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Research article

Linking perceived agility, social media engagement, and tourist behavior in emerging economies

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ABSTRACT

This research explores the relationship between perceived agility, social media engagement, and tourist behavior in the setting of emerging economies. Drawing on the Stimulus–Organism–Response (SOR) framework and Service-Dominant Logic (SDL), it frames perceived agility and social media engagement as external stimuli, customer experience as the mediating organism, and tourist behavior as the resulting response. Digital literacy is examined as a moderating factor. Survey data from 252 tourists were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). Results show that perceived agility and social media engagement both significantly improve customer experience, which subsequently shapes tourist behavior. Moreover, these effects are more pronounced among tourists with higher digital literacy. The study enriches existing literature by extending agility into a customer-perceived dimension and identifying digital literacy as a boundary condition in digital tourism. From a practical standpoint, the findings offer guidance for tourism businesses and policymakers to foster digital inclusivity and adopt agile marketing approaches in emerging economies.

KEYWORDS

Perceived agility; social media engagement; customer experience; tourist behavior; digital literacy

Introduction

The global tourism industry has exhibited strong resilience in the post-pandemic era, with international tourist arrivals reaching nearly 1.4 billion in 2024—around 99% of pre-pandemic levels (UN tourism, 2025). This recovery has been closely linked to rapid digital transformation, which has reshaped how tourists seek information, evaluate destinations, and share experiences (Wei et al., 2025; Wu et al., 2025). Social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok have accelerated this shift by fostering participatory digital ecosystems, enabling tourists to act as both consumers and content creators. As a result, user-generated content (UGC) has become a critical driver of destination image formation and travel decision-making (Wang et al., 2022; Xiang et al., 2017). Tourism organizations are increasingly required to adopt agile and adaptive strategies to remain competitive in dynamic digital environments (Hussain & Malik, 2022; Kalaignanam et al., 2021). This challenge is particularly evident in emerging economies, where tourism is a vital contributor to economic growth and largely sustained by micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). Despite their importance, MSMEs often face barriers to digital adoption, limiting their ability to engage effectively with digitally savvy tourists (Alam et al., 2022; Hasibuan et al., 2025). These dual constraints highlight the need for a deeper understanding of how digital interactions shape tourist behavior. While prior studies have emphasized the role of social media engagement in influencing tourist behavior, particularly in relation to travel decisions, revisit intention, and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) (Bulumulla et al., 2024; Del Chiappa et al., 2015) most research has focused on direct effects. The mediating role of customer experience, which captures cognitive, emotional, and sensory responses, remains insufficiently examined (Dar & Kaur, 2024; Paisri et al., 2022).

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Another critical gap lies in the treatment of digital literacy. Despite its importance, digital literacy has been largely overlooked as a boundary condition in tourism research. Assuming uniform digital competencies oversimplifies tourist behavior, as individuals differ significantly in their ability to access, evaluate, and apply digital information. Lower literacy levels may lead to misinterpretation, information overload, and weaker engagement outcomes (Lee et al., 2025; Wu et al., 2025).

Perceived agility is another underexplored construct, defined as tourists' perception of how effectively service providers adapt to technological and environmental changes. Although agility has been widely studied as an organizational capability (Kalaignanam et al., 2021), its conceptualization from a customer perspective in tourism remains limited. Perceived agility reflects responsiveness and adaptability (Hussain & Malik, 2022). Yet empirical studies integrating perceived agility with social media engagement and digital literacy remain scarce. To address these gaps, this study develops and tests an integrated model linking perceived agility and social media engagement to tourist behavior, mediated by customer experience and moderated by digital literacy. Drawing on the SOR framework (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974) and Service-Dominant Logic (SDL) (Vargo & Lusch, 2008), perceived agility and social media engagement are conceptualized as external stimuli, customer experience as the organism, and tourist behavior as the response. This research contributes to the literature in three ways. First, it extends the concept of agility by introducing perceived agility as a customer-centered construct in tourism. Second, it incorporates digital literacy as a boundary condition in digital tourism behavior. Third, it reinforces customer experience as a mediating mechanism that explains how digital interactions translate into behavioral outcomes. From a practical perspective, the findings provide strategic insights for tourism enterprises and policymakers in emerging economies to enhance digital inclusivity and adopt more adaptive marketing strategies.

Literature review

This study applies the SOR framework (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974) together with SDL (Vargo & Lusch, 2008) to explain how digital interactions influence tourist behavior. Within the SOR perspective, perceived agility and social media engagement are treated as external stimuli that shape tourists' internal psychological states—specifically customer experience—which then drives behavioral outcomes such as revisit intention and electronic word-of-mouth (Bulumulla et al., 2024; Lee et al., 2025). From the SDL viewpoint, value is co-created through exchanges between service providers and tourists, where digital engagement and organizational responsiveness act as operant resources that generate experiential value. In this model, customer experience is positioned as a mediating construct linking digital stimuli to behavioral responses. Digital literacy is introduced as a moderating factor that determines how effectively tourists process and respond to digital information. Tourists with higher literacy are better able to evaluate credibility and interact with platforms, thereby amplifying the effects of perceived agility and social media engagement. Conversely, lower literacy levels may weaken these relationships due to misinterpretation or information overload (Wu et al., 2025). Perceived agility refers to tourists' assessment of how effectively service providers adapt to technological and environmental changes. Although agility has been extensively studied as an organizational capability in marketing and management, its application from a customer perspective in tourism remains limited (Hussain & Malik, 2022; Kalaignanam et al., 2021). In practice, perceived agility may be reflected in innovations such as online booking systems, virtual tours, and real-time service updates. In emerging economies such as Indonesia, tourism MSMEs often face infrastructural and regulatory challenges that restrict their ability to implement agile practices (Adey & Lisle, 2025; Handayani & Masrokhah, 2024). This makes perceived agility both essential and difficult to achieve. Within the SOR framework, perceived agility is expected to serve as a key stimulus that shapes customer experience and directly influences tourist behavior.

H1: Perceived agility has a positive effect on customer experience.
H2: Perceived agility has a positive direct effect on tourist behavior.

Social media engagement (SME) has become a central driver in tourism, shaping how travelers gather information, evaluate destinations, and share experiences. Platforms such as Instagram and TikTok facilitate

the creation and dissemination of UGC, which significantly influences electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) and revisit intentions (Del Chiappa et al., 2015; Wang et al., 2022; Wei et al., 2025). Through these interactions, SME enables value co-creation by positioning tourists as active participants and promoters of destination brands through authentic, real-time content (Bulumulla et al., 2024). From a managerial perspective, SME provides strategic advantages by supporting digital storytelling, enhancing customer engagement, and generating data-driven insights that improve competitiveness (Hasibuan et al., 2025; Khan & Khaki, 2025; Roy & Chakraborty, 2024). This is particularly relevant in emerging economies such as Indonesia, where tourism MSMEs often face infrastructural constraints, making social media a cost-effective and accessible marketing channel (Alam et al., 2022). Despite its growing importance, prior research has predominantly focused on the direct effects of SME on behavioral outcomes, with limited attention to the underlying mechanisms and boundary conditions that shape these relationships. In particular, the mediating role of customer experience and the moderating role of digital literacy remain insufficiently explored (Wu et al., 2025). Within the SOR framework, SME is conceptualized as an external stimulus that influences tourists' internal evaluations—specifically customer experience—which subsequently drive behavioral responses. Accordingly, this study positions SME as a key antecedent of both customer experience and tourist behavior, while digital literacy is expected to strengthen the effectiveness of these relationships.

H3: Social media engagement positively affects customer experience.
H4: Social media engagement positively affects tourist behavior.

Digital literacy refers to the ability to access, interpret, and effectively use digital information, playing a crucial role in shaping how tourists interact with online platforms and UGC (Wu et al., 2025). As digital ecosystems become increasingly complex, tourists require advanced competencies to navigate unstructured information such as reviews, images, and videos. Limited digital literacy restricts individuals' ability to assess content credibility and relevance, thereby reducing the effectiveness of digital interactions. Within the SOR framework, digital literacy functions as a moderating variable, influencing how external stimuli are processed into internal evaluations. Tourists with higher digital literacy are better equipped to identify credible information, engage effectively with platforms like Instagram and TikTok, and extract greater value from digital interactions (Mametja et al., 2023; Xiang et al., 2017). Conversely, lower literacy levels may result in misinterpretation, cognitive overload, and diminished customer experience. Digital literacy also affects how tourists perceive and respond to organizational adaptability and technological responsiveness. Tourists with higher digital competence are more likely to recognize agile features such as real-time updates, digital innovations, and platform integration, thereby enhancing the impact of perceived agility on customer experience. Those with lower literacy may fail to interpret these cues, limiting the perceived benefits of agility. In emerging economies such as Indonesia, disparities in infrastructure, education, and digital access continue to constrain digital literacy growth, limiting the capacity of tourism MSMEs to leverage digital marketing strategies effectively (Alam et al., 2022; Hasibuan et al., 2025; Rudraakshi Tiwari et al., 2025). Despite its strategic relevance, digital literacy remains underexplored in tourism research, particularly as a boundary condition that shapes the effectiveness of both social media engagement and perceived agility. This study therefore positions digital literacy as a critical moderating factor that strengthens the links between social media engagement, perceived agility, and customer experience.

H5a: Digital literacy positively moderates the relationship between social media engagement and customer experience.
H5b: Digital literacy positively moderates the relationship between perceived agility and customer experience.

Customer experience is a multidimensional construct encompassing cognitive, emotional, sensory, and social responses that arise from tourists' interactions throughout their travel journey. It reflects the overall perceived value of tourism encounters and plays a critical role in shaping behavioral outcomes such as revisit intention and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) (Paisri et al., 2022). Within the SOR framework, customer

experience functions as the "organism" that mediates the relationship between external stimuli—such as perceived agility and social media engagement—and subsequent behavioral responses. In digital tourism contexts, customer experience is increasingly shaped by online interactions, where UGC and influencer activities enhance perceived authenticity and destination image, thereby strengthening emotional engagement and travel intentions (Bulumulla et al., 2024; Del Chiappa et al., 2015). From the perspective of SDL, value is co-created through these digital interactions, enabling more personalized and immersive experiences (Basupi & Chatibura, 2025; Promise Opute et al., 2020). Positive experiences act as behavioral drivers by reinforcing satisfaction, encouraging revisit intention, and stimulating eWOM, thus serving as a key link between digital engagement and tourist behavior (Abuhjeeleh et al., 2023). Advancements in digital technologies further enable tourism providers to utilize user-generated data to identify experiential patterns and tailor services to evolving customer expectations (Sánchez-Franco & Rey-Tienda, 2024). For MSMEs in emerging economies such as Indonesia, delivering compelling customer experiences is essential despite infrastructural and resource constraints. Agile practices—such as mobile-based services, digital communication channels, and adaptive service delivery—have been shown to enhance service quality and customer satisfaction (Alam et al., 2022; Ramachandran et al., 2024; Saner et al., 2015). Despite its strategic importance, customer experience is often treated as a direct outcome rather than a mediating mechanism in tourism research. This study addresses this limitation by positioning customer experience as a central construct that explains how perceived agility and social media engagement are translated into tourist behavior. In addition, motivational factors such as curiosity, knowledge-seeking, and collective memory further enrich the experiential process and influence behavioral outcomes (Dar & Kaur, 2024).

H6: Customer experience has a positive effect on tourist behavior.

Tourist behavior encompasses a wide range of activities, including information search, destination choice, service consumption, revisit intention, and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM). In contemporary tourism, these behaviors are increasingly shaped by digital stimuli and platform-based interactions. UGC shared through platforms such as Instagram and Facebook has significantly transformed how tourists evaluate destinations and make travel decisions (Mametja et al., 2023; Xiang et al., 2017). Empirical evidence suggests that positive customer experiences derived from social media engagement (SME) significantly enhance behavioral outcomes, particularly revisit intention and eWOM. Factors such as perceived authenticity, influencer credibility, and destination image play a crucial role in reinforcing these effects (Bulumulla et al., 2024; Hasibuan et al., 2025; Paisri et al., 2022; Roy & Chakraborty, 2024). However, tourist behavior is not solely determined by digital engagement. Structural factors—including infrastructure, service accessibility, and governance—also influence decision-making, particularly in emerging economies such as Indonesia (Adey & Lisle, 2025; Alam et al., 2022; Rudraakshi Tiwari et al., 2025). Despite these constraints, perceived value and experiential quality remain central drivers of tourist behavior. Advances in digital analytics, particularly the utilization of UGC, enable tourism providers to identify experiential triggers and anticipate behavioral patterns more effectively (Sánchez-Franco & Rey-Tienda, 2024; Wu et al., 2025). Nevertheless, much of the existing literature continues to treat tourist behavior as a direct outcome of digital engagement or service quality, with limited attention to the underlying mechanisms that explain these relationships. To address this limitation, the present study positions tourist behavior as the ultimate outcome variable influenced by perceived agility and social media engagement, with customer experience serving as a mediating mechanism and digital literacy acting as a moderating factor. This integrated approach provides a more comprehensive understanding of how digital interactions, individual competencies, and contextual constraints jointly shape tourist behavior in emerging economies.

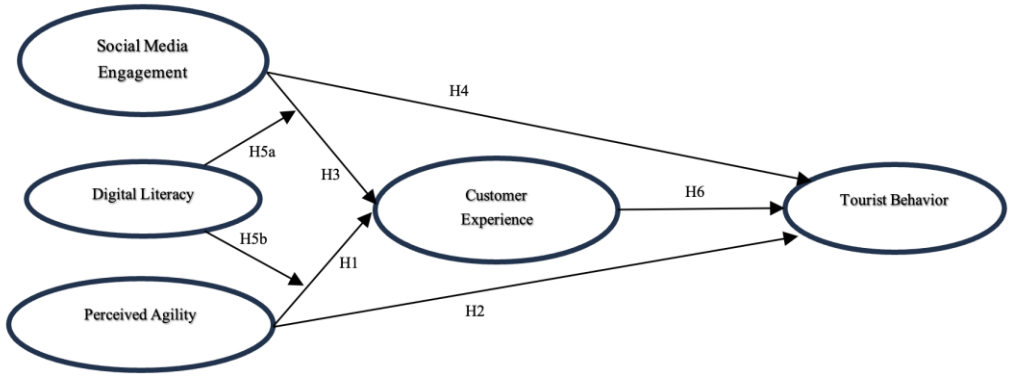

Figure 1 Research model

Methodology

This study employs a quantitative causal research design to examine the relationships among perceived agility, social media engagement, customer experience, tourist behavior, and digital literacy. The research model is grounded in the SOR framework and analyzed using structural equation modeling (SEM). Data were collected from 252 valid respondents between May and July 2025 using purposive convenience sampling. The respondents were Indonesian tourists aged 18 years and above who had previously engaged with tourism-related content on social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Instagram, and Facebook. The sample shows a relatively balanced gender distribution, with the majority aged between 21 and 30 years (41.7%) and 50.4% holding a bachelor's degree. A structured questionnaire was developed using measurement items adapted from prior validated studies (Kalaignanam et al., 2021; Khan, 2020; Paisri et al., 2022; Reena & Udita, 2020). All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The instrument was translated from English into Bahasa Indonesia using a back-translation method involving bilingual experts to ensure semantic equivalence. A pilot test was conducted with 40 domestic tourists in Yogyakarta to assess clarity and initial reliability, leading to minor refinements in wording. Data analysis followed a two-step approach using SPSS 25 and AMOS 25. First, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to evaluate the measurement model, including reliability (Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability) and convergent validity (average variance extracted). Discriminant validity was assessed using the Fornell–Larcker criterion. Second, SEM was applied to test the hypothesized relationships, including the mediating role of customer experience and the moderating effect of digital literacy. Model fit was evaluated using multiple indices, including chi-square (χ^2), goodness-of-fit index (GFI), comparative fit index (CFI), Tucker–Lewis index (TLI), and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). All hypotheses were tested at a 5% significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$). The structural model was visualized using a path diagram in AMOS, where latent variables are represented by circles and observed indicators by rectangles, with directional arrows indicating causal relationships.

Result and discussion

Path diagram

In this study, the SEM was employed to analyze the relationships among perceived agility, social media engagement, customer experience, tourist behavior, and digital literacy. SEM enables the simultaneous estimation of relationships between latent constructs and their observed indicators within a unified framework. The analysis was conducted using AMOS 25, beginning with the specification of a path diagram to represent the hypothesized relationships among variables. In this diagram, latent constructs are illustrated as circles, while observed indicators are represented as rectangles. Single-headed arrows indicate directional (causal) relationships, whereas double-headed arrows represent correlations between constructs (Hair, 2010).

The structural model positions perceived agility and social media engagement as exogenous variables influencing customer experience and tourist behavior. Customer experience is specified as a mediating

variable linking these stimuli to behavioral outcomes, while digital literacy is incorporated as a moderating variable affecting the strength of the relationships between perceived agility, social media engagement, and customer experience. This configuration reflects the SOR framework, where perceived agility and social media engagement function as external stimuli, customer experience represents the internal evaluation (organism), and tourist behavior constitutes the response. The inclusion of digital literacy as a moderator further refines the model by capturing individual differences in processing digital information. The path diagram serves as the basis for subsequent empirical testing, allowing for the evaluation of both direct and indirect effects among variables. It also facilitates the interpretation of how digital interactions and adaptive service capabilities translate into experiential and behavioral outcomes in the tourism context.

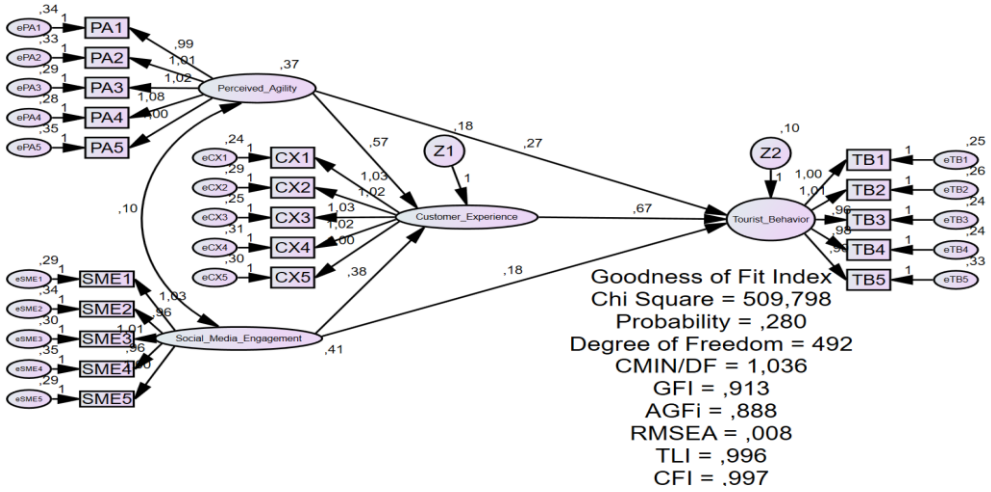

Figure 1 Path diagram model specification

SEM

Model goodness-of-fit test

The goodness-of-fit of the structural model was evaluated using several fit indices to assess how well the proposed model represents the observed data. The results indicate that the model demonstrates an acceptable level of fit. At a significance level of 0.05, the Chi-square value ($\chi^2 = 509.798$; df = 492) yields a probability value of 0.280, which exceeds the recommended threshold of 0.05. This result indicates that there is no significant difference between the sample covariance matrix and the model-implied covariance matrix, suggesting that the model fits the data well.

Furthermore, the CMIN/DF value is 1.036, which is below the recommended cutoff value of 2.00, indicating a good level of model parsimony. These findings confirm that the proposed structural model adequately represents the relationships among perceived agility, social media engagement, customer experience, tourist behavior, and digital literacy.

Table 1 Goodness of fit index

Goodness of fit Index	Cut off Value	Model Result	Justification
Chi Square	Expected Small	509,798	χ^2 table df (0.05, 492) = 543.63 is greater than χ^2 calculated = 509.798, indicating that the model is accepted (fit category).
Probability	≥ 0,05	0,28	Good to Fit
CMIN/DF	≤ 2.00	1,036	Good to Fit
GFI	≥ 0,90	0,913	Good to Fit
AGFI	≥ 0,90	0,888	Margin
TLI	≥ 0,95	0,996	Good to Fit
CFI	≥ 0,95	0,997	Good to Fit
RMSEA	≤ 0,08	0,008	Good to Fit

Further evaluation using additional fit indices supports the adequacy of the model. The GFI value of 0.913 exceeds the recommended threshold of 0.90, indicating a good model fit. Although the AGFI value of 0.888 is slightly below the ideal cutoff, it remains within an acceptable range, suggesting reasonable model

parsimony. Moreover, the TLI (0.996) and CFI (0.997) values are well above the recommended threshold of 0.95, indicating an excellent fit. The RMSEA value of 0.008, which is substantially below the maximum acceptable limit of 0.08, further confirms that the model has minimal approximation error and closely fits the population covariance structure. Overall, these results demonstrate that the structural model achieves a high level of goodness-of-fit. Despite the marginal shortfall in AGFI, the majority of indices—including Chi-square probability, CMIN/DF, GFI, TLI, CFI, and RMSEA—indicate excellent model performance. Therefore, the model can be considered valid and reliable for explaining the relationships among the studied variables (Hair Jr. et al., 2014).

Reliability test

The reliability analysis presented in Table 2 indicates that all constructs demonstrate strong internal consistency. Each construct achieved a Cronbach's Alpha (α) value above the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Byrne, 2016; Hair, 2010), confirming that the measurement scales used in this study are reliable.

Table 2 Reliability test

	Cronbach's Alpha
Customer Experience	0.883
Digital Literacy	0.867
Perceived Agility	0.857
Social Media Engagement	0.864
Tourist Behavior	0.893

Among the constructs, Tourist Behavior demonstrated the highest reliability with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.893, followed by Customer Experience (α = 0.883). Social Media Engagement and Digital Literacy also showed strong internal consistency, with α values of 0.864 and 0.867, respectively. Perceived agility recorded a slightly lower value (α = 0.857), yet it remains well above the acceptable threshold. Overall, these results confirm that all constructs exhibit high internal consistency, indicating that the measurement items reliably capture their respective theoretical dimensions.

Convergent validity

Convergent validity was assessed to ensure that the indicators consistently represent their respective latent constructs. Following the criteria of (Hair Jr. et al., 2014), convergent validity is established when standardized factor loadings exceed 0.50, with values above 0.70 considered ideal. The results indicate that most indicators across all constructs—Perceived agility, social media engagement, customer experience, tourist behavior, and digital literacy—meet these criteria. Specifically, Perceived agility (PA1–PA5) and Social media engagement (SME1–SME5) exhibit loadings ranging from 0.72 to 0.78 and 0.72 to 0.77, respectively, indicating strong convergence.

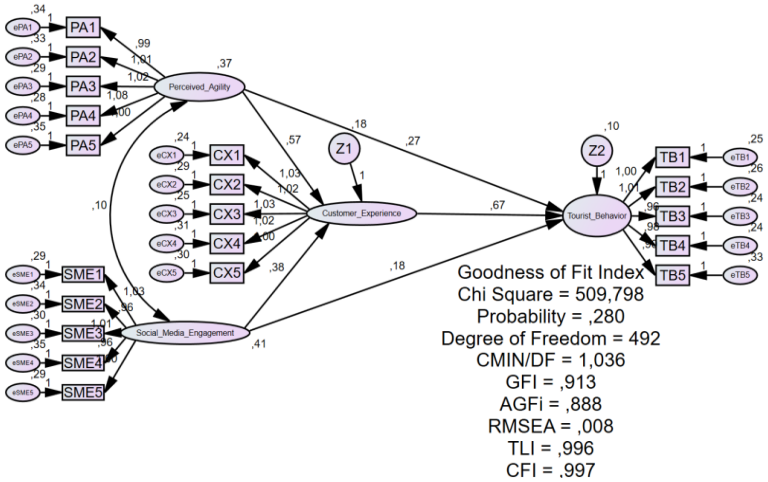

Figure 2 Loading factor variable

Customer Experience indicators (CX1–CX4) also demonstrate satisfactory loadings between 0.71 and 0.80. However, one indicator (CX5) shows a lower loading of 0.38, which falls below the recommended threshold. Despite this, the item is retained to preserve theoretical completeness, as the remaining indicators sufficiently represent the construct. Tourist Behavior demonstrates particularly strong convergent validity, with loadings ranging from 0.73 to 0.81 across all items. Overall, these findings confirm that the majority of indicators are statistically significant and exceed the recommended thresholds. With the exception of CX5, the measurement model demonstrates adequate convergent validity and is suitable for further structural analysis.

Variance extracted

Average Variance Extracted (AVE) is used to assess the proportion of variance captured by a latent construct from its indicators (F. Hair Jr et al., 2014). An AVE value of 0.50 or higher is considered acceptable, indicating that the construct explains at least half of the variance of its indicators and thus supports convergent validity.

Table 3 Variance extract test

	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Customer Experience	0.682
Digital Literacy	0.609
Perceived Agility	0.636
Social Media Engagement	0.648
Tourist Behavior	0.701

As presented in Table 3, all constructs demonstrate satisfactory convergent validity based on their AVE values. Tourist Behavior shows the highest AVE (0.701), followed by Customer Experience (0.682), Social Media Engagement (0.648), Perceived Agility (0.636), and Digital Literacy (0.609). All values exceed the recommended threshold of 0.50, indicating that each construct explains a substantial proportion of variance in its indicators. Overall, these results confirm that the measurement model exhibits strong convergent validity, and the indicators adequately represent their respective latent constructs.

Discriminant validity test

Discriminant validity assesses the extent to which a construct is empirically distinct from other constructs and accurately represents its intended concept. Following Hair et al., (2014), discriminant validity is established when the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (√AVE) for each construct exceeds its correlations with other constructs.

Customer Experience = √0.682 = 0.826
Digital Literacy = √0.609 = 0.780
Perceived Agility = √0.636 = 0.797
Social Media Engagement = √0.648 = 0.805
Tourist Behavior = √0.701 = 0.837

Table 4 Discriminant validity result

	Customer Experience	Digital Literacy	Moderating Effect 1	Moderating Effect 2	Perceived Agility	Social Media Engagement	Tourist Behavior
Customer Experience	0.826						
Digital Literacy	-0.038	0.780					
Moderating Effect 1	0.168	0.089	1.000				
Moderating Effect 2	0.222	-0.016	0.350	1.000			
Perceived Agility	0.559	0.001	-0.002	-0.001	0.797		
Social Media Engagement	0.457	-0.079	-0.001	0.010	0.232	0.805	
Tourist Behavior	0.768	-0.035	0.104	0.201	0.599	0.493	0.837

These results indicate that each construct shares greater variance with its own indicators than with other constructs, thereby satisfying the discriminant validity criterion. Accordingly, all constructs can be considered empirically distinct, supporting the robustness of the measurement model (Hair Jr. et al., 2014).

Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis testing was conducted at a 5% significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$), where a p-value below 0.05 indicates statistical significance and supports the proposed hypotheses. The Critical Ratio (CR) was also used to assess the strength of the relationships, with values exceeding the recommended threshold confirming significant effects. The results show that all proposed hypotheses are supported. Specifically, Social Media Engagement and Perceived Agility have significant positive effects on Customer Experience. Furthermore, Customer Experience, along with Social Media Engagement and Perceived Agility, significantly influences Tourist Behavior.

Table 5 All model result

Variabel			C.R	P Value	Justification
Customer_Experience	<---	Social_Media_Engagement	5,864	***	Significant
Customer_Experience	<---	Perceived_Agility	7,433	***	Significant
Tourist_Behavior	<---	Customer_Experience	7,497	***	Significant
Tourist_Behavior	<---	Perceived_Agility	3,742	***	Significant
Tourist_Behavior	<---	Social_Media_Engagement	3,175	0,001	Significant

For individuals with high digital literacy, the relationships among the studied variables remain strongly significant. Social Media Engagement and Perceived Agility have a positive impact on Customer Experience, while all three variables—Customer Experience, Perceived Agility, and Social Media Engagement—significantly influence Tourist Behavior. These findings suggest that individuals with higher digital literacy are better able to engage with digital platforms and recognize service responsiveness, which enhances their overall experience and strengthens their behavioral responses.

Table 6. High digital literacy models

Variabel			C.R	P Value	Justification
Customer_Experience	<---	Social_Media_Engagement	6,182	***	Significant
Customer_Experience	<---	Perceived_Agility	7,588	***	Significant
Tourist_Behavior	<---	Customer_Experience	5,951	***	Significant
Tourist_Behavior	<---	Perceived_Agility	2,9	0,004	Significant
Tourist_Behavior	<---	Social_Media_Engagement	3,121	0,002	Significant

For individuals with low levels of digital literacy, Social Media Engagement and Perceived Agility do not have a significant effect on Customer Experience. However, Customer Experience and Perceived Agility remain significant predictors of Tourist Behavior. In contrast, the direct effect of Social Media Engagement on Tourist Behavior is not supported in this group. These findings highlight the moderating role of digital literacy, where lower levels tend to weaken or diminish the influence of digital interactions, while higher levels strengthen the relationships among the variables.

Table 7 Low digital literacy models

Variabel			C.R	P Value	Justification
Customer_Experience	<---	Social_Media_Engagement	1,443	0,149	Insignificant
Customer_Experience	<---	Perceived_Agility	1,8	0,072	Insignificant
Tourist_Behavior	<---	Customer_Experience	3,363	***	Significant
Tourist_Behavior	<---	Perceived_Agility	2,584	0,01	Insignificant
Tourist_Behavior	<---	Social_Media_Engagement	0,144	0,885	Insignificant

Discussion

This study reinforces the importance of perceived agility and social media engagement in shaping customer experience within the tourism context. Perceived agility reflects how effectively tourism providers adapt to changing traveler needs, while social media engagement captures the depth and authenticity of interactions between tourists and service providers. Together, these factors influence how tourists interpret and evaluate their experiences, supporting prior findings that responsive service and meaningful digital engagement enhance satisfaction and loyalty (Bulumulla et al., 2024; Hussain & Malik, 2022). However, the effects of

perceived agility and social media engagement on customer experience are not uniform across all tourists. The findings reveal that digital literacy plays a critical moderating role. For tourists with high digital literacy, both perceived agility and social media engagement significantly enhance customer experience. These individuals are more capable of navigating digital platforms, evaluating information, and recognizing service responsiveness, which leads to richer and more personalized travel experiences. This supports Wu et al., (2025), who argue that digitally literate users are better equipped to assess credibility and actively participate in value co-creation. In contrast, tourists with lower digital literacy do not experience the same benefits. Their limited ability to engage with digital platforms and interpret online information reduces the impact of perceived agility and social media engagement on customer experience. This finding aligns with previous studies highlighting that digital skill gaps constrain the effective use of UGC and online platforms, particularly in emerging economies where disparities in infrastructure and education persist (Alam et al., 2022; Rudraakshi Tiwari et al., 2025). These results emphasize the importance of addressing digital inequality in tourism development.

Furthermore, customer experience is confirmed as a key determinant of tourist behavior. The results show that a positive experience significantly influences revisit intention, electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), and overall behavioral commitment. This supports the mediating role of customer experience in linking perceived agility and social media engagement to tourist behavior. Consistent with prior studies (Bulumulla et al., 2024; Paisri et al., 2022), customer experience acts as the mechanism through which digital interactions are translated into behavioral outcomes. In line with Basupi & Chatibura, (2025), memorable experiences represent a form of economic value that drives revisit intention, while factors such as service quality, accessibility, and destination image further strengthen behavioral responses (Darabseh et al., 2024). From a practical perspective, the findings suggest that tourism MSMEs and destination managers should not rely solely on digital marketing and agile strategies. Instead, they must also invest in improving digital literacy among tourists and stakeholders. This can be achieved through the development of user-friendly platforms, clear digital guidance, and collaborations with influencers to enhance engagement. Such efforts can help reduce the digital divide and ensure that broader segments of tourists benefit from digital transformation. Theoretically, this study contributes by positioning digital literacy as a key moderating variable and reaffirming customer experience as a central mediating mechanism in digital tourism research. By integrating these roles, the study extends existing literature on digital engagement and perceived agility (Wu et al., 2025; Xiang et al., 2017). Overall, digital literacy functions as an enabler of digital strategy effectiveness, while customer experience serves as the pathway through which perceptions are translated into tourist behavior. Future research may further explore this model across different cultural contexts or incorporate dynamic moderating effects to better capture variations in digital capability and access.

Conclusion and implication

This study confirms that perceived agility and social media engagement are critical determinants of customer experience in the tourism sector. Both variables influence tourist behavior directly and indirectly through the mediating role of customer experience. These findings reinforce prior research indicating that organizational adaptability and authentic digital engagement enhance tourist satisfaction and behavioral outcomes. However, the effectiveness of these digital factors varies across tourist segments. Digital literacy emerges as a key moderating variable. Among tourists with high digital literacy, perceived agility and social media engagement significantly enhance customer experience and subsequently influence tourist behavior. In contrast, these relationships are not significant among tourists with low digital literacy. This indicates that digital competence is not merely supportive but essential in maximizing the impact of digital tourism strategies, particularly in emerging economies such as Indonesia. From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes by positioning digital literacy as a boundary condition that shapes the effectiveness of digital engagement and agility. It also strengthens the role of customer experience as a mediating mechanism linking digital stimuli to behavioral outcomes, offering a more comprehensive understanding of how digital strategies translate into tourist actions.

From a practical standpoint, the findings suggest that tourism MSMEs and destination managers should not only focus on developing agile and engaging digital platforms but also invest in digital inclusivity.

Efforts such as improving user-friendly interfaces, providing accessible digital guidance, and collaborating with influencers can enhance engagement and experience quality. Additionally, policymakers are encouraged to support digital literacy programs and infrastructure development to ensure broader access to the benefits of digital tourism. Despite these contributions, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the sample focuses on Indonesian tourists who are active on social media, which may limit generalizability to less digitally engaged populations. Second, the cross-sectional design restricts the ability to capture behavioral changes over time. Third, this study considers digital literacy as the primary moderating variable, while other factors such as cultural background, travel motivation, and platform-specific engagement were not examined. Future research is recommended to adopt longitudinal or mixed-method approaches, expand demographic coverage, and incorporate additional variables to provide a more comprehensive understanding of digital tourist behavior.

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