



ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received March 1, 2026;

Revised March 20, 2026;

Revised April 6, 2026;

Accepted June 11, 2026;

Published Online August 17, 2026

Citation:

Susanto, E., & Prawira, M. F. A. (2026). The Safety Paradox of Digitalized Wilderness Among Novice Travelers in Indonesian National Parks. *Jurnal Kepariwisataan Destinasi, Hospitalitas dan Perjalanan*, 10(2), 160-183.

<https://doi.org/10.34013/jk.v10i2.2517>

© The Author(s) 2026. This article is published under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY-SA 4.0). To view a copy of this license, visit: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>



This is an open-access journal, making all its content freely accessible to the public, promoting global knowledge sharing and broader dissemination of research findings.

Research Paper

The Safety Paradox of Digitalized Wilderness Among Novice Travelers in Indonesian National Parks

Eko Susanto^{1*}

Mega Fitriani Adiwarna Prawira²

¹ Tourism Destination Program, Politeknik Negeri Bandung, Bandung, Indonesia

² Tourism Department, Politeknik Pariwisata NHI Bandung, Bandung, Indonesia

*e-mail: eko.susanto@polban.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This study aims to explicitly investigate the complex interplay between User-Generated Content (UGC) exposure, Travel FOMO, risk mitigation, and post-trip behavioral outcomes among novice national park visitors. Employing a cross-sectional quantitative design and purposive sampling, this research analyzed 601 novice travelers (Generation Z and Millennials) visiting Indonesian national parks. The data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). Results indicate that UGC triggers both FOMO and Risk Mitigation Behavior (RMB). FOMO fails to drive rational preparedness. A Safety Paradox is confirmed mitigation efforts intensify perceived trail difficulty, which paradoxically enhances mindfulness and Nature Connectedness. This process ultimately drives Experiential Satisfaction, Environmental Stewardship, and e-WOM advocacy. This study extends Protection Motivation Theory by identifying a digital affective bias in which social anxiety overrides objective safety. It further enriches the Adventure Experience Paradigm by proving that logistical preparedness effectively shatters the illusion of ease perpetuated by social media.

Keywords: Travel FOMO, User-Generated Content (UGC), Risk Mitigation, Outdoor Recreation, Nature Connectedness.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest: The authors declare no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the era of ubiquitous connectivity, the wilderness of national parks has progressively shifted from a sanctuary of physical disconnection into a prominent stage for social performance. For novice outdoor recreation travelers who typically exhibit high digital engagement but possess limited technical expertise, the allure of protected mountainous areas is increasingly driven by the desire to replicate Instagrammable moments and share user-generated content (UGC) (Ravichandran, 2026; Suryani et al., 2025). This phenomenon transforms previously undeveloped wilderness areas into high-risk spots for internet celebrities. Consequently, a managerial paradox emerges: the surge in visitation driven by digital exposure often bypasses traditional safety communication, intensifying tourism risks in unforgiving environments (Fan & Li, 2026). Understanding how these digital triggers interact with novices' psychological and behavioral responses is, therefore, critical for national park governance.

Constant exposure to curated UGC evokes a potent psychological stressor known as Travel Fear of Missing Out (FOMO). Extant research indicates that FOMO operates as a recursive cycle in which negative emotional states drive specific digital engagements to avoid perceived social exclusion (Widaningsih & Putranto, 2025). While traditional literature predominantly associates FOMO with impulsive actions, this study posits a counterintuitive mechanism grounded in Protection Motivation Theory (PMT) and stress-coping frameworks. It is argued that for novice travelers, Travel FOMO serves as a catalyst that triggers proactive, problem-oriented coping mechanisms (Deng et al., 2025). Specifically, the fear of social failure and the inability to capture the idealized digital trace due to physical exhaustion or injury compels travelers to engage in rigorous risk-mitigation behaviors to ensure successful digital performance (Chauhan et al., 2026). Furthermore, FOMO not only drives self-preservation but also encourages sustainable behavior and deepens nature connectedness, as novices strive to align with the pro-environmental norms frequently portrayed in trending UGC (Suryani et al., 2025).

The interplay between these digital stressors and physical risk mitigation is strictly contingent upon individual perceived outdoor competence. Drawing on the Adventure Experience Paradigm (AEP), competence and self-efficacy serve as critical precursors that dictate how travelers interpret their environment and manage inherent risks (Hunter et al., 2025; Phan & Truong, 2025). In the context of national parks, perceived competence fundamentally shapes both susceptibilities to Travel FOMO and the adoption of risk-mitigation behaviors. Concurrently, these preparatory behaviors and digital anxieties profoundly influence perceived trail difficulty. For novices, demanding physical environments such as steep slopes and wild trails act as psychological barriers; however, when navigated through active risk mitigation, these challenges become central features in fostering a profound connectedness to nature (Lengieza et al., 2025).

Ultimately, the primary goal of nature-based tourism management is to transform physical immersion into long-term ecological advocacy and destination loyalty. Converting positive environmental perceptions into actual behavior requires deep psychological engagement. Nature connectedness serves as the crucial psychological bridge translating trail experiences into experiential satisfaction. High experiential satisfaction is conceptualized as the definitive antecedent of post-trip outcomes, simultaneously driving environmental stewardship and positive electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), which subsequently feeds back into the UGC ecosystem (Ali et al., 2026; Fathy et al., 2025).

Therefore, the primary purpose of this article is to empirically investigate how digital exposure (UGC) and psychological stressors (Travel FOMO) influence the physical preparedness, environmental behaviors, and experiential satisfaction of novice national park visitors. To address the fragmented domains of digital psychology and outdoor recreation, this research validates a comprehensive structural model. The study addresses three critical gaps: 1) the counterintuitive role of Travel FOMO

and UGC exposure as proactive drivers for risk mitigation and sustainability among novice climbers; 2) the complex interplay between perceived outdoor competence, trail difficulty, and nature connectedness; and 3) the sequential pathway from experiential satisfaction to dual post-trip outcomes. The findings provide actionable insights for national park managers to leverage digital trends to enhance safety education and sustainable destination management.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Protection Motivation Theory (PMT) and Adventure Experience Paradigm (AEP)

This study is anchored in the integration of two primary theoretical frameworks: Protection Motivation Theory (PMT) (Rogers, 1975) and the Adventure Experience Paradigm (AEP) (Ewert & Hollenhorst, 1989; Martin & Priest, 1986; Priest, 1992). These theories provide a robust lens to dissect the complex interactions among digital psychological stressors, risk preparation, and environmental behaviors in nature-based tourism. Originally developed to understand cognitive responses to threats, PMT offers a foundational structure for analysing how individuals evaluate risks and adopt coping strategies (Truong et al., 2025). In the contemporary digital tourism context, the constant pressure to maintain social presence through curated content creates a psychological stressor manifested as Travel Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) (Widaningsih & Putranto, 2025). Through the lens of PMT and stress-coping frameworks, this psychological stressor does not merely provoke impulsive actions; rather, it activates proactive, problem-oriented coping mechanisms (Deng et al., 2025). The fear of social failure can be defined as the inability to safely capture and share experiences due to inadequate preparation in unforgiving terrains compels a cognitive evaluation that triggers self-protective behaviors. Consequently, travelers proactively engage in risk mitigation to ensure the successful creation of safe digital traces in highly vulnerable environments (Fan & Li, 2026; Xuan Hu et al., 2025).

Complementing the cognitive focus of PMT, the Adventure Experience Paradigm (AEP) conceptualizes the boundary conditions of the physical environment and the traveller's competence (Hunter et al., 2025). AEP posits that the quality of a wilderness experience is directly determined by the interplay between inherent environmental risks, such as trail difficulty, and the individual's perceived outdoor competence. For novice travelers, the disparity between the physical demands of a national park and their technical skills often serves as a psychological barrier to immersion (Brennan et al., 2026). However, the AEP framework delineates that when risk mitigation strategies are effectively applied to bridge this competence gap and lower risk perceptions, the physical challenges of the terrain facilitate a deeper psychological immersion (Lenggogeni et al., 2026).

The integration of PMT and AEP within this structural model offers a holistic framework. It comprehensively explains how social-digital threat evaluations and perceptions of physical competence operate synergistically. This theoretical synthesis elucidates how social media pressures are transformed into systematic safety behaviors, which, in turn, foster a profound psychological connection to nature.

2.2. Digital Pressure and Competence Gap

In the contemporary digital tourism environment, user-generated content (UGC) serves as a primary external stimulus shaping visitors' psychological states. UGC featuring wilderness destinations frequently presents idealized, curated visual narratives that inherently trigger social comparison among social media users (Kumar & Kumar, 2025). When novice visitors encounter others' travel experiences through digital platforms, this exposure significantly heightens Travel Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) (Suryani et al., 2025). The quality of visual content and the credibility of information act as

dominant stimuli, evoking anxiety about social exclusion if individuals fail to participate in trending travel activities (Widaningsih & Putranto, 2025). Consequently, constant exposure to these compelling visual narratives creates an emotional void that demands social validation, positioning UGC exposure as a robust predictor of Travel FOMO (Ravichandran, 2026).

Furthermore, susceptibility to this psychological pressure is not solely driven by external exposure; it is complexly constructed by internal conditions, specifically perceived outdoor competence. Traditionally, adequate competence levels are assumed to reduce anxiety. However, in the context of digitized nature recreation, physical skills and self-efficacy have shifted into performative actions closely tied to social recognition and identity (Soontayatron, 2025). Visitors who perceive themselves as possessing high outdoor competence tend to exhibit higher information involvement and actively seek public confirmation of their personal and group efficacy (Hunter et al., 2025; Zhou & Ho, 2025). Paradoxically, individuals with high perceived competence experience greater pressure to be present and conquer viral hiking trails to maintain their social status and identity within the community (Lyu et al., 2025). This paradoxical construction indicates that a sense of competence directly amplifies the fear of missing out. Based on the synthesis, the hypothesis is proposed:

H1: UGC Exposure positively affects Travel FOMO.

H3: Perceived Outdoor Competence positively affects Travel FOMO.

2.3. Problem-Oriented Coping Mechanisms in Risk Mitigation

Although user-generated content (UGC) predominantly highlights the aesthetic appeal of wilderness destinations, these digital narratives simultaneously function as a crucial channel for informal risk communication. Analysis of digital discourse indicates that exposure to visual narratives and quality cues from short-form videos significantly elevates awareness of physical hazards in high-risk internet celebrity spots (Fan & Li, 2026; Nam & Yang, 2025). This UGC exposure acts as an informational stimulus that shapes social norms, shifting pure travel intentions toward proactive protective behaviors to avoid frequently documented negative incidents (Chauhan et al., 2026; Cornell et al., 2026). Ultimately, the abundance of information derived from social media systematically facilitates precautionary measures.

However, the transition from digital hazard awareness to physical risk mitigation is heavily contingent upon the individual's perceived outdoor competence. Within the framework of Protection Motivation Theory (PMT), self-efficacy and physical competence are fundamental determinants of response efficacy and the successful execution of actual protective actions (Truong et al., 2025). Individuals who perceive themselves as adequately competent possess the cognitive capacity and risk-management skills to assess environmental threats objectively (F. Chen & Liu, 2025; Xuan Hu et al., 2025). In mountainous terrain that demands physical self-reliance, this competence empowers novice visitors to implement concrete mitigation protocols—such as route planning and risk assessment—rather than responding to environmental pressures with panic or passive avoidance (Brown et al., 2025; Cornell et al., 2026; Fan & Li, 2026).

Beyond information exposure and physical competence, the most paradoxical driver of self-preservation behavior in the digital tourism landscape is Travel FOMO. Traditional behavioral models frequently associate social pressure and digital urgency with impulsive risk-taking resulting from cognitive overload (Ulker-Demirel, 2025). Nevertheless, when analysed through the transactional stress and coping framework, FOMO operates as a stressor that actively triggers problem-oriented coping strategies (Deng et al., 2025). For novice visitors, the intense fear of social failure specifically, the inability to capture and share trending moments due to injury or exhaustion induces significant anticipatory anxiety (Suárez-Perdomo et al., 2025). To alleviate this cognitive dissonance and ensure the seamless execution of their performative travel goals, individuals adopt rigorous risk mitigation behaviors as a form of emotion regulation and problem-solving (Jaworska, 2025; Matijašević et al.,

2025). This preventive preparation guarantees that physical impediments do not disrupt their social presence in the virtual sphere.

Based on the aforementioned synthesis, external information exposure, internal capacity, and psychological pressure collectively converge to drive proactive precautionary actions. Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H2: UGC Exposure positively affects Risk Mitigation Behavior.

H4: Perceived Outdoor Competence positively affects Risk Mitigation Behavior.

H5: Travel FOMO positively affects Risk Mitigation Behavior.

2.4. The Interaction between Psychology, Safety, and Trail Difficulty

Beyond safety preparation, the psychological states induced by social media significantly distort how novice visitors evaluate physical realities in national park environments. Travel FOMO creates a dual cognitive burden; in addition to physically navigating hiking routes, individuals feel pressured to engage in performative recreation to meet the visual standards established by digital communities (Ravichandran, 2026; Suryani et al., 2025). Widespread user-generated content (UGC) narratives often set idealized expectations regarding the accessibility and comfort of wilderness destinations, frequently masking the true severity of the terrain (Brennan et al., 2026; Widaningsih & Putranto, 2025). Consequently, when confronted with the actual physical landscape, the discrepancy between digital expectations and environmental reality causes visitors to perceive trail difficulty as substantially more taxing (Jaworska, 2025). This psychological pressure to capture unmissable moments directly converts ordinary natural obstacles into an additional mental load, ultimately intensifying the perceived severity of on-site physical barriers.

Simultaneously, proactive protective actions fundamentally alter how individuals assess terrain difficulty. Intuitively, it is often assumed that thorough preparation and mitigation lower perceived difficulty. However, in the context of adventure tourism in vulnerable mountainous terrain characterized by steep slopes or weather anomalies active engagement in risk mitigation enhances visitors' awareness of latent objective hazards (Fan & Li, 2026; Yadav, 2025). Detailed safety evaluations, such as analysing contour maps, adhering to evacuation warnings, or utilizing tactical gear, force novice visitors to directly confront environmental vulnerabilities and personal physical limitations (Xuan Hu et al., 2025; Truong et al., 2025). The profound awareness gained through this mitigation process leads individuals to view the trail not merely as a recreational arena, but as a challenging ecosystem harboring genuine risks (Brown et al., 2025; Lenggogeni et al., 2026). Thus, the implementation of increasingly rigorous safety protocols logically heightens visitors' appreciation and perception of the actual difficulty of the path they traverse (Cornell et al., 2026).

Based on this synthesis, digitally induced performative expectations and spatial awareness constructed through hazard mitigation preparation collectively converge. Both function as psychological lenses that intensify an individual's evaluation of the physical difficulty of an outdoor destination. Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H6: Travel FOMO positively affects Perceived Trail Difficulty.

H9: Risk Mitigation Behavior positively affects Perceived Trail Difficulty.

2.5. Transitioning Toward Sustainable Wilderness Behavior

The digital tourism landscape not only reshapes safety-related conduct but also facilitates new pathways toward the adoption of sustainability values. Travel FOMO experienced by novice visitors is often driven by a desire to align with trending social norms on social media, including the burgeoning popularity of green travel narratives and responsible outdoor ethics (Nugroho et al., 2025). In an effort

to avoid social exclusion and maintain a positive digital persona, individuals tend to adopt sustainable behaviors modelled by influencers and hiking communities (Ravichandran, 2026; Widaningsih & Putranto, 2025). This yearning for recognition within an environmentally conscious traveler group serves as a potent external driver, turning digital anxiety into tangible actions that preserve the ecological integrity of national parks (Janchai & Suvittawat, 2025).

Simultaneously, a logical nexus exists between discipline in risk mitigation and environmental responsibility. Visitors who actively engage in risk-mitigation behaviors tend to exhibit greater awareness of the vulnerability of mountain ecosystems (Yadav, 2025). The process of preparing for natural hazards such as evaluating erosion risks, adhering to official trails to prevent disorientation, and minimizing loads to improve physical efficiency aligns with the principles of low-carbon tourism and conservation (Fan & Li, 2026; Janchai & Suvittawat, 2025). The profound awareness of personal limitations and the formidable power of nature, gained through safety protocols, creates a spill over effect in which concern for personal safety expands into a broader commitment to environmental sustainability (Cornell et al., 2026; Xuan Hu et al., 2025). Consequently, visitors who demonstrate greater discipline in managing physical risks are more likely to support sustainable tourism practices.

Based on the integration of social validation pressures and risk awareness, sustainable behavior is constructed as both a coping response and a manifestation of a visitor's self-efficacy in the wilderness. Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H8: Travel FOMO positively affects Sustainable Behavior.

H11: Risk Mitigation Behavior positively affects Sustainable Behavior.

2.6. Cultivating Nature Connectedness through Immersive and Responsible Experiences

Nature connectedness is a psychological construct that transcends mere physical visitation, encompassing a deep emotional and cognitive bond between humans and the natural environment. In national park ecosystems, Travel FOMO acts as an initial catalyst, facilitating this attachment. Despite being driven by digital pressures, the compelling urge to be physically present at trending locations necessitates full immersion in outdoor settings for novice visitors (Suryani et al., 2025). The process of being there to fulfil social expectations inadvertently creates opportunities for individuals to experience nature's presence first hand, ultimately strengthening their emotional ties to the visited environment (Ravichandran, 2026; Widaningsih & Putranto, 2025).

Beyond psychological drivers, technical risk-mitigation measures play a pivotal role in deepening this relationship. Visitors who adhere to safety protocols in a disciplined manner tend to possess a liberated cognitive capacity to appreciate natural authenticity, as the resulting sense of security minimizes anxiety regarding uncontrollable hazards (Xuan Hu et al., 2025; Truong et al., 2025). Thorough preparation allows visitors to shift their focus from mere survival to the beauty and integrity of the ecosystem (Brennan et al., 2026; Fan & Li, 2026; Yadav, 2025). Furthermore, the physical challenges encountered through perceived trail difficulty serve as an essential element in reinforcing the bond between humans and nature. The experience of conquering demanding terrains such as steep slopes and pristine natural paths, triggers a profound sense of unity with the forces of the wilderness (Brennan et al., 2026; Yadav, 2025). The physical integrity of these trails serves as a tangible medium that connects hikers with the essence of the terrestrial ecosystem.

Finally, a commitment to sustainable behavior solidifies this connectedness through psychological ownership. Visitors actively engaged in low-carbon tourism practices and environmental preservation exhibit a more robust ecological identity (Janchai & Suvittawat, 2025). The act of caring for the wilderness not only affects ecosystem sustainability but also deepens visitors' personal sense of relatedness to the environment they protect (Sánchez-Torres et al., 2025). Based on the synthesis of

relationships between digital pressure, risk mitigation, physical challenges, and environmental responsibility, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H7: Travel FOMO positively affects Nature Connectedness.

H10: Risk Mitigation Behavior positively affects Nature Connectedness.

H12: Perceived Trail Difficulty positively affects Nature Connectedness.

H13: Sustainable Behavior positively affects Nature Connectedness.

2.7. Experiential Satisfaction, Environmental Stewardship, and e-WOM

The connectedness cultivated between visitors and the natural environment is a primary determinant of experiential satisfaction. When visitors successfully navigate challenging terrain, implement risk-mitigation protocols, and experience profound immersion in nature, the tourism experience transforms from mere physical recreation into a meaningful psychological achievement (Mashkov et al., 2025; Tang et al., 2026). This sense of connectedness with nature fulfills visitors' intrinsic need for mental restoration and escape from digitized urban pressures (Tang et al., 2026). Consequently, visitors who perceive a stronger emotional and restorative connection with the national park environment evaluate their travel experiences significantly more positively, thereby directly amplifying their overall experiential satisfaction (Ban et al., 2026; X. Chen & Cheung, 2025).

Furthermore, high experiential satisfaction is an essential precondition for the emergence of post-visit pro-environmental behaviors, specifically environmental stewardship. Visitors who are highly satisfied with the natural authenticity they experience tend to develop a sense of moral responsibility to protect the source of that satisfaction (Hanafiah et al., 2025). This profound satisfaction shifts visitors' orientation from passive beneficiaries to active protectors, motivating engagement in long-term conservation actions, such as donating to nature conservation or supporting strict national park management policies (Janchai & Suvittawat, 2025; Silva et al., 2025). Thus, profound satisfaction is systematically converted into a stewardship commitment to maintain the ecological integrity of the destination for future generations.

In addition to generating ecological benefits, experiential satisfaction also drives massive electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) in the virtual sphere. Visitors who achieve optimal satisfaction possess a strong psychological drive to share their transformative experiences, photos of their trail conquests, and images of natural beauty within their social networks (Ali et al., 2026; Fathy et al., 2025). This sharing behavior is not merely a form of self-expression but an act of digital advocacy that recommends the destination to other prospective visitors (Jaworska, 2025; Latusi & Ieva, 2025). This e-WOM action effectively closes the theoretical loop of this research model: the digital content generated by satisfied visitors becomes new user-generated content (UGC) that, in turn, triggers Travel FOMO and risk-mitigation awareness among subsequent cohorts of novice visitors (Chauhan et al., 2026).

Based on the synthesis of psychological connectedness, experiential evaluation, environmental advocacy, and digital transmission, the final hypotheses are proposed:

H14: Nature Connectedness positively affects Experiential Satisfaction.

H15: Experiential Satisfaction positively affects Environmental Stewardship Behavior.

H16: Experiential Satisfaction positively affects eWOM Behavior.

2.8. Proposed Conceptual Model

Based on the extensive literature review and the theoretical synthesis of Protection Motivation Theory (PMT) and the Adventure Experience Paradigm (AEP), the interrelationships among all constructs are conceptualized in the proposed research model. Figure 1 illustrates the comprehensive structural framework, delineating the complex pathways from digital precursors (UGC Exposure) and psychological stressors (Travel FOMO) to environmental and post-trip behavioral outcomes.

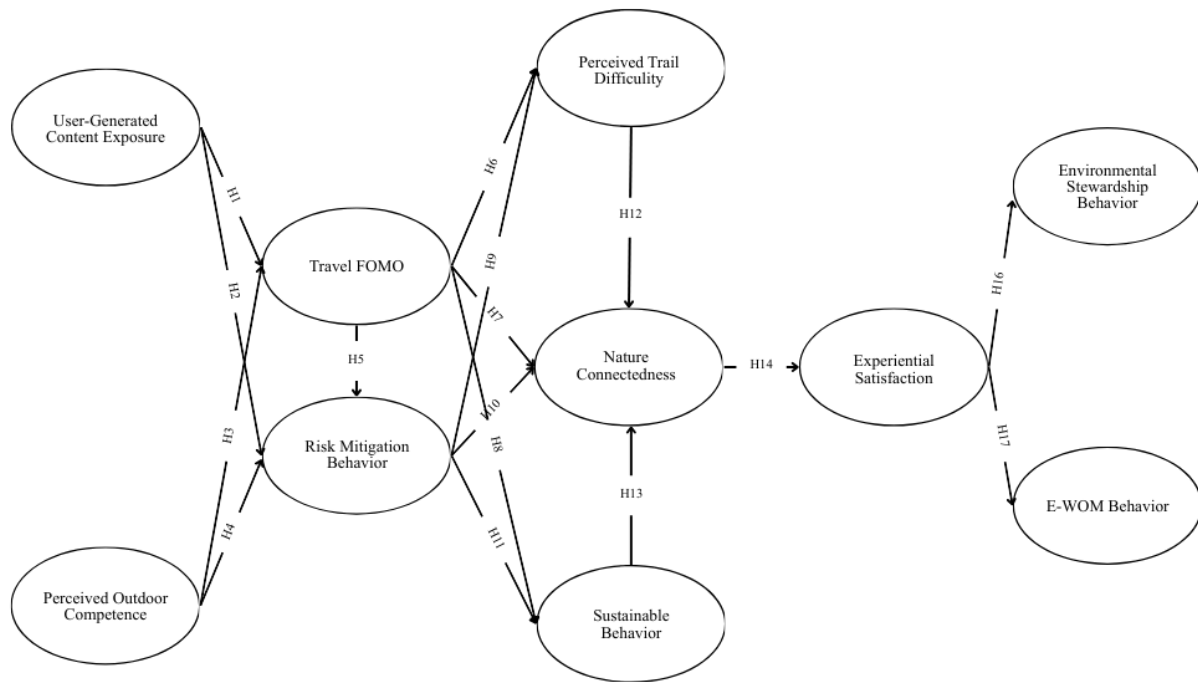


Figure 1. The Proposed Conceptual Framework
 Source: Research data, 2026

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Context and Target Population

This study is situated within the broader context of outdoor recreation tourism in Indonesia, with a specific focus on forest- and mountain-based national parks. Destinations such as Mount Gede Pangrango, Mount Rinjani, and Bromo Tengger Semeru are mentioned strictly as prominent illustrative examples of these terrains, which feature substantial physical difficulty and objective risks, yet have recently experienced an exponential surge in visitation driven by digital trend exposure. The data collection itself spans nationwide rather than being limited to these specific locations. The target population for this study is exclusively focused on novice national park visitors. The framing of this novice cohort is theoretically crucial. Unlike experienced hikers who rely on innate navigation skills and internal recreational motives, novice visitors exhibit heightened cognitive vulnerability. They tend to rely heavily on user-generated content (UGC) as their primary reference, are highly susceptible to social pressure (Travel FOMO), and display a significant discrepancy between their perceived competence and the actual hazards in the field. Consequently, the novice cohort represents the ideal subject for empirically validating the safety paradox and the environmental behavior phenomena proposed in this research model.

3.2. Population and sample

To ensure the sample accurately represents the profile of digitized novice visitors, a multi-stage screening procedure was implemented at the beginning of the questionnaire. The inclusion criteria comprised: 1) Demographic filter where respondents must be at least 18 years old (to ensure legal consent and travel independence); 2) Digital exposure filter where respondents must confirm active usage of visual social media platforms and frequent exposure to UGC related to nature tourism within

the past three months; 3) Novice identification filter where respondents were classified as novices if they visited mountain/forest destinations less than three times a year and self-identified at a beginner skill level in outdoor recreation; 4) Actual visitation filter where respondents were required to have visited at least one mountain/forest-based national park in Indonesia within the last 12 months, ensuring that evaluations regarding experiential satisfaction and trail difficulty were based on accurate, short-term memory recall.

The minimum sample size was determined using the ten times rule for structural equation modelling, which dictates a minimum of 10 cases per maximum number of paths directed at a particular latent construct (Hair et al., 2011). Additionally, an a priori power analysis using G*Power 3.1 (Faul et al., 2009) indicated a minimum sample size of approximately 153 respondents to robustly test the complex model comprising 16 hypotheses (effect size $f^2 = 0.15$, $\alpha = 0.05$, power = 0.80). However, to anticipate invalid responses and maximize the predictive accuracy of the PLS-SEM model, this research initially targeted a minimum of 400 valid responses. Ultimately, the nationwide data collection effort exceeded expectations, yielding a final dataset of 601 valid responses. To ensure data robustness, the questionnaire included two attention-check questions to detect inattentive responses. Questionnaires that displayed straight-lining patterns, illogical completion times, or failed attention checks were systematically excluded from the final dataset prior to analysis.

3.3. Measurement and instruments

Given the complexity of the psychological and behavioral variables in the model, all measurement instruments were developed through a triangulation of established foundational literature and contemporary tourism studies. Because the majority of the original scales were developed in English, a rigorous two-way back-translation procedure (Brislin, 1970) was applied. Two bilingual experts translated the instruments from English to Indonesian, and two independent experts translated them back to English to ensure no semantic or conceptual divergence occurred. All items were measured using a 7-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 7 = Strongly Agree).

The variables are constructed by adapting several related studies such as UGC exposure and travel FOMO, was adapted from the fundamental scale by Przybylski et al., (2013) and contextualized for tourism (Suryani et al., 2025), measuring anticipatory anxiety and social urgency. UGC Exposure was measured through exposure intensity and perceived visual quality (Widaningsih & Putranto, 2025). Perceived outdoor competence was rooted based on study by Bandura, (1977) a foundational self-efficacy scale, contextualized for nature activities (Fan & Li, 2026). Perceived trail difficulty was measured using perceptions of physical barriers and exhaustion (Brennan et al., 2026). Risk mitigation behavior operationalized using the Protection Motivation Theory framework (Rogers, 1975), assessing compliance with official routes, logistical preparation, and hazard information seeking (Chauhan et al., 2026). Nature connectedness measured using an adaptation of the Connectedness to Nature Scale (Mayer & Frantz, 2004), focusing on the affective sense of oneness with the national park ecosystem (X. Chen & Cheung, 2025; Y. Tang et al., 2025). Sustainable and environmental stewardship behavior instrument was built upon the Value-Belief-Norm theory (Stern, 2000), synthesized with indicators of low-carbon tourism and ecological advocacy (Janchai & Suvittawat, 2025; Silva et al., 2025). Finally, experiential satisfaction referred to the fulfillment of restorative expectations (Hanafiah et al., 2025; Oliver, 1980) and e-WOM intention was measured by the drive to share visual experiences on digital platforms (Ali et al., 2026; Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004).

3.4. Data collection procedure

Data collection employed a nationwide online survey design utilizing a purposive sampling technique. This non-probability sampling method was strategically selected because the study required

respondents who met highly specific behavioral criteria specifically, digitally active novice hikers rather than a general population. All data collection protocols strictly adhered to research ethics standards; the initial section of the instrument included an explicit informed consent form, guaranteed respondent anonymity, and affirmed that participation was entirely voluntary. The survey was strategically distributed across specific digital platforms, including online novice hiker communities and outdoor recreation forums in Indonesia.

3.5 Data analysis techniques

A quantitative research design was implemented because this study aims to empirically test predefined hypotheses, measure the strength of relationships among multiple variables, and validate a complex theoretical framework across a large population, which cannot be achieved through qualitative exploration. This study applied Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) using SmartPLS software. This variance-based method was strategically selected over Covariance-Based SEM (CB-SEM) due to its capability to model highly complex framework systems (incorporating 16 hypotheses with paradoxical predictors) without demanding strict multivariate data normality. Furthermore, while CB-SEM is primarily designed for pure theory confirmation, PLS-SEM is optimally suited for theory development and extension (such as extending PMT and AEP in this digital context), alongside its focus on predictive optimization (predictive relevance).

The data analysis process was conducted in three main stages: First, Common Method Bias (CMB) testing given that the data were cross-sectional and self-reported, Harman's single-factor test and a full collinearity Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) analysis were conducted to ensure that no method variance anomalies threatened the validity of the findings. Second, Measurement Model (Outer Model) evaluation indicator reliability was evaluated through factor loadings (> 0.70), and internal consistency reliability was confirmed via Composite Reliability (> 0.70). Convergent validity was validated using the Average Variance Extracted ($AVE > 0.50$). Discriminant validity among constructs was assessed solely using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT), with thresholds of < 0.85 or 0.90 . Third, Structural Model (Inner Model) evaluation where the significance of the hypothesized relationships (H1–H16) was tested using a bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 subsamples to generate precise confidence intervals and p-values. Overall model quality was assessed by the coefficient of determination (R^2) for explanatory power, alongside Stone-Geisser's predictive relevance metric (Q^2) to validate the model's accuracy in predicting environmental preservation behavior and visitors' satisfaction.

4. RESULT

4.1. Demographic Profile of Respondents

The final dataset comprised 601 valid responses. The sample was rigorously screened to ensure that all participants met the specific inclusion criteria vital to the study's context: being novice outdoor recreation travelers who actively engage with visual social media and who had visited a mountain- or forest-based national park in Indonesia within the preceding 12 months. The screening successfully yielded a sample in which 100% of respondents self-identified their outdoor recreation skill level as beginner and universally confirmed active engagement with visual social media platforms, thereby establishing a highly accurate foundational premise for the study. An analysis of the respondents' demographic distribution reveals a profile that closely matches the modern, digitized outdoor visitor. Regarding gender, the sample showed a relatively balanced distribution: 330 male respondents (54.9%) and 271 female respondents (45.1%). This balanced participation highlights a significant shift from traditional, male-dominated adventure tourism toward a more democratized outdoor recreation landscape, heavily driven by digital visual trends and social media exposure.

Furthermore, the age distribution confirms a highly concentrated demographic profile specifically representing young adults. All respondents fell within the 18-35 age bracket, categorically divided into Generation Z (18–24 years old; 38.9%) and Millennials (25–35 years old; 61.1%). As digital natives, these cohorts represent the demographic segment most heavily exposed to digitized tourism trends, making them the most theoretically relevant subjects for investigating the influence of User-Generated Content (UGC) and Travel FOMO. Crucially, the respondents' behavioral profile empirically confirms their novice status. The annual visitation frequency to national parks was strictly distributed between 1 and 3 times per year. Specifically, 34.6% of respondents visited only once, 32.3% visited twice, and 33.1% visited three times in the past year. This low-frequency visitation pattern empirically justifies their classification as beginners, confirming their cognitive vulnerability and high reliance on digital content for outdoor recreation planning. The comprehensive demographic and behavioral profile is detailed in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic and behavioral profile of the respondents

Demographic Variable	Category	n	%
Gender	Male	330	54.9%
	Female	271	45.1%
Age Bracket	18 – 24 years (Generation Z)	234	38.9%
	25 – 30 years (Younger Millennials)	201	33.4%
	31 – 35 years (Older Millennials)	166	27.7%
Visitation Frequency (Past 12 Months) #*	1 visit	208	34.6%
	2 visits	194	32.3%
	3 visits	199	33.1%
Self-Reported Skill Level*	Beginner (Novice)	601	100.0%
Social Media Activity*	Active User	601	100.0%

*(Note: Denotes variables that were strictly controlled through the pre-survey screening filters to ensure sample validity and theoretical relevance).

Source: Research data, 2026

4.2. Common Method Bias (CMB) and Collinearity Assessment

Given that the primary data were cross-sectional and derived from a self-reported survey, it was imperative to assess the potential threat of Common Method Bias (CMB) and multicollinearity among the constructs. Following the procedural recommendations of (Hair et al., 2019; Kock, 2015), a full collinearity assessment was conducted using the PLS-generated inner Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values. The analysis revealed that all inner VIF values for the predictor constructs ranged from 1.000 to 1.501. Since the highest VIF value (1.501) is well below the conservative threshold of 3.3, the dataset is free of significant CMB (see Table 2).

Table 2. Inner VIF Values

Construct	ESB	EWOM	FOMO	NC	POC	PTD	RMB	SAT	SB
EWOM	0.369								
FOMO	0.248	0.215							
NC	0.399	0.423	0.536						
POC	0.236	0.230	0.538	0.557					
PTD	0.269	0.240	0.499	0.613	0.618				
RMB	0.209	0.206	0.238	0.569	0.468	0.484			
SAT	0.579	0.587	0.429	0.738	0.421	0.436	0.402		
SB	0.277	0.283	0.496	0.609	0.380	0.431	0.448	0.452	
UGC	0.186	0.191	0.441	0.395	0.383	0.420	0.434	0.383	0.335

Source: Research data, 2026

Furthermore, this result confirms that there are no critical collinearity issues among the latent variables, ensuring that the structural relationships and path coefficients in the subsequent inner model evaluation are not artificially inflated by method variance or highly correlated predictors.

4.3. Measurement Model Evaluation

The measurement model (outer model) was rigorously evaluated to establish the reliability and validity of the latent constructs prior to testing the structural relationships. The assessment focused on indicator reliability, internal consistency, convergent validity, and discriminant validity, adhering to the contemporary PLS-SEM guidelines (Hair et al., 2019).

Indicator reliability was confirmed as all 50 measurement items exhibited outer loadings ranging from 0.808 (UGC3) to 0.872 (SB5). The complete list of the measurement items used in the questionnaire instrument is provided in Appendix A. Since all loadings substantially exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.708, no items were deleted from the measurement model, confirming that the latent constructs capture more than half of the variance in their respective indicators. Furthermore, internal consistency reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha (α), rho_A (ρ_A), and Composite Reliability (CR). As depicted in Table 3, all constructs demonstrated values well above the stringent 0.70 benchmark (CR ranging from 0.922 to 0.933), indicating excellent construct reliability and ensuring that the items within each construct are highly correlated.

Convergent validity was verified by evaluating the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct. The AVE values for all 10 latent variables ranged from 0.703 (eWOM) to 0.734 (Sustainable Behavior). These values significantly exceeded the minimum acceptable level of 0.50, indicating that each construct explains, on average, more than 70% of the variance in its corresponding indicators.

Table 3. Measurement model assessment

Construct	Outer Loadings Range	C_Alpha (α)	rho_A (ρ_A)	(CR)	AVE
Environmental Stewardship Behavior (ESB)	0.823 – 0.864	0.901	0.903	0.927	0.716
e-WOM Behavior (eWOM)	0.828 – 0.862	0.895	0.900	0.922	0.703
Travel FOMO (FOMO)	0.837 – 0.864	0.906	0.906	0.930	0.727
Nature Connectedness (NC)	0.849 – 0.857	0.906	0.906	0.930	0.727
Perceived Outdoor Competence (POC)	0.830 – 0.858	0.902	0.903	0.927	0.717
Perceived Trail Difficulty (PTD)	0.832 – 0.871	0.903	0.904	0.928	0.721
Risk Mitigation Behavior (RMB)	0.847 – 0.859	0.907	0.907	0.931	0.729
Experiential Satisfaction (SAT)	0.837 – 0.858	0.901	0.901	0.926	0.716
Sustainable Behavior (SB)	0.839 – 0.872	0.910	0.911	0.933	0.734
UGC Exposure (UGC)	0.808 – 0.861	0.897	0.899	0.924	0.708

Source: Research data, 2026

To establish discriminant validity, this study employed the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio of Correlations (HTMT) criterion, recognized as a highly robust metric in variance-based SEM (Henseler et al., 2015). As presented in Table 4, all HTMT values between the constructs were strictly below the conservative threshold of 0.85.

Table 4. HTMT Criterion

Construct	ESB	EWOM	FOMO	NC	POC	PTD	RMB	SAT	SB
ESB									
EWOM	0.369								
FOMO	0.248	0.215							
NC	0.399	0.423	0.536						
POC	0.236	0.230	0.538	0.557					
PTD	0.269	0.240	0.499	0.613	0.618				
RMB	0.209	0.206	0.238	0.569	0.468	0.484			
SAT	0.579	0.587	0.429	0.738	0.421	0.436	0.402		
SB	0.277	0.283	0.496	0.609	0.380	0.431	0.448	0.452	
UGC	0.186	0.191	0.441	0.395	0.383	0.420	0.434	0.383	0.335

Source: Research data, 2026

The highest recorded HTMT value was 0.738 (between Experiential Satisfaction and Nature Connectedness), confirming that each latent variable in the proposed model is conceptually distinct and captures phenomena not represented by other constructs.

4.4. Structural Model Evaluation

Following validation of the measurement model, the structural model (inner model) was evaluated to test the proposed hypotheses, assess its explanatory power, and determine its predictive relevance. The model's explanatory power was evaluated using the coefficient of determination (R^2), which represents the proportion of variance in the endogenous constructs explained by their predictors. The analysis revealed that the model explains substantial variance in the primary mediating variables: Nature Connectedness ($R^2 = 0.514$) and Experiential Satisfaction ($R^2 = 0.446$). Other endogenous constructs, including Perceived Trail Difficulty ($R^2 = 0.325$), Sustainable Behavior ($R^2 = 0.306$), Travel FOMO ($R^2 = 0.297$), e-WOM Behavior ($R^2 = 0.282$), Environmental Stewardship Behavior ($R^2 = 0.273$), and Risk Mitigation Behavior ($R^2 = 0.253$), exhibited moderate explanatory power.

Furthermore, the predictive relevance of the structural model was assessed using Stone-Geisser's Q^2 statistic, obtained via the blindfolding procedure in SmartPLS 3. A Q^2 value greater than zero indicates that the model is predictive of a particular endogenous construct (Hair et al., 2019). As presented in Table 4, all endogenous variables exhibited Q^2 values well above zero (ranging from 0.183 for RMB to 0.370 for NC), conclusively demonstrating the model's robust out-of-sample predictive power.

Table 5. Explanatory power and predictive relevance

Endogenous Construct	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Q^2
Nature Connectedness (NC)	0.514	0.510	0.370
Experiential Satisfaction (SAT)	0.446	0.445	0.317
Perceived Trail Difficulty (PTD)	0.325	0.323	0.232
Sustainable Behavior (SB)	0.306	0.304	0.221
Travel FOMO (FOMO)	0.297	0.295	0.213
e-WOM Behavior (eWOM)	0.282	0.280	0.194
Environmental Stewardship Behavior (ESB)	0.273	0.272	0.193
Risk Mitigation Behavior (RMB)	0.253	0.249	0.183

Source: Research data, 2026

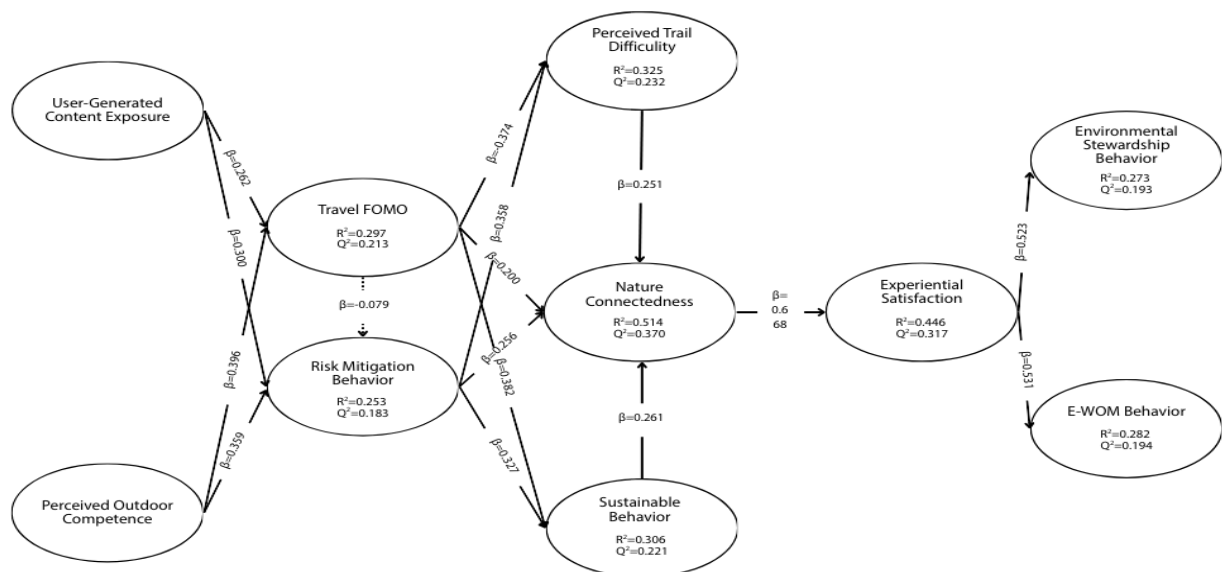


Figure 2. Evaluated Model
 Source: Research data, 2026

To test the significance of the 16 proposed structural relationships, a nonparametric bootstrap procedure was performed with 5,000 subsamples. The significance of the path coefficients (β) was evaluated using t-statistics ($t > 1.96$) and P-values ($p < 0.05$) at the 95% confidence interval. The results, summarized in Table 6 and Figure 2, indicate that 15 out of the 16 hypotheses were empirically supported. Notably, the strongest effect in the model was observed in the relationship between Nature Connectedness and Experiential Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.668$, $t = 29.849$, $p < 0.001$). Digital catalysts such as UGC Exposure significantly influenced both Travel FOMO ($\beta = 0.262$, $p < 0.001$) and Risk Mitigation Behavior ($\beta = 0.300$, $p < 0.001$).

Interestingly, one hypothesis was not supported by the data: the direct path from Travel FOMO to Risk Mitigation Behavior was not statistically significant at the 5% level ($\beta = -0.079$, $t = 1.895$, $p = 0.058$). This suggests that while FOMO drives other behaviors such as perceived difficulty and sustainable actions, it does not directly compel novice visitors to prepare mitigating actions.

Table 6. Results of hypothesis testing

Hypothesis	Structural Path	(β)	Std. Dev.	T-Statistics	P-Values	Decision
H1	UGC --> FOMO	0.262	0.037	7.102	0.000	Supported
H2	UGC --> RMB	0.300	0.036	8.289	0.000	Supported
H3	POC --> FOMO	0.396	0.036	11.015	0.000	Supported
H4	POC --> RMB	0.359	0.039	9.131	0.000	Supported
H5	FOMO --> RMB	-0.079	0.042	1.895	0.058	Not Supported
H6	FOMO --> PTD	0.374	0.035	10.545	0.000	Supported
H7	FOMO --> NC	0.200	0.036	5.631	0.000	Supported
H8	FOMO --> SB	0.382	0.033	11.571	0.000	Supported
H9	RMB --> PTD	0.358	0.032	11.115	0.000	Supported
H10	RMB --> NC	0.256	0.032	7.897	0.000	Supported
H11	RMB --> SB	0.327	0.032	10.075	0.000	Supported
H12	PTD --> NC	0.251	0.035	7.132	0.000	Supported
H13	SB --> NC	0.261	0.035	7.543	0.000	Supported
H14	NC --> SAT	0.668	0.022	29.849	0.000	Supported
H15	SAT --> ESB	0.523	0.031	17.075	0.000	Supported
H16	SAT --> EWOM	0.531	0.029	18.416	0.000	Supported

(Note: Significance level established at $p < 0.05$).

Source: Research data, 2026

5. DISCUSSION

The primary objective of this study was to empirically investigate the complex interplay between digital exposure, psychological vulnerabilities, and behavioral outcomes among novice outdoor recreation travelers. By integrating the Protection Motivation Theory (PMT) with the Adventure Experience Paradigm (AEP) in a digitized context, the findings reveal a nuanced narrative of how novice visitors navigate objective environmental risks while driven by digital social pressures.

5.1. The Digital Catalyst and the Failure of PMT in the FOMO Context

Consistent with recent literature on digital tourism (e.g., (Ali et al., 2026; Suryani et al., 2025; Yang et al., 2025)), this study confirms that UGC Exposure acts as the primary catalyst for novice participation, significantly triggering both Travel FOMO (H1) and Risk Mitigation Behavior (H2). Furthermore, Perceived Outdoor Competence was found to positively influence both FOMO (H3) and RMB (H4). This aligns with the findings of (Xianyang Hu et al., 2026; Kumar & Kumar, 2025), suggesting that as novices

feel slightly more confident in their basic skills, their desire to validate this competence (FOMO) socially increases, while their awareness of necessary preparations (RMB) also sharpens.

Crucially, the structural model revealed a non-significant relationship between Travel FOMO and Risk Mitigation Behavior, leading to the rejection of H5 ($\beta = -0.079$, $p = 0.058$). This represents a pivotal theoretical novelty that challenges traditional assumptions of the Protection Motivation Theory (PMT). While previous literature (e.g., Deng et al., 2025; Suárez-Perdomo et al., 2025) often associates anxiety with protective actions within the PMT framework, this study demonstrates that FOMO functions as an affective and social threat, rather than a cognitive-physical one. Consequently, novice travelers who are primarily driven by anxiety about social exclusion tend to bypass logical hazard preparation (Ulker-Demirel, 2025) and instead rely on the false sense of security portrayed in curated social media visuals.

5.2. *The Safety Paradox: AEP in the Digital Era*

A central contribution of this study is the empirical validation of the Safety Paradox among novices, thereby extending the theoretical boundaries of the Adventure Experience Paradigm (AEP). The findings demonstrate that proactive Risk Mitigation Behavior significantly intensifies Perceived Trail Difficulty (H9). This paradox aligns with the arguments of (Lenggogeni et al., 2026; Yadav, 2025): the very act of preparing for objective hazards (e.g., packing emergency gear, adhering strictly to safety routes) grounds the novice in the harsh physical reality of the outdoor environment, effectively stripping away the romanticized illusions perpetuated by UGC.

Unlike experienced hikers who navigate natural obstacles reflexively, novices require immense cognitive effort to process safety information in real-time. When they transition from passively consuming idealized social media montages to actively monitoring terrain hazards and physical stamina, their cognitive load spikes dramatically. This heightened state of vigilance forces them to step out of the tourist gaze and into a survival-oriented mindset. As a result, the trail is no longer perceived as a mere aesthetic backdrop, but as a tangible, unforgiving ecosystem. This acute awareness of potential consequences makes every steep incline or slippery surface feel substantially more physically demanding and exhausting.

Similarly, Travel FOMO exacerbates the perception of trail difficulty (H6), supporting the conceptualization by (Brennan et al., 2026). The psychological burden of needing to perform and capture the perfect viral moment adds substantial cognitive load, ultimately amplifying the subjective perception of physical fatigue. Despite these perceived difficulties, both FOMO and RMB positively influence Sustainable Behavior (H8 and H11). This indicates that sustainable actions among novices may not stem purely from deep-rooted ecological ethics, but rather from a compliance mindset driven by RMB or a performative desire to maintain an eco-friendly persona online, as suggested by recent community-based tourism studies (Louis et al., 2025; Nugroho et al., 2025).

5.3. *Type II Fun and Nature Connectedness*

The structural model effectively delineates how antecedent behaviors forge a psychological bond with the environment. Nature Connectedness is significantly fostered by Travel FOMO (H7), Risk Mitigation Behavior (H10), Perceived Trail Difficulty (H12), and Sustainable Behavior (H13). The positive influence of Perceived Trail Difficulty on Nature Connectedness (H12) offers profound theoretical implications. It confirms the concept of Type II fun in outdoor recreation literature (Lengieza et al., 2025; Mashkov et al., 2025), where overcoming physical friction and exhaustion forces novices to become intensely mindful and present. This physical struggle strips away digital distractions, facilitating a raw, unfiltered emotional connection with the wilderness. Furthermore, actively practicing sustainability (H13) and adhering to safety protocols (H10) force visitors to interact mindfully with the ecosystem, further deepening their environmental bond (Brown et al., 2025; F. Chen & Liu, 2025).

5.4. Satisfaction to Stewardship

The model robustly explains the culmination of the novice visitors' experience. Nature Connectedness emerged as the strongest predictor of Experiential Satisfaction (H14: $\beta = 0.668$, $p < 0.001$). This extends the findings of (Sánchez-Torres et al., 2025; Silva et al., 2025), demonstrating that for digital-native novices, the ultimate restorative value is not derived merely from reaching a summit or taking a photograph, but from the profound psychological immersion achieved during the journey. Finally, satisfied novices exhibit a dual post-trip behavioral response. They become active environmental advocates, demonstrating significant Environmental Stewardship Behavior (H15) and corroborating the framework proposed by (Janchai & Suvittawat, 2025). Concurrently, high satisfaction triggers e-WOM Behavior (H16) (Fathy et al., 2025; Latusi & Ieva, 2025). This sharing behavior effectively closes the systemic loop: the e-WOM generated by today's satisfied novices becomes compelling UGC that triggers Travel FOMO among the next generation of beginner visitors (Ali et al., 2026), thereby perpetuating the cycle of digitized outdoor recreation.

5.5. Theoretical Implications

This research provides fundamental theoretical contributions by reconceptualizing the outdoor recreation literature in the digital era through three main extensions. First, this study reconstructs the boundaries of the Protection Motivation Theory (PMT) framework. Previously, literature utilizing PMT assumed that cognitive threat appraisal would invariably trigger protective behaviors. However, by empirically rejecting Travel FOMO's influence on risk-mitigation behavior, this study demonstrates that purely socially driven anxiety fails to translate into physical preparedness. This finding extends PMT by introducing a digital affective bias among novice visitors, in which social validation is prioritized over objective safety an anomaly of rationality that remains underexplored in the tourism risk management literature. Second, this study extends the boundaries of the Adventure Experience Paradigm (AEP) by empirically validating the safety paradox. Traditionally, literature assumes that increased preparation reduces visitor's s' perceived difficulty of the terrain. Conversely, this model demonstrates that proactive risk mitigation behavior actually intensifies perceived trail difficulty. This provides a novel perspective on the AEP, asserting that logistical preparation effectively detaches visitors from the illusion of ease created by User-Generated Content (UGC), forcing them to confront environmental friction realistically. Third, this study builds a robust theoretical bridge between digital exposure and regenerative tourism. The structural model proves that perceived trail difficulty and nature connectedness function as crucial mediators. Physical exhaustion, recognized as Type II fun, does not diminish satisfaction levels; rather, it serves as an essential mechanism that transforms visitors who are initially driven by FOMO into active environmental stewards and destination loyalists.

6. CONCLUSIONS

This study successfully achieved its primary objective by empirically unraveling the psychological dynamics and behavioral complexities of novice outdoor recreation travelers amidst the proliferation of digital tourism trends. By integrating the Protection Motivation Theory (PMT) and the Adventure Experience Paradigm (AEP), this research demonstrates that the digital ecosystem operates as a double-edged sword. While exposure to User-Generated Content (UGC) democratizes access and stimulates novice participation, it also engenders significant cognitive vulnerabilities, in which social anxiety (Travel FOMO) fails to translate into adequate physical risk-mitigation behavior. Furthermore, this research reveals an essential Safety Paradox: logistical preparation and precautionary measures ground visitors in the harsh physical reality of the terrain, effectively shattering the illusion of ease perpetuated by social media. Nevertheless, this physical friction and trail difficulty (Type II fun) unexpectedly serves

a transformative function. Physical exertion compels visitors to be intensely mindful and present, ultimately deepening their psychological connection to nature. This profound connection culminates in exceptionally high experiential satisfaction, transforming novice visitors who initially sought mere digital validation into active environmental stewards and e-WOM advocates, thereby fostering a regenerative cycle of outdoor recreation.

6.1. Practical Recommendations

Based on the empirical findings, this study offers three actionable recommendations for national park authorities and destination managers to accommodate the influx of digitally driven novice tourists safely: First, Implement Transparent Risk Communication: Authorities must move beyond purely aesthetic visual marketing. Official social media channels should proactively dominate the digital space by transparently depicting the reality of trail difficulties, emergency safety guidelines, and the requisite physical endurance standards. This ensures that tourists' expectations are accurately calibrated before they arrive at the destination. Second, Enforce Mandatory On-Site Physical Interventions: To shatter the UGC-induced illusion of ease, destination managers must mandate strict logistical inspections and face-to-face safety briefings for all visitors without exception. These physical interventions serve as reality anchors, forcibly shifting novices from a performative mindset to a precautionary one. Third, Develop Ecological Gamification: Managers have a strategic opportunity to capitalize on the performative nature of this tourist cohort. By designing ecological gamification campaigns that integrate pro-environmental actions with visually interactive points along the trail, authorities can frame sustainability as a new, shareable social currency. This elegantly converts social anxiety impulses into tangible actions for ecosystem preservation.

6.2. Limitations and Future Research Directions

While this study offers robust theoretical and practical insights, several methodological limitations provide avenues for future research. First, this study adopts a cross-sectional design, which constrains the ability to draw absolute causal inferences regarding behavioral changes over time. Future research is strongly encouraged to employ longitudinal designs to track the evolutionary trajectory of digital anxiety (FOMO) and environmental stewardship behaviors as visitors' transition from novice to expert proficiency levels. Second, the empirical investigation exclusively targets the young adult demographic (Generation Z and Millennials) within a developing country context. Although highly relevant to the investigated phenomenon, these specific cultural and geographical boundaries may limit the generalizability of the findings. Future research should expand the ecological scope by conducting cross-cultural comparative studies to examine whether the psychological responses of novice visitors in Asian outdoor destinations differ from those in Western contexts, which may vary in the degree of established outdoor risk literacy. Third, the use of self-reported instruments to measure normative variables, such as sustainable behavior and environmental stewardship behavior, introduces potential social desirability bias, in which respondents may overstate their pro-environmental actions. Consequently, subsequent studies should seek to validate this structural model using objective behavioral metrics. This could involve direct observational analyses of trails, geospatial tracking, or field experiments to measure visitors' actual carbon footprints and waste-management behaviors driven by social media impulses.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors would like to express their sincere gratitude to Politeknik Negeri Bandung and Politeknik Pariwisata NHI Bandung for providing the institutional support and academic environment

necessary to conduct this research. We also extend our appreciation to respondents who voluntarily participated in this study and provided the data required for the analysis.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS (CRediT)

Eko Susanto: Conceptualization; Methodology; Software; Formal Analysis; Resources; Writing - Original Draft; Visualization.

Mega Fitriani Adiwarna Prawira: Conceptualization; Validation; Data Curation; Project Administration.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest with their respective organizations, Politeknik Negeri Bandung and Politeknik Pariwisata NHI Bandung.

REFERENCES

- Ali, F., McKenna, B., Thatcher, J. B., Wu, C., & Alotaibi, S. (2026). Why disclose? Understanding users' self-disclosure on hospitality and tourism social networking sites. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 134, 104570. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2026.104570>
- Ban, J., Kim, J., Prideaux, B., Kuik, S., & Singh, K. (2026). Understanding visit intentions in eco-lodges: The role of eco-service quality within the stimulus–organism–response framework. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13567667251413344>
- Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological Review*, 84(2), 191–215. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.84.2.191>
- Brennan, B. S., Kessler, D., Luo, Y., & Bae, K. M. (2026). Sustaining the Modern Pilgrimage: Governance, Community Impacts, and Environmental Challenges on Korea's Jeju Olle Trail. *Sustainability*, 18(3), 1540. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su18031540>
- Brislin, R. W. (1970). Back-Translation for Cross-Cultural Research. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 1(3), 185–216. <https://doi.org/10.1177/135910457000100301>
- Brown, C. L., Heddy, B. C., Gill, K. S., Gowell, J., & Koenka, A. C. (2025). Urban Middle Schoolers' Experiences of an Outdoor Adventure Education Program to Facilitate Social and Emotional Development. *Education Sciences*, 15(7), 841. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci15070841>
- Chauhan, J. S., Anuj, N. A., Singh, R. K., Upadhyay, R. K., Sharma, A., Raina, K., & Sonker, V. (2026). The mediating effect of risk mitigation via digital practices on travel intentions following COVID-19 among tourists in Uttarakhand. *International Journal of Electronic Business*, 21(2), 244–263. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJEB.2026.151470>
- Chen, F., & Liu, S. (2025). How Confucian values activate tourist environmentally responsible behavior? — an activated perspective of planned behavior. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, 30(5), 517–536. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10941665.2025.2454240>
- Chen, X., & Cheung, L. T. O. (2025). Balancing nature-based tourism and sustainable well-being: exploring aesthetic quality, environmental benefits, and pro-environmental behaviour. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, 30(6), 809–830. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10941665.2025.2470639>
- Cornell, S., Piatkowski, T., Brander, R. W., & Peden, A. E. (2026). The Influence of Social Media on Outdoor Risk-Taking Behaviours: Understanding the Role of Social Norms, Intentions, and Perceptions

- Among Australians. *Health Promotion Journal of Australia*, 37(1), e70133, <https://doi.org/10.1002/hpja.70133>
- Deng, X., Li, J., & Huang, Y. (2025). Social media-induced fear of missing out (FoMO) in the workplace: the influence on job burnout and workplace relations. *Internet Research*, 36(4), 1287-1304, <https://doi.org/10.1108/INTR-02-2024-0244>
- Ewert, A., & Hollenhorst, S. (1989). Testing the Adventure Model: Empirical Support for a Model of Risk Recreation Participation. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 21(2), 124-139. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00222216.1989.11969794>
- Fan, C., & Li, L. (2026). Stop unsafe behaviors at Internet celebrity spots: Matching strategies of warning message appeals and background colors in tourism safety communication. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 66, 101393, 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhtm.2026.101393>
- Fathy, E. A., Salem, I. E., Zidan, H. A. K. Y., & Abdien, M. K. (2025). From plate to post: how foodstagramming enriches tourist satisfaction and creates memorable experiences in culinary tourism. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 28(20), 3373-3392. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2024.2405625>
- Faul, F., Erdfelder, E., Buchner, A., & Lang, A.-G. (2009). Statistical power analyses using G*Power 3.1: Tests for correlation and regression analyses. *Behavior Research Methods*, 41(4), 1149-1160. <https://doi.org/10.3758/BRM.41.4.1149>
- Hair, J. F., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2011). PLS-SEM: Indeed a Silver Bullet. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 19(2), 139-152. <https://doi.org/10.2753/MTP1069-6679190202>
- Hair, J. F., Fisher, J. J., Sarstedt, M., & Ringle, C. M. (2019). When to use and how to report the results of PLS-SEM. *European Business Review*, 31(1), 2-24. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EBR-11-2018-0203>
- Hanafiah, M. H., Amirah, W. N., Asyraff, M. A., Zain, N. A. M., & Hussein, A. S. (2025). Glamping tourism: unpacking ecotourists' experiential quality, perceived value and behavioural intention. *Journal of Ecotourism*, 24(4), 401-423. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14724049.2024.2447953>
- Hennig-Thurau, T., Gwinner, K. P., Walsh, G., & Gremler, D. D. (2004). Electronic word-of-mouth via consumer-opinion platforms: What motivates consumers to articulate themselves on the Internet? *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 18(1), 38-52. <https://doi.org/10.1002/dir.10073>
- Henseler, J., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2015). A new criterion for assessing discriminant validity in variance-based structural equation modeling. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 43(1), 115-135. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-014-0403-8>
- Hu, Xianyang, Hua, F., Chen, G., & Lu, M. (2026). Effects of the Threatened Moral Self on Visitors' Environmentally Responsible Behavior: Insights from a Lab-in-the-Field Experiment. *Journal of Travel Research*, 65(4), 1169-1182. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00472875251322516>
- Hu, Xuan, Tan, J., & Han, K. (2025). Examining the spillover effect of self-protective behaviors on sustainable land use intentions: behavioral insights from landslide-prone areas in China. *Natural Hazards*, 121(16), 18919-18937. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11069-025-07544-1>
- Hunter, J. A., Clark, H., Keenan, G., Moradi, S., Arahanga-Doyle, H., Boyes, M., Ruffman, T., O'Brien, K., Mason, A., Stringer, M., & Scarf, D. (2025). Social identity is associated with the long-term growth of personal efficacy in an Adventure Education Program (AEP). *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice*, 29(3), 133-148. <https://doi.org/10.1037/gdn0000231>
- Janchai, N., & Suvittawat, A. (2025). The Structural Equation Model of Factors Affecting Decision-Making on Low-Carbon Tourist Destinations. *Sustainability*, 17(5), 2082. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su17052082>
- Jaworska, D. (2025). Many faces of FoMO: A qualitative in-depth investigation of context-specific experiences, emotions, and coping strategies. *PLOS One*, 20(9), e0330978. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0330978>

- Kock, N. (2015). Common Method Bias in PLS-SEM. *International Journal of E-Collaboration*, 11(4), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.4018/ijec.2015100101>
- Kumar, S., & Kumar, S. (2025). Social media's sway: how social comparison on social media stimulates impulse travelling; serial mediation study on Indian millennials tourists. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Insights*, 8(1), 138–160. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JHTI-01-2024-0004>
- Latusi, S., & Ieva, M. (2025). Touchpoints' role in the museum context: from affect to customer loyalty. *The TQM Journal*, 37(9), 81–97. <https://doi.org/10.1108/TQM-03-2025-0153>
- Lenggogeni, S., Wang, J., Scott, N., & Saito, H. (2026). Religiosity and risk in the Ring of Fire. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13567667261417681>
- Lengieza, M. L., Richardson, M., & Hughes, J. P. (2025). Feature networks: The environmental features that are central to nature- connectedness experiences. *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 259, 105362. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2025.105362>
- Louis, A. A., Talib, H., Chan, J. K. L., & Kamlun, K. U. (2025). Benefits of geopark from the perspective of local communities: A case study of Kinabalu UNESCO Global Geopark, Malaysia. *International Journal of Geoheritage and Parks*, 13(4), 534–546. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijgeop.2025.10.001>
- Lyu, C., Xu, W., & Jiang, Y. (2025). Elderly Tourists' Motives for Virtual Tourism and Its Impact on Subjective Vitality. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 27(5), e70104. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jtr.70104>
- Martin, P., & Priest, S. (1986). Understanding the adventure experience. *Journal of Adventure Education*, 3(1), 18–21.
- Mashkov, R., Shoval, N., Rizowy, B. I., Shavin, U., Srulovitch, H., & Shwartz, A. (2025). Measuring reactions to congestion in the digital era. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 113, 103976. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2025.103976>
- Matijašević, B., Penjak, A., & Mališa, S. (2025). When the screen calls: online FoMo as a behavioural and pedagogical problem. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, 30(1), 1-20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02673843.2025.2554284>
- Mayer, F. S., & Frantz, C. M. (2004). The connectedness to nature scale: A measure of individuals' feeling in community with nature. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 24(4), 503–515. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2004.10.001>
- Nam, Y.-Y., & Yang, Y. (2025). Cognitive Inconsistency in Travel Risk Perception: A Behavioral Economics Perspective. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 49(7), 1303–1316. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10963480251318035>
- Nugroho, R. A., Quevedo, J. M. D., & Kohsaka, R. (2025). Are the local communities in Balikpapan Bay, Indonesia ready for Mangrove ecotourism? A theory of planned behavior informed study. *Socio-Ecological Practice Research*, 7(4), 439–460. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42532-025-00233-0>
- Oliver, R. L. (1980). A Cognitive Model of the Antecedents and Consequences of Satisfaction Decisions. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 17(4), 460–469. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002224378001700405>
- Phan, T. P., & Truong, P. H. (2025). Sustainable Rural Development Through Agritourism in Ben Tre Province. *Tạp Chí Nghiên Cứu Dân Tộc*, 14(1), 145–152.
- Priest, S. (1992). Factor Exploration and Confirmation for the Dimensions of an Adventure Experience. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 24(2), 127–139. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00222216.1992.11969881>
- Przybylski, A. K., Murayama, K., DeHaan, C. R., & Gladwell, V. (2013). Motivational, emotional, and behavioral correlates of fear of missing out. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 29(4), 1841–1848. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2013.02.014>

- Ravichandran, S. S. (2026). FOMO at the Vineyard: A Microstudy of Wine Tourists' Revisit Intentions Based on Digital Triggers. *Indian Journal of Marketing*, 56(1), 69-79.
<https://doi.org/10.17010/ijom/2026/v56/i1/175901>
- Rogers, R. W. (1975). A Protection Motivation Theory of Fear Appeals and Attitude Change. *The Journal of Psychology*, 91(1), 93-114. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00223980.1975.9915803>
- Sánchez-Torres, J. A., Hernández Fernández, Y. L., & Perlaza Lopera, C. (2025). Factors influencing university students in conducting ecotourism. *Journal of Tourism Futures*, 11(1), 82-95.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/JTF-09-2020-0139>
- Silva, L. F., Carballo-Cruz, F., & Ribeiro, J. C. (2025). Moral Norms in Action: Understanding the Interplay of Visitors' Motivations, Pro-Environmental Personal Norms, and Satisfaction in a Protected Area Context. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 27(3), e70066.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/jtr.70066>
- Soontayatron, S. (2025). The Paradox of Thai Leisure: Exploring the Tension Between "Doing as One Pleases" and the Pursuit of Meaningful Leisure. *Leisure Sciences*, Advance online publication.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01490400.2025.2584990>
- Stern, P. C. (2000). New Environmental Theories: Toward a Coherent Theory of Environmentally Significant Behavior. *Journal of Social Issues*, 56(3), 407-424. <https://doi.org/10.1111/0022-4537.00175>
- Suárez-Perdomo, A., Garcés-Delgado, Y., & Arvelo-Rosales, C. N. (2025). Profiles of undergraduates' fear of missing out (FoMO): Influences in academic goals and decision-making processes. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 41(6), 52-66. <https://doi.org/10.14742/ajet.10466>
- Suryani, W., Lestari, I., & Afwina, R. (2025). From Scroll to Stroll: The Role of FOMO and Climate Advocacy in Shaping Gen Z's Travel Intentions for Sustainable Tourism Destination. *International Journal of Sustainable Development and Planning*, 20(09), 4041-4050.
<https://doi.org/10.18280/ijstdp.200933>
- Tang, J., Yan, L., Wang, Y., & Huang, L. (2026). Psychological restoration and transformative experiences of recreational vehicle tourists. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 29(2), 338-353.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2024.2420849>
- Tang, Y., Liang, S., Bu, H., & Huang, R. (2025). Sustainable development in wetland tourism: The impacts of gratitude to nature and connectedness to nature on environmentally responsible behavior. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 63, 460-477. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhtm.2025.05.019>
- Truong, T. T. H., Nguyen, T. T. Van, Nguyen, T. H. H., Tran, H. T., Hoang, H., & Nguyen, T. M. N. (2025). The Role of Resilience, Risk Perception, Efficacy Belief on Protective Behaviours and Travel Intention During a Crisis. *Sage Open*, 15(2). <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440251337199>
- Ulker-Demirel, E. (2025). *The Paradox of Choice in the Age of AI. In Insights on Consumer Psychology in the Digital Landscape* (pp. 251-278). IGI Global Scientific Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3373-2424-1.ch009>
- Widaningsih, T. T., & Putranto, A. (2025). Digital tourism communication: effects of influencer credibility, content quality, and e-WoM on emotions, FoMO, self-identification, and visit intentions of Gen Z travelers. *Frontiers in Communication*, 10. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fcomm.2025.1717937>
- Yadav, S. J. (2025). *The link between customer perception and green marketing: A study on sustainable practices in Indian hotels* (pp. 399-418). IGI Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-8949-2.ch016>
- Yang, Q., Zhang, T., Mukambaeva, I., & Mukambaev, N. (2025). Perceived quality symbols in short-video social media drive ski tourism behavior. *Scientific Reports*, 15(1), 30767.
<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-025-16666-2>

Zhou, J., & Ho, H.-W. (2025). Does FoMO matter with impulsive travel in live streaming? The role of marketing communication. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Insights*, 8(10), 3885–3904.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/JHTI-11-2024-1246>

APPENDIX A

UGC Exposure (User-Generated Content Exposure)

- UGC1: I regularly view reviews and visual content from other travelers about wilderness destinations on social media.
- UGC2: I am often exposed to short videos or photos featuring the beauty of national parks on my social media timeline.
- UGC3: I spend significant time observing content from influencers or online communities related to outdoor travel.
- UGC4: I actively seek visual information on routes and destination conditions in mountains/forests from other users' posts.
- UGC5: My social media algorithm very frequently displays recommendations for nature destinations that are currently viral.

Travel FOMO (Travel Fear of Missing Out)

- FOMO1: I feel anxious if I cannot visit nature destinations that are currently being widely discussed on social media.
- FOMO2: I feel socially left behind when my friends share their nature recreation experiences, while I do not.
- FOMO3: I have a strong urge to immediately replicate nature trips I see on the Internet to stay relevant in my social circle.
- FOMO4: I feel uneasy or uncomfortable when I see others successfully conquering hiking trails that I have never visited.
- FOMO5: When I see others' visual posts at iconic spots in a mountain/forest, I feel pressured to prove that I can also be there.

Perceived Outdoor Competence

- POC1: I feel confident in my physical ability to navigate reasonably challenging nature routes.
- POC2: I have high confidence in operating basic survival and safety equipment outdoors.
- POC3: I trust my ability to remain calm and make logical decisions if weather conditions suddenly deteriorate in the wild.
- POC4: I feel capable of overcoming technical physical obstacles (such as steep climbs or cold weather) during the trip.
- POC5: I am confident I have adequate initial stamina to complete the hiking trail within standard time targets.

Risk Mitigation Behavior

- RMB1: I proactively equip myself with detailed information regarding potential hazards and extreme weather before starting a journey.
- RMB2: I strictly adhere to safety warning signs and never deviate from the official trails established by management.

RMB3: I prepare backup logistical supplies and personal medical kits (First Aid) to anticipate emergency conditions or physical injuries.

RMB4: I consciously refrain from taking photos in steep or landslide-prone areas for safety (safe-risking).

RMB5: I always ensure my physical and mental condition is at its peak before deciding to explore the national park.

Perceived Trail Difficulty

PTD1: Physical obstacles (such as long climbs, rocks, or slippery terrain) along the trail felt very exhausting.

PTD2: Navigating the routes in this national park provided physical pressure and fatigue far beyond my initial expectations.

PTD3: I felt that the objective conditions of the travel route demanded an extreme level of bodily endurance.

PTD4: The terrain I had to pass through during the visit was categorized as very agonizing for novice-level endurance.

PTD5: Overall, I perceive the technical difficulty level to pass through this natural trail as very high.

Sustainable Behavior (On-Site)

SB1: I consistently practice "Leave No Trace" principles by bringing back all my personal trash.

SB2: I actively minimize single-use plastic use within the national park area.

SB3: I maintain a safe distance and do not disturb wildlife in their natural habitat at all.

SB4: I use natural resources (such as clean water on the trail) very sparingly and wisely.

SB5: I am very careful not to damage, pick, or step on rare flora along the hiking trail.

Nature Connectedness

NC1: While on the trail, I felt a deep emotional bond with the forest and mountain ecosystem elements around me.

NC2: Completing this travel route made me feel like an integral part of the wilderness power, not just a foreign visitor.

NC3: Being in this wilderness environment significantly increased my spiritual appreciation for the earth's authenticity.

NC4: I feel a strong inner connection with the landscape within this national park.

NC5: This profound experience in nature made me realize that my mental well-being is directly connected to the preservation of that environment.

Experiential Satisfaction

SAT1: Overall, the experience of conquering this wilderness trail was very satisfying and successfully met my performance expectations.

SAT2: Visiting this national park provided an extraordinary mental restoration effect from my daily routine pressures.

SAT3: The experience I gained was truly worth the risk, physical fatigue, time, and costs incurred.

SAT4: I feel very proud and happy with the personal achievements I obtained during this outdoor recreation.

SAT5: The overall quality of the travel experience at this wilderness destination was exceptional.

Environmental Stewardship Behavior (Post-Trip)

ESB1: I am willing to voluntarily reprimand other visitors who are proven to have committed vandalism in the wild.

ESB2: I am willing to pay a higher ticket fee if the funds are transparently allocated specifically for nature conservation.

ESB3: I am committed to educating my close relatives about the importance of wilderness conservation ethics.

ESB4: I am willing to support national park management policies that limit visitation quotas to prevent ecosystem damage.

ESB5: I am interested in donating time or money to reforestation programs in the national park I have visited.

e-WOM Behavior (Electronic Word-of-Mouth)

eWOM1: I have shared photos, videos, or positive experiences regarding this national park on my social media accounts.

eWOM2: I have recommended this nature destination to my friends and online followers.

eWOM3: I have written comments, reviews, or positive stories about this place on digital platforms or online communities.

eWOM4: I have enthusiastically told of my success in conquering this route through stories or status updates on the Internet.

eWOM5: I have successfully encouraged others in my social network to experience visiting the destination for themselves.