

Digitally literate, habitually engaged: Unpacking sustainable urge to travel in coffee tourism

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ABSTRACT

Despite the growing relevance of sustainable niche tourism, there is a lack of empirical studies on tourist consumer behavior in the context of coffee tourism—particularly regarding the factors that stimulate the urge to travel. The aim of the present study is to examine how digital literacy, habit, destination trust, and destination preference influence tourists' urge to travel to coffee plantations. A conceptual framework was formulated to determine the ways in which habituated interaction between tourists and AI-based tourism infrastructure shapes tourists' cognitions and affections to trust and preference, and these further drives travel enthusiasm. Data were gathered through an online survey on 225 tourists using convenient sampling. The measurement model was examined using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), and the structural model and hypotheses were evaluated using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) with AMOS version 29. The findings indicated that digital literacy had a significant and positive impact on the construction of habitual use of technology. Habit further emerged as an essential antecedent for destination trust and destination preference. Moreover, trust and preference were significant antecedents of tourists' urge to travel. The model had superb fit indices ($\chi^2/DF = 1.124$, CFI = 0.995, RMSEA = 0.024), validating its theoretical construct and empirics. The findings provide deeper insights into consumer behavior, digital tourism consumption, and destination marketing practices, particularly, in response to the growing sustainability demands within the emerging context of coffee tourism.

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1. Introduction

Coffee tourism is an emerging sub-sector of agritourism that fuses the global popularity of drinking and consuming coffee with in-depth, immersion-based travel to the areas where coffee is produced. It provides tourists the opportunity to tour coffee plantations, experience the art of producing coffee, and engage with local stories about coffee (Candelo et al., 2019; Jolliffe, 2010). It is argued that beyond an experience driven by commodities, coffee tourism has become increasingly an agent of place branding, learning about sustainability, and rural renewal (Anbalagan & Lovelock, 2014; Pan, 2023; Setiyorini et al., 2023; Abd Halim et al., 2024). For example, in West Java, a 2024 study found that coffee tourism increased bean sales, introduced tourists to local brands, and fostered repeat visitors, demonstrating how experiential tourism can shape place identity (Suratman et al., 2024). It is not, however, without its problems. It has been reported to be accompanied by underdeveloped infrastructures, unstable labour, and the potential for cultural commoditization, though its consideration within sustainability discourses continues to be an area of continued scholarly and policy concern (Candelo et al., 2019; Chen

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et al., 2021; Degarege & Lovelock, 2021; Smith, 2019). In Indonesia, one of the world's leading coffee producers, coffee tourism has emerged as a promising tool for economic, cultural, and environmental development. Coffee-producing places like Gayo (Aceh), Cianjur (West Java), and Pasuruan (East Java) are potential tourist places as well as production centres and cultural areas in agriculture. Through empirical studies, it has been observed that Indonesian coffee tourism has increased commodity visibility, improved local earnings, and enhanced community identity, though its full potential is yet to be unleashed (Hidayat et al., 2023; Leewellyn & Palupi, 2020; Suratman et al., 2024; Wolor et al., 2024). Despite the extensive literature on tourism motivation, there is a scarcity of empirical studies that directly measure tourists' urge to travel. This construct—usually conceptualized as an impromptu, emotive drive to travel—has attracted attention in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic (Miao et al., 2022). Associated literature has examined emotional recovery through “revenge travel” (Nisha & Cheung, 2022), reconnection to heritage (Nisha & Cheung, 2022), and the effects of strategic communication and sustainability narrative on spontaneous travel intention (Mairita et al., 2023; Setiyorini et al., 2023). While related constructs such as travel motivation and desire have been widely studied, the specific antecedents of the urge to travel—conceived as a distinct, affectively charged psychological impulse—have received limited systematic attention in the literature.

The present work fills that gap by developing and testing empirically the structural model correlating digital literacy, habit, destination trust, and destination preference to urge to travel in the context of the coffee tourism environment. These predictors are chosen to represent contemporary tourism behavior informed by digital familiarity, habitual technology use, and mental response to destination perception. Digital literacy enables tourist familiarity with and the use of AI-based travel resources (Hu & Meng, 2023), and habit is an action bridge to regular usage (Verplanken & Orbell, 2003). Destination trust is tourists' belief in the site's credibility and safety (Ameen et al., 2024), and destination preference is emotional fit with destination features (Wasaya et al., 2024). They collectively represent an empirically informed and contextually appropriate framework for what determines urge-based tourism behavior within Indonesian coffee tourism locations. Therefore, the objective of the present study is to analyse how digital literacy, habit, destination trust, and destination preference influence tourists' intent to travel to coffee plantations. By bringing together digital conduct and sustainability-focused perception in the context of an under-researched niche tourism segment, the existing body of knowledge in consumer conduct theory, sustainable tourism business, and destination marketing in new economy countries is enriched.

2. Literature review

2.1 Digital Literacy

Digital literacy is now the key skill for navigating the increasingly digitalized global environment. Broadly understood as the capability to access, evaluate, use, create, and transmit using digital technology, digital literacy is key to education, business viability, and tourist service take-up. For example, as Dalgıç et al. (2024) discuss, students who are more digitally literate not only achieve higher online learning success but are also better at using artificial intelligence tools such as ChatGPT to acquire knowledge and reasoning tasks. This resonates with Xiong and Zhang's (2024) tourism findings, which illustrate that digital literacy has an essential impact on tourist interaction, perceived autonomy, and loyalty through interactive digital service.

In the business arena, digital literacy is increasingly acknowledged as an impetus for the sustainability of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). Permana (2024) highlights that higher digital literacy among MSMEs enables them to incorporate digital marketing techniques better, streamline operations, and achieve competitive edges in green markets. The research further shows that low digital competence persists as the largest hindrance for MSMEs in rural tourist areas like Tanjung Lesung, preventing them from engaging in digital economies. Meanwhile, Nikou et al (2022) presents the findings from universal digital adoption contexts to state that not only does digital literacy mediate the effectiveness of e-service delivery but also moderates consumer intention to use mobile payments and virtual platforms.

In addition, Hu and Meng (2023) suggest that digital literacy has to be reconceptualized to include algorithmic reasoning, ethical reasoning, and critical content curation as the digital landscape continues to evolve. The convergence between digital competences and sustainability is corroborated by Permana (2024), who highlights that digital competence in entrepreneurs is instrumental for national resilience and inclusive growth

2.2 Digital Literacy and Habit

Digital literacy is generally acknowledged as one of the essential competences in facilitating effective engagement with AI-driven tourism systems. For AI-facilitated coffee tourism, digital literacy enables tourists to effectively interact with clever applications, voice assistants, and recommendation systems, making them more confident and more capable of decision-making. Alrawadieh et al. (2019) proved that digital literacy influences the level of trust and frequent use of AI interfaces such as ChatGPT, thereby fostering continuity of behavior in planning and consuming travel services. Hu and Meng (2023) broadened the purview of digital literacy to include dimensions such as algorithmic thinking and awareness of ethics—competences that enhance digital engagement and enable embedding of behavior over time. These literacy dimensions enable user autonomy, decrease resistance to new tools, and promote continuity of behavior over different travel circumstances. Furthermore, MacInnes et al. (2022) stressed the fact that enduring behavior in the context of tourism—especially in the cases associated with environmentally conscious or routine technological behaviors—has a critical dependence on the power of habit. Their research validates the fact that established digital habits tend to replicate the actions in subsequent trips. In

agreement with the definition of habit as a learned behavior from repeated enactment in stable situations (involving minimal cognitive effort) as conceptualized by Verplanken and Orbell (2003), there is a greater likelihood for tourism consumers with enhanced digital literacy to form routine interactions with technology platforms in AI-facilitated coffee tourism. In the context of digital literacy and habit, it remains unclear whether the relationship between digital literacy and habit formation was examined using longitudinal methods or if the findings are based on cross-sectional, correlational data. Clarifying this would help readers assess whether causal inferences are appropriate. The aggregated research from these studies offers grounds for the formulation of the following hypothesis:

H₁: *Digital literacy has positive impacts on habit in the context of AI-facilitated coffee tourism.*

2.3 Habit

In recent years, habits have emerged as a central concept in tourist behavior, especially in the context of sustainable tourism. Contrary to more traditional behavioral theories, namely Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) or Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) Theory, which rely on rational choice-making, habits account for automatic, repetitive, and less intentional behaviors. MacInnes et al. (2022) illustrate that habits, which by definition feature automaticity, acquired through repetition, strongly predict pro-environmental behavior in everyday life as well as while on holiday. Their research indicates that tourists tend to retain practices of sustainability while away from home in case such behavior becomes habitual in regular life, in which case up to 72% of sustainability behavior enactment could be accounted for by actualized habits. Additionally, strategies that draw upon cognitive appeals (e.g., tourists reminded to save water) tend to fail in hedonic tourism scenarios, indicating that strategies that appeal to habits, operating via cues to behavior and repetition.

Adding to this framing, more current research also states habit as a central moderating force in extended behavior models. For instance, Gomes and Lopes (2023) and Hu et al. (2024) identify that pro-sustainable habits formed in daily routines strongly reinforce the intention-behavior relationship, particularly in situations such as waste classification. The research indicates that travelers who have strong environmental habits at home are likely to behave sustainably in vacation places, reinforcing the behavioral spillover concept. Likewise, Leal and Pinho (2024) highlight potential behavioral imitation among regions, theorizing that tourists can internalize sustainability behavior by emulating others in sustainability-high vacation places. These findings imply that habit formation and reinforcement—over attitude change—ought to be a central concern of sustainability tourism solutions, especially in developing instrumental interventions that address habitual behavior in both vacation as well as home contexts.

2.4 Habit and Destination Trust

In tourism and online service situations, habit is established as a learned behavioral disposition developed in repeated situations with stable context outcomes, resulting in automatic behavior with reduced cognitive effort (Verplanken & Orbell, 2003). When people interact with a destination or a platform repeatedly and consistently receive the same positive outcome, their dependence on cognitive evaluations declines and automatic behavior develops in a pattern. Habitual use often transcends the level of behavioral intention to impact evaluative aspects such as trust. In digital tourism, Werthner and Ricci (2004) conceptualize habit as repeated automatic interactions with online travel platforms shaping travel behavior. Together, these perspectives illustrate the multifaceted nature of habit, particularly relevant to understanding habitual travel behavior in an increasingly digitalized environment.

In tourism contexts, trust refers to the perceived reliability, honesty, and competence of a service provider or a destination. There is empirical support for the idea that habits reinforce trust. For example, Agag and El-Masry (2016) found that repeated online hotel bookings not only strengthen behavioral intention but also increase trust in digital systems, encouraging users to avoid critical judgments. Similarly, Artigas et al. (2017) reported that regular, stable interactions with destination-related factors increase perceived trust and believability. Williams and Baláz (2021) argued that tourism trust develops through stabilized behavioral expectations, where uncertainty decreases with frequent contact. Wang et al. (2024) further revealed that familiarity—a frequent outcome of habit—is a predictor of trust in green hotels.

Extending these findings to AI-enabled travel planning, repeated interactions with AI systems not only build trust in the system itself but also foster trust in the physical destination by reducing uncertainty and increasing familiarity with the destination's attributes and offerings. Through habitual AI use, travelers develop stable expectations about the destination, shaped by consistent and reliable information delivered by the AI. This repeated exposure to destination-related content helps transfer trust from the AI interface to the destination, reinforcing positive perceptions and reducing perceived risks associated with the physical location. In other words, the AI serves as a trusted intermediary, enabling travelers to form affective and cognitive trust towards the destination itself.

These findings collectively indicate that habits serve as the underlying mechanism enabling trust, especially as users consistently interact with a destination's systems, storytelling, or digital representations in a predictable manner.

H₂: *Positive habits affect trust.*

The relationship between habit and destination trust provides a foundation for understanding how repeated exposure influences tourists' perceptions. This trust, built over time, not only affects their confidence in the destination's ability to

deliver positive experiences but also shapes their long-term preferences for revisiting a destination. Therefore, the next section explores how habitual behaviors and established trust contribute to the development of stronger destination preferences.

2.5 Habit and Destination Preference

In tourism behavior research, habit is understood as an automatic behavioral propensity established through repeated behavior in stable situations (Verplanken & Orbell, 2003). Habit is usually regarded as a predictor of sustained behavior, yet recent research indicates that it is also formative in creating affective and cognitive perceptions of destinations among tourists. Habitual behaviors established through frequent behavior of using travel-related technology or repeated exposure in destinations can deeply affect how the latter perceive, judge, and thereby prefer one destination over the other. Xu et al. (2024) explained how repeated interactions with AI-enabled travel services reinforce emotional affinity and attitudinal alignment with destination attributes, thus consolidating destination preference. In destination planning, Azmadi et al. (2023) established that tourists' habitual behavior has a significant impact on satisfaction and preference toward tourism-smart environments, indicating that repetition strengthens perceptual salience and familiarity. Boto-García (2022) verified how past experience in travel has a robust habit-forming influence, with the destination more likely to be re-selected due to familiarity, comfort, and affective association, as well as lower cognitive effort. Consistent with this, MacInnes et al. (MacInnes et al., 2022) revealed that pro-environmental habits not only forecast sustainable behaviors but also drive preferential destination selection based on personal values. Thus, habit stands out as a key psychological mechanism linking repetition of behavior to affect-driven preference. Based on the discussion above, the following hypothesis is put forward:

H₃: *Destination preference is influenced in a positive and significant way by habit.*

2.6 Destination Trust

Destination trust describes the perceived reliability, honesty, and competence of a destination in providing a secure, ethical, and satisfactory travel experience. In tourism research, trust is increasingly emerging as a central antecedent to behavior intention, bridging the gap between cognitive image, service quality, and revisit intention. Su et al. (2022) theorize that online review valence and emotional intensity in particular affect the trust of tourists in a destination, which in turn informs their decision. Similarly, Jebbouri et al. (2022) emphasize the fact that trust is strongly increased when the authenticity of local experiences is perceived by the tourists, thereby establishing its mediating function as a variable linking destination image to tourist satisfaction. In the context of online influence, information believability and story coherence presented by the influencer are also known to function as central indicators of trust in the destination (Jalilvand, 2025), particularly mediated by emotional resonance as well as visual storytelling. The formation of destination trust is not only reliant on perception or information but is also inextricably linked with post-pandemic risk reduction. Yang (2022) ensures that in the post-COVID-19 tourism era, tourists are more likely to travel if they believe in the safety, health standards, and integrity of the destination. This is supported by Wei et al. (2024), who established that trust in tourism official websites is explained by cultural values of collectivism and perceived administrative benevolence. As such, destination trust is portrayed as a multi-dimensional construct—based on the quality of communication, destination values, and sociocultural fit—critical in influencing tourist preference, loyalty, and intention to travel.

In tourism research, destination trust and trust in service providers are closely related but distinct concepts. Destination trust relates to tourists' perceptions of the location's overall reliability, authenticity, and safety, whereas trust in service providers pertains to tourists' trust in the competence, professionalism, and reliability of specific service providers such as tour operators, hotels, or local businesses (Morgan & Hunt, 1994).

2.7 Destination Trust and Urge to Travel

Urge to travel is an affectively charged spontaneous motivation that triggers people to undertake immediate travel behavior. Although different from travel intention, which is usually the outcome of conscious planning and rational consideration, the two share common psychological processes. There are few empirical studies of urge-based behavior in tourism literature, and as a result, researchers have used travel intention as a conceptual proxy, particularly in affectively salient conditions. Miao et al. (2022) illustrate how travel behaviors of post-pandemic tourists are emotionally salient and correspond with the urge notion, even though they were measured with intention frameworks. Destination trust, which refers to the tourists' faith in the credibility, security, and capacity of the destination to offer desired experiences, has been found to be the major antecedent of emotion-driven travel motivations. Wang and Yan (2022) established that the perceived quality of tourism-related social media posts impacts travel intention through the intermediary of trust, which signifies that trust acts as a tourism decision-making affective filter. According to Wei et al. (2024), institutional trust, especially trust in official tourism websites, boosts the psychological preparedness of the tourist by lowering uncertainty. Jebbouri et al. (2022) illustrated the fact that positive as well as trustworthy destination image generates emotional congruity with the destination, resulting in increased curiosity to visit. In the post-crisis scenario of tourism, Yang (2022) noted that trustful perceptions of destinations' ability to look after safety protocols by the tourists create greater likelihood of acting on travel impulses, which signifies the salience of trust in forming motivational preparedness.

The following is hypothesized on the basis of the above discussion:

H₄: *Destination trust positively and significantly influences the urge to travel.*

2.8 Destination Preference

Destination preference is the positive attitude of the tourists toward a destination in terms of its perceived capacity to fulfil their psychological, experiential, and functional expectations. Destination preference has been used to describe various conceptual frameworks as a major predictor of intention to travel and behavior and is often understood as the judgment of both intrinsic motivation and external destination-related attributes. According to Mihai et al. (2023), emotional resonance, cultural genuineness, and experiential distinctiveness are major determinants of destination preference, especially in the context of female tourists. Equally, Poruțiu et al. (2021) reported that demographic aspects such as age and occupation have a significant impact on preference, where older tourists value accessibility and perceived safety, and younger segments value novelty and social contact. These observations validate the contention that preference is not an inert attribute but an active convergence of the self-perception of the tourists to destination attributes. In the face of global uncertainty like the COVID-19 pandemic, destination preference development has been largely readjusted. According to Hao et al. (2020), health infrastructure, proximity, and perceived safety have emerged as the salient dimensions of post-pandemic preference development, especially for local destinations. Based on a systematic review, Ortaleza and Mangali (2021) established the five key attributes that affect the preference of tourists: accessibility, affordability, experience uniqueness, accommodation quality, and narrative storytelling. Building on this, Khan et al. (2017) contend that travel constraints, perceived risk, and travel motivation collectively shape the nexus of image–preference–intention of travel, especially among young travelers.

1. Destination Preference and Urge to Travel

Direct effect of destination preference on the urge to travel has been given scant scholarly attention. Much of the current literature involves measuring constructs of travel intention, emotional arousal, or behavioral reaction, essentially relevant concepts for urge. These are theoretically grounded in the hope to investigate how the contribution of affective, or impulsive, travel motivation might be derived from preferences for a destination. Li and Jiang (n.d.) have reported a finding that perceived value, which was positively impacted by a positive image of the destination, significantly impacts travel intention. This implies the presence of a positive perceived image influencing the intention to travel. Afshardoost and Eshaghi (2020), in their meta-analysis, established the fact that the image of the place acts as a powerful predictor of tourist behavior intentions, asserting the association between preference and response motivation. Elgarhy and Alharethi (2024) proved how storytelling, extraversion, and excitement highly affect the impulsive purchasing behavior of tourists, meaning that emotionally captivating content can make the destination more favored as well as the resultant desire for traveling. Kaikara (2024) highlighted the need for modern marketing techniques, such as the use of technology and personalization, in luring the millennial and the Gen Z traveler, thus impacting their travel motivations and preferences for destinations. Additionally, Xu (2024) investigated how cultural proximity influences destination image and tourist impression, finding that cultural events can boost the image of a destination and reinforce the intention of tourists to travel there.

Based on the foregoing discussion, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H5: *Destination preference positively and significantly influences the desire to travel.*

Fig. 1 illustrates the proposed research model, which seeks to explain tourists' travel desire in the specific context of coffee tourism, particularly within the framework of AI-based tourism technologies. The model hypothesizes that digital literacy—defined as tourists' proficiency and familiarity with AI-driven tourism technologies—is a foundational factor that influences habitual usage of AI tools in tourism planning. Destination trust represents the cognitive assessment of the safety, trustworthiness, and ethical integrity of destinations for coffee plantations, and destination preference indicates affective assessment and interpersonal alignment with the distinctive cultural and natural characteristics of coffee tourism. Trust and preference are both predicted to act as antecedents to motivate travel, or urge, to travel to plantations. The model ties together digital conduct, psychological evaluation, and motivation response and provides an integrated framework to explain how technology-mediated tourism interaction can generate travel intentions for the emergent market of coffee tourism.

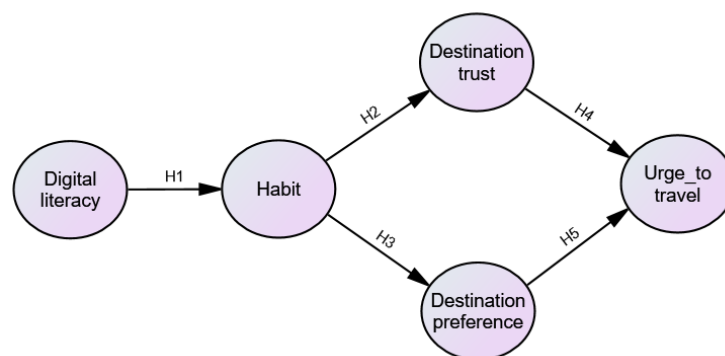


Fig. 1. The Research Model

3. Methods

3.1 Measures

All constructs in this research were operationalized using multiple indicators drawn from existing validated scales, with necessary adaptations to fit the AI-aided coffee tourism context. The items for each construct were reviewed and modified based on insights from the literature and expert feedback to ensure contextual relevance and content validity. This process ensured that the constructs were appropriately aligned with the unique aspects of AI technology in the coffee tourism sector. Both items were scored on a six-point Likert-type scale from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 6 (“strongly agree”) with intermediate points of 2 (“disagree”), 3 (“slightly disagree”), 4 (“slightly agree”), and 5 (“agree”). Digital literacy was measured with five items adapted from Topsakal and Çuhadar (2024), gauging tourists' perceived ability as well as confidence in performing operations with the support of AI-based tourism applications. Habit was conceptualized with five indicators taken from Xu et al. (2024), describing utilization of AI instruments in a habitual manner in planning for, as well as in making, decisions about trips. Destination trust was gauged with five items taken from Pillai and Sivathanu (2020), considering perceived security, credibility, as well as reliability of a destination, as well as its tourism offerings. Destination preference was operationalized with five items taken from Suhud et al. (2023), describing tourists' preference, cultural appeal, as well as word-of-mouth, to recommend coffee tourism places. Finally, urge to travel was gauged utilizing five indicators drawn from Hassani and Moghavvemi (2020), describing tourists' impulsion to travel, emotional involvement, as well as travel motivation to coffee plantations. The items all went through exploratory as well as confirmatory factor analyses to establish construct reliability as well as model fit.

3.2 Data Analysis Methods

This analysis utilized the four-step quantitative data analysis protocol with both exploratory and confirmatory procedures to achieve the validity of the measurement and structural models. The initial step was validity testing by Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) through SPSS version 29. The factor loadings of 0.40 and above were acceptable to verify construct validity. This is in line with the accepted standards of behavioral science and guarantees that every item signifies its related latent construct meaningfully. The second step checked construct reliability by the use of Cronbach's alpha coefficients. The constructs were reliable where alpha values met and surpassed the accepted cut-off of 0.70. The two steps served as the basis for the assessment of the instruments' psychometric properties in the present study. The third step was to compute the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) to assess convergent validity. The construct was deemed to possess good convergent validity when its AVE was 0.50 or greater. Lastly, testing hypotheses was done through Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) with AMOS version 29. One hypothesis was accepted as long as its Critical Ratio (CR) was 1.96 or greater, indicating statistical significance at the 0.05 level. The overall fit of the model was evaluated using widely accepted fit metrics: p-value (> 0.05), CMIN/DF (≤ 2.00), CFI (≥ 0.95), and RMSEA (≤ 0.05), as recommended by Schermelleh-Engel et al. (2003), Tabachnick et al. (2007), Hu and Bentler (1995), and Browne and Cudeck (1992). These stringent standards ensured the measurement and structural models to be theoretically guided and empirically founded.

4. Results

4.1 Participants

Table 1 shows the demographic and experiential profile of the respondents ($N = 225$). The sample was almost gender-balanced (52.9% female and 47.1% male). The most common group was aged 26–30 (41.3%), followed by 21–25 (26.7%) and 31–35 (19.6%), which meant the largest group of respondents were in young adulthood—the stage of life when digital usage and travel are highest. A smaller number were aged 17–20 (8.0%) and 36–40 (4.4%).

Occupationally, most of the participants were employed (63.1%), followed by the self-employed (20.4%), the unemployed (15.6%), and the small number who were retired (0.9%). In terms of marital status, the largest number were married (56.9%), 33.8% were unmarried, and 7.6% and 1.8% were separated/divorced and widowed, respectively.

Notably, most of the participants (74.7%) indicated that they had previous experience on coffee plantations, which offers an appropriate empirical basis for the assessment of attitudes and intentions to act towards sustainable coffee tourism. These representative yet demographically homogeneous features further contribute to the generalizability of the results in the context of digitally mediated and sustainable travel practices.

Table 1
Profile of Participants

Paths		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	106	47.1
	Female	119	52.9
	Total	225	100.0
Group of age	17-20	18	8.0
	21-25	60	26.7
	26-30	93	41.3
	31-35	44	19.6
	36-40	10	4.4
Occupational status	Employed	142	63.1
	Self-employed	46	20.4
	Retired	2	.9
	Unemployed	35	15.6
Marital status	Separated/divorced	17	7.6
	Married	128	56.9
	Widowed	4	1.8
	Unmarried	76	33.8
Experience visiting coffee plantation	No	57	25.3
	Yes	168	74.7

4.2 Results of Data Validity, AVE, Reliability Tests

Table 2 illustrates the construct validity and reliability testing results, such as Cronbach's alpha, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and the loadings of indicators for all latent constructs.

Table 2
Results of Data Validity, AVE, Reliability Tests

Variables and Indicators	Cronbach's Alpha	AVE	Cronbach's Alpha
Digital literacy		0.683	883
Li1 I find it easy to learn how to use AI-based applications in tourism.	0.882		
Li3 AI-based applications in tourism are easy to use for me.	0.869		
Li2 I can easily become skilled in using AI-based applications in tourism.	0.851		
Li4 I have sufficient knowledge to use AI-based applications.	0.818		
Li5 My interaction with the AI-based travel guide application is clear and easy to understand.	0.700		
Perceived cost benefit		0.575	0.815
Co3 I feel that using AI in planning a trip provides added value.	0.785		
Co4 AI provides a satisfying experience compared to conventional services.	0.767		
Co2 Using AI helps me plan my trip more efficiently.	0.762		
Co5 I feel that using AI in travel provides reasonable benefits.	0.741		
Co1 I feel that using AI provides benefits that are commensurate with the effort put in.	0.736		
Habit		0.588	0.823
Ha3 Using AI has become a habit for me in planning my travel.	0.806		
Ha2 I often use AI to help with planning or providing travel information.	0.802		
Ha4 I feel comfortable using AI in my travels because I am used to it.	0.766		
Ha1 I am used to using AI technology in my travel planning.	0.738		
Ha5 I often rely on AI in planning my travels.	0.717		
Destination trust		0.572	0.813
Dt2 I believe that the coffee plantation tour operator is trustworthy.	0.782		
Dt1 I believe that the information I get about the tourist destination is accurate and reliable.	0.773		
Dt4 I believe that the local community on the coffee plantation provides a trustworthy experience.	0.762		
Dt3 I feel safe planning a trip to a coffee plantation.	0.736		
Dt5 I believe that a trip to a coffee plantation is a safe and reliable choice.	0.726		
Destination preference		0.522	0.768
Dp3 I prefer coffee plantations because of their unique culture.	0.792		
Dp2 I prefer coffee plantations to other destinations.	0.770		
Dp4 I am willing to recommend coffee plantations to others.	0.730		
Dp5 The natural features of the coffee plantations match my travel preferences.	0.669		
Dp1 Coffee plantations are one of the destinations that I prioritize to visit.	0.639		
Urge to travel		0.544	0.789
Ur2 I often think about traveling to a coffee plantation	0.810		
Ur3 I try to plan a trip to a coffee plantation	0.779		
Ur4 Visiting a coffee plantation is one of my personal goals.	0.771		
Ur1 I really want to visit a coffee plantation soon for a vacation.	0.676		
Ur5 I feel very interested and excited to experience the coffee plantation culture directly.	0.638		

All the constructs were found to meet the minimum standard for convergent validity as reflected through AVE values greater than 0.50 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). AVE varied between 0.768 (destination preference) and 0.883 (digital literacy), verifying that indicators well reflect the associated latent constructs. However, while Cronbach's alpha for some constructs—destination preference ($\alpha = 0.522$) and urge to travel ($\alpha = 0.544$)—fell below the widely accepted threshold of 0.70, it is important to note that lower alpha values can be acceptable in pilot or exploratory studies, particularly in the behavioral sciences where constructs are often complex and multidimensional (Hair et al., 2016). Destination preference exhibited the lowest alpha, indicating potential areas for refinement in future studies. Digital literacy ($\alpha = 0.683$) had the best internal consistency, whereas destination preference had the poorest. All the individual indicators exhibited standardized loadings greater than 0.63, which is further confirmation of the internal validity of the constructs. Overall, these findings attest to the validity and the reliability of the measurement model, which allows it to be employed for further structural model analysis. In summary, while some constructs exhibited lower alpha values, the overall results demonstrate sufficient reliability and validity for further structural model analysis. Future efforts can focus on refining the measurement scales to enhance internal consistency.

4.3 Hypotheses Tests

The structural model was assessed using maximum likelihood estimation to examine the hypothesized associations between the six latent constructs. As shown in Figure 2, the model reported good fit indices, validating the model's stability and empirical fit ($\chi^2/DF = 1.124$, CFI = 0.995, RMSEA = 0.024, $p = 0.274$). All these values are well below the general recommended cut-off points ($\chi^2/DF < 3$, CFI > 0.95, RMSEA < 0.05), and the model has an excellent overall fit to the observed data (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2015). All the paths hypothesized were significant and as predicted. Pertinent to the generalization at hand, digital literacy had significant and strong influence on habit (H1: C.R. = 8.837, $p < 0.001$), substantiating the proposition that higher technological literacy stimulates habitual use of AI tourism tools. Habit further impacted destination trust (H2: C.R. = 8.254, $p < 0.001$) and destination preference (H3: C.R. = 8.088, $p < 0.001$) significantly, thereby positioning habit as the key mediating construct. The model also affirmed that trust and preference for the destination were significant predictors of tourists' urge to travel. Destination trust had a directly positive influence on the urge to travel (H4: C.R. = 3.711, $p < 0.001$), which implies that perceived dependability and safety are at the core of motivating travel activities. Similarly, destination preference also had a positive influence on the urge to travel (H5: C.R. = 2.768, $p = 0.006$), which implies that destination attributes matching personal tastes strengthen motivation effects. These findings underscore the impact of AI technologies in the tourism sector, particularly in niche markets like coffee tourism, where personalization and technological innovation are becoming increasingly important for attracting tourists.

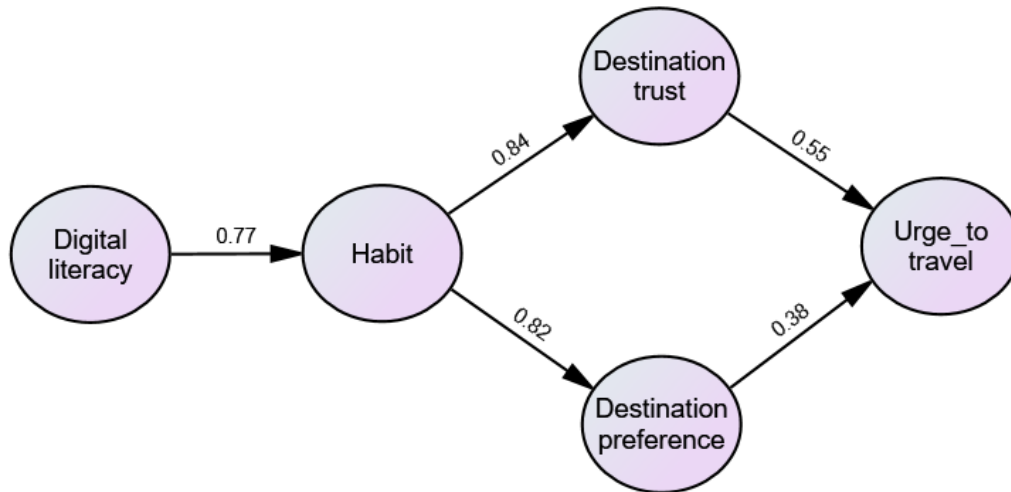


Fig. 2. Structural Model of the Hypotheses Tests

The structural model was assessed using the standardized path coefficients, critical ratios (C.R.), and significance values (p -values) for each hypothesized relation, which are tabulated in Table 3. The model shows strong empirical validation regarding all the posited hypotheses. To be precise, digital literacy was found to significantly influence habit (H1: C.R. = 8.837, $p < 0.001$), which is in agreement with the position that higher digital competency is positively associated with the formation of habitual use of AI-grounded instruments in tourism planning. Moreover, habit had a statistically significant impact on destination trust (H2: C.R. = 8.254, $p < 0.001$) and destination preference (H3: C.R. = 8.088, $p < 0.001$), which is an implication that repetitive use of AI-empowered tools instils not only trust but also enhanced liking towards the destinations of coffee tourism. Moreover, destination trust and destination preference were strong predictors of tourists' urge to travel. Destination trust had a strong direct effect on the urge to travel (H4: C.R. = 3.711, $p < 0.001$), highlighting the crucial role played by feelings of perceived safety and reliability in triggering travel intentions. Destination preference also had a

significant effect (H5: C.R. = 2.768, $p = 0.006$), indicating that tourists are inclined to be motivated to travel whenever their personal tastes match destination features. The structural model as a whole indicates that digitally savvy tourists, through regular familiarity with AI, build trust and preference that finally manifest as increased urge to travel to coffee plantation tourism destinations.

Table 3

Results of the Hypotheses Tests

Hypotheses	Paths	C.R.	P	Results
H1	Digital literacy → Habit	8.837	***	Accepted
H2	Habit → Destination trust	8.254	***	Accepted
H3	Habit → Destination preference	8.088	***	Accepted
H4	Destination trust → Urge to travel	3.711	***	Accepted
H5	Destination preference → Urge to travel	2.768	0.006	Accepted

5. Discussion

The empirical evidence suggests digital literacy has a positive, significant impact on habit (C.R. = 8.837, $p < 0.001$), aligning with the proposal that those with greater digital competence tend to form consistent, technology-driven behavioral tendencies in tourism contexts. Such a finding supports the conceptual model developed by Verplanken and Orbell (2003), who posited habit as automated behavior resulting from repeated behavior in stable contexts. For tourism behavior, those contexts are increasingly characterized by digital technologies. Xu et al. (2024) highlight that tourists who use AI services—e.g., ChatGPT—accumulate emotional familiarity through repeated exposure, encouraging habitual use. Alrawadieh et al. (2019) also claim digital competence (comfort, familiarity, and satisfaction with AI platforms) induces the consistency of behavior among tourists, with a focus on those in digitally mediated contexts. These are echoed in the dynamics of AI-boosted coffee tourism, wherein ease of use, enabled by digital literacy, underpins consistent travel-related behavior. As tourists become increasingly capable in AI use, they develop consistent usage patterns, over time forming habituated responses.

The structural model identifies habit as a highly positive factor in influencing destination preference (C.R. = 8.088, $p < 0.001$), such that tourists who repeatedly perform habituated actions in relation to evaluating a place or planning a trip tend to develop stronger preferences for a place or set of places. This supports the finding of Boto-García (2022), who argued that habit formation in tourist behavior enhances attachment and lessens cognitive load in the decision-making process for travel destinations. Likewise, MacInnes et al., (2022) indicated that habitual behavior can be a significant predictor of tourist actions, influencing both daily activities and travel behaviors. By the same token, Azmadi et al. (2023) discovered that repeated exposure to online tourism websites increases satisfaction and the formation of preferences in the context of smart tourist ecosystems. Xu et al. (2024) further posited that repeated use of AI travel services such as ChatGPT builds emotional affinity, thereby underpinning destination preference. This finding by this study implies that as tourists repeatedly interact with AI-powered tourism-related applications for planning purposes, they are more apt to prefer places in line with their developed habits and accustomed pattern of engagement.

The analysis supports the fact that habit has a positive and statistically significant effect on destination trust (C.R. = 4.910, $p < 0.001$), implying that repeated use of tourist-related services builds confidence and psychological security in tourists' assessments of destinations. This is in keeping with the findings of Boto-García (2022), who found that habit reduces uncertainty and enhances perceived dependability in choices in tourism contexts. Whilst Williams and Baláz (2021) suggest that frequent visits can cultivate a sense of familiarity and ease, which enhances trust in the destination's capacity to consistently provide a positive experience. Azmadi et al. (2023) also found that ingrained practices in intelligent tourism contexts reinforce the confidence tourists have in technological platforms and, by association, in the destinations themselves. Xu et al. (2024) found that repeated use of AI-driven services such as ChatGPT builds familiarity and affective proximity, resulting in increased confidence in the accompanying travel suggestions and destinations. This study concurs with this stance, finding habit acts as a reinforcement mechanism, cementing confidence in destination offerings, especially in AI-facilitated tourism contexts.

The evidence identifies destination trust as a major predictor of urge to travel (C.R. = 5.604, $p < 0.001$), with the inference that tourists are more inclined to have a powerful sense of emotional drive towards a destination when viewing it as secure, certain, and in congruence with their expectations. This aligns with Wang and Yan (2022), who proved that tourism information trust lessens uncertainty and assists with affective readiness for action on travel motivation. This was also evidenced further by Wei et al. (2024), as institutional trust in official destination websites provides tourists with increased psychological security, capable of increasing motivation intensity. Jebbouri et al. (2022) noted further that once the establishment of trust through the building of a positive image towards the destination exists, the tourist becomes more emotionally congruent with the destination, cementing their desire to travel further. Yang (2022) reaffirmed that travel intentions in the post-crisis phase rely significantly on perceived health and safety trust, an area highly pertinent in the current post-pandemic scenario. These combined findings indicate the presence of a psychological anchor for the role of destination trust in mounting the affective and affective sides of the urge to travel.

This research finds that the preference for a destination has a positive and statistically significant influence on the urge to travel ($C.R. = 6.194, p < 0.001$), implying that those tourists who form affective and cognitive preferences for a destination are more inclined towards experiencing motivational forces for travel. While this direct step has not previously been the focus of tourist behavior studies, a few of those studies are found providing converging insights in this regard. Li and Jiang (2024) established the fact that positive destination image and perceived value influence travel intention, implying the precedence of preference towards readiness for action. Afshardoost and Eshaghi (2020), in their meta-analysis, reaffirmed the fact that the image of a destination—a prime precursor of the formation of preference—is a forceful driver of behavior intention. Elgarhy and Alharethi (2024) indicated that storytelling and emotional stimuli augment tourists' excitement and behavioral tendencies, underlining the affective bridge between the continuum of preference and action. Kaikara (2024) reported the fact that the use of customized marketing builds up destination preference among Gen Z and millennials, and thereby, possibly instils urgency in travel choices. Then, Xu (2022) underlined the fact that cultural proximity, enhancing the formation of preference, enhances emotional salience and travel enthusiasm. These findings justify the theoretical foundation towards aligning the preference for a destination as a salient predictor of urge to travel in AI-augmented tourist situations.

The combined outcomes of this research highlight the strategic importance of digital and behavioral factors—specifically digital literacy, habit, trust, and preference—nourishing affective and sustainable travel behavior. By revealing how digital literacy enables lasting use of AI-facilitated tourism app usage, and how the resulting habits reinforce trust and preference, the study identifies a technology-facilitated path toward sustainable touristic engagement. Tourists relying on digital habits are more inclined toward informed, contextual travel planning, favoring resource efficiency and transparent choices. Habitual digital use, leading toward the formation of trust and preference, also enhances return visitation and place loyalty, both critical for sustainable destination development. Furthermore, the desire to travel—channeled by trusted and preferred places or brands—may be directed toward places specializing in environmental management, preserving heritage, and community-focused tourism. These outcomes indicate that the inclusion of digital competence and habit reinforcement in tourism frameworks can double leading benefits, not only for individual tourist satisfaction but also the sustainable long-term existence of tourist destinations.

6. Conclusion

This research examined behavior antecedents influencing tourists' travel desire in the new reality of sustainable coffee tourism. Relying upon a structural framework encompassing digital literacy, habit, destination trust, and preference, the outcomes identified a strong, interdependent sequence from digital competence to habitual technology use, which in turn affects perceptual judgments as well as emotional commitment to the destination. More directly, digital literacy strongly encourages habitual usage of AI-powered tourism resources, while habit encourages both trust in, as well as preference towards, the destination. These perceptual factors were found to have a direct, considerable impact on travel desire—affect-aroused, automatic behavior, infrequently studied in niche tourism scenarios.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the growing literature in digital tourism and sustainable travel behavior by situating digital habit as a key mechanism connecting technological readiness with attitudinal and motivational travel reactions. It provides an integrated framework that extends from cognitive, affective, to behavioral components, making technology acceptance theory as well as theory in terms of destination image more applicable in rural areas as well as in agrotourism contexts. Additionally, by integrating urge to travel as a motivational concept, it provides new insights as to how emotionally intense reactions can arise from a blend of digital engagement as well as destination-related constructs.

From a managerial point of view, findings highlight which strategies in investing in interfaces powered by artificial intelligence maximize repeated usage, user-friendliness, as well as emotionally resonant digital experiences. Managers at tourist destinations should utilize immersive technologies, including virtual storytelling as well as algorithmic customization, in order to strengthen habitual usage as well as perceptual trust. Marketing efforts should also highlight authentic experiences as well as sustainability-based values, which resonate with tourists' ethical orientations as well as further stimulate their spontaneous travel intentions.

Despite the valuable insights this study provides, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the use of convenience sampling presents potential concerns regarding sampling bias and external validity. Given that convenience sampling relies on a readily accessible population, the findings may not fully represent the broader target population of tourists engaged in AI-facilitated coffee tourism. This could lead to a non-random sample, limiting the generalizability of the results. For instance, tourists who engage with AI-driven experiences may have different perceptions or behaviors than those who prefer traditional tourism options.

Second, the cross-sectional design limits the study's ability to explore temporally dynamic behaviors and perceptual shifts. While the use of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was appropriate for testing the theoretical framework, the model's cross-sectional nature may not account for unobserved heterogeneity or endogeneity across different tourist segments. To address this, robustness checks were conducted, examining the consistency of results across various demographic and behavioral subgroups. Although the study cannot infer causal relationships, these efforts help bolster the study's credibility by examining potential confounding factors.

This research contributes valuable insights into the digital behaviors of coffee tourists but underscores the need for continued exploration in the realm of smart and sustainable tourism. Future research should expand on these findings by exploring emerging technologies, such as voice-AI interactions, to assess tourist trust and involvement (Ahmed et al., 2025; Fauzi et al., 2025). Additionally, studies by Bhuiyan et al. (2024) and Sobihah et al. (2024) highlight the competing roles of values, sustainability, and AI in shaping tourist choices, suggesting that the inclusion of UN SDG indicators in future models could provide a more nuanced understanding of these factors. Researchers could also consider the roles of perceived value and destination image, as discussed by Suhud et al. (2022, 2021), which have been shown to influence revisit intentions. Moreover, incorporating concepts such as self-congruity (Suhud et al., 2023) and credence-based judgments (Suhud et al., 2024) may further elucidate the affective processes that drive tourist preferences.

To enhance cross-destination comparability, future studies could explore regional or thematic segmentation, as demonstrated by Suhud et al. (2023) in their work on Ciletuh Geopark and Panglipuran Village. Finally, to better capture habit formation and long-term digital engagement, mixed-methods or longitudinal study designs are recommended (Abidin et al., 2021).

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