

# INFLUENCE OF NEW MEDIA ON LANGKAWI AS A HERITAGE DESTINATION: A GENDER COMPARISON

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**ABSTRACT:** This study examines the influence of new media on tourists' intention to visit Langkawi as a heritage destination, with a focus on gender differences. Specifically, it investigates the effects of social media, online travel reviews (OTRs), and short video platforms on tourists' decision making and emotional engagement. A quantitative approach was employed, with data collected from tourists who have visited or plan to visit Langkawi and have interacted with new media. Multiple regression analysis indicates that all three digital platforms significantly enhance travel intention, with OTRs showing the strongest effect. The model explains 45.9% of the variance in travel intention, and no multicollinearity issues were detected. Independent samples t-tests reveal no significant gender differences in travel intention. These findings suggest that new media play a critical role in shaping tourists' travel decisions to heritage destinations, regardless of gender.

**Keywords:** tourists' intention, gender, social media, online travel review, short video platforms.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of new media has profoundly transformed the tourism industry, influencing how destinations are promoted and experienced [1]. Platforms such as social media, online travel reviews (OTRs), and short video platforms provide tourists with real time information, user generated content, and visually engaging narratives, thereby shaping perceptions and decision making processes [2]. Heritage destinations increasingly rely on digital media to communicate their cultural and ecological value to a diverse audience. Langkawi, a UNESCO Global Geopark in Malaysia, is renowned not only for its natural landscapes but also for its rich cultural heritage, including traditional Malay architecture, folklore, and ancient geological formations [3]. Tourism authorities and local stakeholders actively employ digital marketing campaigns to highlight these features, aiming to attract both domestic and international visitors [4].

Despite the growing use of new media in heritage tourism, existing research has predominantly focused on general marketing effectiveness, with limited attention to gender specific responses [5,6]. Gender has been shown to influence digital behaviour in tourism, with female tourists often engaging more in content creation and emotional storytelling, while male tourists tend to seek goal oriented and practical information [7, 8] These behavioural differences suggest that men and women may perceive and respond differently to new media content, yet few studies have examined this in the context of heritage destinations such as Langkawi.

This study addresses this gap by investigating how social media, OTRs, and short video platforms influence tourists' intention to visit Langkawi, with a specific focus on the moderating role of gender. Using a quantitative approach and survey data collected from visitors or prospective tourists who have engaged

with new media content, the research examines both the direct effects of these platforms on travel intention and potential gender based differences.

The findings of this study are expected to make both theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, it integrates gender as a moderating factor into the understanding of digital tourism behaviour, extending current frameworks of heritage tourism research [4]. Practically, it provides insights for destination marketers and policymakers to design targeted, inclusive, and effective digital campaigns that enhance tourist engagement and satisfaction. By addressing the intersection of new media and gender in heritage tourism, this study contributes to more nuanced and evidence based strategies for promoting destinations like Langkawi.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1. TOURIST INTENTION

Tourist intention refers to an individual's willingness or plan to visit a particular destination, shaped by perceptions, motivations, and external information sources. Heritage destinations, including historical, cultural, and natural sites, attract tourists seeking authentic experiences and deeper cultural understanding. Tourists' intention is influenced not only by the intrinsic characteristics of the site but also by digital content and information dissemination, which affect their decision making processes [9]

### 2. GENDER

Gender shapes tourists' perceptions, motivations, and decision making, influencing how individuals engage with tourism content and form travel intentions [10]. It may moderate the effects of new media on tourist intention, with men and women potentially responding differently to digital information and promotional content.

### 3. NEW MEDIA

New media encompasses digital platforms that allow real time, interactive communication, including social media, online travel reviews (OTRs), and short video platforms [16]. Unlike traditional media, new media facilitates multidirectional interactions, offering personalized, immersive, and accessible content. In tourism, new media enhances destination promotion, engagement, and decision making, making heritage sites more attractive and interactive for a global audience.

### 4. SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media provides a dynamic platform for users to share experiences, access information, and engage with tourism content [11] It influences tourists' perceptions, emotional connections, and travel intentions by offering visually rich and interactive content. High quality and credible social media content strengthens tourists' engagement and serves as a key tool for heritage destination marketing [12].

### 5. ONLINE TRAVEL REVIEWS (OTRS)

OTRs are user generated evaluations of destinations, services, and experiences shared on digital platforms, forming an important source of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) [13]. They provide authentic insights, reduce uncertainty, and influence tourists' perceptions, trust, and decision making. In heritage tourism, OTRs enhance the perceived authenticity and cultural value of destinations, thereby strengthening travel intentions [3].

### 6. SHORT VIDEO PLATFORMS

Short video platforms are emerging digital tools characterized by brief, visually engaging content and high user interactivity [15, 16]. These platforms enhance destination visibility, provide immersive experiences, and shape tourists' perceptions and emotional responses. Campaigns utilizing short videos, such as those by Langkawi tourism authorities, demonstrate their effectiveness in promoting heritage and cultural sites and motivating potential visitors.

## 7. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

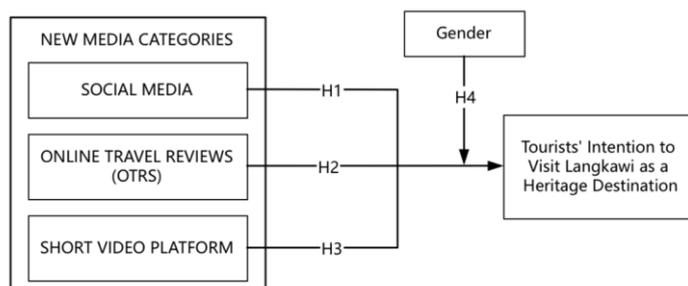


FIGURE 1. Framework.

## 8. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

- H1: Social media positively influence tourists' intention to visit Langkawi as a heritage destination.
- H2: Online Travel Reviews (OTRS) positively influences tourists' intention to visit Langkawi as a heritage destination.
- H3: Short video platform positively influences tourists' intention to visit Langkawi as a heritage destination.
- H4: Gender moderates the relationship between different new media categories and tourists' intention to visit Langkawi, with females showing higher engagement and influence than males.

## III. METHODOLOGY

### 1. RESEARCH DESIGN

This study employs a descriptive quantitative research design to examine how new media influences tourists' intention to visit Langkawi as a heritage destination, with a focus on gender differences. A structured questionnaire was used to collect measurable data, allowing statistical analysis of relationships among variables. This approach ensures objectivity, facilitates hypothesis testing, and supports the analysis of patterns across a large population.

### 2. POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The target population consists of tourists who have visited or plan to visit Langkawi and have engaged with new media content related to the destination. The planned sample size is approximately 300 respondents, including both male and female participants, ensuring sufficient data for gender comparison and multivariate analysis [2]

### 3. SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

A convenience sampling method was employed to collect data efficiently from accessible participants. This approach, commonly used in tourism research, allows for practical and diverse sampling, and supports meaningful gender comparisons using statistical tests such as t-test [12].

### 4. RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

A structured questionnaire served as the primary research instrument, including sections on demographic information, perceptions of Langkawi as a heritage destination, and engagement with new media platforms. The questionnaire consisted mainly of closed ended items to ensure consistency of responses and facilitate statistical analysis.

### 5. DATA COLLECTION

Data were collected through the structured questionnaire over two months period, targeting tourists who interacted with new media platforms. Surveys enable standardized data collection from a large sample, allowing comparisons between male and female respondents and supporting quantitative analysis of trends and relationships (Coffey et al., 2024).

#### 6. DATA ANALYSIS

Collected data were analysed using SPSS. Independent samples t-tests were conducted to compare male and female perceptions, while multiple regression analysis examined the effects of social media, online travel reviews, and short video platforms on tourists’ intention to visit Langkawi. Gender was tested as a moderating variable to determine whether it influences these relationships (Pratap Singh Kaurav et al., 2021).

#### 7. RELIABILITY TEST

Cronbach’s Alpha was used to assess the internal consistency of the questionnaire, measuring the reliability of items within the same construct. A value of 0.70 or higher was considered acceptable, ensuring that the instrument consistently measured the intended variables across respondents.

**Table 1.** Result of reliability test.

variable	Number of items	Cronbach’s Alpha
Social media	5	0.739
Online travel review (OTRs)	5	0.827
Short travel video (STV)	5	0.828
Travel Intention	4	0.833

### IV. FINDINGS

#### 1. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

The survey collected responses from 332 participants, with 44% male and 56% female. Most respondents were under 25 years old (77.1%), followed by 25–30 (16.3%). Nationals included 51% Malaysians and 49% from other countries. Regarding Langkawi visits, 79% had never been, 16% visited 1–3 times, and 5% more than 3 times. TikTok was the most used social media (48.8%), followed by Instagram (14.8%), Facebook (4.8%), X (3.6%), and other platforms (28%).

**Table 2.** Result demographic profile.

	Category	N=332	percentage
Gender	Male	146	44%
	Female	186	56%
Age	Below 25	256	77.1%
	25-30	54	16.3%
	31-35	9	2.7%
	36-40	7	2.1%
	41-45	5	1.5%
	45 Above	1	0.3%
Nationality	Malaysian	170	51%
	Non-Malaysian	162	49%
Frequency of travelling to Langkawi	Never	262	79%
	1-3 times	53	16%
	4-6 times	7	2%
	More than 6	10	3%
Most used social media platform	TikTok	162	48.8%
	Instagram	49	14.8%

Facebook	16	4.8%
X	12	3.6%
others	93	28.0%

## 2. Findings and Discussion

### 2.1 Model Summary

**Table 3.** Model Summary<sup>b</sup>.

Mod	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.678 <sup>a</sup>	.459	.454	1.97090

### 2.2 ANOVA

**Table 4.** ANOVA<sup>a</sup>.

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	1079.145	3	359.715	92.603	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	1270.220	327	3.884		
Total	2349.365	330			

### 2.3 Coefficients

**Table 5.** Coefficients<sup>a</sup>.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	1.387	.667		2.079	.038		
Social media	.139	.041	.174	3.353	.001	.614	1.629
OTRs	.279	.044	.350	6.335	.000	.542	1.846
Short travel video	.253	.050	.270	5.085	.000	.588	1.700

### 2.4 T-Test

**Table 6.** Result Of T-Test.

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances t-test for Equality of Means					
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)

Travel Intention	Equal variances assumed	3.283	.071	-.059	330	.953
	Equal variances not assumed			-.058	282.441	.954

2.2 Pearson Correlation

**Table 7.** Result of pearson correlation.

		Correlations			
		Social media	Online Travel Review (OTR)	Short travel video (STV)	Travel intention
social media	Pearson Correlation	1	.580**	.532**	.524**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	332	332	332	332
OTR	Pearson Correlation		1	.603**	.613**
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.000	.000
	N			332	332
short ravel video	Pearson Correlation			1	.576**
	Sig. (2-tailed)				.000
	N				332
travel intention	Pearson Correlation				1
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
	N				

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

2.3 Hypothesis Result

HYPHOTHESIS	β VALUE	t VALUE	P VALUE	STATUS
H1: Social media positively influence tourists' intention to visit Langkawi as a heritage destination.	0.274	3.353	p = .001	ACCEPTED
H2: Online Travel Reviews (OTRs) positively influences tourists' intention to visit Langkawi as a heritage destination.	0.350	6.335	p < .001	ACCEPTED
H3: Short video platform positively influences tourists' intention to visit Langkawi as a heritage destination.	0.270	5.085	p < .001	ACCEPTED
H4: Gender moderates the relationship between different new media categories and tourists' intention to visit Langkawi, with females showing higher engagement and influence than males.	The independent samples t-test revealed no significant difference in travel intentions between male and female respondents (t = -0.059, p = .953)			NOT ACCEPTED

2.4 Histogram

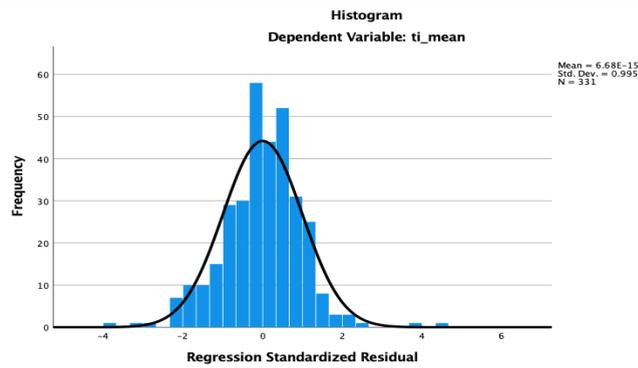


FIGURE 2. Histogram.

### 2.5 Normal P-P Plot

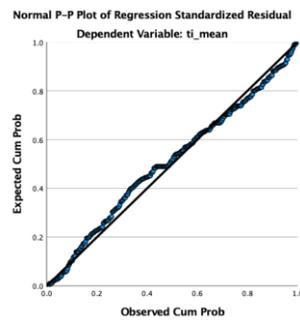


FIGURE 3. Normal P-P Plot of regression standardized residual.

### 2.6 Residuals vs. Predicted Values

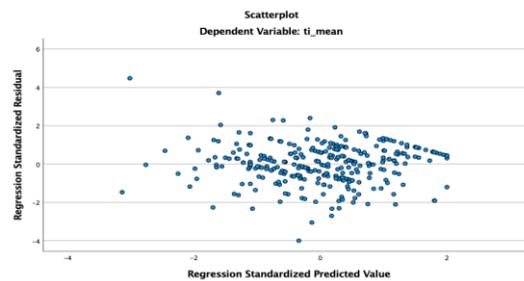


FIGURE4: Scatterplot of standardised residuals vs predicted.

## 3. MAJOR FINDINGS

The study found that social media, online travel reviews (OTRs), and short travel videos significantly influence tourists' intention to visit Langkawi as a heritage destination. OTRs emerged as the strongest predictor, highlighting the importance of credible, experience based information for travel decisions. Short travel videos were also highly influential due to their visual appeal and ability to quickly convey destination experiences. Social media contributed positively to destination awareness, though its effect was moderate. Gender was not a significant moderating factor, indicating that male and female tourists respond similarly to new media content. The demographic profile showed a diverse sample of young, digitally active participants from both Malaysia and other countries, supporting the generalizability of the findings to international and domestic audiences.

#### 4. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future studies should consider using probability based sampling methods to improve representation across age, nationality, and digital literacy. Expanding the range of new media channels, such as travel blogs, livestreams, VR/AR experiences, and AI powered tools, could provide a more comprehensive view of digital influence on tourism. Researchers should also examine additional demographic, psychological, and cultural factors, including nostalgia, perceived authenticity, and emotional engagement, which may moderate tourists' travel intentions more effectively than gender. Mixed method and longitudinal designs can offer richer insights into evolving media trends, tourist behaviour, and cross destination comparisons, enhancing the practical relevance for tourism planning and marketing strategies.

#### V. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that digital media plays a critical role in shaping tourists' intentions to visit Langkawi as a heritage destination. OTRs, short travel videos, and social media collectively influence travel decisions, with OTRs being the most impactful. The lack of gender differences suggests that digital marketing strategies can be broadly applied without targeting specific genders. Academically, the research fills a gap in understanding new media's role in heritage tourism in Malaysia. Practically, it provides insights for tourism authorities and marketers to enhance Langkawi's appeal through credible reviews, engaging visual content, and strategic social media promotion. Overall, digital media is a powerful tool that can support sustainable tourism development while reinforcing Langkawi's identity as a unique heritage destination.

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