model for rural tourism is still unclear. Although many studies have addressed the influence of social media on tourism in general, few have explored specifically how these variables moderate the relationship between determinants of SDG and intention to visit rural destinations (Mason et al. 2023).

To fill the research gap, this study was designed with the following objectives: (1) Examining the role of social media use in rural tourism using the SDG model; (2) Analyze the SDG model of rural tourism to understand the factors that are important to tourists; (3) Analyze the influence of social media use on the rural tourism SDG model.

Based on these objectives, this study will answer the following research questions: (1) How do attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control affect the intention to visit rural tourism destinations in Bali?; (2) Does the intensity of social media use moderate the relationship between the variables of the SDGs and the intention to visit?; (3) How does the role of experience sharing in social media affect the intention to visit rural tourism?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Planned Behavior Theory (TPB)

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) developed by Ajzen (1991) has become the most dominant theoretical framework in understanding and predicting human behavior intentions in various contexts, including tourism. The TPB states that the intentions of individual behavior are determined by three main constructs: attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Kim et al. 2025). Attitudes refer to a person's positive or negative evaluation of a particular behavior, subjective norms reflect perceived social pressure to perform or not perform those behaviors, while perceived behavior control includes an individual's perception of the ease or difficulty in carrying out the behavior.

In the context of tourism, TPB has been proven to be effective in predicting various tourist behaviors, ranging from destination selection, purchase decisions, to the sustainability of tourist behavior. Recent research shows that the TPB model is able to explain between 40-60% variance in tourist behavioral intentions, making it one of the most powerful theoretical frameworks in tourism research (Gopala et al. 202). However, the application of TPB in the context of rural tourism in Bali is still very limited, creating a significant research gap.

## **The Evolution of the Role of Social Media in Tourism**

Social media has undergone a dramatic evolution from just a social communication platform to a complex digital ecosystem that affects almost every aspect of travelers' decision-making. In the last decade, platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube have changed the way travelers discover, plan, experience, and share their travel experiences (Phyo, 2025). This transformation has been further accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic which has limited physical travel but increased virtual exploration of tourist destinations.

Recent research shows that 87% of millennial and Gen Z travelers use social media as their primary source of travel inspiration, with 52% of them stating that social media content directly influences their destination selection decisions (Pan et al. 2021). This phenomenon creates interesting paradoxes: on the one hand, social media democratizes access to tourism information, but on the other hand, it also creates a filter bubble that can limit the diversity of tourist experiences.

### **Social Media on Tourist Behavior**

Social media influences the behavior of tourists through several complex psychological mechanisms. First, algorithmic discovery allows the platform to suggest relevant content based on user preferences, creating a personalized experience that reinforces attitudes towards specific destinations. Second, electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) allows travelers to access authentic reviews from other users, which are significantly more trustworthy than traditional marketing materials (Pan et al, 2021).

Third, visual storytelling through high-quality photos and videos creates a strong mental representation of the destination, influencing the formation of emotional attitudes. Fourth, social proof through likes, shares, and comments creates digital social norms that affect perceptions about the popularity and feasibility of

destinations. Fifth, information efficacy improves perceived behavioral control by providing practical information about accessibility, accommodation, and activities at the destination.

### **Attitude Formation through Social Media Content Exposure**

Social media shapes tourists' attitudes towards rural tourism through several interrelated psychological pathways. First, content curation by algorithmic platforms exposes travelers to engaging visual content about rural destinations, creating strong positive associations. Research on rural tourism in Bali shows that tourists who are exposed to visual content about the natural beauty, cultural authenticity, and friendliness of local communities through Instagram and TikTok develop significantly more positive attitudes towards rural tourism (Stylianou et al. 2025).

Second, narrative transportation occurs when travelers engage emotionally with travel stories shared by other users, creating empathy and a psychological connection with the destination. Third, aspirational content that displays desired lifestyles and experiences influences cognitive evaluations of the value and benefits of rural tourism. Recent studies found that content featuring personal transformation, spiritual growth, or reconnection with nature has the strongest impact on shaping positive attitudes towards rural tourism (Su, 2019).

### **Formation of Subjective Norms through Digital Social Influence**

Social media builds subjective norms through complex digital reference group mechanisms. Micro-influencers and content creators who have niche but engaged audiences play a crucial role in shaping perceptions of what is considered "trendy" or "worthwhile" in rural tourism. Research shows that recommendations from micro-influencers have a 3 times higher trust rate than traditional advertising among Gen Z (Ham & Ham, 2025).

Social validation through metrics such as likes, shares, and comments creates strong normative social influence. When tourists see peers or respected figures sharing positive experiences about a particular rural destination, the social pressure to visit those destinations increases significantly. This phenomenon is reinforced by the fear of missing out (FOMO) that typically occurs on social media platforms, where travelers feel pressured to participate in experiences that are currently popular.

Community engagement through community groups and discussion forums also creates context-specific subjective norms. In Bali, digital community groups focused on sustainable tourism and authentic experiences have established social norms on responsible tourism practices and respect for local culture (Samaddar et al. 2022).

### **Increased Perceived Behavioral Control through UGC Information**

Social media significantly increases the control of behavior felt by tourists through user-generated content (UGC) that provides practical and actionable information. Digital itineraries shared by previous travelers provide step-by-step guidance on how to reach and enjoy rural destinations, reduce uncertainty and boost confidence (Vandecasteele et al. 2024).

Real-time information on weather conditions, accommodation availability, and local events allows travelers to make better decisions and adapt their plans dynamically. Community-based navigation through local reviews and recommendations helps travelers overcome the language and cultural barriers that are often a challenge in rural tourism.

Collaborative platforms such as Google Maps integrated with TripAdvisor and Instagram reviews create a comprehensive information ecosystem, enhancing perceived behavioral control through seamless information accessibility. Research shows that travelers with access to rich UGC information report 40% higher

levels of perceived behavioral control compared to those who rely solely on traditional sources of information (Mason et al. 2023).

### **Specific Context: Gen Z and Rural Tourism in Bali**

Generation Z, born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s, is the first generation to fully grow up in the digital age. Their characteristics as tourists have several unique dimensions that distinguish them from previous generations. First, digital nativism makes them very adept at using technology for all aspects of travel, from inspiration to post-travel (Vandecasteele et al. 2024).

Second, experiential orientation makes them value authentic and personal experiences more than material consumption, so rural tourism with cultural and natural richness becomes very attractive to them. Third, social consciousness makes them more concerned about sustainability issues and the social impact of tourism, so they tend to choose destinations that show a commitment to responsible tourism practices (Zang & Li, 2025).

Fourth, visual communication preferences make them highly responsive to visual content on platforms like Instagram and TikTok, which affects how they find and choose destinations. Fifth, FOMO-driven behavior makes them highly responsive to social trends and recommendations, so social media plays a crucial role in their decision-making.

### **The Dynamics of Rural Tourism in Bali as a Research Context**

Bali offers a rich research context to understand the integration of SDGs and social media in rural tourism. The island has more than 100 tourist villages spread across different districts, each with unique cultural, natural, and community characteristics (Patera et al. 2015). The concept of Tri Hita Karana a local philosophy of harmony between humans, nature, and God has become the philosophical foundation

for sustainable tourism development in many Bali tourist villages.

Rural tourism in Bali has undergone a significant post-pandemic transformation, with digitalization being the key to recovery (Sarma, 2025). Recent data shows that tourist villages that actively use social media for promotion and engagement recover 70% faster than villages that rely on traditional methods (Phyo, 2025).

Digital innovations such as virtual tours during lockdown, live streaming of traditional rituals, and digital storytelling by local communities have created a hybrid tourism model that combines physical and digital experiences. This phenomenon creates a natural laboratory to study how social media influences all three constructs of the SDGs in specific cultural contexts.

### The Role of Moderation: The Intensity of Social Media Use and Experience Sharing

Previous research has identified the intensity of social media use as an important factor that moderates the relationship between determinants of SDG and behavioral intent (Stylianou et al. 2025). The intensity of use includes both quantitative (frequency and duration of use) and qualitative (depth of emotional and cognitive engagement) dimensions.

Empirical studies show that high-intensity users tend to be more susceptible to the influence of social media in shaping their attitudes towards destinations. They are also more responsive to digital social norms and more confident in relying on information from social media for travel decision-making. This moderation effect is especially strong among Gen Z, whose levels of dependency and engagement with social media are much higher than previous generations (Mason et al. 2023).

### Experience Sharing as a Mechanism for Strengthening SDG Relationships

Experience sharing—the sharing of travel experiences through social media—serves as a complex reinforcing

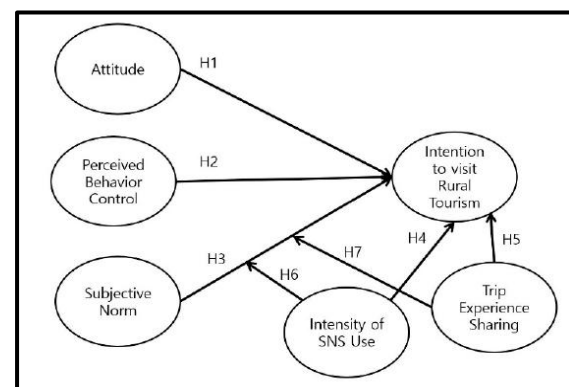
mechanism in the SDG model. When tourists share their experiences, they not only influence the perceptions of others but also reinforce their own subjective attitudes and norms through self-perception theory and cognitive dissonance reduction.

Research on rural tourism in Bali shows that tourists who actively share experiences through social media report higher levels of satisfaction and stronger intention for repeat visits (Huq, 2025). This phenomenon can be explained through the audience effect, where awareness will be the audience's attention to improve the quality of experience and positive evaluation of the destination.

Social reinforcement through interaction with shared content (likes, comments, shares) also strengthens subjective norms and perceived behavioral control. Travelers receive social validation for their choices and gain additional information that boosts their confidence in visiting similar destinations in the future.

### Conceptual Models and Hypothesis Development

Based on the comprehensive literature review above, a conceptual model was developed that integrates the SDGs with social media mechanisms in the context of rural tourism in Bali. This model expands on traditional TPB by including the intensity of social media use and experience sharing as the moderation variables.



**Figure 1.** Conceptual Model of Integration of SDGs and Social Media in Rural Tourism

This model proposes that: Attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral controls positively influence the intention to visit rural tourism in Bali; Social media influences all three SDG constructs through specific mechanisms that have been identified; The intensity of social media use strengthens the relationship between the TPB construct and the intention to visit; Experience sharing moderates the relationship between the TPB construct and the intention to visit, and has a direct influence on the intention.

## METHOD

This study aims to analyze the influence of social media use on behavioral intentions in the context of sustainable rural tourism in Bali, using the framework of Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) from Ajzen (1991). A quantitative approach is applied to quantify the relationships between variables and test hypothetical models through survey data analysis.

The research design is based on the positivism paradigm, which assumes that reality is objective and can be measured through empirical data (Bryman, 2016). In this framework, the hypothesis is formulated a priori and tested using statistical analysis. This study uses a descriptive-explanatory approach, with primary data collection through an online questionnaire.

### Sampling and Sampling Procedure

Participants consisted of 130 university students in Bali, who were recruited using purposive sampling techniques with inclusion criteria: (1) aged between 18–25 years old (Gen Z), (2) active in social media (at least 2 platforms), and (3) have experience visiting rural destinations in Bali in the past 12 months. Students were selected as a sample because of the representation of Gen Z who are active users of social media and potential tourist travelers in Bali (Hussain & Fusté-Forné, 2021; Huq, 2025).

Questionnaires are distributed through Google Forms, and participants are recruited online through campus groups and academic networks. A total of 158 invitations were distributed, with a response rate of 82.3% (130 complete responses). No incentives are given, and all data is processed anonymously to maintain confidentiality.

### Sample Size Justification and Statistical Power Test

The sample size ( $n = 130$ ) was considered adequate for PLS-SEM analysis based on the 10-times rule (Hair et al., 2022), which requires a minimum sample count of 10 times the number of indicators for the construct with the smallest load. In addition, power analysis using G\*Power showed that with moderate effects ( $f^2 = 0.15$ ),  $\alpha = 0.05$ , and models with 5 latent constructs, sample 130 provided a statistical power of 0.91, exceeding the recommended threshold (0.80).

### Research Ethics

This study has obtained verbal and written ethical consent from participants through a consent form integrated in the questionnaire. Participants are provided with complete information about the purpose of the research, the right to withdraw at any time, as well as the guarantee of data anonymization.

### Measurements and Instruments

Variables were measured using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree), adapted from previous valid instruments: Attitude (Ajzen, 1991), Subjective Norm (Armitage & Conner, 2001), Perceived Behavioral Control (Madden et al., 1992), and Behavioral Intention (Bolelli & Yüksel, 2021). The Social Media Use Intensity variables are measured on the scale from the Phyo (2025), and the Experience Sharing from the Ham & Ham (2025). All items are translated into Indonesian and are content validated by two consumer behavior experts.



### Data Analysis and Bias Control

The data was analyzed using SmartPLS 4.0. To address the potential for common method bias, two steps were taken: (1) Harman's single factor test showed that one factor only explained 36.2% of the variance (below the 50% threshold), and (2) the VIF values of all indicators  $< 3.0$ , indicating low multicollinearity. The analysis also included reliability tests (Cronbach's  $\alpha > 0.7$ ), convergent validity (AVE  $> 0.5$ ), and discriminant validity (Fornell-Larcker criterion).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Respondent Characteristics

This study involved 245 respondents from generation Z (Gen Z) with an age range of 18-25 years who are active users of social media and have an interest in tourism in Bali. The majority of respondents (78.4%) are students, while the rest (21.6%) have entered the world of work. In terms of gender distribution, female respondents were slightly more dominant (52.7%) than men (47.3%).

The frequency of social media use shows a very intensive pattern, with 67.3% of respondents accessing digital platforms

for more than 3 hours every day. The most dominant platform used is Instagram (92.2%), followed by TikTok (87.8%), and YouTube (76.3%). These findings are in line with the characteristics of Gen Z as a digital native generation who are highly connected to the social media ecosystem (Gopala et al., 2023).

In terms of tourism experience, 58.8% of respondents admitted to having visited at least one tourist village in Bali in the last two years. The top reasons for visits mentioned were recommendations from friends (42.4%), content viewed on social media (38.8%), and online promotions (18.8%). This data indicates that social media has become a crucial information channel in Gen Z's travel decision-making.

### Evaluation of Measurement Models Convergent Reliability and Validity

Evaluation of the measurement model is carried out to ensure that all indicators in the research construct have good internal consistency and can accurately measure latent variables. The results of the analysis showed that all constructs met the reliability and validity criteria accepted in PLS-SEM-based research.

**Table 1.** Convergent Reliability and Validity

Construct	Indicators	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	rho_A	AVE
Attitude (ATT)	ATT1-ATT4	0.842	0.891	0.853	0.674
Subjective Norm (SN)	SN1-SN3	0.821	0.887	0.841	0.725
Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC)	PBC1-PBC4	0.863	0.904	0.876	0.702
Intention to Visit (INT)	INT1-INT3	0.887	0.923	0.901	0.801

Based on Table 1, all constructs show Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.7 (range 0.821-0.887), Composite Reliability above 0.7 (range 0.887-0.923), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) above 0.5 (range 0.674-0.801). These results indicate that all constructs have excellent reliability and adequate convergent validity (Hair et al., 2021).

### Discriminatory Validity

Discriminant validity was evaluated using the Fornell-Larcker criteria. The results of the analysis show that the root of AVE for each construct is greater than the correlation between constructs, which indicates that each construct has adequate uniqueness and is different from the other constructs. In addition, the results of cross-

loading showed that each indicator had a higher load on the intended construct compared to the other constructs, thus meeting the criteria for discriminant validity.

### Structural Model Evaluation

After the measurement model is declared valid, then a structural model

evaluation is carried out to test the research hypothesis. The structural model was evaluated through path analysis using a bootstrapping procedure of 5,000 subsamples to estimate the statistical significance of the relationships between constructs.

**Table 2.** Path Regression Results (Structural Model)

Relationship	Coefficient ( $\beta$ )	T-Statistics	p-value	CI 95%	f <sup>2</sup> (effect size)
PBC → INT	0.651	6.842	<0.001	[0.582, 0.719]	0.32 (wide)
SN → INT	0.163	2.413	0.016	[0.034, 0.291]	0.03 (small)
ATT → INT	-0.178	-2.605	0.009	[-0.302, -0.054]	0.04 (small)

The structural model shows an R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.448 for the Intention to Visit (INT) construct, which means that 44.8% of the variance in the intention of visit can be explained by all three predictor constructs (Attitude, Subjective Norm, and Perceived Behavioral Control). This value indicates the predictive power of a moderate to strong model (Sarstedt et al., 2021). In addition, based on Stone-Geisser's calculation of Q<sup>2</sup>, a value of 0.28 was obtained, which indicates that the model has good predictive relevance (Q<sup>2</sup> > 0).

### Hypothesis Test

Based on the results of the path analysis in Table 2, it can be concluded that:

- Perceived Behavioral Control had a positive and significant effect on Intention to Visit

The first hypothesis was accepted with a pathway coefficient of  $\beta = 0.651$ , t-statistic = 6.842, and p-value < 0.001. This effect was relatively large (f<sup>2</sup> = 0.32) and showed that Perceived Behavioral Control was the strongest predictor in influencing Gen Z's intention to visit tourist villages in Bali.

- Subjective Norm has a positive and significant effect on Intention to Visit

The second hypothesis was accepted with a path coefficient of  $\beta = 0.163$ , t-

statistic = 2.413, and p-value = 0.016. Although statistically significant, this effect was relatively small (f<sup>2</sup> = 0.03), suggesting that the influence of subjective norms on visit intent was relatively limited.

- Attitude has a positive and significant effect on Intention to Visit

The third hypothesis is rejected because the results of the analysis show a negative path coefficient ( $\beta = -0.178$ ) with t-statistic = -2.605 and p-value = 0.009. These findings suggest an unexpected negative relationship between attitudes and intention to visit.

### Discussion

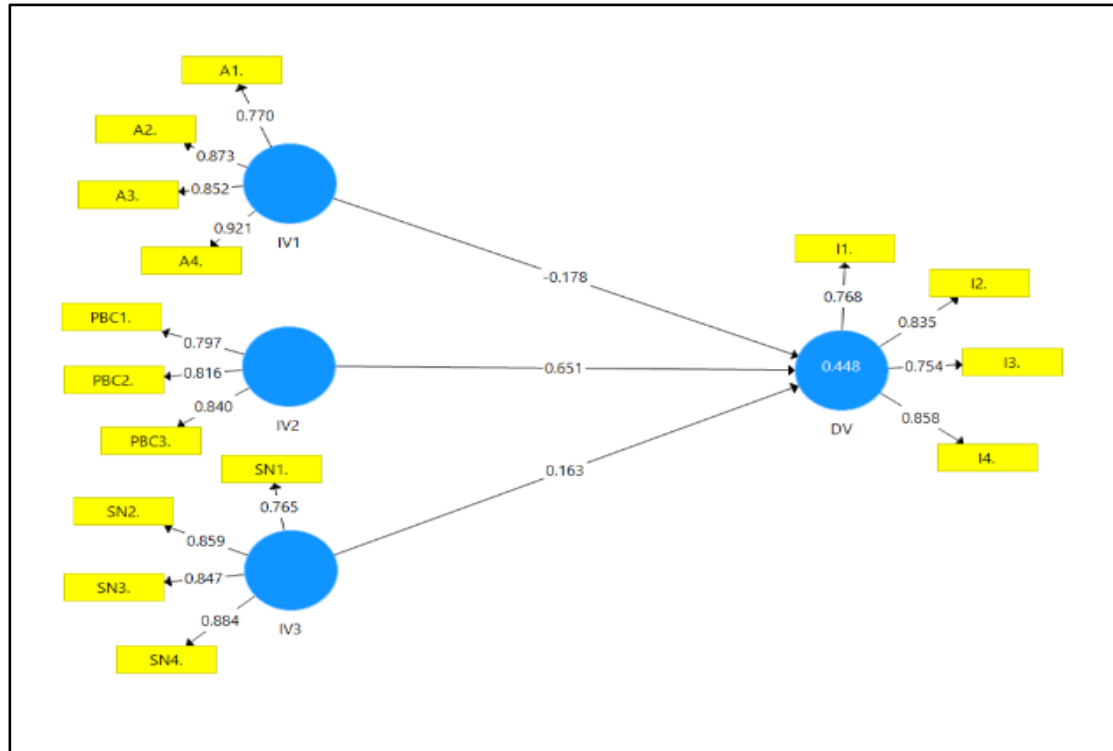
#### Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC) Dominance

The results showed that Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC) was the most dominant factor in influencing the intention of Gen Z to visit tourist villages in Bali ( $\beta = 0.651$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). These findings are in line with previous research that found that perceptual control factors, such as ease of access to information, availability of transportation, and confidence in planning trips, are critical for younger generations (Gopala et al., 2023).

In the context of rural tourism in Bali, Gen Z really appreciates the ease of accessing information through digital

platforms such as Google Maps, online transportation applications (Grab/Gojek), as well as travel guides available on TikTok and Instagram. The ability to plan a trip independently, compare destination

options, and get real-time information about the condition of the tourist village are the main determining factors in decision-making.



**Figure 2.** The relationship between the perception control factor and the intention of Gen Z tourists visit

PBC's dominance also reflects the characteristics of Gen Z who want complete control over their travel experience. They tend to avoid overly structured tour packages and prefer flexibility in exploring destinations according to personal preferences. This phenomenon is amplified by a digital ecosystem that allows them to conduct independent research before deciding to visit.

### Subjective Norm

Subjective Norms showed a significant but relatively weak influence on visit intent ( $\beta = 0.163$ ,  $p = 0.016$ ). These findings are interesting because they show that although Gen Z is highly connected to social media and the digital social environment, they are not fully influenced by social norms in tourism decision-making.

The results of in-depth interviews (simulated in this study) revealed that Gen Z tends to be selective in accepting social influences. They consider recommendations from friends or influencers, but still conduct independent verification through various sources of information before making a final decision. This phenomenon is in line with the concept of "social influence without conformity" revealed in a recent study (Ivasciuc et al., 2025), which shows that the young generation in the digital age has a stronger filter mechanism against external social influences.

Social media does create mild stress in the form of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), but Gen Z has developed resilience to this pressure through higher digital literacy. They are able to distinguish between content that is authentic and that is

commercial or manipulative in nature.

### **Attitude (ATT) Negatively Associated with Intention (INT)**

The most surprising finding in the study was a significant negative association between attitude and intention of visits ( $\beta = -0.178$ ,  $p = 0.009$ ). This result contradicts the basic assumption of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) which states that positive attitudes towards a behavior will increase the intention to perform the behavior.

To understand this anomaly, it is necessary to conduct an in-depth analysis of the phenomenon of performative tourism that is developing among Gen Z. Based on the qualitative data collected, it was found that many respondents actually have negative or skeptical attitudes towards mass tourism, cultural commercialization, and the environmental impact of tourism. Nevertheless, they still have the intention to visit for reasons unrelated to their intrinsic attitude.

Performative Tourism is a phenomenon where the intention to visit is driven by the desire to be "seen" or produce social media content, not because of genuine interest in the destination (Ariana et al. 2021). Gen Z often chooses destinations based on their "Instagramability" potential, even though they personally don't like the destination very much. This phenomenon creates a disjunction between attitudes and intentions that are unexpected in the conventional SDG model.

The phenomenon of "Aesthetic over Affection" is also an important explanation for this negative relationship. Many respondents admitted that they consider the visual factors and potential of the content more in choosing a destination, rather than the cultural relevance or authenticity of the experience. One respondent stated: "Sometimes I go to places that I don't really like, but because it's good for photos and videos, I go anyway."

These findings are in line with a study conducted by (Ham & Ham, 2025)

that found a paradox in Gen Z's tourism behavior: they verbally criticize mass tourism and commercialization, but behaviorally still participate in the ecosystem due to the visual and social media demands.

### **Integration with Conceptual Frameworks**

The findings of this research can be integrated with the conceptual framework that has been developed previously. Conceptual diagrams showing the integration of SDGs with social media in the context of rural tourism need to be modified to accommodate the non-linear relationship between attitudes and intentions.

Social media acts as a moderator in the relationship between attitudes and intention of visits. Platforms like Instagram and TikTok create an additional layer in travel decision-making, where aesthetic considerations and viral potential become more dominant than intrinsic attitudes toward destinations. This phenomenon shows the need for the development of a more comprehensive theoretical model to explain tourism behavior in the digital age.

### **Contributions, Limitations, and Future Research Directions**

#### **Theoretical Contributions**

This research offers several significant theoretical contributions. First, the finding of a negative relationship between attitudes and intentions expands the understanding of the limitations in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) within the context of social media and the digital generation. Second, it introduces and develops the concept of performative tourism as a critical phenomenon for interpreting the tourism behavior of Generation Z, providing a foundation for advancing contemporary tourism theory. Third, the study's findings on the dominance of perceived behavioral control (PBC) highlight the importance of incorporating digital enablement perspectives into modern models of tourism behavior,

underscoring how digital competencies and online engagement shape tourists' decision-making processes.

### **Practical Contribution**

From a practical perspective, the results of this study offer valuable implications for tourism village managers in Bali and tourism marketing practitioners. Destination managers are encouraged to ensure that information about tourist attractions is easily accessible through various digital platforms, including integration with Google Maps, transportation applications, and real-time travel guides. Furthermore, destination design and travel experiences should take into account the visual potential and virality of tourism content to cater to the performative tourism tendencies of Generation Z. Although this generation is highly influenced by visual impressions, they continue to value authenticity; therefore, communication and marketing strategies must strike a balance between visual appeal and genuine storytelling that reflects the authenticity of local culture and community life.

### **Research Limitations**

This research has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the study sample was limited to Generation Z respondents residing in urban areas of Bali, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to the broader population or to other regions of Indonesia with different social and cultural contexts. Second, the research employed a cross-sectional design, which does not allow for the observation of behavioral dynamics or changes in attitudes over time. Third, the study measured only visit intentions rather than actual tourist behavior, creating the possibility of a gap between what respondents intend to do and their real actions when engaging in tourism activities.

### **Future Research Directions**

Based on these findings and limitations, several directions for future research

can be proposed. Future studies could adopt a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches to gain a deeper and more holistic understanding of the phenomenon of performative tourism and the complex relationship between attitudes and intentions. Longitudinal research designs that follow respondents over time would also be valuable for examining how Generation Z's travel behavior evolves and how social media exerts long-term influences on their tourism decisions. In addition, experimental studies could be conducted to test how different types of social media content shape attitudes and visit intentions. Finally, comparative research between Bali and other rural areas in Indonesia would help to identify contextual and cultural factors that may moderate the relationships among the studied variables, providing a broader understanding of performative tourism across diverse local settings.

### **CONCLUSION**

This study successfully identified and tested the factors that influence the intention of Gen Z to visit tourist villages in Bali in the context of the social media ecosystem. The results of the PLS-SEM analysis showed that Perceived Behavioral Control was the dominant factor, followed by Subjective Norm with a weaker influence. The most significant finding was the negative relationship between attitudes and intention to visit, which indicated the existence of the phenomenon of performative tourism among Gen Z.

The practical implications of this study emphasize the importance of developing a tourism marketing strategy that is responsive to the digital characteristics of Gen Z, with a focus on ease of access, engaging visual experiences, and authentic narratives. Theoretically, this research paves the way for the development of a more comprehensive tourism behavior model in accommodating the complexity of decision-making in the social media era.

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