

The Influence of e-Government Information and Social Media Engagement on the Intention to Introduce Tourist Attractions among Thai Tourists

Tamonwan Sitthipon¹, Bordin Phayaphrom², Sutitthep Siripipattanakul³

¹City University, Selangor, Malaysia

²Manipal GlobalNxt University, Malaysia

³Kasetsart University, Bangkok, Thailand

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the influence of e-government information and social media engagement on the intention to introduce tourist attractions for destinations in Thailand predicting after the COVID-19 pandemic. The quantitative approach employed a self-administered online survey for data collection through convenience sampling. The samples were Thai citizens who had the intention to be tourist attractions for destinations in Thailand after the COVID-19 pandemic (n=416). The questionnaire was designed from highly reliable and valid sources. Data were analysed using PLS-SEM to test the hypotheses. The results reveal that there is a positive influence of e-Government information and social media engagement on the intention to introduce tourist attractions. Moreover, social media engagement can explain the intention to introduce tourist attractions among Thai tourists better than e-Government information. The results could be applied to improve e-services, social media engagement, and behavioural intention in any sector. The recommendation is to study in the business sector further. Also, a qualitative approach could give more in-depth insight in further study.

KEYWORDS: E-Government, Social Media Engagement, Intention to Introduce, Tourist Attractions, Thai

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Research

Nowadays, digital technology, such as applications and artificial intelligence, has significant implications for many organisations. Furthermore, the importance of using communication to create an image is widely used in both business and government. In recent years, the government has given much priority. It is a critical component of public relations advertising comparable to marketing with government, planning, communication, and leadership (Limna et al., 2021; Rujichok, 2020). The communication concept was used to create a government image. Electronic government (e-Government) evolves the old government administration into a new government administration model that uses information technology systems to provide more efficient service to the public. It is the development of the senior

government administration into a new model of government administration that provides more efficient service to the public. Information technology systems are used to develop databases of government agencies at all levels to be linked and expanded in their ability to serve the people. Information technology is seen as a tool to assist people through electronic systems, and thus it is used to develop databases of government agencies at all levels. Providing services to people quicker creates a positive attitude towards the government. It is an opportunity for people to be aware of information quickly. It builds confidence in the administration of state affairs in the government sector. E-government is also considered a tool for essential factors that help implement the government's efficiency (Kuraeiad,

2015). The role of e-Government acts as necessary during the crisis. People who have a high level of trust in government are more likely to cooperate by following government instructions (Chanley et al., 2000). Public officials are arranged to live in every community to ensure people are safe. Online media have become a common channel by which citizens gather information on the government's priorities, actions, and performance (Zhu et al., 2000). Accordingly, online media, including Line official, Facebook, and mobile health applications, are now widely used by the Thailand government to build its social role as a trustworthy protector. E-government and social media are essential platforms to supply information related to COVID-19 and educate people on protective behaviour. Moreover, people spend much more time on the Internet, especially on mobile devices. The visual component of content in social media networks is the most significant feature in social media networks. It is especially crucial to know the information of service and, more importantly, what makes consumers buy services from these kinds of channels. As a part of the tourism and service industry, tourism was not an exception to the digitalisation of social media. Concerned about the importance of effective communication during the pandemic, the government of Thailand relies heavily on e-government and social media to provide sufficient and up-to-date information to the public (Yusof et al., 2020). Effective communication during a crisis helps relieve panic among society and promotes trust in tourists' intention to introduce a destination in Thailand. This study explores the influence of e-Government information and social media engagement on Thai people's willingness to be tourist attractions. This research would be helpful for the government decision-makers to design appropriate communication strategies with Thai tourists who can get information and updates on COVID-19 through social media. Understanding the role of e-government and tourists' desire to visit a destination and its associated behavioural intent is vital in developing social media practical information tourism in Thailand.

1.2. Problem Statement

In 2019, the tourism industry generated a revenue of THB 301 trillion making it the stronghold of Thailand's economy (Pongsakornrungrungsilp et al., 2021). Since March 2020, tourism businesses and other services in the country have been shut down following government policies and emergency measures. Fear, anxiety, and panic of COVID-19 people have reduced the travel and tourism of Thai people and foreigners who travel to Thailand (Marome & Shaw, 2021; Pongsakornrungrungsilp et al.,

2021). e-Government is a powerful tool for promoting public participation from a government (Northrup & Thorson, 2003; Parent et al., 2005). Several studies confirmed a relationship between e-Government and public satisfaction (Hariguna et al., 2019), the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) Model (Alshehri et al., 2012), and perspective of citizens interaction (Al-Kaseasbeh et al., 2019). Few studies supported the influence of e-government and social media engagement on the intention to introduce tourist attractions among Thai people. Therefore, this study examines the influence of e-Government information and social media engagement on introducing tourist attractions among Thai people. The findings could be used to improve e-Government social media communication in the issue of remedial measures from the government to be more comprehensive and appropriate. Also, the future planning to cope with the new wave of epidemic or provide preparation measures for effective epidemic control for tourists to reduce concerns and increase tourists' confidence in travelling to their destinations. Furthermore, the findings could be applied to improve e-services, social engagement, and behavioural intention in any sector.

1.3. Research Objective

This study examines the influence of e-Government information and social media engagement on the intention to introduce tourist attractions among Thai people.

1.4. Research Question

Is there any influence of e-government information and social media engagement on the intention to introduce tourist attractions among Thai tourists, and how?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Role of e-Government

Electronic government (e-government) has been defined in various ways depending on the contexts in which it is applied. Essentially, e-government can be seen as simply the web-based application to provide interactive exchanges between public institutions and citizens, business partners, and other government agencies by transforming the conventional public services to improve the access and delivery of the service (Alsaghier et al., 2009). According to Northrup and Thorson (2003) summarise three advantages have been used to support e-government initiatives: increased efficiency, increased transparency, and transformation. Both e-government definitions and advantages hint at the internal and external purposes of e-government. E-government is expected to trim costs, enhance productivity in government, improve service delivery and public

administration, and facilitate the advancement of an information society. On the other hand, as the external purpose, e-government is delineated as a powerful tool for promoting public participation (Parent et al., 2005). Because it entitles the citizen to have more access to and interaction with the government (Safeena and Kammani, 2013). Ultimately, e-government is also expected to increase citizen satisfaction with government and help reverse the weakening in citizen trust in government (Morgeson et al., 2011). Perceptions are heightened during an outbreak period, as people are concerned about their protection, and their attitude toward an epidemic outbreak depends on this protection to some extent. During a quarantine period, as people are isolated, the perceived role of the e-government may be increased. People might be motivated to play a role in epidemic protection after watching the involvement of e-government (Yasir et al., 2020). It might enhance the people's perceptions about e-government playing a role in an epidemic outbreak. In Canada, social media was used as a tool for the facilitation of consumers by government officials (Dias 2019). Everyone is involved in e-government and online social presence because a noteworthy difference was identified in the analysis of awareness about using mobile phones to seek health information during critical times (Pai & Alathur 2019). Awareness promotion plays an important role in burn cases (Biswas et al., 2020). Universal and global research is needed in community health to use social media in E-government (Tursunbayeva et al., 2017) Therefore, the influence of e-government information and social media engagement on the intention to introduce tourist attractions is crucial in this study.

2.2. Attitude toward Social Media Engagement

Communications motivate people to use a service by demonstrating it and what the organisation offers. They can help build engagement by establishing image creation through social media (Siripipatthanakul & Sixl-Daniell, 2021; Siripipatthanakul & Bhandar, 2021). Engagement in an online social platform is the level of a consumer's physical, cognitive, and emotional presence in connections with a particular online social platform. It is indicated that consumer engagement in an online social platform is a psychological state which drives consumer engagement behaviour. Moreover, involvement and social interactions are antecedents of consumer engagement in an online social platform (Cheung et al., 2020). Social media refers to a combination of internet-based applications based on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and enables the creation and exchange of user-generated content. The ability of social media to

communicate and share information has radically changed consumer behaviour and the way consumers interact with brands. As a result, social media has become a powerful source of information for digital consumers (Cheung et al., 2022; Machado et al., 2020). Therefore, social media engagement in this study refers to a combination of technological applications that communicate and share information with tourists.

2.3. Intention to Introduce Tourist Attractions

Almost every city aims to develop or redevelop an image through branding. From a branding point of view, city branding is based on three pillars: authenticity, image, and uniqueness. Continue by saying that many cities try to promote themselves using iconic constructions. City image combines the city's urban elements like monumental buildings, public spaces, and other special features (Kavaratzis, 2007). Iconic buildings contribute to the creation of an identifiable city image. They can indirectly influence the feeling of well-being of locals and the level of satisfaction of visitors, connecting the image of a city and the quality of life there. The image of a city is also considered important for city identity and city branding (Jencks, 2006; Riza et al., 2012). Another important role held by the image of a city is that it strongly influences both the levels of citizens' satisfaction and well-being and the levels of satisfaction of tourists. People visit places whose branding portrays them so that once they realise it is not as expected, they feel like they have been deceived. Past and current visitors that felt this way and their satisfaction levels after visiting are low will share their experience with people of their social cycle. Through word of mouth, potential future visitors might change their minds and avoid visiting such places. With lower chances of attracting future visitors, there are higher chances of negative effects on the local economy in the long run, especially to places whose economy is mostly dependent on the tourism industry. However, as destinations are intangible products, tourists' knowledge and information can potentially lead to greater certainty (Chi et al., 2020). Tourists' feeling of solidarity with residents and destinations is regarded as essential for effective tourism planning and destination marketing (Stylidis et al., 2020). The relationship between tourists and a destination and its residents can be explained through emotional solidarity. Understanding such a relationship offers substantial insights into tourists' destination image and future behavioural intentions (Woosnam et al., 2015; Stylidis et al., 2020). Behavioural intention refers to the intention to reuse and the intention to recommend the services to others (Siripipatthanakul & NyenVui,

2021). The term "behavioural intention" refers to the degree to which people are willing to try and the amount of effort they intend to put into a particular behaviour. Individuals' behavioural intention reflects their willingness and motivation to engage in the behaviour, confirming the existence of a relationship between their intention and actual behaviour (Limna et al., 2022). Therefore, the intention to introduce tourist attractions in this study is the degree of tourist intent to attract other people to the destinations in Thailand after the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.4. Research Hypotheses Development

2.4.1. The Relationship Between E-Government's Information and Attitude Towards Social Media Engagement

The roles of e-government and social media are significantly related to people's attitudes to engage in protective behaviour (Dawi et al., 2021). The results provide additional support for the role of social context and past behaviours in predicting the attitudes and future intentions in using digital communication technologies (Zagidullin et al., 2021). A study conducted in China reported that the use of social media by the Chinese government to provide the latest news in handling the COVID-19 crisis had positively affected public engagement (Chen et al., 2020). However, Mansoor (2021) showed quality information on social media interacts with perceived government response on COVID-19 and augments public trust in government. The citizens' easier access to the information provided by the government agencies via social media platforms is an authentic source of gaining public trust for a longer period (Song and Lee, 2016; Tangi et al., 2021). The government's timely and effective response to uncertain situations using e-government platforms results in a higher level of trust among the citizens (Warren et al., 2014). Rather (2021) indicated that social media is related to co-creation and revisit intention, as mediated via social media on customer brand engagement. In the context of COVID-19, identify the role of mediator customer brand engagement in effecting travel intentions (Bhati et al., 2020). Results show positive relationships for both interactivity cues and media richness content components on increasing consumer engagement outcomes. The findings add clarity to previous inconsistent findings in the marketing literature. Media richness also strongly influences all engagement behaviours, with visual imagery (photos and videos) attracting the most consumer responses (Moran et al., 2020). Social media can improve customer engagement, affecting customer behaviours, recommendations, and behavioural intentions. According to Pramudhita and Madiawati (2021), the

Indonesian Ministry of Tourism uses @Pesonaid_travel to promote Indonesian tourism and the Pesona Indonesia's brand used in @Pesonaid_travel determine the role of social media marketing activities to increase visit intention through brand equity. Further, Arshad and Khurram (2020) revealed that the information provided by the government agencies regarding important decisions through social media is considered an authentic source of information and further enhances the trust level of the audience while coupled with the response of the government on different matters.

H1: E-Government's information significantly influences attitude on social media engagement.

2.4.2. The Relationship Between Attitude Towards Social Media Engagement and Intention To Introduce Tourist Attractions

Marine-Roig and Huertas (2020) indicated that visitors did not fear for their safety despite the seriousness and immense international media coverage of both events. The opinion of tourists, shared through online reviews, can help companies improve the supply of goods and services. The videos from the perspective of videography generate insights that are of value to destination management organisations and tourist businesses (Vujić et al., 2021). Rather (2021) found that social media on customer brand engagement positively impacts co-creation and revisit intention. social media sees key effects in tourism, specifically regarding how tourists use information (Ebrahimi et al., 2020). Marketing communication techniques affect tourists' travel intention and behaviour (Huynh, 2020). Social media's effect on tourists' revisits intent and co-creation and customer brand engagement's effect on revisit intent/co-creation have been documented (Harrigan et al., 2018). In the social media-led destination brand context, customer brand engagement aids the improvement of affective bonds with consumers, increasing their brand revisit intent (Harrigan et al., 2018; Li et al., 2018). Thus, tourists' revisit intention can be strengthened by engaging them in brand-linked social media interactions (Li et al., 2019). The results indicate that every existing variable has a positive and significant effect on other variables. Dong and Lian (2022) showed a meaningful positive relationship between the participation of entertainers and the degree of public engagement through social media. The findings indicated that inviting entertainers to participate could improve the effects of publicity and ease the emotional tension and anxiety among the public during a crisis. Investigating media during the COVID-19 outbreak as the components of cognitive

destination image on future behavioural intention across the experience of visiting a destination showed the high predictive power of the model on post-COVID-19 travel behavioural intention. In contrast, the effect of solidarity on behavioural intention was identified much stronger for the prospect of tourists

with the experience of visiting a destination (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2019).

H2: Attitude toward social media engagement significantly influences the intention to introduce tourist attractions.

2.5. Conceptual Framework

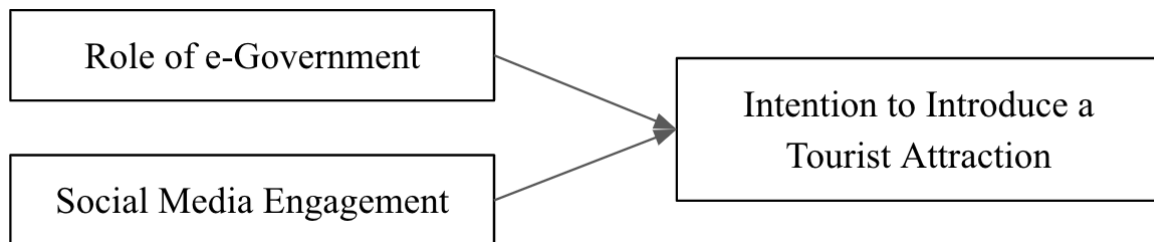


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Method

This study used closed-end questionnaires (Likert's Rating Scale) to collect data. The questionnaire items were developed by the researchers based on previous research. A reliability questionnaire was tested on 30 respondents for pre-testing. In the reliability of the measurements, the alpha coefficients of Cronbach are needed to overcome all constructs 0.70. The main variables in this study were all measured using a five-point Likert Scale, with the following classifications: strongly agree with a value of 5, agree with a value of 4, neutral with a value of 3, disagree with a value of 2, and strongly disagree with a value of 1. The demographics of the respondents were derived from the study conducted by Napawut et al. (2022) and Sitthipon et al. (2022). The questionnaire items in e-Government constructs were based on Mat Dawi et al. (2019). The questionnaire items in social media engagement constructs were based on Demir & Yıldız (2021). The questionnaire items in intention to introduce tourist attraction constructs were based on Rasoolimanesh et al. (2021).

3.2. Population and Sample

The population number of the study's target population is unknown. A typical survey has a 95% confidence level. Accordingly, a minimum collected data of 385 cases at $p=0.5$ must be collected with a sample error of 5% and a precision level of 95% (Limna et al., 2022, a; Siripipatthanakul et al., 2022). The researchers employed an online survey through convenience sampling. The total number of participants in the study was 416 ($n=416$).

3.3. Data Collection

Data were collected between February 1st, 2022, and March 9th, 2022, via the online survey. Convenience sampling was used to collect the data. Before distributing online questionnaires, the researchers explained the study's objective to the respondents and solicited their participation.

3.4. Data Analysis

The collected data were analysed using a software programme and the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Model: PLS-SEM. Descriptive statistics were used to examine the demographic characteristics of the respondents (frequency and percentage). According to Limna et al. (2022, b) and Siripipatthanakul et al. (2022, b), each variable's results and questionnaire items were analysed using mean analysis and standard deviation. Jöreskog's Rho reliability coefficient was used to assess the consistency and reliability of the data. Factor loadings were calculated for testing the validity of the instrument. Finally, the hypotheses were tested using PLS-SEM (inferential statistics). According to Ahmad et al. (2021), Jöreskog's Rho (reliability) was set at 0.8, Factor Loading was set at 0.6, SRMR was set at 0.087, AVE was set at 0.5, and Factor Loading was set at 0.6.

4. RESULTS

Table 1 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents (n=416).

Demographics		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	162	38.90%
	Female	254	61.10%
Age	18-25 years old	14	3.40%
	26-30 years old	141	33.90%
	31-35 years old	124	29.80%
	36-40 years old	87	20.90%
	41 years old or over	50	12.00%
Education	Associated degree	4	1.00%
	Bachelor's degree	222	53.40%
	Above Bachelor's degree	190	45.70%
Monthly Income	10,001- 30,000 THB	127	30.53%
	30,001- 50,000 THB	236	56.73%
	More than 50,000 THB	53	12.74%
Total		416	100%

The researchers coded and analysed the completed four hundred and sixteen (416) online questionnaires of Thai citizens in Thailand. The results revealed that most respondents were female (61.10%), aged between 26 and 30 (33.90%), had a bachelor's degree (53.40%) and earned a monthly income between 30,001 and 50,000 baht (56.73%). The demographic profile was represented as the study's samples.

4.1. PLS-SEM Results

Table 2 Item Loadings, Jöreskog's Rho and Average Variance Extracted (n=416).

Items	Factor Loadings	Mean	SD.
Role of e-Government (Jöreskog's Rho = 0.8685, AVE = 0.6274)			
ROE1. The government provided an appropriate daily update on preventive COVID-19 methods and the number of cases through any channels during the COVID-19 outbreak.	0.864	4.38	1.00
ROE2. The online information I received from the healthcare provider, immigration office, the government public relations department, etc, during the COVID-19 outbreak is appropriate.	0.910	4.15	0.98
ROE3. The government is committed to curbing the COVID-19 outbreak by promoting preventive protocols to people through social media.	0.737	3.89	1.06
ROE4. The policies and regulations that the government is imposing during the COVID-19 outbreak are appropriate for the people to follow.	0.627	3.65	1.10
Social Media Engagement (Jöreskog's Rho = 0.8546, AVE = 0.7464)			
SE1. I often click the "like" option on the posts of the travel destinations I follow on social media sites.	0.835	4.43	0.75
SE2: I follow travel destinations pages of my interest to get information (e.g., new destinations I never visited before).	0.892	4.48	0.68
Intention to Introduce a Tourist Attraction (Jöreskog's Rho = 0.8847, AVE = 0.6575)			
WD1. I would encourage my friends and relatives to travel destinations after the COVID-19 crisis in Thailand.	0.768	4.52	0.70

WD2. I say good things about a travel destination in Thailand on social media.	0.842	4.56	0.71
WD3. I would promote a travel destination in Thailand to help tourism recovery.	0.820	4.62	0.62
WD4. I would make all my efforts to promote a travel destination in Thailand.	0.812	4.58	0.65

Table 3 The Goodness of Model Fit (n=416).

The goodness of Model Fit	Value
Saturated Model	0.0859
Estimated Model	0.0859

Table 4 R-Squared (n=416).

Construct	Coefficient of Determination (R ²)	Adjusted R ²
Intention to Introduce a Tourist Attraction	0.3952	0.3923

Table 5 Effect Overview (n=416).

Effect	Beta	Indirect Effect	Total Effect	Cohen's f ²
ROE → WD	0.3556		0.3556	0.1952
SE → WD	0.4346		0.4346	0.2914

Table 6 Total Effects Inference (n=416).

Effect	Original Coefficient	Standard Bootstrap Results					Percentile Bootstrap Quantiles		
		Mean Value	Standard Error	T-Value	P-Value (2-Sided)	P-Value (1-Sided)	0.5%	2.5%	97.5%
ROE → WD	0.3556	0.3554	0.0421	8.4406	0.0000	0.0000	0.2475	0.2723	0.4631
SE → WD	0.4346	0.4372	0.0444	9.7875	0.0000	0.0000	0.3159	0.5220	0.5492

ROE = Role of e-Government, SE = Social Media Engagement, WD = Intention to Introduce a Tourist Attraction

The role of e-Government can predict the intention to introduce a tourist attraction at $\beta=0.3556$, $p<0.001$ (Two tails at 0.000 and one tail at 0.000). Social Media Engagement can predict the intention to introduce a tourist attraction at $\beta=0.4346$, $p<0.001$ (Two tails at 0.000 and one tail at 0.000). Overall, the relationship phenomenon predicting intention to introduce a tourist attraction can be explained by 39.5% ($R^2=0.395$).

4.2. Assumptions

Table 7 Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Hypotheses	Results	Actions
H1: Role of e-Government → Intention to Introduce a Tourist Attraction	$\beta=0.356$ at $p<0.001$	Accepted
H2: Social Media Engagement → Intention to Introduce a Tourist Attraction	$\beta=0.435$ at $p<0.001$	Accepted

Overall, the relationship phenomenon predicting intention to introduce a tourist attraction can be explained by 39.5% ($R^2=0.395$).

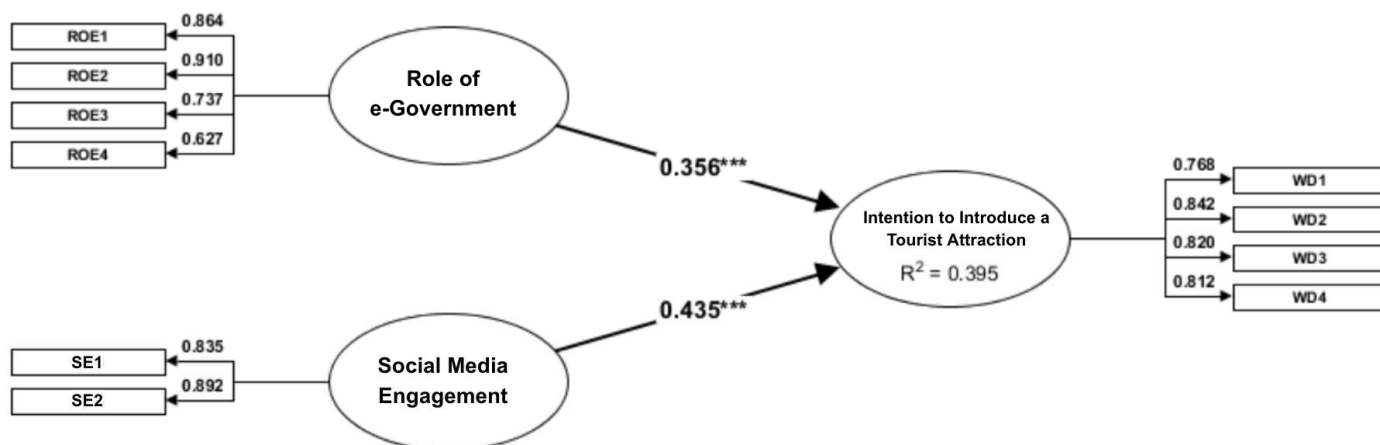


Figure 2 PLS-Structural Equation Model of This Study.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1. Discussion

The study's PLS-SEM model confirmed the proposed conceptual framework. The results confirmed a positive influence of e-government information and social media engagement on the intention to introduce tourist attractions among Thai tourists. The results supported the previous research of Moran et al. (2020) that social media can improve customer engagement, also related to customer behaviours, recommendations, and behavioural intentions. The results supported the previous research of Bhati et al. (2020), Madiawati (2021), and Song & Lee (2016) that e-Government's information significantly influences individuals' attitudes on social media engagement. Besides, the results supported the previous research of Rather (2021) that social media on customer brand engagement can positively impact co-creation and revisit intention. The results also supported the previous research of Harrigan et al. (2018) and Li et al. (2018) that there was a positive relationship between customer brand engagement and individuals' intention to use that brand. Also, the results supported the previous research of Dong & Lian (2022), Rasoolimanesh et al. (2019), and Vujić et al. (2021) that attitude toward social media engagement significantly influences the intention to introduce tourist attractions.

5.2. Conclusions

The results reveal that there is a positive influence of e-government information and social media engagement on the intention to introduce tourist attractions among Thai tourists. Moreover, social media engagement can explain the intention to introduce tourist attractions among Thai tourists better than the role of e-government information. E-government information about the government provided an appropriate daily update on preventive COVID-19 methods and the number of cases through any channels during the COVID-19 outbreak is important for Thai tourists in decisions to visit

destinations in Thailand. Social media engagement is essential to Thai tourists in following travel destinations pages of their interests to get information (e.g., new destinations that they have never visited before). The intention to introduce tourist attractions could be measured using the tourists will encourage their friends and relatives to travel destinations after the COVID-19 crisis in Thailand, say good things about a travel destination in Thailand on social media and they would promote a travel destination in Thailand to help tourism recovery. The results could be used to improve e-government social media communication in the issue of government remedial measures to be more comprehensive and appropriate. Also, future planning to deal with a new wave of epidemics or provide preparation measures for effective epidemic control for tourists to alleviate concerns and boost tourists' confidence in travelling to their destinations. Besides, the results could be applied to improve e-services, social engagement, and behavioural intention in any sector.

5.3. Research Implication

This study may assist government decision-makers to design appropriate communication strategies with Thai people who can get information and updates on COVID-19 through social media and intent to be tourists. Furthermore, this study added to the existing literature on the influence of e-government information and social media engagement on the intention to introduce tourist attractions. This study's findings may aid academics in broadening their research by incorporating more potential elements. The measurements could be used to guide future research on e-government information, social media engagement, and the intention to introduce tourist attractions in any country.

5.4. Limitations and Recommendations

The nature of this study is a self-administered online questionnaire. Qualitative research could provide more insight into future research, such as interviews, observations, and focus groups. Also, the

recommendation is to study in the business sector further.

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