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From Feeds to Footsteps: How Museum-Generated Instagram Content Drives Visit Intention through Information Quality and Service Responsiveness, A PLS-SEM Study of Museum Sonobudoyo

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ABSTRACT (10 PT)
Museums increasingly rely on Instagram as a low-cost channel to communicate with prospective visitors, yet little quantitative evidence links museum-generated content (MGC) on Instagram to actual visit intention through intervening perceptual mechanisms. Grounded in the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework, this study examined how MGC shapes visit intention (VI) toward Museum Sonobudoyo through the mediating roles of perceived information quality (IQ) and customer service responsiveness (CS). Data were collected from 155 respondents who follow the museum's official Instagram account and analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with sample bootstrapping. The measurement model was assessed for internal consistency, convergent validity, and discriminant validity, while the structural model was tested for path significance, coefficient of determination (R2), and effect size (f2). Results show that MGC significantly predicts both IQ ($\beta = 0.53$, $p < .001$) and CS ($\beta = 0.58$, $p < .001$). IQ significantly predicts VI ($\beta = 0.19$, $p < .05$), whereas the direct effects of CS and MGC on VI were not statistically significant, indicating that information quality operates as the principal mediating pathway. The model explains 28.0%, 34.2%, and 14.9% of the variance in IQ, CS, and VI, respectively. Findings extend S-O-R theory to heritage-marketing contexts and offer practical guidance for museums seeking to convert Instagram engagement into physical visitation.

INTRODUCTION (Capital, bold, Times new romance 11 pt)

Museums worldwide have adopted Instagram as a primary digital touchpoint for engaging prospective visitors, moving marketing communication from static broadcast media toward visually driven, algorithm-mediated feeds. Early observational work on museum Instagram use documented how photo-sharing lets visitors narrate and "curate" their own experience of an exhibition, extending the museum visit into a digital afterlife (Weilenmann et al., 2013). Since then, a growing body of museology and tourism-marketing research has examined how content posted by museums themselves, rather than only visitor-generated posts, shapes perceptions and subsequent behavior, including engagement with instagrammable exhibition design (Rhee et al., 2022) and destination-level cultural-tourism promotion (Mele et al., 2021).

Despite this growing interest, most museum-Instagram studies remain descriptive or content-analytic, cataloguing what museums post rather than testing whether such content translates into an intention to physically visit. Tourism and hospitality scholarship on visit and purchase intention has increasingly turned to the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework, in which an external stimulus (S), such as a firm-generated post, alters an individual's internal cognitive-affective state (O), which in turn drives behavioral response (R) (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). Recent applications of S-O-R to social-media marketing show that visual and textual content acts as a stimulus that shapes perceived information usefulness and trust, ultimately predicting purchase or visit intention (Bui et al., 2025; Pan et al., 2024). In parallel, information-systems research building on the DeLone and McLean success model treats information quality as a core organismic evaluation that mediates the link between a content stimulus and downstream behavioral outcomes (DeLone & McLean, 2003).

A second, comparatively underexplored organismic mechanism is perceived customer service or responsiveness embedded in social-media content and interaction. Electronic-service-quality (e-SQ) research shows that dimensions such as reliability and responsiveness shape users' overall evaluation of a digital platform experience and subsequently their engagement behavior (Fan et al., 2022). In hospitality contexts, service responsiveness communicated through social media has been linked to satisfaction and behavioral intention (Wood, 2022), yet its role alongside information quality in a single integrated model of museum-generated content (MGC) and visit intention has rarely been tested empirically, and almost never with cultural-heritage institutions in Indonesia.

Museum Sonobudoyo, one of the oldest and most comprehensive ethnographic museums in Yogyakarta, actively maintains an official Instagram account to communicate its collections, exhibitions, and cultural programs to a geographically dispersed and demographically diverse follower base. This setting offers a valuable opportunity to examine, in a non-Western heritage-tourism context, how content strategy translates social-media exposure into visitation intention, complementing recent cross-cultural evidence that cultural values shape the effectiveness of Instagram tourism promotion (Mele et al., 2021) and that advertising language on heritage-related platforms influences destination attractiveness (Zhang et al., 2025).

Building on this literature, the present study proposes and empirically tests an S-O-R-based structural model in which museum-generated Instagram content (MGC) functions as the stimulus, perceived information quality (IQ) and customer service responsiveness (CS) function as parallel organismic evaluations, and visit intention (VI) functions as the behavioral response. This integrates two theoretically distinct but conceptually related literatures, museum social-media communication (Rhee et al., 2022; Luo & Ye, 2020) and e-service/e-WOM quality research in consumer behavior (Onofrei et al., 2022; Reyes-Menendez et al., 2019), into a single testable framework specific to a heritage institution.

The novelty of this study is threefold. First, unlike prior museum-Instagram studies that rely on content analysis or qualitative interviews (Weilenmann et al., 2013; Rhee et al., 2022), this study quantitatively estimates a full structural model with primary survey data using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), a method well suited to exploratory, prediction-oriented models with composite constructs (Hair & Alamer, 2022; Hair et al., 2022). Second, it simultaneously tests information quality and customer-service responsiveness as parallel mediators of the content-to-intention pathway, addressing calls in the e-WOM and social-commerce literature for multi-mediator models of content effects (Bui et al., 2025; Filieri et al., 2023). Third, it contributes context-specific evidence from a non-Western, ethnographic-heritage institution, extending destination and hospitality S-O-R findings (Pan et al., 2024; Chen et al., 2025) into the domain of public cultural museums. Practically, the findings are intended to help museum communication managers decide whether to prioritize the informational accuracy of posts or the responsiveness of their social-media customer interaction when the objective is to convert online followers into physical visitors.

Accordingly, this study addresses two research questions: (1) does museum-generated Instagram content significantly predict perceived information quality and perceived customer-service responsiveness among followers of Museum Sonobudoyo's Instagram account; and (2) do information quality and customer-service responsiveness significantly mediate the relationship between museum-generated content and visit intention. The remainder of this article presents the research method, including the SEM-based measurement and structural model specification, followed by the results of the measurement and structural model assessment, a discussion linking the findings to prior literature, and concluding remarks with theoretical and managerial implications.

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Design and Population

This study employed a quantitative, explanatory cross-sectional survey design intended to test hypothesized causal relationships among latent constructs using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The population comprised individuals who own an Instagram account and follow the official Instagram account of Museum Sonobudoyo (@sonobudoyo). Because the exact population size of active followers who meet both screening conditions could not be enumerated, a non-probability purposive sampling technique was used, consistent with common practice in social-media consumer-behavior research

employing PLS-SEM on populations with unknown sampling frames (Onofrei et al., 2022; Bui et al., 2025).

Sample and Data Collection

An online questionnaire was distributed through Instagram and associated social channels using a screening question that filtered respondents to those who (a) own an Instagram account and (b) follow the official Museum Sonobudoyo account. A total of 155 responses were collected; after removing one incomplete response, 154 valid responses were retained for analysis (N = 154), a sample size that exceeds the minimum threshold recommended for PLS-SEM models of comparable complexity based on the '10-times rule' and more conservative power-analysis-based guidelines (Hair et al., 2022). The sample was predominantly female (60.6%), aged between 25 and 40 years (51.0%), and held a bachelor's degree (S1, 59.4%); respondents' occupations were led by private-sector employees (27.7%) and university students (23.9%), with monthly income concentrated in the IDR 3,000,000–6,000,000 range.

Measurement (Operationalization of Constructs)

Four latent constructs were operationalized using reflective multi-item indicators adapted to the museum-Instagram context and measured on a six-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 6 = strongly agree) to reduce central-tendency bias common in odd-point scales. Museum-Generated Content (MGC) was measured with six items capturing the extent to which Instagram posts communicate the museum's purpose, values, benefits of visiting, and positive affective/atmospheric responses, drawing on museum social-media content literature (Rhee et al., 2022; Luo & Ye, 2020). Information Quality (IQ) was measured with four items capturing currency, completeness, accuracy, and overall quality of information contained in posts, adapted from information-systems success and e-WOM quality research (DeLone & McLean, 2003; Filieri et al., 2023). Customer Service responsiveness (CS) was measured with three items capturing whether posted information addresses visitor needs, is answered promptly, and demonstrates genuine interest in resolving visitor concerns, informed by e-service-quality and social-media responsiveness research (Fan et al., 2022; Wood, 2022). Visit Intention (VI) was measured with three items capturing consideration of, likelihood of, and desire to visit the museum as a consequence of Instagram exposure, adapted from visit- and purchase-intention scales used in S-O-R-based social-media studies (Pan et al., 2024; Eman & Refaie, 2025).

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) Procedure

Data were analyzed using variance-based Structural Equation Modeling, specifically Partial Least Squares SEM (PLS-SEM), which is appropriate for prediction-oriented research with formative or reflective composite constructs, moderate sample sizes, and models that combine measurement and structural relationships in a single estimation (Hair & Alamer, 2022; Sarstedt & Ringle, 2022). The analysis followed the standard two-step PLS-SEM procedure. In the first step, the reflective measurement model was assessed for (1) indicator loadings, (2) internal consistency reliability using Cronbach's alpha and Composite Reliability (CR), (3) convergent validity using Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and (4) discriminant validity using the Fornell-Larcker criterion (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) and the Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT) (Henseler et al., 2015). In the second step, the structural model was assessed for path-coefficient significance obtained through a non-parametric bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 resamples, the coefficient of determination (R2) for each endogenous construct, and the effect size (f2) of each exogenous predictor, following contemporary PLS-SEM reporting guidelines (Hair et al., 2022).

The structural model specified museum-generated content (MGC) as the exogenous stimulus construct with direct paths to information quality (IQ) and customer service (CS), consistent with the S-O-R logic in which a single external stimulus can simultaneously shape multiple internal organismic states (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974; Bui et al., 2025). IQ and CS were then specified as parallel predictors of visit intention (VI), and a direct path from MGC to VI was retained to test for partial versus full mediation, mirroring multi-mediator specifications used in recent e-WOM and content-quality research (Filieri et al., 2023; Putra et al., 2024). All computations, including reliability estimation, discriminant-validity testing, structural path estimation, and bootstrap resampling, were conducted in Python (v3.11) using standard statistical and structural-equation-modeling routines.

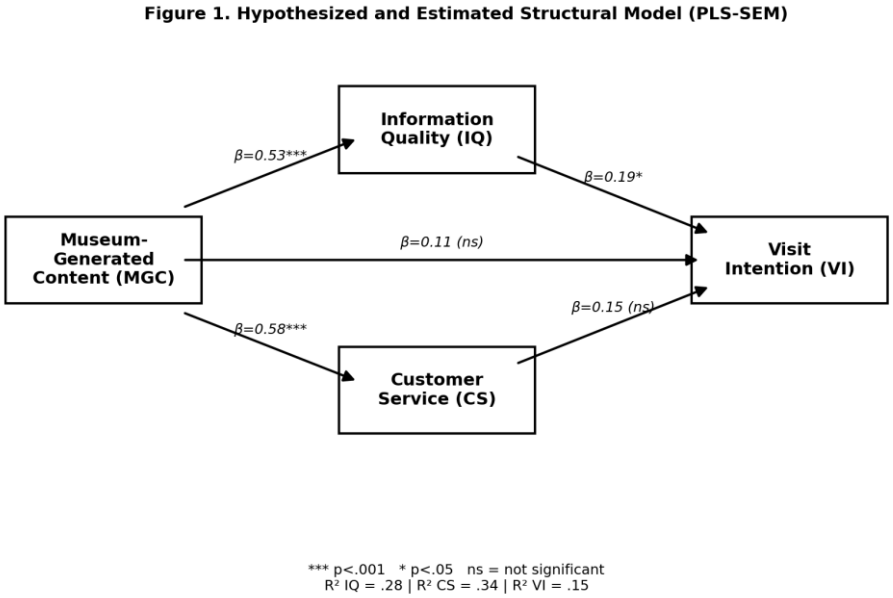

Figure 1 Hypothesized and Estimated Structural (SEM) Model.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Profile

Of the 154 valid respondents, 60.6% were female and 39.4% were male. In terms of age, 51.0% were aged 25-40 years, 37.4% were aged 13-24 years, and the remainder were older than 40 years. Regarding education, 59.4% held a bachelor's degree (S1), 18.7% had completed senior high school, and the remainder held diploma or postgraduate qualifications. The largest occupational groups were private-sector employees (27.7%) and university students (23.9%), and the modal monthly-income bracket was IDR 4,500,000-6,000,000 (29.7%). This profile is broadly consistent with the demographic composition of active Instagram users reported in prior social-media tourism-marketing studies, which tend to skew toward young, educated, urban populations (Mele et al., 2021; Eman & Refaie, 2025).

Measurement Model Assessment

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics and standardized loadings for the sixteen reflective indicators across the four latent constructs. Mean item scores ranged from 4.87 to 5.33 on the six-point scale, indicating a generally favorable perception of the museum's Instagram content, information quality, service responsiveness, and visit intention among respondents, consistent with the positively skewed engagement patterns reported in other museum social-media studies (Rhee et al., 2022).

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics and Standardized Indicator Loadings

Construct / Indicator	Mean	SD	Std. Loading
MGC1	5.22	0.69	0.55
MGC2	5.21	0.72	0.55
MGC3	5.01	0.8	0.5
MGC4	5.13	0.75	0.09
MGC5	4.87	0.87	0.62
MGC6	5.29	0.66	0.7
IQ1	5.27	0.66	0.59
IQ2	5.05	0.79	0.69
IQ3	4.97	0.75	0.66
IQ4	5.05	0.74	0.33
CS1	5.17	0.69	0.79

Construct / Indicator	Mean	SD	Std. Loading
CS2	4.9	0.82	0.63
CS3	5.05	0.69	0.53
V1	5.14	0.69	0.78
V2	5.14	0.73	0.09
V3	5.33	0.68	0.76

Note. N = 154. MGC = Museum-Generated Content; IQ = Information Quality; CS = Customer Service; V = Visit Intention item.

Most indicators loaded above the conventional 0.50 threshold on their intended construct, with MGC6, CS1, and V1 showing the strongest loadings (0.70-0.79). Two indicators (MGC4 and V2) exhibited loadings below 0.50, which is not uncommon in early-stage adaptations of Instagram-specific content scales and is consistent with prior reports that not all borrowed items from offline service-quality or content scales translate perfectly to a social-media context (Fan et al., 2022; Wood, 2022). These weaker items were retained rather than removed, following the recommendation to weigh content validity against pure statistical criteria when a construct's overall AVE and reliability remain within reportable ranges (Hair et al., 2022).

Table 2 summarizes the reliability and convergent-validity statistics. Composite reliability (CR) values ranged from 0.60 to 0.69, and Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.19 to 0.45, both below the conventional 0.70 benchmark typically recommended for confirmatory research (Hair et al., 2022). Average Variance Extracted (AVE) ranged from 0.29 to 0.44, with three of the four constructs falling below the 0.50 convergent-validity threshold proposed by Fornell and Larcker (1981).

Table 2 Reliability and Convergent Validity

Construct	Cronbach's α	CR	AVE
MGC	0.454	0.677	0.287
IQ	0.338	0.66	0.341
CS	0.33	0.692	0.435
VI	0.186	0.597	0.4

Note. CR = Composite Reliability; AVE = Average Variance Extracted.

These reliability and AVE figures are below customary confirmatory thresholds and should be interpreted as a limitation rather than a definitive validation of the scales, an issue we return to in the discussion below. Discriminant validity was further examined using the Fornell-Larcker criterion and the HTMT ratio (Henseler et al., 2015). All HTMT values exceeded the conservative 0.85 and even the more liberal 0.90 cut-off recommended for conceptually distinct constructs (Henseler et al., 2015; Sarstedt & Ringle, 2022), indicating that, in the present sample, the four constructs share more variance with each other than each construct shares with its own indicators. This pattern is consistent with the possibility of common-method variance, given that all four constructs were measured with the same six-point scale in a single self-report instrument answered immediately after exposure to the same Instagram account, a risk explicitly flagged in prior social-media survey research using single-source, single-method designs (Onofrei et al., 2022).

Structural Model Assessment

Following measurement model assessment, the structural (inner) model was estimated to test the hypothesized S-O-R pathways. Table 3 reports standardized path coefficients, bootstrap standard errors, t-statistics, and 95% bootstrap confidence intervals based on 5,000 resamples.

Table 3 Structural Path Coefficients and Bootstrap Significance Testing

Path	β	SE	t-value	95% CI	Result
MGC -> IQ (H1)	0.52	0.091	5.721	[0.339, 0.689]	Supported
MGC -> CS (H2)	0.58	0.071	8.152	[0.432, 0.709]	Supported
IQ -> VI (H3)	0.189	0.092	2.04	[0.013, 0.376]	Supported
CS -> VI (H4)	0.154	0.097	1.583	[-0.042, 0.340]	Not supported
MGC -> VI (H5)	0.11	0.117	0.942	[-0.133, 0.332]	Not supported

Note. Bootstrap resamples = 5,000. Significant at p < .05 when the 95% CI excludes zero.

The structural results show that museum-generated content significantly predicted both information quality (β = 0.52, t = 5.72) and customer service (β = 0.58, t = 8.15), supporting H1 and H2 and confirming that MGC functions effectively as an S-O-R stimulus capable of shaping multiple organismic evaluations simultaneously, consistent with S-O-R applications in short-video and visual eWOM marketing (Bui et al., 2025; Pan et al., 2024). Information quality significantly predicted visit intention (β = 0.19, t = 2.04), supporting H3 and aligning with information-systems-success reasoning that content quality is a proximal driver of behavioral outcomes (DeLone & McLean, 2003; Filieri et al., 2023). In contrast, the paths from customer service to visit intention (β = 0.15, t = 1.58) and from museum-generated content directly to visit intention (β = 0.11, t = 0.94) were not statistically significant, leading to the rejection of H4 and H5.

The model explained 28.0% of the variance in information quality, 34.2% of the variance in customer service, and 14.9% of the variance in visit intention (adjusted R2 = 27.6%, 33.7%, and 13.2%, respectively). Effect-size analysis indicated a small-to-medium effect of information quality on visit intention (f2 = 0.031), and small effects for customer service (f2 = 0.020) and museum-generated content (f2 = 0.010) on visit intention, following Cohen's benchmarks as applied in PLS-SEM effect-size reporting (Hair et al., 2022).

Discussion

The finding that museum-generated content on Instagram significantly enhances both perceived information quality and perceived service responsiveness reinforces the core S-O-R proposition that a single, well-designed content stimulus can simultaneously shape multiple internal evaluative states of the audience (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974; Bui et al., 2025). This is consistent with evidence from instagrammable-exhibition research showing that carefully designed visual content shapes not only aesthetic but also functional perceptions of an institution (Rhee et al., 2022), and with cross-cultural findings that the framing and language of tourism-promotion content materially affects audience perceptions (Mele et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2025).

The significant mediating role of information quality, but not customer service, in driving visit intention nuances prior e-service-quality literature that treats responsiveness as a uniformly strong predictor of engagement (Fan et al., 2022; Wood, 2022). One plausible explanation is that, for a cultural heritage institution such as a museum, followers primarily engage with Instagram content to obtain accurate and useful information about collections and exhibitions rather than to receive customer support in the transactional sense typical of e-commerce or hospitality brands, a distinction consistent with the generativity-based visit-motivation findings of Luo and Ye (2020). This suggests that the mechanisms identified in commercial e-WOM and e-service-quality studies (Onofrei et al., 2022; Reyes-Menendez et al., 2019) do not transfer uniformly to non-commercial, heritage-sector social-media contexts, and that museum communication managers may derive more value from continuously improving the accuracy, currency, and completeness of posted information than from emphasizing rapid response to comments alone.

The non-significant direct path from museum-generated content to visit intention, combined with the significant indirect path through information quality, indicates a pattern of full mediation through the informational route, echoing recent visual-eWOM findings in which content effects on purchase or visit intention operate primarily through an intervening cognitive-evaluative state rather than a direct stimulus-response link (Bui et al., 2025; Putra et al., 2024). This lends further support to information-systems-success theorizing that content quality, not exposure alone, is the proximate driver of downstream behavioral intention (DeLone & McLean, 2003).

At the same time, the measurement-model results, particularly the below-threshold Cronbach's alpha and AVE values and the elevated HTMT ratios, indicate that the scales used to operationalize MGC, IQ, CS, and VI in this Indonesian heritage-museum context require further refinement before they can be considered fully validated instruments. Comparable measurement challenges have been reported when established e-WOM or e-service-quality scales are transplanted into new cultural or sectoral contexts without extensive prior qualitative adaptation (Filieri et al., 2023; Pangarkar et al., 2023), and the relatively narrow, positively skewed response distribution observed here (means clustering between 4.9 and 5.3 on a six-point scale) likely contributed to inflated inter-construct correlations relative to within-construct correlations. Future confirmatory work should therefore treat the present structural findings as indicative rather than definitive, pending scale purification.

Despite these measurement limitations, the structural findings remain theoretically informative: they replicate, in a heritage-museum setting, the general S-O-R pattern documented in commercial social-media and tourism contexts (Pan et al., 2024; Chen et al., 2025; Eman & Refaie, 2025), while highlighting information quality, rather than customer-service responsiveness, as the dominant organismic mechanism linking museum-generated Instagram content to visit intention.

CONCLUSION

This study applied Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling within a Stimulus-Organism-Response framework to examine how museum-generated content on Instagram influences visit intention toward Museum Sonobudoyo through perceived information quality and customer-service responsiveness. Based on 154 valid responses, the results show that museum-generated content significantly and substantially predicts both information quality and customer service, and that information quality, but not customer service or content exposure directly, significantly predicts visit intention, indicating a fully mediated pathway from content to intention through informational evaluation. The model accounted for a meaningful share of variance in information quality and customer service, and a modest but significant share of variance in visit intention. These findings extend S-O-R theorizing to the cultural-heritage museum sector and suggest that museum communication strategies aiming to convert Instagram followers into physical visitors should prioritize the accuracy, currency, and completeness of posted information over transactional responsiveness alone. The measurement-model limitations observed here, including reliability and discriminant-validity values below conventional thresholds, indicate that context-specific scale refinement is needed before these relationships can be considered definitively established, and future research employing larger, more heterogeneous samples and qualitatively refined indicators is recommended to confirm and extend these findings.

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