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# How Travel Vlogs on YouTube Influence Consumer Travel Behavior in Indonesia: Empirical Evidence from fsQCA

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*Abstract*—Due to the rapid development of technology, various businesses have adapted their services to digital platforms. In this study, we examine whether travel vlogs on YouTube contribute to influencing travel behavior among Indonesian consumers. In light of this study, we propose that the preposition to achieve high travel intention is determined by consumer motivation, parasocial relationships, and trust, which lead to unique and different outcomes. The data were collected from 215 respondents through an online survey and analyzed using the fsQCA. The results show distinct and unique causal conditions for each configuration that supports the proposition. The results suggest that the best chance for increasing visit intention is based on the highest raw coverage and consistency values, through the presence of conditions such as novelty, entertainment, relaxation, and trust. Additionally, this study examines the implications of leveraging travel vlogs on YouTube as marketing tools for academics and tourism managers.

*Keywords—Visit Intention, Travel Behavior, Parasocial Relationship, Trust, Consumer Motivation, fuzzy set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA), Travel Vlogs, YouTube*

## I. INTRODUCTION

YouTube is rapidly gaining popularity as the world's largest video-sharing site [1]. The popularity and rapid dissemination of digital video content on YouTube [2] have developed this platform into a powerful marketing communication tool [3][4]. In the form of reduced marketing costs, YouTube benefits its users [5]. It may also serve as an effective promotional medium by disseminating information and advertising to promote a brand [6][7]. YouTube is a medium used by the tourism industry for tourism promotion [8] by providing travel videos in the form of tourist destinations, accommodation, etc. [9]. YouTube is used as the most important source of travel information [10] and as a marketing tool through the dissemination of information about the tourist attractions [11] to shape the image of the destination [9]. This may improve the audience's experience of learning about the destination before traveling, thereby triggering their interest in visiting [12].

Travel Vlogs have become very popular on YouTube as they supply travellers with a wealth of information and honest feedback about their experiences [7][13]. Besides serving as a promotional tool for tourist destinations, travel vlogs can help to shape an image of the destination and serve as a travel recommendation [14]. Therefore, they can be used to broaden tourism marketing [13]. Viewers of travel vlogs will learn about tourist destinations and how to plan their trips by viewing real-life experiences and travel insights [13]. Travelers may access YouTube travel vlogs according to their needs. It is based on tourists watching travel vlogs to obtain novelty, entertainment, and relaxation [15][16][17]. It is reported that tourists seek novelty by seeking the latest information to gain new experiences [18]; entertainment by engaging in video content [19]; and relaxation by watching quality video content to increase satisfaction [20]. As can be seen from the activeness of YouTubers in replying to tourist comments in the comments column, these three motivations will form a parasocial relationship with YouTubers, ultimately affecting their interest in visiting [21][22].

Given the substantial marketing value of YouTube travel vlogs, it is necessary to investigate the influence of YouTube travel vlogs on the interest of traveling tourists by looking at issues such as audience motivation, trust, and parasocial relationships. This study assumes that consumer motivation in watching YouTube travel vlogs, such as novelty, entertainment, and relaxation, creates a parasocial relationship between viewers and YouTubers and forms a perception of trust in YouTube content to influence consumers' interest in visiting. In this study, we analyze the role of YouTube travel vlogs in generating interest in visiting tourist destinations in North Sumatra, Indonesia. A configurational analysis is conducted using fsQCA to assist managers in formulating tourism marketing strategies based on the combination of solutions obtained.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Travel Vlogs on YouTube and Tourism Marketing

Tourism marketers use travel vlogs on YouTube to promote the destination by sharing content (videos) on the platform [13]. As a result, the content developed aids tourists in choosing destinations and increases their interest in visiting them [23]. Furthermore, travel experiences shared through YouTube travel vlogs provide consumers with authentic experiences [13]. Thus, it can create a sense of involvement and allow consumers to share information with others [3]. In addition, they can build consumer trust through the credibility of content owners (YouTubers) [24]. As a marketing tool,

YouTube travel vlogs are used by marketers to encourage consumers to plan their future travels [25].

### B. Consumer Motivation in Watching Travel Vlogs on YouTube

YouTube travel vlogs enable YouTubers to share their experiences about visiting tourist destinations in order to build trust with consumers and incite visit intentions [26]. Consumers watch YouTube travel videos for a variety of reasons, each of which influences their behavior. First, novelty, in which tourists seek new information to obtain new experiences [27]. Second, entertainment provides consumers with psychological satisfaction and pleasure [23]. Third, consumers need relaxation to feel calm and enjoy themselves [28]. The consumer's behavior will be influenced when these three motivations are met when watching YouTube Travel Vlogs [29].

### C. Parasocial Interaction with YouTuber

Parasocial relationships are defined as the friendly relationships between the audience and media figures who appear in the mass media [30]. Through the content they share, consumers feel close to media figures (YouTubers) through the relationship formed [31]. Further, consumer involvement and interaction through comments, it creates a solid parasocial relationship and leads to a desire for consumers to meet face-to-face [32][33]. As a consequence, the parasocial relationship will influence consumer behavior. YouTubers play an essential role in facilitating long-term relationships and communication with consumers [34]. As the relationship with consumers is established, trust in the information shared by YouTubers tends to increase [10]. In the end, consumer behavior, including the desire to visit, will also be affected.

### D. Trust

Building and maintaining long-term relationships with consumers using YouTube travel vlogs requires trust [22]. Through interactions between consumers and YouTubers, trust may be formed through shared video content [35]. Furthermore, trust can be formed through a sense of closeness and credible information provided by YouTubers. As a result, YouTubers are viewed as honest and trustworthy [36][37]. As a result, when YouTubers share their experiences through YouTube content, quality information and reliable reviews will increase consumer interest in visiting recommended destinations [38][39]. Thus, tourism marketers can use YouTube travel vlogs as a marketing tool to promote and market destinations to influence consumers' interest in visiting the destination [40].

### III. PREPOSITION DEVELOPMENT AND RESEARCH MODEL

The purpose of this study was to identify the optimal configuration to form visit intentions based on the causal conditions of consumer motivation for viewing travel vlogs on YouTube (novelty, entertainment, and relaxation), parasocial relationships, and trust [41][42]. As a result of different configurations of visit intention, various causal conditions can occur. Watching YouTube travel videos usually stimulates consumer interest in visiting the destination due to their desire for entertainment, novelty, or relaxation. However, some consumers are considering a visit simply because they enjoy the content they watch on YouTube. By creating parasocial interaction and trust with YouTubers, consumers may also be influenced to develop travel intentions. Consumers will be more likely to visit your website if you perform further research regarding the most appropriate solution to offer. Therefore, the proposition proposed in the current study is that to achieve high visit intention to destinations through travel videos, causal conditions such as consumer motivation, parasocial relationship, and trust. Accordingly, the configurational framework shown in figure 1 is as follows:
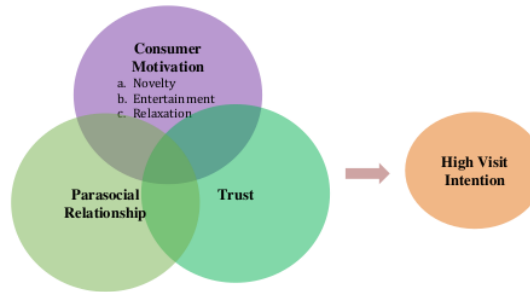


Fig. 1 Configurational Model

### IV. RESEARCH METHOD

To collect the data for the study, we distributed online questionnaires via Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp. In each section of the questionnaire, responses were rated on a seven-point Likert scale: "1" Strongly Disagree, "7" Strongly Agree, and so on. We derived the sample using a purposive sampling technique by identifying the following criteria: (1) use of YouTube at least twice daily; and (2) categories of travel video content watched, such as nature, culinary, cultural, and historical. A total of 215 responses were received over a period of four months.

To examine the theoretical complexity of the relationship between each construct, we use a fuzzy set qualitative comparative analysis (fsQCA). These findings will provide the most suitable solution configuration using consumer motivations (novelty, entertainment, relaxation), parasocial relationships, and trust. To begin the analysis, we calibrated a 7-point Likert scale into three membership categories, namely: "2" for full non-membership, "6" for full membership, and "4" for the median as suggested [43]. This method has also been applied in previous study [44]. Additionally, the results of data calibration are compiled into a truth table and then analyzed. Based on the findings obtained, the best solution configuration has been identified to establish a high visit intent. In the study, predictive validity was examined using the XY axis.

### V. RESULTS

### A. Sample Demographics

Among the 215 responses collected, 50.4% were male. In terms of age, 45.5% of respondents are between the ages of 20 and 29 years. In terms of marital status, the majority of respondents (50.9%) were single. According to the level of education, 70.2% are undergraduates. According to occupation, 37.9% of respondents are students. YouTube is used by respondents on average for 2-3 hours per day (31.6%) and culinary videos are watched at a rate of 27%.

### B. fsQCA Analysis

1) Calibration Selection and Truth Table Construction

In order to analyze the data using fsQCA, first the data is calibrated by changing it from a 7-point Likert scale into three fuzzy sets (2, full non-membership; 6, full membership; 4, median), as suggested [45]. Additionally, the calibration results are transformed into fuzzy scores with values of "0", "Low", and "1", "High". The truth table consists of several composites, each containing a different causal condition for forming visit intentions.

TABLE I.     Truth Table for Visit Intention

| Antecedents for Visit Intention | | | | | Cases | Outcome (VI) | Raw Consistency |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| NVT | ENT | RLX | PSR | TST | | | |
| High | High | High | High | Low | 8 | Yes | 0.983 |
| High | High | Low | High | High | 19 | Yes | 0.978 |
| High | Low | High | High | High | 4 | Yes | 0.976 |
| High | High | High | Low | High | 8 | Yes | 0.972 |
| Low | High | High | High | High | 8 | Yes | 0.969 |
| High | High | High | High | High | 88 | Yes | 0.967 |
| High | High | Low | Low | Low | 4 | Yes | 0.937 |
| High | Low | Low | Low | Low | 9 | No | 0.764 |
| Low | Low | Low | Low | Low | 67 | No | 0.325 |

Notes: NVT, Novelty; ENT, Entertainment; RLX, Relaxation; PSR, Parasocial Relationship; TST, Trust; VI, Visit Intention.

From the truth table (Table 1), nine composite conditions were found to be significant predictors of visiting intention. Seven composites constitute "high" visit intention, and two composites comprise "low" visit intention. With five "High" condition constructs, the sixth composite was the highest predictor of forming high visit intent. There were 19 cases with a "High" condition in four constructs, creating a high visit intention. An additional composite that developed high visit intention was derived from different constructs with a low number of cases. Composite nine, on the other hand, formed a low visit intention, with 67 cases falling into the "Low" category. A combination of factors led to low visit intention in the remaining 13 cases. The composites derived from the results of the analysis of visit intentions are unique.

### 2) Analysis of Necessary Conditions

The next step is to determine whether a construct is in a "presence" or "absence" condition. In this case, a construct with a consistency value greater than 0.8 or 0.9 is considered necessary, as suggested [46].

TABLE II.     fsQCA Analysis of Necessary Conditions

| Conditions | High Visit Intention | | Low Visit Intention | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Consistency | Coverage | Consistency | Coverage |
| NVT | 0.886 | 0.842 | 0.490 | 0.297 |
| ~NVT | 0.261 | 0.445 | 0.741 | 0.806 |
| ENT | 0.896 | 0.882 | 0.432 | 0.271 |
| ~ENT | 0.259 | 0.417 | 0.812 | 0.833 |
| RLX | 0.806 | 0.921 | 0.399 | 0.291 |
| ~RLX | 0.379 | 0.497 | 0.892 | 0.746 |
| PSR | 0.836 | 0.921 | 0.417 | 0.293 |
| ~PSR | 0.357 | 0.490 | 0.887 | 0.776 |
| TST | 0.867 | 0.921 | 0.439 | 0.298 |
| ~TST | 0.339 | 0.487 | 0.884 | 0.809 |

Notes: (~) absence of conditions

Table 2 illustrates the results of the analysis of necessary conditions. There were several conditions for high and low visit intention, including: (1) the presence of conditions for all constructs, namely novelty, entertainment, relaxation, parasocial relationship and trust, which are necessary conditions for high visit intention. (2) Lack of conditions(2) The absence of entertainment, relaxation, parasocial relationships, and trust are necessary conditions for low visit intentions.

### 3) fsQCA Findings

Based on the constructs of novelty, entertainment, relaxation, parasocial relationship, and trust, the fsQCA analysis revealed high visit intention. The overall solution coverage value is 0.833 and the consistency value is 0.893 for four configurations. The consistency value of each configuration is greater than 0.75, indicating that the four configurations meet the requirements and can be implemented as recommended [46]. Regarding the value of raw coverage, the second configuration (C.2) is the most suitable option.

TABLE III.     fsQCA Findings

| Configurations | High Visit Intention | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | C.1 | C.2 | C.3 | C.4 |
| Novelty (NVT) | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Entertainment (ENT) | ● | ● | | ● |
| Relaxation (RLX) | ● | ● | ● | ⊗ |
| Parasocial Relationship (PSR) | ● | | ● | ⊗ |
| Trust (TST) | | ● | ● | ⊗ |
| Raw Coverage | 0.662 | 0.664 | 0.649 | 0.200 |
| Unique Coverage | 0.029 | 0.025 | 0.018 | 0.014 |
| Consistency | 0.960 | 0.959 | 0.965 | 0.937 |
| Overall Solution Coverage | 0.833 | | | |
| Overall Solution Consistency | 0.936 | | | |

Notes: Black circle (●), presence of condition; Cross circle (⊗), absence of condition; Blank space, "don't care" condition.
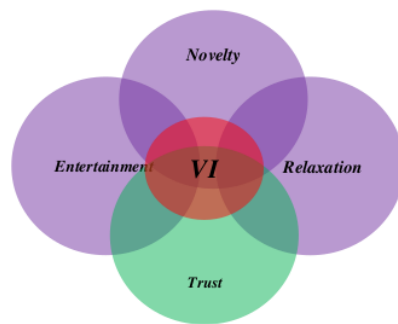


Fig. 2. Configuration 1 contributes to high visit intention (Consistency = 0.959; Raw coverage = 0.664)

A visual representation of the fsQCA configuration is shown in Figure 2, which illustrates the causal conditions for high visit intention based on the highest consistency and raw coverage values. It was discovered that to form high visit intention, it requires the presence of conditions that construct novelty, entertainment, relaxation, and trust.

### 4) Predictive Validity

According to Woodside's [47] suggestion, predictive validity is tested to determine whether the research model is accurate. These findings indicate that the research model used has good predictive validity. It is obtained by dividing the data into two subgroups, namely subsamples and hold samples. The table below shows the subsample analysis of $f$ $(*NVT\ *ENT,\ *RLX,\ {\sim}PSR,\ {\sim}TST)$ displaying high consistency values ($> 0.75$). Figure 3 illustrates the hold samples analysis from proposition $(*NVT,\ *RLX,\ *TST,\ {\sim}ENT,\ {\sim}PSR)$ with a high consistency value ($>0.75$).

TABLE IV.    SOLUTIONS FROM THE SUBSAMPLES

| Model from Subsamples | Raw Coverage | Unique Coverage | Consistency |
|---|---|---|---|
| $f$ (*NVT *ENT, *RLX, ~PSR, ~TST) | | | |
| *NVT, *ENT | 0.829 | 0.121 | 0.901 |
| *NVT, *RLX | 0.740 | 0.032 | 0.938 |
| *ENT, *RLX | 0.753 | 0.045 | 0.938 |

Note: (*), presence of conditions; (~), absence of conditions

## VI. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSSION

### A. Main Findings

This study conducted the FSQCA analysis to determine the optimal combination of novelty, entertainment, and relaxation consumer viewing motivations, parasocial relationships, and trust to form a high visit intention. There are different and unique causal conditions associated with each configuration. The study resulted in four configurations with high consistency values, allowing each configuration to be implemented. In particular, the second configuration (C.2) offers the best opportunity to increase visit intention based on the highest raw coverage and consistency values. It is through the presence of conditions such as novelty, entertainment, relaxation, and trust that high visit intention will be created. Parasocial relationships are characterized as "don't care" conditions.

### B. Implication for Research

The study offers a theoretical contribution to future research regarding consumer visit intentions through YouTube travel videos. In addition, the theoretical complexity achieved in the study    can be used to analyze consumer behavior as a consequence of watching YouTube travel videos. As a result of the motivation to observe consumers (novelty, entertainment, and relaxation), parasocial relationships and trust will result in high visit intentions. The findings indicate that the second configuration (C.2) is the best solution for forming high travel intentions. The four motivations for watching consumers, namely novelty, entertainment, relaxation, and the perception of trust, can create high visit intentions when certain conditions are met. Thus, it can be concluded that once the motivation of consumers to watch YouTube travel vlogs has been satisfied, it will be possible to create consumer interest in making visits. However, as consumer confidence increases, the likelihood of a visit will also increase.

### C. Implication for Managerial

Through the configuration of the results of the FSQCA analysis, the research also contributes to marketing. In particular, tourism managers will be able to take advantage of YouTube travel vlogs to attract tourists to specific destinations. The results indicate that each configuration can be implemented in marketing due to its high consistency value. In contrast, the second configuration (C.2) with the highest raw coverage and consistency values was the best choice for forming a high visit intention. When conditions such as novelty, entertainment, relaxation (motivation to watch consumers), and trust are present, high visit intention is likely to increase. Tourism managers should pay attention to this aspect when creating YouTube travel videos to attract tourists.

Novelty in content allows consumers to obtain the most up-to-date and unique information about specific destinations, increasing their desire to visit them. Also, viewers of YouTube travel vlogs will gain the impression of being relaxed, happy, and entertained, which will lead them to become interested in visiting the destinations shared. Additionally, transferring transparent and credible information in YouTube content increases consumer trust, resulting in increased visit intentions. Considering the causal conditions in the second configuration (C.2), tourism managers can use YouTube travel vlogs as a marketing tool to increase tourist visits to specific destinations through the use of YouTube travel vlogs.

### D. Limitation and Future Research

Although theoretical and managerial contributions have been made, there are still limitations associated with this research. In particular, the parasocial relationship aspect, which describes the consumer's friendly relationship with YouTubers, was not explicitly explored. Accordingly, Chung and Cho [31] investigated several factors of parasocial relationships, including perceived friendship, self-disclosure, and understanding. Consequently, future research can explore the specific dimensions of parasocial relationships. Secondly, the type of consumer viewing motivation studied in the study is still limited. Furthermore, there are several other forms of motivation, such as engagement, pastime, hedonism, and social [47]; future research adds to or further investigates the types of consumer motivations that can influence consumer behavior.

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