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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Social Media Influence on Tourist Destination Choices among the Students of Higher Education

Dhrubajyoti Bordoloi[1*], Rajendra Nath Babu Murathoti[2], Boyillapalli Venkata Rao[3], Ditalak Mpanme[4]

[1,4] Assistant Professor, Department of Management, Nagaland University, Kohima Campus, Meriema, Nagaland-797 004

[2,3] Associate Professor, Department of Education, Nagaland University, Kohima Campus, Meriema, Nagaland-797 004

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	Over the past ten years, various tourist locations have undergone noteworthy transformations because of globalization, due to different influences from both national and international sources. The present study was conducted on the social media influence on tourist destination choices; to examine the effects of exogenous variables on endogenous variables through Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) approach. The study consists of 392 students pursuing higher education in Nagaland, India. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), items' total correlation, and Cronbach's alpha methods were used for the validity and reliability of the scale. The results of EFA generated three significant dimensions of "Social Media Stimuli (SMS)," "Comfort, Timing and Security Concerns (CTSC)," and "Destination Appetite (DA)." The study data was collected with the confirmed scale. The detailed data were analyzed with path analysis of SEM.

*Corresponding Author

dhruba42@nagalanduniversity.ac.in

INTRODUCTION

As the name suggests, social media is the media through which information is disseminated through various social groups. It is an online platform that an individual or a group can use to be a part of a virtual network to seek, discuss and disseminate information. Social media gained popularity in India through "orkut," which was launched in the year 2004. In 2008 it became the most visited website in India and Brazil (Os Sites Mais Acessados Do Brasil - 2017). With the advent of smartphones and affordable data tariffs of mobile networks, social media gained popularity worldwide, including in India. Currently, in India, many social media apps, such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, WhatsApp, etc., are operating, each with millions of users. Among the student community, social media is viral and increasing daily. Now, people cannot think of living without social media, which has become part and parcel of a person's life. According to the study of Xiang and Gretzel (2010), the importance of social media is increasing in the online tourism industry.

The authors have observed that social media usage among the student community in Nagaland, India is very high. It is easier to find a student in college and university with a smartphone and an account on social media apps such as Facebook, YouTube, etc. The authors have further observed that the students also use social media platforms extensively in their academic matters. For example, for any

assignment given to students, the assignment topics are searched on Google for textual references and then searched on YouTube for video references.

Tourism is one of the largest industries in the world. Directly or indirectly, it employs millions of individuals. Many countries, such as Thailand, Sri Lanka, Mauritius, etc., depend entirely on tourism for their income generation. When covid 19 pandemic struck the world in 2020, many countries dependent upon tourism, such as Sri Lanka, could not sustain it and ultimately headed toward an economic disaster (Nanadasena, 2021).

A tourist destination is a place or area with a collection of products and attractions related to tourism that is offered in such a way as to deliver a tourism experience to people and groups traveling away from their place of residence (Jalis, 2019). A place can be classified as a tourist destination if a good brand image of that place is created. The image can be created by creating a proper atmosphere or environment in and around the place. Social media is also a tool that can be used to create a positive destination image for a particular place (Chugh R, 2017). In the present study, an attempt has been made to develop and validate an attitudinal scale for measuring the impact of social media on tourist destination choices among the students of higher education in Nagaland, India.

There is plenty of literature available on social media and the tourism industry. Some of the related literature available on the web are presented below:

Tham, A et al. (2019) identified three different dimensions, namely "Level of Social Media Engagement (SME)", Destination novelty and familiarity (DNF), and "complexity of planning decisions (CPD)" for measuring the impact of social media influence. De las Heras-Pedrosa et al (2020) highlighted how social media had become a strategic platform for enhancing brand image and achieving tourist engagement. Pachucki et al (2022) highlighted the need for effective social media campaign to create a better tourist destination image by creating unique social media content. In their study, Gaffar et al (2021) revealed several key determinants influencing the image of a botanical garden as a tourist destination using structured equation modeling. Barman and Sharma (2021) found the impact of social media on tourist destination choices among university students in terms of some demographic variables. Chang & Chiang (2022) investigated how virtual reality affects the tourism image of a tourist destination. It was found that there is a significant interaction between the type of marketing tools and the acceptance of new technologies concerning the tourism image. In their study, Sharma et al (2017) attempted to understand the relationship between social media and destination marketing and examine the positive and negative impact of social media marketing in the tourism industry. Suanpang (2020) conducted a factor analysis on social media usage in tourism enterprises. The study found that social media use in tourism enterprises is mainly for providing information, customer engagement, and a reduction of business operation costs. In their study, Peco-Torres et al. (2021) aim to analyze the effect of social media on the perception of brand personality and to identify its effect on customer brand engagement. They found that social media has a positive effect on the perception of brand personality which in turn positively impacts customer brand engagement. Sahin & Sengun (2015) attempted to find the impact of social media on tourism marketing. They found that social media has a positive and negative influence on tourism marketing as the young generation has been affected by comments and personal experiences of other users on social media. In their study, Chu et. al. (2020) covered 15 years (2004–2019). This study was focused on journal papers archived in two academic databases in social sciences: Business Source Complete and Communication and Mass Media Complete. Each of the 192 papers collected was coded for eight significant variables: journal, year of publication, research topic, country studied, type of social media investigated, method, theoretical underpinning, and critical findings. Three major topic areas were identified in their study:
- the use of social media from the consumer's perspective
- the use of social media from the organization's perspective
- the effects of social media

The results of the study by Pop et al. (2022) indicated that consumer trust in Social Media Influencers (SMI) has a positive effect on each phase of travel decision-making. Moreover, each step of the decision-making journey mediates the trust effect on the next step, having a spillover effect on the

whole journey, implying continuous SMI input. They conducted the study by adopting the Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) approach by using Smart PLS software. Narangajavana et al. (2019) focused on sources of user-generated content (UGC) in social media: strong-tie sources, weak-tie sources, and tourism-tie sources and their effects on tourist satisfaction with the destination. Their findings suggest that UGC sources indirectly affect tourist satisfaction since most UGC sources influence tourist expectations, which would later be compared with the real tourist perception.

This paper attempts to find out and validate the most relevant factors relating to social media that impact the selection of a tourist destination through Confirmatory Factor analysis and a Structured Equation modeling (SEM) approach in Nagaland. Although many studies on social media and tourism have been conducted inside and outside India, studies employing CFA and SEM approaches have yet to be found by anyone in Nagaland and North East India.

Therefore, the objectives of the study are formulated as under:

- To develop and validate a Likert scale through EFA and CFA for measuring social media impact on tourist destination.

- To find out and validate the most relevant factors relating to social media impact on tourist destination choices among the college and university students.

- To establish the relationship between various constructs of the social media impact scale.

The following questions guided the investigation:

- Does Confirmatory Factor Analysis verify the number of factors and confirm the latent structure of the scale?

- Is there any association among the identified constructs of the social media impact scales?

The initial pre-tested model of the study was formulated based upon the existing review of literature and research questions:
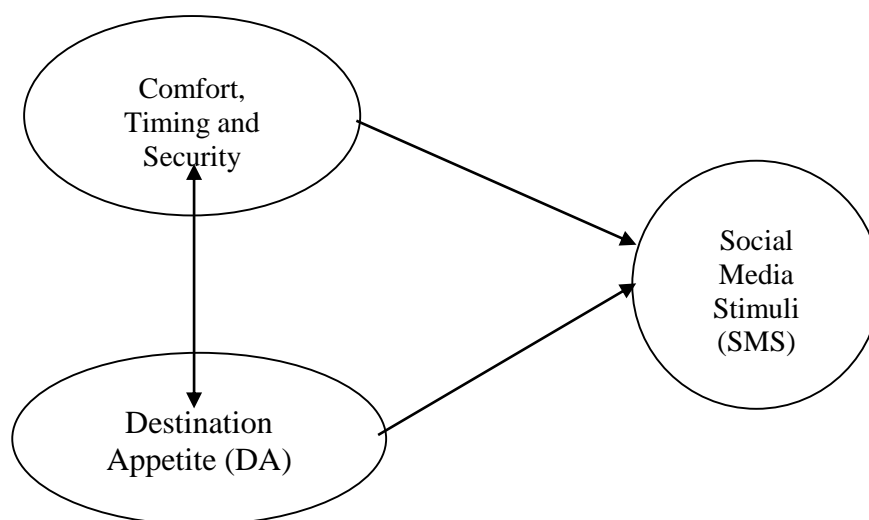
Figure 1: Basic hypothesized model

As identified in the present study, the three constructs of the Social Media Impact scale are interrelated. Whenever one person would like to go to a tourist destination, first the person searches about the place and then check for various other parameters such as the comfort of stay, timings, and security concerns. These two constructs then directly influence the person's engagement in social media to get more insights and ultimately lead to the decision-making process of selecting the tourist destination.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

It is a descriptive survey-based study.

a. **Analytical approach:** Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) were conducted to test the underlying structure of the Social Media impact scale. After EFA, the logical structure of the Social Media impact scale through CFA, SEM was conducted to test the relationship between various social media impact scale constructs. The current study used factor analysis, descriptive & correlational analysis, and SEM to answer the research questions. The scale under study was relatively new and has yet to be used with particular populations. Thus, the scale's validity was tested through CFA to confirm the measurement model specified by the EFA and to test how the model fits the observed data. CFA and SEM were conducted using IBM AMOS 21 software.

b. **Jurisdiction of the study:** This study covers the College and University students of Nagaland.

c. **Types of respondent:** In the study, the students studying in graduation and above were only considered irrespective of gender, grade, community, religion, etc.

d. **Universe of the study:** A pure quantitative method using a survey design was adopted for the study. There are 70 colleges and 4 Universities in Nagaland as of 31/12/2022 (Nagaland University 2023). All these 70 colleges are affiliated to Nagaland University. The study was confined to these Colleges and Universities.

e. **Sample, sample unit and data collection:** The sample was drawn using multi-Stage sampling. In the first stage of sampling, four institutions were selected so that the students of these institutions represent the student community of Nagaland. The selected institutions are Nagaland University Kohima Campus, St. Joseph's College, Zakhama, Tetso College, and Bosco College of Teachers Education. Students from all districts of Nagaland are found studying in these institutions. As per the interactions with the college authorities, it was found that these institutions have around 6000 students' altogether. In the second stage of sampling, simple random sampling was used. The online questionnaire was circulated among all the institutions' students through their respective teachers and college authorities. Altogether, 392 responses were received from the students of these institutions. Therefore, the sample size of this present study is 392.

f. **Questionnaire development:** A structured Questionnaire was developed for collecting primary data. Several variables were identified after reviewing the literature to measure the Impact of social media on the selection of tourist destinations among the College and University students of Nagaland. Several statements or items were generated to measure the overall scores regarding the Impact of social media on the selection of tourist destinations. Tham A et. al. (2019) identified three different dimensions, namely "Level of Social Media Engagement (SME)," Destination novelty and familiarity (DNF), and "complexity of planning decisions (CPD)" for measuring the Impact of social media influence. Barman & Sharma (2021) also replicated the same approach in their study. Based upon the identified three dimensions and review of related literature, 20 different statements were put up for constructing a social media impact scale.   The items are as follows:

Table-1: Items for Exploratory Factor Analysis

Item No.	Code	Statement description	Item Correlation Score	Remarks
1	CPD1	I have knowledge on Tourist destinations because of Facebook/ Instagram/ YouTube/ Twitter	0.623	Reliable
2	SME1	When I see some posts/ uploads on Tourist destinations on Facebook/ Instagram/ You Tube/ Twitter, I go through them. (SME1)	0.672	Reliable
3	DNF1	Before visiting a tourist destination, I look for contents on the Tourist destinations on Facebook/ Instagram/ You Tube/ Twitter	0.692	Reliable
4	CPD2	I believe in information available about Tourist Destinations on social media	*****	Removed in EFA

5	SME2	I post queries on Tourist destinations on Social Media	0.538	Reliable
6	SME3	I respond to queries on Tourist destinations on Social Media	0.484	Reliable
7	DNF2	I view sponsored content on Tourist destinations on Social Media	0.607	Reliable
8	CPD3	I go through Ratings/ Review of Tourist destinations which are available on Social Media	0.769	Reliable
9	DNF3	I look for recommendations on Tourist destinations on Social Media	0.813	Reliable
10	CPD4	I have decided to visit some tourist destinations because of Social Media	0.763	Reliable
11	CPD5	Social media help me to gather tourism cost related information.	0.795	Reliable
12	SME4	'Comment' and 'Reply' in social media provides important information.	0.710	Reliable
13	DNF4	'Videos' shared on social media influence me to select any destination.	0.765	Reliable
14	DNF5	'Images' of tourism spots shared on social media attract me to visit that place.	0.790	Reliable
15	DNF6	Social media help me to get travel route information.	0.821	Reliable
16	CPD6	Safety and security issues tourism destination can be identified from social media	0.709	Reliable
17	CPD7	Problems or risks in tour destination can be pointed from social media.	0.650	Reliable
18	SME5	Social media can be helpful to know about the restaurant or food facilities.	0.767	Reliable
19	SME6	Idea about accommodation facilities can be obtained through social media.	0.751	Reliable
20	CPD8	To select the best time to visit, social media helps me.	0.765	Reliable

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire

The questions in the questionnaire had 5 options ranging from 1 to 5 where 1 represented *strongly disagree* and 5 represented *strongly agree* about their opinion on the impact of social media. Therefore, the quantitative score of each question was minimum 1 and maximum 5.

g. **Reliability analysis:** In the first step of data analysis, it was very much necessary to determine whether the data for the study was reliable. In order to do that, the Cronbach alpha value of the data with the help of the SPSS software was calculated. Nunnaly J (1978) has indicated 0.7 to be an acceptable reliability coefficient. The Cronbach alpha value, as calculated for the 20 selected variables, was found to be 0.947. As the calculated value of Cronbach's alpha is more than 0.7, the data collected for the study were highly reliable. The item correlation score statistics were calculated for each item, as shown in Table-1, with the total score, and the same was found to be reliable for all the items except CPD2.

h. **Exploratory factor analysis (EFA):** In order to perform factor analysis, it was essential to establish the reliability and validity of the obtained reduction. The sample should also be adequate. It was done with the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test of sphericity. The result of the KMO and Barttlet's test generated a KMO statistics value of 0.958 which is more than 0.5, and Barttlet's test p-value of 0.000, which is less than the significance level of 0.05. Therefore, the sample data of the study was suitable for Exploratory Factor Analysis.

Table-2 displays the total variance explained at three stages for factors that affect the student's selection choices of tourist destinations of the students. Three groups were extracted because their

Eigen values are more than one. With the three groups extracted, 67.40% of the variance was explained.

Table 2: The total variance explained

Groups	Rotation sum of the squared loadings		
	Total	**Percentage of Variance**	**Cumulative Percentage**
1	5.713	30.068	30.068
2	4.389	23.100	53.168
3	2.705	14.235	67.403

Source: Compiled from questionnaire and extracted from SPSS output

Table-3 shows the rotated component/factor matrix for the questionnaire. In order to interpret the results, a cutoff point was decided. Generally, it is taken above 0.5. (Chawla & Sondhi, 2011).

Table-3: The rotated component matrix with new nomenclatures of components

Item	Components						
	1		CFA Factor Key	**2**	CFA Factor Key	**3**	CFA Factor key
DNF1	.742		SMS1				
DNF3	.733		SMS2				
CPD1	.709	Social Media Stimuli (SMS)	SMS3				
CPD3	.709		SMS4				
CPD5	.676		SMS5				
DNF5	.668		SMS6				
CPD4	.667		SMS7				
SME1	.652		SMS8				
DNF4	.595		SMS9				
SME4	.524		SMS10				
CPD7				.819	CTSC1		
CPD6				.788	CTSC2		
SME5				.705	Comfort, Timing and Security Concerns (CTSC) CTSC3		
SME6				.696	CTSC4		
CPD8				.671	CTSC5		
DNF6				.616	CTSC6		
SME3						.877	Destination Appetite (DA) DA1
SME2						.865	DA2
DNF2						.716	DA3

Source: Compiled from the questionnaire

After performing the varimax rotation method with Kaizer normalization using the SPSS software, three new groups were successfully identified out of the present 19 variables or factors that impact the students. Table-3 shows the rotated component matrix, their new factor groupings, and their new nomenclatures.

Therefore, the Exploratory Factor Analysis identified three primary constructs of Social Media Impact on tourist destination choices in the state of Nagaland as Social Media Stimuli (SMS), Comfort, Timing and Security Concerns (CTSC), and Destination Appetite (DA).

i. **Findings of the Exploratory Factor Analysis:** The most important construct which impacts the minds of the students regarding their selection of tourist destination is "Social Media Stumuli (SMS)," which comprises the items DNF1, DNF3, CPD1, CPD3, CPD5, DNF5, CPD4, SME1, DNF4 and SME4 of the questionnaire. The "Social Media Stumuli (SMS)" construct explains 30.068% of the total variance. It is followed by the "Comfort, Timing and Security Concerns (CTSC)" construct, which accounts for 23.10% of the total variance explained. It comprises of the items CPD7, CPD6, SME5, SME6, CPD8 and DNF6 of the questionnaire. The third most important construct is the "Destination appetite (DA)," accounting for 14.235% of the variance explained. It consists of the items SME3, SME2, and DNF2 items of the questionnaire.

RESULTS

Social media impact on selection of tourist destination: confirmatory factor analysis approach

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was performed to confirm the structure that emerged from Exploratory Factor Analysis used to study the relationship between a set of observed and continuous latent variables. It adds the ability to test constraints on the parameters of the factor model to the methodology of EFA. The new 19 variables identified by the EFA were analyzed by IBM AMOS 21.0 software. The Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) validates the dimensions of the impact assessment questionnaire explored through the EFA. The new codes of the items for CFA are shown in Table 3.

Assessment of the measurement model:

The standard Measurement Model assessment involves a total of four stages. They are:
i)   To check for the Factor Loading. As per the procedure the factor loading for all the observed variables should be greater than 0.5.
ii)   Assessing the model fit.
iii)   Re-specify the model to improve the model fit.
iv)   Assess the reliability and validity.

Figure-2 shows the basic hypothesized model of the study. As suggested by the EFA, three groups of factors were identified, each representing a social media impact scale construct.
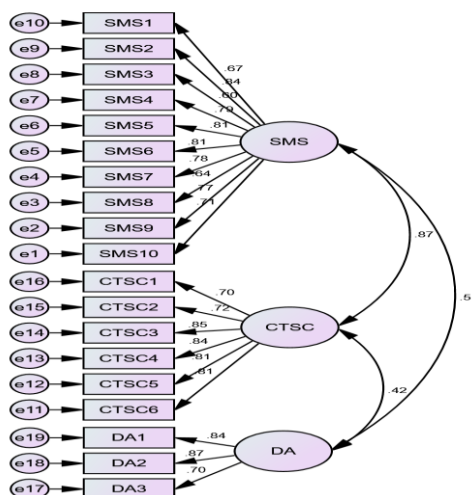

Figure 2: Standardized factor loadings for measurement model

The factor loadings of the basic hypothesized models are presented as follows:

Table 4: Standardized Factor Loading for the basic hypothesized model

Factor Key	Construct	Estimate	Factor Key	Construct	Estimate
SMS1		0.673	CTSC1		0.697
SMS2		0.836	CTSC2		0.725
SMS3		0.604	CTSC3	Comfort, Timing and Security Concerns (CTSC)	0.848
SMS4		0.787	CTSC4		0.840
SMS5	Social Media Stimuli (SMS)	0.813	CTSC5		0.815
SMS6		0.807	CTSC6		0.813

SMS7		0.776			
SMS8		0.640	DA1		0.838
SMS9		0.770	DA2	Destination Appetite (DA)	0.874
SMS10		0.707	DA3		0.696

Source: AMOS output (Compiled from questionnaire)

From the above table, it has been seen that, the factor loading as generated by the SPSS AMOS output is found to be greater than 0.5. Therefore, the first stage of assessment of the measurement model is successfully completed.

The assessment of the model fit involves the following values as given by Sharif and Nia (2018)

- Reporting of Chi Square value, its degrees of freedom and p-value even if it is significant. As per our analysis the Chi Square value is as follows:

Table-5: Chi Square (CMIN) value

Model	NPAR	CMIN	DF	P	CMIN/DF
Default model	41	752.685	149	.000	5.052

Source: AMOS output

- As seen above, the Chi-Square (CMIN) value is 752.685, which is significant. As per Sharif and Nia (2018), the CMIN/DF value must be less than 5.0 to be acceptable. Hence, there was a scope for improving the model fit.
  - The incremental fit indices as given by the AMOS output is given summarized below:

Table-6(i): The incremental fit indices

Model	NFI Delta1	RFI rho1	IFI Delta2	TLI rho2	CFI
Default model	.860	.840	.885	.867	.884

Table-6(ii): The improved incremental fit indices

NFI Delta1	RFI rho1	IFI Delta2	TLI rho2	CFI
.911	.896	.937	.925	.936

Source: AMOS output

For model fit, at least three of the above indices should be greater than 0.9. Therefore, there was a scope to further re-specify the measures to improve the model fit.

- The model fit measures, as generated by the plugin of James Gaskin, are given as follows:

Table 7(i): Model Fit measures

Measure	Estimate	Threshold	Interpretation
CMIN	752.685	--	--
DF	149	--	--
CMIN/DF	5.052	Between 1 and 3	Terrible
CFI	0.884	>0.95	Need More DF
SRMR	0.072	<0.08	Excellent
RMSEA	0.102	<0.06	Terrible

Table 7(ii): Model Fit measures

Measure	Estimate	Threshold	Interpretation
CMIN	477.412	--	--
DF	145	--	--
CMIN/DF	3.292	Between 1 and 3	Acceptable
CFI	0.936	>0.95	Acceptable
SRMR	0.065	<0.08	Excellent
RMSEA	0.077	<0.06	Acceptable

Source: Gaskin & Lim (2016) AMOS plugin "Model Fit Measures"

- As per the above, there were scopes to further re-specify the measures to improve the model fit. Hence, we proceeded to the next step of improving the model fit.

- As suggested by the modification indices in the AMOS output file, the error terms e13 – e14, e15 – e16, e7-e9, and e8-10 were connected. It implied some covariance among these unobserved variables attached to the observed variables. After connecting these terms, once again, the estimates were recalculated, and the following figures were obtained:

- As seen from the above table-6(ii), the incremental fit indices Bentler- Bonner Normed Fit Index (NFI), Incremental Fit Index (IFI), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), and comparative fit Index (CFI) were more significant than 0.9 and hence satisfy the conditions for model fit. The improved model fit measures as given by the plugin of James Gaskin (2016) is shown is Table 7(ii)

The Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) value is less than 0.08, and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) value is less than 0.08. Therefore, now the default model has all the requirements to be within the acceptable Goodness of fit (GOF) level.
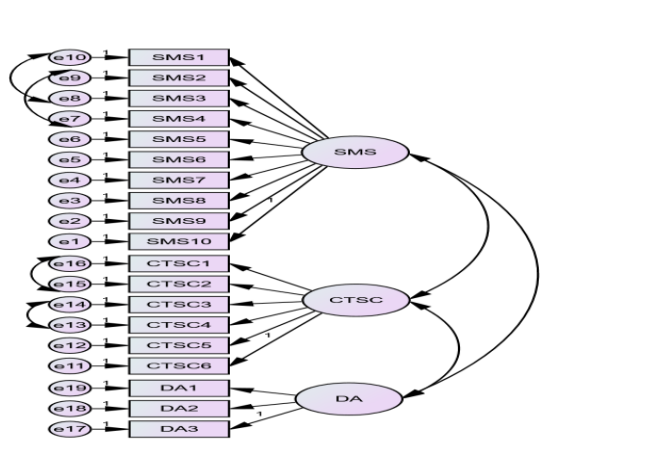
The improved default model is shown in Figure-3:

Figure 3: Improved/ modified measurement model

Assessment of validity and reliability

The assessment of validity and reliability of the model involves two parts:
  I.   The assessment of Convergent Validity
  II.   The assessment of Discriminant Validity.

In order to establish the convergent validity of the constructs, the standardized factor loading was reviewed. According to Hair et al. (2010), standardized loadings should be 0.50 or higher average variance extracted (AVE) should be 0.50 or greater, and composite reliability should be 0.70 or more for establishing convergent validity. From the table-11, it was found that all the factor loadings of the individual factors are greater than 0.50, and all are within the range between 0.604 and 0.874. Thus, it satisfies the first condition of convergent validity. The average Variance Extracted (AVE) for the three dimensions (Social Media Stimuli (SMS), Comfort, Timing and Security Concerns (CTSC), and Destination Appetite (DA)) is 0.547, 0.596, and 0.650, respectively. Thus, all AVEs for each dimension exceed the Variance attributable to measurement error (i.e., AVE > 0.50).

Table-8: Testing of convergent validity and reliability

Constructs	Acceptable Value		Calculated Value		
	CR	AVE	CR	AVE	
Social Media Stimuli (SMS)	>0.7	>0.5	0.923	0.547	CR>AVE
Comfort, Timing and Security Concerns (CTSC)			0.898	0.596	
Destination Appetite (DA)			0.847	0.650	

Source: Gaskin and Lim (2016), "Master Validity Tool", AMOS Plugin.

The composite reliability (CR) values as per the above table for all the dimensions are 0.923, 0.898, and 0.847, respectively. The value of CR exceeds the threshold limit of 0.7. Thus, because of the above analysis, the Convergent Validity and Reliability of the adopted Impact Assessment model have been tested and established.

Discriminant Validity is the extent to which a construct is unidimensional and distinct from other constructs. In other words, if the inter-correlations among the set of indicators, which are supposed to measure different latent constructs, are not too high, they exhibit discriminant validity. The discriminant validity of the constructs was computed and depicted in the following table:

Table 9: Testing of discriminant validity

Constructs	Calculated Values		Re-Calculated Value		Accepted Value
	AVE	MSV	AVE	MSV	
Social Media Stimuli (SMS)	0.547	0.835	0.548	0.400	AVE > MSV
Comfort, Timing and Security Concerns (CTSC)	0.596	0.835	0.737	0.400	
Destination Appetite (DA)	0.650	0.247	0.650	0.315	

Source: Gaskin and Lim (2016), "Master Validity Tool", AMOS Plugin.

The above analysis shows that the AVE for SMS and CTSC values are less than the Maximum Shared Variance (MSV) values. The implication is that the constructs SMS and CTSC are not entirely unidirectional and not distinct from one another. This situation occurs when the factors within the respective constructs have significant factor loadings in both constructs. The same can be verified from the Exploratory Factor Analysis on the factors of the above two constructs in the SPSS software. The result of the SPSS is reproduced below:

Table-10: Rotated component matrix (SMS and CTSC)

| Factor	Components	
	Social Media Stimuli (SMS)	Comfort, Timing and Security Concerns (CTSC)
SMS2	.786	
SMS4	.774	
SMS1	.743	
SMS5	.716	.401
SMS7	.709	
SMS3	.679	
SMS8	.648	
SMS6	.626	.550
SMS9	.592	.516
SMS10	.539	.479
CTSC1		.846
CTSC2		.819
CTSC3	.450	.713
CTSC4	.437	.705
CTSC5	.451	.687
CTSC6	.551	.641

Source: SPSS EFA output on SMS and CTSC

From the above EFA, it has been observed that, the factors CTSC3, CTSC4, CTSC5, CTSC6, SMS10, SMS9, SMS6 and SMS5 have significant cross loading greater than 0.4 on both the components. This is the root cause of the non-validation of the discriminant validity. Now, in order to achieve the discriminant validity of the hypothesized model, the factors having cross loadings are removed from the CFA diagram in the AMOS software one by one starting from the highest cross loading factor 0.551

of CTSC6. After removing one such factor the estimates of AMOS are recalculated. This process is repeated again till the time when we get the value of AVE greater than MSV.

After removing the factors CTSC6, CTSC5, CTSC4, CTSC3, SMS10, SMS9 and SMS6, the desired result has been achieved which is presented in Table-9 in Re-Calculated value column.

Thus, we have achieved the desired result that is AVE > MSV and this establishes the Discriminant Validity of the hypothesized model. As such the final valid and reliable model of Impact of social media on Tourist Destination among the College and University students are presented below:
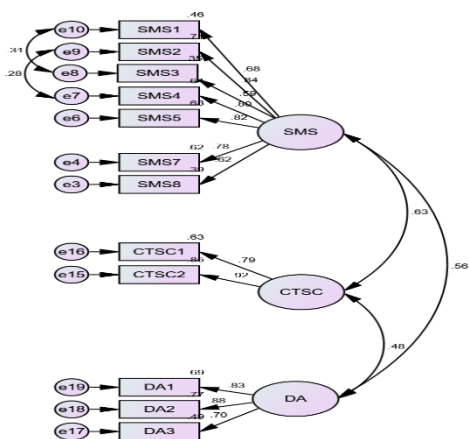
Figure 4: Final validated and reliable model of Impact of social media
Table-11: Validated constructs and variables of the hypothesized model

| Sl No.	Key	Variables for CFA	Construct
1	SMS1	Before visiting a tourist destination, I look for contents on the Tourist destinations on Facebook/ Instagram/ You Tube/ Twitter	Social Media Stimuli (SMS)
2	SMS2	I look for recommendations on Tourist destinations on Social Media	
3	SMS3	I have knowledge on Tourist destinations because of Facebook/ Instagram/ You Tube/ Twitter	
4	SMS4	I go through Ratings/ Review of Tourist destinations which are available on social media	
5	SMS5	Social media help me to gather tourism cost related information.	
6	SMS7	I have decided to visit some tourist destinations because of social media	
7	SMS8	When I see some posts/ uploads on Tourist destinations on Facebook/ Instagram/ You Tube/ Twitter, I go through them	
8	CTSC1	Problems or risks in tour destination can be pointed from social media.	Comfort, Timing and Security Concerns (CTSC)
9	CTSC2	Safety and security issues tourism destination can be identified from social media	
10	DA1	I respond to queries on Tourist destinations on social media	Destination Appetite (DA)
11	DA2	I post queries on Tourist destinations on social media	
12	DA3	I view sponsored content on Tourist destinations on social media	

Source: Authors

This model is fit for further analysis and carried forward to the Structural Equation Modeling framework for further analysis and hypothesis testing.

Social media impact on selection of tourist destination: structural equation modeling (sem) approach

The last stage of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is the Structural Model Assessment (SMA) which follows the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) presented in the previous section. This stage comprises three parts, viz Model Fit Assessment.

I.   Estimating Path Coefficients (Hypothesis Testing)

II.   Estimating squared multiple correlations (R^2)

The CFA model presented in the previous section gives us three validated constructs viz Social Media Stimuli (SMS), Comfort, Timing and Security Concerns (CTSC) and Destination Appetite (DA) for the impact of social media in selecting the tourist destinations. The hypothesized model for the SMA is presented below considering SMS as an endogenous (dependent) variable and CTSC and DA as an exogenous (independent) variable.
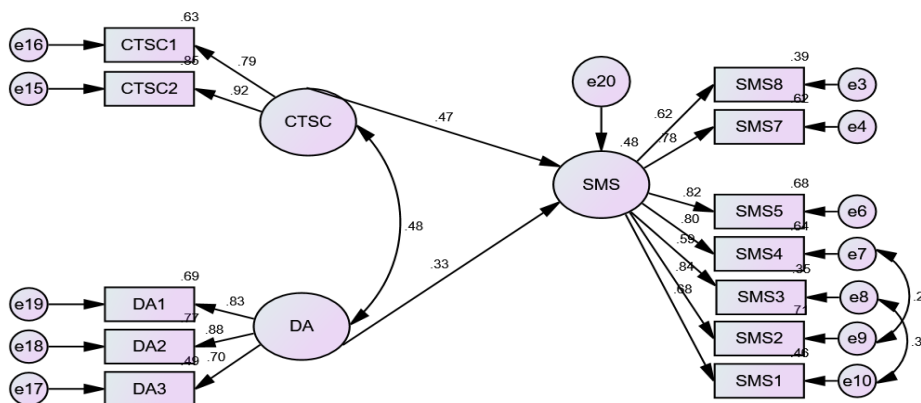
Figure 5: Structural model assessment diagram of the SEM

The model fit assessment of this model is presented below:

Table 12: The SEM model fit measures

Measure	Estimate	Threshold	Interpretation
CMIN	131.775	--	--
DF	49	--	--
CMIN/DF	2.689	Between 1 and 3	Excellent
CFI	0.968	>0.95	Excellent
SRMR	0.057	<0.08	Excellent
RMSEA	0.066	<0.06	Acceptable
PClose	0.028	>0.05	Acceptable

Source: gaskin, j. & lim, j. (2016), "model fit measures", amos plugin.

Table-13: Model fit indices

Sl No.	Model Fit Indices	Calculated Value	Criteria
1	Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	0.968	0-1
2	Normed Fit Index (NFI)	0.951	0-1
3	Tucker Lewis Index (TLI)	0.957	0-1
4	Parsimonious Normed Fit Index (PNFI)	0.706	0-1
5	Parsimony Comparative Fit Index (PCFI)	0.719	0-1
6	Relative Fit Index (RFI)	0.934	0-1
7	Incremental Fit Index (IFI)	0.969	0-1
8	Adjusted Goodness of fit index (AGFI)	0.918	0-1
9	Goodness of Fit Index (GFI)	0.949	0-1

Source: AMOS output

From the above tables, it has been observed that, the model satisfies all the criteria to be fit for further analysis and interpretation.

The second part of the SEM is the estimation of Path Coefficients and Hypothesis testing. The following are the hypotheses formulated for this model:

I.   There is no significant direct effect of Social Media Stimuli (SMS) on Comfort, Timing and Security Concerns (CTSC).
II.   There is no significant direct effect of Social Media Stimuli (SMS) on Destination Appetite (DA).

The AMOS output figures are extracted as follows:

Table-14: Hypothesis testing results

Paths between constructs	Estimate(β)	S. E	C.R	P Value	Remarks
CTSC $\leftarrow$ SMS	0.313	0.044	7.096	0.000	H1 rejected
DA $\leftarrow$ SMS	0.269	0.049	5.491	0.000	H2 rejected

According to Table 14, all paths in the final model were significant ($p<0.05$). In this context, it was found that the higher education student's social media stimulus (SMS) had a direct positive significant effect on their Comfort, Timing, and Security Concerns (CTSC) ($\beta=0.313$; $p<0.05$) and Destination Appetite (DA) ($\beta=0.269$; $p<0.05$) as part of the tourist destination. Based on these findings, it could be stated that the two null hypotheses, "There is no significant direct effect of SMS on CTSC and DA of tourist destination," were rejected. Hence, it may conclude that SMS has a significant direct effect on CTSC and DA.

The squared multiple correlations (R^2) value of SMS is found to be 0.485, which signifies that the hypothesized model explains 48.5% of the variance of SMS.

DISCUSSION

The internal consistency coefficient was applied to determine the scale's reliability; the calculated Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency coefficient was 0.947 value as calculated for the 20 selected items. As the calculated value of Cronbach's alpha is more than 0.7, the data collected for the study is highly reliable. The significance of item-total scale correlation values was found reliable for all the items except CPD2 (I believe in the information about Tourist Destinations on social media). The result of the KMO and Barttlet's test generated KMO; therefore, the sample data of the study was suitable for Exploratory Factor Analysis. The Exploratory Factor Analysis identified three primary constructs of Social Media Impact on tourist destination choices in the state of Nagaland as Social Media Stimuli (SMS); Comfort, Timing and Security Concerns (CTSC); and Destination Appetite (DA)

with their total variance explained 30.068%, 23.10% & 14.235% respectively. As a result of the CFA, the fit indices of the model were RMSEA = 0.077, CMIN /DF= 3.292, NFI = .911, CFI = 0.936, SRMR = 0.065, RFI = .896 was determined. When the obtained fit indices were examined, it was observed that some were excellent, and some were within the acceptable reference range, indicating that the measurement model fits the data well. The value of CR exceeds the threshold limit of 0.7. Thus, because of the above analysis, the Convergent Validity and Reliability of the adopted Impact Assessment model were tested and established. Concerning the discriminant validity, the constructs SMS and CTSC are somewhat unidirectional and not distinct. There is a significant direct effect of SMS on CTSC and DA

Three constructs of the Social Media Impact scale are interrelated. Whenever one person would like to go to a tourist destination, first the person searches about the place and then check for various other parameters such as the comfort of stay, timings, and security concerns. These two constructs then directly influence the person's engagement in social media to get more insights and ultimately lead to the decision-making process of selecting the tourist destination. These findings were similar to the findings of Tham et al. (2019), wherein they identified three different social media impact scale constructs. The direct impact of DA and CTSC on SMS also indicates that a person's mind responds in positive and negative ways, respectively, following social media content. This finding is similar to the findings of Sengun (2015), wherein the author found that social media has a positive and negative influence on tourism marketing as the young generation has been affected by comments and personal experiences of other users on social media.

The study's findings may be helpful in the Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) that uses social media extensively to market their product and services. The study was confined to College and University students with high involvement in social media. Therefore, the study's findings may differ for different groups of people. Also, the study was confined to Kohima and Dimapur in Nagaland. Though utmost care was taken in selecting the sample size, errors in the findings cannot be ruled out. Therefore, future researchers may explore other groups of people and regions of Nagaland and North East India to have more insights into the subject matter. An extensive survey may also carry out a trend analysis of the people of Nagaland to determine their destination choice. This study only adopted CFA and SEM approaches. For a further in-depth study of the variables and constructs, Mediation and Moderation studies may also be carried out by future researchers.

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