

THE BRAND IMAGE INFLUENCE ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING AND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PRACTICES IN PETRA (JORDAN)

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to establish the mediating role of brand image, including advertising and promotion content distributed on social media platforms, which can improve positive brand image in the relationship between social media advertising and sustainable tourism practices at Petra in Jordan. This study survey contained 332 of the participant's respondents who visited Petra from different countries. | A structured questionnaire was also embraced to gather primary data. The data were analyzed utilizing Smart-PLS, which was used to classify the measurement and structural models. The mediating influence of together social media advertising and sustainable tourism practices was tested too. The outcomes showed that brand image positively mediates the link between social media advertising and sustainable tourism practices at Petra. For that reason, it can be supposed that brand image among tourists who visit Petra plays a crucial role in promoting social media advertising for improved sustainable tourism practices at Petra. Finally, this study delivers an empirical indication of a phenomenon not studied at Petra in Jordan where the tourists who visited Petra concentered in norms and customs for sustainable tourism practices. The outcomes underline the significance of brand image in mediating the link between social media advertising and sustainable tourism practices at Petra.

Keywords: Brand image, Social media advertising, Sustainable tourism, Cultural tourism, Tourism destination

1. INTRODUCTION

The contemporary landscape of global tourism is marked by a significant paradigm shift in destination selection and perception (Hall, 2010), which makes. It is hard to choose the appropriate travel destination (Yuzhanin & Fisher, 2016). For this reason, tourists are progressively drawn to destinations that propose more than charming landscapes and ancient landmarks; they search for authentic traditional experiences and desire to decrease their environmental footprint (Prokopis et al., 2019). Particularly, environmental development has significantly transformed customer behavior and environmental awareness of the importance of going green (Xie & Madni, 2023), causing a higher demand for green products (Liu, 2024).

Social media is an impressive advertising medium for sustainable promoters because users can self-select into sustainable lifestyle groups. Furthermore, social media, as advertising channels,

is particularly vital in realizing sustainability because it is considered social (Elizabeth et al., 2012). Social media has become an essential communication channel for generating content, sharing ideas, and expressing attitudes and information (Knott, 2006). Twitter (renamed X), Facebook, Instagram, and other social media networks have become essential virtual gateways (Lemkes et al., 2019). With around 3.2 billion active social media accounts, advertising on social media platforms is one of the most influential growing tools in present marketing (Hootsuite, 2019). Accordingly, around 70% of small businesses depend on it to target new clients (Infusionsoft, 2018). Allowing travelers worldwide to discover world wonders through attractive pictures and exciting narratives (Sabir et al., 2024). Additionally, social media can affect customer behavior, including finding information, attitudes, buying, and evaluating products (Mangold Faulds, 2009; Kim et al., 2012). This increasing dependency on social media for advertising has forced marketers to distinguish themselves from their competitors on social media when boosting their brand image (Sundaram et al., 2020).

Social media marketing activities (SMMA) played a vital role in revitalizing interest through storytelling performances and cultural appearances in the direction of sustainable tourism (ST) (Giaccardi, 2012). SMMA was first presented by Kim and Ko (2012), who examined consumers of luxury fashion brands and determined that SMMA consists of five compartments: word of mouth (WOM), interaction, customization, trendiness, and entertainment (figure 3). Thus, SMMA measured a part of social media marketing (SMM) tools. Once brand awareness among customers is effective, it will bring advantages for marketers because it subsidizes client interests when selecting products (Seetharaman et al., 2001).

On the other hand, the efficiency of a brand image on social media is extremely subject to the reliability of the material, the attitudes towards material, and the quality of content, (Erkan & Evans, 2016; Colton & Poploski, 2019). Brand involvement in social media is an influential instrument for the formation of client equity and value (Yuan et al., 2016); (Kim & Ko, 2012). Accordingly, marketers must be capable of producing social media to encourage clients to recognize the content of the services and recommended products.

Despite the expansion in scholarly consideration regarding social media and brand image integration in a range of industries and considering the relevant contributions of previous studies, there are yet some gaps in knowledge. The existing research literature shows great interest in brand image, as well as in improved sustainable tourism practices, but it pays less attention to the role that social media has in these two topics -brand image and sustainability-.

Research was not effective in offering and realizing various digital marketing tools for brand supervision, thus previous studies have proposed there is a necessity to utilize a social media approach that links and sustains consumer involvement and enables consumers to have their opinions heard (Sheng and Teo, 2012; Dwivedi et al., 2021).

To address the gaps in the existing literature, this research aims to provide a more comprehensive overview of the functionalities of social media platforms and their impacts on sustainable tourism. To do so, it examines the mediating role of brand image, including advertising and promotion content, in the relationship between social media advertising and sustainable tourism practices using the study case of Petra in Jordan. It is particularly noteworthy that despite the evident impact of tourism on destinations, including Petra, there remains a notable knowledge gap in research focusing on the influence of social media on sustainability perceptions at heritage sites in Jordan. Therefore, this research seeks also to contribute to a deeper understanding of the complexities surrounding destination branding, marketing efforts, and especially sustainable tourism practices. The relevance of conducting this research applied to the Petra case is to identify important issues related to environmental practices, and how brand image can influence to improve them. A good example showing this relevance is the seasonality of tourism

and one of the correction measures that can be applied, the distribution of visitors over the year, with the final goal to keep the sustainable factors -economic, socio-cultural, and environmental- more balanced and avoid mass tourism consequences.

Therefore, Petra's case study approaches the brand image, the improvement of sustainable tourism practices, the role of social media, and their interrelations through the following specific questions:

Q1: What type of relationship exists between social media marketing and sustainable tourism in the cultural tourism site of Petra?

Q2: What type of relationship exists between brand image and sustainable tourism in the cultural tourism site of Petra?

Q3: What type of relationship exists between social media marketing and brand image in the cultural tourism site of Petra?

Q4: How does brand image moderate the relationship between social media marketing and sustainable tourism in the cultural tourism site of Petra?

The brand image used in this study as a moderating factor capable of emphasizing the influence of social media marketing on sustainable tourism in the cultural tourism site of Petra. Thus, this research focuses on addressing question Q4, for which purpose it also handles the other questions.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

2. 1. HYPOTHESES FORMATION

Tourism growth has achieved important development over the past few years; this development includes several areas of enjoyment, investment, and entertainment in the relevant visited countries (Holden, 2016). Because of social media, visitors are getting more involved in tourism. From this perspective: Hussain et al., (2019) investigated the leading role of social media in the growth and sustainability of tourism development and behaviors of the tourist. Social media encouragement in the recent world has carried a leading increase in tourism development (Mastilo et al., 2024). For that reason, a cultural tourism site like Petra considers social media as an essential platform to influence international tourists. This influence is not only to allow the tourist to visit Petra but also suggests several packages to be capitalized to improve the outcome channels. Further, Tham et al., (2020) described the significant consideration and awareness of tourists to destinations that have been significantly transformed by the social media effect. Petra has reached a sound reputation worldwide, to the point that the region earns most of its revenue from tourism activity.

Beyond, Senyao & Ha (2022) evaluated the importance of the contribution of social media channels as marketing tools for the tourist's experience and decision-making. The existence of social media has transformed the approaches to visitation through images and experiences. Social media has been measured as a significant element in the tourism industry that has enabled sustainable tourism growth. Therefore, the hypothesis resulting from the above discussion is:

H1: *There is a significant relationship between social media marketing and sustainable tourism in the cultural tourism site of Petra.*

Authors describe a brand image as a combination of comprehensive elements that help differentiate a service or product from its competitors that have significance and produce associations with the product when an individual is considering that brand of product (Kotler, 2006; Kladou,

2017; Wheeler, 2017). Brand image results from a series of customer beliefs about a specific brand (Dam & Dam 2021; Wang & Hu, 2024) and it is vital and of the highest importance since customers will refer to the brand image before buying the product (Ansary & Nik 2018).

This is also supported by previous studies showing that a positive or reliable brand image can have a beneficial influence on consumers (Kazmi & Mehmood, 2020); if a brand has a poor image, it will indirectly influence customers to make a purchase. Studies by Godey et al., (2016) have also shown that a positive brand image significantly affects a consumer's decision to pay for and stay loyal to the brand. Consequently, authors such as Pramono et al., (2021), companies must accomplish an accurate strategy to draw the attention of the customers and not lose attractiveness.

It has been found that the benefits of social media marketing activities (SMMA) have a positive result and influence on brand image. Labrecque et al., (2013) and Alsoud et al., (2023) consider that shared information and activities on social media platforms can successfully enhance consumer behavior and travel purposes, proposing that SMMA can increase customer loyalty among tourists. According to Godey et al., (2016), brand image plays a significant role in the destination's marketing policy. Further, utilizing marketing via social media could be a more effective method to enhance brand image and affect customer behavior.

However, the previous literature evaluation has indicated a shortage of recent investigations that assess the inconsistency of SMMA, sustainable tourism, and brand image when analyzing tourists' intentions to visit the Petra tourism site in Jordan. Even with the growing usage of SMMA in this industry. Therefore, the hypothesis resulting from the above discussion is as under:

H2: *There is a significant relationship between social media marketing and brand image in the cultural tourism site of Petra.*

Since social media's mass usage, marketing of destinations has rearranged its channel policy by placing fame on social media platforms (Koay et al., 2021). Developing attention toward social media influencers in the user's decision-making as handlers for sustainable destinations has been noted (Mira et al., 2021), and influencers generally explain geo-location as a significant kind of information in a post that motivates and reaches a new audience and acquires additional engagement (Wei, et al., 2022). In this context, the destination's brand awareness is growing through the generated content on social media platforms, digital influencers, in common, have the capability to formulate their followers' attitudes and perceptions during their decision-making process (Guerreiro et al., 2019).

According to Tan et al., (2018), social media plays a significant role in responsibility and environmental awareness that can be practiced toward pro-environmental social behavior in online societies of tourists. However, Guzzo et al., (2013) established a framework containing the role of social media in the growth of sustainable tourism in terms of increasing awareness of sustainable practices in tourism, social aspects influencing tourists and sustainability, as well as the growth of innovative practices in sustainable tourism (Han, et al., 2017). This collation of considerable information related to social media is a much more convenient and effective way for tourist destinations to redesign their branding strategy and enhance their relations with tourists. Therefore, the third hypothesis of the research focuses on brand image having a significant relationship with sustainable tourism:

H3: *There is a significant relationship between brand image and sustainable tourism in the cultural tourism site of Petra.*

Social media marketing has a significant positive influence on customer's brand image, as shown by Bilgin (2018). According to Godey et al., (2016), Social media marketing has become a vital tool for creating brand image. (Seo & Park 2018). Earlier investigations (Bruhn et al., 2012; Zailskaitė-jakstė & Kuvykaite, 2012; Schivinski, 2014; Schivinski & Dabrowski, 2015; Hanaysha, 2016) have all shown that connections through social media and marketing activities, which are distributed and secure on different social media platforms (e.g., Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter), share in brand equity growth by constructing a powerful brand image. Social media platforms are becoming significant for establishments to assist distribution of information associated with their brand and involve their customers in marketing activities (Mollen & Wilson, 2010; Kidd, 2011; Yue & Li, 2024), and platforms are confirmed to be the backbone for carrying some forms of marketing communications to customers as well (Rohm et al., 2013).

Besides, effective brand relations with customers, transfer its value intention more efficiently, so consumers improve a sustainable connection with the brand (Greve, 2014; Sasmita & Mohd-Suki, 2015), and causes sustainable relationships and satisfaction with the brand (Titi & Anang, 2018).

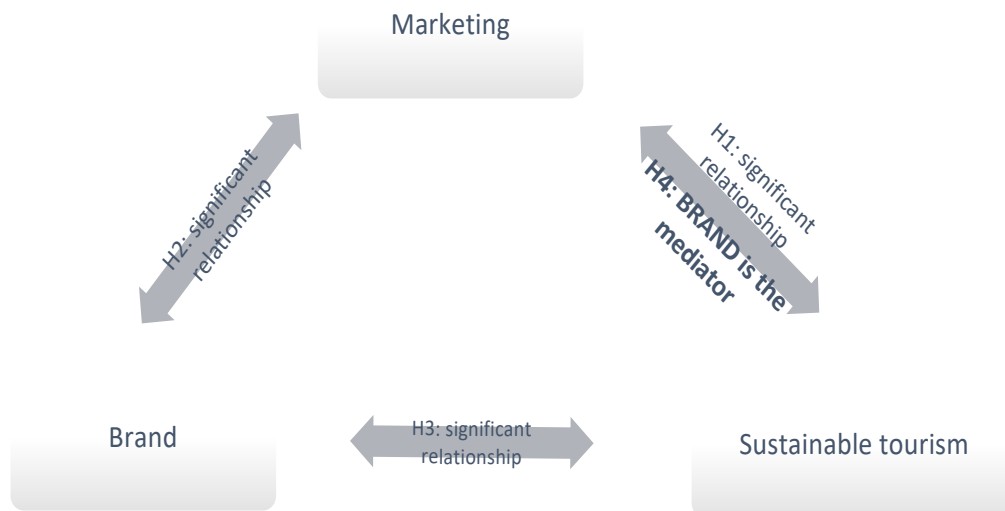
According to the literature discussion aforementioned above, the relationship between the brand image as a research mediator, social media activities as an independent variable, and sustainable tourism practices in the Petra heritage site can be presented through economic, social dimensions, and environmental aspects, which are the cornerstones that shape the research area. A strong brand image, improved by the efficiency of the social media campaigns, attracts more and different types of visitors, enhancing the economy through increased revenue levels, creating more jobs, and investments in projects related to sustainable tourism. Moreover, in the environmental factor, social media advertising can encourage eco-friendly behaviors and several conservation efforts that could be advantageous to preserving Petra's natural and historical heritage while strengthening its brand image as eco-conscious. Furthermore, socially culture-sensitive advertising adopts some community involvement and supports local traditions, enhancing living values and preserving cultural heritage while stimulating further studies into tourism's social impacts. Overall, these interconnected factors ensure a holistic method to sustainable tourism practices and their impact on research growth and development in Petra.

However, only a few studies have concentrated on the underlying influence of brand image to describe the impact of social media marketing activities (SMMA) on customers' observed brand equity.

Thus, considering the mentioned above, this research formulates the last hypothesis and the core of this work:

H4: *brand image mediates the relationship between social media marketing and sustainable tourism in the cultural tourism site of Petra.*

Figure 1. Hypothesis' graphical model showing the relationships between variables



Source: (Titi & Anang, 2018); (Seo & Park 2018);

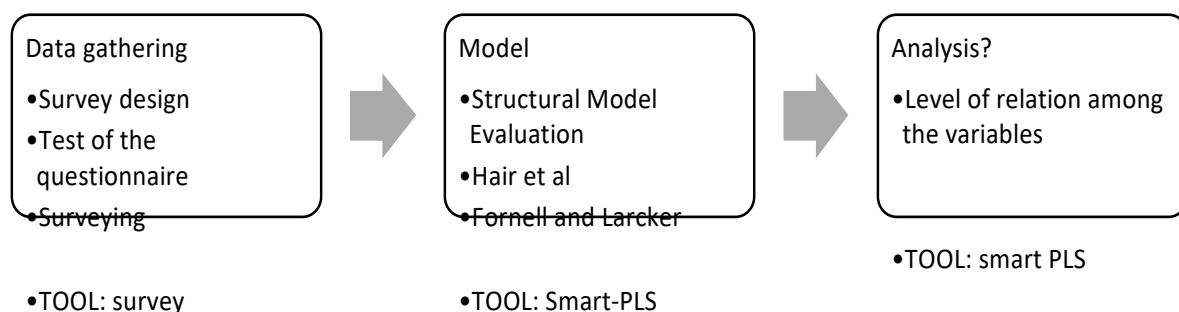
3. METHODOLOGY

This research study examines how brand image mediates the relationship between SMMA and sustainable tourism in Petra, Jordan, ergo hypothesis H4. To that end, a theoretical framework is formed to illustrate the connection between social media marketing, brand image, and Sustainable Tourism (Figure 1), which illustrates the variable's relationships. Several processes have been employed to better explain the relationship among the study variables such as; reflective model measurement, and the Fornell-Larcker criterion, The Fornell-Larcker criterion is employed to evaluate discriminant validity in this study. It provides that each construct in a measure is distinct from each other. This procedure inspects that a construct shares more variance with its indicators than other constructs in the model. Moreover, Cronbach's alpha and other measurement factors that present the right results of the study will be evaluated.

The quantitative questionnaire survey technique was utilized to gather the necessary data to conduct the purpose of the research, allowing a more comprehensive understanding of the essential phenomenon and for the testing of research hypotheses.

The research uses the results of [Kim & Ko's work \(2012\)](#) on SMMA compartments and introduces three of their five compartments to evaluate the variable, brand image has been evaluated by utilizing three items adapted from ([Lai Cheung et al., 2019](#)). Sustainable tourism has been measured by using six items employed from ([Eslami et al., 2019](#)).

Figure 2, [Kim & Ko's work \(2012\)](#); [Lai Cheung et al., \(2019\)](#)



3. 1. AREA OF STUDY

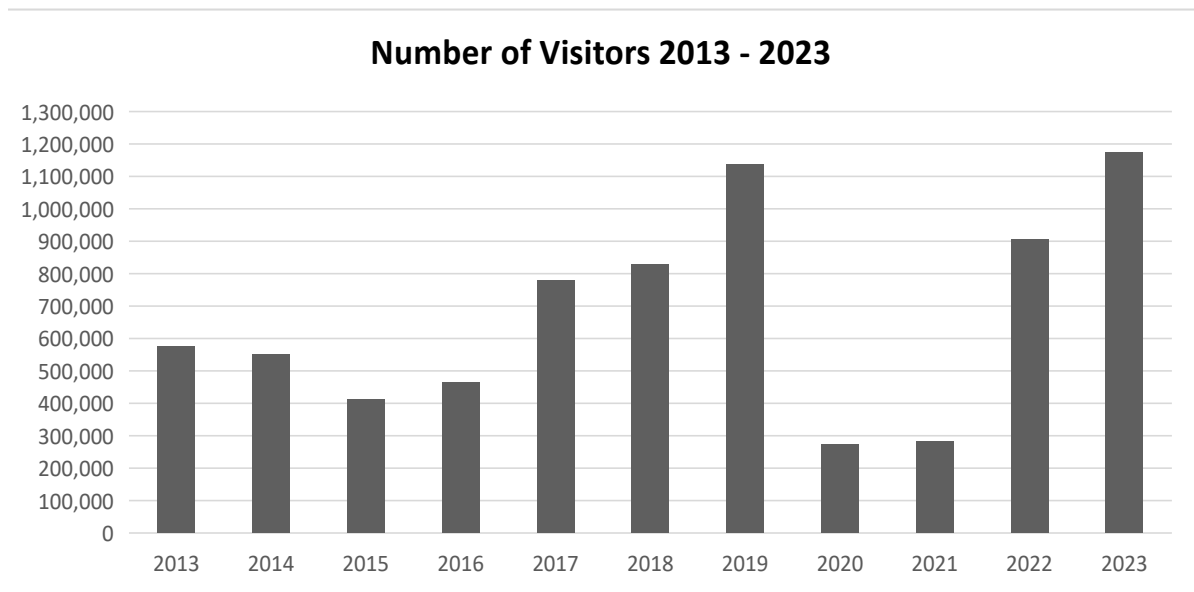
The World Heritage Site of Petra has been selected as the major study area for several key factors. It stands out as a main tourist destination, not only at the national level but also all over the world, due to its historical and cultural importance. In 1985, it was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site, further cementing its reputation as a cultural and archaeological treasure. Petra's exceptional preservation and its representation of the ancient Nabatean civilization make it an ideal research subject.

Petra, originally established as the capital of the Nabatean kingdom in the 4th century BC, is famous for its rich rock-cut architecture and deep historical significance.

Additionally, Petra holds religious significance, featuring temples dedicated to various deities, highlighting its multicultural history. The site faces challenges related to conservation due to tourism, necessitating ongoing efforts to safeguard this remarkable heritage site, which has also found a place in modern pop culture as a captivating location for films and literature.

Petra's remarkable rock-cut architecture, where complex structures, including tombs, temples, and dwellings, were sculpted directly into the rose-colored sandstone cliffs. The most famous facade is the Treasury, known in Arabic (Al-Khazneh), a masterpiece of architectural difficulty. Its total number of visitors in 2019 was 1,135,300 and 1,174,137 in 2023 (Figure 3: Petra visitation).

Figure 3: Petra visitation



Source: PDTRA (2024)

Petra Development and Tourism Region Authority (PDTRA), has progressively relied on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, in addition to its official website, to market the Petra destination to the international audience. This digital outreach supports promoting Petra as a destination, influencing platforms to involve tourists with visuals, influencer partnerships, and real-time updates. This online engagement has directly contributed to the record-breaking number of visitors to Petra, PDTRA has successfully used these channels to expand its reach and affect tourists worldwide, leading to Petra's increased popularity (PDTRA, 2024). This digital marketing strategy including engagement through social media has become a crucial tool for promoting Petra tourism.

3. 2. SURVEY DESIGN

A questionnaire was the main tool of this research, created considering some of the previous connected studies, and researchers administered the survey to collect data for the study. The methodology centered on surveying tourists from around the globe who were visiting Petra, Jordan, ergo, this was the profile and the universe of the survey. A straightforward, simple random sampling technique was utilized accordingly, and a sample of 550 respondents was chosen, including individuals willing to participate, which supposed a level of confidence of Subsequently, a well-structured and comprehensive questionnaire was constructed and distributed to the targeted respondents through printed copies, ensuring accessibility for participants with limited access to digital technology or preferred traditional survey methods to ensure a population robust representation, accounting for potential non-responses. With a final valid of 332 responses, the sample used is statistically significant, counting a standard error margin (typically around 5%) and a level of confidence (usually 95%). This size is fair enough to validate the study due to it meets the minimum needed respondents to achieve reliable level, generalizable outcomes, considering that a sample of around 300-400 is usually sufficient for many studies in social sciences research studies.

To ensure that before distribution, the questionnaire items underwent pretesting and adjustments for the survey to guarantee its validity. This process involved piloting the questionnaire with a small sample of respondents to identify any ambiguities or issues with clarity, which were subsequently addressed to enhance the accuracy and reliability of the survey data.

For the answers, a five-point Likert scale was utilized, from “Strongly disagree” to “Strongly agree.” Out of the 550 questionnaire copies that were delivered to the respondent directly, a total of 332 compatible responses could be recovered. Consequently, the useable sample size for the research study was measured as 332 respondents who visited Petra from different countries worldwide.

The research survey contained 23 questions, organized well into four critical sections to address various elements of the current research. The first part focused on identifying the profile of the tourists, providing basic demographic and behavioural understandings. The second section examined the main role of social media constructs, analyzing how respondent tourists engage with the available platforms. The third group of items examined the role of brand image as a mediating aspect, evaluating its influence within the tourism sector. In the end, the fourth quarter focuses mainly on sustainable tourism, assessing tourists’ attitudes and behaviours toward environmentally responsible methods. All study items that were used in the survey were adjusted from selected previous studies in the area to confirm validity and reliability based on a selected study.

After surveying, the 332 respondents composed the overall demographic shape of the individual participants is displayed in (Table 1).

Table 1. Demographic profiles of the study respondents

Age	Frequency	Percent
Less Than 18	8	2.4
18-25	36	10.8
25-30	45	13.6
30-35	85	25.6
More Than 35	158	47.6
Total	332	100.0
Gender		
Male	187	56.3
Female	145	43.7
Total	332	100.0
Marital status		
Married	203	61.1
Single	129	38.9
Total	332	100.0
Education		
High School	91	27.4
Diploma	84	25.3
Degree	127	38.3
Master	28	8.4
Other	2	.6
Total	332	100.0

Source: data results by Spss

3. 3. STRUCTURAL MODEL

The study contains the initial methodology drawn by [Hair et al., \(2017\)](#), for estimating a structural model of the study. The analytical stage of the study relies on this method. Furthermore, several assessments are employed to evaluate the model of the study, containing an assessment of the correlation between exogenous variables, generally identified as path coefficients.

The software utilized was Smart-PLS with maximum probability estimation to achieve Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and to measure the current research model, counting the main hypotheses research. Smart-PLS was chosen for its robustness in handling complex structural equation models and its suitability for exploratory research, allowing for efficient analysis and interpretation of the data collected in this study. This CFA, utilizing the Smart-PLS technique has a pictorial user interface for variance-based structural equation modeling (SEM) utilizing the partial least squares path modeling technique (PLS). It builds the measurement model involving the research observed values (items) to their respective primary constructs ([Sarstedt & Cheah 2019](#)). PLS allows for the correlation assessment among variables, aligning with the empirical model for the research and providing cause-and-effect relationships ([Hire, 2014](#)).

The relationships between experimental values (research items) and latent variables (research factors) should indicate significance, with loading factors (weights) of 0.2 minimum for variables ([Dijkstra & Henseler, 2015](#)). A loading factor that results in greater than 0.5 is a high-reliability indicator; 0.3 to 0.5 indicates a moderate level of reliability, while the weak reliability is less than 0.3.

4. DATA ANALYSES AND RESULTS

Figure 1 presents the research model with three variables and their relations. Based on this model data was run by utilizing Smart-PLS the analysis results are interpreted. The sample for this investigation contained 332 participants. The overall demographic shape of the individual participants is displayed in (Table 1). The respondents' maturity is more than 35 years old, resulting in 47.6 %, indicating most half of the investigated population. The gender outcomes tended to be males, accounting for 56.3 % of the participants. Most of the population of the samples were married, 61.1%, while the other 38.9% were single. Regarding education levels, most respondents have a bachelor's grade of 38.3%, followed by High School of 27.4%.

These results indicate several aspects, i.e. most of the visitors are educated, which means Petra city attracts cultural tourists. Furthermore, the high rate of a family type of tourist is obviously due to low-cost carriers. That encourages these types of visitors.

4. 1. STRUCTURAL MODEL EVALUATION

The reflective measuring model's assessment, suggested by Hair et al., (2019), has been adapted because it is comprehensive and comprises several procedures starting with the factors loading assessment, finding out Cronbach's Alpha, results of composite reliability, and assessing the convergent and discriminant validity (Puška et al., 2018). The values and results of Average Variance Extracted (AVE), as styled by Hair et al., (2019), were calculated to find out and assess convergent validity.

In contrast, the Fornell-Larcker criterion given in 1981, was created to measure the validity of results and has been used for this research.

Table 2. The findings of the measurement evaluation

Variables	Items	Loading (should be higher than 0.60)	Cronbach's alpha (should be higher than 0.60)	Composite reliability (rho_a) (should be higher than 0.70)	Average variance extracted (AVE) (should be higher than 0.50)
Social Media (SM)	SMI1	0.954	0.900	0.898	0.836
	SMI2	0.954			
	SMI3	0.830			
	SMT1	0.872	0.855	0.858	0.776
	SMT2	0.867			
	SMT3	0.903			
	SM_WOM	0.871	0.828	0.829	0.744
		0.864			
		0.853			
Brand Image (BI)	BI 1	0.881	0.840	0.841	0.757
	BI 2	0.862			
	BI 3	0.867			
Sustainable Tourism (ST)	ST 1	0.830	0.882	0.890	0.631
	ST2	0.861			
	ST3	0.676			
	ST4	0.756			
	ST5	0.834			
	ST 6	0.795			

Hair & Fornell evaluation processes were utilized for the social media marketing study items, and all items were used. The findings of the measurement evaluation of the study reflective model direct that all quality criteria, with essential quality loadings, Cronbach's Alpha, composite reliability, and convergent validity, were seen and met the criteria. More outcomes are shown in (Table 2).

Before examining the research hypotheses, the measurement model process was considered. Moreover, the measurement criteria were completed by finding the loadings for each Factor, average variance extract (AVE), as well as, composite reliability (CR) were applied. Table 2 displays the study values and their results to find out the convergent validity of the factor loadings threshold should be higher than 0.60 (Osintsev & Khalilian, 2023). As per the findings illustrated in Table 2, all factor loadings are greater than the threshold of 0.60. CR and AVE Values should be higher than 0.70 and 0.50 (Hair, et al., 2019). Based on the results reported in Table 2 the values of CR were higher than 0.70, and AVE were higher than 0.50. That means the results meet the criteria of measurement.

Figure 4. Measurement model assessment. Arrows show all the relations checked by the measurement model Source: (Smart PLS) outcomes

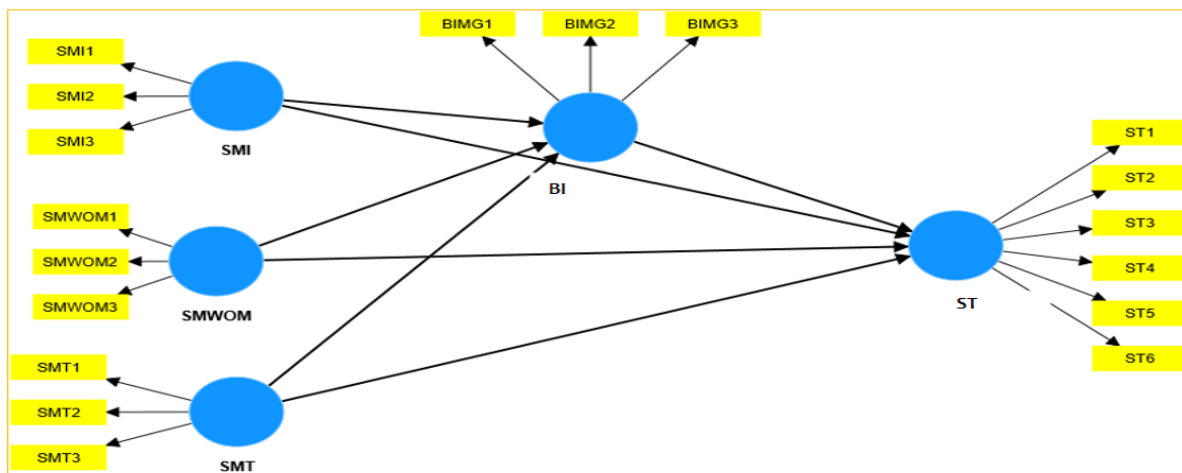


Table (3) provides a correlation matrix demonstrating the discriminant validity results. Discriminant validity is a statistical concept utilized to confirm that research constructs (or variables) in the study are different from each other. Fornell & Larcker (1981) recommended one method to evaluate discriminant validity by comparing the Average square root Variance Extracted (AVE) of each construct (or variables) with the correlations between constructs. If the square root of the AVE of a construct is higher than its correlations with other constructs, then discriminant validity is recognized.

Table 3. Shows the discriminant validity outcome's own elaboration based on Fornell and Larcker, 1981

	SM_I	SM_T	SM_WOM	BI	ST
SM_I	0.914				
SM_T	0.672	0.881			
SM_WOM	0.730	0.805	0.863		
BI	0.660	0.804	0.771	0.870	
ST	0.678	0.798	0.773	0.789	0.794

4. 2. COLLINEARITY AND PATH COEFFICIENTS

In the existing research, the values of the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) have been considered to evaluate collinearity amongst exogenous latent variables. Results indicated that VIF values below 5, proposing no significant collinearity (Hair et al., 2017). In additional assessment of path coefficients, 5000 bootstrapped samples were tested, presenting statistically significant direct effects (Hair et al., 2017). Path and collinearity significance outcomes are shown respectively, in Tables 4 and 5, highlighting the significance of the identified effects.

Table 4. Final Path Coefficients Assessment Using a Complete Bootstrapping Routine

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
SMI -> BI	0.119	0.12	0.06	1.972	0.049
SMI -> ST	0.123	0.125	0.056	2.214	0.027
SMT -> BI	0.491	0.482	0.08	6.153	0
SMT -> ST	0.312	0.314	0.063	4.99	0
SM-WOM -> BI	0.289	0.296	0.082	3.504	0
SM-WOM -> ST	0.197	0.197	0.081	2.428	0.015
BI -> ST	0.305	0.302	0.074	4.1	0

In addition, table 5 displays the indirect paths that have been assessed to measure their effect as a mediating role in determining the relationship among the study variables (Hair et al., 2017).

Table 5: Indirect Influences Significance Testing

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
SMI ->ST	0.036	0.036	0.02	1.791	0.073
SMT->ST	0.15	0.147	0.048	3.146	0.002
SMWOM->ST	0.088	0.088	0.031	2.838	0.005

5. DISCUSSION

The empirical results of the current research support the idea that various social media issues can influence tourists' decisions to visit destinations that are promoted as sustainable destinations. Specifically, interaction, trendiness, and e-WOM were found a positive influence on sustainable tourism in direct relation, which supports previous studies conducted by Fitri & Andriani (2019). Moreover, the study by Alsoud et al., (2023) found that the relationships between SMMA and sustainable tourism through the brand image as a mediator have a positive impact on two constructs (trendiness and e-WOM). However, the interaction construct of social media through brand image on sustainable tourism results found a negative relationship, which is reliable with the results of Barreda et al., (2020) but challenges the effects of Wyles et al., (2019) who obtained that interaction as one of the social media constructs had an important effect on sustainable tourism.

In the contemporary digital time, the quick progress of technology and the widespread use of social media applications have created a progressively demanding scenery for industries aiming to keep pace with market trends and sustain a current brand image. Consequently, tourism destinations that are unsuccessful in adjusting to these evolving trends risk falling out of sync with guest hopes, potentially leading to negative effects on their brand reputation and sales. Nevertheless, studies suggest that integrating modern trends into advertising strategy can be

instrumental in elevating a brand's image. Contrastingly, research conducted by Hilal (2019) suggests that efforts to customize content on social media may not yield a considerable effect on brand image. The lack of influence could be recognized as limited customization choices on the brand side or the lack of tailor-made tourism experiences for the destination's tourists.

This study delved into the influence of social media initiatives on the image of a destination's brand specifically focusing on awareness and image. It revealed that factors such as electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) and trendiness significantly affected the brand image; despite the fact, that interaction did not play a significant role.

6. CONCLUSION

The relationship between social media marketing and sustainable tourism at the Petra cultural tourism site according to the analysis outcomes is significant. Sufficient social media activities for marketing can raise awareness levels about the significance of preserving cultural sites and heritage destinations, motivating tourists to employ more sustainable practices when they visit the site. The second is the relationships between the brand image the mediated variables and sustainable tourism the dependent variable at the Petra cultural tourism site is significantly positive based on the analysis results. A strong and well-known brand image can increase tourists' perceptions of the site's culture and its value, which in turn can enhance responsible and sustainable tourism behaviors. Brand image significantly moderates the relationship between social media marketing activities and the process of sustainable tourism at the Petra heritage site by strengthening the impacts of social media campaigns. When it enhances Petra's brand image as a culturally valuable and better environmentally responsible site, it can strengthen tourists' behavior toward sustainable tourism approaches. A positive and strong brand image makes the sustainability statement more reasonable and well appealing, leading to a more significant alignment between both social media marketing activities and the sustainable behaviors of the tourists.

This research introduces an additional perspective on the several influences the marketing within social media on the formation of travel destination image and the selection of sustainable tourism destinations. The study's outcomes recommend that investigating the intersection of social media, brand image, and overall destination image is valuable for understanding individuals' intentions in choosing a sustainable destination.

The suggested research model not only enhances and influences our understanding of tourism but also provides a great foundation for future studies and research. These findings generate better interest for further exploration, prompting researchers to identify and provide additional factors influencing sustainable tourism destination choices. Additionally, the insights subsidize the modification of the marketing within social media and promotional strategies for destinations.

This study supports earlier claims that social media marketing strongly influences and enhances travelers when choosing a sustainable tourism destination. It also emphasizes the significance of social media and brand image, filling a gap in previous studies that did not explore the interconnected relationships between these factors in such heritage destinations.

The study presents different ways of understanding how social media marketing, brand image, and sustainable tourism destinations are linked to the overall perception. The results of the study contribute to this research, indicating that social media shows a vital side in determining perceptions of a sustainable tourism destination. Additionally, the brand image acts as a mediator, influencing travelers' intentions to choose a sustainable tourism destination.

In general, this research contributes significantly to both academic understanding and the tour-

ism industry professionals by focusing on how social media users, through their online activity and presence, create content that shapes the overall image of a destination and influences travelers' decisions to opt for sustainable tourism destinations. By incorporating some recommendations into destination marketing strategies, practitioners can enhance the practical value of the research and effectively leverage social media and brand image to promote sustainable tourism destinations.

As mentioned in several parts above the existing study contributes to a better understanding of how both variables of social media marketing and brand image form destination perception and build sustainability-oriented tourism selections. By investigating the selected interactions, the study provides useful insights for future research investigating the intersection of social media, sustainable tourism, and brand image. The proposed study model serves as a basis for further exploration, encouraging the identification of different factors affecting sustainable tourism.

Specifically, the current study sheds light on the role of social media in forming tourists' decisions, indicating that a strong level of brand image could direct tourists toward several sustainable practices, for professionals in the tourism field, comprising these insights into creative marketing strategies could enhance destination attraction and foster the behavior of sustainable tourism. By increasing social media marketing and the role of brand image, practitioners will more effectively promote the practice of sustainable tourism, contributing to academic knowledge as well as the tourism industry.

6. 1. RECOMMENDATIONS

To enhance and improve the practical value of this study, practitioners and professionals in the tourism industry can consider several recommendations and actionable insights: There are several recommendations for destination managers and marketers that may enhance the whole image of the destination and sustainable tourism benefit of Social Media for Sustainable Tourism Behaviors:

Use social media marketing to affect pro-tourism behaviors by highlighting the mediating role of destination attractiveness and the perspective toward the positive results of tourism. This can be accomplished by developing engaging and informative content that emphasizes the positive elements of sustainable tourism destinations.

Enrich Quality of Social Media Information: Focus on enhancing better quality of social media details offered by destination marketing representatives. By confirming that the content shared on social media platforms and networks accurately describes the current sustainable elements of the destinations, social media marketers can positively affect the shape of the destination's whole image and travelers' choice of sustainable destinations.

Adapt and Improve the Study Conceptual Framework: Destination managers, professionals, and marketers may adapt and improve the current study conceptual framework with different variables and or constructs to better evaluate travelers' destination favorite intention. This involves customizing the current framework to the specific elements and attractions of the sustainable tourism destinations they promote. The current conceptual framework can be adapted and improved with different elements and constructs to better assess travelers' destination choice intention.

Utilizing the activities of Social Media for Destination Marketing: Influence social media platforms to promote effectively sustainable tourism destinations. Cooperate with influencers to recognize the Interconnected Relationships: Identify the interconnected relationships among social media marketing, brand image, and sustainable tourism destinations. This understanding leads to and can help in developing strong comprehensive marketing strategies that take into ac-

count the impact of these factors on travelers' perceptions and intentions, which can efficiently form users' decisions and quick selections regarding these destinations

Focus on the attractiveness of each destination and approach: Pay attention to destination attractiveness and the attitude towards the helpful impacts of tourism as mediated by several marketing performances in social media. This can lead marketers to enhance residents' pro-tourism behaviors and effectively communicate with partners through social media platforms.

6. 2. IMPLICATIONS

Sustainability is no longer an alternative, but a priority that will influence our culture and the tourism industry within social media advertising and traditional advertisement in the decades to come. Experts and specialists in the tourism industry in Petra can consider some recommendations by working on achievable changes and creating a long-term sustainability strategy for improvements, building a set of policies that will implement sustainable growth and enhance the brand image within the international tourism industry.

Tourists want to avoid mass tourism promoted by social media marketing and advertisement and the environmental troubles that appear with it, they are now willing to travel absolutely outside of peak season; most of them are willing to consider less-popular destinations to decrease overcapacity and adverse environmental impact.

This is an opportunity for tourism suppliers to focus on and promote special tour packages outside of peak seasons. However, need some real measures. Authorities and professionals in the tourism industry in Petra should take into consideration measures and initiatives at different levels such as fitting a water filter to avoid plastic bottles, delivering eco-friendly and reusable shopping bags, or creating local markets in the area where visitors can stopover for a plastic-free experience.

Tourists willing to feel reconnected with local culture and nature can drive extra revenue for the local economy by upselling services and experiences addressed to this profile, like learning about the local culture, handcrafting or cooking workshops, or hiking tours through an association with local companions to positively support the brand image and local community benefits, collaborations with local corporations and responsible day trip operators that offer a diversity of activities.

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