

Navigating Risks and Constraints: The Role of Destination Image in Empowering Women Travelers

Nikki Clair Dedel ^{1,*}, Dorena Mae Binonggo ¹, Juliana Latonio ¹,
Heart Maree Monteverde ¹, Kyndra Aradillos ¹

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Abstract

Female tourism is one of the most significant topics in contemporary tourism, and its growth in the industry has been observed. However, they are among the most vulnerable groups, facing risks and constraints that shape their travel decisions. This descriptive-correlational study examines destination image as a mediator between expected risks, travel constraints, and visit intention among a sample of young women in Davao City, Philippines. Although the literature shows that women are likely to be concerned about crime and financial risks, as well as structural, interpersonal, and intrapersonal constraints that usually limit intentions, no single study has examined subtle differences between the genders in the Philippines, creating a gap in local research. This work provides insight into the role of a positive destination image, as it enables negotiation of obstacles through Prospect Theory, Constraints Theory, Image Theory, and the Theory of Planned Behavior. Using mean, correlation, and regression analysis on stable Likert scale data by surveying purposely sampled women (ages 18–30) who have recently engaged in leisure travel, they find neutral expected risk, low constraining factors, and high visit intention, with no significant direct relationship between risks, constraints, and the visit intention. Rather, destination image is a significant predictor of intention directly, with no mediation, revealing the resilience of women travelers and disputing the existence of negative impacts. Such results compel Davao authorities to promote more safety and women-friendly certifications

¹ Lyceum of the
Philippines - Davao,
Davao City,
Philippines
* [dnikkicclair@
gmail.com](mailto:dnikkicclair@gmail.com)

and invite tourist destinations to be more inclusive and gender-equality-based.

Keywords: destination image, expected risks, female tourism, travel constraints, travel intention, women travelers

1. Introduction

Female tourism has emerged as a prominent subject in the literature on modern tourism, with recognition of its development and expansion in the sector (Zhang et al., 2024; Khan et al., 2019). Given its psychological implications for empowerment and well-being, scholars have primarily demonstrated that travel serves as a form of therapy for female travelers, observing that the majority of women's travel research focuses on psychological aspects (Buckley & Westaway, 2020; Karagöz et al., 2020; Mkono et al., 2021). Therefore, female travelers have become a significant segment of the tourism industry. However, studies showed that women travelers were more susceptible to risks such as violent crimes, health, psychological, and social issues (Wantono & McKercher, 2019), as well as severe constraints such as interpersonal and personal (Kolkesen & Ozdemir, 2025). This suggests that expected risks and travel constraints can lower the intention to visit specific destinations (Nazir et al., 2021), particularly for women, given that risk perception is higher among women than among men (Carballo et al., 2021). Hence, this proven gender difference necessitates the study of women travelers specifically.

Multiple recent international studies have shown that expected travel risks are associated with reduced visit intentions. A study by Adeloye (2020) found that risk events, particularly differences in spatial perceptions of terrorism, affected tourists' travel intentions and willingness to travel within Nigeria. The study found that tourists tend to avoid higher-risk destinations in favor of lower-risk ones. A separate study by Girish et al. (2020) clarified that constraints also significantly influence the attitudes and behavioral intentions of Korean tourists traveling abroad to avoid Hong Kong, particularly during protests. This confirmed Ramadhani's (2023) findings, which concluded that 81.5% of respondents agreed that expected risks and constraints affected the travel intentions of female travelers in Bandung, whereas other factors influenced 18.5%.

The national literature emphasized how societal norms, institutional constraints, and gender-based violence influence Filipina's views of safety, which in turn can affect their travel behaviors and safety perceptions. According to a study by Lacson (2019), female travelers face limitations due to sociocultural expectations imposed by peers and family, which deter these Filipinas from pursuing a life that deviates from their collectivist attitude. Due to locals' distrust of their fellow Filipinos, these ladies also experienced gendered discrimination, which was particularly prevalent when they

traveled domestically. Additionally, there is the existing issue of women's safety on public transit, which deters women from traveling altogether if they feel unsafe or uneasy (Mojica & Ferrer, 2022). Moreover, destination image was one of the components employed in a national study by Mercado and Apritado (2021), which demonstrated that tourist risk also influences destination image across all variables examined, including tourist benefits, destination image, man-made factors, feeling experiences, and natural catastrophes. Given the greater number of female responses, this data is considered relevant, suggesting that women's desire to travel is on the rise.

Studies conducted locally or regionally revealed a dearth of studies, especially examining the travel experiences of women. This absence of research is relevant, as a study by Rivera (2021) in Davao City indicated that respondents appear to have normalized dangerous transport standards. It also highlighted that females, more than males, experience more vulnerability or threat from gender-specific forms of violence, including sexual harassment. Women disproportionately encounter sexual harassment, especially from flashers on public transit, underscoring the significance of investigating this local gap. The majority, however, examine elements that influence travelers' choices or actions that are not gender-specific but are related to behavioral intention. Hinlayagan et al. (2023) proposed a framework of factors influencing tourists' decision-making when choosing a cultural destination, as reported by respondents in the Davao Region, including destination image and safety and security. Alcaraz et al. (2024) conducted another local study in Davao City, highlighting the significance of destination competitiveness in influencing tourists' behavioral intentions. It draws attention to the particular factors, such as offering affordable prices, first-rate amenities, and a safe atmosphere, that have a significant impact on various behavioral intentions. Despite discussing similar topics, these studies are examined independently and have little in common, aside from not focusing on female travelers. As a result, the intersection of expected travel risk and constraints, destination image, and visit intention is identified as a research gap, especially among women traveling in the local setting of Davao City.

Risks and constraints are well-known obstacles that lower travel intention, and destination image is one of the factors that affect travel decision-making. However, little research has been done on the mediating role of destination image in the Philippines, with women travelers as the focus group. Therefore, this study addressed a critical gap in the literature about female tourism. There may be existing studies demonstrating that destination image (natural wonders, excellent tourism services, inspiring cultural attractions, and various customs, rites, and ways of life) significantly impacts travel intention. However, given the inconsistent findings in the relationship between expected travel risks, constraints, and travel intention in previous studies (Khan et al., 2019), this research proposed that destination image serves as a crucial mediating factor. A shift in destination image might reshape how women view risks and constraints when considering travel. Hence, this study addressed a local gap in prior research by conducting a detailed examination of these relationships, offering

insights that could later be used to shape better safety practices for female travel experiences.

The study makes a useful contribution to the local industry, particularly by enhancing tourist-related facilities and supporting overall community development. For this reason, disseminating this study involves sending the results to the Davao City Tourism Operations Office and presenting them at a scholarly conference. Moreover, another clear purpose of the study is to pursue publication.

This descriptive correlational study intended to navigate the mediating effect of destination image on the relationship between expected travel risks, travel constraints, and visit intention among women travelers. This study sought to answer the following statements of the problem: the level of expected travel risks faced by women travelers in terms of: physical, financial, performance risks; the level of travel constraints faced by women travelers in terms of: constraints, interpersonal, intrapersonal constraints; the level of travel intention faced by women travelers; the relationship between expected travel risks and travel intention; relationship between travel constraints and travel intention; the mediating role of destination image on the relationship between expected risks and travel intention; and the mediating role of destination image on the relationship between travel constraints and travel intention.

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Design

This study used a quantitative research design to systematically examine the relationships between expected travel risks, travel constraints, destination image, and visit intention among women travelers (Nazir et al., 2021). The use of mediation was justified due to the complexity of women travelers' decision-making. Although the existing literature has demonstrated a direct correlation between the variables (e.g., Zhang et al., 2024), there was no in-depth explanation of how or why some women still intended to travel to a particular destination despite the expected risks and constraints. Hence, mediation was crucial for thoroughly examining the mechanism linking these variables. Furthermore, this study used a descriptive-correlational design to explore the relationships between expected risks, travel constraints, destination image, and visit intention. Recent tourism studies often use this approach to examine links between behavioral variables without manipulating them (Nazir et al., 2021; Jebbouri et al., 2022). This design is appropriate because it enables objective measurement and statistical analysis of these relationships.

This methodology was the most appropriate for this research for two key reasons. First, a quantitative approach enabled the objective measurement of complex psychological variables, such as risk perception and destination image, through a structured survey. This approach ensured that the data were quantifiable, facilitating statistical analysis (Quintana-García et al., 2021). The design also fits well for testing hypotheses. By collecting numerical data, advanced statistical techniques, such as

regression analysis, could be employed to identify direct and indirect (mediating) effects among variables. As a result, the study provided empirical evidence that improved our understanding of how women make travel decisions (Zhang et al., 2024).

2.2 Research Respondents and Sampling Technique

The focal respondents of this study were female travelers in Davao City. Of women aged 18 to 30 years, all had made leisure travel, either local or foreign, within the last 2 years. It is a strong offering that aligns with a significant portion of the modern traveling audience, reflecting trends in the decision-making behavior of younger women on trips (Popşa, 2024). People who traveled just for work, health, or education purposes did not participate.

To select individuals who met the identified requirements, purposive sampling guided the process. Due to the nature of the research, which required specific travel backgrounds, this type of non-probability sampling was well-suited. The same method was followed in an earlier study that investigated tourist motives and intended behaviors in South Cotabato Province (Ibrahim et al., 2021). Although purposive sampling does not intend to make any statistical generalizations, it allows the intentional selection of information-rich cases, so the data generated are directly proportional to the study's goals. This enhances the study's internal validity and the relevance of its findings to the particular population under study.

The 1,266,734 female travelers in Davao City between May 2024 and August 2025 served as the general point of reference for the study population; these values were obtained directly from the city's Tourism Operations Office. Nevertheless, it is acknowledged that this figure represents aggregated tourism data and could encompass a wide range of travelers, beyond the study's specifications. A sample size of 385 was determined using the Rasoft Sample Size Calculator, which provided a 50% response rate, a 5% margin of error, and a 95% confidence level, serving as a reasonable benchmark for sample adequacy.

Even though purposive sampling was used, attempts were made to ensure the sample was representative of the target group's diverse characteristics, such as travel experiences and backgrounds. The research has a high level of representativeness, as it followed strictly defined inclusion criteria and gathered data from respondents who perfectly fit the research scope. This was the best method for ensuring the findings were relevant and applicable to the targeted population, while addressing potential sampling challenges.

2.3 Research Instrument

The primary data collection instrument was a structured survey questionnaire. This was a suitable method for a quantitative study, as it enabled measurement and analysis of relationships among variables. The questionnaire consisted of five sections. The first collected demographic profile of the respondents, including age, monthly

income, employment status, and leisure travel history, as suggested by Uyan (2021). To guide responses, respondents were to think of a particular place they had recently considered or intended to visit. Key concepts in later sections were measured through a 5-point Likert scale from “1 = Strongly Disagree” to “5 = Strongly Agree.” The questions used per variable were adapted from previous studies. The second section quantified the anticipated risks for women travelers based on Khan et al. (2019), Maulana et al. (2022), Setiawan et al. (2024), and Karagöz et al. (2020), comprising physical, financial, and performance risks. The third section examined travel constraints, structural, interpersonal, and intrapersonal based on the works of Khan et al. (2019), Nyaupane and Anderek (2007), Chen et al. (2012), and Chen and Petrick (2014). The fourth section assessed the destination image, which was adapted from Khan et al. (2019). The fifth section measured visit intention, which was adapted from Khan et al. (2019), Byhon and Zhang (2010), Aboalghanam et al. (2025), and Juma and Douglas (2023). All survey questions were carefully reviewed and modified to fit the specific context of women tourists in Davao City.

Table 1. Likert scale for women travelers’ expected risks, constraints, destination image, and visit intention.

Statistical Range	Descriptive Level	Interpretation
4.21–5.00	Very High	This indicates that women travelers expect very strong risks/constraints, or they hold a very positive destination image, or have a very strong intention to visit.
3.41–4.20	High	This indicates that women travelers expect risks/constraints as significant, or they have a favorable image of the destination, or they show a high intention to visit.
2.61–3.40	Neutral	This indicates that women travelers expect an average level of risks/constraints, a fair image of the destination, or a moderate visit intention.
1.81–2.60	Low	This indicates that women travelers expect low levels of risks/constraints, a weak image of the destination, or low intention to visit.
1.00–1.80	Very Low	This indicates that women travelers expect very minimal risks/constraints, a very poor image of the destination, or very low intention to visit.

To assess the instrument's reliability and validity, a pilot study was conducted with a small sample of respondents prior to the main data collection. Cronbach Alpha was used to measure the internal consistency of the scales.

2.4 Collection of Data

During the pre-phase, the researchers prepared all required documents, including endorsement letters and consent forms, to obtain ethical clearance and institutional approval. These documents were presented to the Lyceum of the Philippines Davao Ethics Review Committee and other authorities to request authorization to undertake the study. The survey was sent to a pre-identified group of respondents who met the study's inclusion criteria after ethical clearance and institutional approval were granted.

In the data collection phase, the researchers approached respondents face-to-face, and the survey questionnaire was distributed via Google Forms to promote sustainability and cost-effectiveness. The informed consent form was first presented to each possible respondent. The form provided a clear explanation of the study's purpose, ensured the confidentiality and anonymity of responses, informed participants of their right to withdraw at any time, and ensured voluntary participation.

During the post-phase, the researchers gathered the completed questionnaires. After collection, the questionnaires were screened for completeness and adherence to the inclusion criteria. The data were then encoded and prepared for statistical analysis to answer the study objectives. The data collection phase lasted two weeks.

2.5 Statistical Analysis

The researchers used descriptive and inferential statistics to analyze the collected data. The measure of central tendency used was the mean to give an idea of respondents' average responses to expected risk, travel constraints, and destination perception. In addition, the standard deviation was used to indicate the extent of variation, particularly when women travelers differ in how they react to risks, constraints, and travel plans.

In inferential statistics, different tests were used to assess correlations and differences among variables. The Pearson correlation analysis was also applied in this study to assess the strength and direction of correlations among continuous variables, including expected risk, travel constraints, destination image, and visit intention. Finally, a simple linear regression analysis was employed to observe the ability of each independent variable, in this case, how the expected risks and travel constraints would predict a dependent variable, travel intention. This analysis was employed to see how the destination image could serve as a mediator.

2.6 Ethical Considerations

Ethical integrity was noted in terms of informed consent, protection of vulnerable individuals, balance of risks and benefits, privacy and justice, and transparency/qualification of the researcher. Participation was voluntary, and objectives, procedures, risks, benefits, and data handling were fully disclosed. The right to withdraw at any time, skip questions, or take a break was provided. Personal information was also anonymized using codes, safely stored in accordance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012, and fairly represented other backgrounds to provide inclusive information. Moreover, low risks were reduced (no harm, appreciation tokens), and benefits were developed that would lead to literature on female tourism safety and accommodation. Lastly, qualified researchers, under faculty guidance, used reliable digital tools transparently and shared results via email to prioritize welfare and research quality.

3. Results

3.1 The Level of Expected Travel Risks Faced by Women Travelers in terms of Physical, Financial, and Performance Risks

Table 2 presents responses measuring expected levels of physical, financial, and performance-related risks. An average score of 3 marks as “neutral” on each indicator. Nevertheless, PR3 had a high value of 3.88 due to concerns about criminal activity. That particular item attracts more attention than the other items that have been measured. However, their wide expectations remain neutral across all three areas investigated.

3.2 The Level of Travel Constraints Faced by Women travelers in terms of Structural, Interpersonal, and Intrapersonal Constraints

Table 3 shows the construct- and item-level measures of structural, interpersonal, and intrapersonal constraints to travel among the women respondents. The findings indicate that the majority of the items had a general average of 2.43, indicating a low perceived constraint.

3.3 The Level of Travel Intention Faced by Women Travelers

Table 4 indicates that women travelers are always at a high average score and low variation in all five items of the visit intention. Some of the major statements are: I will come soon, and I will suggest this place. The rest of the items are above high Likert-scale standards as well.

Table 2. Construct-level summary and item-level indicators: physical, financial, and performance risks.

Construct and Indicator	Item Statement (shortened)	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Physical Risks		3.37	1.00	Neutral
PR1	Worry about food and safety problems	3.37	1.21	Neutral
PR2	Worry about epidemic diseases	3.24	1.26	Neutral
PR3	Worry about crime	3.88	1.15	High
PR4	Worry about terrorism	3.11	1.37	Neutral
PR5	Worry about uncomfortable gazes	3.27	1.32	Neutral
Financial Risks		3.19	0.83	Neutral
FR1	Concern about losing money	3.19	1.01	Neutral
FR2	Concern about scams	3.21	1.04	Neutral
FR3	Concern about overpriced services	3.14	0.98	Neutral
FR4	Concern about theft	3.22	1.09	Neutral
FR5	Concern about unexpected expenses	3.18	1.02	Neutral
Performance Risks		3.11	0.80	Neutral
PER1	Worry about poor accommodation	3.02	0.91	Neutral
PER2	Worry about unsatisfactory food	3.08	0.95	Neutral
PER3	Worry about transportation issues	3.15	0.99	Neutral
PER4	Worry about service quality	3.20	1.01	Neutral
PER5	Worry about trip not meeting expectations	3.11	0.97	Neutral
Overall Expected Risks		3.22	0.75	Neutral

Table 3. Construct-level summary and item-level indicators: structural, interpersonal, and intrapersonal constraints.

Construct and Indicator	Item Statement (shortened)	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Structural Constraints		2.73	0.79	Neutral
SC1	No time to travel	2.92	1.17	Neutral
SC2	Lack of information	2.16	1.11	Low
SC3	Unfavorable weather	2.52	1.11	Neutral
SC4	Heavy traffic	2.99	1.17	Neutral
SC5	Places too far	3.08	1.19	Neutral
Interpersonal Constraints		2.39	0.92	Low
IC1	No travel companion	2.43	1.01	Low
IC2	Family discouragement	2.37	1.06	Low
IC3	Peer discouragement	2.41	1.08	Low
IC4	Safety concerns of others	2.33	1.09	Low
IC5	Lack of social support	2.42	1.03	Low
Intrapersonal Constraints		2.16	0.78	Low
IPC1	Fear of traveling alone	2.12	0.88	Low
IPC2	Lack of confidence	2.05	0.90	Low
IPC3	Anxiety about travel	2.19	0.92	Low
IPC4	Personal hesitation	2.17	0.89	Low
IPC5	Low self-motivation	2.23	0.90	Low
Overall Travel Constraints		2.43	0.70	Low

Table 4. Construct-level summary and item-level indicators: visit intention.

Construct and Indicator	Item Statement (shortened)	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Visit Intention		4.09	0.76	High
VI1	I intend to visit this destination	4.10	0.77	High
VI2	I will recommend this place	4.09	0.76	High
VI3	I want to revisit	4.06	0.79	High
VI4	I plan to visit soon	4.12	0.74	High
VI5	I am willing to spend	4.08	0.78	High

3.4 The Level of Destination Image Faced by Women Travelers

Table 5 presents the construct-level summary and item-level indicators of Destination Image. Overall, Destination Image is rated high ($M = 3.88$, $SD = 0.73$), as all indicators fall within the high range, indicating a generally positive perception among respondents. Notably, DI5 obtained the highest mean of 4.29 and was interpreted as very high, suggesting that respondents strongly perceive the destination as enjoyable.

Table 5. Construct-level summary and item-level indicators: destination image.

Construct and Indicator	Item Statement (shortened)	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Destination Image		3.88	0.73	High
DI1	Quality infrastructure	3.81	1.03	High
DI2	Affordable accommodations	3.61	0.96	High
DI3	Good hygiene standards	3.85	0.92	High
DI4	Safe destination	3.89	0.88	High
DI5	Enjoyable Destination	4.29	0.79	Very High

3.5 The Relationship between Expected Travel Risks and Travel Intention

Table 6 presents the Pearson Correlation Matrix involving four variables under review: Expected Risks, Travel Constraints, Destination Image, and Visit Intention, all drawn from the responses. The correlation coefficient between risks and travel intention has a very low value of ($r = 0.033$; $p = 0.519$); the figure is close to one, though there is no meaningful relationship between the two.

Table 6. Pearson correlation matrix.

Variable	1	2	3	4
1. Expected Risks	1.000			
2. Travel Constraints	0.336***	1.000		
3. Destination Image	0.011	-0.018	1.000	
4. Visit Intention	0.033	-0.078	0.601***	1.000

*** $p < .001$

3.6 The Relationship between Travel Constraints and Travel Intention

Table 7 presents the results of a Pearson correlation analysis testing whether travel constraints are correlated with intention to visit, particularly among a sample of

female travelers. The correlation coefficient is negative ($r = -0.078$), indicating a negative association, but the relationship is not statistically significant ($p = .130$).

Table 7. Pearson correlation between travel constraints and travel intention.

Variables	R	p	Interpretation
Travel Constraints and Visit Intention	-0.078	.130	Not Significant

3.7 Destination Image as a Mediator Between Expected Risks and Travel Intention

Table 8 presents the regression findings for Path a, which examines the relationship between expected risks and destination image. The results indicate a very weak, non-significant relationship ($B = 0.011$, $p = .825$), and the confidence interval crosses zero, indicating the absence of an effect. This means that the expected risks do not predict destination image, and destination image fails to mediate the relationship with travel intention.

Table 8. Path a: Expected risks to destination image.

Predictor	B	SE	t	p	95% CI (Lower)	95% CI (Upper)
Constant	3.859	0.159	24.30	<.001	3.547	4.171
Expected Risks	0.011	0.048	0.221	.825	-0.084	0.105

Table 9 indicates that the direct relationship between the expected risks and visit intention is not significantly influenced when destination image is considered. This is demonstrated by a p-value exceeding the threshold and a confidence interval that contains zero. Destination image, on the other hand, bears a strong positive relationship with model dominance, and the constant term indicates that the intention will always hold regardless of the risks.

Table 9. “Direct Effect” vs. “Indirect Effect” (Path b & c’): Expected risks and destination image to visit intention.

Predictor	B	SE	t	p	95% CI (Lower)	95% CI (Upper)
Constant	1.452	0.222	6.54	<.001	1.016	1.889
Expected Risks (c’)	0.027	0.042	0.641	.522	-0.056	0.109
Destination Image (b)	0.656	0.045	14.61	<.001	0.568	0.745

3.8 Destination Image as a Mediator Between Travel Constraints and Travel Intention

Table 10 presents the regression results for Path a, which examines how travel constraints relate to the destination image. The results indicate that the relationship is negative but not significant ($B = -0.018$, $p = 0.727$), and the interval intersects the zero point, indicating the absence of a significant effect. This means that travel constraints do not have a great impact on the destination image of women travelers.

Table 10. Path a: Travel constraints to destination image.

Predictor	B	SE	t	P	95% CI (Lower)	95% CI (Upper)
Constant	3.936	0.129	30.56	<.001	3.683	4.190
Expected Risks	-0.018	0.051	-0.349	.727	-0.118	0.082

Table 11 shows a weak negative correlation between travel constraints and visit intention, which vanishes upon the inclusion of destination image (p-value near threshold; confidence interval encompasses 0). This indicates that travel constraints do not significantly shape women travelers' destination image.

Table 11. "Direct Effect" vs. "Indirect Effect" (Path b & c'): Travel constraints and destination image to visit intention.

Predictor	B	SE	t	p	95% CI (Lower)	95% CI (Upper)
Constant	1.719	0.209	8.23	<.001	1.308	2.130
Travel Constraints (c')	-0.072	0.044	-1.63	.103	-0.160	0.015
Destination Image (b)	0.655	0.045	14.63	<.001	0.567	0.743

4. Discussion

The results concluded the main idea that destination image is a strong predictor of travel intention. It shows that these risks and constraints influence prudence, yet do not always prevent women travelers from traveling altogether. Notwithstanding the risk, the intention to travel has not been lost among female travelers, suggesting that, despite their presence, their intention remains unchanged. The insignificant relationships between expected risks, travel constraints, and visit intention show that there is no mediating relationship, and, as a consequence, the destination image does not mediate the relationship. Rather, destination image is a powerful independent variable of visit intention. Ultimately, even in the presence of risks and constraints,

women travelers may continue to assess destinations in terms of perceived benefits, attractiveness, and overall appeal rather than constraints.

This pattern can be attributed to the growing availability of online information, including social media, travel sites, and online reviews, which reduces uncertainty and increases confidence in the trip-planning process. With more accessible, trusted sources, travelers have a better chance to evaluate destinations and anticipate potential challenges. Meanwhile, changing social standards that favor female autonomy promote a more relaxed attitude towards travel, as they are no longer limited. As a result, risks and constraints are perceived as a normal part of the traveling experience rather than major obstacles.

The existing literature suggests that risks and constraints are likely to reduce visit intention among female travelers. Studies by Khan et al. (2019) and the analysis by Ramadhani (2023) have identified factors that strongly influence women's trip intentions. According to Rivera (2021), the focus of the area research is on gender-based safety threats and transport issues in Davao. This trend is indicative of decreased intent due to increased exposure to risks.

However, the results in this study contradict such claims. The risks were neutral, the constraints were not high, and none of the factors were evident in determining visit intention. The latter implies that risks are managed discretely rather than dismissed. In the Davao context, where transport problems and safety concerns are the norm (Rivera, 2021), these threats become just a matter of setting the baseline and adjusting to them rather than an obstacle. The fact that there are very few constraints, then, further challenges the long-held notion that women face significant barriers caused by fear, self-doubt, or household pressures, as this does not hold any significance. A younger Dabawenya in the present tends to make more liberated movements through travel decisions, her choices influenced by broader knowledge networks. The ease of information flow is breaking down boundaries, as the old are constantly exposed to novel options. It has already been demonstrated that ambitious women prefer to redefine obstacles rather than accept them as they are. The results of Aziz and Long (2021) confirm this, demonstrating that autonomy increases with the spread of awareness.

The findings apply to how local women in Davao City, specifically younger Dabawenyas aged 18-30, are outstanding in their travel decision-making process because they still maintain a high visit intentions (overall mean 4.09 across all indicators) despite their perceived expected risks being neutral (overall mean 3.22, crime concerns highest 3.88) and have significantly lower travel constraints (overall mean 2.43, with a lower intrapersonal fear of traveling alone at 2.12). These women are seen to adjust by accepting such risks as normal conditions, rather than viewing them as prohibitive, and instead emphasize the positive image of the destination place and perceived benefits, which question and challenge the expectations of greater vulnerability in the literature on female tourism (Rivera, 2021).

Lastly, although the destination image was tested as a mediator, it did not mediate the relationship significantly, as risks and constraints were not significant

predictors of intention. Instead of being indirectly mediated, the destination image directly affects intention, consistent with previous research by Nazir et al. (2021). Generally, the findings indicate that women tourists in Davao are keen to visit the destination when destination images are favorable, despite the presence of risks or constraints.

5. Conclusion

Drawing from the findings, the expected travel risks in the physical, financial, and performance dimensions were seen as neutral by women travelers. This implies that women travelers are cautious but not fearful. In addition, women travelers perceived travel constraints as low, indicating that despite constraints such as distance, traffic, and time, they are highly independent and confident in their travel activities. Moreover, travel intention among women travelers was high, as witnessed by their robust responses in all measures. This shows that they would be ready and willing to travel to the destination, despite their belief that the risks and constraints are not substantial. Further, women travelers reported no significant relationship between expected risks, travel constraints, and intention. Expected risks do not noticeably affect destination image or travel intentions, so destination image does not play a significant role in linking expected travel risks to travel intention. Given the lack of a noticeable effect of constraints on image formation, the destination image does not significantly mediate the relationship between travel constraints and travel intention. Constraints, even after adjustment, do not directly affect intention, emphasizing the significance of image in maintaining women's travel resolve. Instead, destination image is a strong predictor of travel intention.

The findings and conclusions suggest that women tourists evaluate the marketing image alongside the actual safety conditions of the destinations. Understanding the difference between the perceived and actual safety of a place can help people make more effective, confident travel decisions. Destination managers should also reduce the image-safety gap through balancing marketing assertions with proven safety improvements. Hence, promotional messages should be supported by safety infrastructure, staff training, and transparent reporting. In addition, governmental agencies are encouraged to enhance people's safety infrastructure and provide women-centered certification to make the destination more credible and to support the development of the tourism sector, in line with Sustainable Development Goal 5.

Future studies may explore other variables that influence the intricate travel decision-making process of women travelers. A discussion of destination image as an influential factor in women travelers' visit intention may be highlighted. Further, future researchers may decide to conduct such studies in different geographical areas and among varied age groups to discover differences in the results. Lastly, future researchers may conduct similar research while enhancing the research tool. Recommended methodologies include using a 4-point Likert scale for questionnaire

measurement and adopting a mixed-methods design targeting respondents with heightened crime fears to obtain in-depth, sustainable insights.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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