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# NARCISSISM AND REPUTATION AS DRIVERS OF RESPONSIBLE ENGAGEMENT IN COCOA TOURISM STORYTELLING

Usep Suhud<sup>1</sup>, Mamoon Allan<sup>2\*</sup>, Wong Chee Hoo<sup>3</sup>, Bulan Prabawani<sup>4</sup>, Muaz Azinuddin<sup>5</sup>, Ardy Wibowo<sup>4</sup>, Rendy Ega Pradhana<sup>4</sup>, and Hapsari Dwiningtyas Sulistyani<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Faculty of Economics, Universitas Negeri Jakarta, Jakarta, Indonesia. *Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin, Malaysia.* [usuhud@unj.ac.id](mailto:usuhud@unj.ac.id) <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1728-0737>

<sup>2</sup>Faculty of Tourism and Archaeology, University of Jordan, Amman, Jordan. [m.allan@ju.edu.jo](mailto:m.allan@ju.edu.jo), <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0476-9293>

<sup>3</sup>Faculty of Business and Communications, INTI International University, Malaysia. [cheehoo.wong@newinti.edu.my](mailto:cheehoo.wong@newinti.edu.my), <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0691-4463>

<sup>4</sup>Department of Business Administration, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Diponegoro University, Semarang, Indonesia, [bulan@live.undip.ac.id](mailto:bulan@live.undip.ac.id), [ardywibowo@live.undip.ac.id](mailto:ardywibowo@live.undip.ac.id), [rendyega@live.undip.ac.id](mailto:rendyega@live.undip.ac.id)

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7213-5770> <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4994-7513>  
<https://orcid.org/0009-0005-4675-4582>

<sup>5</sup>Faculty of Applied Social Sciences, Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin, Malaysia. [muazazinuddin@unisza.edu.my](mailto:muazazinuddin@unisza.edu.my), <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8570-8352>

<sup>6</sup>Department of Communication, Diponegoro University, Semarang, Indonesia [hapsaridwiningtyas@dosen.undip.ac.id](mailto:hapsaridwiningtyas@dosen.undip.ac.id) <https://orcid.org/0009-0002-4526-4248>

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Corresponding Author: Mamoon Allan  
([m.allan@ju.edu.jo](mailto:m.allan@ju.edu.jo))

## ABSTRACT

*Despite growing academic interest in destination storytelling, limited research has explored narrative intentions within the context of cocoa tourism. In particular, there is a notable gap in studies investigating how tourists – especially those who have never physically visited cocoa plantations – form storytelling tendencies influenced by their psychological characteristics and perceptions of the destination. To bridge this research gap, this study examines relationships between narcissism, self-efficacy, destination reputation, destination trust, and storytelling intention in a sustainable tourism setting of cocoa plantations. A conceptual framework was validated with structural equation modelling using data obtained from 243 participants who predominantly have experience with cocoa plantations. Findings reveal that narcissism is a significant predictor of self-efficacy as well as of destination reputation. Self-efficacy as well as reputation significantly impact destination trust, with this variable, along with reputation, being a significant predictor of storytelling intention. These results suggest narrative behaviour can be triggered mentally as well as emotionally, even without first-hand experience. The conceptual model proposed exhibits excellent fit (CFI = 0.992; RMSEA = 0.0032), in support of related theory relationships. In contributing to tourism research, this*

*study advances storytelling theory in an under-explored agritourism subsector and emphasizes anticipatory trust as well as image perceptions as relevant. It provides practical insights relevant to sustainable tourism promotion through awakening narrative engagement among potential tourists through value-based communication of a destination.*

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**KEYWORDS:** Consumer Behaviour, Destination Marketing, Sustainable Marketing, Cocoa Tourism, Storytelling.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Cocoa tourism is an emerging avenue for promoting rural sustainable development and cultural valorization in various cocoa-producing regions. In the Dominican Republic, Gamble and Futrell (2023) report the ways in which the Chocal Cooperative combines volunteer-based tourism in the process of making chocolates, providing immersive, value-added experiences that combine labour involvement and instruction. In Mexico, the state of Tabasco uses the Chocolate Festival as a cultural tourism initiative in support of local cocoa-based gastronomy, appealing, in turn, to national and foreign tourists (Fócil, 2017). Henry (2018) contrasts models of cocoa tourism in the Dominican Republic and Costa Rica, observing the differences in national strategy: the public-sector-led heritage model in Costa Rica is contrasted with the private-sector-led experiential model in the Dominican Republic. At the same time, Gómez and Rocha (2018) note the key role of cocoa and chocolate in Latin American culinary routes, in museums, and festivals, positioning them in a symbolic role in culinary routes, museums, and festivals. Altogether, the case studies here point out the ways in which the case of cocoa tourism is adapted in very different cultural settings, providing a combination of economic diversification and cultural preservation.

Storytelling intention has garnered increasing scholarly interest in tourism studies, particularly as a post-visit behavioural outcome that reflects tourists' emotional connection, satisfaction, and memory of a destination. Prior research has established that storytelling intention is often influenced by experiential variables such as immersion, authenticity, and destination attachment (Yoon & Lee, 2024; Yuxin et al., 2024). Moreover, it has been linked to revisit intention, particularly in heritage tourism and festival contexts (Ko et al., 2022; Sari et al., 2024). However, the specific application of storytelling intention within cocoa tourism remains largely underexplored. Only a few conceptual works—such as that of Speck and Long (2023)—have addressed storytelling in cocoa-based community entrepreneurship, but not as a measurable behavioural intention or empirical variable. Furthermore, the use of individual psychological traits (e.g., narcissism, self-esteem), perceived destination qualities (e.g., destination reputation, destination trust), as predictors of storytelling intention is virtually absent from existing literature, leaving a critical theoretical and empirical gap.

This study aims to address this gap by investigating the impact of narcissism, self-esteem,

destination reputation, and destination trust on storytelling intention in a context of a cocoa tour. By bridging the gap between the areas of personality psychology and destination branding, the study offers further understanding of what drives tourists to share and tell stories in niche-based agritourism settings. In theory, the study contributes to the emerging field of storytelling in sustainable and culture-embedded tourism experiences.

Indonesian cocoa tourism is still in its primary stage, commonly merged under wider agro-tourism programs rather than being a distinct niche. One high-impact study conducted by Soetriono and Winarno (2020) investigated the management of cocoa and coffee plantations in East Java—namely Jember, Lumajang, and Malang—and indicated the possibilities in integrated agro-tourism models. Their study concluded that the participation of society and inter-stakeholder engagement were key success factors in building sustainable plantation-based tourism. As Indonesia is among the world's largest producers of cocoa, the tourism chain in the industry is underexplored, more so in the case of the region of Sulawesi, the world's oldest producer (Widyasary & Susandarini, 2020). Initiatives such as the case of the "Cokelat Harapan (chocolate hope)" in Samarinda are examples of new models where the cocoa is re-packing the ready-to-drink product in the form of chocolate, used simultaneously as a tourist attraction and rural empowerment tool for farmers (Alfadlan, 2024). Despite the prospects, various hurdles such as the non-infrastructures, non-marketing capacity, and national tourism strategy linkage continue constraining large development. These studies reveal that Indonesia's cacao industry possesses raw material base and community demand in terms of intensification in the development towards a strong cacao-based tourism economy—with the condition of inclusive, market-led, and grassroots-based policies.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Narcissism

Narcissism is commonly realized as a multi-dimensional personality feature with an inflated sense of self, exaggerated need for praise, as well as limited capacity for empathy (Brookes, 2015; Gao & Huang, 2022). It is usually divided into two subtypes: overt narcissism, manifesting grandiosity along with assertiveness, as well as covert narcissism, manifesting hypersensitivity, insecurities, as well as vulnerability (1). Both have differential implications at both the individual level of motivation as well as social behaviour. In organizational as well as

psychological scholarship, narcissism has been related with self-promotion as well as image regulation behaviour in such a manner that individuals attempt approbation as well as attention using public display (Taylor, 2020). This motivation gains special significance in contemporary digital spaces in which social platforms as well as comparison among one's peers maximize opportunities in being seen as well as external approbation.

Narcissism in consumer and tourism settings has been proposed as a related behavioural intention antecedent, particularly in settings with elements of self-presentation such as destination narrative as well as social media communication. Narcissists have higher propensities towards narrative practices of promoting one's one experience as well as achievements, at times as tools of impression management. Moreover, research has further indicated that narcissism may influence perceptions of self-efficacy in a complex manner, with such an interaction being situational in nature. Overt narcissists will have higher levels of self-efficacy as they have grand conceptions of oneself (Al-Ghazali & Afsar, 2021; Gao & Huang, 2022), while covert narcissists may have internalized doubt decreasing self-efficacy in goal-directed behaviour (Brookes, 2015). In organizational settings, narcissism has been proposed as a moderator variable between organizational performance as well as efficacy, with potential positive as well as adverse roles being contingent on situational influences (Beattie *et al.*, 2017).

Existing work also assesses narcissism as a socially responsible identity, developed in environmental as well as cultural settings. Focal points on digital presence, attentional competition, and symbolic capital in the sphere of social media have encouraged performative action with roots in narcissistic propensities (Hirschi & Jaensch, 2015). In tourism settings, this takes place in destination storytelling, with tourists, particularly those with high levels of narcissism, setting up events for appreciation rather than genuineness. As such, narcissism serves not only as a static personality trait but as a dynamic psychological response towards socio-digital spaces prioritizing recognition over reflection.

## 2.2. *Narcissism and Self-Efficacy*

Narcissism is widely defined as a multidimensional personality element that is linked to overinflated feelings of one's own importance, increased yearning for admiration, and a chronic

need to flaunt expertise in public settings. People who are high in narcissism tend to have self-enhancing thinking patterns that strengthen beliefs in their own superiority, which in turn impacts inner systems of beliefs. Self-efficacy is one such belief defined by Bandura (1997) as the perception in oneself of the capacity to perform the behaviour that is necessary in order to achieve a particular performance attainment. In the past, numerous studies have all demonstrated a strong positive correlation between narcissism and self-efficacy. For example, Gao and Huang (2022) showed narcissistic tendency predicts greater entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and Beattie *et al.* (2017) demonstrated that narcissism can serve as a buffer against the effects of performance feedback, allowing self-efficacy to remain high even in the absence of outcome-based reinforcement.

While the strength of this association can differ across various types of narcissism – overt narcissists tending to hold stronger beliefs in self-efficacy than covert narcissists (Brookes, 2015) – there is a general trend in the empirical literature toward a consistent positive association between dispositions toward narcissism and perceptions of individual ability (Akyüz, 2024; Hegde & Shetty, 2020). In the context of tourism, where the possibility of narrative and presentation is high, this association is more pertinent. Narcissists are likely to regard themselves as adept influencers or tellers of stories, even in foreign environments such as sustainable cocoa tourism. Hence, in keeping with the past research and the conceptual foundations of the theory of self-enhancement, the following hypotheses are suggested:

H1: Narcissism has a significant positive effect on self-efficacy.

## 2.3. *Narcissism and Destination Reputation*

In addition to its impact on internal cognitive beliefs such as self-efficacy, narcissism is further implicated in determining how individuals judge and rate external entities, such as places of interest in tourism. Image-based judgment procedures are common among narcissistic individuals, who hold a strong regard for symbolic associations and reputational information congruent with their self-enhancing drives. In destination marketing, destination reputation is the perceived prestige, credibility, and social status of a location, built through personal assessment and public opinion. Studies state that narcissistic individuals pay greater regard to reputational information and tend to idealize locations that promote their self-image. Zhu

and Shan (2024) and Mohammed et al. (2024) argue that reputational perception in the field of tourism is closely entangled in the realm of symbolic consumption, whereby tourists are attracted to locations enjoying high public esteem and social desirability.

Empirical evidence can be provided in support of the claim that narcissistic features can influence the cognitive evaluation of destinations. Narcissists, for example, are prone not only to evaluate environments in accordance with their intrinsic quality, but in accordance with the prestige they can transmit or the social approval they can yield. In alignment with the evidence provided by Ratnayaka (2024) and Suhud et al. (2024), suggesting that reputation is very determined by social discourse, user-generated content, and identity congruence, narcissistic individuals can project upon destinations their desires for uniqueness and admiration, heightening their reputational evaluation. In alignment, then, with the corpus of literature in the field of psychological image development and symbolic values alignment, the following proposition is ventured:

H2: Narcissism has a very strong positive effect on destination reputation.

#### 2.4. Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy, as conceptualized by Bandura (1997), is widely regarded as one of the most significant determinants of human agency along with behavioural regulation. It is a measure of one's belief in being capable enough of performing necessary actions in order to accomplish established goals. Self-efficacy is not concerned with actual competence but reflects perceived ability and faith in dealing with task demands, challenges, and difficulties (Bandura, 1997; Brookes, 2015). It has immediate effects on establishing goals, effort allocation, resistance in facing failure, as well as emotion regulation.

In studies on tourism and entrepreneurship, self-efficacy is a performance, intention, and behavioural consistency predictor. For example, entrepreneurial self-efficacy is conceptualized as an individual's belief in being able to initiate and maintain a business venture (Gao & Huang, 2021). This mental processing mediates between internal dispositional traits and external behaviour. According to studies conducted by Al-Ghazali and Afsar (2021), narcissistic behaviour – specifically overt narcissism – is positive in its effect towards self-efficacy in promoting perceptions of one's greatness and success. However, covert narcissism can be negative towards self-efficacy because it is characterized by insecurity as

well as hypersensitivity (Brookes, 2015).

Self-efficacy is contextually situated as well. Occupational self-efficacy is one's faith in managing work tasks and work stresses, with career engagement and success implications (Hirschi & Jaensch, 2015). In performance settings like teaching, tourism, or e-business, self-efficacy underlies behavioural intention formation, risk-taking behaviour, and decision-making. Notably, Beattie et al. (2017) indicated that while narcissism can structure performance perception, it does not significantly moderate self-efficacy's effect on task outcome at the factual level, revealing self-efficacy's independent motivational contribution.

#### 2.5. Self-Efficacy and Destination Trust

Self-efficacy – i.e., one's perception of their ability to perform distinct actions (Bandura, 1997) – is a key psychological concept that influences human agency and decision-making. In the case of tourists, self-efficacy is the measure of travellers' faith in their ability to interact in unknown surroundings, regulate cultural engagement, and make estimates of risk-related factors. Individuals exhibiting high self-efficacy tend toward proactive action, acceptance of risks, and building trust (Hirschi & Jaensch, 2015). When people are confident in their own abilities, they can better regard a destination in a safe, manageable, and worthy environment in terms of tourists' engagement. As suggested by Beattie et al. (2017), such a perception of control diminishes situational ambiguity and a greater degree of psychological preparedness to trust in external systems, e.g., tourists' providers or local populations.

Destination trust is a traveller's faith in a destination's integrity, competence, and reliability. Torres-Moraga et al. (2021) note that trust in sustainable destinations is heavily influenced by visitor competence perception and the consistency of their experiences. When tourists have high self-efficacy, they can more easily regard destinations as being trustworthy since they will be able to, in their own mind, adequately cope with challenges and gain valuable experiences. This cognitive-emotional process indicates that one's internal perception of oneself directs the outside assessment of destination reliability. As a result, a greater feeling of self-efficacy builds stronger trust in the destination's capacity to fulfil expectations. According to this logic, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Self-efficacy has a significant positive effect on destination trust.

## 2.6. Destination Reputation

Reputation in tourism destinations is shaped by a dynamic interplay of perception, behaviour, and strategic communication. Mohammed *et al.* (2024) emphasize that consumer behaviour is deeply influenced by perceived destination image and satisfaction—two key components of destination reputation—especially in the context of gastronomy tourism. Social media plays a critical role in this perception formation by amplifying symbolic cues and peer recommendations that reinforce a location's desirability. Complementing this, Suhud *et al.* (2024) show that destination awareness and credibility directly enhance destination reputation, which in turn boosts tourists' intentions to visit. Their research on Mount Bromo reveals that trustworthiness and familiarity are core predictors of positive destination associations and reputational value.

Additionally, Dini *et al.* (2024) indicate the cultural aspect of destination reputation, claiming that cultural status of a locality can greatly influence satisfaction and loyalty. Yet, they explain that sustainable on-location activities can strengthen, or compromise said reputation based on congruity with visitor anticipations. Ratnayaka *et al.* (2024) insist on the predominance of user-generated (UGC) over company-created content in developing digital reputation, especially for tourism companies. Lastly, Zhu and Shan (2024) show how Chinese tourist narrative travelogues create organic destination images which shape collective opinions. In aggregate, the research shows that destination reputation is a multi-faceted construct—founded on awareness, trust, cultural imagery, and user experience—that develops based on digital interaction and direct tourist contact.

## 2.7. Destination Reputation and Destination Trust

Destination reputation is the common understanding of a location's prestige, trustworthiness, and social value, generally established through a combination of personal experience, public discourse, and symbolic signs (Suhud *et al.*, 2024). It comprises factors such as a destination's history, cultural richness, service quality, and depiction in the media, all of which influence the destination's seen trustworthiness among potential tourists. It is likely that a reputedly good destination is more trustworthy and appealing, thus making it easier for tourists to form positive expectations and trust in service delivery (Mohammed *et al.*, 2024). The process of reputation and trust dynamics has been increasingly defined in

the field of destination branding, where a favourable reputation is likely to precede and predict trust building (Dini *et al.*, 2024).

Empirical proof strengthens this association, revealing that perceived reputation strengthens tourists' risk tolerance and psychological comfort—both essential trust precursors. Torres-Moraga *et al.* (2021) observed that perceived consistency, integrity, and symbolic image of a destination greatly affect people's willingness to trust its services. In online tourism ecosystems, reputation gained through online content and social networking is particularly strong in creating trust (Ratnayaka, 2024). Where destinations are seen as credible and widely recognized, they tend to be perceived as capable and honest. Since trust is necessary in enabling behavioural intentions such as loyalty, storytelling, and revisit behaviour, knowledge regarding the reputational precursors of trust becomes paramount. Following such observation, the following hypothesis is rendered:

H4: Destination reputation positively impacts destination trust at a significant level.

## 2.8. Destination reputation and Storytelling Intention

Destination reputation in the form of symbolic capital draws out storytelling not only in experiential traveling but even in perceived prestige and emotional congruency. Destinations that are reputable hold a narrative template, which a tourist can access, even in the case of the expectation of a visit. Guleria *et al.* (2024) reaffirm the observation that positive reputational signals stemming from memorable tourism experiences directly increase storytelling intention, particularly where such experiences instil satisfaction and attachment. Choi (2016) goes one step further in emphasizing the observation that storytelling accrues destination brand value, and perceived distinctiveness, emotional depth, and cultural applicability in stories stimulate behavioural intention in the direction of narrating and sharing.

These findings align with Kim and Youn (2017), who show that storytelling elements such as authenticity and emotion significantly increase tourists' memory performance and their intention to visit and narrate about destinations. Likewise, Ghaderi *et al.* (2023) demonstrated that storytelling can influence destination personality and narrative engagement, further reinforcing that tourists' willingness to share their impressions is shaped by symbolic evaluations. Therefore, a highly reputed destination—imbued with cultural, historical, or

social value—serves as fertile ground for prospective narrative behaviour. Building on these insights, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H5: There is a strong positive association between destination reputation and storytelling intention.

### 2.9. Destination Trust

Destination trust is increasingly understood as a vital concept in the field of tourism studies, especially in the case of sustainable and cultural tourism. It reflects tourists' faith in the integrity, ability, and benevolence of a destination and its service network. It is necessary in mitigating perceived risk, strengthening psychological reassurance, and building behavioural loyalty and emotional involvement. Torres-Moraga et al. (2024) identify destination trust as a primary mediator between tourists' identification towards a destination and their intention towards revisit, more so in sustainability-oriented settings. In a similar manner, Dewi and Pratomo (2023) emphasize that trust is a product of perceived service quality and integrity of stakeholders, essential in converting favourable evaluation towards repeat visitation and advocacy. Such evidence is in support of the proposition that trust is not just a cognitive evaluation but an affective reaction towards a destination's reliability and symbolic worth.

More empirical proof shows how trust can be built through cultural match, genuine communication, and narrative interaction. Sodawan and Hsu (2022) discovered that halal-friendly characteristics and culturally sensitive hospitality have a key impact on destination trust among Muslim tourists, validating the contribution of customized experiences towards trust-building. Yoon and Lee (2024) contend that emotionally engaging narrative and value-based branding can strengthen destination trust through building perceived authenticity and psychological proximity. Moreover, Hefny (2021) underlines the contribution of local communal competence and ethical behaviour towards bolstering tourists' trust, where it is especially pertinent in the context of traveling after a crisis.

### 2.10. Destination Trust and Storytelling Intention

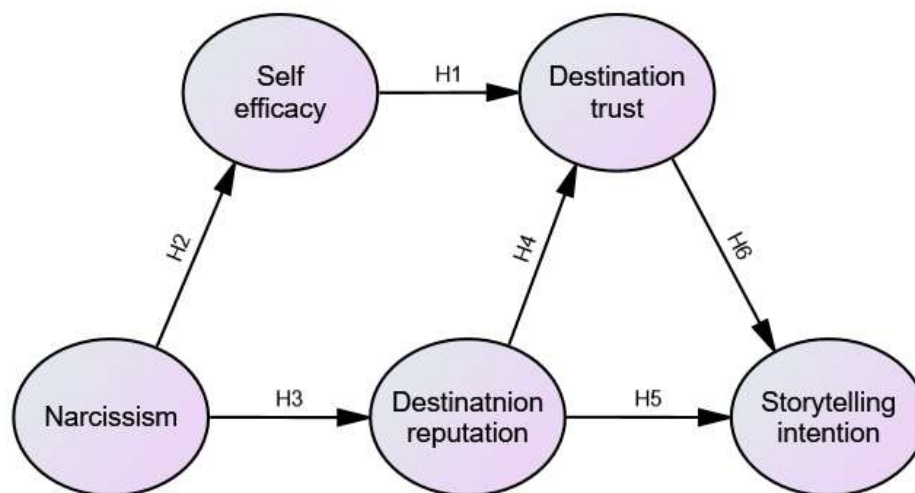
Destination trust constitutes the cognitive and affective basis on which tourists make judgments about the desirability and trustworthiness of a destination. Tourists who are trusting of a

destination will be more likely to view it as emotionally safe, socially approved, and meaningful—thereby creating greater storytelling motivation. As Yoon and Lee (2024) note, storytelling content containing authenticity and value fosters greater emotional immersion and trust, ultimately giving rise to narrative intentions such as e-word-of-mouth and social sharing. Such trust serves a psychological catalyst for converting passive impressions into active, expressive behaviour.

Similarly, Leong et al. (2024) highlight how trust-based experiences—facilitated through storytelling and tour guide interactions—generate value co-creation and cultural alignment, both of which inspire tourists to narrate their experiences. In contexts where symbolic interaction and emotional depth matter (e.g., heritage, sustainable, or agritourism), trust in the destination is particularly effective at triggering storytelling intention. These findings are further supported by Kirillova et al. (2017) and Andrade-Matos et al. (2022), who link authenticity, trust, and emotional investment with increased narrative behaviours. Based on this foundation, the final hypothesis is presented:

H6: Destination trust positively impacts the intention for storytelling.

Figure 1 shows the proposed structural model of six directional hypotheses tracing the interaction between narcissism, self-efficacy, destination reputation, destination trust, and storytelling intention in the context of cocoa tourism. It initiates at narcissism, posited as a dispositional motivator, which positively impacts self-efficacy (H1) and destination reputation (H2). Self-efficacy is then posited to significantly enhance destination trust (H3), while destination reputation is posited to have a twin role: making a contribution toward destination trust (H4) and making a direct contribution toward storytelling intention (H5). Finally, destination trust is posited as a direct precursor toward storytelling intention (H6). As a model, the entire integrative model offers a sequential chain from personality characteristics at the personal level, through appraisal at the cognitive level, and trust judgments, culminating in narrative behavioural intentions. The model is one of anticipatory models of storytelling in the sense it places greater importance at the internal psychological level, rather than direct experience, and it received strong support through structural equation modelling with good indices of fit.



*Figure 1: The Research Model.*

### 3. RESEACH METHODS

#### 3.1. Sampling

The survey respondents were tourists aged 17 and above who were either past visitors to cocoa plantations or had never toured them but were aware of these sites as tourist destinations. Convenience sampling method was applied in recruiting respondents who were eligible. 243 respondents were found eligible and provided their consent towards the study. Those who expressed interest in the study were sent an online link of the survey, which had been designed and conducted in Microsoft Forms. This approach ensured ease of reachability and speed in the collection of the data while collecting information from a wide range of tourists who had various levels of knowledge about the experience of the tourists in cocoa.

#### 3.2. Measurement

All the variables in the current work were operationalized using well-established indicators drawn from past research in a manner that guaranteed construct validity and the preservation of consistency in the literature. Destination reputation items were drawn from Yamashita and Takata (2020) while destination trust utilized scales offered by Su *et al.* (2022). Narcissism utilized the pioneering measure of Emmons (1984), while the Rosenberg scale (2015) with modifications drawn from Dobson *et al.* (1979) operationalized self-esteem. Finally, storytelling intention was operationalized through the paradigm of Kim *et al.* (2020). All the indicators were rated in a six-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 6 = strongly agree,

which offered for the expression of nuanced attitudinal stands while being responsive to the consequences of central tendency bias. This procedure guaranteed theoretical consistency throughout the study, in addition to offering empirical robustness throughout the constructs, thus undergirding the rigor of the structural equation modelling analysis.

#### 3.3. Data Analysis Methods

The four-step quantitative procedure of data analysis was used in this study to achieve the measurement model's and structural model's validity, as well as the latter's robustness. In the first instance, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) utilized SPSS version 29 for the purpose of measuring construct validity. Items were selected for retention if their loadings in the factors were higher than the 0.40 threshold figure allowable in the early model test for convergent validity. In the second instance, reliability testing occurred via Cronbach's alpha in the context of SPSS version 29 application. By meeting the alpha coefficient of 0.70 or higher, a construct could be considered a measure of a unitary, internally consistent, albeit unidimensional, measure, hence a measure of internal consistency in the measurement items. In the third instance, the average variance extracted (AVE) was considered, where 0.50 formed the cut-off point used for determining the convergent validity criterion. At this stage, further endorsement occurred regarding the constructs having extracted sufficient variance over measurement error.

Lastly, hypothesis testing was performed according to the structural equation modeling (SEM)

procedure through the application of AMOS 29. A hypothesis is accepted if the critical ratio (CR) is equal to/either greater than 1.96, which is equivalent to providing a level of probability,  $p < 0.05$ . In terms of measuring the model's overall fit, the indices of the chi-square/degree of freedom ratio ( $\chi^2/DF$ ), the comparative fit index (CFI), and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) were taken under consideration in accordance with predetermined thresholds (Table 1). Following the guidelines of Schermelleh-Engel et al. (2003), Tabachnick et al. (2007), Hu and Bentler (1995), and Browne and Cudeck (1992), acceptable fit is defined under the following thresholds:  $\chi^2/DF \leq 2.00$ ,  $CFI \geq 0.95$ ,  $RMSEA \leq 0.05$ , and probability values  $0.05 < p \leq 1.00$ . Such choices in methodology offer a combination of theory rigor and model-based robustness, providing evidence about the constructs and posited associations in terms of strong psychometric support and model adequacy being in conformity with high-impact tourism and psychology scholarship requirements.

## 4. RESULTS

### 4.1. Participants

Table 1 presents an overview of the demographic characteristics of the respondents (N = 243) who participated in the cocoa tourism storytelling study. The gender split was quite balanced, with 53.9% male and 46.1% female respondents participating. At the educational level, most had an undergraduate degree (54.7%), followed by diploma holders (25.9%), secondary school leavers (16.0%), and postgraduate degree holders (3.3%). Age wise, the most common age range was 21–25 years (62.6%), followed by 30.0% between 26 and 30 years, 4.1% between 31 and 40 years, and 3.3% between 17 and 20 years. Occupationally, 60.1% were employed, 22.2% unemployed, and 17.7% self-employed. Most (60.1%) of the respondents were unmarried, 37.0% married, 2.1% separated or divorced, and 0.8% widowed. Most notably, most respondents (90.5%) had already visited a cocoa plantation, thereby achieving contextual relevance and exposure to the topic under study.

**Table 1: Profile of Participants.**

Profile	Frequency	Percent
Sex	Male	131
	Female	112
	Total	243
Level of education has been completed	Diploma	63
	Postgraduate	8
	Undergraduate	133
	High school	39
Valid	17-20	8
	21-25	152
	26-30	73
	31-40	10
Occupational status	Employed	146
	Unemployed	54
	Self-employed	43
Marital status	Unmarried	146
	Separated/divorced	5
	Married	90
	Widowed	2
Experience visiting a cocoa plantation.	No	23
	Yes	220

### 4.2. Data Validity, AVE, and Reliability Tests

Table 2 shows the psychometric results of all latent constructs, including factor loading, average variance extracted (AVE), and Cronbach's alpha coefficients. All the items had acceptable standardized factor loading, ranging between 0.666 and 0.918, and all had higher values than the 0.60 cutoff and thus confirmed item-level convergent

validity. All the constructs had values of AVE greater than the 0.50 cutoff value recommendation (Hair et al., 2016) and ranged between 0.602 (Narcissism 1) and 0.893 (Storytelling Intention), showing acceptable convergent validity at the construct level. Cronbach's alpha confirmed reliability, and all the values were higher compared to the 0.70 criterion (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). The maximum

reliability was seen in the example of Self-Esteem ( $\alpha = 0.945$ ), and the minimum acceptable value was represented by Narcissism 2 ( $\alpha = 0.849$ ), thus confirming the internal consistency of all the measurement scales. Overall, the results confirm that

the measurement model has strong reliability and convergent validity and thus is acceptable and suitable to undergo the further structural model analysis.

**Table 2: Results of Data Validity, AVE, and Reliability Tests.**

Variables and Indicators	Factor Loadings	EVA	Cronbach's Alpha
<b>Storytelling intention</b>		<b>0.610</b>	<b>0.893</b>
Si1 If I had the opportunity to visit a cocoa plantation, I would share my experience in great detail.	0.820		
Si4 Telling my experience visiting a cocoa plantation would be enjoyable.	0.819		
Si2 If I had the opportunity to visit a cocoa plantation, I would share my experience realistically.	0.796		
Si3 If I had the opportunity to visit a cocoa plantation, I would share my experience in a way that others could understand.	0.793		
Si5 Telling my experience visiting a cocoa plantation would be like imparting knowledge to others.	0.747		
Si6 Telling my experience visiting a cocoa plantation would be informative.	0.745		
Si7 Telling my experience to the cocoa plantation will satisfy my intellectual needs.	0.742		
<b>Destination reputation</b>		<b>0.783</b>	<b>0.905</b>
Dr1 The cocoa plantation has an excellent reputation.	0.892		
Dr3 People highly respect the cocoa plantation.	0.872		
Dr5 The cocoa plantation's good reputation is supported by its history.	0.869		
Dr2 The cocoa plantation has a better reputation than other cities.	0.814		
Dr4 People speak highly of the cocoa plantation.	0.812		
<b>Narcissism (1)</b>		<b>0.602</b>	<b>0.884</b>
N9 I always know exactly what I'm doing.	0.846		
N10 I would consider myself a strong person.	.813		
N8 I am assertive.	0.812		
N4 I have a natural ability to persuade others.	0.770		
N3 Everyone keeps telling me I'm good, so I know I am.	0.741		
N5 I consider myself unique.	0.726		
N2 I would be an extraordinary person.	0.666		
<b>Narcissism (2)</b>		<b>0.775</b>	<b>0.849</b>

N6 I enjoy being the center of attention.	0.911		
N7 Being the center of attention suits me well.	0.906		
N1 I enjoy compliments.	0.807		
<b>Self-esteem</b>		<b>0.786</b>	<b>0.945</b>
Se1 I, like everyone else, am capable of performing a variety of tasks.	0.908		
Se4 Overall, I am happy with who I am.	0.901		
Se5 I wish I had higher self-esteem.	0.900		
Se3 I believe I have many positive qualities.	0.880		
Se6 I have a good view of myself.	0.869		
Se2 I consider myself valuable, at least on par with others.	0.858		
<b>Destination trust</b>		<b>0.643</b>	<b>0.858</b>
Dt5 I believe there are clear travel management standards at the cocoa plantation.	0.842		
Dt3 I hope the tourism services at the cocoa plantation are humane.	0.801		
Dt1 I believe the cocoa plantation community will try to understand my needs.	0.791		
Dt4 I believe there are clear guidelines for travel services at the cocoa plantation.	0.789		
Dt2 I hope the cocoa plantation community will actively offer assistance when I am in trouble.	0.785		
<b>Visit intention</b>		<b>0.885</b>	<b>0.908</b>
Vi2: I will try to visit a cocoa plantation in the near future.	0.918		
Vi1: I plan to visit a cocoa plantation in the near future.	0.887		
Vi4: I am willing to visit a cocoa plantation in the near future.	0.873		
Vi3: I recommend visiting a cocoa plantation in the near future.	0.862		

### 4.3. Hypotheses Tests

Figure 2 shows the structural model used in testing postulated links among six latent constructs: narcissism, self-efficacy, destination reputation, destination trust, and storytelling intention. All of the proposed hypotheses gained statistical evidence in the form of significant path coefficients in Table 3. Narcissism significantly and substantially influenced both self-efficacy (CR = 5.582,  $p < 0.001$ ) as well as destination reputation (CR = 4.365,  $p < 0.001$ ), thus confirming its double prediction of one's belief in oneself as well as quality of perceived destination. Self-efficacy in return significantly predicted destination trust (CR = 14.742,  $p < 0.001$ ), as did

destination reputation in a positive direction towards destination trust (CR = 3.252,  $p = 0.001$ ) as well as in a direct way towards storytelling intention (CR = 6.517,  $p < 0.001$ ). Destination trust in its final instance significantly predicted storytelling intention (CR = 4.352,  $p < 0.001$ ), thus further solidifying its mediator status in translating perceived believability into behaviour intention.

The statistics of model fit present good model adequacy:  $\chi^2/DF = 1.253$ , CFI = 0.992, RMSEA = 0.0032, and probability = 0.116, all of them at or higher than traditional levels of good fit. These results collectively provide evidence towards structural validity of conceptual framework as well

as validity of postulated paths between individual traits, cognitive appraisal, attitudinal trust, and

narrative behavioural intention in the context of cocoa tourism.

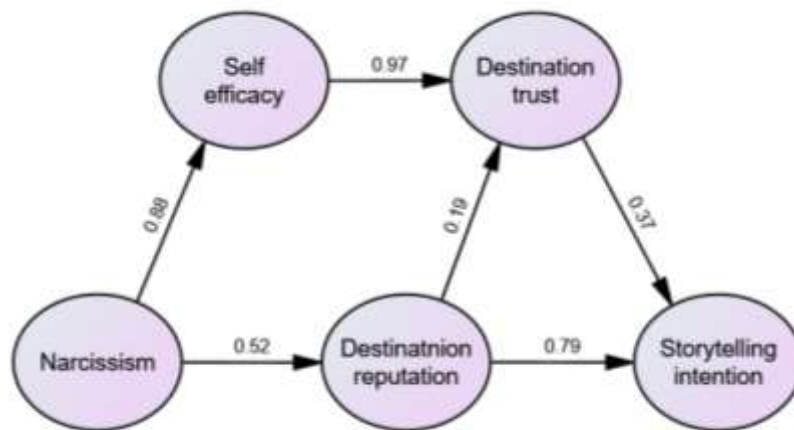


Figure 2: Structural Model of Hypotheses Tests.

Table 3 summarizes structural model results and hypothesis testing with SEM. All of the six conceptual associations tested were validated with statistically significant values. Narcissism had a significant impact on both self-efficacy (H1: C.R. = 5.582,  $p < 0.001$ ) and destination reputation (H2: C.R. = 4.365,  $p < 0.001$ ), therefore suggesting narcissistic tendencies bolster people's faith in capacities as well as perceptions of destination magnificence. Self-efficacy significantly predicted destination trust (H3: C.R. = 14.742,  $p < 0.001$ ), as perceived individual competency once again takes centre stage in fostering trust in a destination. Destination reputation significantly had a positive influence on destination trust as well (H4: C.R. = 3.252,  $p = 0.001$ ), further bolstering perceptions of believability and positive

judgments in fostering trust.

Furthermore, destination reputation (H5: C.R. = 6.517,  $p < 0.001$ ) and destination trust (H6: C.R. = 4.352,  $p < 0.001$ ) significantly affected storytelling intention in a way that travellers' intention in storytelling is driven by how they admire and trust in the destination. These findings lend credit to the integrated framework among personality traits (narcissism) and psychological mechanisms (self-efficacy and trust) with expressive tourism behaviour in storytelling. In general, the entire model exhibited good fit measures (CMIN/DF = 1.253; CFI = 0.992; RMSEA = 0.0032), revealing good appropriateness of a model in hypothesis testing.

Table 3: Results of the Hypotheses Tests.

Hypotheses	Paths	C.R.	P	Results
H1	Narcissism > Self-efficacy	5.582	***	Accepted
H2	Narcissism > Destination reputation	4.365	***	Accepted
H3	Self-efficacy > Destination trust	14.742	***	Accepted
H4	Destination reputation > Destination trust	3.252	0.001	Accepted
H5	Destination reputation > Storytelling intention	6.517	***	Accepted
H6	Destination trust > Storytelling intention	4.352	***	Accepted

#### 4.4. Discussion

The support for H1 suggests that narcissism significantly enhances tourists' self-efficacy in the context of storytelling within cocoa tourism, aligning with findings from prior research in psychology and organizational studies. Narcissism had been found to be closely linked to self-enhancement proclivities, where people overestimate their own competency and look for proof in the form of performance and image management (Beattie et al., 2017; Gao & Huang, 2022). In the case of the field of tourism, narcissistic people can regard themselves as very capable narrators/promoters of experiences, especially in spaces where they can present the self, e.g., in the case of sustainable agritourism (Taylor, 2020).

This positive correlation is consistent with previous research observing that apparent narcissists, who are high in assertiveness and grandiosity, would hold stronger beliefs in their ability, thus enhancing self-efficacy (Brookes, 2015; Al-Ghazali & Afsar, 2021). Conversely, covert narcissism, a quality that is linked with insecurity, could inhibit the capacity for self-efficacy, although in the current work, the total measure of narcissism had a net positive effect.

In the context of cocoa tourism, the finding suggests that narcissistic tourists will feel emboldened to become "storytellers" or "influencers," who believe they can share powerful stories of their experience in the cocoa plantations, even prior to real visitation. This is the anticipatory and the performative aspect of tourism behaviour, where the influence of psychology occurs in terms of forming intentions, irrespective of real experiences.

The acceptance of H2 indicates that narcissism has a significant positive impact on perceptions of destination reputation within the context of cocoa tourism. This suggests that narcissistic tourists—driven by a desire for recognition and social validation—are more likely to associate their chosen destinations with prestige and symbolic value. Prior research has shown that narcissistic individuals tend to select consumption experiences that enhance their self-image and provide opportunities for public display (Wu et al., 2019; Taylor, 2020). When applied to tourism, such tendencies translate into stronger associations with destinations that carry cultural, social, or symbolic capital, thereby enhancing the perceived reputation of those destinations.

This result resonates with earlier studies in tourism branding that found narcissistic traits are linked to preferences for destinations that can amplify one's self-presentation and identity

construction (Park et al., 2016; Zhang & Lee, 2023). Since destination reputation is socially constructed through word-of-mouth, social media, and symbolic branding, narcissists' propensity to engage in self-promotion enhances both their reliance on and reinforcement of destination reputation. In cocoa tourism specifically, the reputation of plantations or cocoa heritage trails is likely to be perceived not only in terms of quality and authenticity but also in terms of the prestige that comes with being associated with culturally rich or sustainable tourism settings.

The endorsement of H3 verifies that destination reputation positively impacts tourists' self-efficacy in the case of the storytelling of cocoa tourists. It suggests that where a destination is seen to be reputable—worth its weight in terms of credibility, prestige, and authenticity—tourists become more reassured in their capacity to meaningfully tell and share their stories. Existing literature foregrounds that reputation is a kind of symbolic capital, influencing tourists' expectations and solidifying their perception of the worthiness of their involvement (Zhang & Lee, 2023; Wang & Pizam, 2022). Namely, robust destination reputation diminishes uncertainty, constructs psychological reassurance, and strengthens perceived competence, all of which promote enhanced self-efficacy.

These results are consistent with social cognitive theory, where self-efficacy is determined not solely by personal characteristics, but also through contextual information and environmental feedback (Bandura, 1997). As tourists interact with a destination highly renowned for quality and trustworthiness, they internalize such reputational information as evidence of their ability to interact, interpret, and communicate their experiences. Empirical proof in the field of tourism validates this association further: destinations whose reputational strength is stronger tend to yield greater pools of tourist confidence and narrative engagement (Quintal et al., 2016; Styliadis et al., 2020). In the case of a cocoa tour, prestige of the plantations, lengths of chocolate trails, and cultural heritage increase the sense of authority among the visitors, making them credible communicators capable of persuading their social networks.

The endorsement of H4 confirms that destination trust significantly enhances tourists' self-efficacy in the context of cocoa tourism. This indicates that tourists feel more capable of engaging with the destination and subsequently sharing their experiences if they view a destination as truthful, dependable, and benevolent. Destination trust acts as a mental safety net that diminishes perceived risks

and ambiguities, thus making tourists believe in their traveller and storytelling competence. This result is consistent with past findings revealing trust is a vital component in determining confidence and intention in the context of tourism (Han et al., 2022; Dewi & Pratomo, 2023). Specifically, trust provides a feeling of reassurance that directly improves self-efficacy in planning, experiencing, and sharing tourism encounters.

This is consistent with the theory of social exchange and signalling, in that trust diminishes the perceived information asymmetry and strengthens tourists' active engagement in destinations (Torres-Moraga et al., 2024). Provided that the promise is delivered time and again in the quality of service, in the hospitality, or in the authenticity of the cultural experience, tourists feel better equipped to evaluate, experience, and share the experience. It is uncovered in previous research that trust-based faith not solely impacts the intention of revisit but also strengthens tourists' intention to recommend the destination through storytelling and recommendation (Sodawan & Hsu, 2022; Hefny, 2021). Translated in the cocoa-based context, trust in the farmers, in the cooperatives, and in service providers empowers tourists to consider themselves informed and capable storytellers, who can substantiate the destination's creditworthiness and reputation in the eyes of others.

The finding that H5 is significantly positive in the context of storytelling intention in cocoa tourism indicates that tourists who are confident in their ability to effectively interpret and share their experiences tend to be more interested in storytelling, both offline and online. Literature so far is unanimous in underlining the fact that self-efficacy is a key determinant of behavioural intention since it influences the feeling of being capable of performing a given behaviour (Bandura, 1997; Kim & Youn, 2017). In the case of tourists, greater levels of self-efficacy have been found to be associated with greater willingness to share experiences, at least where tourists feel that their stories are meaningful or socially rewarding (Ghaderi et al., 2023).

This observation is consistent with research in digital tourism marketing that points to the motivation of tourists as content providers (Guleria et al., 2024; Leong et al., 2024) based on perceived competence. Tourists who feel more strongly in terms of self-efficacy are more likely not just to journal about their trips but share them in ways that shape the perceptions of others about the destination. In the case of cocoa tourism, this is a highly relevant observation, since tourists regularly experience immersive cultural, rural, and sensory environments

that lend themselves easily to narrative description. In believing in the narrative competence of the self, tourists feel empowered so that they can convert personal experiences into narrative content that raises the profile of the destination and contributes to its symbolic capital.

The finding of accepting H6 means that destination trust has a remarkable impact in heightening tourists' storytelling intention in the context of the cocoa tourism environment. It suggests that tourists are more likely to share their experiences once they feel a destination is trustful—reliable, honest, and benevolent. Trust can help reduce perceived risks and foster a feeling of safety in psychology, making it a favourable ground for tourists to share their experiences (Han et al., 2022; Torres-Moraga et al., 2024). In the context of cocoa tourism, trust in farmers, cooperatives, and service providers helps solidify tourists' beliefs that the experiences they had were real and worthy of being shared, thus heightening the possibility of storytelling behaviour.

This result is in accordance with prior research that emphasize that trust not only predicts intent to revisit and recommend but is a determinant of narrative engagement itself (Sodawan & Hsu, 2022; Hefny, 2021). As tourists gain greater trust in the destination credibility, they become more willing to promote it in personal storying, in the writing of reviews, and in online storytelling. In addition, storytelling provides a vehicle for reinforcing and diffusing trust: tourists who tell positive stories verify the destination's image in the prospective visitor, creating a cycle of trust-building and narrative diffusion. In the case of cocoa tourism, the process is of increased significance, since trust in the agricultural heritage and in authenticity conveyed by the community is strengthened while the perceived quality of the experience and the interest of tourists in being destination ambassadors increase.

The findings of this study together specify the driving role of destination-related perceptions and psychology-based characteristics in the forming of storytelling intention, directly abetting sustainable tourism. Self-efficacy and narcissism (H1, H5) show how tourists at the individual level can be encouraged to share openly, making niche attractions such as cocoa cultivation more popular and more seen. While destination trust (H2, H4) and destination reputation (H3, H6) promote the social foundation of sustainability, where trustworthiness, authenticity, and communally-grounded reliability engender tourists' faith and motivation, in turn, toward favourable experience sharing. In this regard,

storytelling serves the purpose of promoting responsible, culture-grounded discourse sustaining the locale's living while generating a gain. By making the tourists the co-authors of the destination narrative, the example of the case of cocoa tourism opens not just the wider livelihood possibilities but, in addition, empowers the locale-based involvement and long-term destination sustainability, all towards the very pillar support bases of sustainable tourism—economic sustainability, sociocultural authenticity, and environmental protection.

## 5. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to explore the relationships between narcissism, self-efficacy, reputation of the destination, trust in the destination, and storytelling intention for cocoa tourism plantations. The results confirmed that narcissism has a positive influence on self-efficacy and reputation of the destination significantly, where both positively influence trust in the destination. Destination trust and reputation significantly influence storytelling intention. These observations indicate that psychological traits and perceptions regarding the destination are able to predict narrative behaviours even where experience is directly absent. The verified model with superior fit measures (CFI = 0.992; RMSEA = 0.0032) emphasizes the value of anticipatory trust as well as emotional attachment for sustainable tourism communication. The study enriches the body of literature on the marketing of destinations by providing self-image motivation as well as reputational evaluation for agritourism narrative engagement. In practice, value-based storytelling as well as trust-building communication are useful for evoking storytelling among potential visitors to cocoa plantations.

This research enables theoretical progression in three overall areas of sustainable tourism and destination marketing. Firstly, it augments the literature on storytelling destinations by revealing that narrative engagement can follow from anticipatory psychological processes as well as or even independent of direct experience. The finding questions extant assumptions about storytelling in tourism being predominantly retrospective and supports a prospective perception-based model of narrative behaviour. Secondly, by advancing narcissism—a personality characteristic normally considered in organizational/psychological literatures—ahead in the context of tourism behaviour, the study contributes to extant literature linking individual-level characteristics to expressive/promotional tourism intentions. It

validates narcissism not only as a direct antecedent to self-efficacy but also as a motivator for reputation building for tourism destinations. Thirdly, by positioning destination trust as an intervening mediating variable between individual perception (self-efficacy) versus perception (reputation) on one side versus behavioural intention (storytelling) on the other side, the model offers an integrative psychological-attitudinal pathway. Collectively, all such theoretical contributions enrich overall accounts of tourist behaviour in agritourism as well as inform about the relevance of self-perception and symbolic evaluation into tourism narrative construction.

This research provides insightful recommendations for tourism professionals and place managers, especially in cocoa farm environments seeking sustainable and experience-based visitation. Firstly, the results indicate that narrative interest could be induced even beforehand through strategic attention to reputation for the destination and trust-building storytelling. As such, managers need to invest in reputation marketing instruments like digital storytelling, heritage branding, and social proof campaigns addressing the symbolic and emotional perception of prospective tourists. Secondly, the study highlights the influence of narcissistic tendencies and self-efficacy on storytelling intentions. To translate this insight into practical strategies, destination managers can develop social media campaigns that encourage self-presentation—such as designing visually striking, "Instagrammable" spaces; launching visitor-generated content initiatives (e.g., hashtag challenges or photo contests); and partnering with micro-influencers to share personalized narratives of their cocoa farm experiences. These approaches not only appeal to tourists' desire for recognition and social validation but also create authentic, shareable content that enhances the destination's visibility and appeal. Thirdly, establishing place trust through repeated quality service, transparent management approach, and *communitas* becomes instrumental in stimulating further storytelling in the future as well as place loyalty. Generally, the results inform the creation of communication strategies where psychological motivation is incorporated with place characteristics for stimulating sustainable promotional behaviour among visitors.

Though this study contributes new knowledge about storytelling for cocoa tourism, some limitations warrant attention. Firstly, even though Indonesia is the world's second-largest cocoa producer, internal consumption and cultural interest in cocoa is significantly less than for coffee with broader appeal

and greater social integration. The comparative low consumption may influence tourist emotional intensity and storytelling passion. Future research must explore relationships between national consumption patterns and product cultural positioning on storytelling for different commodity-based tourist markets. Secondly, the sample was comprised predominantly of respondents with some experience on cocoa plantations and may thus not capture storytelling anticipatory behaviours by inexperienced or overseas tourists. A wider sample encompassing such tourists may add value to external validity. Thirdly, in this work, narcissism was conceptualized as a one-dimensional construct: the case for multidimensional conceptualizations by discriminating between overt vs covert narcissism

for examining separate impacts is available for further work. Fourthly, examining more antecedents such as social media interactions, cultural identity, or multisensory imagery may further refine storytelling models. Other agritourism areas such as coffee, vanilla, or herb plantations may also serve as a basis for comparative work using this framework. Finally, we acknowledge that concentrating on cocoa tourism in Indonesia may restrict the applicability of our findings to other regions or forms of agritourism. Although the study offers valuable insights into the distinct dynamics of cocoa tourism within this particular cultural and economic context, we recognize that the results may not be entirely transferable to different countries or cultural settings.

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