A Conceptual Model of Factors Influencing Destination Choice among Chinese Tourists Visiting New Zealand

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Abstract
This conceptual paper aims to identify and explain the critical factors influencing Chinese tourists' behavioral intention model when choosing New Zealand as a travel destination. The study primarily focuses on understanding tourists' motivations for selecting New Zealand and their decision-making processes in choosing travel destinations. Through this conceptual model, a comprehensive understanding of Chinese tourists' travel motivations and the key factors influencing their choice of New Zealand as a travel destination was obtained. The proposed underpinning theories, research gaps, proposed hypotheses and conceptual model provide valuable insights into the motivations and behaviors of Chinese tourists choosing New Zealand as a travel destination.
Keywords: Destination Choice, Travel Motivations, Digitization Image, Chinese Tourists

Introduction
Understanding tourist destination choice is a critical and timely area of study in the field of tourism research, as it offers essential insights into the motivations, preferences, and behavioral patterns of travelers. This understanding is crucial not only for enriching academic theory but also for informing tourism policy, destination marketing, and experience design in real-world contexts (Douglas et al., 2023).

The study of Chinese outbound tourists, in particular, holds significant importance. As one of the most influential tourist segments globally, Chinese travelers bring with them distinct cultural values, travel expectations, and behavioral patterns. Their destination choices are influenced by a range of factors such as geographical proximity, cultural familiarity, natural beauty, and the availability of high-quality services and infrastructure (Hung et al., 2021). New Zealand has become an attractive destination for Chinese tourists due to its stunning natural landscapes, cultural experiences, and safe, high-standard tourism environment (Hussain & Fuste, 2021). Academic research on the motivations and decision-making processes of Chinese tourists in New Zealand is limited, highlighting the need for a targeted study.

From a theorical perspective, this study will explore Chinese tourists' destination choices in New Zealand using the push and pull theory. It will extend the S-O-R model by introducing digitization image, market attributes, and tourism experience as mediators between motivation and destination choice (Salsabila, 2020). The framework will be based on established concepts of internal motivations and external attractions, and will consider the influence of digitalization and cognitive perceptions in the decision-making process (Salsabila, 2020). This research will aim to fill a gap in existing literature and provide insights for both academia and the tourism industry.

From a practical perspective, the findings are expected to benefit multiple stakeholders. Tourism marketers and government agencies in New Zealand will be able to develop more targeted, data-driven promotional strategies, enhancing the appeal of destinations such as Auckland, Christchurch, and Wellington. The tourism and hospitality sectors will be better equipped to align services with visitor expectations and deliver more personalized experiences (Vargas-Sevalle et al., 2020). Furthermore, the research aims to support sustainable tourism development through positive digital branding, long-term visitor engagement, and improved destination loyalty (Yung et al., 2021).

Ultimately, this study will offer both theoretical enrichment and practical guidance, making it valuable for academics, destination managers, and policymakers. Its contribution lies not only in extending existing models but also in providing actionable insights that enhance the appeal and competitiveness of New Zealand as a destination for Chinese tourists.

The objective of this paper is to develop and evaluate a conceptual model by:
i) reviewing the theoretical foundations underpinning the study;
ii) examining the relationships among digitization image, travel motivation, tourism experience, market attractiveness, and destination choice behavior;
iii) analyzing the links between market attributes, digitization image, and tourism experience; and
iv) investigating the mediating effects of market attributes, digitization image, and tourism experience on the relationship between travel motivation and destination choice behavior among Chinese tourists visiting New Zealand.

Literature Review
Theory Underpinning the Study
There are two theories proposed as the foundation of the study, which are discussed in this section. These theories provide the basis for developing the proposed conceptual model of the research.

Stimulus-Organism-Response Theory (S-O-R)
The Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) theory, which was proposed by Woodworth (Buxbaum, 2016), focuses on delineating how the organism mediates the relationship between the stimulus and response and extended by subsequent researchers Mehrabian and Russel (Buxbaum, 2016), serves as a foundational framework for comprehending the intricacies of human behavior. Building upon Pavlov's classical stimulus-response theory, the S-O-R model explores the complex interactions between external stimuli, individual organisms, and their resulting behavioral responses. Stimuli encompass various environmental triggers such as

marketing campaigns, social media, advertising, product features, or interpersonal interactions. Organisms, representing individuals, respond to these stimuli based on personal characteristics, emotional states, cognitive processes, and situational contexts. These responses, whether positive (e.g., product purchase) or negative (e.g., behavior avoidance), constitute reactions. The SOR model posits that stimuli activate an individual's cognitive and emotional states, driving subsequent behavioral responses. It acknowledges the internal appraisals—perceptions, emotions, and cognitive processes—that underlie observable behavior. The model's flexibility allows researchers to adapt it to diverse study environments while adhering to its core theory. In this study, a novel model of destination choice extends the SOR framework by incorporating three mediating variables: digitization image, market attributes, and tourism experience. Here, travel motivation serves as the stimulus, while digitization images, market attraction, and tourism experience represent the organism, culminating in destination choice as the response. Researchers have applied the SOR model across various contexts, including social media engagement, travel behavior, healthcare, online hotel booking behavior, online sellers' reuse behavior, and destination selection behavior(Chang et al., 2011). By bridging the gap between stimuli, individual cognitive processes, and observable behavior, the SOR approach accommodates both cognitive and affective components, thus offering valuable insights into human decision-making processes.

Push and Pull Theory
Tourist motivation, as conceptualized by Dann in 1977 (Uysal et al., 2009), is intricately shaped by push and pull factors. Push factors, rooted in intrinsic desires, drive individuals' inclination to travel, while pull factors, arising from external allure, influence destination selection. Dann delineates seven types of travel motivations: interpersonal connections, destination attractiveness, novel experiences, categorization motives, diverse individual needs, experiential influences, and self-discovery. Crompton (Uysal et al., 2009) builds upon Dann's push-pull theory, refining motivational types into push motives (e.g., escape, self-exploration, leisure) and pull motives (e.g., new experiences, knowledge pursuit). These theories provide a comprehensive framework for understanding tourism behavior, emphasizing the role of motivation in satisfying personal needs (Dean & Suhartanto, 2019). Among various theories, the push-pull model remains prominent in elucidating tourist motivations, with push factors encompassing relaxation, escapism, and socialization, and pull factors comprising tangible and intangible aspects of destination attractiveness (Nikjoo & Ketabi, 2015). The interplay between push and pull factors underscores the complexity of tourist decision-making, with creative attraction managers tasked with aligning destination attributes with visitor motivations (Katsikari et al., 2020). Understanding these motivations is crucial for enhancing visitor experiences, influencing perceptions of quality, and shaping intentions to revisit, particularly in creative tourism settings.

Push factors, as elucidated by Crompton and Dann, represent internal motivations prompting travel desires, often tied to intangible aspects like personal needs and interests (Uysal et al., 2009). These factors, including Novelty Knowledge and Experience, Escape, Rest and Relaxation, and Social Interaction, collectively influence travelers' destination decisions, aligning with their desires and requirements. Conversely, pull factors, defined by Dann and emphasized by Prayag and Ryan (2011), are external forces attracting individuals to specific destinations after the decision to travel has been made. The pull motivation factors include: Heritage and Culture, Natural Scenery, Weather and Climate, Safety and Security,

Accessibility, Cost, and Entertainment are prominent pull factors influencing destination choices. These factors collectively contribute to a destination's attractiveness, shaping travelers' decisions to visit, with promotional efforts and destination branding further enhancing pull factors.

Key Variables in the Study
Based on the underpinning theories, several key variables are identified in developing the conceptual model of the study.

Destination Choice
Destination choice is the process by which travelers decide on their travel destinations, influenced by both environmental and individual factors. Environmental factors include culture, family, lifestyle, and destination attributes, while individual traits such as motivation and past experiences play a significant role. Social networks, destination image, and personal characteristics also impact the decision-making process. Various factors like risk perception, psychological factors, and socioeconomic variables, including age, income, and prior travel experiences, contribute to the choice (Mutinda & Mayaka, 2012; Pan et al., 2021; Karl et al., 2020).

Travel Motivation
Travel motivation refers to the psychological and behavioral factors that drive individuals to travel, including desires for new experiences, relaxation, cultural exploration, and adventure. Theories such as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and the Push-Pull model help categorize these motivations, which are crucial for destination marketing and understanding tourist behavior (Li & Cai, 2012; Su et al., 2020). Chinese tourists are motivated by a combination of economic factors, cultural exploration, and natural appeal. Economic considerations, such as disposable income and favorable exchange rates, influence their travel preferences. Nature-based activities, cultural experiences, and social dynamics, including family travel and choosing destinations with significant Chinese communities, also shape their decisions (Jiang et al., 2020; Zhang & Peng, 2014; Jin et al., 2019).

Digitization Image
Digitization in tourism involves integrating digital technologies like online booking, digital marketing, and emerging technologies such as augmented reality to enhance customer experiences and operational efficiency. It shapes interactions between tourists, service providers, and destinations, influencing industry competitiveness and sustainability (Su et al., 2020; Kabakchieva, 2021).

Tourism Experience
Tourism experience is essential for destination success, affecting reputation, loyalty, and economic growth. Positive experiences lead to repeat visits, recommendations, and social media engagement, boosting tourism revenue. Satisfied tourists contribute to long-term sustainable growth through word-of-mouth promotion and emotional connections with destinations (Kong & Chang, 2016; Dagustani et al., 2018).

Marketing Attributes
Marketing attributes include features that attract tourists, such as distinctive attractions, accommodation quality, dining services, transportation convenience, and cultural activities. These elements influence travelers' decisions by enhancing the overall destination appeal (Mandic & Petric, 2021; Kong & Chang, 2016).

Findings and Analysis
Literature Gaps
The examination of the current literature in the realm of international tourism, particularly concerning Chinese tourists' visits to New Zealand, has brought forth significant gaps that necessitate more thorough investigation. These voids underscore areas where ongoing research lacks depth or neglects crucial elements essential for a holistic comprehension of travel motivation, market attraction, and destination selection behavior. While existing literature on Chinese tourism does exist, a dearth of research specifically delves into the distinctive motivations of Chinese tourists visiting New Zealand. Previous research has mostly concentrated on more general tourism situations, resulting in a significant knowledge vacuum about the unique elements that motivate Chinese tourists in New Zealand.

The current literature often accentuates satisfaction as a pivotal factor in repeated visits and destination loyalty. However, there is a noticeable dearth in the in-depth exploration of other concerns as a critical determinant of destination loyalty, especially among Chinese tourists. Recognizing how other perceptions impact loyalty becomes paramount, particularly in light of researches (Wang et al., 2017) findings that highlight tourists' prioritization of safety in destination choices.

Another lacuna in the literature pertains to the insufficient exploration of competitiveness and its role in shaping consumer behavior. There remains a gap in understanding how competitive market options, convenience, and processes contribute to switching behavior among Chinese tourists. This gap is pivotal for comprehending the dynamic nature of destination choices in a competitive market. Lastly, the literature predominantly focuses on international tourists' motivations in a global context, leaving a gap in contextualizing these motivations within the unique Chinese tourism landscape of New Zealand. Understanding how the region's characteristics influence Chinese students' choices becomes crucial for destination marketing. This necessitates a more tailored approach to address the nuances of Chinese tourism in the specific context of New Zealand.

Despite the valuable insights from existing literature on international tourism, especially regarding Chinese tourists in New Zealand, there are significant limitations and research gaps. Most studies have not sufficiently explored the motivations and behaviors of Chinese tourists participating in creative tourism in Asian contexts(Dean & Suhartanto, 2019). The experiences and perceptions of Chinese tourists in New Zealand are limited, indicating a research gap in comprehending their motivations and behavioral intentions in this specific tourism context. There is also a lack of studies examining the impact of destination attributes on Chinese outbound tourism to New Zealand, neglecting factors such as cultural distance, World Heritage Sites, and the ethnic Chinese population. The interaction among motivations, emotions, satisfaction, and previous experience in senior tourism is inadequately explored, with a need for differentiation between maintenance and expansion motivations(Ma et al.,

2020). Additionally, the lack of longitudinal studies on pull factors and activity-based visitor typologies in New Zealand limits the understanding of the dynamic nature of destination choices in this region. There is not a lot of research in the areas of the impact of online and offline social capital on tourism SME performance, the effects of Covid-19 on coastal destinations, schematic models for decision-making in tourism, and the influence of tourists' personality on perceived travel constraints and destination selection behavior. Therefore, further research is needed to explore these dimensions of international tourism (Huang et al., 2020).

Hypotheses Development
In this section, relationships between the key variables are discussed and 12 related hypotheses are proposed.

The Relationship between Travel Motivations and Destination Choice
Travel motivations (including push and pull factors) have a causal effect on destination choice behavior. The rationale for this assumption is as follows: First of all, travel motivation, as the fundamental factor driving individual behavior, directly affects individual travel decisions. Push factors are the individual's internal needs and desires, while pull factors are the attraction of external factors to the individual (Pestana et al., 2020). Together, they form the basis for individuals to choose travel destinations. Hence, a cause-and-effect connection exists between travel motivation and destination selection, wherein an individual's motivation influences their decision to opt for a particular place(Tojib et al., 2022). Base on the past literature describe in the above paragraph, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: There is a significant relationship between travel motivation and destination choice among Chinese tourists' visiting New Zealand

The Relationship between Travel Motivation and Digitization Image among Chinese Tourists
In the realm of tourism studies, understanding the interplay between travel motivation and digitization image among Chinese tourists has garnered increasing attention due to the pervasive influence of digital platforms on travel decision-making processes. Travel motivation refers to the internal and external factors that drive individuals to undertake journeys, while digitization image encompasses elements such as electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) and social media presence, shaping tourists' perceptions of destinations.

Several studies have delved into the relationship between travel motivation and digitization image among Chinese tourists. For instance, Wang and Fesenmaier (2004) highlighted the transformative impact of digital platforms on tourists' perceptions and decision-making processes, emphasizing the role of eWOM and social media presence in shaping destination images. Similarly, (Pan et al., 2021) examined the influence of digital platforms on tourists' destination choices, underscoring the significance of online reviews and social media interactions in shaping tourists' perceptions of destinations.

Moreover, Fu and Timothy (2021), conducted a study on international tourists travel behaviour, exploring the impact of social media on destination image formation. Their findings underscored the importance of positive eWOM and engaging social media content in enhancing destination image among tourists.

Based on the insights gleaned from these studies, it can be inferred that there exists a significant relationship between travel motivation and digitization image among Chinese tourists. Specifically, tourists' motivations for travel are intricately linked to their perceptions of destinations, which are increasingly influenced by digital platforms such as eWOM and social media. Therefore, hypothesis H2 posits that there is indeed a significant relationship between travel motivation and digitization image among Chinese tourists.

H2: There is a significant relationship between travel motivation and digitization image among Chinese tourists' visiting New Zealand

Further empirical research is warranted to validate this hypothesis and unravel the nuanced dynamics underlying the relationship between travel motivation and digitization image in the context of Chinese tourism. By gaining a deeper understanding of these dynamics, destination marketers and tourism stakeholders can tailor their strategies to effectively engage Chinese tourists and enhance their overall travel experiences.

The Relationship between Travel Motivation and Market Attributes among Chinese Tourists
Understanding the relationship between travel motivation and market attributes is crucial for comprehending the factors that influence tourists' decision-making processes, particularly among Chinese travelers. Travel motivation refers to the internal and external factors that drive individuals to embark on journeys, while market attributes encompass various features and characteristics of destinations, products, and services that influence tourists' perceptions and choices. Several studies have explored the relationship between travel motivation and market attributes among Chinese tourists. For instance, Kralikova(2020)conducted research on the influence of destination image on tourist satisfaction and loyalty, highlighting the importance of market attributes such as destination attractiveness and perceived value in shaping tourists' perceptions and behavioral intentions. Similarly, (Ratnasari et al., 2021) investigated the impact of authenticity and emotion on tourists' behavioral intentions, emphasizing the role of market attributes in enhancing tourists' experiences. Furthermore, Kim and Fesenmaier (2017) examined the persuasive design of destination websites and its impact on tourists' first impressions, shedding light on the role of market attributes in shaping tourists' perceptions of destinations. Drawing upon the insights from these studies, it can be inferred that there exists a significant relationship between travel motivation and market attributes among Chinese tourists. Specifically, tourists' motivations for travel are closely intertwined with their perceptions of market attributes such as destination attractiveness, perceived value, authenticity, and emotional appeal. Therefore, hypothesis H3 is proposed:

H3: There is a significant relationship between travel motivation and market attributes among Chinese tourists' visiting New Zealand

By gaining a deeper understanding of these dynamics, destination marketers and tourism stakeholders can tailor their strategies to effectively meet the needs and preferences of Chinese tourists, thereby enhancing their overall travel experiences.

The Relationship between Travel Motivation and Tourism Experience among Chinese Tourists
Understanding the intricate relationship between travel motivation and tourism experience among Chinese tourists is crucial for destination marketers and tourism stakeholders in

designing effective strategies to enhance visitor satisfaction and loyalty. Travel motivation, encompassing various internal and external factors that drive individuals to embark on journeys, plays a fundamental role in shaping tourists' experiences at destinations. Meanwhile, tourism experience refers to the holistic encounter that tourists have during their travels, encompassing aspects such as activities, interactions, and overall satisfaction. Numerous studies have explored the relationship between travel motivation and tourism experience among Chinese tourists. For instance, Huang et al. (2019) conducted a study on the association between perceived value, tourism experience, and behavioral intentions among Chinese travelers. Their findings highlighted the mediating role of memorable tourism experiences in shaping behavioral intentions, emphasizing the significance of perceived value in enhancing overall travel experiences. Similarly, Kim and Fesenmaier (2017) examined the persuasive design of destination websites and its impact on tourists' first impressions. Their study revealed that factors such as website aesthetics, usability, and information content significantly influence tourists' perceptions and subsequent travel experiences. Furthermore, Fu et al. (2019) investigated the authenticity, emotion, and behavioral intentions of Chinese tourists visiting theme parks. Their research underscored the importance of authentic experiences in influencing tourists' emotions and intentions, suggesting that travel motivation may drive tourists' preferences for authentic and immersive experiences. Building upon these insights, it can be inferred that there exists a significant relationship between travel motivation and tourism experience among Chinese tourists. Tourists' motivations for travel shape their expectations, preferences, and activities during their journeys, ultimately influencing the quality and satisfaction of their tourism experiences. Therefore, hypothesis H4 is proposed:

H4: There is a significant relationship between travel motivation and tourism experience among Chinese tourists.

The Relationship between Digitization Image and Destination Choice among Chinese Tourists
The influence of digitization image on destination choice among Chinese tourists has become a focal point in tourism research due to the pervasive role of digital platforms in shaping travelers' perceptions and decision-making processes. Digitization image encompasses elements such as electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) and social media presence, which play a crucial role in shaping tourists' perceptions of destinations. Destination choice, on the other hand, refers to the process through which travelers select their desired destinations for travel. Several studies have explored the relationship between digitization image and destination choice among Chinese tourists. For instance, Auliya & Pertiwi (2019) investigated the impact of eWOM and social media on travelers' destination choice behavior. Their study revealed that positive digital representations of destinations, such as favorable online reviews and engaging social media content, significantly influence travelers' perceptions and preferences. Similarly, Li et al. (2018) conducted a study on international tourists visiting China, examining the role of social media in destination image formation. Their findings highlighted the importance of positive eWOM and captivating social media content in enhancing destination image and influencing tourists' destination choices. Moreover, Chen and Xie (2020) explored the influence of destination image on tourist satisfaction and loyalty, emphasizing the mediating role of perceived value and destination attractiveness. Their study underscored the significance of a positive destination image in shaping tourists' perceptions and decisions. Based on the insights gleaned from these studies, it can be inferred that there exists a

significant relationship between digitization image and destination choice among Chinese tourists. Digital representations of destinations, such as eWOM and social media presence, play a crucial role in shaping tourists' perceptions and preferences, ultimately influencing their destination choices. Therefore, hypothesis H5 is proposed:

H5: There is a significant relationship between digitization image and destination choice among Chinese tourists' visiting New Zealand

The Relationship between Market Attributes and Destination Choice among Chinese Tourists
Understanding the relationship between market attributes and destination choice among Chinese tourists is crucial for destination marketers and tourism stakeholders in designing effective strategies to attract visitors and enhance destination competitiveness. Market attributes encompass various factors such as price, accessibility, facilities, and services, which contribute to tourists' perceptions and preferences when selecting destinations for travel. Numerous studies have explored the relationship between market attributes and destination choice among Chinese tourists. For instance, Kralikova(2020) investigated the influence of destination attributes on tourist satisfaction and loyalty. Their study revealed that factors such as destination amenities, cultural attractions, and hospitality services significantly impact tourists' destination choices and overall satisfaction. Similarly, Liang et al. (2018) conducted a study on the role of destination image and perceived quality in shaping tourists' destination choices. Their research highlighted the importance of favorable destination attributes, such as safety, cleanliness, and cultural richness, in influencing tourists' perceptions and decisions. Furthermore, Wang and Fesenmaier (2004) examined the impact of destination image and information quality on tourists' destination choices. Their findings underscored the significance of accurate and informative representations of destinations in shaping tourists' perceptions and preferences. Based on the insights gleaned from these studies, it can be inferred that there exists a significant relationship between market attributes and destination choice among Chinese tourists. Market attributes, including price, accessibility, facilities, and services, play a crucial role in shaping tourists' perceptions and preferences, ultimately influencing their destination choices. Therefore, hypothesis H6 is proposed:

H6: There is a significant relationship between market attributes and destination choice among destination choice among Chinese tourists' visiting New Zealand

The Relationship between Tourism Experience and Destination Choice among Chinese Tourists
According to research by Azis et al. (2020), tourism experience is considered an important factor that can affect tourists' satisfaction and destination loyalty. Tourism experience and tourist satisfaction jointly promote tourists' loyalty to the destination, including destination choice, destination revisit intention and recommendation intention. If tourists have good memories and satisfactory experiences at a travel destination, they are more likely to visit again and recommend the destination to others. Also based to research of Chen et al. (2021), an important motivation for Chinese tourists to travel abroad is to obtain " mien-tzu ", and the travel experience affects their travel behavior and destination selection. Including choosing travel products and services for outbound travel, as well as staying in luxury hotels and participating in unique activities, are seen as face-enhancing behaviors. These points

reflect how Chinese tourists regard travel experience as an important consideration when choosing travel destinations and use travel experience to enhance their status in society.

H7: There is a significant relationship between tourism experience and destination choice among Chinese tourists' visiting New Zealand

The Relationship between Digitization Image and Market Attributes
It is evident that the digitization image, encompassing elements such as electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) and social media presence, plays a pivotal role in influencing travelers' destination choice behavior among Chinese tourists. As highlighted by Auliya & Pertiwi (2019), eWOM and social media are considered crucial market attributes that significantly impact destination choice. Additionally, studies by Wang and Fesenmaier (2004), Liu et al. (2017), and Li et al. (2018) have emphasized the importance of digital platforms in shaping tourists' perceptions and decisions. Therefore, drawing upon the insights from these studies, it is hypothesized that:

H8: There is a significant relationship between digitization image and market attributes destination choice among Chinese tourists' visiting New Zealand

The Relationship between Market Attributes and Tourism Experience
The quality of tourism experiences has been identified as a critical mediator in influencing travelers' destination choices. Huang et al. (2019) demonstrated that perceived value influences behavioral intentions through the mediating effect of a memorable tourism experience. Building upon this, it can be inferred that market attributes, including electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) and social media presence, contribute to shaping tourists' experiences during their visit to a destination. Additionally, studies by Kim and Fesenmaier (2017), Hu et al. (2019), and Chen and Xie (2020) have further emphasized the role of market attributes in enhancing tourists' experiences. Thus, drawing upon the insights from these studies, it is proposed that:

H9: There is a significant relationship between market attributes and tourism experience destination choice among Chinese tourists' visiting New Zealand

Market Digitization Image as a Mediator between Travel Motivation and Chinese Tourists' Destination Choice
Research on how digitization image influences destination choice as a market attribute lacks supporting literature. This may be due to the fact that "digitization image" is a relatively new research area, and there is not enough existing research to substantiate this perspective. However, numerous studies consider electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) and social media as crucial market attributes influencing travelers' destination choice behavior, and market attributes are widely recognized as intermediary variables between travel motivation and destination choice (Auliya & Pertiwi, 2019). In Ishida's (2016) study, the impact of traditional word-of-mouth and eWOM on destination image was assessed, highlighting eWOM as a factor influencing destination choice. Pan (2021) found that eWOM plays a critical role in travelers' perceptions of the usefulness of social networks and their attitudes towards usage, both of which are essential factors influencing tourism destination choices. Therefore, it is suggested that digital image should be regarded as a factor in market attraction, serving as

an intermediary in the relationship between travel motivation and destination choice. Thus, drawing upon the insights from these studies, it is proposed that:

H10: Market digitization image mediates the relationship between travel motivation and destination choice destination choice among Chinese tourists' visiting New Zealand

Market Attributes as Mediators between Travel Motivation and Chinese Tourists' Destination Choice
Market attributes, as intermediary variables, strengthen the impact of tourism motivations on destination choice behavior by transmitting, shaping and influencing information (Nikjoo & Ketabi, 2015). Effective communication of market attributes can strengthen individuals' awareness of the destination, satisfy their push and pull factors, and then influence their decision-making process. In this process, market attributes act as a bridge connecting tourism motivations and destination choices. By strengthening the connection between motivations and choice behaviors, the causal relationship is transmitted. Finally, this causal relationship is consistent with the logic of individual decision-making behavior. Tourists are usually driven by travel motivations to evaluate and compare different destinations and finally make destination choices (Salsabila & Alversia, 2020). In this process, market attributes have an impact on tourists' cognition and expectations, which in turn affects their choice behavior. This logical relationship supports the existence of a causal relationship between tourism motivation and destination choice, and introduces market attributes as mediating factors. If consider market attributes as mediating variables between tourism motivations (push factors and pull factors) and destination choice behavior, this means that market attributes may play a key mediating role in explaining the relationship between the two.

Market attributes, as intermediary variables, can convey specific information about the destination, such as geographical location, cultural history, facilities and equipment, etc. This information is directly related to the push and pull factors of tourists. By acquiring and interpreting this information, tourists form their perceptions and expectations of the destination, thereby affecting their travel motivations (Masuda et al., 2022). Clever marketing of market attributes can strengthen the influence of tourism motivations on destination choice behavior. By highlighting the unique attractions of a destination, such as beautiful scenery, rich cultural experiences, high-quality services, etc., market attributes can help stimulate tourists' interest and thus influence their decision-making (Masuda et al., 2022). The role of market attributes is not just one-way. Tourists' destination selection behavior will also affect their perception of market attributes, forming cyclic feedback. If tourists have a good experience at a destination, they may evaluate the market attributes more positively, thereby increasing their loyalty to the destination, which in turn affects future travel motivations (Yılmazdoğan et al., 2021). The reason for considering market attributes as intermediary variables is that it builds a bridge between tourism motivation and destination choice, and has a direct and important impact on the relationship between the two through mechanisms such as information transmission, expectation shaping, and feedback loops.

Base on the past literature describe in the above paragraph, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H11: Market attributes mediate the relationship between travel motivation and destination choice destination choice among Chinese tourists' visiting New Zealand

Tourism Experiences as Mediators between Travel Motivation and Chinese Tourists' Destination Choice

There is a relationship among travel motivation, satisfaction, tourism experience, and destination choice (Dai et al., 2023). Based on Dai's survey of tourists in China (2023), the research explores the impact mechanisms of travel motivation, satisfaction, and place identity on loyalty in "red tourism," illustrating that place identity, as a tourism experience, serves as an intermediary variable between travel motivation and destination choice. According to Douglas et al. (2023), the study results indicate that tourists' motivation for tourism experiences influences their likelihood of participating in specific activities. These research findings suggest that tourism experiences, including cultural activities, play an intermediary role between travel motivation and destination choice. These experiences are not only directly influenced by travel motivation but also impact tourists' destination choices.

Base on the past literature describe in the above paragraph, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H12: Tourism experiences mediate the relationship between travel motivation and destination choice destination choice among Chinese tourists' visiting New Zealand

Based on the above hypotheses, the conceptual framework of this study is proposed as presented in Figure 1.
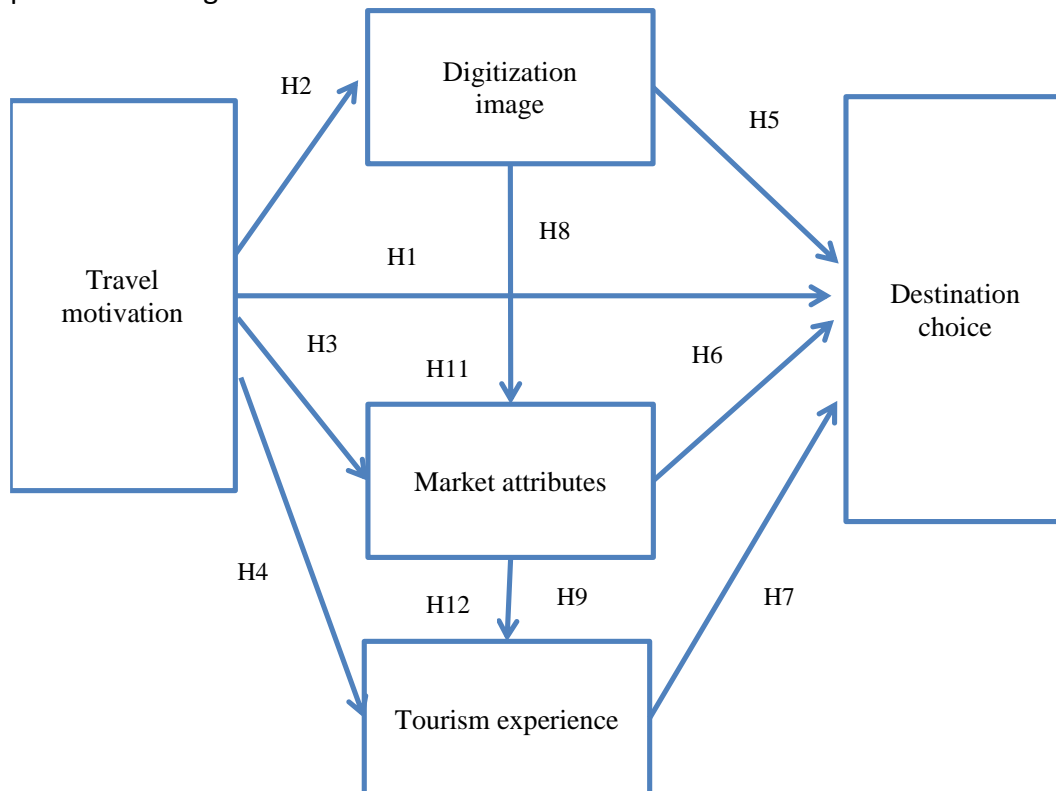

Figure 1 The Conceptual Framework
Source: Mehrabian and Russell (1974) Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) Model, Push Motivation (Uysal et al., 2009), and Pull Motivation (Prayag & Rayan, 2011)

Discussion and Conclusion

Discussion

Given that research on destination selection for Chinese tourists mainly focuses on the relationship between destination image, satisfaction, and behavioral intention, there are few empirical studies on the correlation between digital image and destination selection. The experience and cognition of Chinese tourists in New Zealand are limited, indicating a research gap in understanding their motivations and behavioral intentions in specific tourism contexts (Suntikul et al., 2016). There is also a lack of research on the impact of destination attributes on China's outbound tourism to New Zealand, ignoring factors such as cultural distance, world heritage sites, and the Chinese population (Andrew et al., 2014). In relevant research, destination selection has always been regarded as an important theme for studying Chinese tourists' outbound tourism, and the relationship between factors affecting destination selection and related variables has been rarely explored in depth. This study found a research gap through the literature review mentioned above. Therefore, it is necessary to establish a conceptual framework to study the relationship between destination selection and influencing factors.

In this study, a conceptual model of destination choice and influencing factors was established by using the S-O-R model and push-pull theory. This study includes five variables, travel motivation, market attributes, tourism experience, digitization image, and destination selection behavior. Additionally, 12 hypotheses are proposed, including nine direct effects and three mediating effects. This study will explore the essential relationship between destination choice of Chinese tourists and related influencing factors. Importantly, this study explores the mediating role of digital image in the choice of travel intention and destination behavior. This conceptual framework provides a comprehensive perspective that helps to understand the relationship between destination choice behavior and influencing factors.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study proposes the operationalization of destination choice and related influencing factors among Chinese tourists when visiting New Zealand. The findings from the current study provide significant theoretical and practical implications for scholars and destination managers and marketers.

Theoretical Implications

From a theoretical standpoint, this research endeavors to contribute theoretically to the understanding of travel motivation, market attraction, and destination choice among Chinese tourists visiting New Zealand. The study's theoretical framework aims to elucidate the intricate relationships between these constructs, providing valuable insights for both academia and the tourism industry. This research made a significant contribution to the existing knowledge base, particularly within the realm of travel motivation, market attraction, and destination choice in the context of Chinese tourists visiting New Zealand. Drawing upon the foundational principles of the push and pull theory, this study seeks to extend and enrich the understanding of the decision-making process in international tourism. A new model of destination choice is developed by extending the previous S-O-R model with three mediating variables operated by digitization image, market attributes and tourism experience as the organism (O) that might significantly influence the relationship between motivation as stimulus (S) and destination choice as response (R). This study will build upon the established

push and pull theory, by incorporating key elements of travel motivation and marketing attributes. The integration of push factors, representing motivations such as novelty and experience, and pull factors, encompassing external attractions like natural landscapes and cultural heritage, will form the basis of the theoretical framework (Pan et al., 2021).

This research also found out the mediating effects of marketing attributes within the push and pull theory. By delving into the intricate interplay between these constructs, a nuanced understanding of the motivations will be provided, especially digitalization, and cognitive perceptions that influence destination choice among Chinese tourists (Salsabila, 2020). Also, this study acknowledges the critical importance of comprehensively understanding the decision-making process underlying destination choice (Pan et al., 2021). The findings are expected to make a significant contribution to the academic literature on tourist motivation and provide a valuable resource for stakeholders in the tourism industry in New Zealand. Given the limited research in this specific context, particularly focusing on Chinese tourists in New Zealand, this study presents a unique opportunity to fill this gap and lay the foundation for future empirical studies. The theoretical insights generated from this research may attract further interest from scholars and researchers to expand and validate the results in similar tourism contexts.

Practical Implications
This study will help provide an advantage for marketing professionals in both public and private sectors, as well as government agencies in New Zealand. Insights gained by understanding the motivations and behaviors of Chinese tourists will enhance strategic planning and marketing strategies. This will stakeholders to position New Zealand as a leading tourism destination in the region.

The tourism hospitality industry in New Zealand will benefit from a deeper understanding of why Chinese tourists choose specific destinations based on attributes and features (Vargas-Sevalle et al., 2020). This understanding will enable organizations to refine their products, improve marketing elements, and receive positive feedback from international tourists. And aligns with the global agenda advocating for sustainable tourism goals. By enhancing tourism quality and promoting cross-border agreements on qualifications, standards, and certifications, this research contributes to the broader objectives of sustainable development in the tourism industry.

In this era of intense global competition, this study recognizes the crucial importance of creating a positive destination image. The research results will aid in formulating effective marketing strategies for tourism, guiding organizations to maintain a positive image on social media platforms. This initiative is vital for positioning New Zealand as an attractive global education center. Understanding the motivations, emotions, destination image, and behavior of Chinese tourists visiting New Zealand will foster lifelong relationships between the destination and visitors (Yung et al., 2021). In turn, this is expected to result in increased visitation, positive word of mouth, and higher loyalty among the target audience. The proposed study aims to provide practical insights and contributions for marketing professionals, government agencies, host families, and various stakeholders in the tourism industry. The focus of this research is on tourist motivations, market attractiveness, and

destination choice behaviors, aligning with the global agenda for sustainable tourism development.

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