

# Trustworthiness of Travel Information Sources on Instagram and Intentions to Visit Gopeng Perak

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## Abstract

This study is particularly interested in examining the trustworthiness of travel information sources on Instagram, a popular social media platform as one of the tourism distribution channels. Travel information and attractions of Gopeng, a town in Perak, Malaysia was chosen and examined through an Instagram account. A total of 152 questionnaire was completed by '@gopengtravelgram' instagram followers. Descriptive, independent sample T-test, and regression analysis are performed to examine the differences in trustworthiness on Instagram based on gender and age and the relationship between followers' intentions to visit Gopeng as a tourism destination. The findings revealed that Instagram followers had a positive perceived trustworthiness of travel information sources on Instagram. Furthermore, trust in the information shared by the Instagram account could inspire followers to plan a trip to Gopeng. The findings of this study may be used by destination marketers employing Instagram accounts to strategize the information sources that encourage visitors to have a visit intention. This study also suggests that other Instagram travel accounts or influencers include and highlight important sources in their posting to benefit the followers.

## Keywords:

Trustworthiness, travel information, Instagram, Tourism Distribution Channel, visit intention

## 1 Introduction

Instagram has a major influence on the tourism industry, with 70 percent of travellers using the application to share their travel plans, 67 percent using it to find inspiration for new destinations, and 61 percent discovering things to do on Instagram while travelling (Razo, 2021). Instagram users in Malaysia have increased from 57 percent in 2018 to 63 percent in 2020 (MCMC, 2020). It is also a preferred social media platform since it gives an exciting platform for interacting with people in brand development and engagement that goes beyond what conventional approaches could deliver in the past (Jang et al., 2021). According to Nur'afifah and Prihantoro (2021), Instagram is one of the most popular social media platforms for sharing inspirational moments or activities in recent years. It is an application that allows users to share photos of their daily life with others and can serve as a source of electronic word of mouth (eWOM) (Vidyanata et al., 2018). All of the aforementioned activities serve as a source of information for Instagram users.

Currently, Instagram insights appear on business or creator accounts as they will give information on the user's key statistics through the Account Reached and Account Interactions (MacParlane, 2021). Generally, trust is important for online tourism marketing because it promotes consumers' desire to buy and increases their intention to buy (Li et al., 2020). One of the essential factors that visitors evaluate when making a trip to a specific location is the authenticity of information sources (Berhanu & Raj, 2020). Additionally, the persuasive impact of digital influencers through their social media saw as an incentive for companies or brands to influence consumers using Instagram approaches to persuade them on buying decisions (Filiari, 2016; Vidyanata et al., 2018; Jang et al., 2021). The appearance of social media platforms and the ability to connect with others also influenced tourist attitudes toward their destination choice (Terttunen, 2017). Dogra et al. (2020) also supported that destination has commonly been considered in decision making.

Tourists choose a destination among other competing destinations on Instagram based on many elements such as recommendations by the Instagram influencers, travel experience, cost-efficient, hashtags or tagging, and an "Instagrammable" location on the Instagram feeds or stories (Agbi, 2019; Li et al., 2020; Cavlak, 2021). Users are inspired to travel by pictures of families, friends, celebrities, or other social media users, attracting them to visit other places, especially countries portraying positive and attractive images (Cheah et al., 2019; Chu & Luckanavanich, 2018). As a result, when searching for a destination, consumers will place their trustworthiness on Instagram information. Instagram has affected users' trustworthiness with their travel destination choices. The appearance of social media platforms (e.g.: Instagram) and the ability to connect with others also influenced tourist attitudes toward their destination choice (Terttunen, 2017). Thus, it is critical that the user maintain trustworthiness and a positive attitude on Instagram.

Regarding the trustworthiness of travel information sources on social media, the literature hesitates scholarly arguments (Berhanu & Raj, 2020). On the other hand, other

studies revealed that social media's travel and tourism information sources are less credible. Hence, the trustworthiness of online travel information sources continued to be arguable or debatable, and topical. It remains one of the most debatable or contested themes among commentators, academicians, or scholars. Despite the growing concern about the reliability of online travel information sources, previous research has not yet looked at how the credibility of social media travel and tourism information sources varied depending on visitor demographics like age, gender, and education. No research has been done on the trustworthiness of social media travel and tourism information sources considering visitors' demographic variables (Berhanu & Raj, 2020).

Furthermore, current research in developing countries is scant in general, which indicates a gap in existing literature or body of knowledge. For the tourism industry, an appropriate marketing strategy is responsible for the number and type of tourists visiting a given place and for guaranteeing profitable destinations (Wu et al., 2018). It is important to understand how different demographic backgrounds have varied expectations and demands when planning a proper tourism destination and building a successful communication strategy. According to Berhanu and Raj (2020), some tourism-related organizations did not utilize social media to advertise their business as tourist destinations. The study also revealed there is an issue with information timeliness in some tourism organizations since some material is out of current, as well as the lack of details of information, especially price, hours of operation, and contact number. Gopeng town is a renowned tourist destination since it is surrounded by woods, mountains, rivers, waterfalls, caves, lakes, and villages. (Yaser, 2019).

Thus, eco-tourism and adventure tourism thrive in Gopeng. Gopeng is undeniably a "one-stop destination" for adventure tourism in Peninsular Malaysia (Alwi et al., 2019), and many suppliers have their own marketing platforms. However, there is no specific account promoting and organizing all travel products offered in Gopeng in general. Hence, this study is conducted to examine the differences in the trustworthiness of Instagram travel information sources considering visitors' gender and age, and assess a relationship between trust and intention to visit Gopeng, Perak through created account for this purposes @gopengtravelgram.

## **2 Literature Review**

### **2.1 Instagram and Tourism**

In this new era of a connected world, the way we travel has influenced the growth of technological advancements, and these new technologies offer an even more engaging and adventurous experience. Social media has become an important aspect of everyday people's lives. It has made interacting with friends, family, and businesses easier than ever before since it is now available practically everywhere via an Internet connection and various devices such as laptops, tablets, and smartphones (Terttunen, 2017). Besides that, the widely used of User-Generated Content (UGC) in the tourism industry provides substantial results in online communities as they share their travel

information by tagging or hashtags of the users' pictures, text, videos, and audio (Kitsios et al., 2022; Assaker, 2020). Each of these social media platforms can serve a particular meaning for tourists; for example, YouTube offers travel videos and travel channels; Instagram is one of the most powerful influencers of travel motivation, with images of beautiful destinations posted by social media influencers such as travel influencers, and travel bloggers or collaboration with celebrities or models who are more trusted and liked (Nguyen et al., 2021).

Instagram, a combination of "instant" and "telegram", was created by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger as the first free smartphone application in October 2010 (Instagram, 2022; Hartmans, 2020). Instagram is not just a powerful medium for sharing photos and videos; it is also a social media platform where users can provide their opinions and tag a picture, thereby involving and engaging more people (AramendiaMuneta et al., 2020). Instagram offers a wide range of uses (Prasetya et al., 2021). In addition, exchanging photos rather than words has made interaction with friends and larger user groups with common interests more optimal, easy, and interesting (Anuar & Ihsanuddin, 2016). Gumpo et al. (2020) stated that Instagram has the power to source information and interconnect its users. Currently, Instagram is one of the most-used apps and services globally; as of December 2021, the application now has more than 2 billion active users worldwide (Rodriguez, 2021). Most Instagram users aged between 25 to 34 years old are equivalent to 443.7 million users (Kepios, 2022).

According to Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (2020), in 2021 Instagram users in Malaysia had reached 63.1%. Over the last decade, researchers have been interested in Instagram and the tourism industry as countries, towns, museums, and protected areas are among the subjects of research, which are generally presented as case studies (Aramendia-Muneta et al., 2020). Instagram connects the physical and digital worlds, enhancing digital presence and identity while enabling more active connection, not just for personal reasons but also for business (Appel et al., 2020). In these circumstances, Instagram aided in enhancing its image as a tourist destination. According to Terttunen (2017), there is a strong connection between changing tourist behaviour in trip preparation and the growing popularity of travel content on Instagram. When sharing a photo on Instagram, a description can be added, including tagging and hashtags (Kitsios et al., 2022). A hashtag is a convenient way to categorize images and photos, allowing the user to broaden the reach of the photo while also making it easier for people to find content that they are interested in. By looking through images of people on vacation or travelling, Instagram users can get a better idea of the destination they choose to go to in future planning. Travellers and locals who have discovered something great and wish to share it with others provide a great deal of valuable information and recommendations (Utami, 2022). This gathering approach is thought to be more authentic and informative (Assaker, 2020).

Other than that, Instagram users will modify their vacation itineraries and places to visit after seeing images published by people they followed, such as family, friends, relatives, or even strangers (Prasetya et al., 2021). Viewing these photographs can excite people's interest in specific destinations and encourage them to travel (Liu et al., 2020).

Instagram enables users to link incentive to action by providing a high level of interest in travel-related material among travellers, and businesses may leverage Instagram's free features and natural interaction to grow exposure loyalty and establish a strong 'following' base without having to pay for advertisements (Prasetya et al., 2021). Before the existence of Instagram, most people used traditional techniques to share their vacation experiences with family and friends.

## **2.2 Instagram and Users' Trustworthiness**

Alotaibi et al. (2019) revealed that regardless of the ability to monitor or control the other party, trust is described as "the readiness of a party to be vulnerable to the acts of another party based on the anticipation that the other will perform a specific action significant to the trustor". Trust and reliability of products and services are critical characteristics that cannot be underestimated or ignored. Unquestionably, the reliability of information is one of the most important factors that tourists examine when deciding on their preferred destination choice (Berhanu & Raj, 2020). One of the major decisions of travellers during the journey planning process is trustworthiness (Palmer, 2021). Trustworthiness is the consumer's confidence, honesty, acceptance, and belief in the organization (Elziny et al., 2020). Taghipoorreynh and De Run (2016) mentioned that one of the most used indicators to assess the accuracy of marketing endorsements is credibility. Che et al. (2017) support that trust is important in resolving uncertainties and generating consumers' buying intentions. It also implies that consumers' perception is reliable, sincere, and honest as a source of communication (Filiari, 2016).

According to Kitsios et al. (2022), travellers have more confidence in a UGC website as it delivers more input from traditional sources regarding travel decisions. In recent years, trustworthiness has been an important aspect for social media users, especially in accepting content (Dogra, 2020). Users frequently seek advice from experts or unbiased sources when they are unsure about a certain product or service (Filiari, 2016). However, according to Allcott and Gentzkow (2017), the four most important sources of news and information on the 2016 US elections were cable TV, network television, the internet, and local television. Social media is ranked sixth as an information source. Moreover, Instagram influencers or brands regarded as experts and trustworthy have a bigger influence on their followers' perspectives (Anuar et al., 2021). The originality and authenticity shown by these influencers to promote travel destinations through their Instagram post allowed them to connect with their followers (Xu & Pratt, 2018).

Assaker (2020) also mentioned that the trustworthiness of the influencers for brands when posting their travel experience to their followers is realistic, honest, and relatable. For example, National Geographic Travel (@natgeotravel) has over 45.1 million followers with an average of 47.5k likes on Instagram and was identified as the most followed travel influencer in January 2022 (HypeAuditor, 2022). Customers are drawn to social media, particularly travel 2.0, since online evaluations and suggestions by travellers are seen to have greater authenticity than traditional visitor information sources. It was stated that internet material may be trusted if it is developed and

published by independent actual individuals with authentic experiences (Fotis et al., 2012; Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). On the other hand, with the improvement of consumer-generated media, which allows Internet users to easily post any information without the need for verification, editing, or fact-checking processes (triangulation), travellers should exercise caution before viewing the information and media as trustworthy (Berhanu & Raj, 2020). Online material cannot be trusted since it may be fraudulent content supplied by someone with a vested interest.

Furthermore, the illegal practice of organizations posting fake positive reviews to promote their own product/service/organization or fake negative reviews to sully the reputations of their competitors (Elliott, 2018; Zhang et al., 2016), combined with the legal but unethical practice of only publishing positive reviews, have called into question the authenticity of online consumer reviews (Kim et al., 2019). As an example, Fakespot.com, an artificial intelligence platform that analyses internet reviews, estimated that up to 70% of Amazon.com reviews are fraudulent (Elliott, 2018). In this regard, Hensel and Deis (2010) advised consumers to be cautious when searching for information and reading comments or reviews on social media sites because any organization can post fake reviews or contents of products and services with a vested interest in an increasing number of customers to increase sales volume. In terms of demographics, women have more trust in online shopping than males (Rodriguez & Trujillo, 2014; Riedl et al., 2010).

In contrast, Yang and Lester (2006) discovered that females exhibit lower trust in online purchases. According to the Expedia Group Media Solutions study, 84 percent of Generation Z believe that social media plays a significant role in travel (compared to 77 percent of Generation Y) and that more than half of them use social media (Expedia Group Media Solutions, 2018). Positive social media comments and views are highly important to them, and they will encourage members of this generation to trust to take vacations. Generations X and Y, on the other hand, are more sceptical of information shared on social media and lack the passion of Generation Z. As a result of the above literature, the study proposes the following hypothesis:

H1a: There is a significant difference in the trustworthiness of travel information sources on @Gopengtravelgram considering followers' gender.

H1b: There is a significant difference in the trustworthiness of travel information sources on @Gopengtravelgram considering followers' age.

### **2.3 Instagram and Destination**

The choice of destination is important to travellers or visitors through social media, i.e., Instagram. Dogra et al. (2021) further described those tourists who choose a location among competing destinations depending on various considerations, and destination choice is typically referred to as a decision-making process. Thus, information shared on Instagram is very important. Parsons (2017) indicated that Instagram users could virtually follow the trips of other visitors and travellers by learning about their total experience, including their activities, as most tourist destinations are

getting commercialized, and social media including Instagram has played a significant role in this. In this sense, travellers or visitors will search for the most hyped or recommended destination that is relevant and match a specific demand type to their preferences on Instagram (Cavlak, 2021). Sultan et al. (2019) also mentioned that users discovered that social media is mostly engaged to communicate and obtain information beforehand.

Besides that, Instagram is a location where people discover new travel destinations. The application is one of the key sources of this information, as some individuals purchase trips based on what they learn on the application (Granberg, 2019). For instance, young travellers choose the "Instagrammable" location as the most important factor when choosing holiday destinations as it will inspire other followers by posting it through their feed (Razo, 2021). Another example is that some tourists choose a destination that allows them to capture and upload "Instagrammable" selfies to boost their status and gain more followers (Li et al., 2020). As a result, expanding on destination qualities when marketing them has become increasingly essential (Cavlak, 2021). The primary purpose of intermediate marketing is to influence client purchasing decisions positively (Che et al., 2017; Lim et al., 2017). However, the link between buying intent and eventual purchasing behaviour is determined by the buyer's choices. Che et al. (2017) also claimed that trust has a significant influence on customer purchase intentions. Magno and Cassia (2018) discovered that followers' willingness to accept suggestions made by Instagram travel intermediaries was heavily dependent on the confidence and veracity of the data provided by them. Therefore, the following hypothesis was derived:

H2: Trust in Instagram travel information sources has a significant relationship with the intention to visit destinations (Gopeng, Perak).

### **3 Methodology**

The study employs a quantitative approach. The target population for this study was limited to those local followers of the @gopengtravelgram account. For this study, the researcher used a non-probability sampling strategy. In non-probability sampling, the possibility of each topic being selected is unknown and is based on the analyst's individual selection (Zikmund et al., 2013; Saunders et al., 2012). Purposive sampling was used, which is normally used to determine who can offer the most information to achieve the study's objectives (Dwyer et al., 2012). The sample size of 107 was determined by referring to the G\*Power sample size. A total of 152 responses were successfully collected from the respondent visiting the @gopengtravelgram. The questionnaire was adapted from previous studies by Jasmine et al. (2017), Berhanu and Raj (2020) and Anuar et al. (2021).

The survey questionnaire consists of three sections; Section A was framed to collect demographic data including gender, age, occupation, and Instagram usage which consist of 7 items. Section B contains 7 items of trustworthiness of travel and tourism information sources on @Gopengtravelgram. Meanwhile, Section C has 4 items of

intention to visit Gopeng on the five-point Likert scale starting from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The survey was conducted through an online portal (Google forms). A self-administered survey was used to collect the data. A link to the online questionnaire was sent to all @gopengtravelgram followers using a direct messaging application on Instagram and also in the Instagram story. Prior to data collection, the initial survey questionnaire for item reliability indicates (Cronbach's  $> 0.70$ ). Cronbach's alpha values for 7 items in trustworthiness = 0.748, while Cronbach's alpha values for 4 items in visit intention = 0.729 demonstrate the measurement's high reliability. These values are significantly higher than the minimum recommended levels of 0.70 (Nunnally, 1978). Descriptive and an independent sample T-test was used to examine gender differences in the trustworthiness of Instagram travel information sources, then regression analysis was used to examine the relationship between @gopengtravelgram followers' intentions to visit Gopeng.

## 4 Findings

### 4.1 Descriptive Analysis

Table 1: Profiles of respondents

Variable	Categories	N	%
Gender	Male	76	50
	Female	76	50
Age	18-22	15	9.9
	23-27	27	17.8
	28-32	30	19.7
	33-37	30	19.7
	38-42	23	15.1
	>43	27	17.8
Occupation	Student	28	18.4
	Self Employed	31	20.4
	Government Sector	51	33.6
	Private Sector	28	18.4
	Retired	7	4.6
Year of using Instagram	Unemployed	7	4.6
	Less than 1 year	10	6.6
	1-2 years	58	38.2
	2-3 years	41	27.0
Instagram usage in a day	More than 3 years	43	28.3
	0-1 time	9	5.9
	1-2 times	46	30.3
	2-3 times	12	7.9
Purpose of using Instagram	3-4 times	51	33.6
	More than 4 times	34	22.4
	For entertainment	85	55.9



Experience using Instagram to search for information about Tourism Destination	To interact with friends	20	13.2
	To obtain information	31	20.4
	To share status	16	10.5
	Yes	130	85.5
	No	22	14.5

Based on table 1, it is shown that both genders contributed to the same percentage which is 50% each and the number for each gender that became our respondent is 76. For the age group, the respondent comes from the age group of 28- 32 years old and 33-37 years old which contribute to a total of 39.4% of these two age groups. The third-largest age group is from 23-27 years old and 43 years and above which reflected the same percentage each (17.8%) and followed by the age group of 38- 42 years old which recorded 15.1% of the total respondents. The lowest number of respondents come from the age group of 18-22 years old which contributed to 9.9% of the total respondent for this study. For the occupation, it showed that most of the respondents worked in the government sector (33.6%). Meanwhile, respondents who are self-employed contributed 20.4% followed by the student and private sector which contribute the same percentage for each group 14 (18.4%). Respondents that are retired and unemployed also recorded the same percentage (4.6%) which is the lowest percentage. Not only that, but most of the respondents have also experienced using Instagram for around 1-2 years which reflects 38.2% of the total respondents. Meanwhile, 28.3% of the respondents have more than 3 years of experience using Instagram. The other 27% of the respondents have 2-3 years of using Instagram and only 6.6% of the total respondent revealed that they use Instagram for less than one year. The highest percentage is 33.6% which means the respondents use Instagram 3-4 times a day followed by the second-highest percentage (30.3%) that use Instagram 1-2 times per day. 22.4% of the total respondents use Instagram more than 4 times a day and it was recorded that 7.9% of the respondents use Instagram 2-3 times a day. The lowest contribution in this section comes from respondents that use Instagram 0-1 time in a day (5.9%). It was revealed that most of the respondents use Instagram for entertainment purposes (55.9%) and 20.4% of the respondents use it to obtain information.

An independent sample t-test was conducted to determine if there were significant differences in trustworthiness towards Instagram travel information scores between males and females. The results in table 2 revealed statistically no significant differences between male's and female's trustworthiness towards the travel information on @gopengtravelgram ( $t = -.103$ ;  $df = 150$ ;  $p = .918$ ). Therefore, hypothesis H1a is rejected

Table 2: Trustworthiness of Instagram travel information between gender

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	P value
Male	76	-.00940	.091464	-0.13	0.918
Female	76				

Tests of Equality of Means was also conducted to examine whether there were statistically significant differences among @gopengtravelgram users of different ages in relation to their trustworthiness towards travel information. The results in table 3 revealed statistically significant differences among the users' age,  $F(5, 62.684) = 17.633$ ,  $p = 0.000$ . Therefore, hypothesis H1b is accepted.

Table 3: Trustworthiness of Instagram travel information between age

	Statistic.	df1	df2	Sig.
Welch	17.633	17.633	62.684	.000
Brown-Forsythe	22.601	5 99.010	5 99.010	.000

a. Asymptotically F distributed

Table 4 displays descriptive statistics for the intention to visit Gopeng. The followers likely to visit Gopeng based on the recommendation from @gopengtravelgram had the highest mean scores ( $M = 4.4605$ ,  $SD = .71763$ ), while the followers likely to keep in mind some of the tips recommended by @gopengtravelgram when visiting Gopeng had the lowest ( $M = 3.7895$ ,  $SD = .96722$ ). However, all followers somewhat agreed to travel to Gopeng because all items mean are above average.

Table 4: Descriptive statistics of intention to visit Gopeng

Items	N	Mean	Std Deviation
1. Browsing through @gopengtravelgram makes me want to travel	152	4.2039	.75764
2. It is likely I would visit Gopeng based on the recommendation from @gopengtravelgram	152	4.4605	.71763
3. It is likely I would visit the same location and follow a similar itinerary as recommended by @gopengtravelgram	152	3.8816	.98958
4. It is likely I would keep in mind some of the tips recommended by @gopengtravelgram when I visit the destination	152	3.7895	.96722

## 4.2 Regression Analysis

Linear regression analysis was used to test if the trustworthiness significantly predicted visit intention. The results of the regression in table 5 indicated the predictors explained 58.9% of the variance ( $R^2 = .589$ ,  $F(151) = 214.909$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Therefore, the hypothesis is accepted that trust in @gopengtravelgram travel information sources have a significant relationship with the intention to visit tourism destination.

Table 5: Coefficient Intentions to Visit

Model	Beta	t	Sig.
Constant		1.740	.084
Trustworthiness	0.767	14.660	.000

Dependent Variable: Visit

## 5 Discussion and Conclusion

The researchers investigated the reliability of travel information sources on Instagram, specifically the @gopengtravelgram account as a tourism distribution channel, thus the researchers synthesised two fundamental theoretical perspectives: trust and followers' intention to travel to Gopeng. In the study, two factors are identified: Instagram trustworthiness based on gender and age, and @gopengtravelgram followers' visit intention to Gopeng, Perak. These two categories of criteria are hypothesised to analyse the differences in the trustworthiness of Instagram travel information sources and to examine the relationship between trust and intention to visit Gopeng, Perak through @gopengtravelgram. Our empirical testing on 152 active respondents indicated that trust has no significant difference in Instagram information scores between males and females. According to Assaker (2019), and Berhanu and Raj (2020), the author supports that there is no significant difference between male and female in their levels of trustworthiness toward social media for travel information on @gopengtravelgram.

As a result, many studies have reached the same conclusion: consumers' trust in a company's reliability is a major influence on whether they will buy the company's goods (Che et al., 2017; Magno & Cassia, 2018). This supports the idea that building trust is a key part of getting rid of doubts and making @gopengtravelgram followers want to visit. However, Warner-Soderholm et al. (2018) study's findings indicated that women showed higher trust in the news feeds they read on Instagram. According to the findings of Chiappa's (2011) study, there are significant differences in how male and female respondents regard online comments and reviews as credible and trustworthy. When the proportion of positive and negative comments is equal, female respondents are more likely than male respondents to agree that trustworthiness is greater. Other

studies have found that there are gender differences in the impact of travel reviews on various aspects of decision-making, with female users benefiting the most from using reviews (Gretzel & Yoo, 2008).

As far as respondents' age is concerned, the result revealed that trust has a significant difference in Instagram information scores between respondents' age. In this study, it was concluded that the younger generation from the age of 18 years old to 22 years old have higher trustworthiness on travel information sources compared to other age groups. Similarly, Rodrigues et al. (2017) discovered that trustworthiness had a more significant influence on purchase intention in younger persons than in older ones in the context of online shopping. According to Shearer and Matsa (2018), the young generation and the millennial have more engagement with social media travel information sources. According to Nguyen et al. (2021), Gen Z places the most weight on social media's practicality, followed by its perceived worth and, last, the trustworthiness of its information. Gen Z is therefore motivated and intends to travel to have a genuine experience because they frequently utilize social media to learn new things.

However, this finding contrasts with studies by Kaplan et al. (2020) that mentioned older adults who were also more trusting than young adults in response to neutral indicators of trustworthiness. According to Pabel and Prideaux (2016), people over the age of 50 were the least likely to utilize social media to research travel options. Similar to this, research from the Global Business Travel Association (2015) reveals that millennials (18-34 years old) are twice as likely as baby boomers (56 years and older) to use online travel applications to book or reserve lodging or travel-related activities, search for travel- and tourism-related information, and read reviews. Tan et al. (2018) and Kim (2016) also discovered that age had no moderating influence on the relationships between usefulness, ease of use, and trustworthiness and behavioural intention (BI) in both context of online shopping and hotel tablet app adoption. The researcher also managed to fulfil the third research objective and found that there is a significant relationship between trustworthiness and user's visit intention to Gopeng, Perak.

According to Anuar et al. (2021), the researchers discovered a moderate relationship between trust and the intention to travel to the highlighted destinations. Primananda et al. (2022) stated that online WOM had a significant impact on the intention to revisit. According to Hajli et al. (2016), trust is important in trading and can increase purchase intention. Shrivastava (2016); Tatars and Erdogmus (2016), and Lin et al. (2017) conducted research on trust and revisit intention and discovered that trust has a significant effect on revisit intentions. According to Abubakar and Ilkan (2015), eWOM is advantageous because, in addition to trust, which is significant in improving visits, it can give the impression of shared experiences. This article contributes to the conceptual and empirical knowledge of the credibility of Instagram travel information sources and the intention to travel to Gopeng, Perak.

The implications of this study are significant for both academics and practitioners. Travel and hospitality companies could create an integrated marketing strategy that includes Instagram. Instagram has added insight to professional accounts for businesses, allowing intermediaries to see the demographics of followers such as age and gender. The outcomes of this study may help to strategize the information sources that inspire visitors the most to have a visit intention based on the demographics of their followers. Consequently, marketers should employ segmented marketing strategies, such as digital marketing for youngsters' strategies. Intermediaries or marketers can increase their sales and profits by correctly marketing the destinations to youngsters, as youngsters are the most frequent internet users, with trends utilizing shareable videos and social media sites. Furthermore, marketers or intermediaries may be able to determine the impact of employing Instagram. Marketers or intermediaries need to consider using Instagram to promote their travel services as the majority of the respondents experience using Instagram to search for information about tourism destinations.

It is recommended to post on Instagram channels regularly, including photos and videos with captions at least once a week to attract potential tourists to visit a destination. As followers place the most trust in the recommendations of other visitors, intermediaries or marketers can share reviews from other visitors and urge them to tag our account. This method will allow people who are interested in traveling or who want to visit a specific destination to connect with and exchange opinions with others who have already visited that location. Furthermore, other Instagram travel accounts or influencers should include and highlight important sources in their posting to benefit the followers. In addition, with regards to issue on the timeliness of information in some tourism organisations due to out-of-date information, absence of information, and lack of information specifics (especially price, hours of operation, contact number), this study may help intermediaries to keep their social media profiles and websites up to date and include all pertinent information. Social media marketing provides a cost-effective edge for contacting targeted clients or visitors across the globe. Importantly, tourism and hospitality organisations should adopt destination-specific travel application websites that assist tourists in locating all relevant information about Gopeng, including activities, lodging, and restaurants.

In conclusion, this study shows that trustworthiness influences visit intention, demonstrating the importance of travel information sources that can directly impact people in a competitive environment for tourism businesses and destination management organizations (DMOs). Furthermore, travel intermediaries will gain more credibility if they provide accurate and trustworthy information in their material, which may have a favorable impact on people's travel intentions.

## **6 About the author**

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