



**TRAVEL VLOGGERS' INFORMATION QUALITY AND CREDIBILITY ON
BANGLADESHI'S DESTINATION CHOICE WITH PERCEIVED
INFORMATION AND INFORMATION ADOPTION AS MEDIATORS**

By

ISLAM MD TARIQUL

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,
in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science**

February 2023

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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science

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By

ISLAM MD TARIQUL

February 2023

Chairman : Siti Rahayu binti Hussin
School : Business and Economics

Travel vlogs are considered as a video form of online review, which is usually generated by tourists and shared most on social media platforms. Travel vlogs have emerged as a significant source of information on tourist products and services, including information regarding tourist destinations, accommodation, cuisine, touristic activities, mode of accessibility, etc. Moreover, travel vlogs are the updated version of word of mouth (WoM), where the tourist provides a review or share their experience regarding the products or services that they have consumed. The current study has been conducted to identify how the information quality of travel vlog videos and vlogger credibility influence the Bangladeshi social media users' destination choice with the mediating role of information diagnosticity, information usefulness, information trust, and information adoption. The conceptual framework of the present study is an extension of the Information Adoption Model. The present study has been conducted based on the positivism paradigm, and it is a quantitative study. Data were obtained by surveying 231 Bangladeshi social media users with a structured, self-administered, close-ended questionnaire. The data has been collected through purposive and snowball sampling techniques. Two statistical software have been employed for data analysis purposes; SPSS (v.26) and Smart PLS (v.3.3.9). SPSS software has been used for screening the data, cleaning the data, treating the missing data, respondents' demographic profile analysis, and correlation analysis. Smart PLS software has been used for identifying the construct validity, reliability, discriminant validity, and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The current study's findings indicate that travel vlog information quality and vlogger credibility have a significant relationship with information diagnosticity, information usefulness, and information trust. In addition, information diagnosticity, information usefulness, and information trust have a significant relation with information adoption as well as information adoption had a significant relationship with destination choice. Moreover, information diagnosticity, information usefulness, information trust, and information adoption mediate the relationship of travel vlog information quality and vlogger credibility with destination choice. In addition, the

present study provides both theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, the current study extends the Information Adoption Model (IAM) with three variables; information diagnosticity, information trust, and destination choice. Whereas all the stakeholders of the tourism industry of Bangladesh will be benefitted from the practical contributions of the present study. Finally, the study has been concluded by indicting several limitations and recommendations for future research.

Keywords: Travel Vlog, Information Quality, Vlogger Credibility, Information Diagnosticity, Information Usefulness, Information Trust, Destination Choice, Bangladesh, Information Adoption Model



Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Master Sains

**KUALITI DAN KREDIBILITI MAKLUMAT VLOGGER PELANCONG
TERHADAP PILIHAN DESTINASI BANGLADESH DENGAN MAKLUMAT
TANGGAPAN DAN PENGGUNAAN MAKLUMAT SEBAGAI PENGANTARA**

Oleh

ISLAM MD TARIQUL

Februari 2023

Pengerusi : Siti Rahayu binti Hussin
Sekolah : Perniagaan dan Ekonomi

Vlog perjalanan adalah dianggap sebagai ulasan atas talian dalam bentuk video yang biasanya dihasilkan oleh pelancong dan dikongsi paling banyak di platform media sosial. Vlog perjalanan telah muncul sebagai sumber maklumat penting mengenai barang dan perkhidmatan untuk pelancong kerana ianya merangkumi maklumat mengenai destinasi pengembaraan, penginapan, masakan, aktiviti pengembaraan, kebolehpasaran, dan lain lain. Lebih-lebih lagi, vlog perjalanan adalah versi terkini dari mulut ke mulut (WoM), di mana pelancong memberikan ulasan atau berkongsi pengalaman mereka mengenai produk atau perkhidmatan yang telah mereka gunakan. Kajian semasa telah dijalankan untuk mengenal pasti bagaimana kualiti maklumat video vlog perjalanan dan kebolehpasaran vlogger mempengaruhi pilihan destinasi pengguna media sosial Bangladesh dengan peranan pengantara diagnostik maklumat, kegunaan maklumat, kepercayaan maklumat dan penerimaan maklumat. Kerangka konsep kajian ini adalah lanjutan dari Model Adopsi Maklumat. Kajian ini telah dilakukan berdasarkan paradigma positivisme dan ini adalah kajian kuantitatif. Data diperolehi dengan meninjau 231 pengguna media sosial Bangladesh dengan soal selidik berstruktur, ditadbir sendiri dan tertutup. Data telah dikumpulkan melalui teknik pengambilan sampel dan bola salji. Dua perisian statistik telah digunakan untuk tujuan analisis data iaitu perisian SPSS (v.26) dan Smart PLS (v.3.3.9). Perisian SPSS telah digunakan untuk menyaring data, membersihkan data, merawat data yang hilang, analisis profil demografi responden, dan analisis korelasi. Perisian Smart PLS telah digunakan untuk mengenal pasti kesahan konstruk, kebolehpasaran, kesahan diskriminan, dan Pemodelan Persamaan Struktur (SEM). Penemuan kajian semasa menunjukkan bahawa kualiti maklumat vlog perjalanan dan kebolehpasaran vlogger mempunyai hubungan yang signifikan dengan diagnostik maklumat, kegunaan maklumat, dan kepercayaan maklumat. Di samping itu, diagnostik maklumat, kegunaan maklumat, dan kepercayaan maklumat mempunyai hubungan yang signifikan dengan penggunaan maklumat, maklumat penggunaan maklumat mempunyai hubungan yang signifikan dengan pilihan destinasi. Lebih-lebih lagi, diagnostik maklumat, kegunaan maklumat, kepercayaan maklumat, dan

penggunaan maklumat memediasi hubungan kualiti maklumat perjalanan dan kebolehpercayaan vlogger dengan pilihan destinasi. Di samping itu, kajian ini memberikan sumbangan teori dan praktikal. Secara teorinya, kajian semasa memperluas Model Adopsi Maklumat (IAM) dengan tiga pemboleh ubah iaitu diagnostik maklumat, kepercayaan maklumat, dan pilihan destinasi pengembaraan. Manakala, semua pihak berkepentingan industri engembaraan Bangladesh akan mendapat manfaat daripada sumbangan praktikal dari kajian ini. Akhirnya, kajian ini juga telah merumuskan bahawa terdapat beberapa batasan dan cadangan untuk penyelidikan masa depan.

Kata kunci: Vlog Perjalanan, Kualiti Maklumat, Kebolehpercayaan Vlogger, Diagnostik Maklumat, Kegunaan Maklumat, Kepercayaan Maklumat, Pilihan Destinasi, Bangladesh, Model Penerimaan Maklumat

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This thesis was submitted to the Senate of the Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

Siti Rahayu binti Hussin

Senior Lecturer
School of Business and Economics
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Chairman)

Wong Foong Yee

Senior Lecturer
School of Business and Economics
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Member)

ZALILAH MOHD SHARIFF, PhD

Professor and Dean
School of Graduate Studies
Universiti Putra Malaysia

Date: 08 June 2023

Declaration by Members of the Supervisory Committee

This is to confirm that:

- the research conducted and the writing of this thesis was under our supervision;
- supervision responsibilities as stated in the Universiti Putra Malaysia (Graduate Studies) Rules 2003 (Revision 2012-2013) are adhered to.

Signature: _____
Name of Chairman
of Supervisory
Committee: Siti Rahayu binti Hussin

Signature: _____
Name of Member
of Supervisory
Committee: Wong Foong Yee

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AVE	Average Variance Extracted
CA	Cronbach's Alpha
CR	Composite Reliability
DC	Destination Choice
E-WoM	Electronic Word of Mouth
ELM	Elaboration Likelihood Model
HTMT	Heterotrait - Monotrait
IA	Information Adoption
IACM	Information Acceptance Model
IAM	Information Adoption Model
ID	Information Diagnosticity
IQ	Information Quality
IT	Information Trust
IU	Information Usefulness
OCR	Online Consumer Review
SEM	Structural Equation Modeling
TAM	Technology Acceptance Model
UGC	User-Generated Content
VC	Vlogger Credibility
WOM	Word of Mouth

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The chapter begins by highlighting the background of the study, where a brief concept about the role of travel vlogs and online reviews in destination choice, the tourism industry in Bangladesh, and social media usage behavior among Bangladeshi residents has been discussed. The current chapter further proceeds by mentioning the problem statement of the study, and based on the problem statement, the research objectives and research questions have been developed. Moving next, the scope and significance of the study, as well as the operational definition of the key terms, have been mentioned. Finally, this chapter has been concluded by highlighting the organizational plan for the rest of the study.

1.2 Background of the Study

For collecting information, the dependency of the consumers becomes higher on online reviews and lesser on television, and the trust of the consumers has decreased towards television advertisements (Alhemimah, 2019). Vlog is a type of online review that comes under electronic word-of-mouth (e-WoM). In contrast, electronic word-of-mouth and online consumer reviews are considered effective marketing and advertising tools for businesses of all types and sizes worldwide (Hill et al., 2020).

As mentioned earlier, the vlog is a type of online review that enables users to express their personal opinions regarding products and services they have experienced or consumed with other potential consumers (Chen & Dermawan, 2020). Thus, the vlog is user-generated content (UGC) often seen on online platforms. According to researchers in this discipline, vlogs have emerged as a significant source of information on products and services for marketers and consumers for many years (Vrontis et al., 2021). Not only vlog reviews are increasingly perceived as a necessary element of marketing and promotional communication, but also businesses and organizations have started using vlog information as a part of their market research, particularly about the perspectives of their consumers (Hollebeek & Macky, 2019; Litvin et al., 2018). Consumers use vlog information to better understand a product or service (including advantages and disadvantages) before choosing whether or not to buy it (Zhang et al., 2020). When customers develop trust and credibility toward the information in the vlog video, they are more inclined to accept it. This perception of trustworthiness impacts their online purchase behavior (Filieri, 2016; Hollebeek & Macky, 2019).

Tourism is an intangible product, and consumers often need help to evaluate the quality and characteristics of intangible products before experiencing them. Reviews through vlogs and blogs have been considered essential for assessing the intangible product before even purchasing (Alhemimah, 2019). Intangible products have less visible

characteristics compared to tangible products, by which the product may be evaluated because tourists are hardly experienced with the destination and its associated tourism products and services; information sources are critical for choosing a destination (Santos et al., 2020). Moreover, travel expenditures are classified as high-involvement commodities due to the higher expense, both in terms of time, effort, and financial spending, compared to low-involvement products (e.g., hardware or books) (Zhao et al., 2019). As per 2018 marketing research, 61% of visitors said they 'like to study, select, and then schedule their forthcoming destination' online (Alhemimah, 2019). The abundance of information accessible on the internet from an abundance of marketers has increased issues about authenticity, and they emphasize that the form and importance of information sources have changed (Salet, 2021). Travel vlog videos have become a source of information for travelers. Tourists are increasingly using travel vlog reviews to schedule their tours rather than content generated by the marketer (Silaban et al., 2022).

According to Nguyen and Tong (2022), consumers frequently depend on information from user-generated platforms to determine travel-related choices and develop beliefs and perceptions about destinations and tourism amenities. According to research in 2016, 59.4 percent of American travelers utilized user-generated content (UGC) in the form of online reviews about hotels, destinations, and travel-related activities to assist them in planning their tours (Destination Analysts, 2016). A study on Bangladeshi consumers revealed that 45% Bangladeshi tourist use social media to get information about popular tourist destination, hotel and transportation (Karim, 2021). A survey conducted in 2021 by the Family Travel Association in the United States revealed that 35% of respondents mentioned travelers' social media post and their word of mouth as sources of information and/or suggestions at the time of tour planning, 23% followed traditional news sources, and 30% mentioned about the online travel companies (airlines, destinations, tour operators and agencies), whereas, just 17% of respondents said that they contact travel agent while booking vacations (Jenss, 2021). However, many consumers have noticed the difference between the review provided by online travel companies and the actual scenario (Longwell, 2021). According to the many current research, the dependency of tourists on online reviews continues to expand. Through user-generated content, travelers' recommendations influence consumers' choices on where to vacation, which accommodations to reserve, what destinations to visit, and where to dine (Vo et al., 2022).

Living in the era of technology has significantly altered the tourist's experience since travel guidebooks and maps have become obsolete and are no longer used, as tourists no longer consider them trustworthy (Frohlich et al., 2019). Exploring and performing research is relatively easy for anyone interested in traveling because several resources are available on social media and online platforms, including YouTube Travel Vlogs, Facebook and Instagram posts, and TripAdvisor (Yu, 2021). While planning the upcoming destination, tourists do not have to face the difficulties of deciding where to go and when to go because they mainly depend on the information that is available on online and social media platforms as well as what is trending based on the perception of their friends, content creators or influences they follow, which functions as the inspiration of traveling that tourists intend to follow and once decided, they immediately set their mind and book their tickets (Berhanu & Raj, 2020; Oliveira et al., 2020). Both travel blogs and vlogs have gained popularity and served as a trustworthy resource of

information for tourists, not only to ensure they do not miss out on what is trendy but also to help them to enrich their trip experience by organizing, planning, and planning to prepare it according to the information available on the internet. In addition, the study has found that 52 percent of Facebook users practice this because of their fear of missing out (FOMO) (Arora & Lata, 2020; Le & Hancer, 2021). Undoubtedly, travel blogs and vlogs significantly influence travelers because they transform how consumers present information, resulting in a modification in consumer perceptions (Le & Hancer, 2021). The tour planning process enhances them to a unique stage as consumers go through the travel vlogs by watching, conveying them to any destinations without leaving their place of residence. Tourists can now get a brief idea and knowledge about the place where they want to go, what they want to do, and what they want to eat through these travel blogs and vlogs (Cheng et al., 2020; Peralta, 2019). Travelers are no longer stimulated through pamphlets and travel guides because these print advertisements no longer depict images and videos that trigger a response of excitement in the individuals' minds, mainly because these print advertisements are no longer an impactful instrument for creating an image to travelers' minds about how enjoyable the experience traveling can be (Chang et al., 2017; Liang & Gössling, 2020; Peralta, 2019).

Tourism consumers create online reviews, mainly travel vlogs, to record their personal views and express their satisfaction (or dissatisfaction) with their trip; a key goal is to assist other prospective tourists in making travel decisions (Cheng et al., 2020). According to a report, 79% of customers go through at least six to twelve reviews before booking a hotel (Tripadvisor, 2017), with the primary objective of using other travelers' evaluations and experiences. Thus, travel vlogs may impact prospective tourists' perceptions about a destination and their travel intentions. Moreover, eWOM and online reviews may play a significant role in how tourists choose a destination (Chen et al., 2021; Liang & Gössling, 2020). Leong et al. (2022) acknowledged that the latest eWOM research conducted on social media demonstrates that the eWOM information must be considered in accordance with consumers' behavior toward that information.

Credibility becomes even more significant in planning tours, given the intangible character of tourist products and the comparatively high financial and intellectual risks involved with travel decisions (Shi et al., 2020). For this reason, more travelers are turning to UGC websites for travel-related information submitted by travel customers rather than service providers. Consumers use UGC, such as travel vlogs, to find the finest hotels, restaurants, and attractions, allowing them to avoid the worst goods and services, thereby enhancing their decision-making (Glaveli et al., 2022).

Diagnosticity and usefulness are two significant information elements impacting consumers' decision-making (Mariani et al., 2019). Information diagnosticity and information usefulness of social media-based travel video contents influence the tour planning of the tourists, such as destination choice to travel, accommodation to stay, and activities to experience. Information diagnosticity allows them to perceive that vlog videos can transfer all the relevant information they are looking for, which can assist them in understanding and evaluating the effectiveness of tourism products and services (Jiang et al., 2021). Information usefulness allows tourists to acquire specific information according to their objectives (Mariani et al., 2019). Information usefulness of online reviews refers to the extent to which the viewers perceive the information as

valuable. In contrast, information diagnosticity can be defined as the extent to which the viewers believe that the information will help evaluate the quality of the product described in online reviews (Jiang et al., 2021; Leong et al., 2022). Perceived information diagnosticity, perceived information usefulness, and perceived information trust are the consumers' perceptions towards the information based on the quality and credibility of the information and information provider. These three terms can be called perceived information. Perceived information plays a crucial role in the relationship between tourist destination choice and tourist behavior. It helps tourists evaluate and compare different tourist destinations and make informed decisions based on their preferences and needs (Mazzù et al., 2021). In this study, perceived information is studied as a mediator in the relationship between vlog information quality, vlogger credibility and information adoption.

The tourism industry in Bangladesh is an emerging industry. The incredible advancement of the economy in Bangladesh has led to the rapid development of international tourism and the equivalent growth of domestic tourism (Hassan, 2020). Tourism is a tiny part of Bangladesh's economy's GDP revenues (now), but its contribution is still restricted to economic growth. The present size of the tourist economy in Bangladesh amounts to 500 million BDT. Furthermore, throughout the period 2009-2018, Bangladesh generated 1157 million USD from tourism. Every year, at the same time, Bangladesh receives an estimated 0.55 million visitors. In addition, 2.23 million jobs are created annually, and the tourism and travel industry accounts for 4.4% of the annual GDP (Hossain & Wadood, 2020). International tourist revenues were reported to be US\$344 million in 2017, with a pace of annual growth of 10.91% from 1995, and since then, the value has increased about ten times (Roy et al., 2020).

The advancement of information technology and social media platforms significantly influence how individuals acquire information and make decisions (Vrontis et al., 2021). It has been very convenient to capture and upload videos on social media platforms because of the advancement of all types of video media technology and platform (Al-Marouf et al., 2021). Capturing videos and uploading these on social media platforms has become a common practice and popular behavior among people, especially in the post-90s and post 00. In addition, vlogging has progressively become their preferred method of recording their lifestyle and expressing their personalities (Al-Marouf et al., 2021; Chen & Dermawan, 2020). Vlog is a new video form structured on diverse two-way communication (Koningstein & Azadegan, 2018). Vloggers want to share their self-experience in scenario-based methods and reply to the viewer's plenty of questions and comments to proceed with a reciprocal communicational relationship (Chen et al., 2021). Several vloggers have recently expressed a desire to share on social media regarding the experiences and thoughts of their traveling and to show the content of their traveling more effectively through video vlogs (Hossain, 2021). The majority of travel vlogs are created based on individuals' travel experiences, and vlogs are simple and convenient for developing effective interaction (Xu et al., 2021), and they have a strong appeal and a high level of trust (Cheng et al., 2020). This method of communicating through video has significantly transformed the usual way of transmitting tourism information, which influences the behavior of prospective (Chen et al., 2021). It is vital to analyze how travel vlogs affect users' travel intentions to establish a theoretical foundation for interpreting this unique form of travel communication.

Bangladesh is a developing country, and the consumers of Bangladesh have started using vlog videos in terms of online purchasing, choosing restaurants, etc. Bangladesh has 45 million social media users, equivalent to 27.2% of the total population of Bangladesh. Among 45 million users, 89.25% are Facebook users, 6.12% are YouTube users, 1.43% are Pinterest users, 1.26% are Twitter users, 1.22% are LinkedIn users, and 0.45% are Instagram users, and the number of internet users is 47.61 million in January 2021 (Statcounter, 2021; The Daily Star, 2021). The total number of Facebook user have been counted 37 912 000 till March 2021, which is 22% of the total population; the ratio of male and the female Facebook user is 71.6% and 28.4 %, and the number of people between the age of 18-24 years old is having the most significant number of the Facebook account which is 16 100 000 (Napoleoncat, 2021). Dhaka had the second-highest number of Facebook users (Prothom Alo, 2017). The domestic tourist of Bangladesh often shares their experiences and opinion regarding restaurants, online products, travel experience, etc., on social media, which other consumers adopt.

1.3 Problem Statement

Tourism is a highly promising and rapidly expanding industry that plays a significant role in contributing to a country's economic growth by generating substantial foreign revenue. Tourism also helps build a country's image through its traditions, customs, natural assets, heritage, and history. The tourism industry is an employment-generating industry that enables a country to build a strong financial platform and improve the quality of life (Kobra et al., 2018). Revenue earned from the tourism industry can be utilized to build the country's infrastructure, such as new roads, airports, and bridges. Bangladesh is a land of natural beauty consisting of beaches, hill tracks, a pleasant temperature and climate, and six different seasons, all of which contribute to the development of eco-tourism, sustainable tourism, and rural tourism (Sultana, 2016). Bangladesh has plenty of historical and archaeological attractions, and apart from these, the people's friendliness and the traditional culture are distinct selling features. It contains several opportunities to generate significant revenue in this sector. Despite having so many tourism resources, the tourism of Bangladesh cannot attract tourists globally. Currently, specific statistics regarding the domestic tourist in Bangladesh were not found, but according to the World Bank report in 2021, the number of international tourist arrival in Bangladesh is unstable (The World Bank, 2021). However, the World Bank report shows the direction of the graph of international tourist arrival in the neighboring south Asian countries (India, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Maldives) is upward.

Moreover, it has been reported that 0.5 million Bangladeshi people visited India during the Eid vacation of 2022. In contrast, India received 2.2 million tourists from Bangladesh during the 2016-17 fiscal year (Layekuzzaman, 2022), which is much more extensive as compared to the tourist arrival in Bangladesh. In addition, it has been reported in a national daily that the renowned tourist spot in Bangladesh named Cox's Bazar received few tourists during the pick tourist season, which was the same as in the last few years (Aiman, 2022). These reports show less interest among tourists visiting Bangladesh compared to other tourist destinations.

On the other hand, the Bangladesh tourism sector is confronted with many issues and obstacles on both the domestic and global stages. There have been few studies on the state of Bangladesh's tourism industry except for several authors who have mentioned, among others, the lack of marketing and promotional activities, the unavailability of updated and genuine travel information on government tourism websites, the lack of proper policies, political instability, as well as many attractive tourist destinations are still unexplored (Abir & Khan, 2021; Hassan & Ramkissoon, 2020; Hossain, 2020; Islam & Chowdhury, 2022; Uddin & Alauddin, 2021). At the same time, it was also found that 52% of Bangladeshi tourists modified their travel plans based on online reviews (Karim, 2018).

Apart from that, it was also reported that The U.S. Department of State — Bureau of Consular Affairs, the Government of Canada's digital presence, and The Department of Foreign Affairs of Ireland have suggested foreign tourists to reconsider their travel plans before traveling to the southeast part of Bangladesh, which includes Rangamati hill tracts, Bandarban hill tracts, and Khagrachari hill tracts which are collectively known as Chittagong hill tracts due to the occasional communal clashes and violence between the rival groups sporadic ethnic and other security risks. These agencies suggested contacting the local tour operators and local contacts before planning a trip to those destinations (Affairs, 2021; Affairs, 2021; Canada, 2021).

In Bangladesh, local contacts and tour operators are tourism information sources. At the same time, tourists may also obtain tourism information from different user-generated content (UGC) regarding any particular destination (e.g., blogs, vlogs, and other social media posts). Several marketers have started to promote their destinations through online (Blogs, Social Media Marketing). In addition, past tourists who have visited the destination also share their perceptions, review and experience about a particular destination on social media platforms. On top of that, several different online travel information and booking websites (e.g. TripAdvisor, Lonely Planet) are available that provide information about destinations in Bangladesh.

While potential tourists can access numerous amounts of news, reviews, and advertisements available online, there have been reports of false and inaccurate information available online. The effects of misleading information on consumers' perceptions, attitudes, and behavior have been widely studied in several domains apart from tourism. As accurate information is important for tourists' knowledge acquisition about tourist destinations, services, products, and activities, fake information can disrupt the rhythms of information acquisition and processing (Fedeli, 2020). Destination marketers or tourists often provide information related to tourism, and sometimes they present the fake information in such a way that the fake information seems more accurate than the actual reality (Li & Pearce, 2016). It can significantly distort consumers' perceptions of tourism destinations, services, and products, thus influencing their decision-making and the development of beliefs and attitudes (Berkowitz & Schwartz, 2016; Solakis et al., 2022). Both tourism marketers and consumers use social media platforms. Marketers promote their tourism products, services, and destinations through social media (Riyadi, 2019). Consumers share their reviews and perceptions regarding the products and services they have consumed or the places they have visited (Akarsu et al., 2020).

The rise of online reviews has had a significant impact on the tourism industry. With the increasing popularity of websites such as TripAdvisor, Yelp, and Google Reviews, travelers now have access to vast amounts of information about hotels, restaurants, and attractions (Guo et al., 2021). This information is generated by fellow travelers who share their experiences through reviews, ratings, and comments. Online reviews have become a crucial factor in the decision-making process for many travelers (Pinto & Castro, 2019). Studies have shown that a majority of travelers read reviews before making a booking decision. Reviews provide travelers with information about the quality of a hotel, restaurant, or attraction and insights into the overall guest experience (Zarezadeh et al., 2022). For businesses in the tourism industry, online reviews can make or break their reputation. Positive reviews can lead to increased bookings and revenue, while negative reviews can result in a loss of business (Sayfuddin & Chen, 2021). As a result, many businesses have started to actively manage their online reputation by responding to reviews and addressing any negative feedback.

The behavior of consumers is affected due to advertisements, reviews, and information that are inaccurate or misleading. Consumers become highly distrustful towards advertising when they encounter deceptive advertisements. Consumers also prefer to abandon those brands to which they were attached and loyal (Nuseir, 2018). Consumers' choices and decisions are influenced when reviewers or advertisers present deceptive, inaccurate, or fraudulent advertisements and information. Customers are persuaded unfairly to trust the advertisers' and reviewers' messages, which impacts their perception and judgment. A world traveler named Longwell published an article where the author suggested not to fully depend on the TripAdvisor app for choosing the destination. In September 2018, the Times of London claimed that 33 percent of the reviews were fake. In September 2019, an independent investigation revealed that 15 percent of reviews out of 250000 were fake. TripAdvisor also acknowledges that 93 percent of hotels are involved in posting fake reviews. Individuals provided 79 percent of fake reviews on five-star hotels without previous involvement, activity, or ratings on TripAdvisor. Moreover, negative reviews on TripAdvisor are often deleted (Longwell, 2021).

Using social media has become an integral part of people's daily life. While surfing social media, social media users are introduced to many contents, including photographs and posts detailing different qualities, features, or other elements of a specified destination. These contents can stimulate people to select a destination for their upcoming travel 'bucket list.' Afterward, when consumers consider their upcoming holiday or vacation destination, these contents may 'pop up' and affect their travel destination choices (Liu et al., 2020). A recent study revealed that, between the period 2020 and 2021, the number of social media users in Bangladesh had increased by more than nine million. That study also found that Bangladesh's overall number of social media users accounted for 45 million, 27.2 percent of the country's overall population (UNB, 2021). The behavior and intention of Bangladeshi consumers are influenced by social media posts and reviews of others (Eti et al., 2021).

Numerous research has revealed that online text reviews and video reviews trigger Bangladeshi consumers to use purchase and choose products from online which are tangible, e.g., products from an e-commerce platform, online food, apparel products, fashion products, beauty products, smartphones, etc. (Chowdhury, 2016; Mustafi &

Hosain, 2020; Rahman et al., 2018; Rahman et al., 2018; Rahman et al., 2020), whereas, the behavior of the Bangladeshi consumers towards the intangible products have not explored yet. More than 70% of Bangladeshi people perceive online reviews as the strongest and most trusted form of advertising. The individuals adopt the information from an online review based on the information's quality and the information provider's credibility (Alhemimah, 2019; Erkan & Evans, 2016). Several previous studies found that individuals adopted online reviews systematically (Alhemimah, 2019; Erkan & Evans, 2016). The Information Adoption Model (IAM), developed by Sussman & Siegal (2003), explains this systematic process. IAM is a widely used theory to examine how individuals adopt information or opinion from the online review platform (Cheung et al., 2008). The information Adoption Model explains how individuals adopt information based on the influence of argument quality and source credibility with the mediation role of information usefulness (Sussman & Siegal, 2003). The limitation of IAM was that it failed to give the concept of the consumers' behavioral intention; that gap has been merged in Information Acceptance Model (IACM) (Erkan & Evans, 2016). Information trust and diagnosticity are strongly associated with information quality, credibility, and adoption (Lo & Yao, 2019; Park et al., 2021; Song et al., 2021). Information diagnosticity in online review is the degree to which individuals believe the review information will help them evaluate the products and services (Filieri, 2015; Filieri et al., 2018; Nam & Kim, 2021). Information trust in online review is the degree to which individuals perceive the information shared in online review platforms as trustworthy (Mahat & Hanafiah, 2020; Zelenka et al., 2021). Both information diagnosticity and information trust are important for adopting online review information. However, the trust issues and diagnosticity of the information have been neglected in both IAM and ICAM theories (Alhemimah, 2019). In the present study, the gaps of the previous study have been merged by adding information diagnosticity, information usefulness, and information trust as the mediator in the conceptual research framework. Perceived information diagnosticity, perceived information usefulness, and perceived information trust are the three components of perceived information. Perceived information will play a mediating role in the proposed conceptual research framework. The present study will examine the travel vlog review on choosing tourist destinations. It will assist the tourism industry player in understanding how the tourism consumer adopts travel vlog information to choose a destination. Travel vlogs can be used as a promotional tool for the destination. Travel vloggers play a crucial role in creating an online destination image of a place. The tourism industry player can promote their destination, tourism products and services by creating travel vlog videos to trigger the potential consumers' intention to consume the products and services or visit that destination. The consumer assesses the travel vlog review based on the review's quality and the review provider's credibility (Sussman & Seigal, 2003). When the individual perceives the review quality is high, and the review provider is credible, they perceive it as useful. The useful review influences the individual to adopt and utilise the reviews for behavioral intention (Erkan & Evans, 2016).

1.4 Research Objectives

Following the prior discussion, the general objective of the current study is to examine the influence of travel vlogs on choosing domestic tourist destinations among Bangladeshi social media users, with perceived information as a mediator for the relationship. Specific objectives of the present study are;

1. To identify the relationship of vlog information quality with perceived information diagnosticity, perceived information usefulness, and perceived information trust.
2. To identify the relationship of vlogger credibility with perceived information diagnosticity, perceived information usefulness, and perceived information trust.
3. To examine the relationship of perceived information diagnosticity, perceived information usefulness, and perceived information trust with information adoption.
4. To investigate the relationship between information adoption and choosing a destination.
5. To examine the mediating role of perceived information diagnosticity, perceived information usefulness, perceived information trust, and information adoption between vlog information quality and destination choice.
6. To examine the mediating role of perceived information diagnosticity, perceived information usefulness, perceived information trust, and information adoption between vlogger credibility and destination choice.

1.5 Research Questions

Following the research objectives, the study has been designed to provide the answer to the following research questions. The general research question of the current study is “What is the impact of travel vlogs on choosing destinations by Bangladeshi social media users? And does perceived information have any mediating role on the relationship?” The specific research questions are;

1. Does vlog information quality have any relationship with perceived information diagnosticity, perceived information usefulness, and perceived information trust?
2. Does vlogger credibility have any relationship with perceived information diagnosticity, perceived information usefulness, and perceived information trust?
3. Is there any relationship between perceived information diagnosticity, perceived information usefulness, and perceived information trust with information adoption?
4. Is there any relationship between information adoption and destination choice?
5. Do perceived information diagnosticity, perceived information usefulness, and perceived information trust and information adoption mediate the relationship between vlog information quality and destination choice?
6. Do perceived information diagnosticity, perceived information usefulness, and perceived information trust and information adoption mediate the relationship between vlogger credibility and destination choice?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The findings of the current study will assist in getting a better understanding of the role of travel vlogs in influencing social media users to choose tourist destinations. The present study has significant implications for both marketers and practitioners. The present study has a significant contribution to the literature, as numerous studies have been carried out on video vlogs in the context of the behavioral intention of the consumer (Folkvord et al., 2019; Tolunay & Ekizler, 2021), but less number of research has focused on video vlog in the context of tourism, specifically regarding the impact of travel vlog on choosing tourism destination and this study contributes to a better understanding of tourism vlog in the tourism context. The present study contributes to the literature on the role of online information in tourist decision-making.

Information plays a significant role in the decision-making process of consumers. Consumers depend on user-generated online consumer reviews to make an accurate purchasing decisions for experience items (Kauffmann et al., 2020). Information is considered an essential element for decision-making, so the quality of the information and the credibility of the information source is also important (Ureña et al., 2019). Travel vlogs assist in collecting information. Because of that, the quality of the vlog information and the credibility of the vlogger is also essential, which has been covered in the current study.

The present study makes a significant contribution by providing a comprehensive theoretical model that explains how travel vlog shapes visit intention in connection to tourist destinations in the context of Bangladesh. That model has been developed by extending the Information Adoption Model (IAM) (Sussman & Siegal, 2003). The IAM provides a model of how consumers adopt online information. That model was extended in the Information Acceptance Model (IACM) (Erkan & Evans, 2016), which provides a model where it presents how the adopted information changes the behavioral intention of the consumers. However, information trust and diagnosticity have been neglected in both models, which have been used in the present study's model to extend the Information Adoption Model (IAM) and conduct the current study.

Moreover, previous research in the context of online reviews and vlogs on Bangladeshi consumers' behavior intentions primarily focused on a specific group of people and age group (Rahman et al., 2021; TuzZohora et al., 2017) as well as some researchers have noted the small sample size (Rahman & Mannan, 2018; TuzZohora et al., 2017) as the limitations of their study. In addition, many research has been conducted without any specific e-WoM platform (Abir et al., 2020; Rahman & Mannan, 2018). The present study has been conducted by avoiding these conflicts, and there is no bias between gender, age, or educational background, that study aims to collect data from all ages and gender people as almost all ages and genders people in Bangladesh use social media.

This study has important implications for destination marketers because it offers marketers a framework for understanding the influence of travel vlogs on tourists' intention to visit. Because tourist products and services cannot be directly evaluated before consumption, the variables presented by this study will help marketers to build

an understanding of travel vlogs, allowing them to design more successful marketing strategies. In addition, the government of Bangladesh (e.g., Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism), as well as the other policymakers of the tourism industry of Bangladesh (e.g., Bangladesh Tourism Board, Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation, Bangladesh Tourism Foundation, Tour Operators Association of Bangladesh), will be benefitted by the current study as the findings will assist them to re-strategize the existing policy.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The current study deals with travel vlogs which have a noticeable significance in online destination marketing. The present study will likely contribute to the interpretation of how travel vlogs influence tourists to choose any tourist destination with the help of a research framework that was developed by extending the Information Adoption Model (IAM). In addition, the current study checked the relationship between travel vlogs and destination choice by tourists.

Travelers visually share their travel experiences and provide different information in travel vlogs which is a part of electronic word of mouth (e-WoM). Alhemimah et al. (2019) stated that, in the context of e-WoM, it is tough to select a suitable platform for measurement purposes. Numerous platforms come under the e-WoM platform, where traveler can upload their vlogs. However, in the current study, only social media platforms have been taken, as 27 percent of Bangladeshi residents are social media users. Moreover, getting more significant viewers on social media platforms is very convenient than any other platform. Social media platform includes Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Youtube, LinkedIn, etc.

Bangladesh is the context of this study. Previous studies show that Bangladeshi consumers are triggered towards purchasing a tangible product based on the video vlog on social media. However, the consumers' behavior towards intangible products, especially in the context of tourism, has not been disclosed yet, which influenced to conduct of the current study and any tourists in Bangladesh who use social media and is familiar with the travel vlog phenomenon belong to the target group of the current study. Concerning the demographic characteristics of the respondents, the current study does not target any particular age category, gender, or financial status. The present study included respondents of different ages, genders, educational levels, and economic status to ensure that the current study's findings are generalizable throughout all demographics. The present study did not have any particular racial group as the target. The selection of a race group becomes critical when the research objective is to compare several racial groups. As the objective of this study is not to create any comparisons between racial groups, any Bangladeshi who uses social media platforms and is familiar with the phenomenon of travel vlogs has been deemed a subject of this study.

1.8 Operational Definition of Key terms

Travel Vlog: Travel vlogs are tourist-generated videos that can be watched on internet-based platforms, primarily through social media, and these travel vlogs are the visual

representation of the traveling experience of video creators (Xu et al., 2021). Cheng et al. (2020) defined the travel vlog as a type of word-of-mouth by which travel information is shared among the public from the vlog makers' self-perception and experience.

Information Quality: Information quality is the suitability of the information for usage for a specific purpose by the information users, and that suitability is measured by various characteristics and dimensions (Gutiérrez et al., 2022). Jiang et al. (2021) stated that the term "information quality" refers to users' self-evaluation of whether the features of the information meet their requirements, satisfy their particular demands, and influence them to use. In the context of the current study, vlog information quality refers to the appropriateness of the vlog information for using travel purposes by tourists.

Vlogger Credibility: Vlog video content are uploaded by the vloggers on social media or any other online platform, where the vloggers share their personal experience and review specific products, services, and even tourist destination, often they are unknown to the viewers of that vlog, but the viewers like to take notes from those reviews if they feel that both the information and the information provider are reliable (Alhemimah, 2019). Vlogger credibility in the context of the current study can be described as the extent to which a tourist perceives the source of the travel vlog as reliable and honest (Filiari, 2016).

Information Diagnosticity: In the context of the present study, the term "information diagnosticity" refers to the extent to which tourists believe a travel vlog content is capable of transferring information regarding the destinations and travel-related products and services that help them in comprehending and evaluating the quality of products and services (Jiang et al., 2021). From the consumers' perspective, information diagnosticity can be defined as their opinion about the ability of the marketer's website to provide appropriate information regarding the product that assists them in understanding and evaluating the quality and effectiveness of products sold online platform (Nedumkallel et al., 2020).

Information Usefulness: Information usefulness in the current study's context refers to the tourist's perception towards using information from the travel vlog and the belief that that information will enhance their performance. Information usefulness is considered a significant determinant of adopting information and the behavioral intention of the tourist (Erkan & Evans, 2016).

Information Trust: The information trust of any products or services is characterized based on the trustworthiness of those products and services (Wandoko et al., 2020). Information trust on specific products or services can be described as consumers' belief that the information is reliable (Wandoko et al., 2020). Perceived information trust in the context of the present study can be defined as the tourist's perception towards the travel vlog information that the provided information is honest and accurate.

Information Adoption: In the context of the current study, the adoption of information is a process through which tourists use information intentionally, and it is considered

one of the key activities that the users intend to perform in the online community (Abedi et al., 2020; Cheung et al., 2009). The fundamental theory of the information adoption method says that the information cannot be obtained without some of the essential criteria such as argument quality, reliability of the source, and utility of the information (Cho & Chan, 2019; Khwaja & Zaman, 2020; Zhang et al., 2017).

Destination Choice: Tourism destinations are those areas that provide the opportunity for tourists to experience and explore the sceneries, people, or culture which fulfill their needs, deliver value and generate meaningful experiences (Tapanainen et al., 2021). Choosing a tourist destination can be defined as the wish to visit a specific destination (Tapanainen et al., 2021).

Domestic Destination: Domestic tourism is defined as traveling inside a country by residents of that country. It does not include international border crossings at entrance sites. Domestic tourism was the earliest type of tourism undertaken, as shown by the early documented history of ancient tourist activities (Choo, 2015).

1.9 Organization of the Study

The thesis contains six chapters: Introduction, Literature Review, Theoretical Background and Hypotheses Development, Methodology, Data Analysis and Results, Discussion, and Conclusion.

Chapter 1 provides a brief overview of the study, which includes a complete background of the study where issues regarding travel vlogs, social media travel vlogs, and tourists' destination choices have been discussed. The problem statement related to the study has been highlighted in Chapter 1. Research objectives and questions were identified with the help of a problem statement included in Chapter 1. Finally, the chapter has been concluded by highlighting the significance of the study, the scope of the study, the definition of key terms, and the operational definition of key terms.

Afterward, Chapter 2 is named Literature Review, which contains a broad discussion with an extensive literature review about travel vlogs. This chapter has carried out a detailed discussion about travel vlogs along with all the variables (vlog information quality, vlogger credibility, information diagnosticity, information usefulness, information trust, information adoption, and destination choice) of the study.

Chapter 3 named as theoretical background and hypotheses development. The chapter contains a complete discussion of the theory related to the current study and its application in the context of the present study. Additionally, relevant hypotheses are developed based on the literature review in Chapter 3 and the chapter was concluded with the conceptual framework of the study.

Following on, Chapter 4 is termed as methodology. This chapter indicates the methodology for conducting the current study. Chapter 4 contains a detailed discussion about the appropriate research design, target population, and sample size. The measurement items of all the variables to measure variables have been discussed in Chapter 4. This chapter is concluded with a discussion about the data collection method, data analysis tools, and techniques.

Chapter 5 is named data analysis and results, which discusses the results of data analysis. As stated in the methodology section, all relevant data analysis results are presented along with the appropriate justifications and explanations. This chapter describes the stages involved in data cleansing and preparing for analysis. Additionally, the result of the descriptive analysis, reliability analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, and convergent and discriminant validity analysis are discussed with a depth explanation. Finally, the chapter is concluded with the result of the hypothesis test.

Chapter 6, named discussion and conclusion, and it contains a detailed explanation of the study's findings. This chapter discusses the result of each hypothesis test. Following the test result of the hypothesis (accepted or rejected), justifications are provided by referencing relevant literature. This chapter also includes the theoretical and practical contributions of the study. Finally, Chapter 6 is concluded by highlighting the limitations of the study and indicating some areas for further study.

1.10 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the background of the study, the problem statement of the study, the research questions, and its related research objectives have been discussed. Furthermore, the significance of the study, the scope of the study, and the operational definition of the key terms have been deliberated as well. The chapter was concluded by highlighting the organization of the study at the end of this chapter.

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