

EXPLORING VALUE-ORIENTED STORYTELLING INFLUENCES TRAVELER LOYALTY THROUGH SATISFACTION AND IMAGE

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Abstract. This study explores the impact of Value-oriented Storytelling on Tourist Loyalty, with the mediation of Customer Satisfaction and Destination Image, using a sample of 196 tourists who visited the "Diamond Triangle" in North Konawe Regency. The results show that Customer Satisfaction, Destination Image, and Value-oriented Storytelling have a significant influence on Tourist Loyalty. Customer Satisfaction has a direct impact on loyalty, while Destination Image plays a role in enhancing both satisfaction and tourist loyalty. Value-oriented Storytelling significantly strengthens Destination Image, which in turn increases Customer Satisfaction and drives Tourist Loyalty. Additionally, it was found that Value-oriented Storytelling also has an indirect effect on Tourist Loyalty through Destination Image and Customer Satisfaction, highlighting the importance of storytelling in destination marketing strategies. The limitations of this study include its specific focus on North Konawe and its short-term perspective. Future research is recommended to expand the sample size and use a longitudinal approach to explore the long-term impact of Value-oriented Storytelling on Tourist Loyalty.

Keywords: Value-oriented Storytelling, Image, Loyalty

Abstrak. Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi dampak pendongengan berbasis nilai terhadap loyalitas wisatawan, dengan mediasi kepuasan pelanggan dan citra destinasi, dengan menggunakan sampel 196 wisatawan yang berkunjung ke "Segitiga Berlian" di Kabupaten Konawe Utara. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepuasan pelanggan, citra destinasi, dan pendongengan berbasis nilai memiliki pengaruh yang signifikan terhadap loyalitas wisatawan. Kepuasan pelanggan berdampak langsung pada loyalitas, sedangkan citra destinasi berperan dalam meningkatkan kepuasan dan loyalitas wisatawan. Pendongengan yang berbasis pada nilai secara signifikan memperkuat citra destinasi, yang pada gilirannya meningkatkan kepuasan pelanggan dan mendorong loyalitas wisatawan. Selain itu, ditemukan bahwa pendongengan yang berbasis pada nilai juga memiliki efek tidak langsung pada loyalitas wisatawan melalui citra destinasi dan kepuasan pelanggan, menyoroti pentingnya bercerita dalam strategi pemasaran destinasi. Keterbatasan ttudi ini termasuk fokus spesifiknya pada Kabupaten Konawe Utara dan perspektif jangka pendeknya. Penelitian di masa depan direkomendasikan untuk memperluas ukuran sampel dan menggunakan pendekatan longitudinal untuk mengeksplorasi dampak jangka panjang dari pendongengan berbasis nilai pada loyalitas wisatawan.

Kata Kunci: Pendongengan Berbasis Nilai, Citra, Loyalitas

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INTRODUCTION

Value-oriented storytelling has become an important tool in the tourism industry to increase tourist loyalty (Ratree & Laksitamas, 2023; Zohry et al., 2021). In the context of cultural and heritage tourism, storytelling not only enriches the visitor experience but also deepens the emotional attachment between tourists and destinations (Cheng & Chen, 2022; Leong et al., 2024; Mo et al., 2024). This emotional involvement is crucial in building loyalty, as it affects the perception and intention of tourists to return. Recent research highlights the effectiveness of storytelling in creating memorable travel experiences. For example, research Mo et al., (2024) The exhibition "Lingnan Attire" shows that immersive digital storytelling significantly improves visitors' cultural understanding and emotional engagement, ultimately increasing their intention to return. Moreover Guleria et al., (2024) shows that a positive travel experience is strongly correlated with travelers' attachment to the destination, which then influences their intention to share the story and build loyalty.

Value-oriented storytelling is thought to play an important role in shaping the image of the destination and increasing customer satisfaction. By building a relevant and evocative narrative, storytelling can enrich the travel experience and increase the value perceived by travelers. Research shows that perceived value aspects, including emotional safety and service quality, have a significant influence on traveler satisfaction, which ultimately becomes the basis for the creation of loyalty (Jeong & Kim, 2020; Kim et al., 2013). Value-focused storytelling is also able to strengthen the image of the destination by emphasizing the unique characteristics and unique experiences offered by the destination, which further increases tourist loyalty (Nasrul et al., 2023).

Although many studies have discussed the role of storytelling in tourism, there is still a gap in the literature on how storytelling that focuses on value mediates the relationship between the quality of the destination experience and tourist loyalty. Previous research has often focused on the direct influence of experience quality on loyalty without considering the mediating role of storytelling and destination imagery. Example Ferdinand et al., (2024) Finding that the quality of a culinary experience doesn't necessarily directly increase loyalty, unless the experience has specificities that can be told to a wider audience. In addition, although storytelling has been recognized as an important factor in shaping destination imagery, research that combines storytelling with service-dominant logic (SDL) theory to explain how storytelling can increase loyalty through improved destination image is limited. Therefore, this model is expected to provide a more comprehensive insight into how storytelling can be used as a strategy to strengthen traveler loyalty through improving the image of the destination.

North Konawe Regency, with its distinctive and stunning natural beauty, especially in the "Diamond Triangle" area which includes Taipa Tourism Objects, Wawolesea Hot Springs, and Labengki Island Tourism (Harlina et al., 2023; Olivia et al., 2021), has great potential to utilize value-oriented storytelling as an effective marketing strategy. The main strengths of this destination are its unique natural beauty, high customer satisfaction rate, and positive reputation built through word-of-mouth. Thus, value-oriented storytelling can be a powerful tool to strengthen the image of the destination and increase tourist loyalty.

However, this destination is also faced with several weaknesses, such as reliance on word-of-mouth without a more integrated marketing strategy and limitations in infrastructure and diversification of tourism products. On the other hand, there is a great opportunity to increase visitor loyalty through strengthening the destination image and developing digital marketing. In addition, diversifying tourism products by adding cultural, historical, and culinary elements can enrich the tourist experience and increase the attractiveness of the destination. Threats from competition from other tourist destinations, the negative impact of climate change, and economic uncertainty can affect tourist attraction and loyalty. Therefore, this study aims to explore how value-oriented storytelling can be used to improve destination image, customer satisfaction, and tourist loyalty in North Konawe Regency.

This research model will integrate mediating factors such as customer satisfaction and destination image, as well as consider moderation of managerial competence in destination management. In addition, this study will also explore strategic interventions such as infrastructure development and tourism product diversification as additional variables that can affect destination image and customer satisfaction, which ultimately strengthens tourist loyalty to North Konawe Regency.

METHOD

This research method is designed to explore the impact of Value-oriented Storytelling on Tourist Loyalty, by considering the mediating role of Customer Satisfaction and Destination Image. This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey technique, where data is collected from 196 tourists who visited the "Diamond Triangle" tourist destination in North Konawe. The sample was selected using a purposive sampling technique, where respondents were selected based on their visit to the destination and the relevance of their experience to the variables studied. The research instrument used is a structured questionnaire designed to measure the variables of Value-oriented Storytelling, Customer Satisfaction, Destination Image, and Tourist Loyalty. Each variable was measured using a five-point Likert scale, from

strongly disagreeing to strongly agreeing. The collected data was then analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the Partial Least Squares (PLS) approach to test the direct and indirect relationship between these variables.

RESULTS

Table 1. Respondents' profiles

Characteristic	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Man	122	62,24
Woman	74	37,76
	196	100
Age		
24-34	167	85,20
33-43	29	14,80
	196	100
Income		
< 5 million	96	48,98
6-10 million	79	40,31
11-15 million	21	10,71
	196	100

Based on data from the respondent profiles listed in Table 1, this study involved 196 respondents with a diverse distribution of characteristics. In terms of gender, the majority of respondents were men, namely 122 people or 62.24% of the total respondents, while women amounted to 74 people or 37.76%. In terms of age, the age group of 24-34 years dominated with 167 respondents, or 85.20%, while the age group of 33-43 years only consisted of 29 people, or 14.80% of the total respondents. Meanwhile, the income distribution shows that most respondents have an income of less than 5 million rupiah per month, namely as many as 96 people or 48.98%. Respondents with an income between 6 to 10 million rupiah per month amounted to 79 people or 40.31%, while only 21 people or 10.71% of respondents had an income of 11 to 15 million rupiah per month. This distribution of data provides a clear demographic picture of the profile of respondents, who are made up of the majority of men, dominated by young age (24-34 years old), and mostly in the lower-middle-income group. This information is important to understand the characteristics of the population that is the object of the research and how this can affect the findings and implications of the results of the research conducted.

Table 2. Loading factors and sources

Variables	Items	Loading	Source
Value-oriented _Storytelling	I am happy to share stories about the unique natural beauty of North Konawe Regency.	0,934	(Ferdinand et al., 2024)
	I often tell stories about special natural tourist destinations in North Konawe Regency.	0,961	
	I often tell stories about the diversity of natural tourism experiences in North Konawe Regency.	0,956	
	I often tell stories about memorable experiences and natural beauty in North Konawe Regency.	0,852	
Destination _Image	Good impression of the natural beauty in North Konawe Regency.	0,956	(Zheng et al., 2022; Zulvianti et al., 2023)
	North Konawe Regency has a good image in the minds of tourists.	0,915	
Customer _Satisfaction	North Konawe Regency has a better image than its competitors	0,652	(Zheng et al., 2022; Zulvianti et al., 2023)
	Compared to expectations, I was satisfied with my visit to North Konawe Regency	0,949	
	Satisfied with my visit to North Konawe Regency, considering the time and effort I spent.	0,890	
	Overall, I am satisfied with my visit to North Konawe Regency	0,939	
Tourist _loyalty	Recommend North Konawe Regency to my friends and family.	0,941	(Zheng et al., 2022; Zulvianti et al., 2023)
	Returning to visit North Konawe Regency in the future.	0,940	
	Saying positive things about North Konawe Regency to others.	0,908	

Table 3. Reliability and validity of measurement constructs

Variables	CA	CR	AVE
Value-oriented _Storytelling	0,945	0,961	0,859
Destination _Image	0,812	0,933	0,726
Customer _Satisfaction	0,917	0,931	0,858
Tourist _loyalty	0,922	0,923	0,865

Table 3 shows that all the constructs measured have excellent levels of reliability, as indicated by Cronbach's Alpha (CA) and Composite Reliability (CR) values. Cronbach's Alpha value for all constructs is above the generally accepted threshold of 0.7, with the highest score for Value-oriented Storytelling (0.945), indicating that the items in these constructs are very consistent with each other. The Composite Reliability for all constructs is also very high, with the lowest score on Tourist Loyalty (0.923), which remains above the threshold of 0.7, indicating that the overall instrument has strong reliability in measuring the identified variables.

In addition to reliability, the table also shows that each construct has sufficient convergent validity, as indicated by the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value. The AVE values for all constructs are above 0.5, which is the accepted threshold, with the highest scores on Tourist Loyalty (0.865) and Value-oriented Storytelling (0.859). This suggests that these variables can

account for more than half of the observed variances, thus reinforcing the convergent validity of these measurements. With high AVE values, we can conclude that these constructs have good validity in the context of this study.

Table 4. R-square and Q2

	R-square	Q2
Customer _Satisfaction (Y1)	0,362	
Destination _Image (Y2)	0,207	0,887
Tourist _loyalty (Y3)	0,438	

The R-square value presented in the table provides information about how much variance of the dependent variable can be explained by the independent variable, namely Value-oriented Storytelling. The R-square value for Customer Satisfaction (Y1) is 0.362, which means that 36.2% of the variance in customer satisfaction can be explained by Value-oriented Storytelling. For Destination Image (Y2), the R-square value is 0.207, indicating that 20.7% of the variance in the destination image is explained by the same independent variable. Finally, the R-square value for Tourist Loyalty (Y3) is 0.438, which indicates that Value-oriented Storytelling explains 43.8% of the variance in tourist loyalty. This shows that Value-oriented Storytelling has a strong influence in explaining variability in the three dependent variables.

By entering the given R-square values (0.666 and 0.662) in the previous figure, the Q² calculation yields a value of 0.887. A Q-square value close to 1 indicates that the model has excellent predictive power. In this context, a Q² value of 0.887 indicates that the model has a high ability to predict dependent variables based on Value-oriented Storytelling. This confirms that Value-oriented Storytelling is a significant and effective predictor in influencing customer satisfaction, destination image, and tourist loyalty.

Table 5. Discriminant validity results

	Customer _Satisfaction	Destination _Image	Tourist _loyalty	Value-oriented _Storytelling
Customer _Satisfaction				
Destination _Image	0,537			
Tourist _loyalty	0,640	0,541		
Value-oriented _Storytelling	0,548	0,485	0,544	

HTMT (Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio) is a criterion used to assess the validity of discrimination between constructs in a model. Discriminatory validity is achieved when a construct is completely different from other constructs in the model, which means that it measures something different. In the table presented, the HTMT value is displayed between

various construction pairs, namely between Customer Satisfaction and Destination Image with an HTMT value of 0.537; Customer Satisfaction and Tourist Loyalty by 0.640; Customer Satisfaction and Value-oriented Storytelling at 0.548; Destination Image and Tourist Loyalty by 0.541; Destination Image and Value-oriented Storytelling by 0.485; and between Tourist Loyalty and Value-oriented Storytelling by 0.544. In general, the accepted threshold for the HTMT value is 0.85. If the HTMT value between two constructs is below 0.85, it indicates that the constructs have good discriminatory validity, which means they differ from each other. Based on the HTMT values in the table, all the construct pairs have values below the threshold of 0.85, which indicates that the validity of discrimination between all construct pairs in this model is good. The highest HTMT value is 0.640 (between Customer Satisfaction and Tourist Loyalty), which is still within acceptable limits, thus confirming that although these constructs are related, they are still different and measure different concepts. Thus, this HTMT analysis shows that the constructs in this model are quite different from each other, which supports the validity of the measurement model. The constructs are not very similar, so each construct manages to capture a unique aspect of the phenomenon under study. It is very important to ensure that the results of the study are reliable and that the constructs measured have been appropriately defined and operationalized.

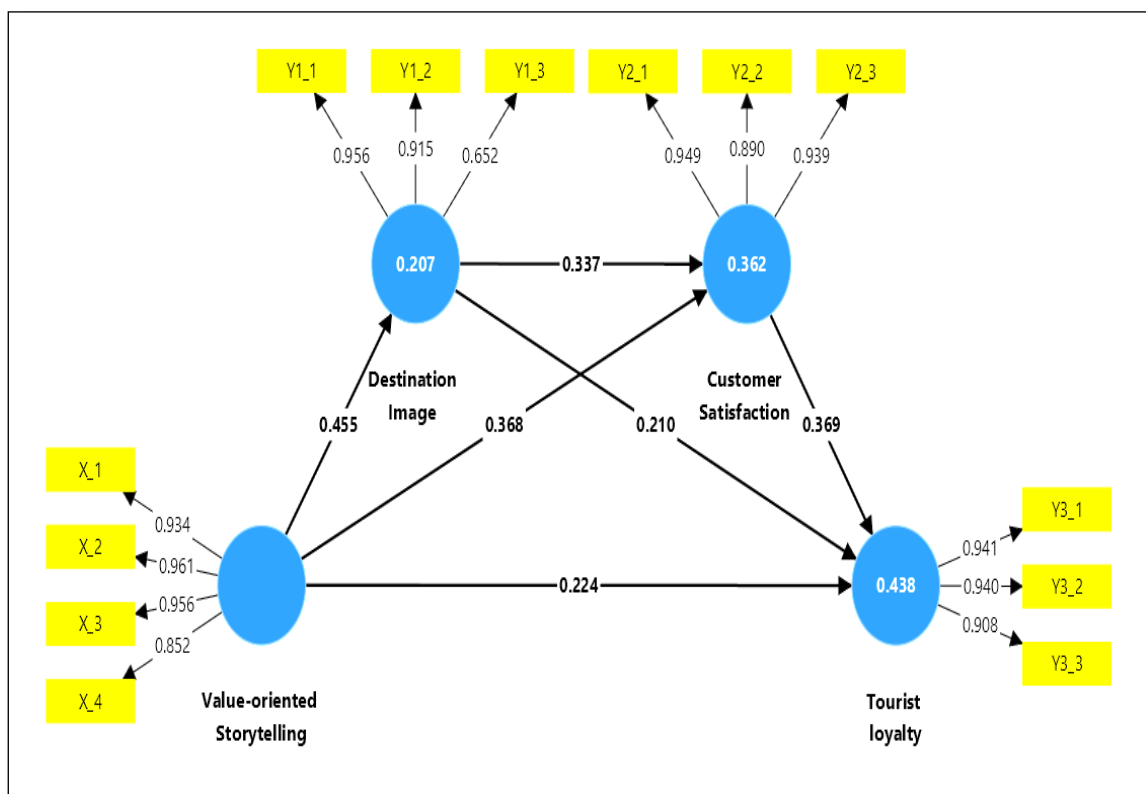


Figure 1. Results of PLS-SEM analysis

Table 6. Structural model assessment and hypothesis test outcome

	Original sample	T statistic s	P value s
Customer _Satisfaction -> Tourist _loyalty	0,369	3,556	0,000
Destination _Image -> Customer _Satisfaction	0,337	3,133	0,002
Destination _Image -> Tourist _loyalty	0,210	2,301	0,021
Value-oriented _Storytelling -> Customer _Satisfaction	0,368	3,186	0,001
Value-oriented _Storytelling -> Destination _Image	0,455	5,218	0,000
Value-oriented _Storytelling -> Tourist _loyalty	0,224	2,177	0,030
Mediation Path			
Value-oriented _Storytelling -> Destination _Image -> Customer _Satisfaction	0,154	2,559	0,011
Destination _Image -> Customer _Satisfaction -> Tourist _loyalty	0,124	2,058	0,040
Value-oriented _Storytelling -> Destination _Image -> Tourist _loyalty	0,096	1,854	0,064
Value-oriented _Storytelling -> Customer _Satisfaction - > Tourist _loyalty	0,136	2,085	0,037

Based on the results of the analysis in the table, it was found that several independent variables had a significant direct influence on the dependent variables. Customer Satisfaction has a significant direct influence on Tourist Loyalty ($\beta = 0.369$, $p < 0.001$). This shows that the higher customer satisfaction, the more likely it is that tourists will become loyal. Destination Image also had a significant direct influence on Customer Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.337$, $p < 0.01$) and Tourist Loyalty ($\beta = 0.210$, $p < 0.05$). This means that a good destination image not only increases customer satisfaction but also contributes directly to tourist loyalty. Value-oriented Storytelling has a significant direct influence on Customer Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.368$, $p < 0.01$), Destination Image ($\beta = 0.455$, $p < 0.001$), and Tourist Loyalty ($\beta = 0.224$, $p < 0.05$). This emphasizes the importance of value-focused storytelling in building a strong destination image, increasing customer satisfaction, and driving traveler loyalty.

The analysis also revealed that there was a significant indirect influence between variables through mediators, Value-oriented Storytelling affected Customer Satisfaction through Destination Image with a significant indirect effect ($\beta = 0.154$, $p < 0.05$). This means that value-oriented storytelling not only increases customer satisfaction directly, but also through improving the destination image. Destination Image has an indirect influence on Tourist Loyalty mediated by Customer Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.124$, $p < 0.05$). This shows that a good destination image can increase tourist loyalty through increased customer satisfaction. Value-oriented Storytelling also has an indirect influence on Tourist Loyalty through two mediation channels: Destination Image and Customer Satisfaction. However, one of these indirect effects

was only close to significant ($\beta = 0.096$, $p = 0.064$), suggesting that value-oriented storytelling can impact traveller loyalty through improved destination image and customer satisfaction, although the effect is relatively weaker. Thus, both direct and indirect influences show how these various factors are interconnected in shaping tourist loyalty

DISCUSSION

There are several key points that emerge as important factors in shaping and increasing tourist loyalty. This study explores how the variables of Customer Satisfaction, Destination Image, and value-oriented storytelling mutually influence tourist loyalty, ultimately contributing to the sustainability of the tourism sector in the region. First, the findings show that Customer Satisfaction is the variable that has the most significant direct influence on Traveler Loyalty (Sangpikul, 2018; Sitorus & Yustisia, 2018; Surahman et al., 2020). This indicates that a satisfying travel experience in this destination not only increases the chances of tourists returning, but also encourages them to recommend this destination to others. In other words, satisfied tourists will become unofficial ambassadors who promote the beauty and experiences offered by North Konawe Regency. This is an important factor that stakeholders must consider in designing a travel experience that can meet, even exceed, travelers' expectations (Moscardo, 2018; Solís-Radilla et al., 2019).

Second, the Destination Image has also been proven to have a significant influence on Tourist Loyalty. This image is not only shaped by promotion and marketing, but also by the first-hand experience experienced by tourists while in the destination (Govindarajo & Khen, 2020; Iordanova & Styliadis, 2019; Kim, 2018; Sangpikul, 2018). These findings show that a positive perception of a destination built through a pleasant experience and an effective promotional strategy can strengthen traveler satisfaction. In this context, it is important for destination managers to ensure that the image they project is consistent with the reality on the ground, so as to increase tourist loyalty.

In addition to direct influence, this study also identifies significant indirect influences through the mediation of other variables. For example, value-oriented storytelling turns out not only to have a direct impact on Customer Satisfaction, but also to strengthen the Destination Image. This shows that effective storytelling, which is able to capture and convey local values and uniqueness of North Konawe Regency, can strengthen the positive image of the destination (Ben Youssef et al., 2019; Pachucki et al., 2022). A strong, value-focused narrative can create a deep emotional connection between travelers and destinations, ultimately contributing to increased their satisfaction and loyalty.

Interestingly, these findings emphasize the importance of a marketing strategy that focuses not only on sales, but also on creating meaningful narratives (Boldsova, 2020). Narratives that are able to connect tourists with the essence of the destination, be it in terms of culture, history, or natural beauty, can create a more immersive and memorable tourist experience. In the long term, this approach can help build closer relationships between travelers and destinations, increase the chances of returning visits, and reinforce positive word-of-mouth (Meng & Han, 2018; Papadimitriou et al., 2018).

Thus, it can be concluded that tourism development in North Konawe Regency, especially in the "Diamond Triangle" area, should consider the use of value-oriented storytelling as an integral part of their marketing strategy. This strategy is not only effective in attracting new tourists but also in maintaining and strengthening their loyalty. In the long term, this approach can make a significant contribution to the sustainable growth of the tourism sector, which in turn will provide economic and social benefits for local communities. These findings provide important insights for stakeholders in North Konawe Regency to optimize their marketing strategies with a focus on creating a strong destination image and an unforgettable travel experience. With the right approach, tourist destinations in North Konawe Regency have great potential to become one of the top destinations for tourists, both domestic and international, who are looking for an authentic and meaningful tourist experience

CONCLUSION

This study shows that Customer Satisfaction, Destination Image, and Value-oriented Storytelling have a significant influence on Tourist Loyalty. Directly, Customer Satisfaction has a huge impact on traveler loyalty, while Destination Image not only increases customer satisfaction but also contributes directly to their loyalty. Value-oriented Storytelling proves to be crucial in building a strong destination image, which in turn increases customer satisfaction and encourages traveler loyalty. In addition, the analysis reveals that Value-oriented Storytelling also has an indirect influence through Destination Image and Customer Satisfaction, reinforcing the importance of storytelling in destination marketing strategies.

This finding has important implications for tourist destination managers, especially in North Konawe Regency. To increase tourist loyalty, the main focus should be on improving customer satisfaction through the creation of a positive destination image. The implementation of the Value-oriented Storytelling strategy not only strengthens the image of the destination but can also significantly increase tourist satisfaction and loyalty. This emphasizes the need to integrate storytelling in destination marketing strategies to create a strong emotional connection

between travelers and destinations. This research has several limitations that need to be considered. First, the study used a limited sample of tourists in North Konawe Regency, which may not be fully representative of tourists in other destinations. Second, this study focuses more on the effects of storytelling in the short term without measuring the long-term impact on tourist loyalty. In addition, the quantitative approach used may not fully capture the complexity of the emotional relationships built through storytelling.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Further research is suggested to expand the scope of the sample by including tourists from different destinations to see if these findings can be generalized. In addition, longitudinal studies can be conducted to measure the long-term effects of Value-oriented Storytelling on tourist loyalty. Further research can also explore the qualitative aspects of storytelling to gain a deeper understanding of how narratives affect travelers' perceptions and behaviors. This will provide richer insights into how storytelling can be leveraged more effectively in tourism marketing

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