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PROMISING THE DREAM: Changing Destination Image of London through the Effect of Website Place

Drawing on theories of place identity and social identity, this study aims to fill a gap in place identity studies regarding the effect of a place website on the destination image of customers/visitors/tourists. The research addresses three questions: (1) what are the main impacts of tourists' attitude on place identity and the place website, (2) what are the factors that influence destination image, and (3) what are the main impacts of a favorable destination image? The favorability of a destination image is reflected by the extent to which visitors positively regard that place website. Results reveal the importance of the destination image in enhancing the intention to revisit and recommend. Also, visitors' satisfaction impacts on their intention to revisit and recommend the place. Significant implications for place managers and researchers are highlighted.

Introduction

The destination image is widely acknowledged as being a powerful tool for the tourism industry to use to advantage in achieving competitive strength in the market. Destination image influences tourist behavior, implying that destinations with strong, positive images are much more likely to be taken into consideration and probably chosen in the decision process of a travel destination. Faced with an extensive choice of competing destinations, the traveler must eliminate some options owing to time and money constraints. Among the narrowed set, however, the traveler is likely to choose the destination with the most favorable image. Not only does the tourist become involved in the actions but they also shape the actions at the vacation destination. Perceptions of a place can be improved by designing new websites or optimizing the existing ones (Foroudi et al., 2016). Similarly, a website can influence the formation of corporate image (Abdullah et al., 2013; Foroudi et al., 2016, 2017; Melewar et al., 2017; Tran et al., 2015).

What are the main impacts of tourists' attitudes on place identity and place websites, what are the factors that influence destination image and what are the main impacts of a favorable destination image? A large body of studies, in domains including tourist behavior (Hunt, 1975; Pearce, 2005), place identity (Tuan, 1980), place websites, destination choice (Bastida and Huan, 2014) and image (Gartner, 1989; Padgett and Allen, 1997) has tried to understand when and why such associations are likely to occur. By contributing to the growing research on destination image, this study explores how these relationships can build deeper, more satisfied customers, visitors, and tourists, which can improve their intention to revisit and to recommend the place. Moreover, it draws on the theories of place identity (Rooney et al., 2010) and social identity (Brewer, 1991; Tajfel and Turner, 1986) to provide a comprehensive, coherent articulation of both the circumstances in which consumers are likely to form their potpourri of memories, conceptions, interpretations, ideas, and related feelings, and their sense of belonging (Mael and Ashforth, 1992) about a place and the consequences of such satisfaction.

In the following sections, we first provide a brief, general discussion about the influence of place identity and consumers' attitude towards place websites and the effects on destination image, which then influence satisfaction, intention to revisit and the intention to recommend

the destination. Next, the methodology used to evaluate the proposed model is outlined. We conclude with a discussion of the theoretical significance of destination image, implications, limitations of the study, and suggested avenues for future research.

Background of the research

The concept of image holds various notions, incorporating ideas, form or conception (Alhemoud and Amstrong, 1996). Kosslyn (1983) refers to an image as a representation of the mind that gives rise to the experience of 'seeing' in the absence of the appropriate stimulation from the eye. Enis (1967) defines an image as "the whole of all sensory perceptions and thought interrelationships associated with an entity by one individual" (p.51). The formation of an image was portrayed by Reynolds (1965) as the development of a mental construct built from a few impressions based on a flood of information. There is, however, no universally accepted meaning of the term 'image' (Lyman, 1984; Poiesz, 1989).

In the marketing literature, the significance of the image concept has been widely discussed (Brown, 1998; Foroudi et al., 2014; Stern et al., 2001) and signifies the associations, beliefs and attitudes about a company that are kept in the minds of consumers (Barich and Kotler, 1991). Corporate image is "the immediate mental picture an individual holds of the organisation" (Foroudi et al., 2014, p. 2271) and relates to the overall impression left in the minds of the consumers (Zimmer and Golden, 1988). The positive image of a company is constructed by means of effective communication (Bravo et al., 2009; Leuthesser and Kohli, 1997; Van Riel and Balmer, 1997) and management of its identity (Balmer and Wilson, 1998; Foroudi et al., 2014, 2016; Van Riel and Balmer, 1997). This understanding of corporate image implies that consumers can create and change their impression (corporate image) based on their perceptions about the website of the company (Bravo et al., 2009; De Chernatony and Christodoulides, 2004) and its identity (Balmer and Wilson, 1998; Foroudi et al., 2014, 2016; Van Riel and Balmer, 1997). In addition, a positive corporate image is known to provide a competitive advantage (Brown, 1998; Stern et al., 2001). A positive corporate image also influences attitude toward a company's products (Brown, 1998), and affects and shapes consumer behavior (Lai et al., 2009). Based on the argument above, the image can be shaped by the website and identity, and can impact on satisfaction, intention to re-visit and intention to recommend. By extension, this concept can also be applied in relation to the destination image.

In the tourism literature, in line with the understanding of image from the marketing literature, destination image can be defined as the sum of the beliefs, feelings, conceptions, knowledge, imaginations, emotional thoughts, ideas, and impressions held by people about a place or destination (Alhemoud and Armstrong, 1996; Baloglu and McCleary, 1999; Baud-Bovy, 1977; Baloglu and Brinberg, 1997). According to Metelka (1981), the image of a destination relates to the expectations about a place, prior to the actual experience. Alhemoud and Armstrong (1996) highlight that destination image has an important influence on the consumers' choice of place to visit. In particular, prior research demonstrates that destinations with strong, positive images can promote and impact upon consumers' choices of destination (Alhemoud and Armstrong, 1996; Goodrich, 1978; Woodside and Lysonski, 1989) and have cognitive and evaluative components (Alhemoud and Armstrong, 1996; Embacher and Buttle, 1989).

Notwithstanding the many studies that use the concept of place and identity, there are but a handful of studies that encapsulate the relationship between identity and place. This relationship is a complex phenomenon. The place identity concept refers to a sub-structure of the self-identity of an individual's "potpourri of memories, conceptions, interpretations, ideas, and related feelings about specific physical settings as well as types of settings" (Rooney et al., 2010, p. 47). Given that definition, place identity can be explained through interaction with places, where people describe themselves as belonging to a specific place. It is not determined only by physical place but also describes the individual's socialization with the physical place (Proshansky et al., 1983).

The second concept related to place and identity is place identification, which refers to the membership of a group of people defining themselves by the place itself, for example, "a person from London may refer to themselves as a Londoner" (Twigger-Ross and Uzzell, 1996, p. 205). Additionally, Twigger-Ross and Uzzell (1996) point out that the physical, social and cultural context has an impact on place identity. Place identification is also linked to the characteristics of individuals and the framework of experiences that individuals have with the place. Place identity is a condition rather than a process (Lalli, 1992); individuals often identify themselves with particular places that reflect their own identity (Brocato, 2006; Kyle et al., 2004; Proshansky et al., 1983).

The advance of the Internet has changed the patterns of preferences of consumers, which

creates significant challenges in tourism marketing (Govers et al., 2007; Lepp et al., 2011) and a need for a more holistic view of the image of a destination. For a destination or place to be successful, it needs to be positively positioned and differentiated from its competitors (Calantone et al., 1989; Govers et al., 2007), making place website and place identity key elements of the destination image. Therefore, there is a need for more research related to destination image as consumer preferences and patterns change. In particular, there is a lack of empirical research relating to place websites and place identity, and how they can affect destination image.

As Chung et al. (2015), and Rodriguez-Molina et al. (2015) state, there is a need for additional research about destination image, in particular, concerning the effect of a website on place and destination image, "especially considering the rate at which the internet is being embraced by destinations around the world" (Rodriguez-Molina et al., 2015, p. 304). A few recent studies have been conducted in relation to the websites of destinations. Examples include 1) Bastida and Huan (2014) investigate performance evaluation of tourism websites via website analysis; 2) Chung et al. (2015) evaluate the influence of tourism websites on tourists' behavior to determine destination selection using the case study of Korea; and 3) Rodriguez-Molina et al. (2015) examine the role of website design in the generation of tourist destination image with the moderating effect of involvement. In these examples, the authors find that websites are the major determinant of consumer attitude and behavior.

This study contributes to marketing theory by drawing on theories of place identity (Rooney et al., 2010) and social identity (Brewer, 1991; Tajfel and Turner, 1986), to fill a gap in place identity studies regarding the effect of place websites on the destination image of customers/visitors/tourists. There is limited research on the relationships between websites and image concepts (Abdullah et al., 2013; Argyriou et al., 2006; Beatty et al., 2001; Foroudi et al., 2017; Melewar et al., 2017; Pollach, 2005, 2011; Topalian, 2003). Social identity theory has been widely applied in corporate identity research investigating relationships among groups, within groups and the social self (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Bhattacharya et al., 1995; Karaosmanoglu et al., 2011). In brief, in-group favoritism improves individuals' self-esteem, which establishes a positively-valued social identity that members of the group seek to obtain (Tajfel and Turner, 1986).

Similarly, places that aim to gain meaningful relationships with visitors/tourists should fulfill

their needs concerning their social identity by communicating images that are relevant to consumers (Foroudi et al., 2017; Melewar et al., 2017) by using the place website. By "engaging in corporate visual identity activities, organisations communicate more favourable to internal and external stakeholders regarding important characteristics of the company's corporate identity" (Foroudi et al., 2014, p. 2276). Furthermore, Dixon and Durrheim (2000) argue in relation to place identity theory that a sense of belonging (place-belongingness) is essential for place identity. Saleh (1998) states that place identity and visual image are connected to social and cultural influences.

Place identity can be defined as a "potpourri of memories, conceptions, interpretations, ideas, and related feelings about specific physical settings as well as types of settings" (Rooney et al., 2010, p. 47). Thus, destinations can use the place website to create a positive image of the destination in the consumers' (visitors/tourists) minds. Place website presents images of the place to enhance the uniqueness of those images for external and internal audiences. Consequently, when consumers (tourists/visitors) have a positive attitude toward the place website they have a more favorable image about the destination.

Recent literature (Bastida and Huan, 2014; Chung et al., 2015; Rodriguez-Molina et al., 2015) calls for more efforts to measure destination image and for robust empirical research to assess the outcomes of destination image (Baloglu and McCleary, 1999; Govers et al., 2007). This current research responds to such calls by measuring destination image and examining place website and place identity as the key factors; as well as evaluating how destination image influences satisfaction, intention re-visit and intention to recommend. This paper demonstrates the significance of building a positive destination image based on a survey of 359 tourists in the context of London (UK). The study combines conceptual foundations and methodological approaches from tourism and marketing to contribute to destination image evaluation. The following section develops the conceptual framework, presenting a detailed description of the key benefits and outcomes of the destination image.

Conceptual framework

Antecedents of Destination Image

Based on the prior research outlined above, this study is founded upon place website and place identity as factors that contribute to generating a positive image of the destination. A place's website is a significant key component in destination image formation, as it can shape

the opinions of consumers, create positive impressions and influence the choice of destination (Al-Qeisi et al., 2014; Bastida and Huan, 2014; Foroudi et al., 2016, 2017; Melewar et al., 2017; Nguyen et al., 2016). Another major factor in destination image is building the identity of a place by portraying distinctive and unique features (Foroudi et al., 2016). In addition, place identity can have a positive impact on the place website (Figure 1).

Place Identity and Destination Image

Place identity refers to "an individual's strong emotional attachment to particular places or settings" (Proshansky et al., 1983, p. 61). As such, place identity has a symbolic importance between an individual and a tourism setting, where individuals have invested in the particular tourism setting psychologically over a period (Yuksel et al., 2010; Kyle et al., 2004; Tuan, 1980). Proshansky (1978) defines place identity as "those dimensions of self that define the individual's personal identity in relation to the physical environment by means of a complex pattern of conscious and unconscious ideals, beliefs, preferences, feelings, values, goals, and behavioural tendencies and skills relevant to this environment" (p. 155). Place identity is one of the components of personal identity and can be explained through interaction with places, where people describe themselves regarding belonging to a specific place (Hernandez et al., 2007). Place can be part of an individual's identity; social interaction and personal experiences can help to create a bond between an individual and a particular place (Yuksel et al., 2010; Rubinstein and Parmelee, 1992). Notwithstanding that attachment to a particular place often starts after one or more visits, it is also possible that individuals may have strong emotional attachments as a part of their identity to a particular place that they have never visited (Lee and Allen, 1999). This bond could be based on stories, memories or recommendations from friends and relatives, cultural bonds, or from communications media (Yuksel et al., 2010).

A place's identity plays a crucial role in the destination image formation process in the minds of the consumers. Similar to the manner in which the positive image of a company can be constructed by its corporate identity (Balmer and Wilson, 1998; Foroudi et al., 2014, 2017; Van Riel and Balmer, 1997), a place's identity can shape destination image. Place image is conceptualized as "an interactive system of thoughts, opinions, feelings, visualisations and intentions towards a destination" (Tasci et al., 2007; p. 200). In the context of an overall image, it can be formed through the interaction of the elements mentioned above. Place

identity, on the other hand, refers to "an individual's strong emotional attachment to particular places or settings" (Proshansky et al., 1983, p. 61).

The image of the destination portrayed by the local tourism industry should be rooted based on the identity of the destination (Go et al., 2004; Govers et al., 2007; Noordman, 2004; Onians, 1998; Van Rekom and Go, 2003; Van Riel, 1996). Therefore, a tourism strategy of building a positive destination image should be based on the identity and the authenticity of the place (Cohen, 1988; Cohen-Hattab and Kerber, 2004; Govers et al., 2007; MacCannell, 1973). For a place to be successful, it is important for it to be positively differentiated from its competition (Calantone et al., 1989; Govers et al., 2007), making place identity one of the key factors of the destination image. These arguments lead to:

Hypothesis 1: Place identity positively influences the destination image

Place Website and Destination Image

With increasing strategic importance of Internet since mid-1990's (Standing et al., 2014), a significant amount of research investigating the relationship between the Internet and consumer-related variables has become a focus of interest over the years (e.g. Huang et al., 2009; Law et al., 2010). Since Worldwide Internet usage is increasing rapidly, many consumers perceive the world through websites (Nguyen et al., 2016). In this vein, in order to provide a positive perception to a consumer, the websites have become an essential way of shaping the consumers' perception as well as lead them to have positive responses (Al-Qeisi et al., 2014; Bravo et al., 2012; Nguyen et al., 2016; Tran et al., 2015). The importance of websites has had a profound impact in different sectors to provide consumers with a positive image, where the impact of websites has extensively researched in different research streams. As such, according to the significant amount of research focusing primarily on the relationship of corporate image and corporate website (Abdullah et al., 2013; De Chernatony and Christodoulides, 2004; Foroudi et al. 2017; Tran et al., 2015) reveal that a favorable corporate website can positively affect a company's corporate image. Also, a well-designed website has a significant positive impact on improving the perception of the viewers of the company (Braddy et al., 2008).

Even though the Internet has facilitated many different industries and force them to be aware of the importance of web (Standing et al., 2014), it is likely to highlight that the tourism

industry can be considered as on of the first industry directly affected from the top on down, where websites became the new intermediaries between consumers and tourism destinations for providing information, enabling them to be aware of the destination, and influence their decision-making process, which is, leading them to have positive responses. To influence potential tourists' decision-making process to lead them to have positive responses, destination image can be considered one of the main aims of a tourism destination strategy, where destination image can affect the impression of the tourists' to the particular destination (Lawson and Baud-Bovy, 1977). To provide positive destination image to the potential tourists, a place website can be one of the integral tools for the tourism industry to assist tourists by providing clear information about the place (Rodriguez-Molina et al., 2015). As consumers can be overwhelmed by too much information about a destination, where the formation of image "is the development of a mental construct based upon a few impressions chosen from a flood of information" (Alhemoud and Armstrong, 1996, p. 77); a place website can be a centralized and organized source to help consumers choose the place to visit. As tourism services are intangible, images (presented on the place website) may become more important than reality (Gallarza et al., 2002; Govers et al., 2007). Thus "individuals can have an image of a destination even if they have neither visited it nor been exposed to commercial forms of information about it" (Alhemoud and Armstrong, 1996, p. 77). Similarly, images of a destination influence the overall impressions of the destination (destination image) (Lawson and Baud-Bovy, 1977). Perceptions of a place can be improved by designing new websites or optimizing existing ones (Foroudi et al., 2016). Therefore, a place website where images of the destination are presented can also influence the image of the destination.

In this research, a place website is considered to be a primary vehicle for the destination image formation process, and plays a major role in the way that a destination portrays itself to internal and external audiences (Bastida and Huan, 2014; Foroudi et al., 2016; Kim and Fesenmaier, 2008; Lee and Gretzel, 2012). Bastida and Huan (2014) stated "as the web becomes an increasingly popular information source, tourism destination websites can play a critical role in destination choice" (Bastida and Huan, 2014, p. 167). To highlight the importance of the place website on destination image, VisitBritain case may be the unique case to encapsulate how tourism destinations have initiated place websites, as an increasingly popular and centralized information source (Bastida and Huan, 2014), to have a positive effect on destination image. The official website created by the United Kingdom, VisitBritain has launched in 2014 as the official place website of United Kingdom, where potential

tourists, locals and even residents can have a better, centralized and organized information source regarding all aspects of the country (British Tourism Authority (BTA) Annual Report, 2015). According to the BTA Annual Report (2015), VisitBritain got 12.4 million page views within one year, which leads to having a 2.5% increase in tourism volumes in 2015, and additional £510 million of incremental visitor spend. Through VisitBritain, not only tourism industry has been captured the substantial expansion, but it also affects various industries in different aspects by having an effective information source with a clear country image. Even though the impact of place website has become to appreciate by tourism managers, governments and stakeholders, the little attention has been given to the studies regarding how place website influences destination image, and which in turn lead them to actual visit (Pallud and Straub, 2014). The scrutiny of the pertinent literature reveals that the existing literature primarily focuses on the question of 'how a place website should be' (e.g. Kaplanidou and Vogt, 2006; Romanazzi et al., 2011), however, there still a need for understanding whether place website lead tourists to have positive destination image, satisfaction, in turn, lead them to revisit and recommend that particular destination. These arguments lead to the second research hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: A place website positively influences the destination image

Place Identity and Place Websites

For the tourism industry, it is important to convey and communicate the identity of a place using the place website. In a similar manner to how companies use their websites to promote, portray and communicate corporate identity (Abdullah et al., 2013; Bravo et al., 2012), place identity can influence place websites. According to Perez and Del Bosque (2014), identity can be conveyed through visual manifestation. Furthermore, Markwick and Fill (1997) point out that corporate identity is portrayed to stakeholders by using a number of cues, which can be arranged so that intentionally planned messages are presented to certain target audiences to reach particular objectives, and characterize how the organization would like to be perceived. Thus, similarly, a place website is influenced by the identity of a place. This link between identity and website is potentially useful for marketers as it can represent a dimension of difference that is impossible for competitors to duplicate. These arguments lead to:

Hypothesis 3: Place identity positively influences a place website.

Consequences of Destination Image

Tourism is one of the major driving forces for economic growth not only for a specific region but also for the entire country (Oh, 2000; Yoon and Uysal, 2005). Tourism can help to maximize government revenues by minimizing unemployment and increasing rates of tourism income (Chen and Tsai, 2007). Therefore, understanding what influences tourists to revisit a destination and/or what makes tourists 'satisfied' is of concern for the success of tourism development and its positive effect on the economic growth of a country (Eusebio and Vieria, 2011). What the driving forces are for a tourist to have a positive behavioral intention toward a specific destination has been the subject of research into destination image since the early 1970s (Hossany et al., 2006; Hunt, 1971; 1975; Gunn, 1972; and Mayo, 1973). Destination image is defined as a concept comprising the sum of the beliefs, knowledge, feelings, and perceptions that an individual holds for a particular tourism destination (Beerli and Martin, 2004; Chen and Tsai, 2007; Crompton, 1979; Fakeye and Crompton, 1991).

Prior research emphasizes that destination image plays an important role in tourist behaviors by influencing: 1) the pre-visit decision-making process (Chen and Tsai, 2007; Fakeye and Crompton, 1991; Gartner, 1989; Mathieson and Wall, 1982); 2) on-site experience (Chen and Tsai, 2007; Chi and Qu, 2008; Wang and Hsu, 2010); 3) evaluation of a destination (such as satisfaction) (Chen and Tsai, 2007); and 4) future behavioral intentions (Ashworth and Goodall, 1988; Bigne et al., 2001; Chen and Gursoy, 2001; Chon, 1990; Court and Lupton, 1997). Understanding destination image and its influence on tourists' decision-making processes will help tourism managers and governments to create favorable destination images and increase the positive behavioral intentions of tourists (Chi and Qu, 2008; Lee et al., 2004; Wang and Hsu, 2010).

Destination Image and Satisfaction

Prior research (Kim, 2008; Kozak, 2001; Lee et al., 2004; Yoon and Uysal, 2005) demonstrates the importance of tourist satisfaction. Notwithstanding the importance of tourist satisfaction in tourism marketing and research and its impact on the economy (Petrick, 2004), the scrutiny of relevant literature reveals that tourist satisfaction is yet to be thoroughly examined, and the definition and antecedents of tourist satisfaction remain elusive (Baker and

Crompton, 2000; Bosque and Martin, 2008; Eusebio and Vieria, 2011; Kozak, 2001; Oppermann, 2000; Prayag, 2009).

According to Hunt (1983), "satisfaction is not the pleasurableness of the experience, it is the evaluation rendered that the experience was at least as good as it was supposed to be" (p. 459). Destination image can be a powerful force for increasing tourists' satisfaction (Bolton and Drew, 1991; Chi and Qu, 2008; Kandampully and Suharatanto, 2000; Lee et al., 2005; Loureiro and Gonzalez, 2008; O'Leary and Deegan, 2005). A positive image of a destination will lead to tourists having high levels of satisfaction. In particular, Lee et al.'s (2005) research on Korea's destination image formed by the 2002 World Cup found that destination image is a direct antecedent of tourist satisfaction. Therefore:

Hypothesis 4: Destination image positively influences satisfaction.

Destination Image and Intention to Revisit

Destinations are facing increasing competition that has "tremendous ramifications for the tourism industry and [is] therefore of considerable interest to practitioners and policy makers" (Ritchie and Crouch, 2000, p. 6). Thus, a better understanding of tourists' future behavioral intentions and the antecedents is becoming an area of growing interest among scholars (Chi and Qu, 2008; Lee et al., 2004). Customer retention plays a central role in the marketing discipline since retaining existing customers is more cost-effective than attracting new ones (Rosenberg and Czepiel, 1984). Similarly, in the tourism industry the concept of repeat visitors is considered both valuable and to be desired by tourism managers, governments and destination managers (Lau and McKercher, 2004) as attracting first-time visitors requires higher marketing costs compared to retaining repeat visitors (Shoemaker and Lewis, 1999).

A positive image towards a particular destination could lead tourists to have a positive evaluation, and, in turn, increase tourists' intention to revisit the same destination (Chi and Qu, 2008; Choi et al., 2011; Ramkissoon et al., 2011; Wang and Hsu, 2010). Kozak (2001) defined revisiting as tourists being willing to travel to other touring spots in a certain destination or in the same country. Taking this approach, it is believed that when tourists have a positive image of a particular destination, they are more likely to revisit the same destination. In particular, Court and Lupton (1997) found that destination image can

positively affect tourists' intention to visit the same destination in the future. Based on the discussion above, it is hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 5: Destination image positively influences the intention to revisit

Destination Image and Intention to Recommend

Prior research demonstrates that intention to recommend is one of the most important consequential characteristics of destination image and is considered as being the first sign of loyalty (Qu et al., 2011) and the most important information source influencing other potential tourists' choices of destination for their future visits (Kozak and Rimmington, 2000; Oppermann, 2000; Reisinger and Turner, 2002). Intention to recommend, as a trustworthy information source for potential tourists (Yoon and Uysal, 2005), is acknowledged as being an important indicator of tourists' loyalty to the particular destination. Research from the manager's perspective finds that an intention to recommend is helpful to destination managers in reducing visitors' perceived risk (Murray, 1991; Prayag and Ryan, 2012).

Previous studies indicate that as one of the most important components of tourists' behavioral intentions, the intention to recommend is influenced by destination image (Alcaniz et al., 2005; Bigne et al., 2001; Qu et al., 2011). The intention to recommend "represents whether or not the respondent actually recommended the firm or brand to another person" (Keiningham et al., 2007, p. 365). In light of the literature, it is believed that when tourists have a positive image toward to a particular destination, they are more likely to recommend the destination to others. Potential tourists rely heavily on the recommendations of previous tourists that have visited the destination already (Stylidis et al., 2017; Williams and Soutar, 2009; Zhang et al., 2014). Therefore, it is hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 6: Destination image positively influences the intention to recommend

Satisfaction and Intention to Revisit

The concept of satisfaction in tourism research can be traced back to the 'Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission Report' written in 1962 (Manning, 1986; Kim, 2008). Satisfaction refers to "the consumer's response to the evaluation of the perceived discrepancy between prior expectations and the actual performance of the product as perceived after its consumption" (Tse and Wilton, 1988, p. 204). In the same vein, satisfaction toward a tourist destination can be defined as the responses of tourists to the evaluation of expectations from a

particular destination and the actual pleasure and performance perceived from the destination. From this approach, it can be stated that the more satisfied tourists are more likely to have positive behavioral intentions, such as intention to revisit and recommend the destination to others (Baker and Crompton, 2000; Bigne et al., 2001; Castro et al., 2007; Chen and Tsai, 2007; Crompton and Love, 1995; Lee et al., 2004; Parasuraman et al., 1985; Yoon and Uysal, 2005).

In particular, Kozak (2001) finds that satisfied tourists are more likely to return to the same destination, whereas dissatisfied tourists are more likely to choose an alternative destination for their future visits. Moreover, Kozak and Rimmington (2000) report that tourist satisfaction is the major determinant of intention to revisit the same destination. Therefore, there is a need for additional research related to satisfaction and future behavioral intentions. In particular, "repeat visitation, particularly the multiple repeat visitation pattern, has largely escaped attention in the tourism literature" (Opperman, 1998, p. 132). Hence, following the argument above:

Hypothesis 7: Satisfaction positively influences the intention to revisit

Intention to Revisit, Satisfaction, and Intention to Recommend

As already explained in the previous section, tourists' satisfaction impacts tourists' behavioral intentions (Kozak and Rimmington, 2000; Kozak, 2001; Wang and Hsu, 2010; Yoon and Uysal, 2005). Tourists' satisfaction is constructed by means of explaining future behavioral intentions, such as the intention to revisit the same destination (Oh, 1999). Although tourists' satisfaction and intention to revisit are generally constructed together, the intention to revisit is not the only consequential behavioral intention as a determinant of satisfied tourists (Um et al., 2006). The intention to recommend is an important indicator of the intention to revisit by satisfied tourists (Baker and Crompton, 2000; Bigne et al., 2001; Grappi and Montanari, 2011).

In the tourism literature, it has been widely emphasized that satisfied tourists are more likely to recommend the destination to others (Kozak, 2001; Philips et al., 2013), whereas dissatisfied tourists are more likely to engage in negative word of mouth and complaining behavior to others (Bigne et al., 2001; Chen and Chen, 2010; Prayag et al., 2015). The discussion above leads to the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 8: Intention to re-visit positively influences the intention to recommend

Hypothesis 9: Satisfaction positively influences the intention to recommend

"Insert Figure 1 about here"

In the following section, the methods for testing the hypotheses are outlined.

MATERIALS AND METHODOLOGY

Empirical Setting

The research hypotheses were examined through the perceptions of visitors, tourists, and consumers in London, UK. In recent decades, destination image has been acknowledged as being a significant component of tourism and destination marketing. In the context of relentless competition between country tourism industries, having a favorable destination website carries a strategic power, which strengthens a tourism industry and influences destination image. Perceived as being at the forefront of change in the world, the UK has attracted the world's attention as a tourist destination, accounting for 2.9% of global arrivals in 2015. Based on UNWTO international tourist arrivals, UK ranked eighth and was in sixth place in the international tourism earnings league (down from fifth in 2014) behind the USA, China, Spain, France, and Thailand.

Data Collection

A questionnaire survey was conducted to attain data for additional scale purification and hypotheses examination. The survey consisted of questions referring to understanding how place identity and consumers' attitude toward place website affect the destination image, which then influences satisfaction, the intention to revisit and the intention to recommend the destination. A convenience sampling technique was applied to gather respondents consisting of UK visitors/tourists/consumers (Bryman and Bell, 2007; McDaniel and Gates, 2006).

Three appropriately skilled field research assistants were recruited. From 521 questionnaires distributed at central London tourist attractions, 359 usable completed questionnaires were processed and analyzed. Data were collected employing the face-to-face method, which is the most used sampling method in large-scale surveys (Churchill, 1999) and which guarantees that the targeted respondents complete the questionnaires. In addition, non-probability

'snowballing' was employed as a distribution method by inviting original informants to recommend others who could offer further insights (Kirby and Kent, 2010).

Following the recommendations of Foroudi et al. (2014), prior to the main survey, a qualitative study was conducted to gain insights from interviews with experts and focus groups with consumers. During the qualitative stage, five interviews were conducted with place brand managers and three focus groups (consisting of 21 participants in total) with tourists. The majority of participants were female (70.8%) between the ages of 30 and 39 (29.2%), and have visited the website more than twice (36%) and twice (34%). A high percentage of respondents were students (34.3%), and 14.2% were professionals, such as lawyers, dentists or architects. Thirty-two percent of the respondents classified themselves as white ethnic group, including English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British, Irish, and other white background, and 15.9% were Arab. The demographic profiles of the participants are reported in Table 1. According to Van Heerden and Puth (1995), "students as a fairly heterogeneous group…are future managers and decision makers" (p.13). The majority of the respondents had a master's degree or above (58.2%).

"Insert Table 1 about here"

Measurement

The item measurement for the research constructs of interest was based on recognized scales from earlier studies (Foroudi et al., 2014) that had been established to be psychometrically sound (Churchill, 1979; Hair et al., 2006) (Table 3). Respondents were asked to indicate on seven-point Likert-type scales ranging from strongly disagree (1), to strongly agree (7). Place identity (PI) was measured using five items (personal values, attachment, sense of belonging, preferences, and connection to the place) (Lee et al., 2012; Yuksel et al., 2010) and place website (PW) by six items (visual appeal, convincing, navigation, security, credibility, information) (Cyr, 2008; Cyr and Head, 2013; Kim and Fesenmaier, 2008; Tarafdar and Zhang, 2005, 2008); one item (convincing) was added based on the qualitative findings. The destination image (IMG) scale contained six items (accessibility, variety and quality of accommodation, cultural diversity, cultural and historical attractions, exoticness of the place, and general level of service) (adapted from Veasna et al., 2013). Satisfaction (SAT) was measured based on Wu's (2015) recommendation with five items (tourism resources, local people, travel consultation service, overall environment, and overall atmosphere). Intention to

re-visit (INV) was also obtained from existing scales (Assaker and Hallak, 2013; Lin, 2014; Matilla, 2001; Maxham and Netemeyer, 2002) with three items (consider as first choice, intention to visit on my next trip, and intention to visit in my distant future). Additionally, intention to recommend (INR) was measured via three items – recommend to someone, encourage friends and relatives, and say positive things (Lin, 2014; Lee et al., 2012; Byon and Zjhang, 2010; Matilla, 2001; Wong and Sohal, 2002).

The original measures were subjected to a series of factor and reliability investigations. The descriptive data for the constructs of interest are illustrated in Table 2. The composite reliability, also named as construct level reliability, ensures that items allocated to the same constructs reveal a higher association with other items. The composite reliabilities of the scales are well above the commonly accepted requirements for psychometric reliability tests (.89 through .968, i.e. all >.70) (Hair et al., 2006; Nunnally, 1978).

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

To examine the interrelationships between a number of research variables and to explain such variables in terms of their common underlying factors, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) is used (Hair et al., 2006). Originally, 28 measures of the six proposed constructs were subjected to exploratory factor analysis. The EFA was used to illuminate the factor structure of measures, inspect internal reliability and determine underlying structures in the research variables (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007). The rotated component matrix (Table 4) reports item loadings ranging from .812 through .969, which satisfies the minimum criteria for factor loadings and fit within the theoretical factor structures (Hair et al., 2006). In addition, the results indicate that the Cronbach's alpha for each factor is internally consistent (Nunnally, 1978).

"Insert Table 2 about here"

This research employed a positivist paradigm (i.e. a quantitative method) to examine the causal relationships between the proposed hypotheses and scale confirmation (De Vellis, 2003). To test the hypotheses and model, an IBM SPSS AMOS 21 confirmatory factor analysis (CFI) and structural equation model (SEM) was used. Standard fit indices indicate satisfactory model fit: RMSEA = .070, CFI = .947, GFI = .862, AGFI = .833, NFI = .920, TLI = .941, IFI = .947 and RFI = .910 (Hair et al., 2006; Garver and Mentzer, 1999; and

Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007). The findings offer support for H1 (place identity -> destination image) and H2 (place website -> destination image) ($\gamma=.19$, t=4.257; $\gamma=.349$, t=6.278, respectively).

However, H3 (place identity -> place website) and H4 (destination image -> satisfaction) are not supported ($\gamma=.13$, t=1.85, *p* .064; $\gamma=.011$, t=.189, *p* .85 respectively). However, there is a significant relationship between destination image and consumers' intention' to re-visit the place (H5) ($\gamma=.313$, t=4.599) and their intention to recommend (H6) ($\gamma=.263$, t=4.684); therefore, both hypotheses are supported.

With regard to hypothesis H7, there is a significant relationship between the satisfaction of customers/visitors/tourists and their intention to re-visit the place ($\gamma=.195$, t=3.09). The relationship between the perceptions of customers/visitors/tourists toward their intention to re-visit the place and their intention to recommend is not statistically significant ($\gamma=.062$, t=1.435, *p* .151). Therefore, H8 is rejected. As a result, it can be a challenge for companies to increase their influence on consumers who revisit to recommend to friends and families (Figure 2). The results imply that satisfaction has a significant influence on intention to recommend, therefore, H9 is supported. The findings demonstrate that the model and hypothesized relationships between the constructs of interest are broadly satisfactory; six out of the nine hypotheses are supported.

"Insert Table 3 about here"
"Insert Table 4 about here"
"Insert Figure 2 about here"

Discussion and Implications

With ever-evolving micro- (customers, competitors, suppliers, etc.) and macro- (economy, technology, ecology, demographics, etc.) environmental factors, the tourism industry has to overcome numerous, complex challenges where consumers are ever more demanding and destinations are in more intense competition (Kastenholz et al., 2012; Ritchie and Crouch, 2000). Therefore, within the shifting dynamics, the question of what are the driving factors to influence tourists to visit a destination is gaining importance for the tourism industry.

Creating and retaining an attractive image in consumers' perception is of vital concern for sustaining any business, not least in the tourism industry. Such considerations raise the question: 'what are the antecedents of a destination image and what are the consequences of a positive destination image?' Academics and managers need to find answers in order to implement the most effective strategies within the ever-changing tourism environment. In light of the above discussion, the main purpose of this study was to investigate an integrated model considering the influence of place identity and consumers' attitudes toward place websites, which affect the destination image, and, in turn, influence satisfaction, intention to revisit and intention to recommend the destination.

The findings of this study indicate that place identity (H1) and place website (H2) are the key factors that contribute to building a positive destination image. These results are consistent with prior research in marketing and tourism literature, which indicates that websites can shape the opinions of the consumers and positively influence image (Al-Qeisi et al., 2014; Bastida and Huan, 2014; Nguyen et al., 2016). Place identity can also positively impact image (Foroudi et al., 2017; Govers et al., 2007). The qualitative part of this current study adds color to these findings. For example, a place brand manager's comment emphasizes the significance of website and identity of a place on destination image:

> "*As part of our day-to-day job, we monitor how tourists' make their opinions about the destination. I noticed that the most crucial factors for them are: 'what the place is really about', 'what meaning it holds'; in a way, I can describe it as 'identity' of the location; and how this identity is communicated in an organized manner, where they prefer to find 'credible' information in one place, which is the main website of the destination*" (JB).

However, surprisingly, place identity does not influence the perception of the place website (H3 not supported). This is unexpected as websites, as part of the communication of places and companies, contribute to building the identity of a place. This unexpected result might be connected to the setting of the research. For tourists, the website of London perhaps did not accurately represent the identity of London, and the website may consequently be only weakly associated with the place identity. Accordingly, place brand managers and the tourism industry should pay attention to the identity of the place, as an anchor of the destination image (Go et al., 2004; Governs et al., 2007; Van Rekom and Go 2003; Van Riel 1996), and place website, as a key channel of communication of what the place represents (Foroudi et al., 2016; Kim and Fesenmaier, 2008). Therefore, the identity and website of a place can

assist place brand managers in shaping tourists' views about the destination, but the website of the place needs to be carefully built and monitored to match and communicate the identity of the place.

In another unexpected result, satisfaction is not supported as an outcome of positive destination image (H4 not supported). This is a surprising result, particularly in light of previous studies (Bolton and Drew, 1991; Chi and Qu, 2008; Lee et al., 2005) that report that destination image is the most powerful antecedent of increased tourist satisfaction. Kozak and Rimmington (2000) suggest that different perceptions toward different places can impact on visitors' satisfaction. Satisfaction can be viewed as a judgment of a place's or product's ability to offer the customer a pleasurable level of consumption-related fulfillment, including levels of under- or over-fulfilment (Gisse and Cote, 2000).

The results demonstrate that the consequences of destination image are an intention to re-visit (H5) and intention to recommend (H6). Satisfaction is found to influence the intention to re-visit (H7). The results support prior findings that positive destination image can result in tourists' intention to revisit the same destination (Chi and Qu, 2008; Castro et al., 2007; Choi et al., 2011; Ramkissoon et al., 2011; Wang and Hsu, 2010), image of the destination can impact on the intention to recommend (Alcaniz et al., 2005; Bigne et al., 2001; Qu et al., 2011), and satisfied tourists are more likely to return to the same destination (Kozak, 2001). A quote from the qualitative study adds color to these findings:

> *"when I visit the place, I pay attention to how easy the transportation to and inside the location is, then I can plan my journey effectively. When I arrive at the place, it is important that my accommodation and level of services there meets my expectations. Afterwards, I can enjoy the sightseeing of the most key and cultural places. If I like and am satisfied with all of the named features, I will definitely come back to the place with my family and recommend it to my friends" (TF).*

The destination image is a major concept that determines future behavioral intentions and thus plays a key role in the success of destination developments and helps to maintain the competitive advantage of a destination. Surprisingly, the intention to re-visit does not impact on the intention to recommend (H8 not supported). However, intention to re-visit and intention to recommend, as outcomes of destination image, support the findings in prior research (Chi and Qu, 2008; Choi et al., 2011; Ramkissoon et al., 2011; Wang and Hsu, 2010). In addition, satisfaction positively influences the intention to recommend (H9).

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Theoretical Implications

The main theoretical contribution concerns confirmation of the relationship between place website and destination image. This relationship has previously been discussed (Bastida and Huan, 2014; Foroudi et al., 2016, 2017; Govers et al., 2007), but rarely empirically investigated (e.g. Rodriguez-Molina et al., 2015). The findings propose a new line of research by exploring the relationship between place identity, place website, and destination image. Having identified the gap, this study proposes a conceptual framework to understand the impact of place identity and place website on destination image. Such a framework has not been tested before in either marketing or in tourism literature. Website and identity are of interest in both research domains, but there is a lack of empirical research. The present study combines conceptual foundations and methodological approaches from tourism and marketing to contribute to the social identity and place identity theories by constructing the study framework and model.

As discussed in the literature part, even though prior research (e.g. Abdullah et al., 2013; Foroudi et al., 2016, 2017; Tran et al., 2015) suggests that websites can affect the image, but there is a lack of empirical research. Looking for the marketing domain, there are many studies concerning the relationship between the impact of the website on a brand image (Muller and Chandon, 2004; Muller, 2008), online store image (Aghekyan-Simonian et al., 2012), and corporate image (Foroudi et al., 2016). Even though the importance of website has gained a considerable attention from scholars within the marketing discipline, as it became one of the influential information sources (Muller and Chandon, 2004), from the tourism perspective, websites became the major force within the industry by going beyond being a reliable information source (Standing et al., 2014).

Within the scope of the tourism industry, websites became the new intermediaries in every step for tourists, from the hotel bookings, aeroplane tickets, and customer services to billing (Standing et al., 2014). Similarly, to have a competitive edge, place websites has become more and more important to have the competitive edge within the relentless tourism market by governments, tourism authorities and tourism managers (OECD, 2014; Sombattheera et al., 2011). According to Standing et al. (2014), "Strategic competitive positioning of a

destination requires a location to develop a distinctive and strong image so that it is differentiated from the competition" (p. 105). Even though the importance of the website and building a favourable destination image has been underlined, according to Miller and Henthorne's (2007) empirical study investigated the web presence of destinations in the Caribbean reveals that destinations have failed to establish a strong image to have a competitive position. Therefore, it is likely to say that in tourism literature, there is a need for additional research about destination image, in particular, concerning the effect of a website on the place and destination image (Chung et al., 2015; Rodriguez-Molina et al., 2015). This current study finds that both place identity and place website influence destination image positively. Therefore, the findings contribute to the destination image formation literature (e.g. Alhemoud and Armstrong, 1996; Rodriguez-Molina et al., 2015; Govers et al., 2007) by empirically evaluating the main benefits and outcomes of the destination image.

One of the interesting theoretical contributions of this study can be found in the relationship between destination image and satisfaction. This study hypothesized that destination image positively influences satisfaction. However, the empirical findings indicate that destination image does not have a significant effect on satisfaction; H4 (destination image → satisfaction) is not supported. This null finding implies that positive destination image does not guarantee the satisfaction of tourists/visitors. Accessible infrastructure, quality of accommodation or cultural attractions does not *per se* guarantee the satisfaction of visitors/tourists.

This study also contributes to marketing theory by drawing on the theories of place identity (Rooney et al., 2010) and social identity (Brewer, 1991; Tajfel and Turner, 1986), to fill a gap in place identity studies regarding the effect of place websites on the destination image of customers/visitors/tourists. The findings provide a comprehensive explanation of the circumstances where consumers can relate to their memories, interpretations, ideas, as well as connect to their feelings and sense of belonging (Mael and Ashforth, 1992) about the place and the consequences of satisfaction.

Practical Implications
The findings offer suggestions on how to create and manage a place website and place identity to build a positive destination image that can result in the intention to revisit and recommend the place. With the widely increasing usage of the world wide web

communication tools (Segota, 2015), and the consequent effect on destination image, it might be a call to managers to rethink the tools in creating an enhanced destination image and the perception of tourist/residents about the particular place. The place website is found to influence destination image positively; therefore, it is expected that managers and decision makers should ensure that the place website is actively updated and managed. The website of the place should be visually appealing, easy to use and navigate, updated with clear information, secure, credible, and convincing.

Another important aspect of building a positive destination image is the identity of the place. In this sense, as Rubinstein and Parmelee (1992) highlight, making a place into a part of an individual's identity, social interaction and personal experiences can increase the bond that attaches an individual to a place (Yuksel et al., 2010). Even though the attachment to a particular place might possibly start after one or more visit to the particular place, Lee and Allen (1999) notes that it is possible that an individual may have a strong emotional attachment as a part of her/his identity to a particular place that he/she has never visited. Thus, the relationship between place identity and an individual's identity can contribute to what the place symbolizes to a tourist/visitor. This bond between place and individual identities could be based on stories, memories or recommendations from friends and relatives, cultural bonds or the media (Yuksel et al., 2010). Therefore, to create a positive destination image, collaborating with locals and creating narratives about the particular destination, and use locals' recommendations and bloggers/travelers' recommendations from different countries would be of benefit in both contributing to destination image and promoting tourism.

The destination image is revealed as the main antecedent of future behavioral intentions, such as the intention to revisit and the intention to recommend. From the managerial point of view, it is essential to create a holistic destination image and promote it comprehensively via marketing activities. It is crucial to reinforce the positive image after a destination visit takes place. Destination image will be the key factor to influence tourists' future visits as well as their positive recommendations to others. Although it is not possible to control all of the elements forming the image of a particular destination, destination marketers should construct an appealing image by improving the tourism infrastructures and the quality of the services and products that a destination offers, and promoting different attractions to maintain the competitive edge of a destination.

The decision makers of a place should make sure that transportation is easily accessed, there are enough interesting places and cultural locations to visit, and service levels are up to industry best standards. The above factors can assist in increasing the numbers of tourists who are likely to want to visit the place again, possibly with families, and recommend it to their friends. Once the image is formed, it can be manipulated by destination marketers by adding more diversified features to enhance the destination image, such as shopping festivals, cultural attractions, tourism centers, etc., as all of these features can increase the rate of potential revisits and positive recommendations.

Limitations and suggestions for future study

As with all research, the current study has a number of limitations. To the authors' knowledge, this study is the first to investigate an integrated model considering the influence of place identity and consumers' attitude toward a place website and the effects on destination image, which, in turn, influences satisfaction, intention to revisit and intention to recommend the destination.

The first limitation of this research concerns the context of the study. The research context concerns London (UK), but the results might be different when applied to other places. To overcome this limitation, future studies can evaluate the conceptual model in different contexts. Second, this research uses a cross-sectional approach, collecting the data at one point in time; therefore, to increase the generalizability of the results, a longitudinal research (Kumar et al., 2014) can be adopted in further studies to confirm the directions of causality. Third, future research is recommended into other factors that may influence destination image. In the same vein, destination image was established as an antecedent of future behavioral intentions (intention to revisit and intention to recommend). Future research should consider other antecedents that may influence future behavioral intentions, such as the psychological characteristics of tourists, emotional experience of a destination and tourists' motivations.

Finally, since image is based on individual evaluations, it may be that different cultural and social backgrounds might be associated with different image perceptions. Therefore, future studies could be extended to include socio-cultural variables. In conclusion, this study models important tourism destination variables, such as satisfaction, intention to revisit and to

recommend. The authors encourage researchers to follow up a number of potentially-fruitful areas for future research.

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Table 1: Demographic profile (N=359)

		Frequency	Percent			Frequency	Percent
Visit				**Ethnic Group**			
	Once	105	29.2	**White**			
	Twice	125	34.8		English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	5	1.4
	More than two times	129	35.9		Irish	32	8.9
Gender					Any other White background	78	21.7
	Female	254	70.8	**Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups**			
	Male	105	29.2		Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups	19	5.3
Age					White and Black African	8	2.2
	19 years old or less	28	7.8		White and Asian	24	6.7
	20 to 29 years	73	20.3		Any other Mixed/Multiple ethnic background	17	4.7
	30 to 39 years	105	29.2	**Asian/Asian British**			
	40 to 49 years	69	19.2		Indian	21	5.8
	50 to 59 years	42	11.7		Pakistani	0	0
	60 years old or more	42	11.7		Bangladeshi	0	0
Employment					Chinese	12	3.3
	Business person	6	1.7		Any other Asian background	24	6.7
	Lawyer, dentist or architect, etc.	51	14.2	**Black/African/Caribbean/Black British**			
	Office/clerical staffs	34	9.5		African	9	2.5
	Worker	21	5.8		Caribbean	13	3.6
	Civil servant	21	5.8		Any other Black/African/Caribbean background	14	3.9
	Craftsman	28	7.8	**Other ethnic group**			
	Student	123	34.3		Arab	57	15.9
	Homemaker	33	9.2		Any other ethnic group	26	7.2
	Retired	35	9.7				
	Unemployed	7	1.9				
Degree							
	High school	49	13.6				
	Undergraduate	101	28.1				
	Postgraduate and above	209	58.2				

Table 2: Study constructs, Cronbach Alpha, scale items, mean, standard variation, and correlation matrix

		CFA Loading	Mean	Standard Dev.	Cronbach's alpha	AVE	Cons. Reliability	Correlation					
								PI	PW	IMG	SAT	INV	INR
Place identity (PI)					.921	.784	.780	1					
Place identity can be defined as an individual's thoughts, values, perceptions and emotional attachment to a certain place or setting (Proshansky et al., 1983; Rooney et al., 2010; Hernandez et al., 2007; Jorgensen and Stedman, 2001)													
Personal values	PI1	.870	5.1922	1.55328									
Attachment	PI2	.898	5.1978	1.57047									
Preferences	PI4	.870	5.0167	1.64427									
Connection to the place	PI5	.905	5.2897	1.57660									
Place website (PW)					.924	.734	.811	.100*	1				
Place website is considered to be a primary vehicle of destination image formation process that plays a major role in the way that a destination portrays itself to internal and external audiences (Bastida and Huan, 2014; Foroudi et al., 2016, 2017; Kim and Fesenmaier, 2008; Lee and Gretzel, 2012; Melewar et al., 2017).													
Visual appeal	PW1	.835	5.8802	1.08552									
Convincing	PW2	.826	5.8106	1.10752									
Navigation	PW3	.812	5.5460	1.25181									
Credibility	PW5	.907	5.7437	1.14387									
Information	PW6	.898	5.6630	1.16540									
Destination image (IMG)					.928	.733	.811	.236**	.346**	1			
Destination image can be defined as a concept comprising the sum of beliefs, knowledge, feelings and perceptions that an individual holds for a particular tourism destination (Beerli and Martin, 2004; Chen and Tsai, 2007; Crompton, 1979; Fakeye and Crompton, 1991).													
Accessibility	IMG1	.817	5.2702	1.33579									
Variety and quality of accommodations	IMG2	.851	5.3315	1.28328									
Cultural diversity	IMG3	.893	5.1086	1.44040									
Cultural and historical attractions	IMG4	.831	5.0529	1.48549									
Exoticness of the place	IMG5	.886	5.0975	1.44120									
Satisfaction (SAT)					.968	.878	.824	.093*	.077	.014	1		
Satisfaction towards a tourist destination can be defined as tourist's responses to the evaluation of expectations from a particular destination and the actual pleasure and performance perceived from the destination (Baker and Crompton, 2000; Bigne et al., 2001; Castro et al., 2007; Chen and Tsai, 2007; Crompton and Love, 1995; Lee et al., 2004; Parasuraman et al., 1985; Yoon and Uysal, 2005).													
Tourism resources	SAT1	.870	5.5822	1.42143									

Local people	SAT2	.958	5.7298	1.51417								
Travel consultation service	SAT3	.969	5.7187	1.53414								
Overall environment	SAT4	.952	5.7131	1.51293								
Overall atmosphere	SAT5	.932	5.5850	1.51082								
Intention to re-visit (INV)					.96	.869	.737	.246**	.261**	.223**	.174**	1
Intention to revisit can be defined as tourists being willing to travel to other touring spots in a certain destination or in the same country (Chi and Qu, 2008; Choi et al., 2011; Kozak, 2001; Ramkissoon et al., 2011; Wang and Hsu, 2010).												
Consider as first choice	INV1	.931	5.7465	1.48919								
Intention to visit in my next trip	INV2	.940	5.6602	1.47468								
Intention to visit in my distant future	INV3	.924	5.6546	1.49409								
Intention to recommend (INR)					.89	.783	.726	.137**	.231**	.277**	.159**	.141**	1
Intention to recommend "represents whether or not the respondent actually recommended the firm or brand to another person" (Keiningham et al., 2007, p. 365).												
Recommend to someone	INR1	.872	5.4373	1.21022								
Encourage friends and relatives	INR2	.872	5.3148	1.35926								
Say positive things	INR3	.910	5.4596	1.17369								

Table 3. Measurement items

Scale	Scale items	Major references	Codes
Place Identity			
	I feel my personal values are reflected in this city	Lee et al. (2012)	PI1
	I am very attached to this city	Lee et al. (2012); Yuksel et al. (2010); Prayag and Ryan (2012); Williams and Vaske (2003)	PI2
	I feel a strong sense of belonging to this city	Lee et al. (2012)	
	Many of my friends/family prefer this city over other places	Lee et al. (2012)	PI4
	I have a special connection to the people who visit (or live in) this city	Lee et al. (2012); White et al. (2008)	PI5
Place Website			
	The place website is convincing	The qualitative study	PW1
	The place website is easy to navigate	Adapted from Cyr (2008); Cyr and Head (2013)	PW2
	The place website looks professionally designed	Adapted from Cyr (2008); Cyr and Head (2013)	PW3
	The place website has provisions for secure transactions	Adapted from Tarafdar and Zhang (2005, 2008)	PW4
	The place website adequately meets my information needs	Adapted from Cyr (2008); Cyr and Head (2013)	PW5
	The place website is trustworthy	Adapted from Kim and Fesenmaier (2008)	PW6
Destination Image			
	This city is accessible	Adapted from Byon and Zhang (2010); Prayag and Ryan (2012); Veasna et al. (2013)	IMG1
	This city has various and quality accommodation	Adapted from Echtner and Ritchie (1993); Prayag and Ryan (2012); Veasna et al. (2013)	IMG2
	This city is culturally diverse	Adapted from Beerli and Martin (2004); Byon and Zhang (2010); Echtner and Ritchie (1993); Prayag and Ryan (2012); Veasna et al. (2013)	IMG3
	This city offers historical (museums and/ or art centers) and cultural events (festivals or concerts) and attractions	Adapted from Beerli and Martin (2004); Byon and Zhang (2010); Echtner and Ritchie (1993); Prayag and Ryan (2012); Veasna et al. (2013)	IMG4
	This city offers good service	Adapted from Beerli and Martin (2004); Byon and Zhang (2010); Echtner and Ritchie (1993); Prayag and Ryan (2012); Veasna et al. (2013)	IMG5
	This city has exotic places	Adapted from Beerli and Martin (2004); Byon and Zhang (2010); Echtner and Ritchie (1993); Prayag and Ryan (2012); Veasna et al. (2013)	IMG6
Satisfaction			
	Tourism resources are rich in the city	Wu (2015)	SAT1
	Local people of the city are often friendly	Wu (2015)	SAT2
	Travel consultation service of the city is satisfying	Wu (2015)	SAT3
	Overall environment of the city is satisfying	Wu (2015)	SAT4

	Overall atmosphere of the city is pleasant	Wu (2015)	SAT5
Intention to Revisit			
	I consider this city as my first choice compared to other cities.	Adapted from Assaker and Hallak (2013); Lin (2014); Matilla (2001); Maxham and Netemeyer (2002)	INV1
	I have a strong intention to visit this place on my next trip	Adapted from Assaker and Hallak (2013); Lin (2014); Matilla (2001); Maxham and Netemeyer (2002)	INV2
	I have a strong intention to visit this place in my distant future	Assaker and Hallak (2013)	INV3
Intention to Recommend			
	I would say positive things about this city to other people.	Li, (2014); Lee et al., (2012), Byon and Zhang (2010), Matilla (2001), Wong and Sohal (2002)	INR1
	I would recommend that someone visit this city	Li, (2014); Lee et al., (2012), Byon and Zhang (2010), Matilla (2001), Wong and Sohal (2002)	INR2
	I would encourage friends and relatives to visit this city	Li, (2014); Lee et al., (2012), Byon and Zhang (2010), Matilla (2001), Wong and Sohal (2002)	INR3

Table 4: Results of hypothesis testing

Standardised regression paths				Estimate	S.E	C.R	p	Hypothesis
H1	Place identity (PI)	--->	Destination image (IMG)	.19	.045	4.257	***	Supported
H2	Place website (PW)	--->	Destination image (IMG)	.349	.056	6.278	***	Supported
H3	Place identity (PI)	--->	Place website (PW)	.13	.07	1.85	.064	Not-Supported
H4	Destination image (IMG)	--->	Satisfaction (SAT)	.011	.058	.189	.85	Not-Supported
H5	Destination image (IMG)	--->	Intention to re-visit (INV)	.313	.068	4.599	***	Supported
H6	Destination image (IMG)	--->	Intention to recommend (INR)	.263	.056	4.684	***	Supported
H7	Satisfaction (SAT)	--->	Intention to re-visit (INV)	.195	.063	3.09	.002	Supported
H8	Intention to re-visit (INV)	--->	Intention to recommend (INR)	.062	.043	1.435	.151	Not-Supported
H9	Satisfaction (SAT)	--->	Intention to recommend (INR)	.134	.050	2.670	.008	Supported

Figure 1: The conceptual research model
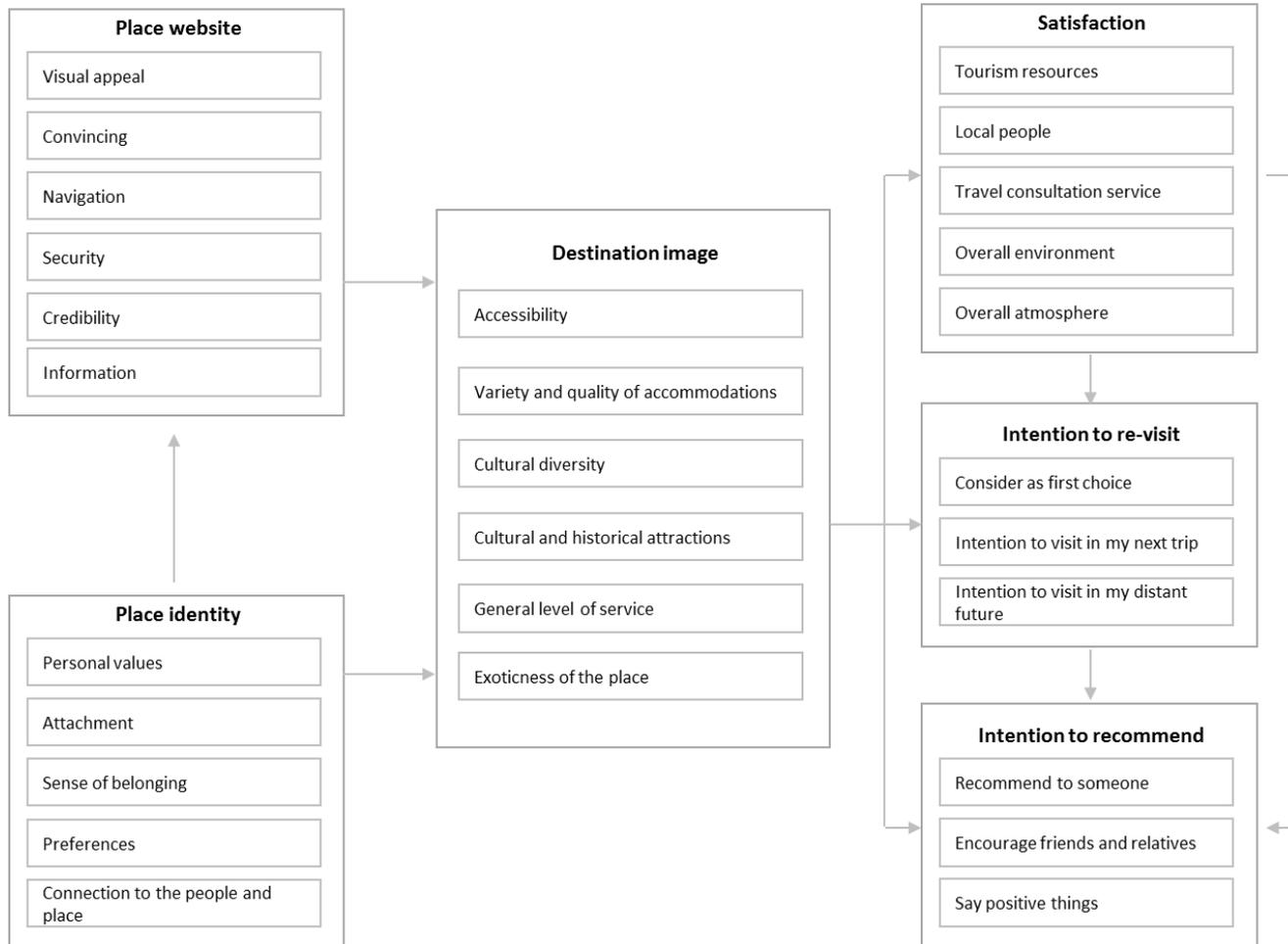
Figure 2: Validated model