

## Effect of User Generated Content on Visit Intention Through Destination Image at Bejjong Tourism Village

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### **ABSTRACT**

*User-generated content (UGC) holds a crucial position in shaping tourists' perceptions of a destination. This study aims to investigate the influence of UGC on visit intention, as mediated by destination image. The research adopted a causal quantitative design and employed a purposive sampling technique. A total of 200 respondents who had viewed content related to Desa Wisata Kampung Majapahit via social media participated. The collected data were processed and analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The analytical findings indicate that UGC significantly affects destination image. However, UGC does not demonstrate a direct impact on visit intention. Conversely, destination image was found to significantly influence visit intention and successfully acted as a mediator in the relationship between UGC and visit intention. These results underscore the role of user-generated content in fostering a positive destination image, which subsequently drives tourists' intention to visit. Practically, this study provides implications for tourism destination managers to optimize digital promotion strategies based on UGC by concentrating on strengthening the destination image*

**Keywords:** *User generated content, destination image, visit Intention, SEM, purposive sampling.*

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### **INTRODUCTION**

The COVID-19 pandemic severely impacted Indonesia's tourism sector, resulting in a steep decline in visitor numbers in 2020. Nevertheless, since 2024, the industry has begun to show indications of recovery. The Central Statistics Agency (BPS) reported a notable increase in domestic tourist trips during 2024 compared to the pandemic years (Bps.go.id, 2025). Capitalizing on this positive trend, the government has been actively promoting the establishment of tourism villages. Data from ADWI 2024 highlight the geographical spread of these villages, with East Java being distinguished as the province possessing the highest number (Jadesta.kememparekraf.go.id, 2024). A prime example of this cultural tourism development is the Bejjong Cultural Tourism Village in Mojokerto, which emphasizes the heritage of the Majapahit Kingdom and has received an ADWI award (Gayatri, 2024).

The proliferation of social media has fundamentally altered how destinations are promoted. User Generated Content (UGC) which encompasses traveler reviews, photos, and videos is often perceived as more authentic and thus more persuasive in forming the destination image for potential visitors (Albarq, 2013). Subsequently, a positive destination image emerges as a primary determinant of visit intention, being shaped by both external and internal factors like promotion, visitor testimonials, and accessibility (Aboalganam et al., 2025).

However, the empirical evidence concerning the mechanism of UGC's influence on visit intention, both directly and through the mediating role of destination image, remains inconsistent. Some research has demonstrated a significant influence of UGC directly on visit intention (Maha & Mahagangga, 2023). Conversely, other studies have shown that UGC affects destination image but does not have a direct effect on visit intention, thus lending stronger support to the validity of the mediation path (Nadiastuti et al., 2025). Furthermore, findings regarding the role of destination image in driving visit intention also show variability (Syahreza & Wibisono, 2021). This existing inconsistency establishes a pressing research gap. Therefore, this study aims to specifically test the mediating effect of destination image (DI) in the relationship between UGC and visit intention, within the context of Bejjong Cultural Tourism Village.

## METHOD

This study utilized a causal quantitative approach to investigate the relationships among two or more interconnected variables. The research primarily focused on assessing the impact of user-generated content on tourists' visit intention, specifically examining the mediating role of destination image within the context of Bejijong Tourism Village. A purposive sampling technique was implemented to select respondents, totaling 200 participants. Data collection involved distributing questionnaires electronically via Google Form, where responses were gathered using a 5-point Likert scale (ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree). Subsequently, the data underwent analysis using Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) version 4.0. This comprehensive analysis procedure involved testing the inner model, the outer model, and assessing the validity and reliability of all research instruments.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Result

#### *Outer Model Test*

The outer model illustrates the relationship between each block of indicators and its latent variables. This model is used to assess construct validity and instrument reliability. It helps determine whether the research instrument effectively measures the intended concept and evaluates the consistency of respondents' answers to the questionnaire statements.

**Table 1. Outer Loadings of Reserch variabel**

Variable indicators	Outer Loading	Description
<b>User Generated Content (X)</b>		
UGC.1	0,772	Valid
UGC.2	0,785	Valid
UGC.3	0,759	Valid
UGC.4	0,786	Valid
UGC.5	0,752	Valid
<b>Visit Intention (Y)</b>		
VI.1	0,850	Valid
VI.2	0,866	Valid
VI.3	0,857	Valid
<b>Destination Image (Z)</b>		
DI.1	0,863	Valid
DI.2	0,843	Valid
DI.3	0,847	Valid

Based on Table 1, all indicators for the variables User Generated Content (X), Visit Intention (Y), and Destination Image (Z) have outer loading values above 0.70, indicating that they are valid. The indicator values for UGC range from 0.752 to 0.786, VI from 0.850 to 0.866, and DI from 0.843 to 0.863. This demonstrates that all indicators effectively reflect their respective constructs and are appropriate for use in this study.

#### *Discriminant Legitimacy test*

The discriminant validity test uses the extracted mean variance values to examine the validity of the research instrument in explaining or reflecting the latent variables. This is done by comparing the average AVE value of the extracted variance with the threshold value of 0.5, which serves as the determinant of convergent validity

**Table 2. Avarage Variabel Extracted**

Variables	AVE	Description
UGC	0,595	Valid
VI	0,736	Valid
DI	0,724	Valid

Based on Table 2, the AVE values for the variables UGC (0.595), VI (0.736), and DI (0.724) are all greater than 0.50. This indicates that all three variables meet the criteria for convergent validity, meaning that the indicators within each variable are able to explain their respective constructs effectively.

### **Composite Validity Cronbach's Alpha**

Composite validity aims to assess the reliability values among the construct indicators that form it. A good composite validity value ranges between 0.50 and 0.60, and the Cronbach's alpha value should be >0.60. This can be presented in Table 3 below:

**Table 3. Composite Validity and Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Validity**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Rho_A</b>	<b>Composite Reliability</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>UGC</b>	0,829	0,830	0,880	Reliable
<b>VI</b>	0,821	0,823	0,893	Reliable
<b>DI</b>	0,810	0,810	0,887	Reliable

Table 3 shows that the Cronbach's Alpha values for UGC (0.829), VI (0.821), and DI (0.810) are all above 0.60. In addition, the composite reliability values are also high, with UGC at 0.880, VI at 0.893, and DI at 0.887. These results indicate that all variables meet the reliability criteria and demonstrate good internal consistency.

### **Inner Model Test**

The R-square value is used to test the level of determination of exogenous variables on endogenous variables. The larger the R-square value, the better the level of determination. This can be presented in Table 4 below:

**Table 4. Goodness of Fit**

	<b>R Square</b>	<b>Adjusted R Square</b>
<b>DI</b>	0,480	0,477
<b>VI</b>	0,498	0,493

Based on Table 4, the R-Square value for DI is 0.480 and for VI is 0.498. This indicates that the model has a moderate ability to explain the variability of the endogenous constructs. In other words, the exogenous variables exert a considerable influence on the endogenous variables.

### **Hypothesis**

Based on the conceptual framework of this study, the correlation and hypothesis testing between variables can be carried out in two ways: correlation analysis and path analysis. This can be summarized in Table 5 below:

**Table 5. Hypothesis Tests Result**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Coefficients</b>	<b>T Statistics</b>	<b>Sig</b>
<b>UGC-DI</b>	0,693	12,747	0,000
<b>UGC-VI</b>	0,217	2,653	0,008
<b>DI-VI</b>	0,538	7,132	0,000
<b>UGC X DI - VI</b>	0,043	0,985	0,325

Table 5 shows that all relationships between variables are significant, with significance values below 0.05. The path coefficients are UGC → DI = 0.693 (T = 12.747), UGC → VI = 0.217 (T = 2.653), and DI → VI = 0.538 (T = 7.132). These results indicate that User Generated Content has a positive and significant effect on both Destination Image and Visit Intention, and Destination Image also has a positive and significant effect on Visit Intention.

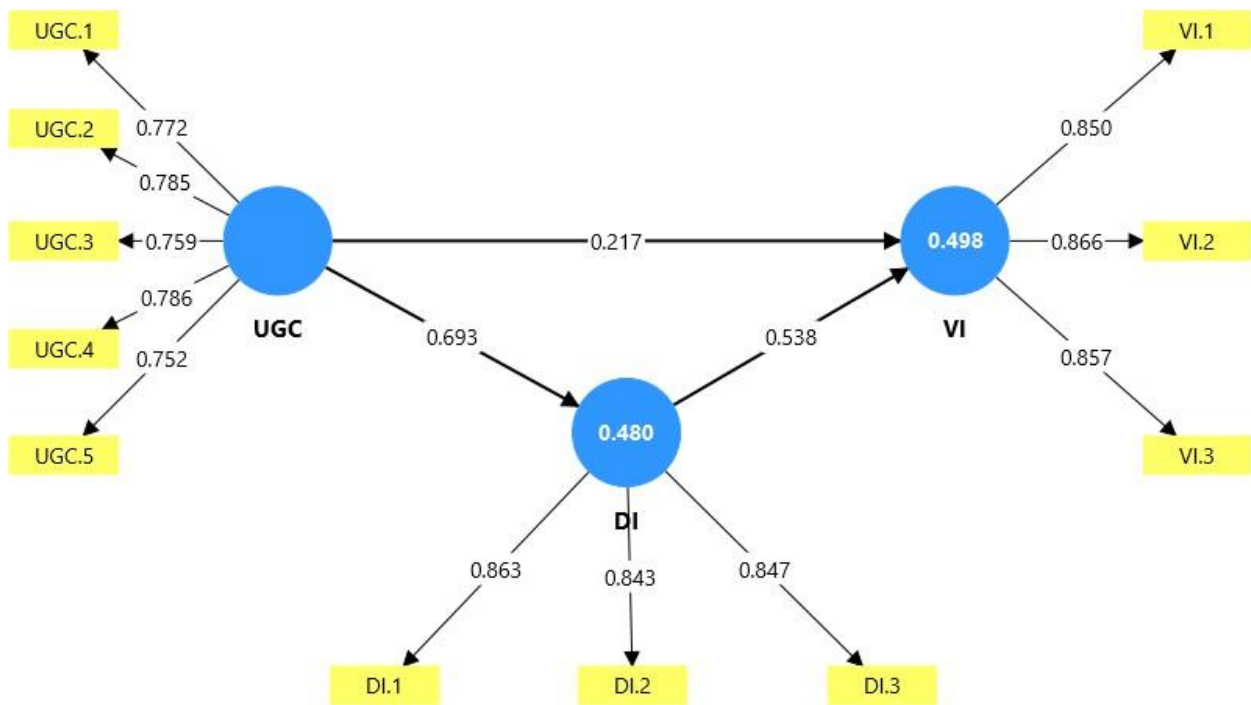


Figure 1. author's Conceptual Framework

**Discussion**

**Visit Intention is influenced by Destination Image**

Destination image exerts a positive and significant influence on tourists' visit intention (Salma et al., 2023). Empirical observations indicate that many travelers consult and analyze online testimonials before making their travel decisions. Destinations that possess favorable reviews and an appealing image generally report higher visit intention rates because prospective tourists rely on the experiences shared by other users (Ihza Aditya Wisnu, 2023). Moreover, promotions and endorsements from influencers or highly regarded figures also impact visit intention, as consumers are often more trusting of and interested in places recommended personally (Cahyani et al., 2024). Furthermore, destinations that offer transparency regarding their facilities, attractions, and unique characteristics contribute to building confidence among potential tourists (Kencana et al., 2023). Destination image is fundamentally crucial in forming and sustaining a tourist's decision to visit (Pada et al., 2023). This principle aligns with the present research findings, which confirm that destination image has a positive and significant effect on visit intention.

**Visit Intention is influenced by User Generated Content**

User Generated Content (UGC) significantly and positively affects tourists' intention to visit. Field observations show that tourists frequently seek inspiration and information through UGC available on platforms such as Tik Tok, YouTube, and Instagram. This content, which includes personal experiences, review videos, and destination photographs, is regarded as being more trustworthy and authentic compared to traditional advertising. When potential visitors encounter engaging and affirmative content, they are motivated to explore further and develop a strong desire to travel to that location. Additionally, travelers who share their experiences on social media platforms create a digital word-of-mouth effect, thereby expanding the promotional reach of the destination. This mechanism strengthens public interest in visiting and experiencing firsthand what they observed online. This finding is consistent with prior research by (Nadiastuti et al., 2025), who established that UGC and destination image have a significant effect on tourists' visit intention to Wae Rebo Tourism Village. Another study by (Nabila Naula Risya Wahid, 2025) similarly indicates that UGC content on Tik Tok has a discernible impact on tourists' decisions and intention to visit Kota Lama Surabaya

**Destination Image is influenced by User generated Content**

Destination image plays an important role in shaping tourists' perceptions of a tourist site. In the digital era, User Generated Content (UGC) has become a key factor influencing the formation of destination image. Field evidence shows that user-created content, such as reviews, photos, and travel experience videos, can increase prospective tourists' interest in a destination. Positive UGC both emotional and factual strengthens the destination's image as an attractive, informative, and worth-visiting

place. For example, tourists' emotional experiences shared on social media about the beauty and spiritual value of Borobudur Temple can shape positive perceptions in the minds of potential visitors. Similarly, factual information such as accessibility, facilities, and the uniqueness of a destination helps build favorable expectations. This aligns with the findings (Willyanto & Tunjungsari, 2025) which indicate that UGC has a significant effect on the formation of destination image. Therefore, the strategic use of UGC can serve as an effective effort to strengthen the destination's image in the eyes of tourists

## CONCLUSION

ACK The findings of this research establish that User Generated Content (UGC) exerts a significant influence on tourists' visit intention, both directly and indirectly through the mediating mechanism of destination image. UGC has been validated as a trusted and relevant information source for travelers due to its perceived authenticity. Both emotional and factual UGC are instrumental in shaping favorable perceptions of a location, consequently fortifying the destination image in the minds of potential visitors. Furthermore, destination image is definitively shown to have a positive and significant effect on visit intention, emphasizing its critical function in guiding tourists' decisions to visit. Collectively, these results confirm that promotion strategies leveraging UGC offer an effective method for boosting tourists' intention to visit Bejijong Cultural Tourism Village. This study contributes theoretically by reinforcing existing literature on the impact of UGC on destination image and visit intention. It also offers practical implications for tourism managers, guiding them in the design of more effective digital promotion strategies.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The researcher would like to express gratitude to KH. A. Wahab Hasbullah University for the academic support provided throughout this research process. Thanks are also extended to all respondents who participated and provided valuable data, as well as to the officials of Bejijong Cultural Tourism Village for granting permission and support during the data collection process. This study would not have been successfully carried out without the participation and cooperation of all parties involved.

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