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Social vacation: Proposition of a model to understand tourists' usage of social media for travel planning

Sakshi^a, Urvashi Tandon^b, Myriam Ertz^{c,*}, Harbhajan Bansal^a

^a Haryana School of Business, Guru Jambheshwar University of Science and Technology, Hisar, Haryana, India

^b Chitkara Business School, Chitkara University, Rajpura, Punjab, India

^c Director LaboNFC, Guest Editor Sustainability, Department of Economics and Administrative Sciences, University of Quebec at Chicoutimi, 555 Boulevard de l'Université, Saguenay, Quebec, Canada

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ABSTRACT

This study develops a theoretical model that highlights the determinants of actual social media (SM) usage for travel planning by combining theoretical frameworks from the marketing, psychology and information systems literature. The data was collected through field as well as online survey in India. An online survey questionnaire link was shared on different social media platforms and social networking sites. Besides, field visits were carried out to collect data in-person through face-to-face interviews. The final sample consists of 539 observations. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was applied to validate the hypothesized relationships among constructs. The results suggest that technological convenience and perceived enjoyment influence the perceived ease of using SM for travel planning. In turn, perceived ease of use impacts perceived usefulness, along with media richness. Perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness, along with trust positively influence intentions to use SM for travel planning, while perceived risk inhibits those intentions. However, trust increases perceived usefulness and mitigates perceived risk. Importantly, intentions exert a strong impact on actual use. This study contributes to the literature by presenting and validating a theory-driven framework that unveils the factors influencing actual usage of SM for travel planning. The proposed theoretical framework emphasizes the key relationships among factors and provides a research basis for development in other contexts.

1. Introduction

Over the last decade, Social Media (SM) have drastically changed the way both individuals and businesses operate [1,2]. In fact, SM usage goes beyond personal use and has entered both public and private sectors (e.g. education, hospitality, tourism, banking, fashion, and retail) for a wide range of purposes [3,4]. These include information and knowledge exchange, customer service and relational marketing, sales, cultivation of brand awareness and loyalty, development of collaborations, and supply management [5–7]. SM can be defined as a group of internet-based applications build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content [8,9]. Within the realm of SM, a significant increase in the number of social networking sites (SNS) and users has been observed worldwide as there were above 250 SNS up to October 2018 [10] and 3.484 billion SM users [11].

The adoption of SM has been particularly strong in hospitality and tourism where organizations, destinations and events engage with potential visitors or guests using SM [12]. More specifically, SM are increasingly prevalent in travel planning at the pre-trip stage [13], and the reasons for that shift are numerous. First, many researchers have emphasized that tourism is a highly information-intensive sector [14]. Yet, SM appear as an important source to generate, distribute and sift through associated information to potential tourists to plan and consume travel. Second, SM are appealing because they are considered to be an extremely user-friendly search engine [15]. Third, SM enable easy creation of user-generated content (UGC) by enabling tourists and guests to write, share their queries, viewpoints, feelings, and personal experiences during and after travel [15,16]. Fourth, specific initiatives by non-travel-specific SM such as Facebook, for example-embedding in the instant messaging platform a new service allowing for booking flights and accommodation and developing trip planning solutions (e.g.,

* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: sakshi1265@gmail.com (Sakshi), urvashi.tandon@chitkara.edu.in (U. Tandon), myriam_Ertz@uqac.ca (M. Ertz), bansal_harbhajan@rediffmail.com (H. Bansal).

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Trip consideration)-, strengthens the importance of SM for travel planning [17]. Fifth, many travel platforms such as Expedia, Opodo or Skyscanner, are increasingly accessed via SM platforms such as Facebook, while travel organizations (e.g., airlines, hotels) increasingly invest in SM to allow potential visitors to make their travel arrangements over SM platforms [17].

Consequently, SM usage has progressively gained higher authority in the tourism sector [14]. Scholars further recognized that the vast amount of travel-related user-generated content available on SM, has changed the way potential tourists plan and decide their travels [18,19]. Although SM is playing an increasingly predominant role in the tourism industry growth, related theory about how different factors shape and predict actual SM usage in travel planning is still emerging [5,20–23]; and suffers a series of limitations. Past research predominantly focused on travel-specific SM (e.g., TripAdvisor) [24], commercial third-parties (e.g., Booking.com) [25], or very particular non-travel-specific platforms (e.g., Facebook) [17]. While laudable, these research endeavors resulted in a fragmented set of models of determinants predicting usage of specific SM for travel planning.

SM provides a platform for tourism managers to evaluate the consumers' complaints and opportunities to sincerely and genuinely respond to such complaints and thus build a strong reputation among existing and potential tourists [26]. Accordingly, the literature shows that social media is playing an increasingly central role in tourism growth. Despite these promising developments, there is a lack of consideration about how different factors associated with social media usage shape and predict actual tourist behavior of using social media. Some researchers highlighted that social media is being increasingly used as a source for information search and for spreading awareness, but it is unclear which factors increase the use of social media for travel planning [1,21–23]. Further, there are limited studies on tour and travels that have hypothesized the relationship considering various key variables such as perceived enjoyment, technology convenience and media richness in the framework developed and also tested outside of India [27–29]. Yet, a theoretical framework underpinning and predicting the use of SM in general for travel planning remains still missing. In other words, it is unclear which cognitive factors determine the use of SM platforms, in general, and for travel planning, in particular. Besides, most studies posit intentions as the focal construct under study, not actual usage behavior. Yet, the "intention-behavior gap" exists, as emphasized by several scholars in the tourism literature [30,31] and this gap puts research findings of studies focused solely on intentions at a disadvantage-. Finally, the majority of studies on SM and tourism industry pertain to developed countries [18]; Yoo and Gretzel, 2010 [17, 32–34]; and very few apply to developing countries. More importantly, these studies have formulated the different model either considering perceived enjoyment or technology convenience or media richness, and therefore the literature lacks a comprehensive study which investigates the extent of influence of technology convenience and perceived enjoyment on perceived ease of use of using social media, media richness on perceived usefulness as well as perceived ease of use on perceived usefulness of using social media for travel planning. Another void is that most discussed models are developed in the framework of developed economies while developing markets are emerging as fertile grounds for tourism development both as destinations and as tourist markets. Hence, developing and testing a model to evaluate the association between trust, perceived risk, perceived ease of use, and perceived usefulness for using social media in the Indian context would provide deeper insights into the developing context to formulate marketing strategies accordingly.

It should also be stressed that past research considered either different or few constructs. For instance, Yoo and Gretzel (2010) focused on trust and its antecedents. Agag and El-Masry [1] tested the associations between relative advantage, compatibility, perceived ease of use (PEOU), perceived usefulness (PU), attitude and positive word of mouth. Further, Christou [5] tested relationships between SM brand

characteristics, and trust in SM and established that trust in travel SM brand leads to brand loyalty. Okazaki et al. [22] illustrated the associations between SM for information search, social interaction ties, trust, shared vision, and SM for sharing knowledge. In recent times, social media has been playing an increasingly important role in the Indian tourism industry. Therefore, it is more than necessary to analyze and understand the tourist's viewpoints about the use of social media for travel planning, the Indian tourism destinations. Consequently, improving marketing capabilities especially by crafting relevant social media strategies to reach consumers effectively and influence their decision-making processes, are top priorities.

Past research thus lacks an integrative model that conceptualizes the interconnections of constructs pertaining to diverse theoretical frameworks such as trust, perceived risk, from the utility framework; perceived ease of use (PEOU), perceived usefulness (PU), behavioural intention towards SM usage, from the technology acceptance model (TAM); media richness from media richness theory; and the actual SM usage for travel planning, to further evaluate the potential interactions of such constructs. To bridge the aforementioned gaps, this study aims at developing a single model considering all the mentioned constructs including actual behavior in a developing country setting. The development of such a model would help destination firms and authorities in understanding tourists' perception and actual use of SM for travel purposes in the context of developing countries. This research combines two trends as SM is increasingly used by potential tourists and guests in travel planning, while tourists from developing countries are also a growing segment in international tourism.

For this study, the tourism sector in India has been considered due to the rich cultural and historic heritage, diversity in ecology, places of natural beauty throughout the country, business opportunities and medical facilities [35,36]. In 2017–18, the sector accounted for 12.38% of the total employment opportunities and provided jobs for 81.1 million individuals [35]. This contribution is anticipated to increase by 2% per annum to 52.3 million jobs at the end of 2028 [36]. India further ranks seventh among 184 countries in terms of the contribution of the travel and tourism sector to the national GDP. The total contribution of the sector to the country's GDP is anticipated to rise from Rs 15.24 trillion in 2017 to Rs 32.5 trillion by the end of 2028. Furthermore, the hotel and tourism industry attracted approximately USD 12 billion of foreign direct investment, and the industry maintains huge growth potential [36]. On the other hand, in terms of quantum of internet users, India is ranked second with 560 million users just next to China which has 829 million users [37]. Besides, SM users reached 326.1 million in 2018 and an anticipated 448 million is expected by 2023 [38]. A recent study claimed that 89.30% of tourists used SM to search for information about tourism destinations located within India [39].

The Indian Government has undertaken several initiatives to increase the arrival of foreign tourists while setting a target of 20 million foreign tourist arrivals by 2020 [35,36]. Moreover, and especially in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, the government seeks also to promote local tourism. A total of USD 15.534 billion have been provisioned in the Union Budget 2019–20 for the development of tourist circuits. Furthermore, the promotion of the Statue of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel also known as Statue of Unity (highest standing statues in the globe), the "Incredible India¹" programme, and the "Atithi Devo Bhava" (is a phrase equating guests to God) programme, are such initiatives [35,36]. "Atithi Devo Bhava" initiative focuses upon media, messaging, and an organized set of communication activities to engender explicit consequences in a large number of individuals and for a specific period of time [40]. Such campaigns require coordinated social media efforts with a blend of

¹ "Incredible India is the slogan of an international marketing campaign launched by the central government of India in 2002 to promote international tourism. Upon landing at Indira Gandhi International Airport, the first thing visitors see might be this logo alongside beautiful pictures of India."

community-based channels. Hence, a cross-sectional study exploring social media usage at the different stages of the travel planning process in the Indian context, would provide deeper understanding for practitioners, destination management authorities, and researchers.

This paper proceeds as follows: Section 2 discusses the theoretical background and hypotheses development. The measurement development and data collection is explained in Section 3. Section 4 includes the statistical analysis and testing of research hypotheses. Lastly, Section 6 discusses the results, the implications, and the limitations of the study.

2. Theoretical background and hypotheses development

This research combines a variety of theoretical frameworks in order to account for the richness and diversity of cognitive constructs underlying SM usage for travel planning. As a technological phenomenon, SM is related to the notion of technology acceptance. Technology acceptance encompasses how people adopt technology for use [41]. In this context, different models for the introduction and adoption of information technology innovations have been elucidated by previous researchers such as Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) [42], the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) [43], the Theory of Planned Behavior [44], extended TAM [45], the model combining TAM and the Theory of Planned Behavior [46], and the Model of PC Utilization [47]. Among these, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) proposed by Davis [43] has been applied widely in a variety of domains to understand users' behavior concerning different technologies. Davis [43] proposed two discrete but vital determinants in technology adoption, namely perceived ease of use (PEOU), and perceived usefulness (PU). PEOU is defined as the extent to which "people believe that the systems are too hard to use and that the performance benefits of usage are outweighed by the effort of using the application" [43]; p. 320), and PU is defined as the extent to which "people tend to use or not use an application to the extent they believe it will help them perform their job better" [43]; p. 320). The scientific literature indicates that TAM has been postulated as the most persuasive and widely used theories in describing the users' acceptance of information systems [48–50]. TAM has been empirically validated by previous researchers to understand employees' adoption of information technology in upscale hotels [51]; information systems regarding hotels [52], computerized reservation systems by a travel agency and SM usage intentions in travel planning [17].

Nonetheless, there are other variables, besides PEOU and PU, which influence the adoption, acceptance, and diffusion of technologies among users [50]. Legris et al. [53], entrenched TAM as an indispensable model; but, to enhance its predictive power, it needs to be unified into a broader model comprising variables associated with human factors. Similarly, other researchers also supported that TAM may be made robust by validating various other predictors or by integrating it with other information system theories [50,54].

SM includes a wide range of online, word-of-mouth forums including blogs, company-sponsored discussion boards and chat rooms, consumer-to-consumer email, consumer product or service ratings websites and forums, Internet discussion boards and forums, and social networking websites" [55]; p. 358). SM are web-based services (also known as "Social Networking Sites") which refer to "network of relationships and interactions among different users (groups or individuals)" [128]. Travelers search for a variety of information using social media such as sightseeing, weather conditions, hotel reviews, tourist guides, car rental, transportation booking, and restaurants/bars or prices [56,57]. Consequently, social media is emerging as one of the most trustworthy informative sources in the tour and travel industry. Since tour and travel associated products and services are highly-priced, and since the Covid-19 pandemic has provided additional constraints for tourists in some destinations (e.g., quarantine, social distance, facial mask, closed borders), the opinions of different people on social media facilitate travel consumers to make comparisons which minimize the risk of wrong decisions [16,58,59]. Researchers have strongly advocated that

the user-generated content about travel available on social media have changed the way potential tourists plan and decide their tours [18,19]. Many social media platforms facilitate tourism-consumers in writing and sharing their travel-associated queries, viewpoints, feelings and personal experience in more innovative manners [16,60]. Hence, tourism authorities are paying significant attention to effectively manage their social media presence to better equip tourists with useful and appealing information [61,62]. From the preceding discussion, it is amply clear that the influence of social media, tourists' engagement in online travel communities, and the availability of user-generated content are vital aspects to impact the travel destination choices of potential tourists [62]. Hence, this study aligns well with the need to promote tourism destinations using social media as a success tool.

Findings from these studies reveal that PU and PEOU are important determinants of user acceptance of technology-related applications. Further, Agag and El-Masry [1] reported PU, PEOU along with trust and capability are important determinants of consumers' intention to engage in the virtual travel community. Hua et al. [7] examined the role of SM while choosing the tourism destinations and inferred that PEOU and PU along with risk have a direct influence on the attitude towards considering SM for selecting tourism destinations. Correspondingly, Singh and Srivastava [63] also supported TAM's validity and confirmed PU and PEOU as predictors of usage of SM for travel purposes. However, Mariani et al. [17] explored the role of Facebook in the travel decision making and claimed that PEOU is irrelevant in context to the use of SM for travel decision-making before the trip.

There are limited studies that have evaluated TAM for SM usage, especially for travel planning. Additionally, there is no uniformity in the findings of the studies related to the usage of SM in travel planning. Therefore, this study aims at validating the extended version of the TAM model in the travel planning context. Accordingly, apart from the two main factors of the TAM model, this research also considers perceived enjoyment, perceived risk, media richness and trust as extension factors expected to influence tourist behavior in the context of SM technology usage.

2.1. Technology convenience and PEOU

Convenience is defined as something that adds to individuals' comfort by being easy to operate or proceed without any hurdles [64]. The greater the technology usage complexity, the lower the perceived convenience [65]. Lee et al. [66] advocated that as technology convenience increases, more users perceive ease of use to adopt a particular technology. However, the users' perception of convenience is adversely affected by users' cognitive, physical, and emotional situations [67]. Likewise, researchers addressed convenience as a predictor of technological PEOU and satisfaction [68]. Thus, a convenient technology can offer more process flexibility as well as a reduction in the total time required to perform that task [69]. The convenience of using digital platforms by tourists to browse, plan and pick activities fosters the frequent use of technology throughout the different stages of travel planning [29]. For instance, the convenience of using SM to share personal experiences enhances SM usage for travel. Further, Lee et al. (2018) found a positive link between technology convenience and PEOU. Therefore, the research posits the following hypothesis:

H1. Technology convenience positively influences PEOU

2.2. Perceived enjoyment and PEOU

Perceived enjoyment is an important construct which considerably affects technology acceptance [43]. In the literature, it is defined as an "extent to which activity of using the computer is perceived to be enjoyable in its own right" (Davis et al., 1992). In the SM context, Rauniar et al. [27], defined it as the extent to which the SM-related activities are supposed to be fun and enjoyable apart from any

performance consequences that may be anticipated. Hence, perceived enjoyment is a motivating force that increases the travelers' engagement on SM [28]. Notably, intrinsic motivations enhance SM usage among travellers as it offers enjoyment [27]. According to Castañeda et al., [70]; for travel-related information search, potential travellers may be more engaged when browsing user-generated content on SM such as reviews, photographs, and videos. Besides, SM promotes social interaction among the users which adds fun and joy. Accordingly, researchers found a positive link between perceived enjoyment and PEOU [20,48] which improves travel-decisions. In addition, Yoo et al. [71] found a positive relationship between the enjoyment of using smart tourism applications and the intention to use such applications. Based on the aforementioned arguments, we propose the following:

H2. Perceived enjoyment positively influences PEOU

2.3. Media richness and PU

Media richness theory is amongst one of the most prominent theories to demonstrate the effect of media types on PU. Papathanassis and Knolle [72] defined media richness as the variety and quantity of information required to fulfill an individual's requirement of being informed. Ayeh [73] reported the perceived media richness as the perception about the capability of information sources to provide rich information. Notably, the information media source significantly varies in terms of their capability [74]. In the literature, four dimensions namely feedback competence, cues, personalization, and variety in language are considered to measure the richness of the media. Thus, the medium is regarded as rich, if it provides on-time feedback [73]. For travel planning, the information search can be regarded as uncertainty and equivocality. Hence, to lessen the uncertainty, the medium should bridge the void between the supplied information quantity and quality and the actual required information for the travel planning. Travel-related users' generated content on SM, facilitates prospective travellers to read and evaluate the different experiences and viewpoints [73]. [75] found that approximately 80% of online travel-related information readers assume that user-generated content helps them in minimizing uncertainty and makes it easier to visualize what the destination would be like. Hence, the study posits:

H3. Media richness positively influences PU

2.4. PEOU, PU, and behavioural intention

According to Singh and Srivastava [63]; the sites with complicated features and that are difficult to use are ignored by users. Researchers advocate that people prefer to use those SM sites which are perceived user-friendly and require minimal effort to perform a task [1]. In this study, PEOU is referred to as the extent to which a tourist believes that SM sites would be easy to operate. For instance: for obtaining information to choose a travel destination, the individual will be more likely to use the SM site which would be easier to use [20]. Lim et al. [51] claimed that the greater extent of PEOU of SM could assist travellers to achieve their travel-related goals easily. Other researchers supported this viewpoint [19,76]. Nevertheless, few studies reported the direct impact of PEOU on behavioural intention to use consumer-generated content [20,49], while others reported an indirect impact [1]. Although previous researches are not conclusive about the link between the PEOU and behavioural intention, recently, Hau et al. (2017) and Mendes-Filho et al. [19], claimed a significant positive impact of PEOU on behavioural intention to use SM. Accordingly, the research proposes that:

H4. PEOU is positively related to PU

H5. PEOU positively impacts behavioural intention

2.5. Trust, perceived risk, PEOU, PU, and behavioural intention

The travelers' search for a variety of information using SM related to sightseeing, weather conditions, hotel reviews, tourist guides, car rental, transportation, and restaurants/bars or prices. It is a well-known fact that consumers trust online consumer-generated content on SM platforms more than information provided by travel service providers [77]. In this line, trust is defined as an individual's willingness to accept vulnerability on the grounds of positive expectations about the intentions or behavior of another in a situation characterized by interdependence and risk [78]. Trust enhances the tendency to frequently use SM for information search (Hau et al., 2017), and a key factor which can also positively influence PEOU, PU, and behavioural intention [79], and negatively influence the perceived risk [58]. As tour and travel associated products and services are high-priced, the opinion of different people on SM facilitate travel consumers to make comparisons which minimize the risk of wrong decisions [16,58,80,81]. Gefen et al. [82], advocated the positive relationship between the trust and PU and claimed that trust enhances the certain characteristic of PU. Öz [83] argued that when travellers trust SM for information search, they believe that products and services will be as shown, which enhances PU. Similarly, Gretzel et al. [84] highlighted that the higher the trust perceived in the SM's reviews and blogs, the higher would be the PU and intention to use SM. Fotis et al. [85], advocated that trust in SM sites is an important determinant of PEOU, risk, PU, and behavioural intentions for SM usage. Based on the above discussion, the following hypotheses are posited:

H6. Trust negatively influences perceived risk

H7. Trust positively influences the PEOU

H8. Trust positively influences PU

H9. Trust positively influences behavioural intention

2.6. Perceived risk, and behavioural intentions

Bauer and Cox [123] defined perceived risk as "a combination of the uncertainty of the outcome involved". Also, Bauer and Cox [123] reported it as uncertainty rooted due to unfavorable outcomes against buyers' expectations. In literature, perceived risk is classified into six categories: safety/privacy, performance, social, time, financial, and psychological loss [86]. According to Hua et al., [7]; the perceived risk associated with SM for obtaining travel-related information indicates the inaccuracy of generated content and the vulnerability which information seeker may face about their data. Researchers stressed that, the lower the perceived risk; the higher would be the PU and behavioural intention to SM usage [84]. Meanwhile, information from reliable review sites is perceived as more credible as it reduces perceived risk, and enhances the PU and use intention [87]. For instance: travellers' participation in online discussion and willingness to purchase products/services increases, if they perceive lower risk associated with SM [87]. Likewise, Gretzel et al. [75] demonstrated that positive online reviews and the online rating systems lessen the risk, facilitating travelers' task of choosing their destinations and accommodations, and thus fostering travel decision making. Researchers also argued that internet users' privacy issues significantly affect risk beliefs which in turn affect behavioural intentions [88,89]. Few previous contributions found that risk negatively impacts intentions to use SM platforms [90]. Others found a negative relationship between perceived risk and PU of SM for travel-related information search [91,92]. Based on the above discussion, we posit the following:

H10. Perceived risk negatively influences PU

H11. Perceived risk is negatively related to behavioural intentions

2.7. PU and behavioural intention

According to Singh and Srivastava [63]; PU reveals the extent to which travelers’ believe that SM usage will facilitate them in taking their travel decisions. Mariani et al. [17], defined it as travelers’ expectations that using SM will improve their travel decision-making and recognize it as a fundamental force of technology deployment. To confine the risk of trip failure, travelers’ consult as many resources as possible. Hence, they will use SM if they perceive it more beneficial than traditional information sources [63]. Several researchers reported that easy availability of information on SM saves time, efforts, and money and thus strengthens positive behavioural intentions [13,85]. The direct association between PU and intentions has also been justified by prior investigations on SM (e.g., Ref. [1,17,20,27]. Empirical evidence suggested an indirect impact of usefulness on intentions, a direct impact of use on intentions to contribute to virtual travel communities [93]. Focusing on travelers, a few studies also measured a direct association between the aforementioned constructs [19,94,95]. Rauniar et al. [27] recommended that travelers who find user-generated content of use, are likely to have positive intentions to use it for travel purposes. Based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis has been proposed:

H12. PU positively influences behavioural intentions

2.8. Behavioural intention and actual use of SM

Ajzen [96] reported behavioural intentions of individuals’ readiness to engage in a given behavior are an immediate antecedent of actual behavior. According to Davis [43], intentions signal a choice that an individual has made on whether to perform a particular action or not. Besides, intentions are the outcome of a mental deliberation procedure and commitment that possibly requires a significant amount of time. Besides, Rauniar et al. [27], defined the actual SM usage as a frequency

of using SM sites for information search and decision-making. Prior studies argued that the actual behavior of SM users is determined by their intentions to perform the behavior [97,98]. Further, Rauniar et al. [27], also confirmed a positive relationship between intentions and actual use. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H13. Behavioural intention positively influences the actual use of SM.

Based upon the discussion above, a theoretical model has been proposed. Fig. 1 summarizes the conceptual model under study.

3. Measurement development and data collection

After a thorough literature revision, a survey instrument was elaborated based on established measurement scales. Measures related to the TAM model such as PEOU and PU were adopted from Davis [43] as well as from Ayeh et al. [20]. Technical convenience was measured with items adapted from Lee et al., [66]. A variety of studies conducted by Ayeh [73]; Chung and Koo [99]; and Chang et al. [100] were used to develop a scale for measuring perceived enjoyment. Measurement items suggested by Bauer et al. [101]; Nusair et al., [102]; Fuchs and Reichel (2006), and Tseng and Wang (2016) were used to measure perceived risk. Likewise, the media richness scale suggested by Ayeh [73] was taken into consideration, and perceived trust was measured using the scale of Chang et al. [100]. To measure the behavioural intentions to use SM, a series of items were adapted from studies conducted by Ayeh et al. [20] and Chang et al. [100]. Lastly, actual use of SM for travel planning was measured with items taken from Chung and Koo [99]. The items of all the constructs were measured with five-point Likert-type scales (1 = “strongly disagree” to 5 = “strongly agree”).

An item screening test was conducted with an expert panel of twelve industry experts, researchers, and scholars to confirm the face validity of the scale items. This panel suggested minor amendments in language

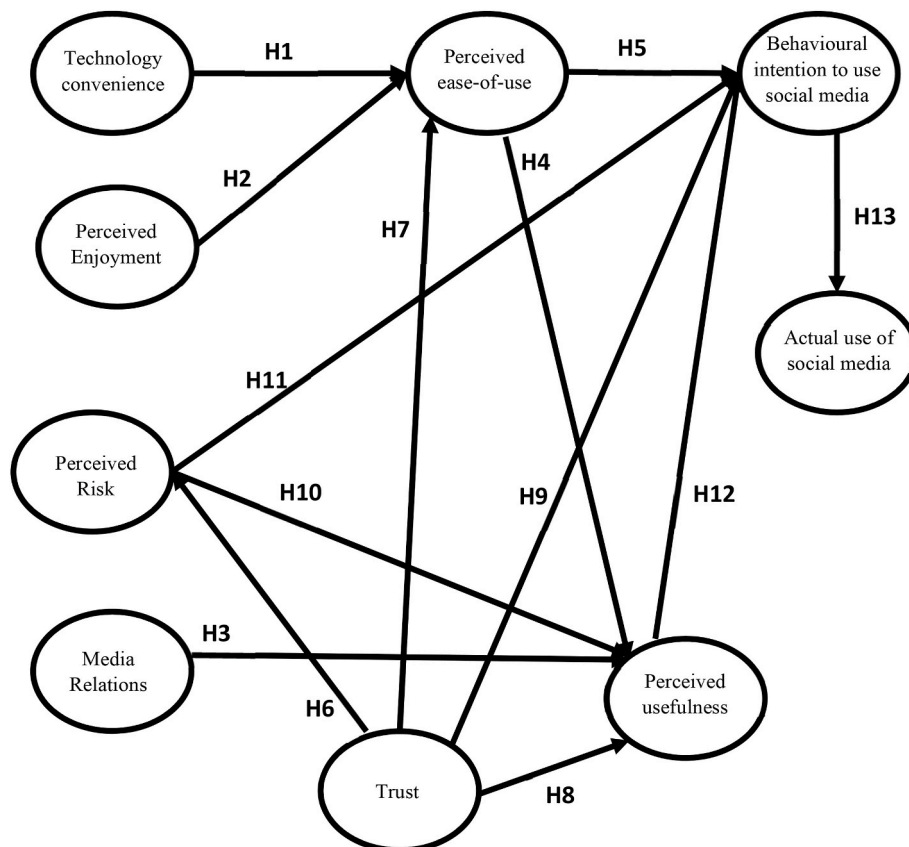


Fig. 1. Conceptual framework.

and applicability as well as alternatives, where applicable, and the scales were modified accordingly. Since, the population of North Indian tourists is unknown and hidden, therefore, mixed method sampling technique was employed. According to Onwuegbuzie and Collins [103]; mixed method sampling is highly imperative where the respondents are unknown and difficult to reach. Therefore, non-probability sampling techniques such as convenience, purposive (also known as judgemental), and snowball sampling methods, have been used to contact respondents. Further, considering the mixed methodology approach (both field and online survey), a survey was carried out in Northern Indian States. Notably, only tourists who belonged to Northern Indian states and have used social media in the last twelve months for travel planning were considered. In the field study, different tourism sites located in India were visited. Based on convenience sampling, tourists were approached to take part in the survey. Subsequently, using purposive sampling method, respondents were recruited from Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube for the online survey. In doing so, authors visited online pages of tourist sites available on Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube, and those individuals who had recommended, liked, disliked, and commented on these pages as well as shared their tours' photographs were considered as potential respondents for this study. Authors sent detailed messages on their related social media accounts to know their willingness for inclusion in the survey. Next, the researchers sent the questionnaire to those individuals who were willing to take part in the survey. Lastly, the researcher recruited respondents using snowball sampling methods from social groups/networks, and questionnaires were distributed using both online and offline modes as per convenience. According to De Leeuw et al., [104]; the use of mixed methods reduces the bias caused by the single method, saves time and improves the survey response rate.

To control for the social desirability bias, respondents were assured about their response anonymity and motivated to respond as accurately as possible [104,105]. Using the aforementioned methodology, a total of 561 filled up responses were received in return. However, 22 were found incomplete or unengaged responses and therefore only 539 valid responses were analyzed. Kline [106] suggested that a sample of 200 responses or larger is suitable for a complicated path model.

In the sample, there is a fair inclusion of respondents across gender -

Table 1
Respondents' characteristics.

Category N = 539	N	%
Male	309	57.32
Female	230	42.68
Age	N	%
18–19	11	2.04
20–29	137	25.41
30–39	182	33.77
40–49	104	19.30
50–59	73	13.54
60 or older	32	5.94
Education	N	%
High school	37	6.87
Diploma	64	11.88
Graduate	214	39.70
Postgraduate	179	33.20
MPhil	16	2.97
Doctorate	29	5.38
Employment status	N	%
Government job	68	12.61
Private job	154	28.57
Self-employed	93	17.25
Student	89	16.51
Looking after home/family full-time	32	5.93
Retired	46	8.53
Unemployed and looking for work	57	10.57

57.32% males and 42.67% females, and a good representation of each age group, education level, employment status, and income range. Table 1 reports the characteristics of respondents in more details.

Table 2 reports SM usage by respondents. It can be seen that YouTube and Facebook are the most popular SM used for travel planning. Further, 40.63% of respondents have considered SM 1 time, 31.91% considered SM twice, 18% considered SM thrice, and 9.46% considered more than 3 times for their travel planning in the last 12 months.

4. Data analysis and findings

The data analysis process was conducted by means of a two-step analytical approach. In the first phase, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) assessed the measurement model including reliability, validity and fit. Secondly, a structural equation model (SEM) estimated the structural model to test the hypotheses.

4.1. Validating the measurement model

A CFA (Amos) was conducted on all the measurement constructs. The results showed that model fit was satisfactory ($\chi^2/df = 1.566$, GFI = 0.911, CFI = 0.962, TLI = 0.959, IFI = 0.962, RMSEA = 0.032) as per Byrne [107] and Cerchione et al.'s (2018) recommendations. Further, factor loadings were used to assess the indicators' reliability and 0.50 was taken as a minimum threshold for the retention of measurement items [108]. As shown in Table 3, all standardized factor loadings were above 0.50 confirming item reliability and factor unidimensionality (Table 3). Further, convergent validity was assessed through item loadings, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE) of each construct. Table 3 shows that AVE and CR for each construct is above the minimum suggested cut-off level i.e., AVE > 0.50 and CR > 0.70, thereby confirming convergent validity [122]. Further, as can be seen in Table 4, the results also indicated satisfactory discriminant validity since all constructs are more strongly correlated with their own items compared to the other constructs' items [108,109].

4.2. Structural model and hypotheses testing

The section examines the structural model. Table 5 also indicates the structural model reporting the theoretical associations between constructs. The results strongly support H1-6, H8-9 and H11-13, but fail to lend support to H7 predicting a positive relationship between trust and PEOU; as well as to H10 which predicted that perceived risk negatively influences PU.

The model fit indices reflect a good fit to the data ($\chi^2/df = 0.804$, GFI

Table 2
Social media usage.

Length of using SM within a day	N	%
Less than 1 h/day	144	26.71
1–2 h/day	176	32.66
3–4 h/day	131	24.30
More than 4 h/day	88	16.33
Use of SM type for travel planning	N	%
YouTube	168	31.16
Facebook	116	21.52
Review sites	103	19.11
Instagram	94	17.43
Twitter	35	6.49
Others	23	4.27
Frequency of SM consideration for travel planning (over the last 12 months)	N	%
1 time	219	40.63
2 times	172	31.91
3 times	97	18.00
More than 3 times	51	9.46

Table 3
Measurement model.

Latent variable	Indicators	Standardized factor loadings	AVE	CR	α	CITC
Technology Convenience Mean: 4.15 Std. Dev = 1.16	TC1	0.70	0.500	0.800	0.800	0.599–0.643
	TC2	0.76				
	TC3	0.71				
	TC4	0.67				
Perceived Enjoyment Mean: 4.33 Std. Dev = 1.22	PE1	0.71	0.534	0.851	0.850	0.626–0.721
	PE2	0.68				
	PE3	0.79				
	PE4	0.76				
	PE5	0.70				
Media richness Mean: 3.95 Std. Dev = 1.08	M1	0.73	0.504	0.834	0.827	0.536–0.732
	M2	0.61				
	M3	0.68				
	M4	0.83				
	M5	0.69				
Trust Mean: 3.90 Std. Dev = 1.22	TR1	0.85	0.683	0.896	0.896	0.749–0.782
	TR2	0.80				
	TR3	0.84				
	TR4	0.81				
Perceived Ease-of-Use Mean: 3.99 Std. Dev = 1.2	PEU1	0.85	0.621	0.891	0.889	0.649–0.785
	PEU2	0.69				
	PEU3	0.76				
	PEU4	0.77				
	PEU5	0.86				
Perceived Risk Mean: 3.93 Std. Dev = 1.22	PR1	0.70	0.647	0.916	0.915	0.668–0.831
	PR2	0.85				
	PR3	0.83				
	PR4	0.78				
	PR5	0.88				
	PR6	0.77				
Perceived Usefulness Mean: 4.40 Std. Dev = 1.40	PU1	0.60	0.538	0.850	0.844	0.552–0.728
	PU2	0.76				
	PU3	0.83				
	PU4	0.58				
	PU5	0.85				
Behavioural Intention Mean: 4.26 Std. Dev = 1.33	BI1	0.85	0.642	0.915	0.892	0.669–0.839
	BI2	0.89				
	BI3	0.77				
	BI4	0.82				
	BI5	0.71				
	BI6	0.76				
Actual use Mean: 4.38 Std. Dev = 1.26	AC1	0.84	0.633	0.912	0.911	0.693–0.808
	AC2	0.85				
	AC3	0.77				
	AC4	0.80				
	AC5	0.73				
	AC6	0.76				

$\chi^2/df = 1.566$, GFI = 0.911, CFI = 0.962, TLI = 0.959, IFI = 0.962, RMSEA = 0.032.

CITC= Corrected Item-total correlation, AVE: Average variance extracted, CR: Composite reliability.

Table 4
Correlation Matrix.

No.	MSV	TR	TC	PE	PU	PEOU	BI	M	AU	PR
TR	0.129	0.827								
TC	0.452	−0.005	0.708							
PE	0.156	0.049	0.386	0.731						
PU	0.175	0.179	0.337	0.309	0.788					
PEOU	0.452	0.036	0.672	0.395	0.376	0.788				
BI	0.536	0.351	0.138	0.066	0.418	0.250	0.801			
M	0.214	0.070	0.366	0.369	0.309	0.463	0.070	0.710		
AU	0.536	0.275	0.066	0.026	0.174	0.121	0.732	−0.016	0.795	
PR	0.333	−0.359	−0.020	−0.026	−0.131	−0.039	−0.497	0.030	−0.577	0.804

Note: Diagonal values in bold represent the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) while off-diagonal values represent the raw inter-construct correlations. TR = trust; TC = technology convenience; PE = perceived enjoyment; PU = Perceived usefulness; PEOU: perceived ease of use; BI: behavioural intention; AU = actual use of SM; M = media richness; PR = perceived Risk; CR: composite reliability, AVE: average variance extracted, MSV: maximum shared variance.

= 0.902, CFI = 0.945, TLI = 0.941, IFI = 0.945, RMSEA = 0.039) as per the recommended thresholds of Byrne [107]. Thus, it can be concluded that the model fit summary indicates that the hypothesized structural model achieved an acceptable model fit. Thereafter, the potency of direct, indirect and total effect for each path was assessed considering

standardized path coefficients (β). Fig. 2 shows the structural model and direct β values, and Table 5 concludes the structural model's results by reporting direct β , indirect β , total β , C.R., and significance level for the thirteen proposed claims. Overall, the analysis has provided support for the acceptance of eleven proposed claims, and unsupported two other

Table 5
Hypotheses testing results.

No.	Hypothesis	Direct (β)	Indirect (β)	Total (β)	C.R.	p-value	Result
H1	Technology convenience → PEOU	0.63	0.00	0.63	11.61	***	Supported
H2	Perceived enjoyment → PEOU	0.22	0.00	0.22	5.15	***	Supported
H3	Media richness → PU	0.17	0.00	0.17	3.48	***	Supported
H4	PEOU → PU	0.31	0.00	0.31	6.20	***	Supported
H5	PEOU → behavioural intention	0.11	0.08	0.19	2.69	0.006	Supported
H6	Trust → perceived risk (-)	-0.36	0.00	-0.36	-7.41	***	Supported
H7	Trust → PEOU	0.03	0.00	0.03	0.79	0.426	Unsupported
H8	Trust → PU	0.13	0.04	0.17	2.71	0.007	Supported
H9	Trust → behavioural intention	0.15	0.20	0.35	3.35	***	Supported
H10	Perceived risk → PU (-)	-0.08	0.00	-0.08	-1.59	0.111	Unsupported
H11	Perceived risk → behavioural intention (-)	-0.43	-0.02	-0.45	-9.22	***	Supported
H12	PU → behavioural intention	0.27	0.00	0.27	5.93	***	Supported
H13	Behavioural intention → actual use of social media	0.74	0.00	0.74	16.76	***	Supported

Note: *** Significant at $p < 0.001$

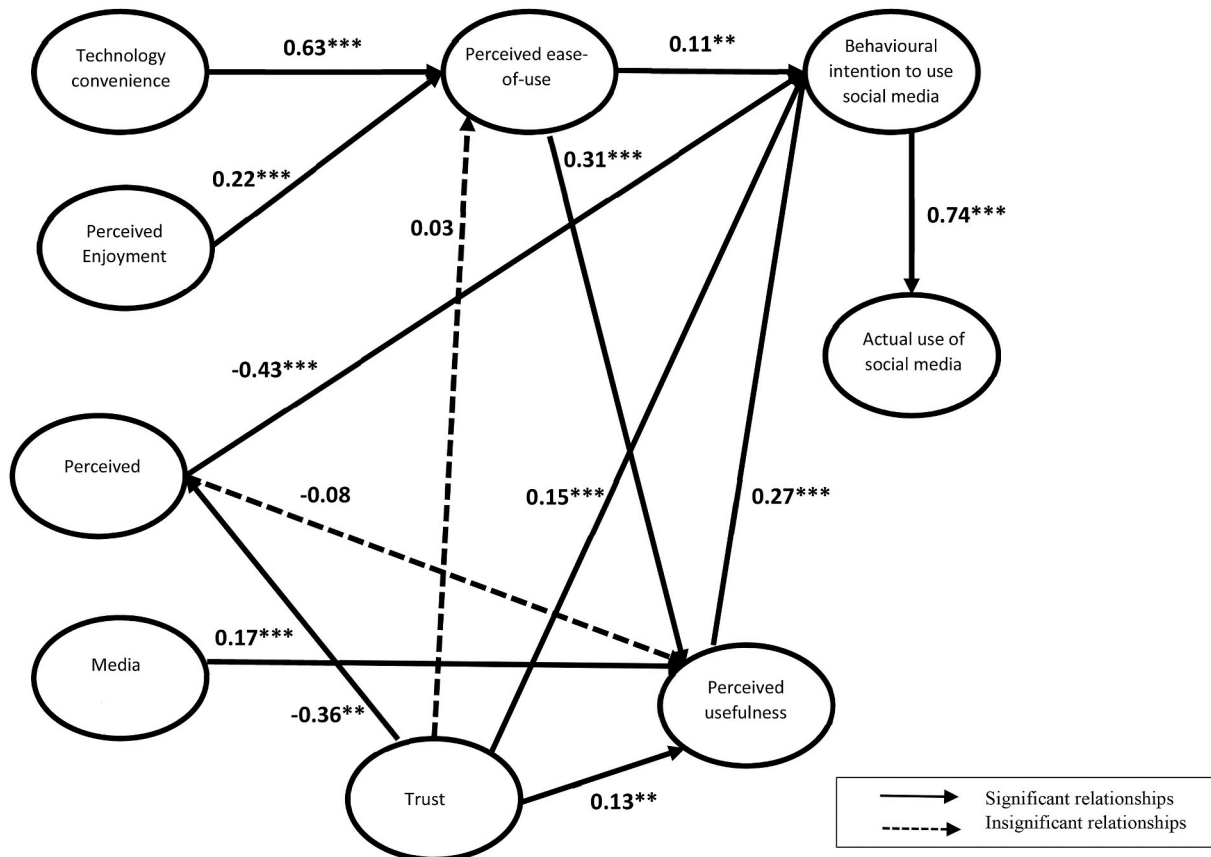


Fig. 2. SEM Model showing path relationships.

claims.

4.3. Path analysis showing direct and indirect effects

The results claimed the following significant positive and negative direct effects; i) from technology convenience to PEOU (0.63); ii) from perceived enjoyment to PEOU (0.22); iii) from media richness to PU (0.17); iv) from trust to perceived risk (-0.35), behavioural intention (0.14), and trust to behavioural intention (0.15); v) PEOU to PU (0.31) and behavioural intention (0.11); vi) perceived risk to behavioural intention (-0.43); vii) PU to behavioural intention (0.27); and viii) behavioural intention to actual use of SM (0.74) (Table 5). As indirect effects are concerned (Table 5), the indirect effect of trust on PU was 0.02. The indirect effect of trust on behavioural intention was 0.20, which is highest among all indirect effects. The indirect effect of PEOU

on the behavioural intention was 0.08. The indirect effect of the perceived risk on the behavioural intention was -0.02. Finally, the indirect effect of PU on behavioural intention was 0.05. The study findings build an understanding about the complex relationships among technology convenience, perceived enjoyment, media richness, trust, PEOU, perceived risk, PU, behavioural intention, and the actual use of SM for travel planning.

5. Discussion, implications, and limitations of the study

5.1. Discussion of the results

The study findings confirmed the positive influence of technology convenience on PEOU [29,66,69]. Perceived enjoyment also showed a significant positive influence on PEOU [27,28,71]. Besides, technology

convenience seems to have a much stronger influence on PEOU than perceived enjoyment. This confirms the vital role of technology convenience in PEOU of SM. Media richness also emerged as a significant factor influencing PU. The study findings also supported the negative influence of trust on perceived risk which is in line with Leung et al. [58]. Further, the positive influence of trust and PEOU on PU and behavioural intention were also found, while perceived risk exerts a negative influence on behavioural intentions. Further, the findings of the study also confirmed the positive influence of PU on behavioural intention and accordingly supported the results of Ayeh [49]. Lastly, the findings affirmed that behavioural intention positively influences the actual use of SM for travel planning. This indicates that SM sites are an important source of information sharing. The tourists consider statements, reviews and recommendations written by friends, neighbours and peers from SM sites as more reliable compared to advertisement.

Technology convenience was found to have the highest loadings among all other constructs. These findings lead us to presume that Indians' need to know more about the tourist places before finalizing their trip will be most adequately addressed if the underlying technology for information search on social media is convenient. Hence, an updated and widespread information that is easy to access and follow on social media will facilitate travellers [89,110–113]. On finding the useful information easily, tourists may discuss their positive experiences with their friends, peers and other social groups leading to an additional increase in traffic for information search.

As the influences on behavioural intention to use SM for travel planning are concerned, perceived risk and PU have stronger influences than the influence of trust or PEOU. Within the model, as individual influences are concerned, the positive influence of behavioural intention on actual use of SM was found strongest followed by the influence of technology convenience on PEOU and the negative influence of perceived risk on behavioural intention. This is further followed by the negative influence of trust on perceived risk, the positive influence of PEOU on PU, and the positive influence of PU on behavioural intention. These influences are further followed by the positive influence of perceived enjoyment on PEOU, the positive influence of media richness on PU, the positive influence of trust on PU, and the positive influence of PEOU.

5.2. Theoretical implications

The study aimed at addressing a gap in past literature with regards to the use of SM in general for travel planning. The study analyzed the impact of a wide array of cognitive constructs for which extant literature has found mixed results with regards to their propensity to predict SM usage, in general, and SM usage for travel planning in particular (e.g., Ref. [17]. Besides, in contrast to past research and in order to avoid the intention-action gap, the study assesses actual behavior in addition to behavioural intentions to use SM for travel planning. The study proposed a comprehensive model combining different theoretical frameworks and thus different constructs to predict the behavioural intention and actual usage of SM for travel planning. This study is the first attempt to simultaneously consider nine diverse constructs and assess the related associations among them. The study results provided a deep understanding of the major theories about the role of different constructs in predicting actual SM usage for travel planning.

Overall, in line with past research which showed that SM are primarily used to satisfy functional motives (e.g. Ref. [20,114]), the results confirm the prevalence of extrinsic motivational factors such as perceived usefulness over more intrinsic ones such as perceived ease of use. While past research stressed that this is primarily the case for non-travel-specific SM such as Facebook and less so in travel-specific SM such as TripAdvisor [20] we find that when taking different types of SM altogether the prevalence of functional motives exceeds that of more hedonically-related ones. This is not so surprising since the results showed that non-travel-related SM such as Facebook and YouTube have

a much higher usage share compared to others.

We complement these past results by showing the pivotal role of trust in those effects. In fact, while trust strengthens PU it does not affect PEOU. The increased effect of functional motives such as PU is therefore the result of higher levels of trust in SM while this is not the case for intrinsic factors such as PEOU. Besides, the combined effect of TAM constructs (i.e., PEOU and PU) do not compensate for the negative impact of perceived risk on intentions. Rather, the additional impact of trust is needed to trigger intentions. More generally, we precise past results emphasizing the key role of trust in information search using SM, by showing that this results from enhancing PU [79] while mitigating perceived risk [58]. Yet, in contrast to past research (e.g. Ref. [79]), we show that in a SM usage context for travel planning, trust is not relevant to enhance extrinsic motivational factors such as PEOU. Hedonic factors such as technological convenience and perceived enjoyment are much more relevant to this end.

In addition to the trust concept, the media richness theoretical framework [72] constitutes a useful addendum to understand the prevalence of PU over PEOU in explaining intentions. In fact, the perception of media richness which is much stronger in SM settings due to the large availability of audio, video, pictorial, graphic, or textual UGC [73] fuels PU of SM for information search and travel planning.

The absence of any negative effect of risk on PU – albeit providing lack of support to one of our hypotheses is good news. It shows that the perception of risk does not inhibit the perception of usefulness both appearing to evolve independently. It also illuminates some parts of the “privacy paradox” which stipulates that SM users continue to use SM while claiming to fear for their privacy [115]. Research suggested that it is because users perceive that the practicality inherent to SM outweighs privacy issues [116]. We show more specifically that this is because the perception of risk does not inhibit the perception of usefulness both seeming to operate independently at different cognitive levels.

Finally, the very strong relationship between intentions and actual use suggests that an “intention-behavior gap” is very unlikely in the specific context of SM usage for travel planning. This may be explicable by the fact that, unlike other highly involving behaviors such as sustainable tourism [117]-where the gap is very acute-, the actual behavior under study (i.e., using SM for travel planning) is not so difficult to perform and does not require excessive commitment or motivation. Instead, it fits well in very diverse lifestyles especially since most people use SM now for a variety of purposes.

The study results provide a deep understanding of the major theories about the role of different constructs in predicting the actual use of social media for travel planning. This study is the first attempt that simultaneously considered nine diverse constructs and assessed the association and interactions among them to understand travel planning using social media. In contrast to past related research (e.g. Refs. [12, 17]), the study demonstrates the use of social media at different stages of travel planning and proposes a comprehensive model to predict the impact of different factors to predict online travel content creation on social media. Additionally, Ayeh et al. [73] conducted an impactful research in the domain. The study explored the impact of perceived ease of use, and perceived trustworthiness on perceived usefulness to use social media. Unfortunately, the study did not shed light on the manner in which trust impacts to perceived ease of use and perceived risk, and further to what extent perceived risk impacts to perceived usefulness. In the same vein, Agag and El-Masry [1] did not explore the relationship between perceived trust and perceived usefulness, and further between perceived risk and perceived usefulness in their measurement model. Ponte et al. [21] supported perceived risk as an important construct which predicts the perceived usefulness of using social media. Zeng and Gerritsen [118] also supported that there are various different research gaps that exist in the literature pertaining to the association between the usefulness of social media and tourism industry. This study of extant research confirms the existence of a research void regarding a single model including predictors of trust, perceived risk, perceived ease of

use, perceived usefulness, behavioural intention to use social media, and actual use of social media for travel planning to develop a deeper understanding of complex relationships among the mentioned constructs.

Further, the present study came with a novel conceptualization to understand the factors affecting the use of social media and their related effect on travelers' behavioural intentions and actual use of social media for travel planning. The study provides a theoretical extension to demonstrate the online behavior of travelers in the social media context. The current investigation offers a relevant theoretical model for studying the complex associations related to the use of online travel content for travel decision making and provides deep knowledge to both practitioners involved in the management of tourist destinations and social media marketing strategies in the context of the tourism and travel industry. The model could constitute a base for future research covering the online behavior of consumers in different sectors.

5.3. Managerial implications

The study results provide a deep understanding of the intricate relationships among cognitive factors which determine SM usage for travel decision-making. Therefore, hospitality and tourism managers should consider these factors in actual practice to increase their market share and revenue. The study confirmed that perceived enjoyment contributes to ease of use. Hence, SM managers can make SM even more useful through adding few attributes on their SM sites which can increase the enjoyment of SM usage. Managers should consider these factors as they enhance the behavioural intention that further increases the actual use of SM. The study findings confirmed that offering a well-designed SM interaction that is useful, trustworthy and easy to use would outweigh the perceived risk associated with SM usage, and enhance intentions of SM usage for tourism-related activities. Hence, social media managers may leverage social media more meaningfully by adding few attributes on their social media sites to increase the enjoyment of using social media in relation to their destination or brand.

More specifically, managers should devote attention to promote ease of use, cultivate media richness on SM, and build their credibility on SM to foster usefulness; they should also build their credibility on SM by holding promises made on SM, publishing valid content or using SM that are trusted by users; they should further attempt to improve the technological convenience first and, to a lesser extent, stress the enjoyment that might result from using SM for travel-related purposes to promote ease of use. Further, as evident from the study, tourism service providers should only share realistic information to minimize the risk, which will positively influence tourists' behavioural intention. This can attract more tourists to go through the travel content available on social media sites and consider it for their travel planning. It will further improve goodwill, market share, and the profitability of both travel destinations and social media operators. All these different measures might act to counter the negative impact of perceived risk which remains an important inhibitor to SM usage.

5.4. Limitations of the study and future research directions

The present work provides interesting insights in the factors predicting SM usage for travel planning purposes. Yet, it is not without limitations that offer the opportunities to conduct further research in this area. First, in this study, the survey respondents represent both rural as well as urban areas. Therefore, two separate studies, one for rural and another for urban, could facilitate in getting deeper insights into the SM usage in the travel planning process. This is an important aspect to keep in mind in the specific context of developing countries such as India, where a large proportion of the population still lives in rural areas, despite urbanization trends. Another fact is that the present investigation includes only Indian tourists. To obtain more meaningful results about the differences between respondents from different developing countries or to compare between developing and developed countries,

future research might conduct a comparative study by taking an equal sample size of both foreign and domestic (i.e., Indian) tourists to investigate their difference in SM usage for the travel planning process. This may result in formulating more effective marketing and branding strategies. Additionally, the respondents for the study were also chosen based on their user-generated content on three social media sites: Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube, and excluded other social media sites. Undoubtedly, these three are dominant social media sites; nevertheless, the choice of respondents from other social media sites (e.g. Twitter, Snapchat, and Flickr, etc.) would have increased sample size and reliability of the information. Therefore, future research is possible considering other social media sites, along with Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. Lastly, this study is based on survey data, therefore failing to capture the causality effects between constructs. Future research using experimental or longitudinal research designs might better capture causal relationships and dynamic evolutions over time. Finally, systematic literature reviews, bibliometrics and network analysis could further conclude the developing body of knowledge about SM usage in pre-travel decision-making processes.

6. Conclusions

This research examines the factors influencing the usage of social media (SM) for travel planning. As tourism firms are considering social media as an essential source of marketing due to their strong reach, tourism authorities are paying significant attention to effectively manage the social media pages of their destinations to allure more tourists. This is especially true in developing markets where social media is being used for a variety of purposes including tourism information search. Therefore, this study takes the context of tourism in Northern India to investigate the impact of several constructs, such as perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, trust, perceived risk, technological convenience originating from multiple theoretical frameworks, to test a theoretical framework that predicts social media usage for travel planning. Data ($n = 539$) were collected from North Indian tourists who had used social media in the last twelve months for travel planning. The study findings confirmed the positive influence of technology convenience and perceived enjoyment on perceived ease of use, and the positive influence of media richness on perceived usefulness. Further, trust is negatively related to perceived risk while both trust and perceived ease of use positively influence perceived usefulness and behavioural intentions. Further, study findings confirmed the negative influence of perceived risk and positive influence of perceived usefulness on behavioural intentions. Lastly, the findings affirmed that behavioural intentions positively influence the actual use of social media for travel planning. The study results provided a deep understanding of the role of different constructs in predicting the actual use of social media for travel planning. The study findings demonstrated media richness, trust, perceived ease of use, and reduced perceived risk as important factors predicting perceived usefulness of social media. This indicates that offering a well-designed social media interaction which is entertaining, fun, enjoyable and easy to use would possibly enhance the use of social media for the tour and tourism-related activities. Hence, managers should frequently attempt to improve the richness of their media and ease of use, build trust and reduce the risk, which will improve the perceived usefulness. Further, tourism service providers should only share realistic information to minimize the risk, which will positively influence tourists' behavioural intention.

Author credit page

Following are the contributions of individual authors: Sakshi: Developing the conceptual model and data collection; Urvashi Tandon: Formal analysis, writing; Myriam Ertz: Content development, Writing - review & editing; Harbhajan Bansal: Developing the conceptual model and data collection.

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Appendix A. Scale items and sources

	Technical convenience [66]
TC1	The desired and target information can be located easily on social media platforms for travel decisions
TC2	Surfing on social media platforms is difficult for the travelers
TC3	The users face difficulties while moving to the social media pages and platforms
TC4	In general, technical convenience is required and useful in making travel decisions on social media platforms
	Perceived enjoyment [20]
PE1	Social media is a convenient channel for me to collect information
PE2	Travel information search through social media is a pleasant experience
PE3	I have fun through the information search using social media
PE4	Travel information search through social media is interesting
PE5	Travel information search through social media is worth to enjoyable
	Perceived risk [101,102]
PR1	Using social media violates personal privacy
PR2	Using social media negatively affects the way others think about you
PR3	Using social media wastes my time
PR4	There is a risk of personal data being misused when using social media
PR5	There is a risk of disapproval from friends/family/associates of my travel destination choice
PR6	There is a risk of receiving unwanted messages when using social media
	Media richness [20]
M1	Social media allows exchanging feedback online
M2	Social media allows me and other travelers online to adapt our discussions to our own personal requirements
M3	Social media offers me a great range of travel opinions
M4	The travel content i.e. pictures, videos, comments posted on social media is helpful in framing my opinion and travel decisions
M5	Social media clarifies my doubts by asking other travelers about their opinion about a place, activity, or leisure
	Trust [82].
TR1	I believe promises made on social media are fulfilled
TR2	Social media content is trustworthy
TR3	Social media content generators keep travelers' interest in mind
TR4	I depend on social media for the purpose of acquiring travel advice I need
	Perceived ease of use [20,43]
PEU1	It is easy to learn how to use social media
PEU2	It is easy to use social media to find the information needed for my travel planning
PEU3	It is easy to use the content of social media to plan my trips
PEU4	It is easy for me to become skillful at using social media
PEU5	Overall, I find social media easy to use
	Perceived usefulness of content [20,43]
PU1	Using information on travel websites will make my travel planning faster
PU2	Using information on social media will facilitate in comparing different travel plan
PU3	Using information on travel websites will make my travel planning better
PU4	Using information on social media in travel planning will help me make better decisions
PU5	I find information on social media will be useful in my travel planning
	Behavioural Intentions to use social media [20,100].
BI1	I will not hesitate to visit social media for travel information
BI2	I expect to use the content of social media to plan my future trips
BI3	I plan to seek travel advice on social media
BI4	I will purchase tour and travel products through social media
BI5	I will encourage others to use social media for travel planning
BI6	I will tell others about the benefits of social media when planning and organizing trips
	Actual use of social media [99,119].
AC1	I use social media for searching and purchasing travel products.
AC2	I use social media for searching to devise an actual tourism plan after choosing a destination
AC3	I use social media to reading about other travelers' experiences
AC4	I use social media to search for and obtain extra information while I am travelling
AC5	I use social media to share my review and opinion about destination for others
AC6	I use social media to share travel experiences from your most recent trip

Appendix B. Supplementary data

Supplementary data to this article can be found online at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techsoc.2020.101438>.

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