

# EMPLOYING PATRIOTISM AND NATIONALISM IN DESTINATION CRISIS COMMUNICATION STRATEGY FOR THE PANDEMIC

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## Abstract

This research primarily aims to investigate the implementation of patriotism and nationalism crisis communication strategies when destination marketers wish to attract domestic tourists to resume their travel consumption following the COVID-19 pandemic. The focal point of the investigation is to explain the mechanisms occurring in potential domestic tourists after communication via this strategy. The research objectives were set to test the causal relationships among destination reputation, trust, intentions to conduct secondary crisis communication, and visit intentions. Data were gathered from 546 potential Thai tourists via a survey questionnaire, with Phuket, Thailand, selected as the crisis scenario. Findings were analyzed via structural equation modeling and suggest that only trust positively impacts intentions to conduct secondary crisis communication. In contrast, visit intentions were positively affected by multiple influential factors (i.e., destination reputation, trust, and intentions to conduct secondary crisis communication). The findings yield suggestions on how to design and enhance the patriotism and nationalism messages to ensure a high level of visit intentions and intentions to conduct secondary crisis communication, for concerned practitioners who are responsible for destination marketing in the post-pandemic time when domestic tourists have become one of the primary and crucial target customers.

**Keywords:** Crisis communication, patriotism and nationalism strategy, COVID-19, crisis recovery, domestic tourists

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Before, during, and after, the occurrence of negative events (Mackey, 2015), crisis communication, i.e., communication conducted to reach the public (Avraham & Ketter, 2008) is considered a crisis management instrument which can be adopted (Glaesser, 2006) in combating a crisis happening at the organization or destination level, to protect the organizational reputation, lessen the physical and psychological harm to stakeholders (Coombs, 2014), reduce unfavorable media coverage, and minimize the crisis impacts on tourism destinations (Ritchie et al., 2004). Moreover, crisis communication should be accorded high priority during the post-crisis management phase, as it should be initially performed to pave the way for conducting other crisis recovery efforts such as marketing activities (Sjouwerman, 2021), and changes to tourism products (Business Victoria, 2021). Therefore,

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among the various crisis management instruments, crisis communication is considered highly beneficial and should be mandatorily conducted in a timely manner.

It is also worthwhile noting that the crisis communication frameworks and guidelines employed by destination authorities must be different from those developed for private firms and organizations, such as those suggested by the situational crisis communication theory (SCCT) (Coombs, 1995), its extended version (e.g., Coombs, 2014), and the theory of image restoration (Benoit, 1995, 1997). The major reason lies in the impracticality of certain strategies such as apology, and prevention of a repeated crisis via a quick fix of the problematic product, when used with destination crises (Avraham & Ketter, 2008). Destination authorities are required to gain collaboration in marketing efforts, with all businesses being active in their own destinations (Elbe et al., 2009), and to base their crisis communication selection on diverse influential factors (Taecharungroj & Avraham, 2022) such as crisis types (Avraham & Ketter, 2008; Coombs & Holladay, 2002, Zhang et al., 2020), audience types and destination characteristics (Avraham & Ketter, 2008). Hence, it is justifiable to support the necessity of adopting destination-customized crisis communication frameworks which provide strategies uniquely suited to the specific conditions of the respective destinations, in place of those advocated for private firms and organizations.

The crisis communication strategy of *patriotism and nationalism* proposed in Avraham and Ketter's (2008) multi-step model for altering place image is deemed highly worthwhile to serve as an important tool for destination authorities to combat the crisis at hand. The justification is that a *patriotism and nationalism* strategy targets domestic tourists to resume their visits to local or domestic destinations for the purpose of supporting their own country (Avraham & Ketter, 2008). Domestic tourists are considered to have high potential in minimizing the crisis damages of the loss of international tourists during or after the crisis (Arbulu' et al., 2021). For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, domestic tourists were expected to be the first and the only group that could resume tourism activity (Talawanich & Pongwat, 2022). The potential of *patriotism and nationalism* as a motivating factor is supported by the adoption of this strategy to encourage domestic markets to resume travel in their home country during and after diverse types of crises, in various destinations such as 'We need you now!' conducted in the US following the 9/11 crisis (Avraham & Ketter, 2008), the 'Bangkok Strong' campaign launched in Thailand after the 2015 terrorist attack (Taecharungroj & Avraham, 2022), and the group of strategies customized for the COVID-19 pandemic (e.g., #BackHome adopted by the Egyptian DMO [Baalbaki & Zizka, 2023], the 'Love Australia' campaign, and 'It is time for travel in Israel', employed to combat the tourism lows caused by the COVID-19 pandemic [Avraham, & Bierman, 2022]). Given the frequent adoption of *patriotism and nationalism* strategies in various destinations, it is crucial for destination authorities to be assured that such adoption can actually bring about success in inducing demand from domestic tourists in each specific place and in each specific crisis. The rationale is that being successful in previous crises may not always guarantee success in newly emerging ones since specific crisis features demand specifically distinct communication for and interpretation of the crisis type (Coombs & Holladay, 2002). Therefore, it is extremely crucial for crisis communication professionals to carefully select the most appropriate strategies to respond to each crisis, target audience, and time (Eriksson, 2018). Consequently, there is an obvious and genuine need for testing the effectiveness of a *patriotism and nationalism* strategy as each new type of crisis generates a new context in which the strategy will be deployed. This need becomes more crucial as the domestic tourists, the main audience of a *patriotism and nationalism* strategy are varied across cultures, such that different cultures may result in dissimilar demands for apology adoption, media strategies, and litigation concerns that can be lessened by crisis communication (Haruta & Hallahan, 2003).

In recent years, it has been apparent that the COVID-19 pandemic has been a major focus of both tourism academia and practitioners since its impacts have been widespread, impacting virtually all nations (UNWTO, 2020). Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic is considered to be different from other crises in terms of causes and public policy responses (Engemann, 2020). Hence, the COVID-19 pandemic requires a higher number of phases equipped with different crisis communication strategies (Avraham & Bierman, 2022). The importance of adopting crisis communication strategies to combat the COVID-19 crisis is based on the notion that the pandemic's extensive media coverage and its declaration has caused negative reactions among global stock markets at a higher level than those created by reoccurring or prior-occurring crisis situations (Khanthavit, 2020).

Nonetheless, previous research focusing on image crises caused by pandemics has been minimal (Avraham & Bierman, 2022). Needless to say, the number of studies relating specifically to the adoption of a *patriotism and nationalism* strategy in the recently emerging COVID-19 crisis is even fewer in number (e.g., Avraham & Beirman, 2022; Talawanich & Pongwat, 2022). Therefore, it can be concluded that the necessity to investigate the effectiveness and success of a *patriotism and nationalism* strategy adopted to combat the COVID-19 crisis is justified and worthwhile.

This research was conducted to address the previously mentioned need for evaluating the effectiveness of a *patriotism and nationalism* strategy, aiming to explain the causal relationship between the potential domestic tourists' attitudes towards the promoted destinations and the communicated *patriotism and nationalism* messages (i.e., destination reputation, and trust) occurring when the *patriotism and nationalism* strategy is employed, and the behavioral intentions of these tourists related to specific destinations and messages (i.e., visit intentions and intentions to conduct secondary crisis communication). The justification underlying the selection of the four constructs (i.e., destination reputation, trust, visit intentions, and intentions to conduct secondary crisis communication) is based on the suggestions gained from the literature stating that these four constructs tend to be formed or heightened in the mind of the audience, when crisis communication strategies are adopted (Chen & Sakamoto, 2013; Coombs & Holladay, 2009 ; Ebrahim, 2020; Kim et al., 2008; Lehto et al., 2008; Pop et al., 2022; Schultz et al., 2011; Ulz et al., 2013), as subsequently explained. Following earlier support gained from previous studies (See Literature Review section) that suggests the existence of a causal relationship between the two attitude constructs (i.e., destination reputation and trust) and the two behavioral intentions constructs (i.e., visit intentions and the intention to conduct secondary crisis communication), the first two research objectives are as follows:

- 1) To examine the impact of destination reputation on visit intentions and intentions to conduct secondary crisis communication when a *patriotism and nationalism* strategy is adopted.

- 2) To investigate whether trust affects visit intentions and intentions to conduct secondary crisis communication when potential domestic tourists are exposed to a *patriotism and nationalism* strategy.

- 3) It is also suggested that websites or social media can be employed by the destination management organizations (DMOs) as a tool to increase the level and intensity of visit intentions (Molinillo et al., 2018). Therefore, following the previously stated logic, it is worthwhile to test if intentions related to interactions taking place on social media can impact visit intentions when a *patriotism and nationalism* strategy is employed.

- 4) To test whether the causal relationship between intentions to conduct secondary crisis communication and visit intentions does exist during the use of a *patriotism and nationalism* strategy.

The research setting of Phuket, Thailand was chosen, based on the fact that this destination has been negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic as shown in the drastic-

cally reduced tourist number, over 10 million visitors from 2019 to 2021 (Thaicharoen et al., 2022). With its heavy reliance on international tourists (Statista, 2023), attracting domestic tourists is considered crucial for the survival of Phuket's tourism industry, especially during the peak of the pandemic in which travel restrictions were applied in many countries (Talamantes, 2020). The evidence shows that the destination authorities of Phuket and of Thailand have launched certain *patriotism and nationalism* campaigns to tackle the during- and post-phase of the COVID-19 pandemic such as the campaign of 'We travel together; Better Thailand; Travel in Thailand; Help Thais, and survive together', all of which were employed to stimulate local consumption in the travel-related industry through the Thai government's subsidized and partial payment for trip expenses (Green Network Thailand, 2022), and "Unseen New Series: Show your kindness through supporting the Thais" implemented in the form of "Purchase the trip in advance, Travel later" (Jullapan, 2021). These initiatives also provided online platforms for tourism-related businesses to sell their tourism products in advance to their potential domestic clients. On the above basis, the selection of Phuket serves as a solid and justifiable study setting.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Patriotism and Nationalism as a Crisis Communication Strategy

By definition, nationalism is defined as a view related to a country's superiority and dominance (Kosterman & Feshbach, 1989), and gives the implication of disparaging other nations (Balabanis et al., 2001), as well as being aggressive and prejudiced towards other nations (Druckman, 1998). Patriotism is different from nationalism in the sense that hostility towards other countries does not exist; this generally refers to when people strongly feel attached and loyal to their own country (Balabanis et al., 2001). Although nationalism and patriotism are not exactly similar, they share the same concept related to favoring one's own country (Wasswa, 2017), nation or other units resembling one's in-group identity.

Previous studies suggest various outcomes of patriotism and nationalism. Patriotism is claimed to yield significant benefits to the home country or the nations of those promoted to their own citizens. Nationalism increases one's identity related to one's own region (Gohary et al., 2022; Meier-Pesti & Kirchler, 2003), and thus, encourages travel within such regions (Gohary et al., 2022, Rita, 2000). This can be explained by the notion that positive emotions are created in tourists' minds if a destination is considered belong to one's own in-group element (Zhang et al., 2017), and thus, their visit intention augments (Xialong et al., 2023). The same logic relating to judging the image of out-groups (versus in-groups' image) is also applied in the case of supporting trade protectionism (Sidanius et al., 1997). Correspondingly, the decision made on choosing between domestic and foreign products is influenced by patriotism (Luque-Martinez et al., 2000). In contrast, people possessing a high level of patriotism are less likely to conduct trips to a destination outside their boundary (Grohary et al, 2022).

In the crisis communication field, applied to destinations, the *patriotism and nationalism* strategy, or solidarity messages, has been proposed in the following studies, as a possible crisis communication strategy, specifically for attracting domestic tourists. Solidarity messages calling for support from potential visitors to help certain destinations, including destinations' economic recovery, have been previously raised (e.g., Armstrong & Ritchie, 2008; Carlsen & Hughes, 2008; Walter & Mairs, 2012) and suggested to especially attract the domestic market (Bierman & Walbeek, 2011). Furthermore, solidarity messages are assumed to create a moderate level of effectiveness in drawing potential visitors back after the crisis occurrence as it is not in the list of the least effective ones (Walter & Mairs, 2012).

In Avraham and Ketter's (2008) multi-step model for altering place image, the *patriotism and nationalism* strategy is proposed as part of the audience strategies, emphasizing the relevance and importance of message audiences. In this model, tourism consumption aims to persuade domestic tourists to travel in order to support their own nation or country, stimulating the identification, belonging, and feelings of national pride among national audiences (Avraham & Ketter, 2008). More specifically for the COVID-19 pandemic, the *patriotism and nationalism* strategy is included in the framework of 'Image repair strategies used for combating the Covid-19 pandemic tourism crisis during three phases', in the third phase of post-lock down or recovery (Avraham, 2021b).

The adoption of the *patriotism and nationalism* strategy or solidarity message is demonstrated in a few studies emphasizing certain pandemics (e.g., the Ebola virus, H1N1, and COVID-19), and occurs as a part of the strategy used during a prolonged negative place image in Sub-Saharan Africa (Avraham & Ketter, 2017), and various crises in the United States (Avraham, 2021a) and Thailand (Taecharungroj & Avraham, 2022). In these studies (i.e., Avraham, 2021a; Avraham & Ketter, 2017; Taecharungroj & Avraham, 2022), the perspective of the crisis communication message senders, that are DMOs or governmental organizations, was investigated through a qualitative content analysis of the message senders' written communication (e.g., countries' marketing campaigns, advertisements, news). There is very little research, such as the work of Talawanich and Pongwat (2022), that focuses on the message recipients' perspective or which suggests the role of the *patriotism and nationalism* strategy in heightening the attitude and behavioral intentions of domestic tourists after the occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, this research does not aim to examine the mechanisms of how the *patriotism and nationalism* strategy stimulates audiences' attitudes, which in turn urges behavioral intentions. As previously explained, the infancy stage of the body of knowledge related to the *patriotism and nationalism* strategy applied in the pandemic context results in the notion that the perspective of potential tourists, especially the in-depth study of how this strategy functions to encourage their visit intentions, has been understudied.

## 2.2 Destination Reputation

The majority of previous studies on crisis communication were conducted by organizations and primarily aimed at restoring reputation (Darwish & Burns, 2019; Utz et al., 2013). Coombs and Holladay (2012) explain that what an organization communicates can significantly influence its overall organizational reputation. The significance of destination reputation also relates to the expectation of tourists, whereas the positive reputation of the destination can lead to social, political, and economic advantages (Darwish & Burns, 2019). Artigas et al. (2015) adds that destination reputation relates to destination familiarity as well. The perception of reputation can develop over an extended period, eventually leading to gaining respect and becoming well-known (Artigas et al., 2015). This is in line with Su et al. (2018), who state that destination reputation concerns how people perceive a destination, taking into account the long-term valuation of its financial, social, and environmental impacts. Hassan and Soliman (2021) recommend that tourism is a reputation-dependent industry managed by the destination marketing organization, while a destination's social responsibility, reputation, and perceived trust, have effects on revisit intentions. Following Artigas et al. (2015), Su et al. (2018), Hassan and Soliman (2021), and Wu (2015), the attributes of the destination reputation construct concern the destination's regard, success, and establishment.

## 2.3 Intentions to Conduct Secondary Crisis Communication

Schultz et al. (2011) explains that the employment of a crisis communication strategy

influences the intention to engage in negative word-of-mouth communication, which serves as an example of secondary crisis communication. Luo and Zhai (2017) explore the patterns of how secondary crisis communication could be emphasized by social media and found that the published messages, which are extremely dynamic, might affect the emotions of the audience in different ways. Mistaken crisis communication messages or strategies could lead to a rapid outspread of messages caused by negative emotions. In general, corporate reputation has an influence on loyalty and word of mouth (WOM), which can express either positive or negative emotions (Su et al., 2014). Šerić et al. (2023) and Su et al. (2014) suggest that destination reputation also significantly affects WOM and loyalty, as well as visit intentions (Su et al., 2018). Šerić et al. (2023) also indicates that gender plays a major role as a moderator of the destination reputation impact upon WOM. Chen and Sakamoto (2013) also discovered that an audience who has more negative emotions toward shared issues is more likely to conduct secondary crisis communication than one who is neutral. The secondary crisis communication proposed by Schultz et al. (2011) suggests that the intention to engage in secondary crisis communication is derived from the clue which indicates the potential to share or react to received messages or information. To be more precise, Schultz et al. (2011) asserts that secondary crisis communication includes the intention to share messages online, the intention to tell friends, and the intention to leave a message. In addition, the online communication process, like the intention to spread news or content, such as electronic word-of-mouth, can significantly lead to destination trust and intentions to travel or visit (Abubakar & Ilkan, 2016, Filieri & McLeay, 2013) and alters image (Setiawan et al., 2020), while the research reveals that the intention to travel also depends on income level (Abubakar & Ilkan, 2016). Moreover, during crises, individuals are more likely to share crisis-related information through social media, particularly when they can relate themselves to the crisis (Chen & Sakamoto, 2013), while the different crisis types can lead to different sharing behavior (Schultz et al., 2011). Thus, according to the received knowledge, the hypothesis has been set as follows:

H1. Destination reputation positively impacts intentions to conduct secondary crisis communication.

## **2.4 Trust**

Several studies suggest that reputation and trust have a positive relationship which can be shaped by the sincerity, hospitality, and competency demonstrated by residents, public, and private sector companies (Marinao et al., 2012), while it is also created through online social media platforms (Ebrahim, 2020; Pop et al., 2022). According to Corrêa and Gosling (2021), trust can be gained individually through personal experiences and the confidence perceived from the reliability, personal motivation, intention, and expected outcomes associated with their engagement in a particular setting. It should be noted that the level of trust relates to the perceived risk (Corrêa & Gosling, 2021; Darwish & Burns, 2019). In general, trust is perceived based on perceived sincerity (Filieri et al., 2015), trustworthiness (Filieri et al., 2015; Kim et al., 2008; Su et al., 2018, 2022; Zhai et al., 2020), reliability (Filieri et al., 2015; Su et al., 2022; Zhai et al., 2020), and integrity (Filieri et al., 2015; Zhai et al., 2020). In the e-commerce business, Kim et al. (2008) proposed that trust in an online seller among customers positively affects the seller's perceived value, which can indicate intentions to purchase online travel products. According to Kim et al. (2008), the trust attributes of online social media messages include message integrity, reliability, and trustworthiness. Meanwhile, Filieri et al. (2015), showed that the trust perceived from online contents has a significant influence on the recommendations and word of mouth among travelers. Many studies have indicated that trust correlates to destination satisfaction (Su et al., 2018), intentions to recommend (Filieri et al., 2015), intentions to share experiences (Filieri et al., 2015; Pop et al., 2022), intentions to use

social media (Kathuria et al., 2020; Zhai et al., 2020), intentions to purchase (Kim et al., 2008), and intentions to travel (Zhai et al., 2020). Therefore, based on the above relationships, the hypothesis is stated as follows:

H2. Trust positively affects the intention to conduct secondary crisis communication.

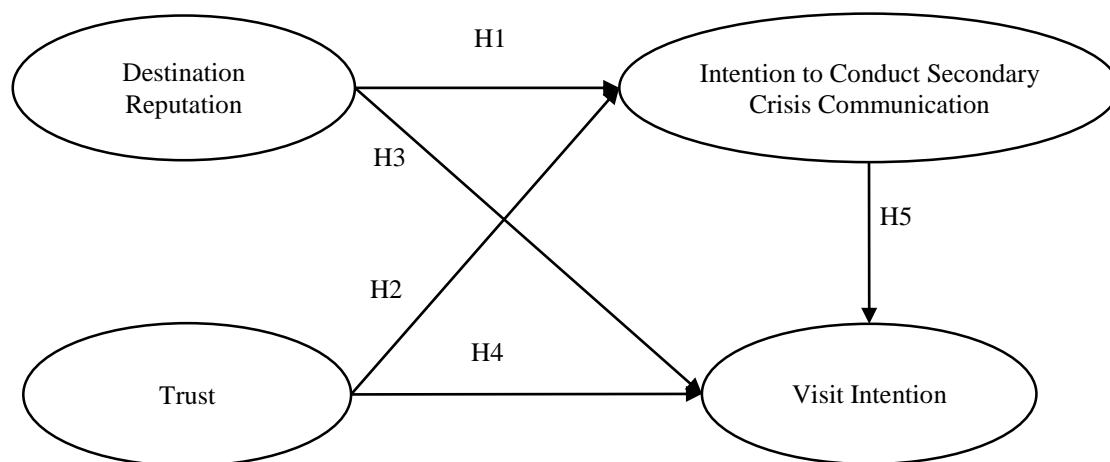
## 2.5 Visit Intentions

The concept of visit intentions incorporates both the interest and the likelihood of individuals visiting a particular destination (Wu, 2015). The COVID-19 pandemic considerably influences consumers' visit intentions as shown by Ru-Zhue et al. (2023), suggesting that customers' concern for COVID-19 is asserted to significantly impact their intent to revisit environmental-friendly accommodations. As aforementioned, crisis communication correlates to visit intentions, especially in the case of the post-pandemic Covid-19 crisis (Hassan & Soliman, 2021). Post-crisis communication efforts initially aim to communicate that destinations are ready to welcome tourists (Avraham & Ketter, 2008). Molinillo et al. (2018) point out that the destination management organizations (DMOs) are responsible for the destination image in boosting intentions to visit among tourists, either via traditional media, websites, or social media. The factors essential for enhancing visit intentions are the cognitive and affective images that have already been created for a certain period of time. Such images could serve as a firm foundation for destination reputation in addition to the destination reputation definition advocating the perception shaped by the long-term evaluation of destination impacts (Su et al., 2018). Several earlier studies affirm that visit intentions can be influenced by destination reputation (Artigas et al., 2015; Hassan & Soliman, 2021, Su et al., 2018, and Wu, 2015) as well as perceived trust (from online media) (Filiari et al., 2015; Kim et al., 2008; Su et al., 2018, 2022; Zhai et al., 2020). Accordingly, visit intentions can be viewed as the outcome of crisis communication targeted at potential tourists. The aforementioned knowledge regarding the relationships among antecedents was consequently formed into the following hypotheses:

H3. Destination reputation has a positive impact on visit intentions.

H4. Trust has a positive effect on visit intentions.

H5. Intentions to conduct secondary crisis communication positively influence visit intentions.



**Figure 1** Proposed Research Model

### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Measurement Items Development

The current study utilizes a quantitative approach to examine the hypotheses through an online questionnaire survey. The measurement items were developed based on previous research on the *patriotism and nationalism* crisis communication strategy proposed by Avraham and Ketter (2008). According to the previous research, different crisis communication strategies shared on social media are likely to influence intentions to conduct secondary crisis communication and visit intentions at different levels (Talawanich & Pongwat, 2023).

The cross-sectional questionnaire used in this research consisted of four constructs, namely *Destination Reputation (DR)*, *Trust (T)*, *the Intention to Conduct Secondary Crisis Communication (IC)*, and *Visit Intentions (VI)*. The four measurement items in the *destination reputation* construct were taken from Artigas et al. (2015), Su et al. (2018a; 2018b) and Wu (2015), featuring destination perception as being highly regarded, attractive, well-established, and having a good reputation. The three items in *trust* were suggested by Kim et al. (2008), Su et al. (2018), Su et al. (2022), and Zhai et al. (2020), including trust in message integrity, reliability, and general trustworthiness. The current study adapted three items proposed by Davis (1989), Schultz et al. (2011), Gaffar et al. (2022) and Zhai et al. (2020) to indicate how the respondents plan, intend, or are likely to respond to messages. Lastly, four indicators were adapted from Fakfare et al. (2020), Su et al. (2022), Wu (2016), and Zhai et al. (2020) in the *visit intention* construct, which represented the behavioral intention indicating whether the respondent was inclined, planning, or intending to visit the destination after seeing the messages. The screening questions were designed to enlist individuals of Thai nationality who did not live in Phuket as residents. Finally, the questionnaire comprised a total of 14 measurement items. The final section of the questionnaire contained participants' socio-demographic data. Participants were presented with a content mock-up, posted on the social media platform, Facebook, since this is the Thai people's most familiar and commonly used platform (We Are Social, 2023). This content was presented with the destination pictures and the messages portraying the circumstances of the Covid-19 pandemic crisis:

*"Thais who travel in Thailand are cool! Let Thai People be united to get through the crisis together and drive our economy. See, taste, support, shop, and share Phuket. #ThaitravelinthefabulousThailand"*

The overall questionnaire was evaluated by a panel of experts. Five experts specializing in tourism management, including three from the academic community and two from the industrial sector, were asked to evaluate the measurement items in the designed questionnaire. Following this expert evaluation, all 14 original items were retained. The items were assessed using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

#### 3.2 Sampling Design and Selection

Given the context of the Covid-19 pandemic crisis, this study aims to focus on domestic tourists in Thailand as the pandemic obviously caused inconvenience for international tourists to travel overseas. In this study, Phuket Province was chosen as the scenario described in the questionnaire. Questionnaire respondents, comprised of mature Thai citizens (aged 18 years old and above) who did not reside in Phuket.

Convenience sampling was employed as it offers benefits in terms of cost and time (Etikan et al., 2016). The minimum sample size appropriate for SEM to create the normality assumption is 400 (Hox & Bechger, 2007). However, Hair et al. (2014) recommend a larger

sample size of 500, especially for the complexity of a model which includes a substantial number of constructs. In conclusion, the target sample size for this research was set at 600 to confidently ensure at least 500 usable sets of questionnaire data.

The surveys were launched toward the end of October 2023, shared online via various social media platforms, e.g., the Facebook pages of beach destinations in Thailand, tourism-related contents and news on Youtube, Tiktok, and Twitter, in order to attract respondents who were interested in traveling in Thailand. A total of 600 responses were collected; after screening for disqualified responses, missing data, straight-line responses, and outliers, 546 valid responses were retained. Prior to the data analysis phase, a descriptive analysis was conducted to explore the characteristics of the respondents by using the IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. The findings in Table 1 reveal that the majority of the respondents were female, and either between the ages of 35 and 44 (25.3%) or 25 and 34 years of age (25.3%). A significant number of respondents (56.4%) had attained an undergraduate degree, and worked in the private sector (28%), or public sector respectively (26.9%). Most of the respondents earned a monthly income of 15,001–30,000 Thai baht (29.5%), while their hometowns were found to be in the Central region of Thailand (44.9%) with respondents travelling once or twice each year.

**Table 1** Demographic Information of the Respondents ( $n = 546$ )

Characteristics	Frequency ( $n = 546$ )	Percent (%)	Characteristics	Frequency ( $n = 546$ )	Percent (%)
<b>Age</b>			<b>Monthly income</b>		
18-24	132	24.2%	$\geq 15,000$	131	24.0%
25-34	138	25.3%	15,001–30,000	161	29.5%
35-44	148	27.1%	30,001–45,000	124	22.7%
45-54	78	14.3%	45,001–60,000	68	12.5%
55-65	41	7.5%	60,001–75,000	20	3.7%
65 and above	9	1.6%	$\geq 75,001$	42	7.7%
<b>Gender</b>			<b>Region</b>		
Male	176	32.2%	Central	245	44.9%
Female	361	66.1%	Northeastern	41	7.5%
Other	9	1.6%	Northern	95	17.4%
			Southern	165	30.2%
<b>Education</b>			<b>Domestic travel each year</b>		
Highschool	75	13.7%	Not more than 1	60	11.0%
Diploma	44	8.1%	1-2 times	227	41.6%
Undergraduate Degree	308	56.4%	3-5 times	160	29.3%
Graduate Degree	119	21.8%	More than 5 times	99	18.1%
<b>Occupation</b>					
Public Sector	147	26.9%			
Private Sector	153	28.0%			
Entrepreneur	121	22.2%			
Student	102	18.7%			
Unemployed	23	4.2%			

### 3.3 Data Analysis

#### 3.3.1 Confirmatory Factor Analysis and the Structural Equation Modeling

The collected data were examined by employing structural equation modeling (SEM) to investigate the impact of the selected crisis communication strategies on reputation perception, intentions to conduct secondary crisis communication, and visit intentions. The factor-based SEM was conducted by using AMOS to assess the latent variables through covariance structure analysis and to indicate the relationship between the variables and the common factors (Hair et al. 2014; Hair & Sarstedt, 2019; Leruksa et al., 2023). A normality test was conducted, which involved assessing standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis (Hox & Bechger, 2007). The relationship between destination reputation and the observed variables (trust, intention to conduct the secondary crisis communication, and visit intention) was assessed through Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). Model fit indices, including the chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) to degrees of freedom (df), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), Normed Fit Index (NFI), and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), were reported.

## 4. RESULTS

Normality test results showed that all values were acceptable according to the recommended thresholds, which are between -2 and 2 for skewness and -7 and +7 for kurtosis (Hair et al., 2010), thus, confirming the normality of the distribution. All factor loadings of the measurement items were above the cut-off value at 0.5 and significant at  $p < 0.000$ , indicating the validity of the measures as shown in Table 2, such that no item was removed. To ensure the internal consistency, Cronbach's alpha of each construct was calculated (see Table 2). The corresponding results ranged from 0.899 (Intentions to Conduct secondary Crisis Communication), 0.870 (Visit Intentions), 0.862 (Trust), 0.85 (Destination Reputation), indicating that all items were consistent as the recommended threshold of Cronbach's alpha is 0.70 (Nunnally, 1978).

**Table 2** Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the Measurement Model Results

Type	Items	Factor Loadings	t-value	Cronbach's alpha
<i>Factor</i>	<i>Destination Reputation (DR)</i>			0.850
	D1 Phuket is a highly regarded destination.	0.763	17.701	
	D2 Phuket is an attractive destination.	0.753	17.457	
	D3 Phuket is a well-established destination.	0.789	18.334	
	D4 Phuket has a very good reputation.	0.760	N/A	
<i>Factor</i>	<i>Trust (T)</i>			0.862
	T1 This travel public relations message has integrity.	0.795	21.177	
	T2 This travel public relations message is reliable.	0.832	22.530	
	T3 This travel public relations message is trustworthy.	0.840	N/A	
<i>Factor</i>	<i>Intention to Conduct secondary Crisis Communication (IC)</i> (i.e., share/repost, tell others about, and leave a reaction to the message.)			0.899

**Table 2** (Continued)

Type	Items	Factor Loadings	t-value	Cronbach's alpha
IC1	I plan to conduct secondary crisis communication.	0.852	24.991	
IC2	I intend to conduct secondary crisis communication.	0.860	25.875	
IC3	I predict I will conduct secondary crisis communication.	0.882	N/A	
<i>Factor</i>	<i>Visit Intention (VI)</i>			0.870
VI1	I intend to visit Phuket.	0.789	N/A	
VI2	If I have time, I will visit Phuket.	0.813	20.330	
VI3	I am interested in visiting Phuket in the future.	0.803	20.039	
VI4	My likelihood of visiting Phuket is high.	0.764	18.853	

Composite reliability (CR) was measured to test the consistency of the measurement items for SEM. The CR scores were 0.90 (T), 0.86 (VI), 0.85 (DR), and 0.82 (IC), all of which were greater than the cut-off value of 0.7 (Nunnally, 1978), confirming the reliability of each construct. The average variance extracted (AVE) was assessed to examine the discriminant validity for each variable and the value should be above the squared correlation estimate (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Table 3 shows that the AVE of DR (0.590), Trust (0.680), IC (0.75), and VI (0.63) variables satisfied the recommended threshold, indicating the constructs' validity.

**Table 3** Testing Composite Reliability, Convergent Validity, and Mean

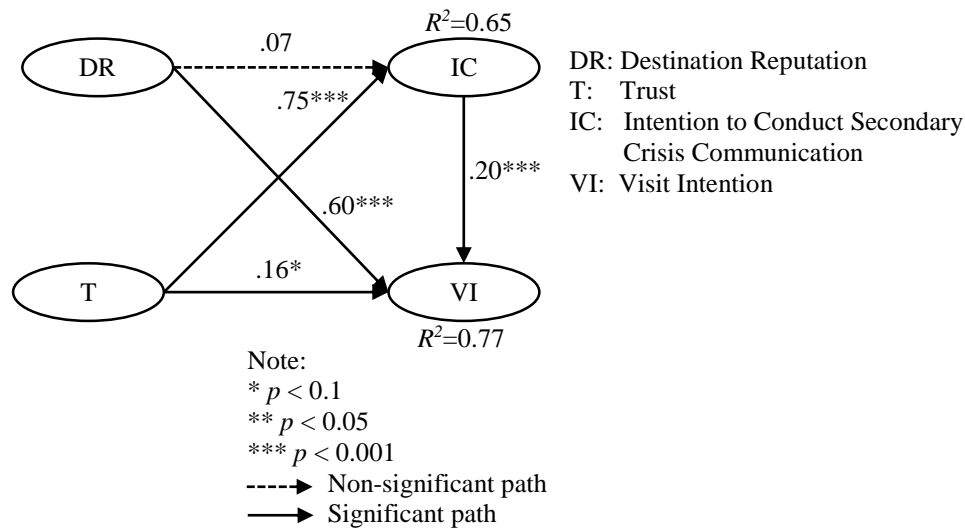
	DR(DR <sup>2</sup> )	T(T <sup>2</sup> )	IC(IC <sup>2</sup> )	VI(VI <sup>2</sup> )
DR	1			
Trust	0.50(0.25)	1		
IC	0.55(0.30)	0.48(0.23)	1	
VI	0.73(0.53)	0.51(0.26)	0.63(0.40)	1
CR	0.85(0.72)	0.90(0.81)	0.82(0.66)	0.86(0.7)
AVE	0.590	0.680	0.75	0.63
Mean	4.99	4.76	4.51	4.40
Std. Dev.	1.33	1.17	1.16	1.28

*Note.* CR=Composite Reliability, AVE=Average Variance Extracted. Mean values were based on a 5-point Likert scale. Correlation was significant at the  $p < 0.000$  level (2-tailed).

According to the goodness-of-fit indices from CFA, the proposed measurement and structural model appear to fit (see Table 4). The results indicate that the measurement model has a good fit as all values satisfy their respective thresholds. The Normed Chi-square was calculated to be 3.513, which is less than the recommended cut-off of 5 (Marsh & Hocevar, 1985) (Chi-square=249.456; df= 71). Meanwhile, the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) was less than 0.08 (0.068), while the comparative fit index (CFI), normed fit index (NFI), and GFI were all above 0.90 (Hair et al., 2010; Hu & Bentler, 1999) (CFI = 0.729, NFI = 0.952, and GFI = 0.934).

**Table 4** Overall Model Fit

Chi-square	df	p-value	RMSEA	CFI	NFI	GFI
249.456	71	0.000	0.068	0.965	0.952	0.934

**Figure 2** Results for Factor-Based Structural Equation Modeling Analysis

The measurement model was tested, yielding the results as shown in Figure 2; this confirms all hypotheses, excluding H1. According to the standardized  $\beta$  coefficients shown in Figure 1, destination reputation (H3) has a statistically significant positive effect ( $\beta = .60$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) on visit intentions ( $R^2=0.77$ ), while it has a small positive effect ( $\beta = .070$ ) on intentions to conduct secondary crisis communication (H1), which is not significant ( $p = 0.222$ ). Trust, on the other hand, posed a significant direct and positive effect on ( $\beta = .75$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) intentions to conduct secondary crisis communication (H2:  $\beta=.75$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $R^2=0.65$ ) and visit intentions (H4:  $\beta = 0.16$ ,  $p < 0.1$ ). Finally, intentions to conduct secondary crisis communication has statistically significant positive effect on visit intentions (H5:  $\beta = 0.20$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). The associated  $R^2$  values are 77% (visit intentions) and 65% (intentions to conduct secondary crisis communication). Thus, the large extent to which the relevant variance of these two dependent variables can be explained by their antecedents, as implied by the  $R^2$  values exceeding the cut-off point of 10% (Falk & Miller, 1992). In conclusion, the results demonstrate that the current research hypotheses, H2, H3, H4, and H5, are supported. Further explanation is presented in the next section.

## 5. DISCUSSIONS

The findings suggest that the two behavioral intentions (i.e., visit intentions and intentions to conduct secondary crisis communication) can be created via the implementation of a *patriotism and nationalism* strategy, based on certain conditions. In efforts to influence audiences' decisions to be likely to conduct secondary crisis communication (e.g., sharing, reposting, recommending the message to others, and leaving a reaction to the message), a sense of trust in the messages must be emphasized. The results also reveal that when communicating messages related to *patriotism and nationalism*, a high level of trust in such messages increases the intention to conduct secondary crisis communication. This notion is in line with previous

research findings affirming the positive impact of trust on certain forms of secondary crisis communication such as intentions to recommend and to share experiences (Filieri et al., 2015; Pop et al., 2022), travelers' recommendations, word of mouth (Filieri et al., 2015), as well as intentions to engage in social media communication platforms (Kathuria et al., 2020; Zhai et al., 2020). In further explanation, the selected communication channel for this research, online social media, can serve as a channel to successfully generate trust (Ebrahim, 2020; Pop et al., 2022). Furthermore, a higher intention to conduct secondary crisis communication, among others, could stem from the notion that trust is the main variable tremendously impacting behaviors, when conducted interpersonally and in an intergroup manner (Golembiewski & McConkie, 1975), this matches the actions of secondary crisis communication (e.g., sharing, reposting, recommending the message to others, and leaving a reaction to the message).

These findings could effectively guide destination management organizations (DMOs) and other relevant stakeholders in charge of promoting destinations in the post-pandemic phase, encouraging a higher level of secondary crisis communication. Given that trust in this study is reflected through the three concepts of message integrity, reliability, and trustworthiness, as suggested by Kim et al. (2008), destination marketers should make certain that all these elements are well presented in their *patriotism and nationalism* messages. Furthermore, message trustworthiness can be enhanced by increasing source credibility (Pop et al., 2022) such as through the use of opinion leaders in sharing online information (Metzger et al., 2010). It is also argued that social media influencers and consumer-generated content does help audiences to perceive a higher degree of trustworthiness, when compared to official tourist sites, mass media, and travel agents (Ip et al., 2012; Pop et al., 2022). This notion may pose a challenge to DMOs that use their official sites as the main communication channels. However, DMOs should consider employing their own social media sites in collaboration with opinion leaders or social media influencers to create *patriotism and nationalism* contents supporting domestic tourism at their specific destinations. Such contents should mainly appear on the social media of the collaborating opinion leaders or social media influencers as primary channels for building relationships with the use of bloggers, paid sponsorship, and reviews (Hayes & Carr, 2015). In addition, to the extent possible, the linkage between the contents posted on the social media of collaborating opinion leaders and social media influencers, and those of the DMOs' own social media should be established, e.g., the DMOs' reference links added in the contents posted by opinion leaders, social media influencers, or these leaders and influencers should be invited as interviewees in interviewing sessions posted on the DMOs' social media sites. Via these approaches, a higher degree or level of content trustworthiness can be guaranteed. On the other hand, any activities that lessen or jeopardize the creditability and expertise of the collaborating opinion leaders and influencers should also be avoided (e.g., blocking or limiting comments, conducting irrelevant conversations) (Hayes & Carr, 2015). Additionally, audience members and users of the DMOs' social media sites can become part of a trustworthy source of information if their reputation as reviewers can be revealed to other audience members and users (Cheung et al., 2009). Therefore, encouraging such audience members and users, with some incentives or recognition, to share the *patriotism and nationalism* messages in the DMOs' social media sites in which the reviewers' reputation levels are provided, can be a valid option for DMOs in their efforts to increase message trustworthiness.

Message integrity and reliability, are concepts employed to guide practical implications as follows. The concept of message integrity is adapted from the concept of key message integrity stating an organization's undiminished and unimpaired key messages after being processed in an intermediary's source (Carroll et al., 2014). Meanwhile, message reliability is the concept of reliable communication, which is here applied and taken to refer to systems possessing the means through which the proper data transfer is conducted, with a guarantee of the actual data arrival (Heermann & Pavlagos, 2005). Based on the integrity and reliability

concepts shown above, it is concluded that messages should remain identical to the original version after being delivered through any source, and such messages must be properly transferred. Therefore, it is recommended that DMOs carefully select high quality, trustable communication channels which keep the *patriotism and nationalism* messages identical to those originally created by the message sender, and which ensure that the messages are properly delivered to all audiences. In this case, a business account or package on the selected social media sites (e.g., Facebook's meta business suite, and Instagram's business account) could be another useful choice for increasing the system capacity to heighten the message integrity and reliability previously mentioned.

The findings also reveal multiple influential factors (i.e., destination reputation, intentions to conduct secondary crisis communication, and trust) that affect visit intentions in diverse degrees, and, thus, deserve different priorities when attempting to enhance the level of visit intentions. Starting from destination reputation, which is claimed to hold the strongest degree of positive impact on visit intentions, this confirmed relationship echoes the previously proposed relationships of certain studies between destination reputation and behavioral intentions as related to tourism consumption (i.e., visit intentions and revisit intentions) (Artigas et al., 2015; Hassan & Soliman, 2021; Su et al., 2018; Wu, 2015). To maximize the benefits to be gained from this causal relationship, it is suggested that the destination image be managed by DMOs to augment visit intentions, employing various media (Molinillo et al., 2018). The image, both cognitive and affective, does help pave the way for destination reputation (Su et al., 2018). Thus, it is assumed that the destination image perceived by potential visitors forms the destination reputation, which in turn, enhances the visit intentions. Moreover, another major reason why destination reputation poses the strongest effect on visit intentions lies in the notion that forming destination reputation requires various elements and takes considerable time. To further elaborate, destination reputation occurs when a destination is perceived through the long-term appraisal of the destination's impacts upon, for instance, finance, society, and environment (Su et al., 2018). In addition, the elements relevant to destination reputation include destination familiarity, respect, and being well-known, the development of which requires a very long period of time (Artigas et al., 2015). As previously stated, it can be assumed that potential domestic tourists must have previously formed their own destination reputation about Phuket, before being exposed to the *patriotism and nationalism* messages. The strong reputation of Phuket is supported by the fact that Phuket has been significantly popular among tourists, is ranked as the most booked destination among Thai tourists (Manager Online News, 2021), and is the most overcrowded destination in the world during the post-pandemic period (Kelly, 2023). Given that certain levels of destination reputation have previously been accumulated, the use of the *patriotism and nationalism* strategy messages could function as a part of the overall destination reputation establishment mechanisms in the mind of potential domestic tourists. Moreover, the impact of the cumulative destination reputation is ranked the highest.

It is implied that employing a *patriotism and nationalism* strategy requires the consideration of a previously established destination reputation, as the highest priority. In highly reputable destinations, the visit intention seems to be easily enhanced with the use of a *patriotism and nationalism* message, while destinations that are lesser known, or suffer from a negative reputation or image, require more time and effort to strengthen their reputation through other destination marketing strategies, apart from a *patriotism and nationalism* strategy. Other marketing efforts may include claiming a 'business as usual' strategy (Avraham & Bierman, 2022), adding visuals to contents, using stars and celebrities, linking the destinations to travelers themselves (Schuldt, 2022), social media marketing (Yan & Wang, 2015), and promoting alternative tourism products that are less dependent on the innate natural resources of destinations (e.g., food [Du Rand et al., 2013], conventions [Crouch & Weber,

2014], and sporting events [Hede, 2005]). This is also supported by the notion that the country's image should be altered with a holistic strategy, rather than with the sole use of marketing communication (Freire, 2011). A larger variety of destination marketing strategies can increase the chance that the destination reputation can be accumulatively improved, which in turn, can help augment visit intentions.

The findings also suggest that intentions to conduct secondary crisis communication is the second-ranked influential factor positively contributing to increased visit intentions. This supports the role asserted in previous studies which emphasizes that positive behavior, such as visit intentions, can be stimulated by intentions to further conduct online communication (i.e. Abubakar & Ilkan, 2016, Filieri & McLeay, 2013). The explanations of why the social media engagement is likely to lead to consumption intentions or actual consumption are as follows: When people are more involved in the contents provided on social media, they tend to consider such contents more profoundly (e.g., decoding the message and solving the puzzle), which in turn enhances their purchase intentions (Angell et al., 2020; Santos et al., 2023). It is also supported that consumers who are more experienced in, more susceptible to, and more engaged in social media are likely to increase their purchasing behavior for the products shown in social media (Kumar et al., 2016; Muralidharan & Men, 2015). Correspondingly, an international brand shows its product advertising pictures in the Facebook feed for the purpose of creating customer awareness and stimulating purchase decisions when customers happen to be in front of product shelves (Adobe Express, 2022).

These findings offer implications related to the use of social media engagement as an indicator for success in stimulating visit intentions in the context of destination marketing. Although the real return on investment in social media increasingly spent by organizations is difficult to be measured (Yogesh & Yesha, 2014) as only a few studies have investigated the types of digital consumer engagement that relates to purchase frequency (Halloran & Lutz, 2021), the findings of this research address this challenge. As suggested in the findings, intentions to conduct secondary crisis communication related to the *patriotism and nationalism* message is one part of the positive contribution mechanisms which bring about increased visit intentions. It is consequently recommended that DMOs consistently consider and assess the social media engagement rate occurring with the *patriotism and nationalism* messages posted on social media, as it is one among many other valid indicators in predicting possible visit intentions. In other words, it is assumed that the higher the social media engagement is, the better the visit intentions tends to be. Furthermore, DMOs should customize the target social media engagement level, based on the types of social media and the status of their destinations. For example, newly established destinations (comparable to small businesses) demand a good social media engagement rate, defined as the total engagements occurring with a post divided by the total number of the post's impressions, at 5% on Facebook, while a highly reputable destination requires 1%-2% on Facebook, 3% on Instagram, and 1% on Twitter (Adobe Express, 2022).

Trust is suggested to be an influential factor that significantly affects visit intentions in the least degree, compared to the other two factors (i.e., destination reputation and intentions to conduct secondary crisis communication). This confirmed positive causal relationship echoes the suggestions about the role of trust in the contents created by social media influencers (Pop et al., 2022), online sellers (Kim et al., 2008), and by destinations (Abubakar & Ilkan, 2016), in increasing visitors' and customers' behavioral intentions. It is further explained that when social media users form trust towards a social media influencer, their desire to visit the destination recommended by such influencer, and their intention to search for more information related to the destination rises (Pop et al., 2022). Similar logic can be applied to the condition in which the *patriotism and nationalism* messages are perceived trustable, and thus, visit intentions tend to increase, as shown in the current research context. Considering the

implications gained from these findings, although trust is rated as the least priority when attempting to increase visit intentions, DMOs should not overlook the enhancement of trust towards the communicated *patriotism and nationalism* message. The reason for this is the two-folded outcome of creating a high level of trust, comprising visit intentions and intentions to conduct secondary crisis communication. In other words, investing in enhancing the level of trust is worthwhile because both desirable outcomes can be achieved as subsequently explained. The findings suggest that an increase in trust positively impacts intentions to conduct secondary crisis communication. Visit intentions can be improved with two approaches: 1) developing a high level of trust, and 2) increasing intentions to conduct secondary crisis communication that have previously been enhanced by trust.

The only unsupported hypothesis relates to the positive effect of destination reputation on intentions to conduct secondary crisis communication. Thus, this result contradicts previous studies which claim the existence of a relationship between destination reputation and a form of secondary crisis communication, namely word of mouth (i.e., Seric et al., 2023; Su et al., 2014). A possible reason to explain this result could be the characteristics of both variables. As previously discussed, destination reputation demands significant time and a number of elements to be built in the minds of tourists (Artigas et al., 2015; Su et al., 2018). However, the intention to conduct secondary crisis communication, defined as the potential to share or react to received messages (Shultz et al., 2011), can be performed instantly without taking much time, especially in the context of communicating the *patriotism and nationalism* message via the social media adopted in this research. Furthermore, the use of unpredictable real-time content, defined as the content communicated unpredictably, unknowingly and non-anticipatingly, can draw consumers' attention, and then, urge these consumers to engage in a more rapid manner (Santos et al., 2022). It is assumed that unpredictable real-time contents match with the *patriotism and nationalism* strategy used after the pandemic, considered as an unusual incident. Therefore, quick engagement is expected as an outcome. As previously mentioned, the tendency to conduct secondary crisis communication could be quickly stimulated with the sole use of *patriotism and nationalism* content in an unpredictable manner, without any influence from the destination reputation that requires considerable time.

This unsupported hypothesis implies that in order to encourage high intentions to conduct secondary crisis communication without concern to increase visit intentions, DMOs can apply a *patriotism and nationalism* strategy in their respective destinations, regardless of the level of destination reputation perceived by the audience, as long as the message is perceived as highly trustable. Doing so does not mean that gaining a higher level of visit intentions is not important. In addition, increasing the level of rapid content-dependable engagement can serve as a foundation for building a higher level of customer involvement and self-brand congruence (Santos et al., 2022). Therefore, marketers of newly established destinations and those which have recently faced a negative image challenge, could still undertake a *patriotism and nationalism* strategy, initially aiming to draw attention and gain a rapid response or secondary crisis communication (e.g., sharing, reposting, telling others about the messages, or leaving a reaction to the message). Then, a deeper level of consumer engagement, such as visit intentions, could be built from the attention gained and rapid responses at a later point.

An additional implication to be noted relates to the negative side of secondary crisis communication. According to the findings, as long as an audience feels trust in the *patriotism and nationalism* messages, the intention to share or repost them online, tell others, and leave a reaction to the message tends to be high, regardless of how the destination reputation is perceived. If the use of *patriotism and nationalism* messages is not well designed or not well communicated, so much so that the messages are misinterpreted, disliked, or resisted by the audience, they are also likely to negatively conduct their secondary crisis communication to

others. This is also supported by the fact that the negative emotions formed by an audience regarding shared issues, is more likely to lead to conducting secondary crisis communication, when compared to an audience of neutral feelings (Chen & Sakamoto, 2013). In summary, any *patriotism and nationalism* message conveyed by a trustable source of information like DMOs, or other content creators working with DMOs should be well designed to ensure that only good word of mouth is to be created afterwards, to ensure that it does not cause further reputational harm to the respective destinations.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study addressing the research objectives, within the context in which the *patriotism and nationalism* strategy is adopted, are as follows: First, destination reputation is confirmed to yield positive effects only to visit intentions while it does not influence intentions to conduct secondary crisis communication. Differently, for the second research objective, trust is confirmed to be an influential factor affecting visit intentions, and becomes the only antecedent of intentions to conduct secondary crisis communication. Third, a causal relationship is confirmed between the two behavioral intentions, from the intention to conduct secondary crisis communication to the visit intention.

In addition, this research yields three theoretical implications. First, the findings can enlarge the body of knowledge related to destination crisis communication, especially through the use of *patriotism and nationalism* strategies. The *patriotism and nationalism* strategy that has previously been studied mostly through the lens of the DMOs or message senders (e.g., Avraham, 2020b, Avraham & Ketter, 2017, Taecharungroj & Avraham, 2022), leaving the perspectives of the message recipients or potential tourists understudied. The previously mentioned knowledge gap could be addressed by the findings of this research, proposing the working model to be adopted in explaining the relationships between the two attitude constructs (i.e., destination reputation and trust) and the two behavioral intentions (i.e., visit intentions and intentions to conduct secondary crisis communication), on the condition that a *patriotism and nationalism* strategy is utilized. Second, although the construct of ‘intentions to conduct secondary crisis communication’ has been considerably explored in the communication field, it has been very much understudied in the tourism field. Based on the authors’ knowledge, this research is considered one of only a few studies which incorporate the construct of ‘intentions to conduct secondary crisis communication’ into a model which also incorporates other constructs existing in the tourism field (i.e., destination reputation, visit intentions, and trust). This combination of constructs was meticulously performed in order to better address the current phenomenon in which the tourism discipline is required to further investigate the use of crisis communication strategies via social media, to combat the recent pandemic that has significantly altered tourism consumption patterns. In summary, the insights into explaining potential tourist perceptions and intentions could be revealed through the presentations of the four constructs selected from both the tourism and crisis communication disciplines. Considering the third theoretical implication, this research provides an additional empirical study to address the literature gap related to the scarcity of research focusing on the adoption of *patriotism and nationalism* strategies in the recently emerging COVID-19 crisis. With this addition, previous destination crisis communication frameworks (e.g., Armstrong & Ritchie, 2008; Avraham & Ketter, 2008; Avraham, 2021b; Bierman & Walbeek, 2011 Carlsen & Hughes, 2008; Walter & Mairs, 2012) can be confirmed in the sense that their proposed *patriotism and nationalism* strategies become valid in a greater variety of recent crisis contexts.

In terms of practical implications, the findings serve as guidelines of crisis communication, for adoption after crisis situations to relevant tourism stakeholders, primarily to DMOs or any tourism policy makers who are primarily responsible for destination marketing

and ultimately destination survival, as the governmental support granted to travel-related businesses is crucial for their survival throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and previous crises (Chutipongdech et al., 2023). The current study supports that *patriotism and nationalism* strategies as applicable and effective, within the Thai context, as far as in terms of increasing visit intentions and intentions to conduct secondary crisis communication. As a consequence, the DMOs of Thailand and other countries that have something in common with Thailand could consider *patriotism and nationalism* strategies as a possible option to speed up destination recovery after the pandemic. Moreover, the findings further suggest that in the case that a *patriotism and nationalism* strategy is implemented, questions arise regarding elements (i.e., destination reputation and trust) which should be seriously taken into consideration and paid significant attention, elements which should be given top priority in order to achieve the desirable outcomes (i.e., visit intentions, intentions to conduct secondary crisis communication). This is even more crucial as each destination possesses its own limitations (e.g., being newly established, previously facing a negative image, lack of budget, or lack of crisis communication expertise and professionals). Thus, the DMOs of various destinations could target different crisis communication outcomes that suit their destination's current conditions, such as initiating consumption, continuation of consumption during a crisis, continuation of consumption after a crisis, changing consumption characteristics (Avraham & Ketter, 2008). The two outcomes studied in this research relate to initiating consumption (possibly giving more importance to intentions to conduct secondary crisis communication) and continuation of consumption after a crisis (possibly focusing more on visit intentions) to different degrees. Thus, the DMOs of each specific destination could choose to adopt certain suggestions given in the discussion section which match the outcomes that they most desire.

One limitation of this research relates to its nature as a context-based study in which the direct generalization of findings across contexts may not be possible. However, since a considerable number of destinations have been negatively impacted by the recent pandemic or are prone to be affected by other pandemics in the future, the need for attracting domestic tourists has remained highly visible due to its likely possibility for recurrence in the long run. Thus, future research focusing on this issue could be required to pay serious attention to this fundamental issue in other specific contexts and destinations. The findings and the constructs employed in this study could also serve as a foundation for future research which aims to further investigate the mechanisms occurring in the minds of domestic tourists, when being communicated to via a *patriotism and nationalism* strategy. Hence, the main suggestion for future studies is to customize the constructs to be adopted in order to better match the conditions of their specific destinations, the cultures of their domestic tourists, and the crisis communication channels currently in use.

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