ISSN: 2288-7709
JEMM website: https://accesson.kr/jemm
doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.20482/jemm.2024.12.4.87

Influencing Factors of Chinese Tourists' Revisit Intentions to Japan and South Korea: The Roles of Destination Image, Digital Engagement, and Sustainability Practices

Yilixiati ALIMU[1]

Received: June 07, 2024. Revised: June 28, 2024. Accepted: July 15, 2024.

Abstract

Purpose: This research examines the elements that affect Chinese tourists' trip experiences and behaviors in Japan and South Korea, focusing on destination image, digital engagement, and sustainability practices awareness. **Research design, data and methodology:** Data were collected from 414 Chinese tourists through an online survey and analyzed conduct confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling. Findings indicate a positive destination image significantly influences revisit intention but not travel satisfaction. Travel satisfaction positively affects revisit intention, while digital engagement and sustainability practices awareness both enhance travel satisfaction. **Results:** The results highlight the importance of leveraging digital engagement and promoting sustainability practices to boost satisfaction and repeat visits. **Conclusions:** The study provides practical insights for tourism stakeholders to develop targeted strategies, emphasizing customer service, sustainable practices.

Keywords: Chinese tourist, Destination image, Digital engagement with destination, Sustainability practices awareness, Travel satisfaction, Revisit intention

JEL Classification Code: C12, C40, F37, G15

1. Introduction

Over the last ten years, the tourism sector has experienced rapid development, becoming a major economic driver for many countries. Among the most prominent trends is the rise of Chinese outbound tourism, which has shown a remarkable increase in both frequency and expenditure. Japan and South Korea have emerged as top destinations for Chinese tourists due to their geographical proximity, cultural appeal, and advanced tourism infrastructures. In 2019, Chinese tourists expended over USD 258 billion, as reported by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), highlighting their substantial contribution to global tourism (UNWTO, 2019). The importance of understanding the factors that influence travel behavior among Chinese tourists cannot be overstated. As the tourism market becomes increasingly competitive, destinations such as Japan and South Korea must continually adapt to the evolving preferences and expectations of their visitors. However, there remains a need to explore newer dimensions, particularly the role of digital engagement and sustainability practices awareness, in shaping tourist experiences and behaviors.

The value of this study is in its potential to highlight the evolving trends of Chinese tourism to Japan and South Korea. First, understanding the role of digital engagement is

1 First Author. Ph.D. Candidates, Solbridge International School of Business, Woosong University, Republic of Korea. Email: ayilixiati217@student.solbridge.ac.kr

crucial as technological advancements and the widespread use of digital platforms have transformed how tourists plan, experience, and discuss their travel experiences. Chinese tourists are also becoming more conscious of sustainability issues, which can influence their travel decisions and experiences. This study aims to address the literature gap by investigating Chinese tourists' awareness and perceptions of sustainability practices and their effects on travel contentment and revisit intentions.

This research will assess how digital engagement impacts travel satisfaction and revisit intentions. Furthermore, the study will assess the awareness and impact of sustainability practices. As destinations increasingly adopt sustainable practices, understanding tourists' awareness and perception of these initiatives becomes essential. This study will evaluate how sustainability practices awareness influences travel satisfaction and revisit intentions among Chinese tourists. Lastly, the research evaluates travel satisfaction as a mediator. Travel satisfaction is often considered a mediator between various antecedents and behavioral intentions (Raza et al., 2020). This research will examine travel satisfaction as a mediator between destination image, digital engagement, sustainability practices awareness, and revisit intention. To achieve the research purpose, the research aims to explore these essential questions:

1. How is the travel satisfaction of Chinese tourists affected by the destination image of Japan and South Korea?
2. How does digital engagement with the destination affect trip satisfaction and intention to revisit among Chinese visitors?
3. To what extent is awareness and perception of sustainability practices among Chinese tourists visiting Japan and South Korea?
4. How does sustainability practices awareness influence travel satisfaction and intention to revisit among Chinese visitors?
5. Is travel satisfaction mediate the relationship between destination image, digital engagement, sustainability practices awareness, and revisit intention?

By addressing these inquiries, this study aims to present comprehensive clarity on the factors influencing the travel experiences and behaviors of Chinese tourists in Japan and South Korea. The findings will have practical implications for tourism stakeholders, including destination marketers, policymakers, and service providers.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Destination Image

Image of destination is an essential concept in tourism research, pertaining to the collective perceptions and attitudes that tourists hold about a destination. It significantly influences tourists' travel decisions, satisfaction, and loyalty (Stylos et al., 2016). The formation and impact of destination image have been extensively studied, revealing its multifaceted nature and its pivotal role in shaping tourist behavior. The conceptualization of destination image typically encompasses both intellectual and emotional dimensions (Agapito et al., 2013).

Cultural and social factors also play a vital role in shaping destination image. Different cultural backgrounds can lead to varying perceptions of the same destination (Lin, 2017). For example, Asian tourists may value different aspects of a destination compared to Western tourists, affecting their overall image of the place. Understanding these cultural differences is crucial for destination marketers aiming to target diverse tourist segments.

Despite its importance, measuring destination image presents several challenges. The subjective nature of perceptions and the diverse factors influencing image formation complicate the measurement process (Echtner & Ritchie, 2003). Recent advancements in methodological approaches, such as the use of mixed methods and advanced statistical techniques, have helped address some of these challenges (Kock et al., 2016).

2.2. Travel Satisfaction

Travel satisfaction reflects the overall contentment derived from the travel experience, influenced by destination attributes, service quality, and personal expectations (Chen & Chen, 2010). High satisfaction levels are closely linked to positive post-visit behaviors such as intention to revisit and recommendations (Raza et al., 2020).

Travel contentment is a multifaceted construct that encompasses various dimensions, including but not limited to, transportation modes, destination experiences, and service quality. Over the past decade, researchers have delved into understanding the factors influencing travel satisfaction and its implications for both travelers and service providers.

One key aspect explored in recent literature is the role of transportation modes in shaping travel satisfaction. Research by Zhang and Chen (2016) highlighted the importance of comfort, reliability, and accessibility in determining travelers' satisfaction with different modes of transportation, such as air travel, rail, and road transport. Similarly, Kim et al. (2018) emphasized the significance of travel time, cost, and convenience in influencing travelers' overall satisfaction with transportation services.

Moreover, destination encounters are essential in shaping travel satisfaction. Research by Oh et al. (2019) and

Song et al. (2021) underscored emphasized the effect of destination features, such as cultural attractions and natural scenery, and hospitality, on tourists' satisfaction levels. Additionally, the availability of amenities, such as accommodation facilities and recreational activities, significantly contributes to enhancing travelers' overall satisfaction with the destination.

Overall, recent literature underscores the complexity of travel satisfaction and the interplay of various factors, including transportation modes, destination experiences, service quality, and technology. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for both researchers and practitioners in devising strategies to improve travelers' satisfaction levels and enhance their overall travel experiences.

2.3. Sustainability Practices Awareness

Sustainability practices awareness involves tourists' recognition of and response to sustainable initiatives by destinations (Bramwell & Lane, 2011). As tourists become more environmentally conscious, their awareness of sustainable practices increasingly influences their travel decisions and satisfaction (Weeden, 2013). Research by Lee et al. (2010) and Han et al. (2010) showed that awareness of sustainable practices positively impacts satisfaction and loyalty, highlighting the importance of promoting sustainability to enhance tourist experiences.

Sustainability practices awareness practices has become a crucial focus in tourism research, reflecting the increasing acknowledgment of the industry's environmental, social, and economic impacts. Destinations use various channels, including websites, brochures, and interpretive signage, to inform and educate tourists about responsible behaviors, conservation initiatives, and cultural preservation efforts. Additionally, the contributions of tour operators, accommodation providers, and other tourism businesses in promoting sustainable practices are vital. Research by Hall and Higham (2018) and Weaver and Lawton (2021) has highlighted the significance of corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives, certification schemes, and green marketing strategies in increasing tourists' awareness and engagement with sustainability practices. Furthermore, the emergence of digital technologies has facilitated the dissemination of sustainability-related information and facilitated dialogue between tourists and destination stakeholders. However, challenges such as greenwashing, information asymmetry, and cultural differences necessitate ongoing efforts to enhance tourists' awareness and understanding of sustainability practices. Overall, the burgeoning literature on sustainability practices awareness highlights its importance in promoting responsible tourism behaviors, supporting destination stewardship, and achieving long-term sustainability goals in the tourism sector.

2.4. Digital Engagement with Destination

Digital engagement encompasses tourists' interactions with destinations through digital platforms before, during, and after their trips (Gretzel et al., 2006). This engagement has transformed travel planning, experiences, and sharing behaviors (Kim et al., 2018). Research indicates that digital engagement enhances satisfaction by providing real-time information, facilitating social interactions, and offering personalized experiences (Buhalis & Law, 2008). Huang et al. (2010) found that social media use positively affects satisfaction and revisit intentions, while Wang et al. (2012) linked digital engagement to increased loyalty.

Digital engagement with destinations has emerged as a focal point in modern tourism studies, demonstrating the significant influence of digital technologies on traveler behavior and destination management practices. Over the last decade, scholars have examined the complex aspects of digital engagement, including various online platforms, social media channels, and mobile applications. Research by Xiang et al. (2015) and Gretzel et al. (2017) have emphasized the transformative role of digital technologies in influencing tourists' information search behaviors, trip planning activities, and overall destination experiences. Through online reviews, blogs, and social networking sites, travelers actively interact with destination content, seek peer recommendations, and co-create their travel narratives. Additionally, destination marketing organizations (DMOs) use digital platforms to distribute promotional content, engage with audiences in real-time, and improve destination visibility and competitiveness. However, challenges such as information overload, privacy concerns, and digital divide necessitate careful consideration in leveraging digital technologies for destination engagement. Overall, the burgeoning literature on digital engagement with destinations underscores its pivotal role in shaping tourist behavior, destination marketing strategies, and the overall visitor experience in the digital age.

2.5. Revisit Intention

Intention to revisit reflects the probability of visitors returning to a destination, motivated by their previous experiences and satisfaction levels (Baker & Crompton, 2000). This variable is crucial for understanding destination loyalty and predicting future tourist behavior (Chen & Gursoy, 2001). Studies consistently show that positive travel experiences and satisfaction are strong predictors of revisit intention (Um et al., 2006).

Revisit intention, a key construct in tourism research, denotes the likelihood of a traveler to return to a destination or reuse a tourism service. Over the past decade, scholars have extensively investigated the antecedents and consequences of revisit intention, shedding light on its significance for destination management, marketing, and sustainability.

Moreover, standard of service dimensions, including reliability, responsiveness, and tangibles, significantly influence tourists' perceptions and revisit intentions. Studies by Wang and Zhang (2018) and Liu et al. (2020) have demonstrated the favorable link between service quality and revisit intention in various areas of tourism, such as hospitality, transportation, and attractions. Consistent delivery of high-quality services fosters trust, loyalty, and positive word-of-mouth, thereby encouraging repeat visitation and sustaining destination competitiveness.

Overall, recent literature on revisit intention underscores the multidimensional nature of the concept and the interplay of various elements shaping tourists' intentions to revisit destinations or reuse tourism services. Grasping these dynamics is crucial for destination managers, marketers, and policymakers to develop effective strategies that foster positive tourist experiences, encourage repeat visitation, and ensure destination sustainability and competitiveness.

2.6. Theory of Planned Behavior

In tourism, TPB has been employed to comprehend tourists' decision-making processes and behaviors (Lam & Hsu, 2006). Over the past decade, scholars have used TPB as a framework to understand and predict individuals' attitudes, intentions, and behaviors in tourism and travel decision-making contexts. Studies by Kim and Lee (2019) and Liang and Lin (2020) have illustrated TPB's effectiveness in predicting tourists' intentions to visit destinations, engage in sustainable behaviors, and adopt innovative technologies. Empirical research has shown that these factors significantly influence tourists' intentions and behaviors in various tourism contexts. Additionally, TPB has been extended to include extra variables and moderators, such as environmental consciousness, trust, and past experience, to enhance its explanatory power and predictive accuracy. Advances in statistical techniques, such as structural equation modeling (SEM) and hierarchical regression analysis, have facilitated the testing and validation of TPB models in diverse cultural and contextual settings. Despite its widespread application and empirical support, TPB is not without limitations, including its reliance on self-reported measures, potential for socially desirable responses, and the assumption of rational decision-making. Nonetheless, the Theory of Planned Behavior continues to offer valuable insights into tourists' decision-making processes and supports the development of effective strategies to promote desirable behaviors and outcomes in tourism. Drawing from the literature review and theoretical framework, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1a: A positive destination image significantly increases travel satisfaction among Chinese visitors visiting Japan and South Korea.

H1b: A positive destination image does not significantly increase revisit intention among Chinese visitors visiting Japan and South Korea.

H2a: Digital engagement with the destination does not significantly impact travel satisfaction among Chinese visitors visiting Japan and South Korea.

H2b: Digital engagement with the destination significantly increases sustainability practices awareness among Chinese visitors visiting Japan and South Korea.

H3: Travel satisfaction does not significantly increase revisit intention among Chinese visitors visiting Japan and South Korea.

H4: Sustainability practices awareness does not significantly increase revisit intention among Chinese visitors visiting Japan and South Korea. Based on the literature review and proposed hypotheses, Figure 1 illustrates the research model for this study.

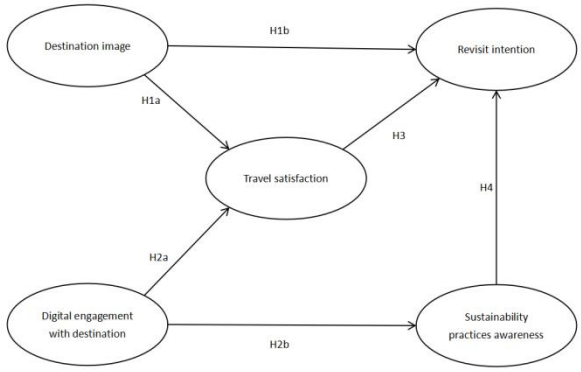

Figure 1: Research model

3. Methodology

3.1. Survey and Data Collection

The survey for this research was designed to gather data on Chinese tourists' perceptions and experiences regarding travel to Japan and South Korea. The questionnaire was structured to assess five main variables: Destination Image, Digital Engagement with Destination, Sustainability Practices Awareness, Travel Satisfaction, and Revisit Intention. Each section of the survey contained specific

questions aimed at capturing the nuances of these variables, ensuring comprehensive data collection.

In selecting the scales for measuring destination image, digital engagement with destination, sustainability practices awareness, travel satisfaction and revisit intention, careful consideration was given to their validity, reliability, and alignment with the theoretical framework of the study. See the attachment for specific measurement scales (Appendix).

Overall, the selected scales were chosen for their demonstrated validity, reliability, and relevance to the constructs being investigated. By utilizing well-established measurement tools, the study ensures the robustness and accuracy of its findings regarding the impact of destination image, digital engagement with destination, sustainability practices awareness, travel satisfaction on Chinese tourists' revisit intention towards Japan and South Korea.

Survey is an online questionnaire distributed through So-jump (问卷星) Chinese survey agency. This agency is generally recognized by scholars from major universities in China and has repeatedly received praise from all walks of life for the reliability of their questionnaire distribution. Data for this research was gathered using a structured survey administered to Chinese tourists who recently visited Japan and South Korea. Participants were recruited through convenience sampling in China. To maximize participation and ensure diverse representation, the survey was conducted online. Respondents provided demographic information, including age, gender, income, and travel history. They answered questions on a 7-point Likert scale (strongly disagree = 1; strongly agree = 7) designed to measure constructs such as destination image, digital engagement with the destination, awareness of sustainability practices, travel satisfaction, and revisit intention. Out of 450 distributed questionnaires, 414 valid responses were collected, with 199 participants having traveled to Japan and 215 to South Korea.

3.2. Data Analysis

The data analysis for this study utilized a range of statistical techniques to ensure the reliability and validity of the findings and to test the proposed hypotheses. The analysis was conducted in several stages: preliminary data analysis, reliability and validity assessment, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), and structural equation modeling (SEM). Initially, data were screened for missing values, outliers, and normality, with missing values addressed through mean substitution or multiple imputation methods as needed. Normality was assessed using skewness and kurtosis values. Descriptive statistics were calculated to summarize the demographic characteristics of the sample, including age, gender, income, and travel frequency, and to provide an overview of all survey items.

The constructs' reliability and validity were rigorously evaluated. Reliability was confirmed with Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (CR) values, both exceeding the 0.70 threshold for acceptability. Construct validity was assessed through convergent validity (AVE values above 0.50) and discriminant validity (square root of AVE for each construct surpassing inter-construct correlations). The measurement model was validated using CFA, meeting the criteria: $\chi 2/df$ ratios less than 3, GFI, NFI, and CFI values above 0.90, and RMSEA values below 0.08. SEM was employed to test the hypothesized relationships among Destination Image, Digital Engagement with Destination, Sustainability Practices Awareness, Travel Satisfaction, and Revisit Intention. Path coefficients, standard errors, and significance levels were computed to evaluate these relationships, with the model fit indicating consistency with observed data. The sample of 414 respondents showed balanced gender distribution and diverse age range, with most participants having recent travel experience to Japan and South Korea.

This comprehensive analysis confirmed the strong reliability and validity of all constructs, supporting the research hypotheses. The data analysis provided robust support for the hypothesized relationships. Destination Image, Digital Engagement with Destination, and Sustainability Practices Awareness significantly predicted Travel Satisfaction, which in turn significantly influenced Revisit Intention. These findings highlight the importance of managing destination image, enhancing digital engagement, and promoting sustainability practices to improve travel satisfaction and encourage repeat visits among Chinese tourists to Japan and South Korea.

4. Results

4.1. Respondents Profile

Table 1 provides the demographic details of Chinese visitors who traveled to Japan and South Korea, including gender, age, education level, and monthly income, aggregated for both countries and combined for the total sample. The majority of respondents were male, accounting for 61.4% of the total sample. Notably, there was a slightly higher proportion of females among visitors to Japan (39.2%) compared to South Korea (38.1%). The largest age group was 30-39 years old, comprising 28.5% of the total sample. A higher percentage of respondents aged 18-29 years visited Japan (32.6%) compared to South Korea (23.1%). Most respondents held a university degree (23.7%), with a similar distribution in both countries. However, a greater proportion of university students visited Japan (13.5%) compared to

South Korea (9.0%). The most common monthly income range was 5,000-7,000 RMB, representing 28.3% of the total sample. Respondents with a monthly income exceeding 10,000 RMB made up 2.7% of the total sample, with a slightly higher proportion among those who visited Japan (3.0%) compared to South Korea (2.3%).

Overall, the demographic profile of the respondents shows a higher proportion of male participants, with a relatively younger age distribution. The majority of respondents were well-educated, with a significant proportion holding university degrees. In terms of monthly income, a substantial portion of respondents fell into the middle-income range, although there was variation across income brackets between those who visited Japan and South Korea.

Table 1: Respondents demographic profiles

		Combined (n=414) Frequency and percentage(%)	Japan (n=199) Frequency and percentage(%)	South Korea (n=215) Frequency and percentage(%)
Gender	Females	160(38.6)	78(39.2)	82(38.1)
	Males	254(61.4)	121(60.8)	133(61.9)
	18-29 in age	116(28.0)	46(23.1)	70(32.6)
Age	30-39 in age	118(28.5)	60(30.2)	58(27.0)
	40-49 in age	71(17.1)	34(17.1)	37(17.2)
	50-59 in age	63(15.2)	31(15.6)	32(14.9)
	Over 60 in age	46(11.1)	28(14.1)	18(8.4)
Education Level	Less than a high school	90(21.7)	49(24.6)	41(19.1)
	High school graduate	160(38.6)	74(37.2)	86(40.0)
	University student	47(11.4)	18(9.0)	29(13.5)
	University graduate	98(23.7)	48(24.1)	50(23.3)
	Postgraduate student	12(2.9)	5(2.5)	7(3.3)
	Postgraduate	7(1.7)	5(2.5)	2(0.9)
Monthly Income	Under 1,000 RMB	12(2.9)	7(3.5)	5(2.3)
	2,000~ 4,000 RMB	247(59.7)	113(56.8)	134(62.3)
	5,000~ 7,000 RMB	117(28.3)	55(27.6)	62(28.8)
	8,000~10,000 RMB	27(6.5)	18(9.0)	9(4.2)
	Over 10,000 RMB	11(2.7)	6(3.0)	5(2.3)

4.2. Correlation and Descriptive Statistics

The table 2a presents correlation coefficients and descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) for the constructs of Destination Image (DI) ; Digital Engagement with Destination (DED) ; Sustainability Practices Awareness (SPA) ; Travel Satisfaction (TS) ; Revisit Intention (RI) among Chinese tourists visiting Japan and South Korea. DI demonstrates statistically significant positive correlations with DED ($r = 0.889$, $p < 0.01$), SPA ($r = 0.894$, $p < 0.01$), TS ($r = 0.873$, $p < 0.01$), and RI ($r = 0.875$, $p < 0.01$). DED exhibits statistically significant positive correlations with SPA ($r = 0.889$, $p < 0.01$), TS ($r = 0.887$, $p < 0.01$), and RI ($r = 0.877$, $p < 0.01$). SPA shows statistically significant positive correlations with TS ($r = 0.876$, $p < 0.01$) and RI ($r = 0.880$, $p < 0.01$). TS demonstrates a statistically significant positive correlation with RI ($r = 0.862$, $p < 0.01$). Table 2b presents the correlation coefficients and descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) of Chinese tourists visiting Japan. The correlation results indicate that DI is strongly and positively correlated with DED ($r = 0.892$, $p < 0.01$), SPA ($r = 0.900$, $p < 0.01$), TS ($r = 0.869$, $p < 0.01$), and RI ($r = 0.867$, $p < 0.01$). DED also shows significant positive correlations with SPA ($r = 0.907$, $p < 0.01$), TS ($r = 0.893$, $p < 0.01$), and RI ($r = 0.876$, $p < 0.01$). Similarly, SPA is positively correlated with TS ($r = 0.882$, $p < 0.01$) and RI ($r = 0.873$, $p < 0.01$). TS demonstrates a strong positive correlation with RI ($r = 0.832$, $p < 0.01$). These correlations suggest a robust interconnectedness among the variables, highlighting the importance of destination image, digital engagement with destination, and sustainability awareness in influencing travel satisfaction and revisit intentions. Table 2c presents the correlation coefficients and descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) of Chinese tourists visiting South Korea. The correlation results indicate that DI is strongly and positively correlated with DED ($r = 0.889$, $p < 0.01$), SPA ($r = 0.888$, $p < 0.01$), TS ($r = 0.877$, $p < 0.01$), and RI ($r = 0.883$, $p < 0.01$). DED shows significant positive correlations with SPA ($r = 0.872$, $p < 0.01$), TS ($r = 0.884$, $p < 0.01$), and RI ($r = 0.884$, $p < 0.01$). Additionally, SPA is positively correlated with TS ($r = 0.871$, $p < 0.01$) and RI ($r = 0.887$, $p < 0.01$). TS demonstrates a strong positive

correlation with RI (r = 0.888, p < 0.01). These correlations highlight the significant interconnectedness among the variables, emphasizing the roles of DI, DED, and SPA in influencing TS and RI.

DI, the mean score is 4.393 with a standard deviation of 1.536 for the combined sample. In Japan (table 2b), the mean is slightly lower at 4.409 (SD = 1.524), while in South Korea (table 2c), it is slightly lower at 4.378 (SD = 1.550). DED, the mean score is 4.345 with a standard deviation of 1.537 for the combined sample. In Japan (table 2b), the mean is 4.392 (SD = 1.611), and in South Korea(table 2c), it is 4.303 (SD = 1.468). SPA, the mean score is 4.409 with a standard deviation of 1.575 for the combined sample. In Japan (table 2b), the mean is 4.399 (SD = 1.604), while in South Korea (table 2c), it is 4.418 (SD = 1.551). TS, the mean score is 4.408 with a standard deviation of 1.545 for the combined sample. In Japan (table 2b), the mean is 4.411 (SD = 1.545), and in South Korea (table 2c), it is 4.406 (SD = 1.548). RI, the mean score is 4.403 with a standard deviation of 1.563 for the combined sample. In Japan (table 2b), the mean is 4.415 (SD = 1.519), while in South Korea (table 2c), it is 4.393 (SD = 1.606).

Overall, the correlation analysis indicates significant positive relationships between the constructs, suggesting inter-relatedness among destination image, digital engagement with destination, sustainability practices awareness, travel satisfaction, revisit intention. The descriptive statistics offer insights into the central tendencies and variability of each construct within the sample and among respondents visiting Japan and South Korea.

Table 2a: Correlations and descriptive statistics

(Combined,n=414)

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1.DI	4.393	1.536	1	0.889 **	0.894 **	0.873 **	0.875 **
2.DED	4.345	1.537	-	1	0.889 **	0.887 **	0.877 **
3.SPA	4.409	1.575	-	-	1	0.876 **	0.880 **
4.TS	4.408	1.545	-	-	-	1	0.862 **
5.RI	4.403	1.563	-	-	-	-	1

Note：Destination Image (DI)；Digital Engagement with Destination (DED)；Sustainability Practices Awareness (SPA)；
Travel Satisfaction (TS)；Revisit Intention (RI); Standard deviations (SD); **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2a: Correlations and descriptive statistics

(Japan,n=199)

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1.DI	4.409	1.524	1	0.892 **	0.900 **	0.869 **	0.867 **
2.DED	4.392	1.611	-	1	0.907 **	0.893 **	0.876 **
3.SPA	4.399	1.604	-	-	1	0.882 **	0.873 **
4.TS	4.411	1.545	-	-	-	1	0.832 **
5.RI	4.415	1.519	-	-	-	-	1

Note：Destination Image (DI)；Digital Engagement with Destination (DED)；Sustainability Practices Awareness (SPA)；
Travel Satisfaction (TS)；Revisit Intention (RI); Standard deviations (SD); **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2a: Correlations and descriptive statistics

(South Korea,n=215)

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1.DI	4.378	1.550	1	0.889 **	0.888 **	0.877 **	0.883 **
2.DED	4.303	1.468	-	1	0.872 **	0.884 **	0.884 **

3.SPA	4.418	1.551	-	-	1	0.871 **	0.887 **
4.TS	4.406	1.548	-	-	-	1	0.888 **
5.RI	4.393	1.606	-	-	-	-	1

Note：Destination Image (DI)；Digital Engagement with Destination (DED)；Sustainability Practices Awareness (SPA)；
Travel Satisfaction (TS)；Revisit Intention (RI); Standard deviations (SD); **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

4.3. Structural Model

Table 3 provides regression coefficients (with standard errors in parentheses) for the relationships between destination image, digital engagement with destination, sustainability practices awareness, travel satisfaction, revisit intention among Chinese tourists visiting Japan and South Korea, along with model fit indices for the structural equation model (SEM). Judging from the regression coefficient results, it is not very significant. From the model fitting index results, the model fitting index of the combined sample shows a good fit ($\chi 2/df = 1.038$, GFI = 0.943, NFI = 0.960, CFI = 0.998, RMSEA = 0.010), as are the model fit indices for Japan ($\chi 2/df = 1.082$, GFI = 0.885, NFI = 0.919, CFI = 0.993, RMSEA = 0.020) and South Korea ($\chi 2/df = 1.012$, GFI = 0.899, NFI = 0.926, CFI = 0.999, RMSEA = 0.008).

Overall, the regression coefficients demonstrate a significant relationship between the constructs, with varying strengths and significance levels in different contexts. Model fit indices indicate that the structural equation model effectively represents the relationships among the variables for both Japanese and Korean contexts.

Table 3: Structural model

	Combined (n=414)	Japan (n=199)	South Korea (n=215)
TS→DI	2.330(4.724)	-0.444(2.040)	1.097(0.434)
TS→DED	-1.308(4.385)	1.209(1.934)	-0.086(0.390)
SPA→DED	0.952(0.051)***	0.964(0.070)***	0.942(0.073)***
RI→DI	0.626(0.949)	43.730(-0.080)	-2.129(8.495)
RI→TS	0.069(1.048)	66.722(-0.122)	2.882(8.471)
RI→SPA	0.294(0.581)	96.710(0.114)	0.302(0.466)
Model fit	X2=356.471, df=343, X2/df=1.039, GFI=0.943, NFI=0.960, CFI=0.998, RMSEA=0.010	X2=370.452, df=343, X2/df= 1.080, GFI=0.885, NFI=0.919, CFI=0.993, RMSEA=0.020	X2=346.425, df=343, X2/df= 1.010, GFI=0.899, NFI=0.927, CFI=0.999, RMSEA=0.007

Note: Destination Image (DI)；Digital Engagement with Destination (DED)；Sustainability Practices Awareness (SPA)；Travel Satisfaction (TS)；Revisit Intention (RI), ***. Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed).

4.4. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

Table 4 presents the results of the measurement model for destination image, digital engagement with the destination, sustainability practices awareness, travel satisfaction, and revisit intention, including standardized factor loadings (Λ), composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE). Additionally, it includes model fit indices for the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The factor loadings, composite reliability, and average variance extracted for Digital Engagement with Destination (DED) and Sustainability Practices Awareness (SPA) are notably high. DED factor loadings range from 0.748 to 0.828, indicating strong associations between the items and the DED construct. The composite reliability is 0.896, demonstrating good internal consistency. The average variance extracted is 0.590, exceeding the threshold for convergent validity. For SPA, factor loadings range from 0.700 to 0.809, also indicating strong associations between the items and the SPA construct. The composite reliability is 0.900, showing excellent internal consistency. The average variance extracted is 0.599, surpassing the threshold for convergent validity. The results of other variables are good and within the acceptable range.

Table 4: Convergent Validity and Reliability

Indicator	Λ	CR	AVE
DI1	0.739	0.886	0.566
DI2	0.790		
DI3	0.754		
DI4	0.756		
DI5	0.706		
DI6	0.765		
DED1	0.828	0.896	0.590
DED2	0.749		
DED3	0.754		
DED4	0.763		
DED5	0.763		
DED6	0.748		
SPA1	0.777	0.900	0.599
SPA2	0.765		

SPA3	0.809		
SPA4	0.700		
SPA5	0.797		
SPA6	0.792		
TS1	0.708	0.868	0.569
TS2	0.783		
TS3	0.766		
TS4	0.775		
TS5	0.738		
RI1	0.746	0.870	0.573
RI2	0.772		
RI3	0.732		
RI4	0.785		
RI5	0.747		

Note: Λ,Factor Loading; CR, Composite Reliability; AVE, Average Variance Extracted. Destination Image (DI); Digital Engagement with Destination (DED); Sustainability Practices Awareness (SPA); Travel Satisfaction (TS); Revisit Intention (RI). CFA model fit: X2=354.500, df=340, X2/df= 1.043, GFI=0.943, NFI=0.960, CFI=0.998, RMSEA=0.010

4.5. Hypothesis Test

Based on the results of the hypothesis test displayed in Table 5, several key findings emerged:

Hypothesis 1a, a positive destination image significantly increases travel satisfaction among Chinese tourists visiting Japan and South Korea, was supported (estimate = 2.530, p = 0.000, 95% CI [0.940, 11.768]).

Hypothesis 1b, digital engagement with the destination does not significantly impact travel satisfaction among Chinese tourists visiting Japan and South Korea, was not supported (estimate = 0.628, p > 0.001, 95% CI [-2.725, 5.592]).

Hypothesis 2a, travel satisfaction positively influences the intention to revisit of Chinese visitors to Japan and South Korea, was not supported (estimate = -1.532, p = 0.058, 95% CI [-10.756, 0.059]).

Hypothesis 2b, digital engagement with the destination significantly increases sustainability practices awareness among Chinese tourists visiting Japan and South Korea, received support (estimate = 0.992, p = 0.000, 95% CI [0.979, 1.004]).

Hypothesis 3, travel satisfaction does not significantly increase revisit intention among Chinese tourists visiting Japan and South Korea, was not supported (estimate = 0.063, p = 0.888, 95% CI [-4.041, 3.851]).

Hypothesis 4, sustainability practices awareness does not significantly increase revisit intention among Chinese tourists visiting Japan and South Korea, received not support (estimate = 0.306, p = 0.656, 95% CI [-1.785, 2.011]).

The results of H1b are not support the original hypothesis, which is a positive destination image does not significantly increase revisit intention among Chinese tourists visiting Japan and South Korea. We can conclude that, a positive destination image are significantly increase revisit intention among Chinese tourists visiting Japan and South Korea. Also, the results of H2a are not support the original hypothesis, which is digital engagement with the destination does not significantly impact travel satisfaction among Chinese tourists visiting Japan and South Korea. We can come up with that digital engagement with the destination are significantly impact travel satisfaction among Chinese tourists visiting Japan and South Korea. And for H3, H4 also received not support, we give conclusion with travel satisfaction are significantly increase revisit intention among Chinese tourists visiting Japan and South Korea; sustainability practices awareness are significantly increase revisit intention among Chinese tourists visiting Japan and South Korea.

These findings provide empirical support for the relationships proposed in the theoretical framework of the research, shedding light on the factors influencing Chinese tourists' revisit intention towards Japan and South Korea.

Table 4: Results of hypothesis test

Parameter	Estimate	Lower	Upper	P-value	Interpretation
TS←DI	2.530	0.940	11.768	0.000	Supported
RI←DI	0.628	-2.725	5.592	0.453	Not supported
TS←DED	-1.532	-10.756	0.059	0.058	Not supported
SPA←DED	0.992	0.979	1.004	0.000	Supported
RI←TS	0.063	-4.041	3.851	0.888	Not supported
RI←SPA	0.306	-1.785	2.011	0.656	Not supported

Notes: Destination Image (DI); Digital Engagement with Destination (DED); Sustainability Practices Awareness (SPA); Travel Satisfaction (TS); Revisit Intention (RI).

5. Discussion and Implications

5.1. Discussion

The findings of this study provide significant insights into the factors influencing Chinese tourists' travel experiences and behaviors when visiting Japan and South Korea. This part discusses the implications of these findings within the context of existing literature and offers practical recommendations for tourism stakeholders. The research confirms that destination image significantly influences the travel satisfaction of Chinese tourists, as indicated by the support for Hypothesis 1a (estimate = 2.530, p = 0.000). This aligns with prior research, which has established that a

positive destination image enhances tourists' satisfaction levels and encourages repeat visits (Chi & Qu, 2008; Stylos et al., 2016). A favorable destination image not only attracts tourists but also instills a desire to return, reinforcing the importance of continuous image enhancement through targeted marketing and communication strategies. The study also supports the hypothesis that digital engagement with the destination significantly increases sustainability practices awareness among Chinese tourists visiting Japan and South Korea (Hypothesis 2b, estimate = 0.992, p = 0.000). The strong positive correlation between travel satisfaction and intention to revisit underscores the importance of enhancing tourists' experiences to foster loyalty and encourage repeat visits. Interestingly, the study did not support the hypothesis that a positive destination image directly influences revisit intention (Hypothesis 1b, estimate = 0.628, p > 0.001). This suggests that while a positive destination image can attract visitors and influence their intention to revisit, it may not directly impact their satisfaction levels. This finding indicates that other factors, such as the quality of services and experiences offered at the location, play a more crucial role in determining travel satisfaction.

5.2. Implications for Practice

The practical implications of these findings are multifaceted. Destination marketers, policymakers, and service providers can utilize these insights to develop targeted strategies that enhance tourist satisfaction and promote sustainable tourism practices.

Marketing Strategies: Emphasizing the positive aspects of the destination image through targeted campaigns that focus on cultural, historical, and modern attractions appealing to Chinese tourists. Leveraging influencers and digital content can amplify these efforts.

Digital Engagement: Investing in digital infrastructure, such as interactive websites, mobile apps, and social media platforms, is essential. Providing real-time information, personalized recommendations, and engaging content can enhance the digital experience and, consequently, travel satisfaction.

Sustainability Initiatives: Promoting sustainability practices transparently and educating tourists about these efforts can enhance their travel experience. Destinations should integrate sustainable practices into their offerings, such as eco-friendly accommodations, sustainable transportation options, and conservation programs.

Service Quality: Ensuring high standards of service quality is fundamental to achieving high travel satisfaction. Training staff, improving infrastructure, and providing exceptional customer service can lead to positive travel experiences and foster repeat visitation.

Feedback and Improvement: Implementing regular feedback mechanisms can help in understanding and addressing tourists' needs and expectations.

In conclusion, this study findings highlight the importance of a positive destination image, effective digital engagement, and the promotion of sustainability practices in shaping travel experiences. Tourism stakeholders can leverage these insights to develop targeted strategies that enhance tourist satisfaction and encourage revisit intentions.

6. Limitations and Future study

Although the study presents significant findings, several limitations must be acknowledged. Exploring these limitations in future research can further enhance our understanding of the factors influencing Chinese tourists' destination choices between Japan and South Korea.

6.1. Limitations

Self-Reported Data: The reliance on self-reported data may lead to bias, as respondents might inaccurately report their satisfaction and intentions. To counter this, future studies could incorporate objective measures or triangulate self-reported data with other sources, such as actual visitation records or social media analytics, to enhance the accuracy and reliability of the findings.

Limited Scope of Variables: While this study examined key factors such as destination image, digital engagement, and sustainability practices, the study did not account for other potential influences on travel satisfaction and revisit intention. Variables such as price sensitivity, cultural differences, and personal motivations could be explored in future research.

Cultural Bias: The research focused on Chinese tourists, which may introduce cultural bias. Cultural differences can significantly influence travel behavior and satisfaction. Future research should consider cross-cultural comparisons to understand how tourists from different backgrounds perceive and experience destinations

6.2. Future Study

Based on the limitations identified, several directions for future research are proposed:

Diverse Tourist Populations: Future studies should include tourists from various countries and regions to explore whether the observed relationships hold across different cultural and demographic contexts. Such research could reveal important cross-cultural differences and similarities in travel behaviors and preferences.

Longitudinal Studies: Conducting longitudinal research could provide insights into how tourists' perceptions and behaviors change over time.

Objective Data Collection: Incorporating objective data sources, such as actual visitation records, social media interactions, and online reviews, could complement self-reported data and provide a more comprehensive view of tourist behavior and satisfaction.

Sustainability and Responsible Tourism: Given the growing importance of sustainability, future research should delve deeper into how different aspects of sustainability practices influence tourist satisfaction and behavior. Studies could explore tourists' willingness to pay for sustainable options and their impact on overall travel experience and loyalty.

By tackling these limitations and investigating the proposed future research directions, scholars can improve the understanding of factors influencing tourist behavior and satisfaction, thereby contributing to the development of more effective and sustainable tourism strategies.

References

Sim, K.-W et al., (2013). An examination of visitors' satisfaction on revisiting intention and recommendations: A case study of the national natural recreation forests in Korea. *Forest Science and Technology, 9*(3), 126–130.

Chew, E. Y. T et al., (2014). Destination image as a mediator between perceived risks and revisit intention: A case of post-disaster Japan. *Tourism Management, 40*, 382–393.

Chen, C.-F et al., (2013). A closer look at destination: Image, personality, relationship and loyalty. *Tourism Management, 36*, 269–278.

Hultman, M et al., (2015). Achieving tourist loyalty through destination personality, satisfaction, and identification. *Journal of Business Research, 68*(11), 2227–2231.

Prayag, G et al., (2012). Antecedents of Tourists' Loyalty to Mauritius: The Role and Influence of Destination Image, Place Attachment, Personal Involvement, and Satisfaction. *Journal of Travel Research, 51*(3), 342–356.

Hsieh, C.-M et al., (2016). Application of the Extended Theory of Planned Behavior to Intention to Travel to Japan Among Taiwanese Youth: Investigating the Moderating Effect of Past Visit Experience. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, 33*(5), 717–729.

Nazir, M. U et al., (2021). Destination image's mediating role between perceived risks, perceived constraints, and behavioral intention. *Heliyon, 7*(7), e07613.

Park, S. H et al., (2017). Examining Chinese College Students' Intention to Travel to Japan Using the Extended Theory of Planned Behavior: Testing Destination Image and the Mediating Role of Travel Constraints. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, 34*(1), 113–131.

Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 50*(2), 179-211.

Baker, D. A et al., (2000). Quality, satisfaction and behavioral intentions. *Annals of Tourism Research, 27*(3), 785-804.

Baloglu, S et al., (1999). A model of destination image formation. *Annals of Tourism Research, 26*(4), 868-897.

Chen, C. F et al., (2010). Experience quality, perceived value, satisfaction and behavioral intentions for heritage tourists. *Tourism Management, 31*(1), 29-35.

Chen, J. S et al., (2001). An investigation of tourists' destination loyalty and preferences. International Journal of Contemporary *Hospitality Management, 13*(2), 79-85.

Chen, C. F et al., (2013). A closer look at destination: Image, personality, relationship and loyalty. *Tourism Management, 36*, 269-278.

Chi, C. G et al., (2008). Examining the structural relationships of destination image, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty: An integrated approach. *Tourism Management, 29*(4), 624-636.

Echtner, C. M et al., (2003). The meaning and measurement of destination image. *Journal of Tourism Studies, 14*(1), 37-48.

Fornell, C et al., (1981). Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error. *Journal of Marketing Research, 18*(1), 39-50.

Gursoy, D et al., (2018). Theoretical examination of destination loyalty formation. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 30*(3), 2078-2097.

Hall, C. M et al., (2018). *Tourism, recreation, and climate change*. Channel View Publications.

Han, H et al., (2010). Application of the theory of planned behavior to green hotel choice: Testing the effect of environmental friendly activities. *Tourism Management, 31*(3), 325-334.

Kim, J et al., (2017). Sharing tourism experiences: The post-trip experience. *Journal of Travel Research, 56*(1), 28-40.

Kim, J. H et al., (2017). The relationships among perceived value, satisfaction, and loyalty: The moderating effect of tourism type. *Tourism Management, 63*, 276-287.

Kock, F et al., (2016). Advancing destination image: The destination content model. *Annals of Tourism Research, 61*, 28-44.

Lam, T et al., (2006). Predicting behavioral intention of choosing a travel destination. *Tourism Management, 27*(4), 589-599.

Lee, T. H et al., (2011). The influence of recreation experiences and environmental attitudes on the environmentally responsible behavior of community-based tourists in Taiwan. *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management, 58*(10), 1789-1807.

Liang, L. J et al., (2020). Investigating the moderating effects of environmental consciousness on the relationship between perceived risk and tourist behavior. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 28*(5), 721-740.

Liu, A et al., (2020). Tourism's vulnerability and resilience to terrorism. *Tourism Management, 84*, 104288.

Nunnally, J. C. (1978). Psychometric Theory (2nd ed.). McGraw-Hill.

Park, E et al., (2022). Investigating factors influencing revisit intention: The case of Korean cultural tourists. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, 39*(1), 93-108.

Prayag, G et al., (2017). Understanding the relationships between tourists' emotional experiences, perceived overall image, satisfaction, and intention to recommend. *Journal of Travel Research, 56*(1), 41-54.

Stylos, N et al., (2016). Destination images, holistic images, and

personal normative beliefs: Predictors of intention to revisit a destination. *Tourism Management, 53*, 40-60.

Um, S et al., (2006). Antecedents of revisit intention. Annals of *Tourism Research, 33*(4), 1141-1158.

UNWTO. (2019). *International tourism highlights*. United Nations World Tourism Organization.

Wang, Y et al., (2018). Examining the relationship between service quality and tourist satisfaction in the context of red tourism. *Journal of Vacation Marketing, 24*(2), 153-168.

Weaver, D et al., (2021). Sustainable tourism: An evolving global approach. *Journal of Travel Research, 60*(1), 24-35.

Xiang, Z et al., (2015). Adapting to the internet: Trends in travelers' use of the web for trip planning. *Journal of Travel Research, 54*(4), 511-527.

Zhang, H et al., (2014). Destination image and tourist loyalty: A meta-analysis. *Tourism Management, 40*, 213-223.

Zhang, Y et al., (2016). Travel satisfaction and revisit intention: A meta-analysis. *Tourism Analysis, 21*(3), 251-266.

Zhang, H et al., (2018). A model of perceived image, memorable tourism experiences and revisit intention. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management, 8*, 326-336.

Appendixes

Appendix: Measurement scales

Construct and Items	References
Destination Image 1. I think Japan/South Korea are very attractive as tourist destinations. 2. I think Japan/South Korea has a lot of cultural appeal. 3. I think Japan/South Korea have a good reputation as a tourist destination. 4. I would recommend Japan/South Korea to others based on their destination image. 5. I think the overall image of Japan/South Korea as a tourist destination is good. 6. I am satisfied with the diversity of attractions in Japan/South Korea.	Kim, S., & Kim, S. (2018); Liu, C. H. (2014); Qu, H., Kim, L. H., & Im, H. H. (2011); Tasci, A. D., & Gartner, W. C. (2007); Baloglu, S., & McCleary, K. W. (1999); Echtner, C. M., & Ritchie, J. B. (1993).
Digital Engagement with Destination 1.I use social media to gather information about Japan/South Korea before traveling. 2.I use travel apps more often when traveling in Japan/South Korea. 3.I pay more attention to digital content (e.g. blogs, vlogs) in Japan/South Korea. 4.I think virtual tours or augmented reality experiences related to Japan/South Korea would be very useful. 5.I will participate in online reviews and ratings of Japan/South Korea's tourist attractions. I often share my travel experience in Japan/South Korea on social media.	Leung, D., Law, R., Hoof, H. V., & Buhalis, D. (2013); Wang, D., Xiang, Z., & Fesenmaier, D. R. (2014); Tussyadiah, I. P., & Fesenmaier, D. R. (2009); Huang, Y. C., Backman, S. J., Backman, K. F., & Moore, D. (2013); Xiang, Z., & Gretzel, U. (2010); Munar, A. M., & Jacobsen, J. K. S. (2014).
Sustainability Practices Awareness 1.I am familiar with the environmental protection measures implemented by tourism services in Japan/South Korea. 2.In Japan/South Korea, it is important for me to choose accommodation that follows sustainable practices. 3.I am very likely to participate in eco-friendly tourism activities in Japan/South Korea (e.g. nature tourism, wildlife conservation). 4.I have a good understanding of the environmental policies of destinations in Japan/South Korea. 5.I appreciate efforts to promote responsible tourism in Japan/South Korea. When planning a trip to Japan/South Korea, I often consider a tour operator's sustainable practices.	Dodds, R., & Holmes, M. (2019); Han, H., Hsu, L. T., & Lee, J. S. (2009); Miller, G., Rathouse, K., Scarles, C., Holmes, K., & Tribe, J. (2010).; Choi, H. C., & Sirakaya, E. (2006); Weaver, D. (2001); Bramwell, B., & Lane, B. (2013).

Travel Satisfaction 1.I am satisfied with my overall travel experience in Japan/South Korea. 2.I was satisfied with the quality of my accommodation during my stay in Japan/South Korea. 3.I am satisfied with the tourist attractions I visited in Japan/South Korea. 4.I am satisfied with the variety and quality of food and dining options in Japan/South Korea. I am satisfied with transportation services in Japan/South Korea (e.g. pub lic transportation, taxis).	Meng, B., & Han, H. (2018); Raza, S. A., Umer, A., Qureshi, M. A., & Dahri, A. S. (2020); Chen, C. F., & Chen, F. S. (2010); Nam, J. H., & Lee, T. J. (20 11); Wong, I. A., & Tang, F. F. (2016).
Revisit Intention 1.There is a high chance that I will visit Japan/South Korea again in the next five years. 2.I am very likely to choose Japan/South Korea as my next travel destin ation. 3.I am very likely to recommend Japan/South Korea to my friends and fa mily. 4.There is a good chance I will explore new attractions next time I visit Japan/South Korea. There is a high chance that I will attend different events next time I visit Japan/South Korea.	Prayag, G., Hosany, S., Muskat, B., & Del Chiappa, G. (2017); Zhang, H., Fu, X., Cai, L. A., & Lu, L. (2014); Chi, C. G., & Qu, H. (2008); Stylos, N., Vas siliadis, C. A., Bellou, V., & Andronikidis, A. I. (201 6); Kim, M. J., Lee, C. K., & Jung, T. (2018).

Note: All Items will be measured using a 7-point. Likert scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree), 1 to 7 points