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# COVID-19 and repeat visitation: Assessing the role of destination social responsibility, destination reputation, holidaymakers' trust and fear arousal

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## ABSTRACT

This study aimed to examine the influence of destination social responsibility (DSR) on destination reputation, holidaymakers' perceived trust and their revisit intention. It also tested the direct paths between destination reputation, tourists' perceived trust and revisit intention. Moreover, it investigated the moderation impact of fear arousal due to COVID-19 on the relations between visitors' revisit intention and its associated antecedents. PLS-SEM was employed to analyze the data gathered from 543 domestic holidaymakers who have recently visited tourism destinations in Egypt. The findings indicated that tourists' revisit intention is positively and significantly influenced by DSR, destination reputation and their perceived trust. Additionally, DSR is positively linked to destination reputation and visitors' trust, which in turn is positively affected by destination reputation. The results also revealed that fear arousal negatively moderates the link between destination reputation, holidaymakers' trust and their intention to revisit. Academic and managerial implications, limitations, and directions for future studies were also presented.

## 1. Introduction

The adverse impacts of the proactive measures, enforced to rein the outbreak of COVID-19, have negatively affected all industries around the world including tourism (Crossley, 2020). The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) predicted that international tourist arrivals could decline by 60–80% in 2020 (UNWTO, 2020). Following the World Health Organization (WHO) warnings, most nations restricted individuals' movements, closed tourist attractions, and suspended public events and business activities (Ioannides & Gyimóthy, 2020). Travel restrictions have been rapidly developed from adopting sanitary measures, isolating arrivals from hit countries, invalidating or suspending visas, requesting medical certificates, and demanding self-isolation or quarantine, to the full or partial lockdown. Tourism and hospitality businesses were, therefore, forced to suspend their operations and services, lay off their workforces, etc (Wen, Wang, Kozak, Liu, & Hou, 2020).

Consequently, tourism policymakers sought to find appropriate solutions to mitigate these disruptive effects on the tourism and hospitality sector. One of these solutions is to promote domestic tourism, at the same time ensuring effective deployment of health and safety

requirements. Many countries are thinking of domestic travel as a long term recovery, considering the past examples of the spread of SARS, the avian influenza virus as well as the H1N1 pandemic, which caused a great decline in international arrivals. Governments have accordingly promoted domestic travel as an appropriate strategy in times of crises that restrict international travel (Todman-Lewis, 2017).

Depending upon the aforementioned issues, destination management organizations (DMOs) are required to concentrate on crucial factors affecting domestic holidaymakers' behavior. To this end, this paper aims to shed light on the role of four decisive factors concerning tourism management, marketing and repeat visitation. First, destination social responsibility (DSR) is a paramount factor to be considered within the COVID-19 outbreak. According to Su, Lian, and Huang (2020), DSR has a significant influence on customers' attitudes and behaviors in different tourism and hospitality sectors (e.g. airlines, hotels and restaurants). Additionally, DSR will become more vital for tourism destinations, as consumers will look to corporations' further engagement in social responsibility (Kim, Yin, & Lee, 2020). Prior studies have examined social responsibility in different contexts. However, few studies have investigated DSR from the tourism destination perspective (Su, Huang, & Huang, 2018, Su, Huang, & Hsu, 2018, Su, Gong, & Huang, 2020, Su,

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Hsu, & Boostrom, 2020, Su, Lian, et al., 2020). Moreover, to the best of our knowledge, the relation between DSR and domestic tourism during the COVID-19 era has not been tested yet. Second, DMOs have to pay closer attention to destination reputation which is one of the key predictors of visitors' behavior and loyalty (Loureiro & Kastenholz, 2011) and their perceived trust (Artigas, Yrigoyen, Moraga, & Villalón, 2017; Johnson & Grayson, 2005). According to Helm and Tolsdorf (2013), there are two perspectives related to the link between destination reputation and crises; some studies revealed that crises have a negative impact on reputation, however, others indicated that reputation could diminish these negative influences. Although the relations between destination reputation, tourists' trust and their intention to revisit a destination have been evaluated in previous research, no known work has examined these relations regarding domestic tourism during the COVID-19 period. Third, one of the essential factors affecting travelers' intention is trust. Prior research assessed the connection between individuals' trust as well as their intention and behavior in various contexts (Chen & Barnes, 2007; Chen, Huang, & Sternquist, 2011) including tourism and hospitality (Abubakar, Ilkan, Al-Tal, & Eluwole, 2017; Chang, 2014; Kim, Chung, & Lee, 2011). However, few studies have examined the correlation between domestic holidaymakers' perceived trust and their intention to revisit the destination in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region while considering the conditions of COVID-19 pandemic. Fourth, it is apparent that COVID-19 caused a feeling of fear and anxiety worldwide (Reznik, Gritsenko, Konstantinov, Khamenka, & Isralowitz, 2020). Thus, studying the consequences of this fear on human behavior is crucial. According to Addo, Jiaming, Kulbo, and Liangqiang (2020), fear appeal linked to coronavirus has a significant impact on purchase behavior. Regarding the tourism setting, limited studies have investigated the influence of fear arousal of COVID-19 on visitors' behaviors. Furthermore, there is no study evaluating the moderation impact of fear arousal on the relation between revisit intention and its linked predictors involved in the research framework.

As a result, this paper aims to fill these gaps by examining the essential factors influencing domestic tourism revisit intention in the COVID-19 era. More specifically, the current research aims to: 1) test the influence of DSR on destination reputation (DR), domestic tourists' perceived trust (PT) and their revisit intention (RI); 2) assess the direct relations between DR, PT and RI; and 3) examine the moderation role of fear arousal (FA) related to COVID-19 on the direct relationships between DR, DSR, PT and RI of domestic travelers in Egypt.

Taken collectively, this study contributes to the body of knowledge and practices four-fold. First, it develops an integrated structural framework to address the questions on whether and how DSR, DR and PT influence revisit intention of domestic holidaymakers. Second, it adds to the few studies that outlined the domestic tourism behavior during the time of crises in general and during COVID-19 period in particular. Third, it extends the present literature on the outcomes of FA linked to COVID-19 from tourism destinations' perspective. Last, this paper provides different implications related to the tourism industry as well as managerial guidelines for tourism policymakers and managers in Egypt.

With respect to the article's structure, section 2 explicates the literature review. The third section demonstrates the development of hypotheses followed by the methods section. The fifth section provides the study results, while the last section elucidates the conclusions.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1. Destination social responsibility

According to Aksak, Ferguson, and Duman (2016), corporate social responsibility (CRS) entails several diverse approaches and changes based on the context, time, and culture; therefore, defining CRS is a challenge. However, Su, Gong et al. (2020), Su, Hsu et al. (2020), and Su, Lian, et al. (2020), defined DSR as "perceptions of obligations and

activities that are applied to all stakeholders, including tourists, community residents, employees, investors, governments, suppliers, and competitors" (p. 2). Gordon (2001) identified eight principles for CSR which include accountability, business conduct, community involvement, corporate governance right of shareholders, environment precautionary principle, indigenous peoples' rights, consumers, and employees. Moreover, while the dimensions of DSR are varied, in his model, Carroll (2016) identified the most common four dimensions of CSR that are: economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic responsibilities (Kim et al., 2020). Hence, DSR is mutually beneficial for tourists and destinations; as applying social responsibility principles in all stakeholders' activities in any destination will minimize negative impacts, generate economic benefits for local people, and enhance the wellbeing of locals and tourists' experience. Furthermore, tourists observe these destinations as socially responsible, in terms of environmental protection, careful use of natural resources and as secure places which offer supportive and rewarding cultural experiences. Additionally, economic equality and thriving ecosystems are not only of interest to tourists but also reflected in their satisfaction and in getting meaningful experiences (Henderson, 2007; Lund-Durlacher, 2015).

### 2.2. Destination reputation

Reputation is a symbol of quality and ethical behavior towards stakeholders. It is a multidimensional concept, as it incorporates admiration, respect, trust and confidence, consistent performance, and effective communication regarding organizations (Braun, Eshuis, Klijn, & Zenker, 2018; Walsh, Mitchell, Jackson, & Beatty, 2009). Concerning the tourism context, reputation literature has focused on tourism suppliers, mainly in connection with tourism organizational culture, economy, marketing, nonprofit companies and service quality (Jalilvand, Vosta, Mahyari, & Pool, 2017). As tourism is a reputation-dependent industry, the destination reputation, which is created by its DMOs, is a more stable indicator of performance than brands or images from tourist's perspective (Dastgerdi & De Luca, 2019). Moreover, destination reputation is influential in regard to attracting investment, skilled human resources and tourists, as well as retaining them. It also increases the destination's competitiveness, creates positive behavior towards stakeholders, and reduces customers' risks while choosing the destination (Andreassen & Lindestad, 1998; Fombrun & Shanley, 1990; Fombrun & Van Riel, 1997).

### 2.3. Tourists' perceived trust

According to Chung and Kwon (2009), trust is an individual's feeling of security and willingness to rely on other people or things. Human perceived trust can be categorized and defined in two ways: a) as a belief, attitude, or expectation; and b) as an intention including vulnerability and uncertainty (Chen, 2006). Therefore, trust is considered as a psychological stance and a multi-dimensional notion that includes two sides; cognitive and affective (Chang & Chen, 2008). Moreover, there are many dimensions of trust involving availability, consistency, discreteness, fairness, integrity, loyalty, competence, openness, promise, and fulfilment (McCole, 2002). Furthermore, trust is a long-term relationship because it depends on post-purchase decisions rather than the first-time use (Kim, 2012).

### 2.4. Fear arousal

Over the years, fear and inconsistent human behavior have been engendered by the outbreak of diseases or pandemics (Moukaddam, 2019), such as COVID-19. Pandemic is a substantial outbreak of infectious diseases that has psychological, economic and social effects on societies (Madhav et al., 2018). The consequences of each pandemic depend on its scale, thus, individuals' fear is significantly aroused by the fast outbreak of pandemics (Moukaddam, 2019). This could lead people

to express adaptive or protective behaviors to escape from the source of this fear or risk (Steimer, 2002). Under circumstances of such crises, fear arousal or appeal is widely used to encourage proper behaviors. A fear appeal can be defined as “a persuasive communication that presents threatening information to arouse fear in order to promote safer behavior” (Ruiter, Verplanken, Kok, & Werrij, 2003, p. 466). Based on the perceived level of fear or risk, human behavior gradually changes, along with the actions taken to relieve it (Addo et al., 2020; Laros & Steenkamp, 2005). With respect to tourism, Giusti and Raya (2019) stated the major risks for visitors include health issues, crime, political issues and natural disasters. Additionally, Fennell (2017) concluded that factors and states regarding fear of travel are shock, panic, risk, worry, and anxiety. Concerning health concerns, the impact of fear arousal related to COVID-19 on domestic tourists’ behavior has not been examined yet, however, several tourism studies articulated that risk perception substantially impacted travelers’ intentions to visit a destination (e.g. Fuchs & Reichel, 2011; Giusti & Raya, 2019; Li, Wen, & Ying, 2018).

2.5. Revisit intention

Revisit intention, one of the behavioral intention components, refers to an individual’s intention to re-experience the same tourism product or destination (Tosun, Dedeoğlu, & Fyall, 2015). When visitors are satisfied with their experiences, they are more likely to present positive intentions towards the destination, such as positive word of mouth (WOM), recommending the destination for others, and willingness to visit the destination again in the future (Abubakar et al., 2017; Chen & Tsai, 2007). Revisit intention is a common research area in tourism and hospitality literature in connection with destination. Many scholars have examined travelers’ intentions to revisit destinations, considering some antecedents such as reputation, trust, satisfaction, emotions, destination image, familiarity, etc (see Artigas, Vilches-Montero, & Yrigoyen, 2015; Han, Back, & Barrett, 2009; Han, Lee, Chua, Lee, & Kim, 2019; Soliman, 2019; Um, Chon, & Ro, 2006; Zhang, Wu, & Buhalis, 2018). Additionally, destination service quality, affective image, and past visits were found to significantly influence tourists’ revisit intention (Tosun et al., 2015). Moreover, Li et al. (2018) indicated that there are substantial relations between crises, destination image perception, and travelers’ willing to revisit a destination.

3. Conceptual framework and hypotheses

Depending upon the aforementioned discussion of the literature

review, Fig. 1 reveals the proposed conceptual model that demonstrates the direct and indirect connections between the studied latent constructs. The first three hypotheses suggested that DSR has a positive relation with DR, PT and RI. Hypothesis four suggested that DR positively influences PT, while hypotheses five and six stated that RI is positively impacted by DR and PT, respectively. Moreover, we assumed that FA related to COVID-19 moderates the direct paths between DR and RI (H 7); DSR and RI (H 8); and PT and RI (H 9). The model also includes the link between preferred destination (control variable) and RI. The following subsections illustrate the development of research hypotheses.

3.1. DSR and destination reputation

Limited studies have explored the link between DSR and reputation concerning tourism destination perspective. However, the relationship between social responsibility and reputation have been examined by scholars in different settings. From the public relations perspective, Aksak et al. (2016) indicated that there is a substantial connection between CSR and reputation. Additionally, CSR is considered one element of corporate reputation. Keh and Xie (2009) stated that a good reputation can be established and maintained through the activities of social responsibility. Kim and Kim (2017) examined the relation between CSR, customers’ trust, satisfaction, and corporate reputation. Their findings demonstrated that perceived CRS significantly affected consumers’ satisfaction and trust. In turn, customer’s trust and satisfaction have positive effects on perceptions about corporate reputation. The results of Su and Huang (2012) showed that destination reputation is affected by DSR and played a mediating role between DSR and destination identification. Thus, the first hypothesis is:

H1. Destination social responsibility has a positive relationship with destination reputation.

3.2. DSR and visitors’ perceived trust

The connection between social responsibility and customer’s trust is widely tested. Relevant studies indicated that social responsibility initiatives could build individuals’ trust. Jalilvand et al. (2017) examined the link between CSR, reputation, WOM behavior and customers’ trust. The results revealed that CSR has a direct and positive effect on trust, reputation and WOM. Additionally, they determined that reputation, as a predictor, was positively correlated with customers’ trust and satisfaction. Within the hotels sector, Kim and Kim (2016) tested potential customers’ perceptions of hotels’ social responsibility activities. They

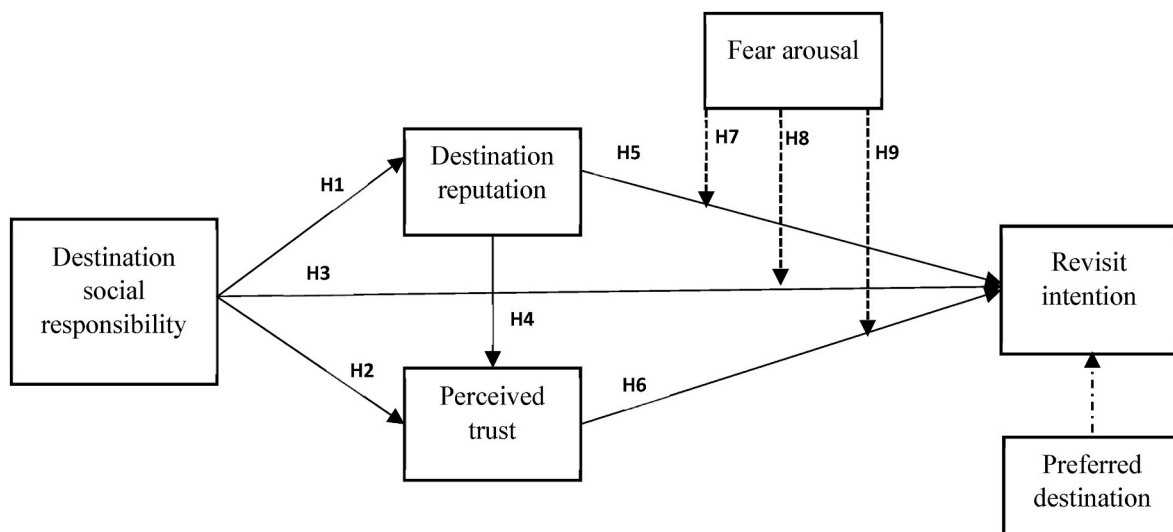


Fig. 1. Hypothesized framework.

indicated that CRS and reputation had positive relationships with trust and satisfaction. Moreover, Palacios-Florencio, del Junco, Castellanos-Verdugo, and Rosa-Díaz (2018) examined a sample of 629 guests in four international hotels to show that CSR affected the image, customers' loyalty and their trust in these hotels. Therefore, the second formulated hypothesis is:

**H2.** Destination social responsibility has a positive relationship with visitors' perceived trust

### 3.3. DSR and revisit intention

Many researchers examined the relation between CSR and repurchase intention through some mediator variables such as satisfaction, reputation, etc. Su, Swanson, and Chen (2015) investigated the relationships between CSR, reputation, satisfaction and behavioral intention. They stated that CSR and reputation significantly impacted customer satisfaction, which in turn, affected repurchase intentions. Tong and Wong (2014) confirmed that CSR plays a significant role in inducing positive repeated purchases in fast food business. The relation between DSR and revisit intention has been studied by Su and Huang (2019) who investigated the influence of DSR's five indicators: environmental, social, economic, stakeholder, and voluntariness, on revisit intention in China. The findings showed that DSR positively impacts tourists' satisfaction, which in turn positively influences revisit intention. According to Su, Gong et al. (2020), DSR strategy (reactive or proactive) substantially impacted the intention of travelers to visit a destination among the mediating impact of motive attribution, as well as the interaction role of information source. Additionally, Su, Gong et al. (2020), Su, Hsu et al. (2020), Su, Lian, et al. (2020) assessed the influence of DSR on destinations trust and the intention to visit them. The results revealed that the impact of DSR's motive attributions on destination trust and intention vary under different situations of destination reputation. Thus, we provide the following hypothesis:

**H3.** Destination social responsibility has a positive relationship with visitors' revisit intention.

### 3.4. Destination reputation and visitors' perceived trust

The relationship between reputation and trust has been widely studied in many areas. Artigas et al. (2017) suggested that reputation is a relevant antecedent of trust which reflected its importance to the tourism industry. Tabrani and Djilil (2016) examined the influence of reputation on commitment, trust and loyalty and its impact on customers' behavior of Garuda Indonesian Airline. The results showed that corporate reputation has a positive effect on commitment, trust, and loyalty. Broutsou and Fitsilis (2012) investigated online trust in the B2C context. More specifically, the issues of perceived companies' reputation, online trust and intention for online transactions were tested. It is concluded that there is a positive relationship between perceived companies' reputation and online trust. Yasin and Bozbay (2011) tested the relation between corporate reputation and customers' trust, within the telecommunications sector in Turkey. The empirical results of their study indicated that corporate reputation contributes to customers' trust. Based on the above discussion, we provide the following hypothesis:

**H4.** Destination reputation has a positive relationship with visitors' perceived trust.

### 3.5. Destination reputation and revisit intention

Reputation is a key predictors of human attitudes and behaviors (Dastgerdi & De Luca, 2019). Prior research examined the connection between corporate reputation and repurchase intentions. Results elucidated that corporate reputation has a positive influence on customer

WOM and repurchase intention (Kircova & Esen, 2018). Walsh et al. (2009) explored the antecedents and customer-related consequences of reputation through the impact of customers' satisfaction and trust on corporate reputation, as well as how reputation affects customer's loyalty. According to Su, Hsu et al. (2020), DR related to the eco-friendly theme has a significant influence on both visitors' emotions (positive and negative) and their satisfaction. Artigas et al. (2017) confirmed that destination reputation increases the probability of revisit. Wu, Cheng, and Ai (2018) in their article assumed the positive effects of trust, corporate reputation and experiential satisfaction on intention as antecedents and consequences of reputation. Therefore, the fifth hypothesis is:

**H5.** Destination reputation has a positive relationship with visitors' revisit intention.

### 3.6. Visitors' perceived trust and revisit intention

The relation between trust and visit intention has been explored and confirmed in tourism and hospitality research in relation to pre- and post-visitation. Abubakar et al. (2017) revealed the significant impact of destination trust on revisit intention. Saleem, Zahra, and Yaseen (2017) examined the relation between trust and repurchase on 383 frequent flyer customers within Pakistan's airline industry. The results revealed that service quality and trust are directly associated with repurchase intention. Moreover, Mosavi and Ghaedi (2012) indicated that there is a significant and positive relationship between trust and repurchase intention. As a result, we develop the next hypothesis:

**H6.** Visitors' perceived trust has a positive relationship with visitors' revisit intention.

### 3.7. Fear arousal as a moderator

Once the WHO declared COVID-19 as a pandemic (UNWHO, 2020), lots of people realized the risk of this deadly pandemic on their health and lives (Reznik et al., 2020). Therefore, fear arousal has grown considerably and circulated contagiously amongst people around the world through sharing their feelings of fear and noticing the behaviours of others. To this end, this study sought to explore whether COVID-19 fear-arousal could change the behavior of holidaymakers to revisit a domestic destination in the future. In this regard, Addo et al. (2020) indicated that fear appeal of COVID-19 has a significant effect on online purchase behavior toward personal protective equipment by enhancing consumers' e-loyalty. Concerning tourism, as previously mentioned, no research has tested the impact of fear arousal associated with COVID-19 on domestic tourists' attitude and behavior. In addition, no well-known work has explored the interaction role of fear arousal of COVID-19 on the relation between domestic holidaymakers' revisit intention and its associated predictors involved in the research model (i.e. destination reputation, DSR and visitors' perceived trust). Hence, the following hypotheses were developed:

**H7.** Fear arousal has a moderation impact on the relationship between destination reputation and visitors' revisit intention.

**H8.** Fear arousal has a moderation impact on the relationship between destination social responsibility and visitors' revisit intention.

**H9.** Fear arousal has a moderation impact on the relationship between visitors' perceived trust and visitors' revisit intention.

## 4. Research Methods

### 4.1. Sampling and procedures

The research followed a quantitative approach by gathering data from domestic holidaymakers who made at least one visit to any tourism

destination in Egypt since 2017. Here, it is difficult to specify the target population frame, thus, this study applied a non-probability sampling approach to collect the data (Buelens, Burger, & Brakel, 2018). Accordingly, an online questionnaire was distributed to possible participants by adopting multiple sampling methods, involving self-selection sample through sharing the survey link on social platforms sites; convenience sample through forwarding the link directly to participants via their personal accounts on social networking; and snowball sample by demanding some colleagues to circulate and share the link to potential respondents. These sampling procedures helped to get a high number of responses from surveyors and to limit the nonresponse bias. During the period between April 27<sup>th</sup> and May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020, a total of 616 individuals participated in this research; 73 responses were eliminated (12 of them did not agree to fill in the survey and 61 had not visited any tourism destination in Egypt since 2017) while 543 participants completed the survey with responses which were considered valid for further analyses.

The next step was assessing the Common Method Variance (CMV) following two approaches. Firstly, Harman's single-factor approach was employed and the results showed that the total variance explained by a single factor was 47.9% (less than 50%). This means that CMV is not a concern for the current paper (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). Secondly, we checked CMV depending on full collinearity VIFs (Kock, 2020). As shown in Table 2, the VIFs values were lower than 5, again confirming the absence of CMV and multi-collinearity (Kock & Verville, 2012).

#### 4.2. Questionnaire design and measures

The cover page of the survey contained information about the study's objectives, value, confirmation of confidentiality and time spent to answer the questions. Additionally, the final form of survey was composed of four main parts. The first part gathered information about surveyors' demographic features consisting of gender, marital status, age, education and job. The second part collected information about their tourism destination in Egypt in terms of past visits per year since 2017 and their favorite destination.

The third part included four indicators related to fear arousal arising from COVID-19. These scales were derived from previous studies (Ahorsu et al., 2020; Ruitter et al., 2003) and were measured by five scales ranging from 1 = 'Not at all' to 5 = 'Very much'. The last part of the survey involved 19 items of four constructs, namely destination social responsibility (DSR), destination reputation (DR), perceived trust (PT) and revisit intention (RI). DSR was measured using 6 items adapted from prior research (Su, Huang, & Pearce, 2018b; Su & Swanson, 2017). Five indicators adapted from Artigas et al. (2015) were used to measure DR. PT was assessed through five items adapted from previous studies (Chang & Chen, 2008; Kim et al., 2011; Terpstra, 2011). As for the three-item scale of RI, it was adapted from past studies (Soliman, 2019; Zhang et al., 2018) (see Appendix A). All indicators in section 4 were measured by a five-point Likert-type scale (1 being 'strongly disagree' and 5 indicating 'strongly agree'). The questionnaire took 7–10 min to be completed by respondents. It should be considered that the initial survey was written in English then translated into Arabic as it is the mother tongue of Egyptian respondents (see Appendix B).

#### 4.3. Analysis technique

The process of data analysis was carried out through a number of essential stages. At first, the sample characteristics, mean and standard deviation of measures were analyzed using SPSS 25 software. Further, the normality test was performed following the method of maximum likelihood estimation. Based on the results generated by SPSS (Appendix A), skewness values ranged from -0.276 to 0.322 and kurtosis values ranged between -1.482 and -0.849, implying the normal distribution of the data (Kline, 2016).

Next, employing the WarpPLS 7.0 program (Kock, 2020), PLS-SEM was conducted to assess the research framework through two steps. Firstly, the outer (measurement) model was tested in terms of its reliability and validity, including the assessment of indicator reliability, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity and discriminant validity. Secondly, the inner (structural) model was evaluated and the hypotheses were tested (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2017). PLS-SEM was selected for some reasons; (a) the conceptual framework is rather complicated in terms of the constitution of the studied constructs and the paths built between them (direct and moderating correlations); (b) PLS-SEM is also a common SEM technique to estimate the behavioral constructs; and (c) it is a fit method that is not obstructed by the number and distribution of indicators of constructs included in the research model (Henseler, Hubona, & Ray, 2016).

#### 4.4. Control variable

As this study was conducted during the outbreak of COVID-19, we sought to determine if the respondents' opinions could be influenced by the destination they selected. More particularly, this research examined the effect of the preferred destination, as a control variable, on revisit intention (RI). The results indicated that there is no significant connection between the chosen destination and RI ( $\beta = -0.031$ ,  $p = 0.238$ ). This result indicated that respondents have similar perceptions of risk toward all tourism destinations included in this research. In other words, the destination's COVID-19 situation is similar among all selected destinations in Egypt; therefore, the participants' responses were not noticeably impacted by selecting a specific destination.

### 5. Results

#### 5.1. Respondents' profile

Table 1 demonstrates the features of respondents' profile. Of 543 participants, 279 were female and 261 were male, 57.3% were married, 58.6% aged between 31 and 50 years, 48.8% had full-time jobs and 37.2% graduated from universities. Around half of the respondents have visited their destinations one time per year since 2017. Alexandria is the most popular destination for them (21.2%), followed by Red Sea, South Sinai and Matrouh (19.9% and 13.1% and 12.9% respectively).

#### 5.2. Measurement model assessment

The outer model was assessed for reliability and validity of the studied reflective constructs (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2011). As provided in Table 2, all indicator loadings (ranging from 0.744 to 0.931) were more than the cut-off point of 0.70 recommended by Hair et al. (2011) and were significant ( $p < 0.001$ ). Therefore, indicator reliability was established. Additionally, all Cronbach's alpha (ranging from 0.843 to 0.911) surpassed the proposed threshold of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2011) as well as the values of composite reliability (CR) ranged between 0.895 and 0.944 and exceed the value of 0.70 suggested by Hair et al. (2017), establishing internal consistency reliability.

Table 3 illustrates the evaluation of construct validity. First, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values (ranging between 0.664 and 0.849) exceed the recommended value of 0.50 (Hair et al., 2017), proving convergent validity. Second, following the guidelines of Fornell and Larcker (1981), the square root of the AVE of each latent variable was higher than its corresponding correlation among other constructs, establishing discriminant validity.

Based on the preceding findings, the outer model was evenly valid and acceptable. As a result, the next step is to perform the analysis of the inner model.

**Table 1**  
Sample description.

Features	Category	Frequency	%
Gender	Male	261	48.1
	Female	279	51.4
Marital Status	Prefer not to say	3	0.6
	Single	164	30.2
	Married	311	57.3
	Widowed	46	8.5
	Divorced/separated	15	2.8
Age	Not prefer to say	7	1.3
	18–30	181	33.3
	31–40	165	30.4
	41–50	153	28.2
	51–60	31	5.7
	Over 60 years	13	2.4
Education	Incomplete primary school	0	0
	Complete primary school	7	1.3
	Incomplete secondary school	3	0.6
	Complete secondary school	8	1.5
	Incomplete technical	9	1.7
	Complete technical	98	18.0
	Incomplete university	78	14.4
	Complete university	202	37.2
	Incomplete postgraduate	9	1.7
	Complete postgraduate	120	22.1
	Other	9	1.7
Employment	Full-time job	265	48.8
	Part-time job	39	7.2
	Looking for a job	52	9.6
	Student	77	14.2
	Housewife	81	14.9
	Retired	13	2.4
	Others	16	2.9
Past visit	One time	273	50.3
	2 times	160	29.5
	3 times	60	11.0
	4 and more	50	9.2
Preferred destination	Cairo	56	10.3
	Alexandria	115	21.2
	Matrouh	70	12.9
	South Sinai	71	13.1
	Red Sea	108	19.9
	Luxor	35	6.4
	Aswan	23	4.2
	Suez	26	4.8
	Others	39	7.2
	Total		543

5.3. Structural model assessment

According to Hair et al. (2017), some measures such as beta ( $\beta$ ), p value,  $R^2$  and the effect sizes ( $f^2$ ) can be used to assess the inner model. The findings presented in Table 4 revealed that DSR has a positive and significant effect on DR ( $\beta = 0.808$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ), PT ( $\beta = 0.472$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ) and RI ( $\beta = 0.227$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). Therefore, the first three hypotheses were all accepted. Additionally, DR positively and significantly influenced PT ( $\beta = 0.422$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ) and RI ( $\beta = 0.367$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). Thus, H4 and H5 were supported. There was also a positive and significant relationship between PT and RI ( $\beta = 0.293$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ), supporting H6.

Furthermore, DSR explained 65% of the variance in DR ( $R^2 = 0.65$ ), both DSR and DR explained 72% of the total variation in PT ( $R^2 = 0.72$ ), while DSR, DR and PT explained 69% of the variance in RI ( $R^2 = 0.69$ ). The  $R^2$  values demonstrated that the structural model showed a substantial explanatory power (Cohen, 1988).

The next step is measuring the effect size. In doing so, the guidelines of Cohen's (1988) were followed; where 0.02 = low effects; 0.15 = medium effects; and 0.35 = large effects. As shown in Table 4, great effects were recorded among the relationship between (DSR → DR; DSR → PT; and DR → PT) and a medium effect was seen in the links between (DSR → RI; DR → RI; and PT → RI), whereas the remaining

**Table 2**  
Measures of constructs reliability and collinearity.

Construct/items	FL	CR	$\alpha$	VIFs	Weights
<b>Destination social responsibility (DSR)</b>					
DSR1	0.805	0.922	0.899	3.924	0.202***
DSR2	0.772				0.194***
DSR3	0.808				0.203***
DSR4	0.826				0.207***
DSR5	0.839				0.211***
DSR6	0.836				0.210***
<b>Destination reputation (DR)</b>					
DR1	0.856	0.917	0.886	4.040	0.249***
DR2	0.827				0.241***
DR3	0.808				0.235***
DR4	0.842				0.245***
DR5	0.811				0.236***
<b>Holidaymakers' perceived trust (PT)</b>					
PT1	0.853	0.920	0.891	3.925	0.245***
PT2	0.857				0.246***
PT3	0.817				0.235***
PT4	0.832				0.239***
PT5	0.812				0.233***
<b>Fear arousal (FA)</b>					
FA1	0.863	0.895	0.843	1.080	0.317***
FA2	0.744				0.273***
FA3	0.859				0.315***
FA4	0.829				0.304***
<b>Revisit intention (RI)</b>					
RI1	0.912	0.944	0.911	3.194	0.358***
RI2	0.931				0.366***
RI3	0.922				0.362***

Note: FL= Factor Loadings; CR = Composite Reliability;  $\alpha$  = Cronbach's alpha  
\*\*\* =  $p < 0.001$ .

**Table 3**  
Construct validity assessment.

Constructs	AVE	1	2	3	4	5
DSR	0.664	<b>(0.815)</b>				
DR	0.688	0.808	<b>(0.829)</b>			
PT	0.696	0.813	0.804	<b>(0.834)</b>		
FA	0.681	0.148	0.099	0.143	<b>(0.825)</b>	
RI	0.849	0.755	0.782	0.765	0.116	<b>(0.921)</b>

Note: AVE = Average Variance Extracted; Diagonal numbers in bold are  $\sqrt{AVE}$ .

**Table 4**  
Results of the inner model and hypotheses testing.

Hypotheses	$\beta$	P value	$f^2$	Supported?
<b>Direct impact</b>				
H1: DSR → DR	0.808	***	0.653	Yes
H2: DSR → PT	0.472	***	0.384	Yes
H3: DSR → RI	0.227	***	0.172	Yes
H4: DR → PT	0.422	***	0.339	Yes
H5: DR → RI	0.367	***	0.287	Yes
H6: PT → RI	0.293	***	0.224	Yes
<b>Moderation impact</b>				
H7: DR × FA → RI	-0.121	**	0.000	Yes
H8: DSR × FA → RI	0.143	***	0.004	Yes
H9: PT × FA → RI	-0.075	*	0.000	Yes

Note:  $\beta$  = Path coefficient; \*\*\* =  $< 0.001$ ; \*\* =  $< 0.01$ ; \* =  $< 0.05$ ;  $f^2$  = Effect size.

paths related to the moderation analysis had a weak effect.

5.4. Moderation analysis

This research sought to assess the moderation role of FA linked to COVID-19 on the direct relationships between DR, DSR, PT (independent constructs) and RI (dependent construct). The findings presented in Table 4 indicated that path coefficients of the FA impact on DR → RI ( $\beta = -0.121$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ), DSR → RI ( $\beta = 0.143$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ) and PT → RI ( $\beta =$

-0.078;  $p < 0.05$ ) were significant. These results demonstrated that FA of COVID-19 moderates the relations between DR, DSR, PT and RI. Thus, H7, H8 and H9 were supported. Moreover, following the approach of Kock (2020), Figures from 2 to 4 show the low-high values with data points, generated by WarpPls 7.0, of FA as a moderating variable. As shown in Fig. 2, with low FA, the direct effect between DR and RI is stronger than with high FA. Similarly in Fig. 4, the impact between PT and RI is stronger with low FA compared to high FA. In contrast, the effect between DSR and RI is stronger with high FA than with low FA. These results also support the moderation impact of FA related to COVID-19 (see Fig. 3).

6. Conclusions

6.1. Discussion of findings

This article aimed to (1) understand the influence of DSR on DR, PT and RI; (2) examine the direct relations between DR, PT and RI; and (3) evaluate the moderation role of FA on the paths between DR, DSR, PT and RI of domestic holidaymakers in Egypt. Overall, the empirical results supported the direct and indirect paths within the research model. The results revealed that holidaymakers' perceived DSR has a positive impact on DR. The good reputation of tourism destinations will be positively impacted since the destination considers environmental, social, economic, legal, ethical, and health responsibilities in its operations. This result is in line with prior studies (e.g. Aksak et al., 2016; Keh & Xie, 2009; Kim & Kim, 2017) that stated there is a positive relation between DSR and DR. Besides, the results confirmed that DSR could foster the perceived trust of domestic holidaymakers towards the destination. Perceived DSR will make tourists feel trusting that their destinations provide operations and services in an integrity, reliable and trustworthy manner. Visitors also ensured that their destinations have good intentions towards them. This result complies with past research (e.g. Jalilvand et al., 2017; Kim & Kim, 2016; Palacios-Florencio et al., 2018) indicating that DSR has a positive effect on customers' trust. It is also indicated that domestic holidaymakers' perception of DSR could

enhance their intention to revisit the destination. This means that a greater revisit intention of domestic traveler is associated with a higher perception of DSR. This finding is consistent with previous studies (e.g. Tong & Wong, 2014; Su, Swanson, & Chen, 2015; Su & Huang, 2019, Su, Gong et al., 2020, Su, Hsu et al., 2020, Su, Lian, et al., 2020) demonstrating that DSR has a significant impact on visitors' intention to repeat visitation. These results also supported the study of Su, Gong et al. (2020), Su, Hsu et al. (2020), Su, Lian, et al. (2020), which revealed that the impact of DSR motive attributions on trust vary under different conditions of DR.

Moreover, a significant relationship was found between DR and PT. The better the destination reputation, the more trust customers have of it. This result is similar to those of past research of Tabrani and Djailil (2016) and Broutsou and Fitsilis (2012) who confirmed the significant link between DR and PT. Additionally, it was revealed that DR has a positive and significant link with RI. The more DR, the greater the willingness of people to repeat visitation. This finding supports the studies of Artigas et al. (2017) and Wu et al. (2018) illustrating the positive influence of DR on RI. Furthermore, it is confirmed that PT significantly affected RI. Domestic tourists will visit the destination again in the future since they feel trust and confidence towards it. This result is consistent with Mosavi and Ghaedi (2012) and Abubakar et al. (2017) who demonstrated that PT has a positive link with RI.

Lastly, the present research hypothesized that FA associated with COVID-19 would moderate the direct relationships between DR, DSR, PT (predictor variables) and RI (outcome variable). It should be considered that no previous research has examined the interaction role of FA connected to COVID-19 on the relations between RI and its related antecedents. In this research, FA was found to negatively affect the direct relationship between DR and RI. This means that the greater value of FA related to COVID-19 could alter the link between DR and RI to be negative. It is also revealed that FA negatively impacted the link between PT and RI. As FA increases, the direct positive link between PT and RI will go down in value and might be converted to a negative relationship. These results may reflect the fact that the ongoing state of being quarantined, isolated and maybe unemployed due to this

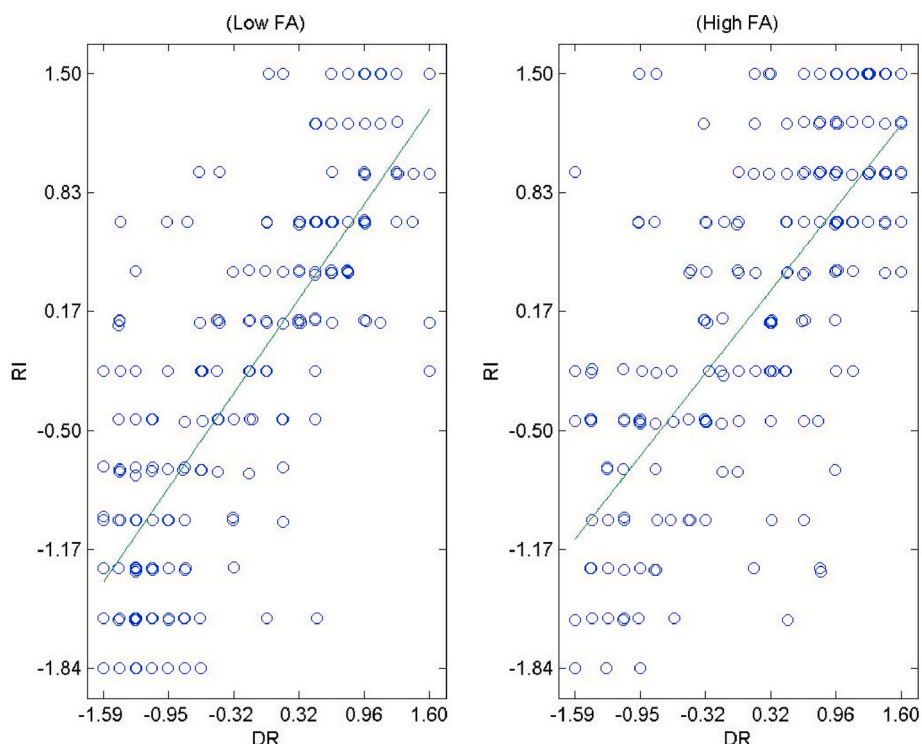


Fig. 2. Low-high values of FA between DR and RI.



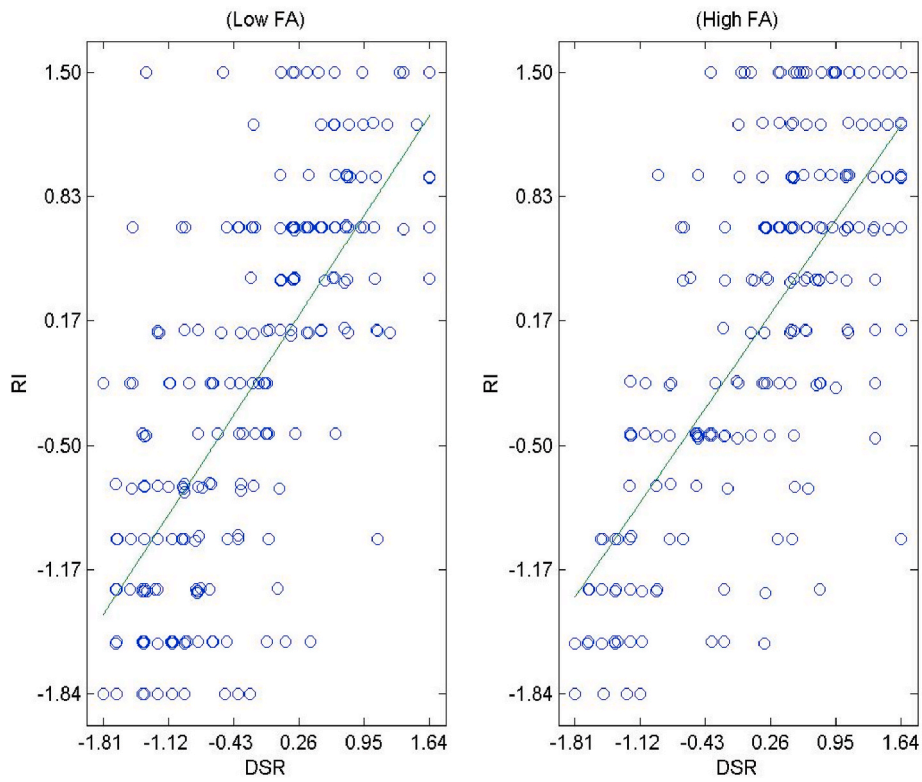


Fig. 3. Low-high values of FA between DSR and RI.

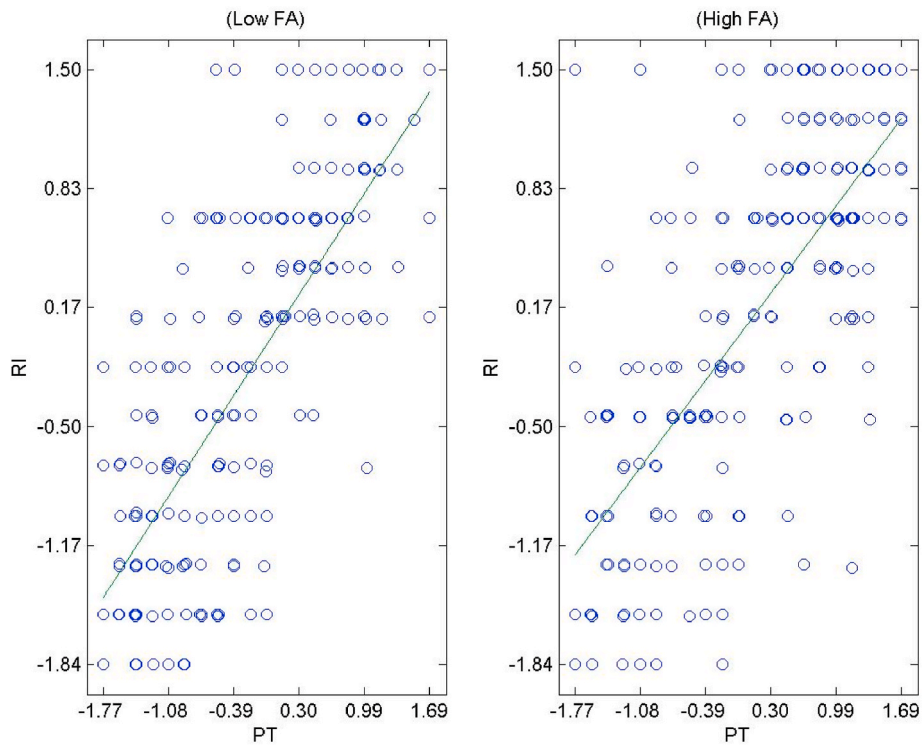


Fig. 4. Low-high values of FA between PT and RI.

pandemic creates a sense of fear with individuals. This fear could have negative psychological impacts on human well-being and could decrease people eagerness to travel in general. On the other hand, FA of COVID-19 positively moderated the link between DSR and RI. Interestingly, the high degree of FA could enhance the domestic holidaymakers'

perceptions of DSR, which in turn positively impact their intention to revisit the destination.

## 6.2. Theoretical implications

This paper contributes to the existing literature in various ways. First, it adds to the existing knowledge on the behavior of domestic tourists in general and in times of crises in particular. Although there are several studies that have investigated the behavior of international tourists, there is no known work on domestic holidaymakers revisit intention that is directly linked to COVID-19. Accordingly, this paper contributes to the tourism literature by illustrating the most crucial factors affecting domestic tourism behavior during times of worldwide crises and risks (i.e., coronavirus pandemic). These factors play a substantial role in changing the behavioral intention and willingness of individuals to make a decision for travel and tourism. This study also adds to academic literature associated with domestic tourism in the MENA region, especially in Egypt. In addition, this research is considered as an attempt to develop and empirically examine a conceptual framework to understand domestic holidaymakers' revisit intention in countries of the MENA region including Egypt. Moreover, as far as we know, no prior studies have developed an integrated structural model incorporating the studied constructs (i.e. DSR, DR, PT, and FA) to measure their effect on RI within the domestic tourism subject. Hence, the research results supported the tourism scholarly publications which revealed the significance of such variables in reshaping the tourists' behavior. Furthermore, despite the fact that fear arousal has been distinctly considered and investigated in literature among various contexts (e.g. marketing, business, life insurance, health issues, etc), few studies have tested the undeniable role of FA in relation to domestic tourism concerns. Thus, the empirical findings of this study contribute to the current tourism literature in two-folds. First, it adds to the limited studies that have explored the influence of FA on holidaymakers' behavior. Second, it demonstrates the interaction role of FA as a psychological consequence arising from the outbreak of COVID-19. Unlike prior research, this study assessed the moderation role of FA and presented empirical support and evidence on how FA related to coronavirus negatively influenced the direct positive connection between DR, PT and RI and positively affected the direct link between DSR and RI of domestic holidaymakers. Additionally, despite the significance and prominence of DSR among various domains, this study is considered one of the limited attempts that investigated the outcomes of DSR on DR, PT and RI of domestic visitors. Consequently, the empirical findings of this research contributed to the body of knowledge by supporting the consequences and importance of DSR in tourism destinations.

## 6.3. Managerial implications

The results of this study present many managerial implications for tourism destination managers and marketers. To begin with, it is evident that tourism and hospitality industry is considered one of the most affected industries by coronavirus and its proactive procedures including quarantine, social isolation, lockdown, and travel restrictions. This study provides a better understanding on some crucial factors in tourism destination management and marketing affecting the behavior of domestic tourists. In other words, our results could assist tourism destinations managers and marketers to develop effective strategies to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic once the virus is restrained. In addition, the results showed that DSR has many positive outcomes including improving destination reputation, increasing the visitors' perception of trust and their intention to repeat the visit. Accordingly, tourism destinations managers should focus mainly on ensuring that the dimensions of DSR (i.e. environmental, economic, legal and ethical responsibilities) are well-deployed and considered. This could improve the destination reputation and enhance individuals' perceived trust towards the operations and services provided.

More importantly, the findings proved the moderation role of FA caused by COVID-19 and indicated that FA negatively influenced the relations between DR, PT and RI and positively affected the connection

between DSR and RI. Consequently, managers and marketers of tourism destinations should pay attention to their marketing strategies and advertising to reinforce the good reputation of the destination and to enhance customers' trust, particularly in times of crises. They are also required to promote the social responsibility activities delivered by the destination. Moreover, the results confirmed that DR plays a major role in enhancing holidaymakers' trust as well as their intention to revisit the destination. Thus, it is crucial for tourism destination managers to improve their own reputation management strategies among various methods using the most effective tools that have a significant impact on tourists' attitudes and behaviors.

## 6.4. Limitations and directions for future research

It is not deniable that the present research has some limitations to be addressed for further studies. First, this study focused on domestic holidaymakers who have already visited a tourism destination in Egypt since 2017. Thus, future research can examine the behavioral intention of non visitors. A comparative analysis of first-time and repeat tourists could be also considered. Second, the respondents were surveyed during the proactive measures of COVID-19 such as quarantine, isolation and travel restrictions. As a result, longitudinal studies are required to improve the generalization of results. Third, further research should consider other destination-related predictors of revisit intention (e.g. destination image, travel motivation, destination familiarity, sense of place, etc) or visitor-related antecedents (e.g. perceived value, self-efficacy, visitors' emotions, etc). Fourth, the current study tested the moderating impact of fear arousal; therefore, future studies are recommended to investigate other interaction constructs such as psychological perceived safety and perceived risk. Further research can also examine the mediating role of some variables (e.g. eWOM, satisfaction, etc). Fifth, this study was conducted in one country, Egypt, thus, the generalization of findings should be made with caution. Therefore, further research is recommended to conduct the survey in other countries with different cultures. Last, this research used an online survey to gather data from potential participants; thus, other data collection tools can be employed such as a self-administrated questionnaire or interview to support the research findings.

## Credit author statement

**Suzan Hassan:** Conceptualization, Validation, Resources, Data Curation, Writing - Original Draft preparation, Review & Editing and Supervision & Project administration. **Mohammad Soliman:** Conceptualization, Methodology, Software, Formal analysis, Investigation, Resources, Data Curation, Writing - Original Draft preparation, Review & Editing.

## Appendix A. Supplementary data

Supplementary data to this article can be found online at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2020.100495>.

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