Why Consumers Disclose Their Tourism Experiences on Tourism Social Networking Sites:

Multiple Theoretical Perspectives

by

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to:

The God, who is my Creator, my Heavenly Father and my Master,

My motherland, the People's Republic of China, a beautiful country with a long history,

My dearest husband, Rong-Da Liang, who supported me all the way through,

My greatest father Yansong Zhang and mother Lingmei Kong, who always give me unconditional love and care,

My beloved son Qirui Liang and daughter Zhuxuan Liang, who made me stronger, better and more fulfilled than I could have ever imagined,

University of South Florida, my Alma Mater, which I would be extremely proud of forever.

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ABSTRACT

Tourism social networking sites (SNSs) are websites that provide users with templates for describing their travel experiences and an infrastructure to share such travel posts with a network of like-minded individuals. Tourism SNSs represent an important advertising channel for the tourism industry, as they may assist travelers in selecting destinations and planning vacations on the basis of other travelers' experiences, which may further stimulate travel and generate income for the tourism industry (Yazdanifard & Yee, 2014). User-generated content (UGC) in the form of travel posts is the core offering and key success factor of tourism SNSs. Travel posts constitute a valuable resource that attracts users to these websites, and they serve as a key data feed into the data mining process that is used to develop travel products on tourism SNSs. However, one problem with tourism SNSs is that their users, especially the new ones, do not publish their travel experiences on these SNSs as often as they do on traditional SNSs, such as Facebook. This may result in a lack of content and, therefore, a loss of potential consumers and, consequently, revenue. Therefore, a study on self-disclosure behavior in writing travel posts may contribute to understanding the reasons why this problem exists and help tourism SNSs improve their service accordingly. The author used multiple theoretical perspectives (social exchange theory and social cognition theory) to develop a comprehensive self-disclosure framework. The framework was tested by using a partial least squares based

structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) approach with data from 443 participants recruited from the two most popular Chinese tourism SNSs: Qyer.com and mafengwo.cn. The findings show that self-disclosure behavior on tourism SNSs was significantly affected by self-benefit, positive feedback from other users, social benefits, rewards, tourism SNSs' security mechanism, and ease of use. However, habit and motive did not have a statistically significant effect on self-disclosure behavior. Moreover, self-disclosure behavior positively affected electronic word of mouth (EWOM) relating to the tourism SNSs. Finally, the findings have theoretical and practical implications, and the thesis ends with a discussion of the limitations of this study and suggestions for future research.

1. INTRODUCTION

Social networking sites (SNSs) have rapidly developed as some of the most popular online platforms in the world (Al-Saggaf & Nielsen, 2014; Hoadley, Xu, Lee, & Rosson, 2010; Hollenbaugh & Ferris 2014; Ko, 2013; Taraszow, Aristodemou, Shitta, Laouris, & Arsoy, 2010; Xie & Kang, 2015). SNSs, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, MySpace, Twitter, and Instagram, allow their users to network, collaborate, stay in touch, and interact with other users. All of these websites require users to disclose personal information (Forest & Wood, 2012), through which they may share personal feelings, opinions, and activities with friends as well as strangers (Jones, Millermaier, Goya-Marthinez, & Schuler, 2008; Valenzuela, Park, & Kee, 2009).

SNSs are web-based platforms that allow users to build a public or semi-public profile and establish an interrelated list of other users with whom they can share their connections with those on this list, viewing and traversing the connections of those other users within a boundless system (Boyd & Ellison, 2008). According to Zlatolas, Welzer, Hericko, and Hölbl (2015), SNSs are online platforms where (1) users can construct a public or semi-public profile; (2) build social relations with other users; and (3) view lists of connections of each of their connections.

SNSs attract millions of users for four major reasons. First, they can help users maintain

their relationships by interacting and communicating with those individuals to generate stronger bonds. Second, as SNSs enable users to connect with each other by sharing and reading each other's personal information (Kim, Sohn, & Choi, 2011; Leung, 2002), an individual's social and psychological needs may be highly satisfied by self-disclosure on SNSs (Trepte & Reinck, 2013). Third, SNSs enable users with similar backgrounds, cultures, interests, or goals to build social networks or social relations. This function enables traditional SNSs to evolve into multiple forms for specific purposes, such as tourism SNSs, which feature tourism and travel-related characteristics. For example, the popular Chinese tourism SNSs Qyer.com provides a professional template for tourists to describe their travel experiences in detail (e.g., duration of the journey, destination, travel type, itinerary, restaurant, and accommodation) and share them with other tourists who are interested in the same destination (see Figures 1–7). One of the concepts of SNSs is that users are willing to disclose their thoughts or personal information so that they can interact with other people (Kim et al., 2011; Leung, 2002). Thus, it is meaningful for researchers to investigate the important role that self-disclosure plays in the establishment of relationships online (Leung, 2002).

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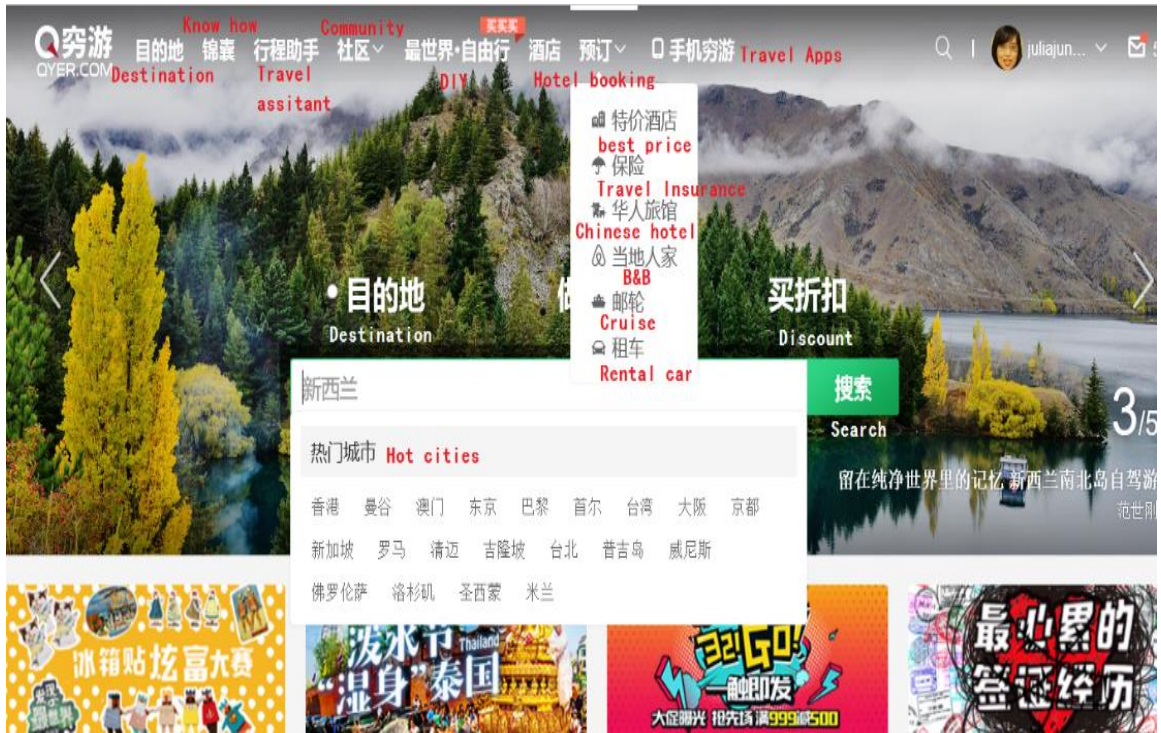
Figure 1. Page of Qyer.com 1

Note. From Qyer.com (2016)

Figure 2. Page of Qyer.com 2

Note. From Qyer.com (2016)
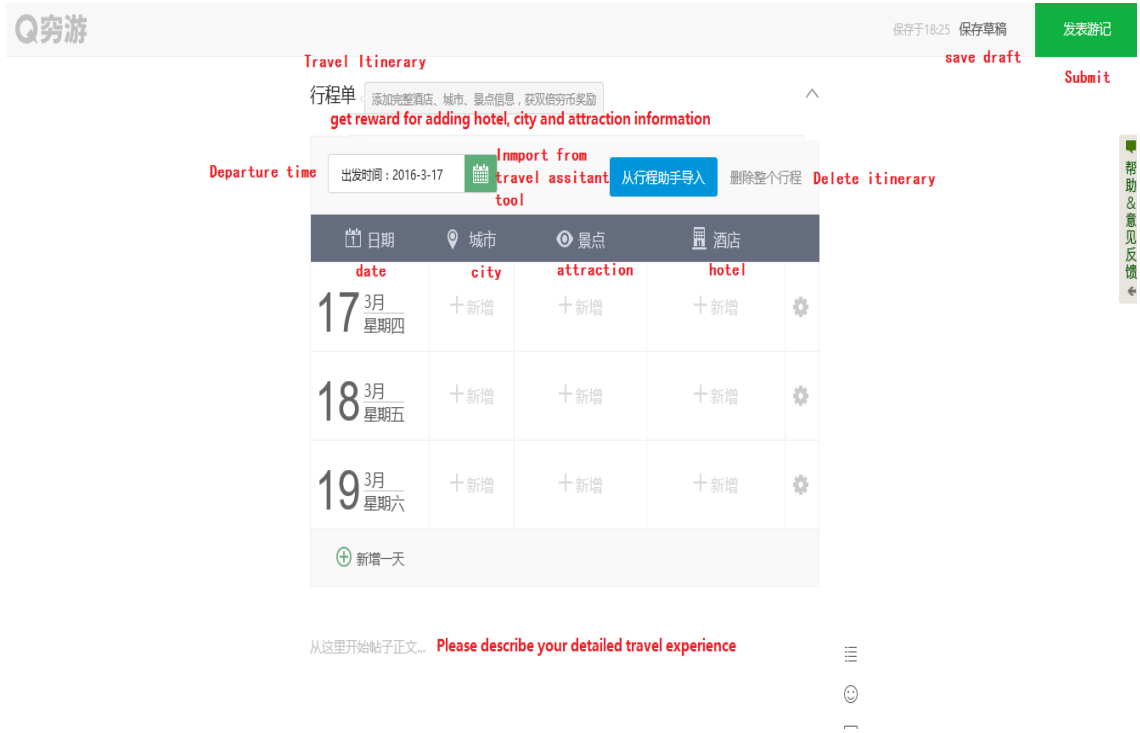
Figure 3. Page of Qyer.com 3

Note. From Qyer.com (2016)

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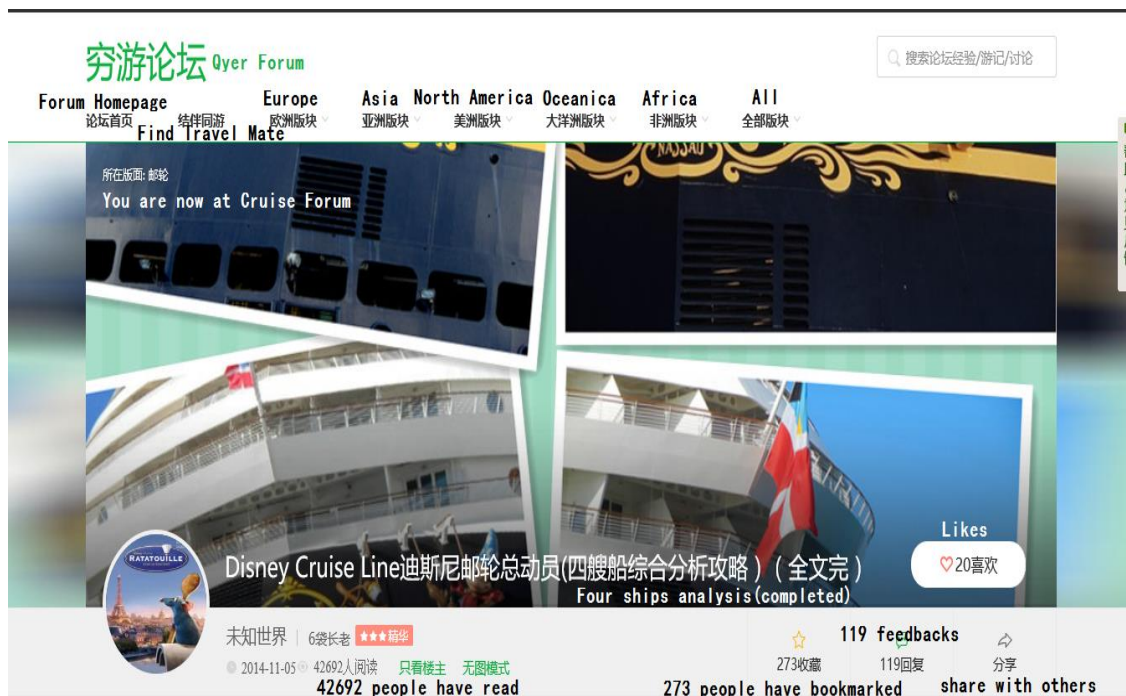
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Note. From Qyer.com (2016)

Figure 6. Page of Qyer.com 6

Note. From Qyer.com (2016)

Figure 7. Page of Qyer.com 7

Note. From Qyer.com (2016)

Although tourists can post travel information and positive or negative online reviews, and upload photos of hotels and restaurants on other social media platforms, such as Facebook, in comparing the consumer behavior on tourism SNSs with that on other social media platforms, the author found the following. First, users of tourism SNSs often actively seek the travel information they need when they review websites; however, users of traditional SNSs such as Facebook usually passively receive information shared by their friends. Second, users of tourism SNSs publish complete, informative, systematic, and professional-style travel posts, while users of traditional SNSs, such as Facebook, post snippets of their daily lives casually and briefly. Third, users of tourism SNSs usually create their groups according to travel destinations and travel interests, while users of other social media platforms, such as Facebook, usually create groups comprising their friends. Fourth, users of tourism SNSs do not update

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their information or publish new posts as often as users of other SNSs, such as Facebook. Fifth, users of tourism SNSs often give or receive comments or feedback to or from strangers, while users of other SNSs such as Facebook usually give or receive comments or feedback to or from familiar friends and relatives.

Past studies on self-disclosure behavior focused on (1) the relationships between reward, safety cues, and self-disclosure (Gabisch & Milne, 2013); (2) teenagers' self-disclosure and regret on SNSs (Xie & Kang, 2015); (3) gender and disclosure (Al-Saggaf & Nielsen, 2014; Chen, 2012); (4) social norms, self-efficacy, and self-disclosure (Posey, Lowry, & Roberts, 2010); (5) self-concept and virtual self-presentation (Min & Lee, 2011); (6) age and self-disclosure (Chang & Heo, 2014; Forest & Wood, 2012); (7) disclosure and privacy concerns (Lee & Cranage, 2011; Mohamed & Ahmad, 2012; Xu, Michael, & Chen, 2013); (8) positive feedback and online posting behavior (Joyce & Kraut, 2006); (9) trust and privacy management in online environments (Akhter, 2014; Fogel & Nehmad, 2009; Zlatolas et al., 2015); (10) consumer socialization and brand-related electronic word of mouth (EWOM) on Twitter (Chu & Sung, 2015); and (11) the relationships between travelers' user-generated content (UGC), website trust, attitude toward using consumer generated content (CGC) for travel planning, and intention to use tourism SNSs for travel planning (Ayeh et al., 2013; Cox, Burgess, Sellitto, & Buultjens, 2009; Di Pietro, Di Virgilio, & Pantano, 2012; Filieri et al., 2015).

Most of these previous studies fragmentarily discussed some antecedents that may affect

users' self-disclosure on SNSs (Chang & Heo, 2014; Christofides, Muise, & Desmarais, 2012; Hollenbaug & Ferris, 2014; Xie & Kang, 2015). For example, some explored consumers' psychological factors (Liu & Park, 2015; Spake et al., 2011; Wirtz & Lwin, 2009) and consumers' online review perception (Sen & Lerman, 2007; Zhang, Craciun, & Shin, 2010). Other studies only used a qualitative approach to discuss the effects of personality, emotion, and media characteristics on self-disclosure (Misoch, 2015), thus neglecting to study these aspects quantitatively. In addition, most of the previous studies focused on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn (Al-Saggaf & Nielsen, 2014; Zlatolas et al., 2015). The present study explored self-disclosure behavior on tourism SNSs on the basis of multiple theories. To the best of the author's knowledge, prior to this, there had been no empirical study on the behaviors of travelers on tourism SNSs. Therefore, future research investigating similar topics could take this paper as their basis.

UGC in the form of travel posts is the core offering and key success factor of tourism SNSs. Travel posts represent a valuable resource that attracts users to tourism SNSs. These posts also serve as a key data feed into the data mining process that is used to develop the travel products on tourism SNSs. However, one problem with tourism SNSs is that their users, especially the new ones, do not publish their travel experiences on these websites as often as they do on traditional SNSs, such as Facebook. This problem may result in a lack of content and, therefore, in a loss of potential consumers and, consequently, revenue. Hence, a study on

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the self-disclosure behavior in writing travel posts may shed light on the reasons for such a problem and help tourism SNSs improve their service accordingly.

Cho (2010) proposed that users' self-disclosure behavior would be influenced by individual factors, interpersonal factors, and website factors. The present study explored the following research questions: (1) Do users' individual factors influence their self-disclosure on tourism SNSs? (2) Do interpersonal factors influence users' self-disclosure on tourism SNSs? (3) Do website factors influence users' self-disclosure on tourism SNSs? (4) After disclosing their information on these tourism SNSs, will users recommend the websites to other people?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Social cognitive theory

Social cognitive theory proposes that human behavior is dynamic and that there is a triadic, reciprocal interaction between an individual, the individual's behavior, and the environment (Bandura, 1989). However, it has also been noted that the three factors (individual, behavior, and environment) do not make an equal contribution to each other simultaneously. Usually, people are not simply passively molded by their environment, but they can learn through observation in a social context. People can cognize the environmental factors, predict the consequences of their actions, improve and control their behaviors, and directly interact with their environment (Bandura, 1997, 2003). In other words, before making a decision, people will assess their level of confidence in their ability to successfully exhibit a behavior and the corresponding consequence of the action (Bandura, 1986).

In social cognition theory, individual refers to personal beliefs, thoughts, and feelings, which may influence human behavior (Bandura, 1986). The individual factors of this study included habit, motive, and self-benefit, which will be discussed in depth later. The website factors of this study refer to the tourism SNSs environment, which can influence self-disclosure behaviors.

According to this theory, a dynamic and triadic reciprocal interaction also exists between

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tourism SNSs users (individual factors), self-disclosure behavior (behavior), and the website environment (website factors). There are three relationships in the social cognition theory model (Figure 8). The first relationship occurs between individual factors and behavior, which means that the behavior will be influenced by person's beliefs, thoughts, and feelings. The second relationship occurs between personal factors and the environment. People gain experiences from the environment, and this influences their cognitive development, beliefs, and expectations. The third relationship is between the environment and the individual's behavior. While the environment shapes human behavior, the human behavior can impact the environment as well (Bandura, 1986).
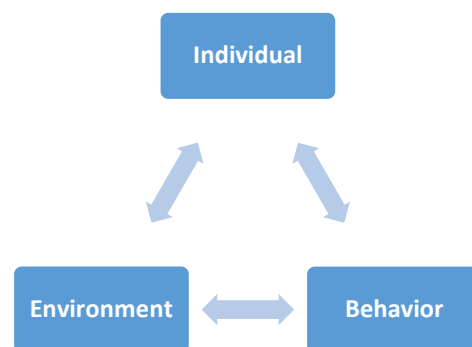
Figure 8. Social cognition theory model

2.2 Social exchange theory

Social exchange theory, which originated in the 1950s, aims to explain interpersonal interactions between two parties. Interpersonal interaction is a process of relating to one another and exchanging feelings or valuable resources both verbally and non-verbally (Homans, 1961). Both parties in a social exchange will continue to interact with each other only when they feel they can get profits from each other. Blau (1964) proposed that people may want to

join a social group because they expect to receive a profit from that group and want to be accepted by the other group members; therefore, they are also willing to provide some benefits to the group members for the chance of being accepted. In other words, people get together because, once the interpersonal connections form, they will give and receive intrinsic rewards (e.g., emotion, respect, and love) as well as extrinsic rewards (e.g., money and physical labor) to maintain and strengthen their relationships.

Thus, people will help each other on the premise that they may get something in return. (1) People ask for help and expect that the other person will fulfill the requirement, and (2) people will give something in return for the other person's help. Premazzi et al. (2010) proposed that social exchange theory could be used to analyze the consumer information sharing behavior in the context of E-vendors. From the social exchange theory perspective, they proposed that consumers would be willing to post their personal information and experiences after assessing the cost, risk, and benefits of self-disclosure, which could be used to discuss the personal interactions among people (Premazzi et al., 2010). People establish an interpersonal relationship or friendship by carrying out a subjective analysis of the costs versus the benefits and comparing alternatives (Blau, 1964). Different from economic exchange theory, which emphasizes external profit, social exchange theory stresses internal benefits (Geffen & Ridings, 2002). By assessing their cost and corresponding intrinsic rewards, people

will decide whether to make a self-disclosure or not. Therefore, it seemed apt for social exchange theory to serve as the theoretical basis of the interpersonal factor for this study.

2.3 Social Networking Sites

Social media is a much broader term including SNSs. Social refers to a need that people have to connect with other people in society either individually or in a group. Media are the platforms or channels that people use to establish relationships with others. Therefore, social media may be described as web-based conversational applications that allow people to come together online to share diverse content, including information, opinions, knowledge, and experience in the form of words, pictures, audio, and video (Luttrell, 2014). Early social media included blogs and virtual communities. However, social media have evolved into multiple forms, such as SNSs (e.g., Facebook), video sites (e.g., YouTube), bookmarking (e.g., Digg), microblogging (e.g., Twitter), search engines, forums, and Wikis (e.g., Wikitravel) (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010).

SNSs contain social functions, such as social connections, relationship maintenance, and information exchange. SNSs have rapidly developed to become some of the most popular platforms in the world (Al-Saggaf & Nielsen, 2014; Hoadley et al., 2010; Hollenbaugh & Ferris, 2014; Ko, 2013; Taraszow et al., 2010; Xie & Kang, 2015; Zlatolas et al., 2015). SNSs enable users to disclose their personal information using a variety of methods (Forest & Wood, 2012) and share their thoughts and lives with others instantly and conveniently (Hollenbaugh & Ferris,

2014; Jones et al., 2008; Valenzuela et al., 2009). The process by which tourism SNSs users share their inner emotions, experiences, or information about themselves with others is called self-disclosure. Self-disclosure on blogs generates self-benefits and social benefits (Hollenbaugh, 2010; Miura & Yamashita, 2007). In addition, users provide personal information and photos on SNSs to make connections online with like-minded individuals (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2011). Previous research on SNSs found that individuals often disclose considerable information on a personal profile (Thelwall, 2008), because SNSs not only enable users to share personal information (e.g., create a profile, post photos and videos, share personal interests) but also to establish a social network comprising different individuals, groups, communities, and organizations to satisfy the users' social-psychological needs (Trepte & Reinck, 2013; Xie & Kang, 2015). Regarding the functions and features of SNSs, many scholars (e.g., Boyd & Ellison, 2008; Zlatolas et al., 2015) have offered similar definitions of SNSs.

UGC is the lifeblood of SNS organisms (Obar & Wildman, 2015; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Lu and Stepchenkova (2015) described UGC as any form of content, such as blogs, podcasts, pictures, forums, and videos, created by online users and published on publicly accessible websites. UGC can be posted on any form of social media, such as YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Qyer.com, or mafengwo.cn.

More recently, new types of SNSs, called tourism SNSs, emerged. Tourism SNSs such as

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Qyer.com and mafengwo.cn provide a platform encouraging users to stick to the topic of travel when writing travel posts on their forums and allowing the users to network, stay in touch, and collaborate with each other. While users can post their opinions, pictures, videos, and experiences on tourism SNSs, they should not include any information that is unrelated to travel. Tourism SNSs provide a customized travel planning service and other functions, such as an interactive travel forum, questions and answers (Q&A), notifications, a trip assistant, guide app downloads, travel purchasing, featured travel groups, and a personal page. Tourism SNSs are especially popular with tourists who would like a do it yourself (DIY) tour or package tour (Zhao, 2010).

The UGC posted on tourism SNSs may be influenced by users' self-disclosure behavior. The concept of EWOM is also closely related to the use of UGC in tourism SNSs' advertising (Ayeh, Au, & Law, 2013; Chu & Sung, 2015; Filieri, Alguezaui, & McLeay, 2015). EWOM can be defined as both good and bad statements made by former, current, or future consumers about a product or company, which are available to the public through social media platforms (Wang & Rodgers, 2010). From this definition, the author concluded that EWOM is a specific type of UGC about products or companies.

2.4 Self-disclosure

Self-disclosure represents travelers' behaviors of describing personal feelings, mood, behavior, or experiences on tourism SNSs. The concept of self-disclosure originated from the

field of social psychology and refers to an individual's willingness to reveal personal information to other people (Archer, 1980; Greene, Derlega, & Mathews, 2006; Ignatius & Kokkonen, 2007). Personal information, such as private, intimate thoughts, feelings, and experiences (Valkenburg et al., 2011), can help people maintain a relationship, as such information exchange will help people connect with each other (Krcmar, Van der Meer, & Cingel, 2015). Cozby (1973) and Wheeless and Grotz (1976) defined self-disclosure as intentional personal information exposure through verbal or non-verbal communication. Therefore, self-disclosure involves how people use personal information (e.g., thoughts, feelings, and experiences) to communicate with others (Derlega et al., 1993; Gibbs, Ellison, & Heino, 2006). Ko (2013) investigated self-disclosure behavior and stated that self-disclosure on SNSs is a behavior through which one shares personal feelings, experiences, and information by voluntarily writing and posting on SNSs. Xie and Kang (2015) expressed a similar opinion about self-disclosure on SNSs. According to the above research results, the author defined self-disclosure on tourism SNSs as an individual intentionally revealing personal travel experiences, feelings, and thoughts to other people on the network.

Self-disclosure is characterized by breadth and depth (Jourard, 1964). Breadth refers to the amount of information revealed (e.g., family life, work life) and depth refers to the degree of intimacy of the revealed information. Nguyen, Bin, and Campbell (2012) pointed out that self-disclosure included three dimensions: breadth, depth, and duration. Breadth represents the

amount of revealed information, depth represents the degree of intimacy in the act of disclosing

the information, and duration refers to the amount of time spent on disclosing this information.

In addition, disclosing private, personal information will significantly affect the relationship

outcomes (Jiang, Bazarova, & Hancock, 2011; Matheson & Zanna, 1988). Therefore, the

aforementioned studies were performed in a laboratory and investigated the communication

between strangers, who interacted with each other anonymously or using fake names.

Collin and Miller (1994) stressed that (1) we have more fondness for the people who are

willing to self-disclose, (2) we are willing to disclose more to the people we like, and (3) when

we disclose more, we hope the ones to whom we have revealed this information will disclose

themselves more in return. According to Cho (2010), when we disclose personal information,

we will consider the relationship with those who will receive the information. Therefore, self-

disclosure behavior will be affected by intrinsic factors, such as self-efficacy (Griffin, Neuwirth,

& Dunwoody, 1995), external factors, such as interpersonal relationships, and environmental

factors, such as the communication source (Tyler & Cook, 1984), which is similar to social

cognition theory and social exchange theory, referenced in this study.

2.5 Individual factors

The majority of previous studies focused on personal factors that affect self-disclosure,

such as personality traits, attitude, age, gender, habits, and self-efficacy (Ang et al., 2015;

Hollenbaugh, 2010; Zlatolas et al., 2015). The present study focused on the habit of writing

forum posts, motivation for writing, and self-benefit. First, habit is defined as "learned sequences of acts that become automatic responses to specific situations which may be functional in obtaining certain goals or end states" (Verplanken, Aarts, & Van Knippenberg, 1997). Aarts, Verplanken, and van Knippenberg (1998) pointed out that habits may generate similar continuous automatic behavior. Gefen (2003) used the technology acceptance model (TAM) to predict how long users would continuously use information technology (IT), and found that the habit of using IT positively influences the user's performance and using intention. Ang et al. (2015) investigated 1,604 adolescents and found that if the subjects had a usual routine or made a habit of surfing the Internet, they would spend more time online. Taking the example of IT, Guinea and Markus (2009) proposed that when users got used to IT, they would exhibit continuous good learning behavior. Therefore, habit is an important factor in predicting the degree of IT usage. The assumption in the present study was that when individuals have the habit of writing forum posts, they will automatically display self-disclosure behavior. Therefore, the author hypothesized as follows:

H1: The habit of writing travel notes will significantly affect self-disclosure behavior.

As SNSs have numerous functions, people will have different motivations, such as sharing emotions and experiences or chatting with others (Lenhart & Fox, 2006; Nardi et al., 2004), when they use different platforms, such as SNSs and one-on-one chatting (Peter, Valkenburg, & Schouten, 2006). According to Hollenbaugh (2010), the motivations for writing a personal

blog include killing time, helping others, forming social connections, self-display, and profession, all of which may affect the breadth and depth of self-disclosure on such a blog. Utz (2015) did empirical research on 151 German university students and found that their motivation for writing on SNSs included sharing, relationship maintenance, entertainment, and self-presentation. Different motivations would generate different self-disclosure information. Ko (2013) proposed that people wrote in a blog because they wanted to practice writing skills and create and maintain social relationships. In other words, when an individual has a stronger motivation to write a forum post, this may generate self-disclosure more readily. Therefore, the author hypothesized as follows:

H2: An individual's motivation to write travel posts will significantly affect the individual's self-disclosure behavior.

Self-disclosure is related to well-being, identification, and self-worth (Pennebaker & Chung, 2007; Tanis, 2008). In other words, self-disclosure has a positive correlation with self-benefit. According to previous studies, after an individual has revealed his or her thoughts and feelings, his or her bad mood will changed instantly and stress will be released (Baker & Moore, 2008). Self-disclosure can help to improve physical and psychological health and consequently generate self-benefit (Niederhoffer & Pennebaker, 2002). Furthermore, self-disclosure can help individuals form positive thoughts that will enable them to improve their relationships with other people (Hollenbaugh, 2010; Miura & Yamashita, 2007). Therefore, author hypothesized

as follows:

H3: Self-benefit will significantly affect an individual's self-disclosure behavior.

2.6 Interpersonal factors

Interpersonal factors refer to tourism SNSs users' communications with other people through writing travel notes online and the hope of receiving positive feedback from other people. Previous studies pointed out that the major motivation for using SNSs is maintaining relationships and forging stronger bonds with acquaintances and friends (Valenzuela et al., 2009). Utz (2015) proposed what motivates SNSs users is generating strong bonds with other people and maintaining good relationships. For example, to be known by other people, maintain good relationships with others and strengthen bonds with others, Internet users will choose to write blogs (Miura & Yamashita, 2007). Similar to social exchange theory, people maintain their social relationships through reciprocity. According to the above-mentioned propositions, the author argues that users write forum posts on tourism SNSs to maintain their social relationships and get reciprocity. As such, the author focused on two factors: personal feedback on suggestions/advice and social benefit.

Feedback is defined as "advice, criticism, or information about the goodness or usefulness of something or somebody's work" (Lu & Hsiao, 2007). Positive feedback refers to information that has a positive emotional connotation to the recipients, such as happiness, support, and encouragement. Berndt (1989) stated that positive feedback would support individuals in

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achieving their goals. Past studies also proposed that positive feedback is an important factor that affects users' continuous self-disclosure (Cheshire & Antin, 2008). Ko (2013) pointed out that the main function of a blog is to increase the opinion exchange. The assumption in the present study was that positive feedback would make people feel supported; thus, they would be more willing to self-disclose. Therefore, the author hypothesized as follows:

H4: Positive feedback from others will significantly affect self-disclosure behavior.

Individuals are eager to get group support or social benefits. Although the personal information is public, people are still willing to disclose it on SNSs (Bateman, Pike, & Butler, 2011; Ellison, Steinfield, & Lame, 2007; Tong, Van der Heide, Langwell, & Walther, 2008), from which we can know that self-disclosure is the main factor in maintaining relationships. Jina, Park, and Kim (2010) stated that posting information, interacting, and actively communicating with other group members would increase personal social benefits, such as social support (Baker & Moore, 2008) and social capital (Ko & Kuo, 2009). Xu et al. (2013) investigated privacy disclosure among 171 university students in China and found that when individual cognition was accepted by other people or communities, the students were more willing to disclose their personal information. Therefore, the author hypothesized as follows:

H5: Social benefit significantly affects self-disclosure behavior.

2.7 Website factors

Misoch (2015) emphasized that researchers should discuss the influence that media

characteristics (e.g., Internet service characteristics) may have on self-disclosure. If the Internet provides a special service, it may promote the user's self-disclosure on SNSs. Examples are blogs (Hollenbaugh & Everett, 2013) or videos called "note card stories," which provide users a frame for telling operators of the websites what kind of content and patterns they are expected to give. Social cognition theory also proposes that the environmental factor is an important factor that affects personal behavior. Therefore, the online environment is likely to affect self-disclosure behavior when users reveal their information on tourism SNSs.

Previous studies also pointed out that a valid reward system will encourage users to disclose themselves (Premazzi, Castaldo et al., 2010; Xie et al., 2006). Reward represents the expectations of benefits in keeping with the choice of behavior (Lee, Larose, & Rifon, 2008). Gabisch and Milne (2013) proposed that reward could be an Internet provided incentive to make users agree to post their personal information. Companies always provide rewards to encourage consumers to disclose their personal information (Acquisti & Varian, 2005). The rewards may include economic incentives, such as coupons and specials, or non-economic incentives, such as convenient and customized services. Self-disclosure can be stimulated by reward, which means that if individuals get rewards (e.g., cash, coupon, or free goods), they may feel that it is a fair trade (Deutskens, De Ruyter, Wetzels, & Oosterveld, 2004). Adolescents between 14 and 18 years of age were willing to provide personal information on the Internet when they thought they might get a reward (Youn, 2005). Many SNSs offer rewards

in exchange for users' personal information. Therefore, the author hypothesized as follows:

H6: A reward system for writing travel notes on a tourism SNS will significantly affect self-disclosure behavior.

The author surmised that one's belief would directly influence one's self-disclosure. When users have a high sense of security, they will feel comfortable posting about intimate topics, and they will be more willing to self-disclose (Fogel & Nehad, 2009; Frye & Dornisch, 2010; Mesch, 2012). In discussing online reviews, Park and Nicolau (2015) pointed out that because of information asymmetry, the sense of security will be one of the most important factors in predicting people's risk taking behavior. Lee, Au, and Law (2013) investigated the influence of the Internet security strategy on guests' beliefs about hotels. They pointed out that if the Internet could inform guests about detailed Internet security strategies, it would enhance the guests' sense of security and increase their willingness to disclose personal information. When people feel insecure about Internet information security, such as security breaches, they will be reluctant to reveal their personal information (Premazzi, Castaldo et al., 2010). In other words, when the Internet can provide an effective security mechanism for tourism SNSs, users will disclose more about themselves. Therefore, the author hypothesized as follows:

H7: Tourism SNSs' security mechanism will significantly affect self-disclosure behavior.

Davis (1989) defined perceived ease of use as "the degree to which a person believes that use of a particular system would be free of effort." In the TAM, perceived ease of use

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influences the user's attitude (Ham et al., 2008). Kucukusta and Law (2015) proposed that perceived ease of use influences users' behavior intentions (e.g., intention to book online). Herrero and Martin (2012) put forward a similar proposition. Therefore, the assumption in the present study was that the ease of use of tourism SNSs would significantly influence self-disclosure. Therefore, the author hypothesized as follows:

H8: The ease of use of tourism SNSs will significantly affect self-disclosure.

Hawkins, Best, and Coney (2004) proposed that the formation of WOM—that is, sharing information and opinions about a certain product, brand, or service—took a long time. Litvin, Goldsmith, and Pan (2008) defined EWOM as consumers' information about certain products and services shared with other people using Internet technology. EWOM can be formed when tourists increasingly self-disclose on tourism SNSs by providing their personal information, experiences, and suggestions (Filieri et al., 2015). When users lack travel experience, they may become more confident by reading other tourists' experiences on a tourism SNS (Brown, Borderick, & Lee, 2007). Filieri et al. (2015) proposed that when tourists read self-disclosed information, they will be likely to go to the same hotels, restaurants, and attractions suggested by tourism SNSs. This will motivate them to engage in EWOM by sharing information from tourism SNSs with their friends. Therefore, the author hypothesized as follows:

H9: Self-disclosure behavior will significantly affect tourism EWOM.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research framework

Based on social cognition theory and social exchange theory, this study investigated how self-disclosure on tourism SNSs is influenced by individual factors, interpersonal factors, and website factors. Individual factors include (1) the habit of writing travel posts, (2) motives, and (3) getting individual benefits. Interpersonal factors include (1) social benefits and (2) positive feedback. Website factors include (1) tourism SNS security mechanisms, (2) rewards, and (3) ease of use. There are five dimensions of self-disclosure: (1) honesty and accuracy, (2) positive/negative matter, (3) depth, (4) amount, and (5) intention. The research framework developed for this study is presented in Figure 9.
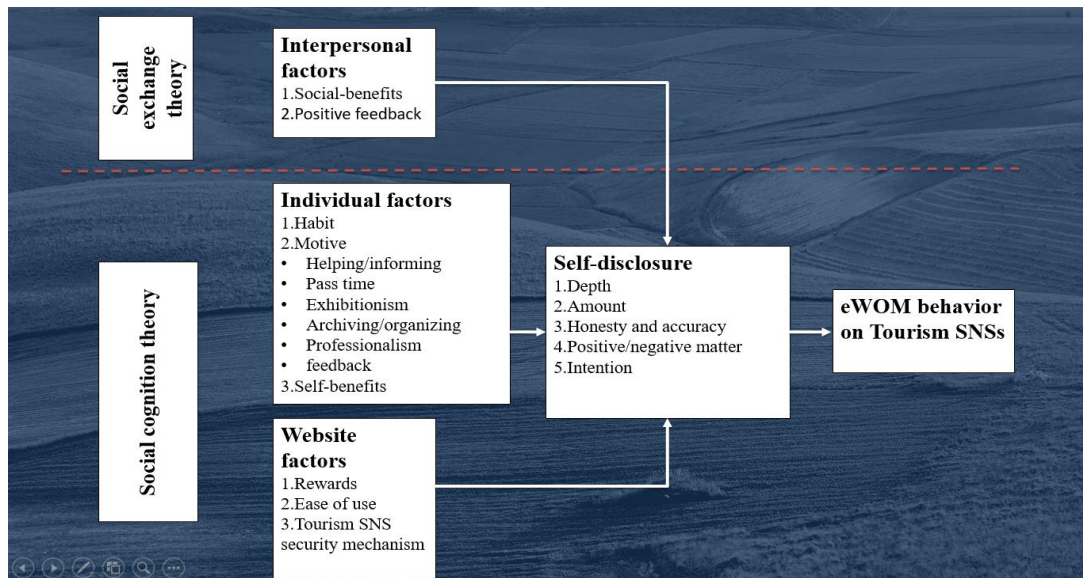
Figure 9. Research framework

3.2 Measurement

The author developed a questionnaire in English based on the literature review. Feedback and suggestions were given by three academic thesis committee members of the College of Hospitality and Tourism at the USF Sarasota-Manatee. The author revised the English instrument according to those suggestions and then asked an American professional academic editor to edit the English questionnaire. The final English questionnaire was translated into Chinese by the author. In addition, the author asked a Taiwanese professor from the National Kaohsiung University of Hospitality and Tourism (NKUHT) to review the Chinese questionnaire and provide feedback. Then this feedback was used to make revisions and prepare the final Chinese questionnaire. Finally, another Taiwanese professor from NKUHT, who had not been previously involved in the study, did the back translation to ensure the accuracy and quality of the questionnaire. By comparison, the back-translated items are similar to the ones in the source text.

The questionnaire comprised eight parts: The first part was an introduction presenting the purpose of questionnaire to the participants. The second part was a qualifying question: Have you written a forum post on a tourism SNS in the last 12 months? Only participants who answered affirmatively qualified to complete the questionnaire.

The third part measured individual factors. The first factor was the habit of writing travel notes on tourism SNSs. Three items in this part were adopted from the studies of Khalifa and

Liu (2007) and Ko (2013). The second factor was motives for writing travel notes, and it included seven dimensions: (1) helping/informing, (2) pass time, (3) exhibitionism, (4) archiving/ organizing, (5) professionalism, and (6) feedback. The items in this part were also adopted from the studies of Khalifa and Liu (2007) and Ko (2013). The third factor was self-benefit, referring to the amount of benefit an individual receives from emotional improvement and change of cognition after writing a forum post. The three items were adopted from the study of Miura and Yamashita (2007). All of the items in this part were measured on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree vs. 7 = strongly agree). The items are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. *Dimensions of individual factors*

Dimension(α)		Items	Source
Habit (.80)	1.	Publishing posts on a tourism SNS has become something I do right away when returning from a trip.	
	2.	Publishing posts on a tourism SNS has become a natural act for me.	(Khalifa & Liu, 2007)
	3.	The first thing that comes to my mind when I return from a trip is to publish my travel experience on a tourism SNS.	
Motive		The reason why I want to publish posts on a tourism SNS (Qyer.com or TripAdvisor) is	
Helping/informing (.86)	1.	I publish travel posts on a tourism SNS because I want to encourage others to be interested in travel.	
	2.	I publish travel posts on a tourism SNS because I want to help others make their travel plans.	
	3.	I publish travel posts on a tourism SNS because I want to share travel information that may be of use to others.	(Hollenbaugh, 2010)
	4.	I publish travel posts on a tourism SNS because I want to share my knowledge and skills about travel.	
	5.	I publish travel posts on a tourism SNS because I want to encourage others to travel.	

Table 1. *Dimensions of individual factors* (continued)

Pass time (.84)	6.	I publish travel posts on a tourism SNS because it's a nice way to pass the time.	
	7.	I publish travel posts on a tourism SNS because I want to keep busy.	
	8.	I publish travel posts on a tourism SNS because I have nothing better to do.	
Exhibitionism (.70)	9.	I publish travel posts on a tourism SNS to get attention.	
	10.	I publish travel posts on a tourism SNS because I want to be well known.	
	11.	I publish travel posts on a tourism SNS because I like other people to read things about me.	
Archiving/Organizing (.72)	12.	I published travel posts on a tourism SNS to record my thoughts and feelings so I can reflect on them.	
	13.	I published travel posts on a tourism SNS because it helps me organize my thoughts and feelings.	
	14.	I published travel posts on Tourism SNS because I capture my memories and review them at a later time.	
Professionalism (.74)	15.	I publish travel posts on Tourism SNS in order to help me to be more professional in writing.	(Hollenbaugh, 2010)
	16.	I publish travel posts on Tourism SNS in order to put my professional-style travel posts on Tourism SNS.	
	17.	I publish travel posts on Tourism SNS because I have to practice writing professional travel reviews to get a job at a Tourism SNS.	
Feedback (.78)	18.	I publish travel posts on Tourism SNS in order to get more points for my views.	
	19.	I publish travel posts on Tourism SNSs in order to get advice from my friends and readers.	
	20.	I publish travel posts on Tourism SNSs in order to get feedback from others who have similar travel experiences.	
Self-benefits (.78)	1.	Publishing travel posts helps me clarify how I really feel about a travel experience.	(Miura & Yamashita, 2007)
	2.	I know what's on my mind when I publish travel posts on a Tourism SNS.	
	3.	Publishing travel posts on a Tourism SNS helps me address complaints about my experience.	

The fourth part of the questionnaire concerned interpersonal factors. The first factor was positive feedback, referring to positive comments, suggestions, and constructive criticism. The three items were adopted from the studies of Bock, Zmud, and Kim (2005) and Lu and Hsiao (2007). The second factor was publishing travel posts helping users maintain relationships with other people. Therefore, social benefits referred to the benefits derived from interpersonal relationships. The four items were adopted from the study of Miura and Yamashita (2007). All of the items in this part were measured on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree vs. 7 = strongly agree). The items are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. *Dimensions of interpersonal factors*

Dimension(α)		Items	Source
Positive feedback (.79)	1.	I hope readers will sympathize with the views I share on my travel posts.	(Miura & Yamashita, 2007)
	2.	I hope readers will provide support for my travel posts.	
	3.	I hope readers will offer significant encouragement regarding my travel posts.	
Social benefits (.90)	1.	I hope I can get acquainted with new friends by publishing travel posts.	(Bock et al., 2005; Lu & Hsiao, 2007)
	2.	I hope I can gain deeper relationships with other group members by publishing travel posts.	
	3.	I can have better relationships with readers.	
	4.	I make strong relationships with readers who have common interests with me.	

The fifth part of the questionnaire contained questions about the website factors. The first factor was tourism SNSs' security mechanism for protecting users' personal information by using security technologies and providing users with secure online access to their accounts and

information. The two items were adopted from the studies of Fogel and Nehmad (2009) and

Xu et al. (2013). The second factor was rewards, referring to the expected benefits of self-

disclosure behavior by writing travel notes. The four items were adopted from the studies of

Mohamed and Ahmad (2012) and Youn (2009). The third factor was ease of use, which was

used to measure beliefs regarding whether or not using tourism SNSs would be effortless. The

four items were adopted from the study of Kucukusta and Law (2015). All of the items in this

part were measured on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree vs. 7 = strongly agree). The

items are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. *Dimensions of website factors*

Dimension(α)		Items	Source
Rewards (.78)	1.	I publish travel posts on a tourism SNS because I want to get discounts when booking flights and hotels.	(Mohame & Ahmad, 2012; Youn, 2009)
	2.	I could get my tourism SNSs membership upgraded if I publish more travel posts on it.	
	3.	I could have more opportunities to get bonuses when I publish more posts on a tourism SNS.	
Tourism SNS security mechanism (.88)	1.	I feel that my personal information is protected by the tourism SNSs which I use.	(Fogel & Nehmad, 2009; Xu et al., 2013)
	2.	I believe the tourism SNSs which I use will not use my personal information for any other purpose than those that are clearly stated on the site.	
Ease of use (.83)	1.	The tourism SNSs which I use is user-friendly, and therefore it does not require much mental effort to learn how to write travel posts on this site.	(Kucukusta & Law, 2015)
	2.	It is simple to revise the content if needed when I write travel posts on tourism SNSs.	
	3.	I want to write travel posts on tourism SNSs because the instructions are easy to follow.	

The sixth part of the questionnaire measured self-disclosure, referring to the degree to which individuals reveal their personal feelings, emotions, behaviors, and experiences when they write travel notes. This factor comprised five dimensions: (1) honesty and accuracy, (2) positive/negative matter, (3) depth, (4) amount, and (5) intention. The total of 17 items were adopted from the studies of Posey et al. (2010) and Wheeless and Grotz (1976). All of the items in this part were measured on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree vs. 7 = strongly agree). The items are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. *Dimensions of self-disclosure*

Dimension(α)		Items	Source
Honesty and accuracy	1.	I am always sincere when I express my feelings and experiences.	
	2.	I am always honest in my travel posts.	
	3.	My self-disclosures are accurate reflections of who I really am.	
Positive matter	4.	My disclosures about myself are more positive than negative on the whole.	
	5.	I usually disclose positive things about myself.	(Posey et al., 2010;
	6.	I normally show "good" feelings I have about myself.	Wheeless &
	7.	I often express more positive things about my trips than negative things.	Grotz, 1976)
Depth	8.	I usually spend a lot of time writing about myself in my travel posts.	
	9.	I frequently talk about myself in travel posts.	
	10.	I often reveal my ideas and feelings about myself in travel posts.	
	11.	Once I get started, I fully reveal myself in travel posts.	
	12.	I often disclose personal things about myself in travel posts, without hesitation.	

Table 4. *Dimensions of self-disclosure* (continued)

Amount	13.	My travel posts are the longest when I am discussing myself.	
	14.	My statements about my feelings are usually lengthy in my travel posts.	
	15.	I express my personal beliefs and opinions frequently in my travel posts.	(Posey et al., 2010; Wheeless & Grotz, 1976)
Intention	16.	When I am disclosing things in my travel posts, I am consciously aware of what I am revealing.	
	17.	When I express my personal feelings in my travel posts, I am always aware of what I am doing and saying.	

The seventh part of the questionnaire measured EWOM behavior, referring to the personal intention of passing information from person to person by writing travel notes on tourism SNSs. The four items were adopted from the study of Filieri, Alguezaui, and McLeay (2015). All of the items in this part were measured on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree vs. 7 = strongly agree). The items are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. *Dimensions of EWOM*

Dimension(α)	Items	Source
EWOM behavior for tourism SNSs	1. I have mentioned to others that I seek travel information from tourism SNSs which I use.	（Filieri et al., 2015)
	2. I let other people know that I rely on tourism SNSs to gain travel information.	
	3. I speak positively about the tourism SNSs which I use.	
	4. I have recommended the tourism SNS which I use to close friends.	

The eighth part of the questionnaire contained demographic variables, including gender, age, educational background, income, amount of time spent online, and Internet use frequency.

The items were adopted from the studies of Fogel and Nehmad (2009) and Hollenbaugh (2010).

3.3 Pilot study

Data were collected for a pilot study from August 31, 2016 to September 4, 2016. Convenience sampling on WeChat users was applied by distributing the online questionnaire via the Moment [1] function of the author's WeChat account. For the pilot study, 300 questionnaires were distributed, 84 were collected, and 73 qualified for checking the reliability of the measurement scales. The analysis results (see as Table 6) indicated that the Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the scales included in the questionnaires ranged from 0.593 to 0.96. All the dimensions demonstrated very good reliability scores, which were greater than 0.7, except for intention (0.593). According to Nunnally (1978), Cronbach (1951), and Churchill (1979), a Cronbach's alpha value above 0.7 generally signifies high reliability; a Cronbach's alpha value between 0.5 and 0.7 has fair yet acceptable reliability; a Cronbach's alpha value between 0.35 and 0.5 evidences poor or low reliability; and a Cronbach's alpha value below 0.35 indicates unacceptable and rejected reliability.

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[1] WeChat supports users in posting images and text, sharing music (associated with QQ Music) and articles, as well as comments and "likes" in the Moments. Only friends from the user's contacts list can view the user's Moments contents and comments. The Moments can be also linked to Facebook and Twitter accounts, and the Moments content can be automatically posted directly to these two platforms ("WeChat," 2016).

Table 6. *Reliability analysis of the pilot study*

Dimensions	Cronbach's Alpha
Social benefit	0.885
Positive feedback	0.779
Habit	0.837
Helping/informing	0.935
Pass time	0.828
Exhibitionism	0.873
Archiving/organizing	0.856
Professionalism	0.873
Feedback	0.782
Self-benefit	0.877
Rewards	0.905
Ease of use	0.924
Tourism SNS security mechanism	0.887
Depth	0.797
Amount	0.837
Honesty/accuracy	0.853
Positive matter	0.901
Intention	0.593
EWOM	0.955

3.4 Sampling design and main data collection

The author employed systematic sampling and self-selection sampling methods to collect

the main data from September 5, 2016 to September 23, 2016. Tourism SNS users constituted

the target population of this study. The data sources were two of the most popular Chinese

tourism SNSs: Qyer.com and mafengwo.cn. These tourism SNSs together offered the most

www.manaraa.com

expansive population of tourism SNSs users in China. There were 55 and 81 different travel groups on Qyer.com and mafengwo.cn, respectively. Based on the studies of Taddi and Contena (2013), Chen (2012), and Zlatolas et al. (2015), participants were recruited for this study in two steps. First, the author selected 10 groups from each of the tourism SNSs. The first group was chosen at random, then the author selected every fifth group from Qyer.com and every eighth group from mafengwo.cn and stopped once the tenth group had been selected. Second, the author utilized the self-selection sampling method to recruit 200 members from each group. All participants were contacted via the "contact me" or "send a message" function, by which the author sent recruitment information containing a link to the online questionnaire. The first page of the online questionnaire was the consent form, with a button to click "I agree" to participate. Thus, participants began to fill out the questionnaire after agreeing to participate. Overall, 4,000 tourism SNS users from 20 travel groups were targeted. Data were collected from 422 respondents, 370 of whom returned valid questionnaires with an effective valid response rate of 9.25%.

Taking the pilot study process into account, there were 4,300 potential respondents, of which 506 provided data. The qualifying question eliminated 55 (10.87%) respondents who had not published travel information on tourism SNSs within the previous 12 months. After excluding 8 questionnaires for missing data (more than 90% missing values), there were 443 valid questionnaires altogether. The response rate was 11%, and the valid response rate was

10.3%.

3.5 Data preparation and cleaning

The data normality for this study was examined using three statistical analyses: (1) skewness, (2) kurtosis, and (3) the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. First, the author calculated the data skewness and kurtosis values. If skewness and kurtosis are both zero, the data are perfectly normally distributed; however, a value of zero is hardly possible in the real world. According to George and Mallery (2010), the values for skewness within +/−1 and kurtosis within +/−2 could be considered acceptable thresholds of normal distribution. As Table 7 shows, some of the values were above the recommended thresholds of normal distribution. In addition, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test results showed significant value ($p < 0.001$), which meant rejecting the assumption of normal distribution. This provided a strong reason to apply partial least squares (PLS) to analyze the data.

Table 7. *Normality test result*

Items	Descriptive			Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test(a)		
	N	Skewness	Kurtosis	Statistics	df	Sig.
Habit1	443	-0.411	-0.596	0.160	443	.000
Habit2	443	-0.593	-0.417	0.186	443	.000
Habit3	443	-0.255	-0.719	0.146	443	.000
Self-benefits 1	443	-0.991	0.505	0.233	443	.000
Self-benefits 2	443	-0.795	0.159	0.208	443	.000
Self-benefits 3	443	-0.368	-0.49	0.156	443	.000
Positive feedback 1	443	-0.874	1.183	0.249	443	.000
Positive feedback 2	443	-0.685	0.669	0.237	443	.000
Positive feedback 3	443	-0.585	0.419	0.230	443	.000
Social-benefits1	443	-0.502	-0.09	0.207	443	.000

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Table 7. *Normality test result* (continued)

Items	Descriptive			Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test(a)		
Social-benefits2	443	-0.457	0.016	0.198	443	.000
Social-benefits3	443	-0.521	0.294	0.208	443	.000
Social-benefits4	443	-0.504	0.299	0.173	443	.000
Reward1	443	-0.439	-0.179	0.154	443	.000
Reward 2	443	-0.364	-0.133	0.168	443	.000
Reward 3	443	-0.308	-0.178	0.171	443	.000
Security1	443	-0.19	-0.241	0.175	443	.000
Security 2	443	-0.214	-0.355	0.176	443	.000
Ease of use1	443	-0.702	0.822	0.178	443	.000
Ease of use 2	443	-0.56	0.474	0.192	443	.000
Ease of use 3	443	-0.595	0.663	0.206	443	.000
Help1	443	-0.643	0.654	0.203	443	.000
Help2	443	-0.88	1.199	0.239	443	.000
Help3	443	-1.057	1.939	0.244	443	.000
Help4	443	-1.043	1.841	0.247	443	.000
Help5	443	-1.151	2.343	0.260	443	.000
Pass_time1	443	-0.4	-0.019	0.177	443	.000
Pass_time2	443	-0.507	-0.179	0.154	443	.000
Pass_time3	443	-0.244	-0.505	0.159	443	.000
Exhib1	443	-0.2	-0.554	0.164	443	.000
Exhib2	443	-0.176	-0.585	0.171	443	.000
Exhibt3	443	-0.554	-0.077	0.166	443	.000
Organiz1	443	-0.931	0.941	0.256	443	.000
Organiz2	443	-0.685	0.579	0.226	443	.000
Organiz3	443	-0.674	0.244	0.239	443	.000
Profess1	443	-0.342	-0.116	0.172	443	.000
Profess2	443	-0.388	-0.151	0.156	443	.000
Profess3	443	-0.134	-0.509	0.170	443	.000
Feedback1	443	-0.378	-0.272	0.156	443	.000
Feedback2	443	-0.535	-0.062	0.179	443	.000
Feedback3	443	-0.607	0.198	0.193	443	.000
Honest1	443	-1.321	2.258	0.270	443	.000
Honest2	443	-1.088	1.191	0.268	443	.000
Honest3	443	-0.742	0.422	0.195	443	.000

Table 7. *Normality test result* (continued)

Items	Descriptive			Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test(a)		
Postivematter1	443	-1.004	0.796	0.254	443	.000
Postivematter2	443	-0.991	1.063	0.252	443	.000
Postivematter3	443	-1.362	2.761	0.277	443	.000
Postivematter4	443	-0.981	0.775	0.267	443	.000
Depth1	443	-0.577	0.07	0.191	443	.000
Depth2	443	-0.577	-0.013	0.170	443	.000
Depth3	443	-0.96	1.158	0.207	443	.000
Depth4	443	-0.528	0.025	0.167	443	.000
Depth5	443	0.053	-0.759	0.140	443	.000
Amount1	443	-0.217	-0.581	0.151	443	.000
Amount2	443	-0.345	-0.415	0.166	443	.000
Amount3	443	-0.417	-0.274	0.171	443	.000
Intent1	443	-0.721	0.665	0.193	443	.000
Intent2	443	-1.041	1.748	0.210	443	.000
EWOM 1	443	-0.824	0.502	0.310	443	.000
EWOM 2	443	-0.859	0.585	0.247	443	.000
EWOM 3	443	-0.864	0.776	0.243	443	.000
EWOM 4	443	-0.943	1.070	0.226	443	.000

(a)   Lilliefors Significance Correction

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4. FINDINGS

4.1 Demographics

Of the 443 participants recruited for this study, 278 (62.8%) were female and 165 (37.2%) were male; 56.4% reported having a bachelor's degree and 34.8% reported having a Master's degree or higher. The percentages of respondents who were married with children and single were 48.1% and 41.1%, respectively. The most frequently reported occupation category was service industry (36.8%). Furthermore, 50.1% of the respondents had a monthly income of 5,000 RMB or lower, and 49.9% had a monthly income of 5,001 RMB or higher; 47.2% were between 31 and 40 years old, and 33.6% were between 21 and 30 years old. The demographic analysis of this study is presented in Table 8.

Table 8. *Demographic analysis*

Gender	Number of respondents	%
Male	165	37.2%
Female	278	62.8%
Education	Number of respondents	%
High school	9	2.0%
Associate degree (2 years)	30	6.8%
Bachelors' degree (4 years)	250	56.4%
Graduate degree	154	34.8%

Table 8. *Demographic analysis* (continued)

Marital Status	Number of respondents	%
Single	182	41.1%
Married without children	35	7.9%
Married with children	213	48.1%
Divorced or separated	13	2.9%
Widowed	0	0%
Average income/month (RMB)	Number of respondents	%
Less than 3500	130	29.3%
3501-5000	92	20.8%
5001-10000	131	29.6%
Above 10000	90	20.3%
Occupancy	Number of respondents	%
Students	78	17.6%
Military, or teacher	107	24.2%
Service industry	163	36.8%
Manufacture industry	57	12.9%
Professional traveler	15	3.4%
Retired or self-employed	14	3.2%
Unemployed	9	2.0%
Age	Number of respondents	%
18-20 years old	36	8.1%
21-30 years old	149	33.6%
31-40 years old	209	47.2%
41-50 years old	39	8.8%
Older than 50 years old	10	2.3%

When asked about their Internet usage behavior and SNS posting, 30.9% of respondents reported using the Internet for 4 to 6 hours daily and 26.9% reported using the Internet 1 to 3 hours daily. Most respondents (58.2%) spent 30 minutes writing tourism posts every time. Further, 69.8% of respondents had been using the Internet for more than 12 years. The demographic analysis showed that most of the respondents were well-educated with a high income and were frequent users of the Internet. Table 9 presents the respondents' Internet usage

behavior.

Table 9. *The Internet usage behavior*

Daily hours of internet use	Number of respondents	%
Less than one hour	14	3.2 %
1-3 hours	119	26.9%
4-6 hours	137	30.9%
7-9 hours	78	17.6%
More than 9 hours	95	21.4%
Years of internet use	Number of respondents	%
Less than one year	2	0.5%
1-3 years	18	4.1%
4-6 years	30	6.8%
7-9 years	43	9.7%
10-12 years	41	9.3%
More than 12 years	309	69.8%
Length of time to write tourism post every time	Number of respondents	%
Less than 15 minutes	153	34.5%
16-30 minutes	105	23.7%
31-45 minutes	76	17.2%
46-60 minutes	39	8.8%
More than one hour	70	15.8%
Member of tourism SNS	Number of respondents	%
Less than 1 year	255	57.6%
1-2 years	61	13.8%
3-4 years	33	7.4%
5-6 years	19	4.3%
More than 6 years	75	16.9%

4.2 PLS-SEM

This study applied partial least squares based structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) to

analyze the data for three reasons. First, the model is a complex cause–effect relationship model,

and SEM allows for the simultaneous testing of multiple variables. Second, the questionnaire

comprised 62 items, and there were 443 valid responses; the sample size was not large, and compared to other techniques, PLS is more suitable for analyzing data from small samples (Goodhue, Lewis, & Thompson, 2012; Hair et al., 2013). Third, the normality test showed that the data were not normally distributed, which is another reason why PLS was appropriate for the study. Following Anderson and Gerbing (1988), this study applied a two-stage analytical procedure to examine complex cause–effect relationship models with latent variables. The first step involved an analysis of the measurement model, which used confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to test the reliability and validity of the measurement model. Once the item reliability, internal consistency, and discriminant validity were established, the study proceeded to the next step of analyzing the structural model (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988; Eta, 2010; Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Henseler et al., 2009) to test the proposed hypotheses. This step yielded three important parameters: (1) amount of variance explained (R^2), (2) path coefficients, and (3) statistical significance of associated t-values.

4.3 Assessment of measurement model

The measurement model describes the relationship between the latent variables and their measures. There were 62 items used to measure 19 reflective constructs in the measurement model, including habit, self-benefit, helping, passing time, exhibitionism, archiving/organizing, professionalism, feedback, honesty and accuracy, positive matter, depth, amount, intent, positive feedback, social benefits, reward, tourism SNS security mechanism, ease of use, and

EWOM. The CFA measuring those 19 reflective constructs was performed by SmartPLS (Ringle, Wende, & Will, 2005).

Table 10 displays the results of each item's reliability, internal consistency, and discriminant validity in the measurement model. All of the standardized loadings of this measurement model item were greater than the threshold of 0.7 (Chin, 1998), which meant that all items used for this study demonstrated satisfactory indicator reliability.

Following Fornell and Larcker (1981), this study used composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) to examine the convergent validity. CR offered an advantage over Cronbach's alpha for measuring the internal consistency because CR applies actual loadings to calculate indicators (Ma & Agarwal, 2007). Hair et al. (1998) proposed that if CR is greater than the threshold of 0.7, then this construct can be regarded as a good indicator of internal consistency. Moreover, the AVE must be greater than the threshold of 0.5, which means more than 50% of the variation in this construct can be explained by its indicators (Chin & Newsted, 1999). As Table 10, each AVE was greater than 0.5 and each CR was greater than 0.7; therefore, the measurement model had an acceptable internal consistency and convergent validity.

Table 10. *Assessment of Items Reliability and Convergent Validity of Constructs*

Construct	Indicator	Standardized loading	CR	AVE
Habit	H1	0.862	0.769	0.909
	H2	0.896		
	H3	0.873		
Self-benefits	SB1	0.910	0.761	0.905
	SB 2	0.802		
	SB 3	0.900		
Positive feedback	PF1	0.922	0.848	0.944
	PF2	0.936		
	PF3	0.904		
Social benefits	SOB1	0.882	0.789	0.937
	SOB2	0.928		
	SOB3	0.881		
	SOB4	0.860		
Reward	R1	0.903	0.843	0.942
	R2	0.922		
	R3	0.930		
Tourism SNS security	S1	0.941	0.877	0.934
	S2	0.932		
Ease of use	EOU1	0.873	0.825	0.934
	EOU2	0.916		
	EOU3	0.936		
EWOM behavior of tourism SNSs	E1	0.909	0.860	0.961
	E2	0.921		
	E3	0.939		
	E4	0.941		

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Table 10. *Assessment of Items Reliability and Convergent Validity of Constructs* (Continued)

(Motive) Helping	Help1	0.868	0.802	0.953
	Help2	0.895		
	Help3	0.900		
	Help4	0.912		
	Help5	0.902		
(Motive) Pass time	PT1	0.851	0.718	0.884
	PT2	0.898		
	PT3	0.789		
(Motive) Exhibitionism	Exhib1	0.893	0.782	0.915
	Exhib2	0.897		
	Exhibt3	0.864		
(Motive) Archiving/Organizing	AO1	0.897	0.829	0.935
	AO2	0.908		
	AO3	0.925		
(Motive) Professionalism	P1	0.932	0.837	0.939
	P2	0.936		
	P3	0.876		
(Motive) Feedback	F1	0.811	0.733	0.892
	F2	0.889		
	F3	0.867		
(Self-disclosure) Honesty/accuracy	HA1	0.895	0.766	0.907
	HA2	0.889		
	HA3	0.840		
(Self-disclosure) Positive matter	P1	0.801	0.705	0.905
	P2	0.866		
	P3	0.895		
	P4	0.793		
(Self-disclosure) Depth	D1	0.809	0.615	0.887
	D2	0.842		
	D3	0.853		
	D4	0.810		
	D5	0.573		
(Self-disclosure) Amount	A1	0.890	0.766	0.908
	A2	0.860		
	A3	0.875		
(Self-disclosure) Intention	Intent1	0.906	0.830	0.907
	Intent2	0.916		

Regarding discriminant validity, according to Fornell and Larcker (1981), if the square root of the AVE is greater than the correlation coefficient between the dimension and all the other dimensions, then discriminant validity is established in the model. In Table 11, the bold values are the square roots of the AVE, each of which are greater than the non-bold values (inter-correlation value between constructs) of off-diagonal elements in the corresponding row and column. Therefore, the results indicated that there was discriminant validity between the constructs.

Following Henseler, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2015), this study examined the cross-loadings to evaluate discriminant validity. Table 12 shows the output of cross-loadings between indicators and constructs. The loading value is greater than all the other values in the corresponding row and column. Therefore, discriminant validity was again confirmed to be established.

In conclusion, this measurement model had satisfactory reliability, acceptable internal consistency, and convergent validity.

Table 11. *Inter-Correlation Matrix of Constructs*

Dimensions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
1. Amount	**0.875**																		
2. Organizing	0.264	**0.910**																	
3. Depth	0.592	0.366	**0.784**																
4. Ease of Use	0.396	0.432	0.479	**0.908**															
5. Exhibitionism	0.445	0.320	0.400	0.405	**0.885**														
6. Feedback	0.427	0.427	0.397	0.502	0.541	**0.856**													
7. Habit	0.290	0.352	0.432	0.412	0.315	0.345	**0.877**												
8. Helping	0.340	0.588	0.514	0.639	0.390	0.559	0.435	**0.895**											
9. Honesty & accuracy	0.317	0.382	0.593	0.499	0.254	0.343	0.522	0.570	**0.875**										
10. Intent	0.479	0.369	0.527	0.520	0.358	0.314	0.333	0.490	0.525	**0.911**									
11. Pass time	0.402	0.265	0.373	0.419	0.485	0.539	0.306	0.438	0.234	0.237	**0.847**								
12. Positive Feedback	0.372	0.498	0.537	0.517	0.413	0.475	0.376	0.688	0.547	0.503	0.362	**0.921**							
13. Positive/Negative Matter	0.355	0.401	0.583	0.400	0.233	0.300	0.408	0.489	0.642	0.507	0.217	0.498	**0.840**						
14. Professionalism	0.445	0.333	0.389	0.358	0.456	0.692	0.276	0.408	0.253	0.250	0.553	0.349	0.293	**0.915**					
15. Rewards	0.494	0.302	0.470	0.525	0.380	0.446	0.227	0.436	0.315	0.384	0.408	0.385	0.276	0.415	**0.918**				
16. Self-Benefit	0.362	0.403	0.512	0.407	0.289	0.353	0.723	0.483	0.608	0.414	0.301	0.437	0.501	0.322	0.276	**0.872**			
17. Social Benefit	0.421	0.427	0.572	0.504	0.424	0.545	0.373	0.585	0.529	0.460	0.451	0.665	0.498	0.510	0.457	0.448	**0.888**		
18. Tourism SNS Security	0.454	0.299	0.484	0.572	0.289	0.417	0.338	0.472	0.425	0.334	0.398	0.391	0.357	0.430	0.503	0.323	0.476	**0.936**	
19. EWOM	0.306	0.433	0.481	0.539	0.309	0.428	0.441	0.627	0.479	0.424	0.341	0.525	0.399	0.316	0.376	0.468	0.475	0.366	**0.928**

Note *: The square root of AVE of every multi-item construct (first-order and second-order) is shown on the main diagonal.

Table 12. *Cross-Loadings*

	Amount	Organize	Depth	Ease of Use	Exhibitionism	Feedback	Habit	Helping	Honesty	Intent	Pass time	Positive Feedback	Positive/Negative Matter	Professionalism	Rewards	Self-Benefit	Social Benefit	Security	EWOM
amount1	**0.860**	0.200	0.479	0.287	0.400	0.404	0.236	0.254	0.207	0.293	0.406	0.302	0.287	0.428	0.436	0.234	0.346	0.446	0.213
amonut2	**0.890**	0.237	0.516	0.385	0.390	0.379	0.225	0.310	0.278	0.435	0.317	0.319	0.294	0.377	0.438	0.315	0.358	0.383	0.261
amount3	**0.875**	0.251	0.554	0.362	0.381	0.344	0.296	0.321	0.336	0.510	0.339	0.351	0.346	0.370	0.426	0.386	0.397	0.372	0.319
organize1	0.194	**0.897**	0.298	0.385	0.283	0.371	0.315	0.547	0.351	0.362	0.171	0.435	0.367	0.246	0.245	0.358	0.352	0.242	0.430
organize2	0.276	**0.908**	0.390	0.415	0.306	0.399	0.328	0.551	0.360	0.315	0.306	0.480	0.374	0.342	0.317	0.407	0.418	0.308	0.404
organize3	0.248	**0.925**	0.307	0.378	0.283	0.394	0.317	0.507	0.333	0.334	0.240	0.442	0.353	0.317	0.260	0.332	0.393	0.264	0.349
depth1	0.459	0.302	**0.809**	0.373	0.271	0.311	0.316	0.415	0.449	0.409	0.272	0.464	0.481	0.320	0.430	0.420	0.451	0.390	0.351
depth2	0.546	0.315	**0.842**	0.373	0.353	0.321	0.374	0.451	0.445	0.382	0.330	0.422	0.448	0.291	0.398	0.395	0.436	0.411	0.389
depth3	0.483	0.364	**0.853**	0.430	0.315	0.282	0.381	0.466	0.570	0.523	0.257	0.496	0.546	0.235	0.369	0.480	0.468	0.369	0.408
depth4	0.478	0.308	**0.810**	0.434	0.344	0.382	0.347	0.437	0.521	0.465	0.300	0.436	0.520	0.386	0.388	0.412	0.525	0.427	0.449
depth5	0.340	0.082	**0.573**	0.233	0.297	0.267	0.266	0.186	0.297	0.236	0.344	0.242	0.226	0.324	0.230	0.271	0.355	0.294	0.269
ease1	0.375	0.377	0.427	**0.873**	0.326	0.438	0.378	0.552	0.446	0.441	0.350	0.448	0.341	0.313	0.456	0.347	0.436	0.584	0.452
ease2	0.354	0.386	0.429	**0.916**	0.390	0.462	0.362	0.576	0.453	0.487	0.392	0.487	0.372	0.337	0.473	0.378	0.469	0.474	0.505
ease3	0.352	0.413	0.450	**0.936**	0.385	0.467	0.384	0.614	0.462	0.488	0.399	0.475	0.378	0.324	0.502	0.383	0.469	0.503	0.511
exhibit1	0.421	0.199	0.340	0.302	**0.893**	0.400	0.233	0.234	0.144	0.284	0.411	0.306	0.149	0.371	0.335	0.203	0.292	0.234	0.193

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Table 12. *Cross-Loadings* (Continued)

	Amount	Organize	Depth	Ease of Use	Exhibitionism	Feedback	Habit	Helping	Honesty	Intent	Pass time	Positive Feedback	Positive/Negative Matter	Professionalism	Rewards	Self-Benefit	Social Benefit	Security	EWOM
exhibit2	0.406	0.186	0.320	0.297	**0.897**	0.426	0.238	0.273	0.132	0.261	0.449	0.303	0.142	0.362	0.320	0.208	0.312	0.202	0.215
exhibit3	0.361	0.418	0.387	0.445	**0.864**	0.575	0.343	0.482	0.355	0.381	0.424	0.456	0.297	0.456	0.348	0.330	0.484	0.311	0.376
feedback1	0.405	0.305	0.319	0.376	0.618	**0.811**	0.284	0.355	0.177	0.223	0.496	0.368	0.193	0.694	0.391	0.200	0.436	0.332	0.260
feedback2	0.346	0.347	0.337	0.410	0.414	**0.889**	0.278	0.505	0.333	0.262	0.462	0.403	0.262	0.582	0.381	0.321	0.486	0.371	0.398
feedback3	0.346	0.442	0.364	0.502	0.361	**0.867**	0.322	0.574	0.369	0.321	0.426	0.447	0.314	0.504	0.375	0.384	0.476	0.367	0.439
habit1	0.232	0.305	0.348	0.343	0.262	0.275	**0.862**	0.376	0.419	0.284	0.265	0.302	0.306	0.210	0.171	0.592	0.302	0.239	0.379
habit2	0.251	0.322	0.362	0.367	0.288	0.283	**0.896**	0.383	0.478	0.308	0.221	0.352	0.388	0.194	0.203	0.633	0.323	0.312	0.380
habit3	0.277	0.299	0.423	0.373	0.278	0.345	**0.873**	0.386	0.473	0.285	0.317	0.333	0.374	0.317	0.220	0.672	0.354	0.331	0.400
help1	0.319	0.472	0.454	0.576	0.434	0.534	0.427	**0.868**	0.469	0.405	0.473	0.628	0.395	0.446	0.412	0.409	0.524	0.491	0.517
help2	0.326	0.500	0.468	0.582	0.300	0.491	0.352	**0.895**	0.520	0.460	0.354	0.603	0.412	0.355	0.424	0.417	0.538	0.437	0.564
help3	0.250	0.531	0.431	0.577	0.264	0.468	0.371	**0.900**	0.538	0.446	0.308	0.589	0.457	0.302	0.352	0.415	0.491	0.363	0.562
help4	0.292	0.539	0.465	0.574	0.351	0.498	0.402	**0.912**	0.523	0.448	0.368	0.631	0.471	0.344	0.366	0.445	0.519	0.379	0.573
help5	0.328	0.589	0.480	0.553	0.385	0.507	0.392	**0.902**	0.504	0.438	0.443	0.625	0.455	0.370	0.397	0.475	0.543	0.436	0.592
honest1	0.258	0.408	0.526	0.477	0.210	0.284	0.487	0.562	**0.895**	0.520	0.160	0.543	0.583	0.158	0.283	0.556	0.479	0.344	0.463
honest2	0.265	0.318	0.498	0.411	0.203	0.287	0.454	0.481	**0.889**	0.466	0.167	0.452	0.557	0.204	0.294	0.544	0.467	0.372	0.442

Table 12. *Cross-Loadings* (Continued)

	Amount	Organize	Depth	Ease of Use	Exhibitionism	Feedback	Habit	Helping	Honesty	Intent	Pass time	Positive Feedback	Positive/ Negative Matter	Professionalism	Rewards	Self-Benefit	Social Benefit	Security	EWOM
honest3	0.311	0.274	0.534	0.422	0.255	0.331	0.430	0.450	**0.840**	0.391	0.291	0.438	0.545	0.304	0.249	0.495	0.442	0.400	0.350
inten1	0.459	0.282	0.503	0.440	0.324	0.269	0.265	0.395	0.419	**0.906**	0.230	0.420	0.413	0.248	0.318	0.325	0.347	0.282	0.324
inten2	0.415	0.389	0.459	0.505	0.327	0.303	0.340	0.495	0.535	**0.916**	0.203	0.496	0.507	0.208	0.379	0.427	0.488	0.326	0.445
pass1	0.349	0.212	0.219	0.307	0.417	0.392	0.209	0.317	0.152	0.218	**0.851**	0.270	0.123	0.393	0.365	0.223	0.295	0.244	0.201
pass2	0.335	0.229	0.310	0.379	0.407	0.474	0.239	0.385	0.205	0.184	**0.898**	0.307	0.189	0.483	0.349	0.272	0.438	0.311	0.309
pass3	0.336	0.231	0.406	0.372	0.407	0.493	0.323	0.403	0.233	0.202	**0.789**	0.337	0.232	0.519	0.324	0.264	0.402	0.444	0.345
PF1	0.379	0.443	0.480	0.480	0.387	0.434	0.363	0.607	0.494	0.472	0.310	**0.922**	0.479	0.293	0.374	0.420	0.605	0.362	0.475
PF2	0.292	0.467	0.508	0.478	0.367	0.412	0.360	0.656	0.530	0.478	0.305	**0.936**	0.476	0.281	0.329	0.410	0.580	0.341	0.501
PF3	0.358	0.465	0.495	0.471	0.388	0.467	0.314	0.639	0.486	0.439	0.388	**0.904**	0.418	0.393	0.362	0.377	0.653	0.378	0.473
positive1	0.237	0.321	0.404	0.332	0.130	0.208	0.280	0.353	0.509	0.342	0.144	0.358	**0.801**	0.210	0.193	0.346	0.349	0.239	0.280
postive2	0.321	0.391	0.521	0.380	0.224	0.278	0.382	0.456	0.584	0.467	0.218	0.463	**0.866**	0.270	0.283	0.461	0.445	0.362	0.410
postive3	0.305	0.333	0.537	0.346	0.223	0.247	0.385	0.445	0.596	0.465	0.205	0.432	**0.895**	0.251	0.237	0.486	0.452	0.296	0.373
potive4	0.326	0.298	0.487	0.284	0.198	0.271	0.313	0.378	0.460	0.416	0.155	0.411	**0.793**	0.250	0.206	0.377	0.419	0.296	0.264
prof1	0.372	0.328	0.353	0.349	0.410	0.639	0.265	0.397	0.259	0.220	0.489	0.338	0.299	**0.932**	0.368	0.320	0.463	0.408	0.299
prof2	0.436	0.352	0.408	0.389	0.441	0.646	0.310	0.437	0.281	0.255	0.501	0.358	0.320	**0.936**	0.382	0.341	0.499	0.414	0.347
prof3	0.416	0.225	0.300	0.232	0.398	0.617	0.174	0.275	0.143	0.209	0.534	0.254	0.174	**0.876**	0.392	0.213	0.435	0.355	0.214
reward1	0.455	0.245	0.417	0.479	0.312	0.381	0.159	0.387	0.282	0.329	0.361	0.330	0.239	0.362	**0.903**	0.223	0.388	0.427	0.330
reward2	0.443	0.276	0.424	0.524	0.352	0.407	0.263	0.420	0.278	0.362	0.390	0.358	0.263	0.372	**0.922**	0.292	0.425	0.450	0.378
reward3	0.464	0.310	0.451	0.446	0.381	0.440	0.202	0.396	0.305	0.365	0.375	0.373	0.257	0.407	**0.930**	0.245	0.444	0.506	0.329

Table 12. *Cross-Loadings* (Continued)

	Amount	Organize	Depth	Ease of Use	Exhibitionism	Feedback	Habit	Helping	Honesty	Intent	Pass time	Positive Feedback	Positive/ Negative Matter	Professionalism	Rewards	Self-Benefit	Social Benefit	Security	EWOM
selbe2	0.299	0.388	0.463	0.377	0.227	0.305	0.656	0.439	0.574	0.397	0.229	0.393	0.466	0.247	0.237	**0.910**	0.412	0.295	0.423
selbe3	0.327	0.274	0.428	0.298	0.263	0.292	0.557	0.337	0.433	0.305	0.373	0.335	0.359	0.355	0.267	**0.802**	0.369	0.249	0.371
selfbe1	0.324	0.383	0.450	0.383	0.271	0.326	0.672	0.479	0.573	0.376	0.204	0.412	0.479	0.253	0.226	**0.900**	0.391	0.300	0.429
socialbe1	0.376	0.391	0.531	0.419	0.366	0.448	0.302	0.539	0.487	0.389	0.352	0.624	0.472	0.427	0.435	0.396	**0.882**	0.418	0.454
socialbe2	0.386	0.357	0.526	0.455	0.378	0.488	0.318	0.516	0.470	0.390	0.439	0.585	0.426	0.489	0.445	0.405	**0.928**	0.409	0.410
socialbe3	0.372	0.392	0.503	0.483	0.382	0.493	0.367	0.568	0.497	0.441	0.425	0.624	0.454	0.445	0.350	0.430	**0.881**	0.428	0.458
socialbe4	0.361	0.376	0.470	0.432	0.381	0.508	0.340	0.450	0.421	0.415	0.387	0.522	0.413	0.451	0.394	0.359	**0.860**	0.435	0.361
safe1	0.455	0.298	0.479	0.565	0.308	0.420	0.330	0.446	0.411	0.333	0.383	0.382	0.315	0.399	0.526	0.312	0.459	**0.941**	0.377
safe2	0.394	0.262	0.426	0.504	0.231	0.358	0.303	0.438	0.384	0.292	0.362	0.349	0.355	0.407	0.412	0.293	0.431	**0.932**	0.307
EWOM1	0.278	0.373	0.406	0.491	0.270	0.357	0.418	0.522	0.417	0.415	0.288	0.466	0.342	0.253	0.334	0.403	0.396	0.296	**0.909**
EWOM2	0.299	0.417	0.424	0.469	0.296	0.407	0.395	0.611	0.433	0.340	0.323	0.509	0.365	0.325	0.371	0.418	0.457	0.342	**0.921**
EWOM3	0.283	0.417	0.472	0.505	0.289	0.413	0.405	0.592	0.446	0.398	0.328	0.476	0.369	0.311	0.343	0.439	0.450	0.347	**0.939**
EWOM4	0.276	0.399	0.480	0.532	0.290	0.408	0.417	0.600	0.477	0.418	0.325	0.497	0.402	0.284	0.349	0.473	0.457	0.371	**0.941**

4.4 Assessing second-order constructs

A second-order construct model consists of two order factors, which may causally influence numerous first-order factors (Diamantopoulos, Riefler, & Roth, 2008). The model includes two second-order latent constructs. First, motive is a reflective second-order construct with six primary dimensions, including helping/informing, passing time, exhibitionism, archiving/organizing, professionalism, and feedback. Second, self-disclosure has five primary dimensions, including honesty/accuracy, positive matter, depth, amount, and intention. The validity and reliability of these dimensions had already been tested and reported. As shown in Table 13, the weight values for each dimension of motive and self-disclosure were high with a significant p-value. Therefore, the first-order construct designated on motive as well as self-disclosure.

Table13. *Weights of the First-Order Constructs on the Designated Second-Order Construct*

Second-order constructs	First-order constructs	Weight	t-Value (p-Value)
Motive	Helping	0.820	35.565(p<.000)
	Pass time	0.702	23.643(p<.000)
	Exhibitionism	0.679	21.539(p<.000)
	Archiving/organizing	0.662	14.371(p<.000)
	Professionalism	0.750	33.531(p<.000)
	Feedback	0.832	46.131(p<.000)

Table13. *Weights of the First-Order Constructs on the Designated Second-Order Construct* (Continued)

Second-order constructs	First-order constructs	Weight	t-Value (p-Value)
Self-disclosure	Honesty and accuracy	0.796	34.312(p<.000)
	Positive matter	0.813	31.834(p<.000)
	Depth	0.875	65.773(p<.000)
	Amount	0.673	16.516(p<.000)
	Intention	0.728	21.184(p<.000)

Notes: Critical t-values. **2.58 (P<0.01).

4.5 Assessment of structural model

Hanlon (2001) claimed that assessing a structural model means comparing the constructs in the model, while Barclay, Higgins, and Thompson (1995) proposed that structural model assessment means examining the statistical significance of the path co-efficient and path loadings between constructs. The analysis results were evaluated with regard to three criteria: (1) R^2, (2) path coefficients, and (3) t-value, which is the significance of the relationship between constructs (Mustamil, 2010).

4.6 Explanatory power of the model

Table 14. *Endogenous Constructs and Related R^2*

No	Endogenous Constructs	R^2
1	**Self-disclosure**	0.641
2	**EWOM**	0.289

First of all, the R^2 value was examined for each predicted variable in assessing the explanatory power of the model. As shown in Table 14, 64.1% of the total variability of the dependent variable (self-disclosure) could be explained by habit, motive, self-benefit, positive feedback, social benefits, reward, tourism SNS security mechanism, and ease of use, $R^2 = 0.641$. Furthermore, 28.9% of the total variability of EWOM could be explained by self-disclosure. The findings indicated that all scores for endogenous constructs' value (R^2) were greater than the 0.1 threshold value (Hanlon, 2001; Mustamil, 2010).

4.7 Path coefficients and t-values path

The next step of the study was evaluating the relationships between the constructs with regard to the hypotheses (Mustamil, 2010). This study applied bootstrapping to test the confidence intervals of the path coefficients and statistical inference (Tenehaus et al., 2005). On the basis of the results reported in Table 4.8, the author concluded that all relationships were statistically significant, except the first two relationships in the table. Hence, the relationships proposed in H3 to H9 were positive and the paths were significant.

Table 15. *Results of Structural Model and Hypotheses Testing*

	Hypothesis	Path coefficients	*t*- value	*p*	Decision
H1	Habit → self-disclosure	0.032	0.708	0.479	Rejected
H2	Motive → self-disclosure	0.023	0.384	0.701	Rejected
H3	Self-benefits → self-disclosure	0.303	5.784	0.000	Fail to reject
H4	Positive feedback → self-disclosure	0.209	3.988	0.000	Fail to reject
H5	Social-benefits→ self-disclosure	0.179	3.229	0.001	Fail to reject
H6	Reward → self-disclosure	0.105	2.980	0.003	Fail to reject
H7	Tourism SNS security mechanism → self-disclosure	0.131	3.044	0.002	Fail to reject
H8	Ease of use → self-disclosure	0.096	2.375	0.018	Fail to reject
H9	Self-disclosure → EWOM	0.538	10.160	0.000	Fail to reject

According to Table 15, tourism SNS users' self-disclosure behavior was primarily influenced by self-benefit (γ = .303; t = 5.784), followed by positive feedback (γ = 0.209; t = 3.988), social benefits (γ = .179; t = 3.229), tourism SNSs' security mechanism (γ = .0131, t = 3.044), reward (γ = .105, t = 2.980), and ease of use (γ = .096, t = 2.375). Moreover, 64.1% of the total variability of self-disclosure could be explained by the above-mentioned independent variables (R^2 = 64.1%). This result suggested that this study could use interpersonal factors, individual factors, and website factors to discuss the self-disclosure behavior of tourism SNS users. Besides, their self-disclosure behavior would have a statistically significant influence on EWOM (β = 0.538; t = 10.160; R^2 = 28.9%), which means that the more tourists disclosed their

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travel experiences on tourism SNSs, the more willing they were to recommend this website to

others and hope that they would use the same tourism SNSs.

5. DISCUSSION

5.1 Conclusions and discussion

The findings showed that self-disclosure behavior on tourism SNSs was significantly affected by self-benefit, positive feedback from other users, social benefits, rewards, tourism SNSs' security mechanism, and ease of use. However, habit and motive did not have a statistically significant effect on self-disclosure behavior. Moreover, self-disclosure behavior positively affected EWOM.

Habit had no significant influence on self-disclosure behavior ($p > 0.05$), which indicated that writing travel posts is not a spontaneous behavior, which results from a natural impulse or tendency. Tourism SNSs need to encourage users to self-disclose more on their websites.

Motive had no significant influence on self-disclosure behavior ($p > 0.05$), the possible reason for which is as follows. The motive construct has six dimensions: (1) helping/informing, (2) passing time, (3) exhibitionism, (4) archiving/organizing, (5) professionalism, and (6) feedback. However, the author found that only 15.8% of respondents spent more than 1 hour every time they wrote a travel post, which might indicate that passing time was not one of the motives for writing travel posts. Besides, only 15.8% of the respondents were professional travelers, which made professionalism a less likely motive. As for archiving/organizing, the author thought that if the respondents wrote travel posts in order to capture their memories and

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record and organize their thoughts and feelings, they could just keep a private diary. In other words, they did not need to publish their travel posts on tourism SNSs. Lastly, other dimensions that also influence the relationship between motive and self-disclosure might exist. All above-mentioned reasons may explain why motive had no significant influence on self-disclosure behavior.

The result of H3 (Individual self-benefit will significantly affect self-disclosure behavior) echoed Niederhoffer and Pennebaker's (2002) and Miura and Yamashita's (2007) proposition: disclosing personal ideas and feelings could help to improve relationships with other people; therefore, tourism SNSs users were willing to disclose their travel information and experiences and interact with other people. Baker and Moore (2008) also proposed that sharing personal feelings and opinions with others could make people more positive and happy.

In addition, the results of H4 (Positive feedback from others will significantly affect self-disclosure behavior) and H5 (Social benefit significantly affects self-disclosure behavior) verified the following proposition: positive feedback from other people and the exchange of information could help maintain good relationships (Krcmar et al., 2015). As proposed by social exchange theory, in order to get support from other people, tourism SNSs users were willing to disclose personal travel information, ideas, and feelings (Bateman, Pike, & Butler, 2011; Ellison, Steinfield, & Lame, 2007; Tong, Van der Heide, Langwell, & Walther, 2008).

Furthermore, the analysis results of H6 (A reward system for writing travel notes on

tourism SNSs will significantly affect self-disclosure behavior), H7 (Tourism SNSs' security

mechanism will significantly affect self-disclosure behavior), and H8 (The ease of use of

tourism SNSs will significantly influence self-disclosure) showed that rewards from tourism

SNSs, tourism SNSs' security mechanism, and ease of use were important factors, which may

influence self-disclosure. According to Premazzi et al. (2010) and Gabisch and Milne (2013),

websites should provide incentives to motivate users to post their personal information. In other

words, if tourism SNSs offer rewards to users, the users will disclose themselves in the manner

expected by the tourism SNSs to get corresponding benefits. In addition, the tourism SNSs

provided a security mechanism on their websites, this made users feel more secure when

writing travel posts on these websites (Fogel & Nehad, 2009; Frye & Dornisch, 2010; Lee et

al., 2013; Mesch, 2012). Besides, the friendly interface of the tourism SNSs provided

convenient functions so that users were encouraged to disclose themselves more when writing

travel posts on tourism SNSs.

Finally, self-disclosure had a significant effect on EWOM. This result echoed the

proposition of Filieri et al. (2015): if users could disclose themselves more and share their

pleasant travel experiences with friends as well as strangers by writing travel posts on tourism

SNSs, it would create a positive brand image for the tourism SNSs and more people would like

to use those websites.

As Table 4.8 shows, self-benefit ($\gamma = .303$) was the most important factor that significantly

affected self-disclosure behavior, while positive feedback ($\gamma = 0.209$), social benefit ($\gamma = 0.179$), reward ($\gamma = 0.105$), tourism SNSs' security mechanism ($\gamma = 0.131$), and ease of use ($\gamma = 0.096$) had a relatively smaller effect on self-disclosure. Following Ou, Lin, and Ko (2008) and Kotler (2003), in this study, product levels were divided according to the degree of the impact of the independent variables on dependent variables. Product levels included core benefit product, basic, or generic product, expected product, augmented product, and potential product (Kotler, 2003). The author proposed that the core benefit of tourism SNSs should be tourism service or benefits users wanted to have, namely, self-benefit. Basic or generic product was the interpersonal interaction. Expected product was the website design and functionality, incorporating a set of attributes and conditions expected by users. Similar to other SNSs, tourism SNSs help users share personal experiences and information with other people, enabling them to interact very well with other tourists and receive recognition from them. Therefore, tourism SNS users paid attention to the interpersonal interaction function which tourism SNSs provided, like any other SNSs. Moreover, tourism SNSs provided a tourism platform where users could write travel posts about their travel experiences, which made them understand themselves better and escape the real world temporarily. Self-benefit is another important reason for writing travel posts on tourism SNSs. Tourism SNSs not only satisfied the users' interpersonal needs but also the met the various tourism related needs of tourist consumers. Finally, tourism SNSs must stress the design of their website functions, such as

detailed instructions on using the tourism SNSs and Q&A. Not only should they provide users with a friendly interface and security mechanism but also special rewards.

5.2 Theoretical contributions

First, most previous studies focused on traditional social media, such as Facebook (Al-Saggaf & Nielsen, 2014; Chang & Heo, 2014) or Twitter (Filieri et al., 2015; Mohamed & Ahmad, 2012). However, increasingly, travel enthusiasts prefer to use SNSs devoted specifically to tourism to share their travel experiences. Thus, this study investigated tourism SNSs from multiple theoretical perspectives.

Second, previous studies only fragmentarily discussed some antecedent factors that may affect users' self-disclosure on SNSs (Chang & Heo, 2014; Christofides, Muise, & Desmarais, 2012; Hollenbaugh & Ferris, 2014; Xie & Kang, 2015). In accordance with the suggestion of Mohamed and Ahmad (2012), Premazzi et al. (2010), and Utz (2015), social exchange theory and social cognition theory were applied as the theoretical basis to develop the variables. Therefore, on the basis of social exchange theory and social cognition theory, the dimensions were divided into three different groups—interpersonal factors, individual factors, and website factors—which made the research framework more complete and clear (Sen & Lerman, 2007; Zhang et al., 2010).

Third, 64.1% of the total variability of self-disclosure could be explained by the independent variables, indicating that this study effectively integrated related factors that may

influence self-disclosure, including interpersonal factors, individual factors, and website factors. The study also investigated the relationship between independent variables, self-disclosure, and EWOM. The results showed that different factors have different effects on the self-disclosure behavior of writing a travel post. Habit and motive did not have a statistically significant positive influence on self-disclosure. There might exist intervening or moderating variables, such as social expectation or personality (Hollenbaugh & Ferris, 2014). Future scholars should regard the findings as the basis for investigating similar topics.

5.3 Practical contributions

First, tourism SNSs need to improve their functions and enable their users to interact with each other. As the author pointed out earlier, users of tourism SNSs do not review the website, update their information, and publish new posts as often as Facebook users do. The most important reason is that there are abundant UGC on tourism SNSs; however, those contents lack exposure. This problem made users disclose themselves less. The findings of this study suggested that interpersonal factors positively influence self-disclosure behavior on tourism SNSs. Therefore, in order to encourage users to disclose themselves more often and more deeply, tourism SNSs should pay more attention to function innovation. For example, in order to increase the exposure to travel posts, tourism SNSs can provide back-end service and recruit employees to help with searching, reading, and sharing the travel posts that are outstanding, but that have not received enough attention from users.

Second, self-benefit is the only individual factor that positively influenced self-disclosure. Some suggestions for tourism SNSs are as follows: (1) There should be an emoji insertion function on travel post forums, so that users can easily express their mood and feelings; (2) they should provide users with more professional travel post templates so that they can better clarify their feelings about their travel experiences.

Third, website factors positively affected self-disclosure. Some suggestions for tourism SNSs are as follows. First, besides providing different featured travel groups (e.g., travel photography enthusiasts or bicycle tour groups), tourism SNSs could also provide rewards to those who answer other users' questions or comment or give feedback on other users' travel posts. The rewards could encourage users to discuss and interact with each other more. Besides the "sharing" and "add to favorite" function, the tourism SNSs could add the emoji function, and the more "likes" a travel post could get, the more rewards users could get. Second, users could be reminded to install antivirus software every time they make a transfer on a tourism SNS. Before users create their account on a tourism SNS, they could be allowed to read the legal declaration that this website will not use any personal information for any purposes other than those clearly stated on the site. Third, tourism SNSs could continue to improve and develop the webpage to make it easier to navigate and friendlier.

Fourth, in order to attract more potential users, tourism SNSs need good EWOM. The findings of this research reveal that self-disclosure behavior had statistically significant positive

influence on EWOM; therefore, tourism SNSs should encourage their existing users to disclose themselves more when writing travel posts. Tourism SNSs could provide some guidelines to help users organize their travel posts. For example, a travel post template and module with constant topics are good ideas for persuading users to self-disclose more deeply and honestly.

5.4 Limitations and future research

Although this study employed a scientific research method, its results must still be interpreted within the context of its limitations. First, there was a sampling method limitation. The resources were two popular Chinese tourism SNSs, each of which has more than four million members, but these two tourism SNSs do not work in any other language other than Chinese. A future study could replicate this study with international travelers on different tourism SNSs in other countries and introduce cultural background as an extraneous variable.

Second, the data sample collected by this study lacked census data or traveler profile data to compare to; therefore, there might have been sampling bias preventing generalization for all other tourism SNSs. Thus, future studies could undertake replicated sampling, choosing multiple samples from the surveyed population according to the same design.

Third, the variables faced a limitation. This study investigated the relationship between self-disclosure behavior and antecedent factors; however, the author did not consider possible moderating variables (e.g., gender and age) or other outcome variables (e.g., public expectations, euphoria, and self-worth) (Pennebaker & Chung, 2007; Tanis, 2008). Future

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scholars could add new variables to the framework.

Fourth, there was a cross-sectional study limitation. This study involved administering a questionnaire to tourism SNS users only once and did not consider whether the users' behavior and cognition would change. Future research could apply a longitudinal study design to collect data over time.

Fifth, during the process of studying self-disclosure behavior on tourism SNSs, the author found that most users uploaded numerous inspiring photographs (more than 100) and poetic text (more than 5,000 words) on the tourism SNSs. However, both Jacoby (1984) and Wan et al. (2009) proposed that information overload would make people struggle to understand an issue, and they would be confused when making decisions. Therefore, the author suggests that future studies investigate if information overload influences self-disclosure behavior on tourism SNSs and further affects users' EWOM behavior, travel intentions, and travel behavior.

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July 27, 2016

Junshu Zhang

USF Sarasota/Manatee - College of Hospitality and Tourism Leadership

7739 75th St.N

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RE: **Exempt Certification**
IRB#:   Pro00027004
Title: Why Consumers Disclose Their Tourism Experience on Tourism Social Networking
         Sites? Based on Multiple theoretical perspectives

Dear J. Zhang:

On 7/27/2016, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) determined that your research meets criteria for exemption from the federal regulations as outlined by 45CFR46.101 (b):

Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless:
information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation. As the principal investigator for this study, it is your responsibility to ensure that this research

is conducted as outlined in your application and consistent with the ethical principles outlined in the Belmont Report and with USF HRPP policies and procedures.

Please note, as per USF HRPP Policy, once the Exempt determination is made, the application is closed in ARC. Any proposed or anticipated changes to the study design that was previously declared exempt from IRB review must be submitted to the IRB as a new study prior to initiation of the change. However, administrative changes, including changes in research personnel, do not warrant an amendment or new application.

Given the determination of exemption, this application is being closed in ARC. This does not limit your ability to conduct your research project.

We appreciate your dedication to the ethical conduct of human subject research at the University of South Florida and your continued commitment to human research protections. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please call 813-974-5638.

Sincerely,

Kristen Salomon, Ph.D., Vice Chairperson USF Institutional Review Board