

How digital storytelling builds visit intention in Jakarta's heritage tourism destinations: The mediating role of destination brand attitude.

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ABSTRACT

Digital storytelling has become increasingly important for heritage destinations seeking to translate historical and cultural resources into compelling digital experiences. This study examines how digital storytelling, destination brand awareness, and perceived authenticity shape tourists' visit intention through destination brand attitude in Jakarta's heritage tourism context. A cross-sectional survey generated 164 valid responses from domestic tourists and prospective visitors who had encountered digital content about at least one Jakarta heritage destination. The proposed model was analyzed using partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM). The measurement model demonstrated satisfactory convergent validity and internal consistency. The reported structural results show that digital storytelling, destination brand awareness, and perceived authenticity significantly strengthen destination brand attitude, whereas their direct relationships with visit intention are not significant. Destination brand attitude is the strongest predictor of visit intention ($\beta = 0.700$) and fully mediates the three focal relationships. The model explains 74.9% of the variance in destination brand attitude and 62.1% of the variance in visit intention. These findings position destination brand attitude as the principal psychological mechanism through which digital narratives, destination familiarity, and authenticity perceptions are converted into behavioral intention. Heritage destination managers should therefore prioritize coherent, culturally credible, and emotionally engaging digital narratives rather than relying on visibility alone.

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Keywords

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INTRODUCTION

Digital technologies have altered how tourism destinations communicate, compete, and maintain relationships with prospective visitors. Search engines, social platforms, online video, virtual environments, and user-generated content now shape information acquisition and destination evaluation before a trip takes place (Fuchs & Sigala, 2021; Gössling, 2021; Sigala, 2018). This shift is particularly consequential for heritage tourism because the value of a heritage destination depends not only on its physical attributes but also on the meanings attached to historical events, cultural identity, collective memory, and local traditions. Digital communication must therefore do more than display attractions: it must interpret the destination in a way that is understandable, credible, and emotionally resonant.

Digital storytelling offers such an interpretive mechanism. It combines narrative structure with text, imagery, audio, video, animation, and interactive features to organize destination information into meaningful stories. In destination marketing, stories can circulate through social media and stimulate engagement with brand narratives (Lund et al., 2018), communicate place identity and stakeholder meanings (Bassano et al., 2019), and improve the narrative quality of destination promotional videos (Moin et al., 2020). More recent reviews further show that tourism storytelling works through mechanisms such as emotional engagement, narrative transportation,

identification, authenticity, and memory, although the empirical literature remains fragmented across technologies and destination contexts (Zhang & Ramayah, 2024). Digital heritage applications similarly demonstrate that interactive storytelling can reconstruct historical objects and events in ways that deepen visitor involvement (Rizvic et al., 2024).

Destination branding provides a complementary explanation of how such communication influences tourism decisions. From a consumer-based brand equity perspective, awareness is the gateway through which a destination enters a potential visitor's consideration set (Aaker, 1996; Keller, 2013). Destination brand awareness captures the ability to recognize or recall a destination and connect it with distinctive attributes. Empirical destination-branding research identifies awareness, image, quality, cultural assets, and loyalty as interrelated components of destination brand equity (Kladou & Kehagias, 2014; Konecnik & Gartner, 2007). However, recognition alone may be insufficient to generate visit intention unless it is converted into a favorable overall evaluation of the destination.

Perceived authenticity is especially important in heritage tourism. It reflects the extent to which visitors believe that a destination credibly represents its history, culture, and social identity. Consumer-based authenticity models show that authenticity is a multidimensional judgment with meaningful consequences for cultural-heritage evaluation (Kolar & Žabkar, 2010), while evidence from heritage settings links perceived authenticity to destination imagery and cultural behavioral intentions (Ramkissoon & Uysal, 2011). Digital storytelling can support authenticity by contextualizing heritage objects, giving visibility to local voices, and connecting contemporary audiences with the meanings of historic places. At the same time, highly polished or decontextualized digital content may weaken credibility, making authenticity a crucial evaluative bridge between communication and behavior.

The Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) framework provides a parsimonious explanation of this process. The framework proposes that external stimuli influence behavioral responses through internal cognitive and affective states (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). In this study, digital storytelling, destination brand awareness, and perceived authenticity constitute salient informational and evaluative inputs; destination brand attitude represents the internal assessment of the destination; and visit intention is the behavioral response. This logic is consistent with travel-decision research showing that attitude is a central predictor of destination choice intention (Ajzen, 1991; Lam & Hsu, 2006) and with destination-brand equity research linking brand evaluations to purchase or visit intention (Pike & Bianchi, 2016).

Three gaps motivate the present study. First, digital storytelling research has emphasized engagement, destination image, narrative design, and memorable experience, but its effect on destination brand attitude remains less established. Second, digital storytelling, destination brand awareness, perceived authenticity, destination brand attitude, and visit intention are rarely integrated within one structural model. Third, much of the evidence comes from internationally established destinations, whereas large metropolitan heritage systems in emerging tourism markets remain underexamined. Jakarta is an appropriate context because destinations such as Kota Tua, Museum Fatahillah, Museum Bank Indonesia, Museum Wayang, Museum Bahari, and Setu Babakan combine colonial, national, and indigenous cultural narratives while competing for attention in a media environment dominated by contemporary entertainment.

Accordingly, this study examines whether destination brand attitude mediates the effects of digital storytelling, destination brand awareness, and perceived authenticity on visit intention in Jakarta's heritage tourism destinations. By integrating SOR theory with destination branding and authenticity research, the study clarifies why exposure, familiarity, and credibility may not translate directly into visit intention. Its principal contribution is to identify destination brand attitude as the psychological mechanism through which these antecedents become behaviorally consequential.

Literature Review And Hypothesis Development

2.1 Theoretical foundation

SOR theory distinguishes environmental stimuli from the internal states that organize an individual's response. Although originally developed in environmental psychology, the framework is widely applicable to mediated consumption environments because digital content can function as a stimulus that changes cognition, affect, and subsequent behavioral intention. In the present model, digital storytelling is a designed communication stimulus, destination brand awareness is a cognitive accessibility condition, and perceived authenticity is an evaluative belief. Destination brand attitude is the organism because it summarizes the tourist's favorable or unfavorable evaluation of the destination, whereas visit intention is the response.

The model also draws on consumer-based brand equity. Aaker (1996) and Keller (2013) conceptualize awareness and brand associations as foundations of brand value, while destination research demonstrates that salience, image, perceived value, cultural assets, and loyalty are adapted to place-based brands (Kladou & Kehagias, 2014; Pike & Bianchi, 2016). Integrating these perspectives implies that cognitive accessibility and authenticity-related beliefs should first influence destination brand attitude, which then guides behavioral intention.

2.2 Digital storytelling, destination brand attitude, and visit intention

Narratives organize fragmented information into causal and emotionally meaningful sequences. In tourism, this function is particularly valuable because prospective visitors must imagine an experience before consuming it. Social-media storytelling can mobilize destination brand narratives and encourage audiences to participate in their circulation (Lund et al., 2018). Place-based storytelling also helps destinations articulate identity and coordinate meanings among stakeholders (Bassano et al., 2019), while well-structured promotional videos can translate destination attributes into recognizable narrative arcs (Moin et al., 2020). These mechanisms should produce more favorable evaluations of the destination.

Storytelling may also increase visit intention by helping audiences mentally simulate a future visit. Yet the strength of a direct effect is theoretically uncertain. Storytelling research indicates that behavioral outcomes commonly depend on intermediate mechanisms such as emotion, identification, perceived value, and brand evaluation (Moscardo, 2020; Zhang & Ramayah, 2024). Therefore, digital storytelling is expected to improve both destination brand attitude and visit intention, while the indirect attitudinal route may be particularly important. H1: Digital storytelling positively influences destination brand attitude. H2: Digital storytelling positively influences visit intention.

2.3 Destination brand awareness, destination brand attitude, and visit intention

Destination brand awareness reduces retrieval effort and makes a destination more likely to be considered during travel planning. Brand awareness is therefore a necessary, but not always sufficient, component of destination brand equity (Aaker,

1996; Kladou & Kehagias, 2014). Recognition and recall provide the cognitive basis for evaluating a destination, and repeated exposure may strengthen familiarity and perceived relevance. This should contribute to a more favorable destination brand attitude.

Awareness can also increase the probability that a destination enters the visitor's choice set. However, awareness does not determine whether the destination is positively evaluated. Destination-brand research suggests that salience becomes behaviorally meaningful when accompanied by favorable associations, image, value, and attitude (Keller, 2013; Pike & Bianchi, 2016). Thus, a direct awareness-intention relationship is plausible, but it may be weaker than the indirect relationship through attitude. H3: Destination brand awareness positively influences destination brand attitude. H4: Destination brand awareness positively influences visit intention.

2.4 Perceived authenticity, destination brand attitude, and visit intention

Heritage tourism involves judgments about whether cultural representations are credible, meaningful, and consistent with the identity of the place. Perceived authenticity strengthens the value of heritage encounters by connecting material settings with historical and social meanings (Kolar & Žabkar, 2010). In digital environments, authentic narratives may also reduce skepticism by presenting contextual detail, local perspectives, and continuity between online representation and on-site experience. These judgments should enhance destination brand attitude.

Authenticity has also been associated with behavioral intentions in cultural tourism (Ramkissoon & Uysal, 2011). Nevertheless, authenticity is primarily an evaluation of the destination's credibility rather than an intention in itself. It may therefore influence visit intention directly and indirectly through a favorable destination brand attitude. H5: Perceived authenticity positively influences destination brand attitude. H6: Perceived authenticity positively influences visit intention.

2.5 Destination brand attitude and visit intention

Destination brand attitude is an overall evaluative judgment that integrates cognitive beliefs and affective responses. In planned behavior theory, attitude toward a behavior is a proximal predictor of intention (Ajzen, 1991), and tourism research confirms the relevance of attitude to destination choice (Lam & Hsu, 2006). Within a destination-branding context, a favorable attitude indicates that the destination is attractive, valuable, and suitable relative to alternatives. It should therefore be the most immediate predictor of visit intention.

The integrated model further suggests mediation. Digital storytelling, awareness, and authenticity may create favorable informational and experiential conditions, but tourists still need to form an overall brand evaluation before those conditions influence behavioral intention. Accordingly, destination brand attitude is expected to mediate each antecedent-intention relationship. H7: Destination brand attitude positively influences visit intention. H8a: Destination brand attitude mediates the relationship between digital storytelling and visit intention. H8b: Destination brand attitude mediates the relationship between destination brand awareness and visit intention. H8c: Destination brand attitude mediates the relationship between perceived authenticity and visit intention.

METHOD

This study used a quantitative, explanatory, cross-sectional survey design to test the proposed relationships among digital storytelling, destination brand awareness, perceived authenticity, destination brand attitude, and visit intention. The empirical context comprised heritage tourism destinations in Jakarta, Indonesia, including Kota Tua Jakarta, Museum Fatahillah, Museum Bank Indonesia, Museum Wayang, Museum Bahari, and Setu Babakan Betawi Cultural Village. Respondents evaluated Jakarta's heritage destinations after prior exposure to related digital tourism information through social media or other online platforms.

The unit of analysis was the individual domestic tourist or prospective visitor. Purposive sampling was appropriate because participation required prior knowledge of the research context. Eligible respondents were at least 17 years old, had encountered digital promotional content concerning Jakarta's heritage destinations, knew at least one of the listed destinations, and expressed interest in heritage tourism.

Data were collected through an online questionnaire distributed via social media between May and June 2026. Participation was voluntary, anonymous, and confidential, and respondents were informed that the data would be used exclusively for academic purposes. After screening, 164 responses met the eligibility criteria and were retained for analysis.

The sample size is adequate for estimating the proposed PLS-SEM model under commonly used heuristic guidance because the number of observations exceeds ten times the largest number of structural paths directed at an endogenous construct (Hair et al., 2022). Nevertheless, statistical power should ideally be confirmed through an a priori or inverse-square-root power assessment when the complete model output is available.

The questionnaire contained a demographic section and a measurement section. All construct items were adapted from established tourism and branding scales and rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Expert review and language refinement were conducted before full data collection to improve clarity and content relevance. Table 1 presents the operationalization used in the final measurement model. The indicator counts have been aligned with the reported outer-loading table.

Table 1. Construct operationalization

Construct	Indicators	Principal sources
Digital storytelling	9	Lund et al. (2018); Moscardo (2020); Moin et al. (2020)
Destination brand awareness	6	Aaker (1996); Kladou and Kehagias (2014)
Perceived authenticity	6	Kolar and Žabkar (2010); Ramkissoon and Uysal (2011)
Destination brand attitude	6	Keller (2013); Pike and Bianchi (2016)
Visit intention	6	Lam and Hsu (2006); Ajzen (1991)

The proposed model was estimated with SmartPLS 4 using partial least squares structural equation modeling. PLS-SEM was selected because the study is prediction-oriented, includes multiple latent constructs and mediation paths, and uses a moderate sample size without requiring multivariate normality (Hair et al., 2022).

The measurement model was evaluated using indicator reliability, Cronbach's alpha, rho_A, composite reliability, average variance extracted (AVE), the Fornell-Larcker criterion, and the heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT). Outer loadings of 0.70 or higher were preferred, while indicators between 0.60 and 0.70 were retained when

construct reliability and AVE remained satisfactory. Internal-consistency coefficients above 0.70 and AVE values above 0.50 were considered acceptable (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2022). HTMT was evaluated against the conservative threshold of 0.90 (Henseler et al., 2015).

The structural model assessment focused on path direction and significance, explanatory power (R^2), and indirect effects. Destination brand attitude was treated as a mediator between the three antecedents and visit intention. Full mediation was inferred where the indirect relationship was reported as significant while the corresponding direct relationship was not significant.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Descriptive statistics

Table 2 reports the standardized latent-variable scores exported from the PLS analysis. The means are therefore approximately zero and the standard deviations approximately one; these values should not be interpreted as raw five-point Likert means. The negative minima indicate that a small number of respondents scored substantially below the sample mean on the corresponding standardized constructs.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for standardized latent-variable scores

Construct	Mean	Median	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Digital storytelling	0.000	0.024	1.000	-4.641	1.321
Destination brand awareness	0.000	0.111	1.000	-3.921	1.701
Perceived authenticity	0.000	-0.108	1.000	-4.497	1.326
Destination brand attitude	0.000	0.016	1.000	-4.065	1.377
Visit intention	0.000	0.063	1.000	-3.700	1.568

4.2 Measurement model

Convergent validity was assessed through outer loadings and AVE. Most indicators exceeded the recommended loading threshold of 0.70. DS4 (0.661) and VI1 (0.697) were slightly below 0.70 but above 0.60 and were retained because the associated constructs continued to demonstrate adequate AVE and internal consistency. AVE values ranged from 0.569 to 0.697, exceeding the 0.50 criterion for every construct.

Internal consistency was satisfactory. Cronbach's alpha ranged from 0.849 to 0.920, composite reliability from 0.888 to 0.934, and rho_A from 0.856 to 0.923. These results indicate that the item sets consistently represent their intended latent constructs. The available manuscript states that HTMT and the Fornell-Larcker criterion were used; the numerical discriminant-validity matrices should accompany the final journal submission to permit independent verification.

Table 3. Indicator loadings and convergent validity

Construct	Indicator	Outer loading	AVE	Decision
Digital storytelling (DS)	DS1	.808	.612	Supported
	DS2	.820		Supported
	DS3	.823		Supported
	DS4	.661		Acceptable
	DS5	.832		Supported
	DS6	.753		Supported
	DS7	.719		Supported
	DS8	.811		Supported
	DS9	.798		Supported
Destination brand awareness (DA)	DA1	.740	.569	Supported
	DA2	.751		Supported

Construct	Indicator	Outer loading	AVE	Decision
	DA3	.739		Supported
	DA4	.797		Supported
	DA5	.727		Supported
	DA6	.769		Supported
Perceived authenticity (PA)	PA1	.825	.697	Supported
	PA2	.873		Supported
	PA3	.803		Supported
	PA4	.843		Supported
	PA5	.841		Supported
	PA6	.822		Supported
Destination brand attitude (DBA)	DBA1	.801	.678	Supported
	DBA2	.832		Supported
	DBA3	.859		Supported
	DBA4	.774		Supported
	DBA5	.808		Supported
	DBA6	.862		Supported
Visit intention (VI)	VI1	.697	.620	Acceptable
	VI2	.777		Supported
	VI3	.826		Supported
	VI4	.793		Supported
	VI5	.809		Supported
	VI6	.812		Supported

Table 4. Internal-consistency reliability

Construct	Cronbach's α	Composite reliability	rho_A	Assessment
Digital storytelling	.920	.934	.923	Excellent
Destination brand awareness	.849	.888	.856	Good
Perceived authenticity	.913	.932	.915	Excellent
Destination brand attitude	.905	.927	.907	Excellent
Visit intention	.877	.907	.886	Good

4.3 Structural model and mediation

The reported structural results indicate that digital storytelling, destination brand awareness, and perceived authenticity each have a significant positive relationship with destination brand attitude. By contrast, their direct relationships with visit intention are not significant. Destination brand attitude has a strong positive relationship with visit intention ($\beta = 0.700$) and is the most influential predictor in the model.

The model explains 74.9% of the variance in destination brand attitude and 62.1% of the variance in visit intention. These R^2 values indicate substantial explanatory power for the two endogenous constructs. The pattern of significant antecedent-attitude paths, a strong attitude-intention path, and nonsignificant direct antecedent-intention paths supports full mediation by destination brand attitude. Exact bootstrapped coefficients, t statistics, p values, confidence intervals, VIF values, effect sizes, and predictive-relevance statistics should be reported from the SmartPLS output in the final submission.

Table 5. Summary of reported structural relationships

Relationship	Reported result	Coefficient	Hypothesis decision
Digital storytelling $\rightarrow$ Destination brand attitude	Significant positive	Not reported	H1 supported
Digital storytelling $\rightarrow$ Visit intention	Not significant	Not reported	H2 not supported
Destination brand awareness $\rightarrow$ Destination brand attitude	Significant positive	Not reported	H3 supported

Relationship	Reported result	Coefficient	Hypothesis decision
Destination brand awareness → Visit intention	Not significant	Not reported	H4 not supported
Perceived authenticity → Destination brand attitude	Significant positive	Not reported	H5 supported
Perceived authenticity → Visit intention	Not significant	Not reported	H6 not supported
Destination brand attitude → Visit intention	Significant positive	$\beta = .700$	H7 supported

Table 6. Summary of reported mediation effects

Indirect relationship	Mediation type	Hypothesis decision
Digital storytelling → Destination brand attitude → Visit intention	Full mediation	H8a supported
Destination brand awareness → Destination brand attitude → Visit intention	Full mediation	H8b supported
Perceived authenticity → Destination brand attitude → Visit intention	Full mediation	H8c supported

Discussion

This study demonstrates that digital storytelling does not automatically convert exposure into visit intention. Instead, its principal role is to improve destination brand attitude. This finding is theoretically consistent with tourism storytelling research, which describes narratives as devices for structuring meaning, eliciting emotion, and enabling audiences to imagine destinations before travel (Moscardo, 2020; Zhang & Ramayah, 2024). It also extends social-media destination-branding research by showing that the circulation of brand stories becomes behaviorally relevant when those stories improve the audience's overall evaluation of the place (Lund et al., 2018). In Jakarta's heritage context, compelling stories about historical events, communities, architecture, and local traditions appear to influence visit intention only after they make the destination more favorably evaluated.

The nonsignificant direct relationship between digital storytelling and visit intention is substantively important. Although recent research shows that social-media content can attract attention and stimulate tourism demand (Hussain et al., 2024), content exposure may not be sufficient when destinations require higher cognitive and emotional involvement. Heritage destinations are complex experiential products; prospective tourists may first ask whether the narratives are credible, relevant, and personally meaningful. The result therefore supports an organism-based explanation: the effectiveness of digital storytelling depends on the attitude it creates, rather than on narrative exposure alone.

Destination brand awareness significantly strengthens destination brand attitude but does not directly predict visit intention. This pattern refines the role of awareness in destination brand equity. Awareness helps a destination become retrievable and recognizable, but recognition does not imply preference. The finding is compatible with consumer-based brand equity theory, in which salience is an entry condition that must be supported by favorable associations and judgments (Aaker, 1996; Keller, 2013). It also aligns with destination-brand studies showing that awareness operates as part of a broader system of cultural assets, image, value, and loyalty (Kladou & Kehagias, 2014; Pike & Bianchi, 2016). For Jakarta, increasing digital visibility is therefore necessary but insufficient; communication must transform recognition into a positive destination evaluation.

Perceived authenticity also has a significant relationship with destination brand attitude but no direct relationship with visit intention. This result suggests that authenticity is interpreted as a quality of the destination, not as an immediate behavioral trigger. Heritage tourists may appreciate accurate historical representation, cultural continuity, and local voices, yet these judgments become actionable only when

they contribute to a favorable overall attitude. The finding complements consumer-based authenticity research (Kolar & Žabkar, 2010) and evidence linking authenticity with cultural-tourism evaluations and behavioral intentions (Ramkissoon & Uysal, 2011). It also indicates that digital storytelling should not merely dramatize the past; it should preserve contextual accuracy and recognizable local meaning.

Destination brand attitude is the strongest predictor of visit intention ($\beta = 0.700$), thereby supporting the central SOR proposition that internal evaluation connects external stimuli with behavioral response. The finding also accords with the theory of planned behavior and travel-choice research, in which attitude is a proximal determinant of intention (Ajzen, 1991; Lam & Hsu, 2006). Full mediation across all three antecedents shows that attitude is not an ancillary variable but the model's primary conversion mechanism. Digital narratives, familiarity, and authenticity beliefs matter because they shape whether the destination is ultimately evaluated as appealing and worth visiting.

The model's explanatory power is noteworthy: 74.9% of destination brand attitude and 62.1% of visit intention are explained. These values suggest that the integrated model captures a substantial portion of the psychological process underlying heritage visit intention. At the same time, explanatory power should not be equated with complete predictive validity. The final journal version should include out-of-sample prediction or at least Q^2 statistics, along with effect sizes and confidence intervals, to determine how well the model generalizes beyond the estimation sample.

Theoretical implications

The study contributes to tourism research in three ways. First, it links digital storytelling to destination brand attitude rather than treating storytelling solely as a direct antecedent of behavioral intention. This clarifies the psychological route through which destination narratives exert influence. Second, it integrates destination brand awareness and perceived authenticity with storytelling in a single SOR-based model, showing that cognitive accessibility, credibility, and narrative communication converge in an affective brand evaluation. Third, the full-mediation pattern demonstrates that destination brand attitude is the principal mechanism converting digital and brand-related stimuli into visit intention in an emerging-market heritage context.

The findings also qualify destination brand equity theory. Awareness remains important, but its contribution is indirect and evaluative rather than immediately behavioral. Similarly, authenticity is not merely an objective property of heritage resources; it functions as a perceived brand-relevant belief. These results support a process view of destination branding in which tourists move from exposure and recognition to credibility judgments, overall attitude, and finally behavioral intention.

Managerial implications

Heritage destination managers should evaluate digital performance by its effect on destination brand attitude, not only by reach, impressions, followers, or video views. Digital campaigns should use coherent story arcs, identifiable characters or communities, historically grounded settings, and a clear connection between past and present. Short-form videos can be used to attract attention, but longer-form content, interactive maps, virtual tours, oral histories, and archival material may be needed to build credibility and emotional depth. Recent research on short-form destination video also shows that emotional experience can strengthen destination identification and loyalty (Li & Zhang, 2023).

Authenticity should be operationalized through content governance. Museums, cultural communities, historians, and local creative actors should be involved in script

development and factual review. User-generated stories can broaden representation, but they should be curated to avoid decontextualization or romanticization. Interactive digital heritage applications may further strengthen involvement by allowing audiences to explore historical events and objects rather than passively receiving information (Rizvic et al., 2024).

Awareness-building campaigns should be coordinated across Jakarta's heritage portfolio. Consistent naming, visual identity, cross-linking among destinations, and thematic itineraries can improve recall while also creating a broader narrative of the city. However, visibility should always lead to a clear evaluative proposition: why the destination is culturally meaningful, personally relevant, accessible, and worth visiting. Brand-attitude tracking should therefore be incorporated into campaign evaluation alongside standard digital analytics.

Limitations and future research

This study has several limitations. First, the cross-sectional design does not establish temporal causality. Longitudinal studies and controlled experiments could test whether exposure to different narrative formats changes authenticity perceptions, destination brand attitude, and subsequent visitation. Second, purposive online sampling may overrepresent respondents who are already digitally active or interested in heritage tourism. Probability-based sampling and comparisons between visitors and non-visitors would improve external validity.

Third, the analysis treats Jakarta's heritage destinations as a general category, although museums, historic districts, maritime heritage, and living cultural villages may produce different responses. Multi-group analysis could examine destination type, age, prior visitation, heritage involvement, and platform usage. Fourth, the reported manuscript does not provide the complete SmartPLS output required for comprehensive evaluation, including demographic profiles, item wording, discriminant-validity matrices, collinearity diagnostics, full bootstrapped path estimates, indirect-effect confidence intervals, effect sizes, predictive relevance, and model-fit or prediction statistics. These outputs should be incorporated before submission to a highly selective journal.

Future research may extend the model with destination image, trust, narrative transportation, emotional engagement, memorable tourism experience, electronic word-of-mouth, and perceived risk. Researchers should also compare human-created, community-created, and AI-assisted heritage narratives, because the source and transparency of digital content may alter authenticity judgments and destination attitudes.

CONCLUSION

This study explains how digital storytelling contributes to visit intention in Jakarta's heritage tourism destinations. Digital storytelling, destination brand awareness, and perceived authenticity each strengthen destination brand attitude, but none has a significant direct relationship with visit intention. Destination brand attitude is the strongest predictor of visit intention and fully mediates the three antecedent relationships. The results therefore show that exposure, recognition, and authenticity perceptions become behaviorally meaningful only when they produce a favorable overall evaluation of the destination.

The study extends SOR theory and destination-branding research by positioning destination brand attitude as the central conversion mechanism between digital communication and tourism intention. For practice, the implication is clear: heritage

destinations should not pursue digital visibility as an end in itself. They should create culturally credible, emotionally engaging, and strategically coherent narratives that improve how prospective visitors evaluate the destination.

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