# Social media marketing activities and tourists' purchase intention

**Malek Alsoud[a*], Sabri Mahmoud Alfdool[b], Ali Trawnih[a], Abdullah Saleh Helalat[a], lu'ay Al-Mu'ani[a] and Nihaiah Mahrakani[a]**

[a]*Al-Ahliyya Amman University, Jordan*
[b]*Polytechnic University of Valencia, Spain*

| CHRONICLE | ABSTRACT |
|---|---|
| | This study aims to examine the influence of brand image as a mediator between social media marketing activity and tourist intentions to visit tourist sites in Jordan. To test the hypotheses, we utilized the partial least square method and distributed a questionnaire survey to 400 visitors, receiving 289 responses for analysis using SMART-PLS4 software. The study made significant contributions to the literature on social media marketing by developing a research model that links social media usage to brand image and shopping intention, and by using statistical techniques to quantitatively assess the effect of social media marketing activity on the brand image as a mediator. The findings exposed that word of mouth, a construct of social media, significantly positively influenced tourists' purchase intention to visit sites in Jordan. This study sheds light on the importance of social media marketing and its impact on the tourism industry in Jordan, providing useful insights for practitioners and policymakers in the field.<br> |

## 1. Introduction

The proliferation of Internet technologies and their capabilities have become increasingly essential in providing information across various sectors and industries (Jesús et al., 2021). Social media, in specific, has arisen as a powerful tool known for its networking capabilities worldwide, both socially and economically (Al-Emran & Shaa-lan, 2018). There have been multitudes of studies that have sought to identify the functions of social media (Al-Emran et al., 2017). With the ongoing evolution and development of social media, the emergence of intelligent applications with advanced tools and methods has facilitated human lives and created a more conducive environment for businesses to operate in. Social media and its associated tools also provide a valuable means of communication among individuals, enabling interactive content and facilitating Internet-based interactions and cooperation among network participants (Park et al., 2018; Khan, 2022). The utilization of social media has been extensively admitted as a tool of significant adjustment and a universal path between individuals, organizations, and related communities (Almaaitah, 2021). Studies have shown that the activities of social media can significantly influence an individual's behavior and lifestyle, as well as their connection to society through the enhancement of platform use. The tourism industry has been particularly influenced by the growth and widespread usage of social media in recent technology and media marketing. Social media platforms have played a crucial role in guiding tourists in determining their desired destinations by providing valuable information (Lin et al., 2022). Research has also demonstrated the role of social media in various aspects of tourism activities, such as the reservations process, the exchange of information, and the development of tourism marketing strategies (Khatri, 2019). Social media networks' activities have effectively surpassed websites' traditional roles in information dissemination and exchange among individuals and tourists. The incorporation of modern technology in social media has also

been identified as a key component in shaping the forthcoming of the tourism business, including the structure, plans, activities, and services offered. The growing usage of social media and related technologies is resulting in a significant share of the overall tourism business worldwide (Oliveira, et al, 2020). In particular, the Jordanian tourism sector is among the growing industries that play a substantial role in improving and improving the domestic economy, as evidenced by its contribution to a high share of Jordan's Gross National Product. Despite a substantial amount of tourism research, insufficient emphasis has been paid to the impact of brand image in determining tourists' intentions. This study seeks to fill that gap by investigating the mediating influence of brand image on the link between SMM activity and visitors' intent to visit tourist attractions.

## 2. Literature review

Gratification Theory (UGT) is a theoretical framework that posits that consumers seek out various brands and products on various promotional platforms in order to fulfill their needs and desires. With the arrival of internet technology and new collaborating applications, UGT has been adapted to research correlated to social media advertising. The theory has been applied to examine consumer behavior on conventional promotional media and has been discussed in several studies to determine its influence in various circumstances (Khan, 2017; Dinh & Lee, 2022). For example, research has examined the factors that strengthen consumers' commitment to a particular company through marketing activity on social media platforms (de Oliveira, Huertas, & Lin, 2016) and has also been used to strengthen intensity, strength, and brand loyalty in order to favorably engage the consumer. Additionally, UGT has been functional in the setting of traditional and social networking sites as a means to consider consumers' emotional, informed, and evolving wants. Furthermore, the theory has been utilized in specific situations to understand how different social networking sites can be leveraged to attract customers to a product or service . The literature includes several UGT applications that explain why specific social networking sites were chosen (Khan et al., 2017). Given the successful applications of UGT, it is well suited for the purpose of our present study, which tests the mediation effect of brand image on SMMA and tourists' intention to visit tourism locations.

### 2.1 Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA)

Refer to the various strategies and tactics employed by companies to interact with and engage with their target audience through various social networking sites. As noted by Joo et al. (2020), social media sites have become a crucial aspect of modern marketing, allowing companies to gain insights into consumer interests and preferences, and subsequently, tailor their offerings to meet those needs. The SMMA framework can be broken down into four key elements: interaction, trendiness, customization, and WOM marketing. The participatory nature of social networking sites enables companies to foster a dialogue with their consumers, thereby allowing for a more personalized and effective marketing approach.

### 2.2 Interaction

Interaction, as defined by Kotler et al. (2016), is the act of expressing one's opinion or feedback regarding a particular service or experience. This concept is crucial in the development of content in various contexts, including social media. In this regard, the study conducted by Booker, Kelly, and Sacker (2018) aimed to examine the relationship between adolescent interactions on social media and their happiness. The research found that there were significant differences in the levels of interaction between genders and how it affected their well-being. Additionally, the study revealed that well-being declines with age, with the highest levels of interaction. Social media platforms, such as Instagram, provide a valuable opportunity for marketers and companies to engage with customers, produce content, and exchange ideas. Li et al. (2021) highlight the significance of social media in facilitating interactions between businesses and customers. Furthermore, Ceyhan (2019) conducted a study to inspect the influence of interactions on Instagram pages on the shopping intention of students; the findings indicated that branding and interactions on Instagram have a significant effect on individual purchase intent.

Cui et al., (2019) in their study explore the effect of disseminating food safety science on consumers' purchasing intentions in China via social media platforms. The research employed a quantitative method, utilizing a survey that was dispersed to a sample size of 199 individuals. The study intended to inspect the relationship between interests, specifically, the conclusion of social media interactions on purchase intentions, taking into account other factors such as recommendations from friends and perceived risks. The findings of the research indicate that there are several factors that enhance purchase intentions and reveal an indirect effect of social media interactions on shopping intentions.

Additionally, the study by Cui et al., (2019) found that recommendations from friends had a substantial direct influence on purchase intentions, and that perceived risks played a part in the administrative development. Furthermore, the study also explored the specific social networking sites used by contributors, with the majority of respondents reporting that they used WeChat and Weibo for food safety information. The study concludes that social media and its activities can be effectively used as a means for distributing food safety information to consumers in China but also highlights the importance of considering other factors such as recommendations and perceived risks in understanding consumer behavior. Overall, this research provides valuable insights for food manufacturers and retailers in China, as well as for policymakers and regulators in the food industry, on how to effectively communicate food safety information to consumers through social media platforms.

**H₁:** *Interaction (IN) significantly influences tourist intention (TI).*

*2.3 Trendiness*

Trendiness, as defined by Liu, Wu, and Li (2018), refers to the developments that are widely disseminated through social networking platforms and that are deemed desirable by users to view on a regular basis. The effect of social media on individuals across the globe is multifaceted. Oscarius Yudhi Ari Wijaya et al. (2021) employed a quantitative methodology by distributing 217 surveys to consumers in Indonesia to inspect the outcome of trendiness as a social media activity on the intention to purchase smartphones. The research initiates that customization had a noteworthy impact on intentions, while trendiness had no significant effect.

Recent literature has demonstrated that various research has inspected the influence of SMMA strategies on customers behavior. A study conducted by Samsudeen and Kaleel (2020) specifically sought to observe the influence of SMMA on interaction with smartphone brands in Hong Kong. The outcomes of this research indicate that SMMA elements play a significant role in constructing brand awareness and the theoretical framework employed suggests a direct correlation among interaction, trendiness, and electronic word of mouth with brand interaction.

Moreover, social media plays a crucial role in reducing consumer hesitations during the purchasing process by allowing for direct communication with brands or service providers and access to the furthermost facts related to a product (Cui et al., 2019). Pre-purchase information acquisition, such as reading product reviews, is often used by consumers to make well-considered buying decisions. As a result, social media is considered a vital source for obtaining new information related to a brand or service, serving as a motivator for customers to utilize it prior to purchase decision.

**H$_2$:** *Trendiness (TR) significantly influences tourist intention (TI).*

*2.4 Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM)*

E-WOM has been defined as any negative nor positive feedback that customers share about a particular product, or brand on the internet. With the rise of online platforms, consumers have increasingly engaged in conversations, debates, and discussions about brands and companies have sought to leverage e-WOM to improve their brand image and enhance their online presence (Rosario et al., 2019, Alsoud & bin Lebai Othman, 2018a, 2018b). The advent of the Internet in the 1990s has led to a growing interest among companies in electronic commerce, prompting a proliferation of literature examining the development about (e-WOM) and its distinctions from outdated WOM communication. Studies have sought to identify the obstacles and future chances presented by e-WOM for companies and the field (Jalilvand et al., 2011).

The examination of the influence of e-WOM on consumer shopping and brand image is a prominent area of research. Hilal (2019) investigates the effect of social networking site elements, specifically e-WOM and customization, on brand equity as a destination for tourists in Sri Lanka. The study found that entertainment, customization, and e-WOM had a significant influence on brand equity, but no significant effect was found for interaction and trendiness. Tien, Amaya Rivas, and Liao (2019) used a sample of 314 participants in Taiwan to investigate the influence of e-WOM on purchase intentions of cosmetic users. The study found that the usefulness and credibility of e-WOM had a strong mediating role in influencing purchasing intentions. The outcomes of this research align with previous research that has observed the effect e-WOM has on various factors related to brand and consumer behavior. Hayat and Hershkovitz (2018) conducted a study using a questionnaire distributed to 115 university students to examine the influence of social diversity on brand image and content credibility within the context of the Twitter network. The results suggested that social diversity could enhance brand image and content credibility.

**H$_3$:** *E-WOM significantly influences tourist intention (TI).*

*2.5 Customization*

Customization has been extensively researched in the arena of customer behavior and marketing. The customization dimension, as defined by Ullah et al. (2021), refers to the aptitude of a business to encounter the specific needs of customers and engage in personalized communication to understand their requirements and bring them to fruition. This aspect of customer service has been recognized as a key factor in attracting and retaining consumers. One study by Kim and Lee (2019) meant to examine the impact of customization on consumer purchasing intentions. The research found that customization had a positive correlation with shopping intention. The authors of the study recommend investing in creative activities that enhance consumer happiness and increase purchasing intention. Biswas and Sindhura (2020) used a field survey and questionnaires to observe the impact of customization on customer intention to shop online. The research aimed to comprehend customers' tendencies toward seeking uniqueness and value in products and services. The study found that uniqueness had the highest level of impact, followed by a sense of accomplishment.

In the realm of digital marketing, the process of customizing private ads in social media has been identified as a crucial way to increase the effectiveness of advertising. An experiment conducted by Al-Adwan (2022) involving 936 cases found that the most prominent messages that depend on customization on social media were those that targeted personal characteristics.

Customizing social media content and interactions has been shown to positively impact a business's brand image by demonstrating to customers that the business values their individual preferences and interests.

**H₄:** *Customization (CZ) positively influences tourist intention (TI).*

*2.5 Brand Image*

Kotler et al. (2016) define a brand as a collection of characteristics, including a name, symbol, or design that serves to distinguish a product or service from its competitors. Brand image, in contrast, pertains to the collective perception held by consumers with regard to a company and its associated product offerings. Keller (1993) posits that brand image is the set of connections that are associated with a brand in the minds of consumers. This includes external cues, such as product quality and value that customers use to evaluate products before making a purchase. Study has exposed that brand image can have a significant influence on a purchaser's shopping intention and loyalty. A favorable brand image can lead to an increase in product quality and value, as well as a higher likelihood of purchasing the product (Godey et al., 2016). The use of SMMA has found a positive effect on brand image. Labrecque et al. (2013) initiate that information displayed on social media was successful in influencing customer behavior and buying intentions. This proposes that SMMA practices be able to effectively enhance customer loyalty (Godey et al., 2016). Brand image is a critical component of a company's overall marketing strategy. By understanding and managing consumers' perception of a brand, company perceptions prove their product quality and value, as well as increase customer loyalty. Additionally, the use of SMMA can be an effective way to enhance brand image and influence customer behavior. Literature review revealed a lack of current studies that incorporate the variables of SMMA, brand image, and consumer shopping intention in the analysis of tourist intention to visit tourism sites in Jordan. Despite the increasing use of SMMA in the tourism business, many nations continue to rely on traditional marketing strategies, which have become less effective in influencing visitor choices and preferences. This research gap highlights the need for further exploration of the impact of SMMA on tourist intention to visit specific tourist sites in Jordan.

**H₅:** *Brand Image mediates the relationship between interaction (IN) and tourist intention (TI).*

**H₆:** *Brand Image mediates the relationship between Trendiness (TR) and tourist intention (TI).*

**H₇:** *Brand Image mediates the relationship between Customization (CZ) and tourist intention (TI).*

**H₈:** *Brand Image mediates the relationship between E-WOM and tourist intention (TI).*

*2.6 Intention to Visit Tourists Sites*

The intention to visit tourist destinations has been the subject of recent research efforts. In this regard, Sultan et al. (2020) examine the environmental behavior of coastal tourism in relation to the content on social media sites. The study revealed that a set of cognitive and emotional stimuli could lead to increased interest and behavior toward sustainable coastal tourism. Similarly, Joo et al. (2020) aimed to identify key factors that affect the behavior of tourists in rural areas. The study adopted a survey methodology and distributed questionnaires to 323 applicants in 2019. The outcomes of the research indicate that consumers show a crucial role in the relationship between the intention to visit and standards, in the presence of social media.

The sharing of travel feedback via social media has gained increasing attention among tourists. Wong et al. (2019) study the impact of tourism experiences published on social media on visit intentions to various ethnic destinations. The study adopted a survey methodology and collected data from 279 consumers. The research examined three main items of tourism experiences. The outcomes of the study indicate that the sharing of tourism experiences on social media has a significant result on the intentions of others to visit tourist sites. Additionally, the study provided recommendations for the tourism sector to improve the promotion and marketing of ethnic destinations.

Moreover, the influence of smartphones and SMMA on intentions to visit tourist destinations is an area of growing interest among researchers. In order to design efficient marketing strategies for tourist locations, it is critical to realize the relationship between smartphone marketing, social media, and sustainable tourism. A conceptual model has been built based on the literature research to illustrate the link between the study variables and their conceptions. As shown in Fig. 1, this model identifies the independent and dependent variables, as well as the mediation effect between them. The factors map depicts the relationship between independent variables like SMMA activity, brand image, and consumer purchase intention and the dependent variable, tourist intention to visit specific tourism locations. The model also depicts the potential mediation effect between the variables, emphasizing the potential influence of SMMA activity, brand image, and consumer intent to purchase on certain tourism locations.

## 3. Methodology

This research is adapted to a quantitative investigation design, which employs a simple random sampling method. The target applicants for this research study were tourists visiting Jordanian tourism sites. Data collection was carried out using paper-

based questionnaires, which were distributed to the target respondents in person. The measurement items for all constructs were modified from previously validated research studies and were modified to align with the perspective of the current research. The independent variable of SMMA activity was tested using a twelve-item scale adapted from Godey et al. (2016) and Kim and Ko (2012). The dependent variable, tourist intention to visit specific tourism sites, was measured by using a three-item that was modified from Alalwan (2018). The mediating role of the brand image variable was measured by using a three-item that was adapted from Nyadzayo and Khajehzadeh (2016). The items for the study questionnaire were collected and measured by utilizing a five-point Likert scale, which is widely used in business research and ranges from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Table 1 shows the summary of the personal characteristics of the participants in this survey.
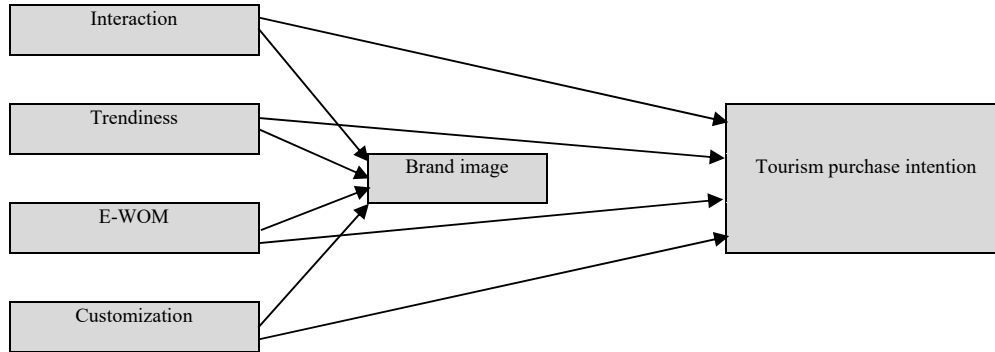


**Fig. 1.** The proposed study

**Table 1**
Personal characteristics of the participants

| Variable | Category | N | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | Male | 233 | 81% |
| | Female | 56 | 19% |
| Age | Less than 30 | 31 | 11% |
| | 30 – 39 years | 85 | 29% |
| | 40 – 49 years | 92 | 32% |
| | 50 – 59 | 53 | 18% |
| | 60 or more | 28 | 10% |
| Education Level | Bachelor | 79 | 27% |
| | Higher Diploma | 68 | 24% |
| | Master | 116 | 40% |
| | PhD | 4 | 9% |
| Marital | Single | 104 | 36% |
| | Married | 183 | 63% |
| | Divorcee | 2 | 1% |
| Occupation | Students | 37 | 13% |
| | Housewife | 33 | 11% |
| | Employee | 103 | 36% |
| | Other | 116 | 40% |
| | Total | 289 | 100% |

The research sample for this study consisted of 289 participants. The demographic profile of the participants are summarized in Table 1. The majority of the research participants were males (81%). The largest age group among the participants was the middle age group between 30 and 49 years old, accounting for 61% of the study participants. Regarding education, the highest percentage of participants (40%) held a master's degree, followed by 27% who held a bachelor's degree, 24% who held a high diploma degree, and 9% who held a Ph.D. degree.

## 4. Data analysis and Results

The current research employed SMART-PLS 4 software to analyze the collected data. The analysis procedure included several measurement methods, including the measurement model, as well as other techniques, processes, and criteria that were followed in the research. This included the assessment of both reliability and validity, as well as the estimation of the study structural model, which was used to test the proposed hypotheses. The results of the analysis provided insights into the relationship between the study variables and their constructs, as well as the potential mediation effect among them.

### 4.1 Measurement Model

The evaluation of reflective measuring models, as suggested by Hair et al. (2017), involves several processes such as assessing factors loading, calculating Cronbach's Alpha, determining composite reliability, and evaluating both convergent and discriminant validity. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values, as described by Hair et al. (2017), were run to evaluate

convergent validity, while the Fornell-Larcker criterion (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) was founded to measure the results validity. This evaluation was applied to four items in the social media study, and no items were eliminated. The results of the measurement assessment of the reflective model indicate that all quality criteria, including required quality loadings, Cronbach's Alpha, convergent validity, and composite reliability, were met. Further details are provided in Table 2.

**Table 2**
Factor loadings, Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability, and Convergent Validity

| | Items | Loading | Cronbach's alpha | Composite reliability (rho_a) | Average variance extracted (AVE) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | E-WOM1 | 0.851 | | | |
| | E-WOM2 | 0.876 | | | |
| | E-WOM3 | 0.872 | 0.834 | 0.836 | 0.750 |
| | IN1 | 0.835 | | | |
| | IN2 | 0.877 | | | |
| Social media | IN3 | 0.857 | 0.819 | 0.821 | 0.734 |
| | TR1 | 0.830 | | | |
| | TR2 | 0.882 | | | |
| | TR3 | 0.864 | 0.821 | 0.823 | 0.737 |
| | CZ1 | 0.887 | | | |
| | CZ2 | 0.860 | | | |
| | CZ3 | 0.888 | 0.852 | 0.856 | 0.772 |
| | BI1 | 0.885 | | | |
| Brand image | BI2 | 0.906 | | | |
| | BI3 | 0.728 | 0.794 | 0.821 | 0.711 |
| | TI1 | 0.760 | | | |
| Tourist intentions | TI2 | 0.910 | | | |
| | TI3 | 0.871 | 0.803 | 0.808 | 0.722 |

Furthermore, according to the criterion of Fornell-Larcker (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), the discriminant validity results that were established were shown in Table 3.

**Table 3**
Discriminant Validity Establishment based on Fornell-Larcker Criterion

| Scale | E-WOM | BI | CZ | IN | TI | TR |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| E-WOM | 0.866 | | | | | |
| BI | 0.790 | 0.843 | | | | |
| CZ | 0.829 | 0.727 | 0.878 | | | |
| IN | 0.765 | 0.709 | 0.754 | 0.857 | | |
| TI | 0.738 | 0.761 | 0.745 | 0.722 | 0.849 | |
| TR | 0.796 | 0.734 | 0.823 | 0.783 | 0.766 | 0.859 |

*4.2 Structural Model Evaluation*

The methodology outlined by Hair et al. (2017) for the estimation of a structural model is utilized as a fundamental aspect of the analytical phase of the research project. Additionally, several evaluations are performed to assess the model, including an examination of the correlation between exogenous variables, which are commonly referred to as path coefficients.

*4.3 Collinearity and Path Coefficients*

In this study, the values of the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) were computed to evaluate the degree of collinearity among the exogenous latent variables. The results revealed that the values of VIF were all less than 5, indicating that there was no substantial collinearity among the exogenous constructs (Hair et al., 2011). To further assess the significance and relevance of the path coefficients within the model, a round of bootstrapping was implemented utilizing 5000 bootstrapped samples. Bootstrapping is a statistical technique that involves resampling to estimate the standard errors of path coefficients and determine their statistical significance (Hair et al., 2017). The outcomes of the collinearity evaluation and the path significance testing are presented in Table 4 and Table 5, respectively. The direct effects were found to be statistically significant, indicating the importance of these impacts.

**Table 4**
Collinearity Assessment

| Items | BI | TI |
|---|---|---|
| E-WOM | 3.956 | 4.599 |
| BI | | 2.984 |
| CZ | 4.264 | 4.282 |
| IN | 3.080 | 3.151 |
| TR | 4.041 | 4.137 |

**Table 5**
Final Path Coefficients Assessment Using a Complete Bootstrapping Routine

| Items | Original sample (O) | Sample mean (M) | (STDEV) | T statistics (|O/STDEV|) | P values |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| E-WOM → BI | 0.464 | 0.462 | 0.084 | 5.526 | 0.000 |
| E-WOM → TI | 0.029 | 0.033 | 0.086 | 0.341 | 0.733 |
| BI → TI | 0.331 | 0.327 | 0.062 | 5.325 | 0.000 |
| CZ → BI | 0.078 | 0.082 | 0.082 | 0.947 | 0.344 |
| CZ → TI | 0.165 | 0.167 | 0.078 | 2.104 | 0.035 |
| IN → BI | 0.154 | 0.153 | 0.074 | 2.073 | 0.038 |
| IN → TI | 0.143 | 0.141 | 0.074 | 1.944 | 0.052 |
| TR → BI | 0.180 | 0.181 | 0.087 | 2.063 | 0.039 |
| TR → TI | 0.252 | 0.253 | 0.072 | 3.488 | 0.000 |

Additionally, table 6 demonstrates the indirect paths that were evaluated in order to assess their role as a mediating process in determining the relationship between variables (Hair et al., 2017).

**Table 6**
Indirect Effects Significance Testing

| Indirect path | Original sample (O) | Sample mean (M) | Standard deviation (STDEV) | T statistics (|O/STDEV|) | P values |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| E-WOM → TI | 0.154 | 0.151 | 0.040 | 3.802 | 0.000 |
| CZ → TI | 0.026 | 0.026 | 0.028 | 0.932 | 0.351 |
| IN → TI | 0.051 | 0.050 | 0.027 | 1.919 | 0.055 |
| TR → TI | 0.059 | 0.059 | 0.031 | 1.903 | 0.057 |

*4.4 Hypotheses Testing Results*

The results of the analysis, as presented in Tables 5 and 6 and in accordance with the procedures outlined by Hair et al. (2017), indicate that only one hypothesis regarding the mediating role of brand image in the relationship between electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) and tourist shopping intention was supported. Specifically, the analysis supports the notion that brand image serves as a mediator of the effect of e-WOM on tourist purchase intention. However, the other hypotheses, as discussed in the literature by Hair et al. (2017) and Nitzl et al. (2016), regarding the mediating role of brand image in the relationship between interaction, trendiness, customization, and tourist shopping intention were not supported by the data.

**5. Discussion**

The proliferation of social media and associated activities has drastically transformed the tourism experience, allowing individuals to identify and access crucial information necessary for planning their travel to a specific destination. The aim of this research is to investigate the impact of SMMA strategies, such as interaction, trendiness, electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM), and customization, on tourists' intentions to visit tourist sites in Jordan and how brand image acts as a mediator in this relationship. The experiential outcomes of this study support the notion that tourists' decisions and purchase intentions can be affected by various social media factors. Specifically, trendiness and customization were found to have a positive effect on tourists' intentions, which aligns with previous studies conducted in the Malaysian tourism market (Chin & Ming, 2022) and the Chinese market (Liu, Wang, Zhang, & Qiao, 2022). However, the interaction was found to have no noteworthy result on tourists' intentions, which is consistent with the results of Liu et al. (2022) but contradicts the results of Chin & Ming (2022) who found that interaction on social media had a significant influence on tourists' intentions.

Furthermore, e-WOM was found to have no significant role on purchase intentions, which contradicts the majority of literature on the topic (Abubakar, 2016; Adam, Ibrahim, Putra, & Yunus, 2023; Chin & Ming, 2022) which suggests that e-WOM plays a significant role in persuading shopping decisions. This discrepancy may be attributed to the fact that e-WOM's impact on purchase intentions is dependent on numerous variables such as the type of product and the target audience, and it is possible that individuals with prior experience will not be swayed by information on social media.

The current research is expected to examine the impact of SMMA on brand image. The results of the analysis revealed that the majority of hypotheses were supported, suggesting that the perception and emotions towards a destination brand can be affected by e-WOM from comments and reviews. Additionally, the findings indicate that interactions on social media brand pages can have a significant effect on brand image. Negative or slow interactions can lead to a loss of trust and confidence in the brand, potentially ensuing in a decline in the consumer base. Conversely, positive interactions can enhance brand image. The study suggests that brands that involve their consumer via social media channels can reap the benefits of increased brand recognition and exposure. Through active engagement, such as answering questions and providing useful information, brands can effectively reach and connect with their target audience.

In the current digital age, the fast advancement of technology and the proliferation of social networking sites have made it increasingly challenging for businesses to stay current with market trends and maintain an up-to-date brand image. As a result,

businesses that fail to adapt to these trends may find themselves out of alignment with customer expectations and may suffer negative impacts on their brand image and sales. However, research suggests that understanding and incorporating the latest trends into a marketing strategy can aid in enhancing a brand's image. In contrast, a study by Hilal (2019) found that customization efforts on social media might not have a substantial impact on brand image. This may be because of the lack of customization options offered on brand pages or the absence of custom travel experiences for destination visitors. The research examined the role of social media efforts on destination brand equity (awareness and image) and found that elements such as trendiness, customization, and e-WOM had a significant impact on brand image, while interaction did not.

The current study examined the mediating role of brand image on the relationship between SMMA and tourist purchase intention. Results showed that brand image mediates the relationship between e-WOM and tourist purchase intention, consistent with previous study findings (Ezzat & Ebraheem, 2022; Doosti, Jalilvand, Asadi, Khazaei Pool, & Mehrani Adl, 2016). However, no mediating effect was found for the other three constructs (Interaction, Trendiness, and Customization), indicating that brand image only partially mediates the relationship between social media and tourist shopping intention. These findings highlight the importance of social media in providing tourists with critical information regarding their potential visit, and how the brand image can enhance their decision-making process.

## 6. Conclusion

The present study directed to examine the mediating role of brand image in the between various constructs of SMMA and tourist intentions to visit tourist sites in Jordan. A quantitative methodology was employed, utilizing the SMART-PLS software for data analysis. The results of the research indicate that different types of SMM may influence consumer decisions and purchase intentions, with trendiness and customization having the strongest effect on tourist purchase intention. These findings serve to reiterate the significant impact of SMM on individuals' decision-making processes. Furthermore, the study suggests that when linked with certain elements of SMM, brand and image may play a positive role in driving purchase intent. Many researchers established a positive correlation between an attractive brand image and positive consumer behavior toward the corresponding product. In accordance with the present study, brand image was found to partially affect purchase intention, with a positive influence of the construct of Word of Mouth on tourist purchase intention to visit Jordanian tourist sites.

## 7. Limitations

The current study acknowledges the limitations associated with utilizing open opinion through the network of social media as a research method. Despite these limitations, it is acknowledged that social media is a prevalent and rapidly growing method of communication that is here to stay, with an increasing number of research studies utilizing social data. However, the scope of this study is limited to a specific industry within the tourism sector in Jordan, and as such, the results may not be generalizable to other industries or geographical locations. Furthermore, there is a limited sum of literature available on the topic of social media and tourism in Jordan, with most research having been conducted in western countries. Therefore, it is vital to footnote that the findings of this research are specific to the tourism sector in Jordan.

## 8. Recommendation

The outcomes of this research indicate the crucial significance of social networking sites in influencing the intention to visit tourist sites. Therefore, it is imperative for marketers to prioritize the utilization of these platforms in their marketing efforts. Tourism companies should also consider incorporating social media content into their marketing plans, in order to effectively leverage the power of content marketing and search engine optimization. In light of these findings, researchers and practitioners in the field of tourism marketing should give further attention to the role of social networking sites in shaping consumer behavior and decision-making. This includes conducting more in-depth studies on the specific mechanisms through which social media influences the intention to visit tourist sites, as well as identifying the most effective strategies for leveraging social media in tourism marketing. Additionally, practitioners in the tourism business should take note of the importance of incorporating social media content into their marketing efforts and invest in developing skills and resources for effective content marketing and search engine optimization. By doing so, tourism companies can better tap into the potential of social networking sites to drive traffic and increase bookings.

## References

Alalwan, A. A. (2018). Investigating the impact of social media advertising features on customer purchase intention. *International Journal of Information Management*, *42*, 65-77.

Al-Adwan, A. S. (2019). Revealing the influential factors driving social commerce adoption. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Information, Knowledge, and Management*, *14*, 295-324. https://doi.org/10.28945/4438

Al-Adwan, A. S., & Al-Horani, M. A. (2019). Boosting customer e-loyalty: An extended scale of online service quality. *Information*, *10*(12), 380. https://doi.org/10.3390/info10120380

Al-Adwan, A. S., & Sammour, G. (2020). What makes consumers purchase mobile apps: Evidence from Jordan? *Journal of Theoretical and Applied Electronic Commerce Research*, *16*(3), 562-583. https://doi.org/10.3390/jtaer16030034

Al-Adwan, A. S., Albelbisi, N. A., Aladwan, S. H., Horani, O., Al-Madadha, A., & Al Khasawneh, M. H. (2020). Investigating the impact of social media use on student's perception of academic performance in higher education: evidence from Jordan. *Journal of Information Technology Education*: Research, 19, 953-975. https://doi.org/10.28945/4661.

Al-Adwan, A. S., Alrousan, M. K., Yaseen, H., Alkufahy, A. M., & Alsoud, M. (2022). Boosting Online Purchase Intention in High-Uncertainty-Avoidance Societies: A Signaling Theory Approach. *Journal of Open Innovation: Technology, Market, and Complexity*, 8(3), 136. https://doi.org/10.3390/joitmc8030136

Abubakar, A. (2016). Does eWOM influence destination trust and travel intention: A medical tourism perspective. *Economic Research-Ekonomska Istrazivanja*, *29*(1), 598–611. https://doi.org/10.1080/1331677X.2016.1189841

Adam, M., Ibrahim, M., Putra, T. R. I., & Yunus, M. (2023). The effect of e-WOM model mediation of marketing mix and destination image on tourist revisit intention. *International Journal of Data and Network Science*, *7*(1), 265–274. https://doi.org/10.5267/j.ijdns.2022.10.007

Albelbisi, N. A., Al-Adwan, A. S., & Habibi, A. (2021). Impact of quality antecedents on satisfaction toward MOOC. *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education*, *22*(2), 164-175. https://doi.org/10.17718/tojde.906843

Al-Emran, M., Mezhuyev, V. and Kamaludin, A. (2018). Technology Acceptance Model in M-learning context: A systematic review. *Computers & Education*, 125, pp.389–412. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2018.06.008

Al-maaitah, D. A., Tha'er Majali, M. A., & Almaaitah, T. A. (2021). The role of leadership styles on staff's job satisfaction in public organizations. *Journal of Contemporary Issues in Business and Government* Vol, 27(1).

Alsoud, M. A. S., & bin Lebai Othman, I. (2018a). The determinant of online shopping intention in Jordan: A review and suggestions for future research. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 8(8), 441-457. http://doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v8-i8/4507

Alsoud, M. A., & bin Lebai Othman, I. (2018b). Factors influencing online shopping intention in Jordan: an empirical study based on the Tam model. *International Journal of Current Innovations in Advanced Research*, 1(6), 1-13. DOI: 10.6007/IJARBSS/v8-i8/4507

Babić Rosario, A., de Valck, K. and Sotgiu, F. (2019). Conceptualizing the electronic word-of-mouth process: What we know and need to know about eWOM creation, exposure, and evaluation. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 48(3), pp.422–448.

Biswas, A., & Sindhura, K.S. (2020). Impact of customization on purchase intention. *repository.iimb.ac.in*. [online] Available at: https://repository.iimb.ac.in/handle/2074/19419 [Accessed 9 May 2022].

Booker, C.L., Kelly, Y.J., & Sacker, A. (2018). Gender differences in the associations between age trends of social media interaction and well-being among 10-15-year-olds in the UK. *BMC Public Health*, [online] 18(1). http://doi.org/doi:10.1186/s12889-018-5220-4.

Ceyhan, A. (2019). The Impact of Perception Related Social Media Marketing Applications on Consumers' Brand Loyalty and Purchase Intention. *EMAJ: Emerging Markets Journal*, 9(1), pp.88–100. http://doi.org/doi:10.5195/emaj.2019.173.

Chin, C. H., & Ming, W. W. P. (2022). Exploring the Impact of Social Media Marketing on Tourism Destination Marketing and Revisit Intention: The Extension of Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) Model. *Studies of Applied Economics*, *40*(2). https://doi.org/10.25115/eea.v40i2.6848

Cui, L., Jiang, H., Deng, H. and Zhang, T. (2019). The influence of the diffusion of food safety information through social media on consumers' purchase intentions. *Data Technologies and Applications*, 53(2), pp.230–248. http://doi.org/doi:10.1108/dta-05-2018-0046.

De Jesús Titla-Tlatelpa, J., Ortega-Mendoza, R. M., Montes-y-Gómez, M., & Villaseñor-Pineda, L. (2021). A profile-based sentiment-aware approach for depression detection in social media. *EPJ data science*, *10*(1), 54. https://doi.org/10.1140/epjds/s13688-021-00309-3.

Dinh, T. C. T., & Lee, Y. (2022). "I want to be as trendy as influencers"–how "fear of missing out" leads to buying intention for products endorsed by social media influencers. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing*, 16(3), 346-364. https://doi.org/10.1108/JRIM-04-2021-0127

Doosti, S., Jalilvand, M. R., Asadi, A., Khazaei Pool, J., & Mehrani Adl, P. (2016). Analyzing the influence of electronic word of mouth on visit intention: the mediating role of tourists' attitude and city image. *International Journal of Tourism Cities*, *2*(2), 137–148. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJTC-12-2015-0031

Ezzat, M., & Ebraheem, M. A. E. M. (2022). Impact of Electronic Word of Mouth on Purchase Intention: Mediating Role of Brand Image and Brand Trust of Tourist Destinations and Hospitality Establishments in Egypt. *Minia Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Research MJTHR*, *14*(3), 153–173. https://doi.org/10.21608/MJTHR.2022.170036.1070

Godey, B., Manthiou, A., Pederzoli, D., Rokka, J., Aiello, G., Donvito, R. and Singh, R. (2016). Social media marketing efforts of luxury brands: Influence on brand equity and consumer behavior. *Journal of Business Research*, [online] 69(12), pp.5833–5841. https://doi.org/doi:10.1016/j.jbusres.2016.04.181.

Hayat, T., & Hershkovitz, A. (2018). The role social cues play in mediating the effect of eWOM over purchasing intentions: An exploratory analysis among university students. *Journal of Customer Behavior*, 17(3), 173–187. https://doi.org/10.1362/147539218x15434304746027.

Hilal, M.I.M. (2019). Impact of social media marketing efforts on Destination's brand equity: A study among International Tourists arriving to Sri Lanka. *2019 3rd International Conference on Computing and Communications Technologies (ICCCT)*. https://doi.org/doi:10.1109/iccct2.2019.8824976.

Jalilvand, M.R., Esfahani, S.S., & Samiei, N. (2011). Electronic word-of-mouth: Challenges and opportunities. *Procedia Computer Science*, [online] 3(1), pp.42–46. https://doi.org/doi:10.1016/j.procs.2010.12.008.

Joo, Y., Seok, H., & Nam, Y. (2020). The Moderating Effect of Social Media Use on Sustainable Rural Tourism: A Theory of Planned Behavior Model. *Sustainability*, 12(10), p.4095. https://doi.org/10.3390/su12104095

Jordan Times (2020). Petra ranks 1st on Lonely Planet's Ultimate Travel List. [online] Jordan Times. Available at: http://jordantimes.com/news/local/petra-ranks-1st-lonely-planets-ultimate-travel-list [Accessed 9 Apr. 2022].

Keller, K. L. (1993). Conceptualizing, measuring, and managing customer-based brand equity. *Journal of marketing*, *57*(1), 1-22.

Khan, I. (2022). Do brands' social media marketing activities matter? A moderation analysis. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, *64*, 102794. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2021.102794.

Khatri, I. (2019). Information technology in tourism & hospitality industry: A review of ten years' publications. *Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Education*, 9, 74-87. https://doi.org/10.3126/jthe.v9i0.23682.

Kim, A.J., & Ko, E. (2012). Do Social Media Marketing Activities Enhance Customer equity? an Empirical Study of Luxury Fashion Brand. *Journal of Business Research*, 65(10), pp.1480–1486. https://doi.org/doi:10.1016/j.jbusres.2011.10.014.

Kim, H.Y., & Lee, Y. (2019). The Effect of Online Customization on Consumers' Happiness and Purchase Intention and the Mediating Roles of Autonomy, Competence, and Pride of Authorship. *International Journal of Human–Computer Interaction*, 36(5), pp.403–413. https://doi.org/10.1080/10447318.2019.1658375.

Kotler, P., Armstrong, G., Groebner, D., Shannon, P. & Fry, P. (2016). *International Business Management–Academic Year*. [online] Available at: https://www.hesge.ch/heg/sites/default/files/formation-base/IBM/welcome-day/2016/ibm_welcomeday_2016_textbooks.pdf [Accessed 24 Apr. 2022].

Labrecque, L. I., Vor Dem Esche, J., Mathwick, C., Novak, T. P., & Hofacker, C. F. (2013). Consumer power: Evolution in the digital age. *Journal of interactive marketing*, *27*(4), 257-269.

Li, F., Larimo, J., & Leonidou, L. C. (2021). Social media marketing strategy: definition, conceptualization, taxonomy, validation, and future agenda. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, *49*, 51-70.

Liu, C. H., Horng, J. S., Chou, S. F., Yu, T. Y., Huang, Y. C., & Lin, J. Y. (2022). Integrating big data and marketing concepts into tourism, hospitality operations and strategy development. *Quality & Quantity*, 1-18. *doi: 10.1007/s11135-022-01426-5.*

Liu, H., Wu, L. and Li, X. (Robert) (2018). Social Media Envy: How Experience Sharing on Social Networking Sites Drives Millennials' Aspirational Tourism Consumption. *Journal of Travel Research*, 58(3), pp.355–369. *https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287518761615.*

Liu, J., Wang, C., Zhang, T., & Qiao, H. (2022). Delineating the Effects of Social Media Marketing Activities on Generation Z Travel Behaviors. *Journal of Travel Research*. https://doi.org/10.1177/00472875221106394

Nitzl, C., Roldan, J.L., & Cepeda, G. (2016). Mediation analysis in partial least squares path modeling: Helping researchers discuss more sophisticated models. *Industrial Management & Data Systems, 116*(9), 1849-1864. *https://doi.org/10.1108/IMDS-07-2015-0302.*

Nyadzayo, M. W., & Khajehzadeh, S. (2016). The antecedents of customer loyalty: A moderated mediation model of customer relationship management quality and brand image. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, *30*, 262–270. *https://doi:10.1016/J.JRETCONSER.2016.02.002*

Oliveira, T., Araujo, B., & Tam, C. (2020). Why do people share their travel experiences on social media? Tourism Management, 78, 104041. *https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2019.104041.*

Oscarius Yudhi Ari Wijaya, A. P., Sulistiyani, S., Pudjowati, J., Kartikawati, T. S., Kurniasih, N., & Purwanto, A. (2021). The role of social media marketing, entertainment, customization, trendiness, interaction and word-of-mouth on purchase intention: An empirical study from Indonesian smartphone consum e. *International Journal of Data and Network Science*, *5*(3), 231-238.

Samsudeen, S. N., & Kaleel, M. I. M. (2020). Impact of social media marketing elements on consumer-brand engagement.

Sultan, M. T., Sharmin, F., Badulescu, A., Stiubea, E., & Xue, K. (2020). Travelers' responsible environmental behavior towards sustainable coastal tourism: An empirical investigation on social media user-generated content. *Sustainability*, *13*(1), 56.

Ullah, I., & Narain, R. (2021). Achieving mass customization capability: the roles of flexible manufacturing competence and workforce management practices. *Journal of Advances in Management Research*, *18*(2), 273-296.

Wong, J. W. C., Lai, I. K. W., & Tao, Z. (2019). Memorable ethnic minority tourism experiences in China: a case study of Guangxi Zhuang Zu. *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change*, *17*(4), 508-525.