

From Screens to Suitcases: e-WOM, Trust, and Destination Image Influencing Travel Intentions in Morocco

Anas Moukrim

ENCG-Casablanca, Morocco
anas.moukrim-etu@etu.univh2c.ma

Majdouline Attaoui

ENCG-Casablanca, Morocco
majdoulineattaoui@gmail.com

Hajar Rbiaa

ENCG-Casablanca, Morocco
hajarrbiaa1998@gmail.com

Hasnaa Gaber

ENCG-Casablanca, Morocco
h.gaber@encgcasa.ma

This study examines the effects of electronic word-of-mouth (e-wom), trust, destination image, and perceived value on visit intention. Structural equation modelling was employed to test the proposed relationships using data from 523 respondents. The findings indicate that e-wom significantly predicts trust and destination image, while trust, destination image, and perceived value significantly influence visit intention. Mediation analysis using bootstrap confidence intervals was conducted to assess the indirect effects of e-wom on visit intention. The results reveal that the direct effect of e-wom on visit intention becomes non-significant once the mediators are incorporated into the model. Bootstrap estimates further demonstrate that trust significantly mediates the relationship between e-wom and visit intention. In contrast, the indirect effect through destination image is not statistically significant. These findings identify trust as the principal mechanism linking e-wom to visit intention and provide implications for tourism marketing research and practice.

Keywords: online WOM, e-WOM, trust, destination image, perceived value, travel intentions

 <https://doi.org/10.26493/2335-4194.19.189-210>

Introduction

The digitalization of travel decision-making has moved the tourism industry into a new informational paradigm, where choices are shaped less by official marketing narratives and more by the voices of real travellers (Tung & My, 2023; Erkan & Evans, 2016). Today, electronic word-of-mouth (e-wom) – reviews, testimonials, informal recommendations, experiential storytelling – has become one of the most influential forces determining destination attractiveness and competitiveness (Nilashi et al., 2022). On platforms such as TripAdvisor and Booking.com, tourists do not merely ‘consult information’; they actively con-

struct their expectations of an experience through the perceptions crafted by other travellers (Tung & My, 2023).

Positive peer evaluations generate assurance, reduce uncertainty, and strengthen travellers’ willingness to commit to a destination (Lujun et al., 2021; Zelenka et al., 2021). Even a single compelling narrative – relaying how a visitor felt welcomed, safe, delighted, or emotionally enriched – can transform a hesitant potential tourist into a convinced traveller. Conversely, negative reviews often dismantle interest and disqualify destinations instantly, regardless of conventional promotional efforts (Pee, 2016).

Destination managers, aware of this shift in informational power, increasingly acknowledge e-WOM not as a supplementary element but as a core strategic determinant of tourism success (Cheng et al., 2023; Madzík et al., 2023). Destinations with vibrant online reputations, sustained by authentic and credible online endorsements, consistently outperform those with weaker digital reputations (Baber et al., 2022; Golmohammadi et al., 2020). Importantly, qualitative richness – vivid descriptions of atmosphere, culture, hospitality, and emotional resonance – enables consumers to vicariously ‘live the experience’ well before arrival (Chen & Funk, 2010; Verma et al., 2023).

Purpose of the Study

Despite extensive research on e-WOM in tourism (e.g. Mohammed Abubakar & Ilkan, 2016; Bai et al., 2022; Reza Jalilvand & Samiei, 2012; Kusumawati et al., 2019; Martini et al., 2022; Prayogo et al., 2016), prior scholarship on electronic word-of-mouth in tourism has predominantly analysed trust, destination image, and perceived value as separate determinants, thereby overlooking their collective function as an integrated mechanism that shapes visit intention. In addition, the existing literature lacks an empirically substantiated mediation framework that simultaneously captures the mediating roles of destination image and trust in the relationship between e-WOM and visit intention. This conceptual gap leaves unresolved the underlying processes through which digital peer communication is internalized and successfully translated into actual travel motivation. The present study addresses this theoretical gap by demonstrating that trust operates as a pivotal mediating driver of behavioural intention, whereas destination image alone is insufficient to convert favourable perceptions into action. By performing this multi-mediator analysis within the Moroccan tourism context, the research enhances theoretical insight and broadens the cultural and regional relevance of (e-WOM) scholarship beyond predominantly Western study environments.

Accordingly, this research proposes and validates an integrated Structural Equation Model (SEM) that conceptualizes how e-WOM shapes visit intention. This robust framework offers a more comprehensive

understanding of the psychological conversion process linking digital information exposure to travel intention. This methodological and empirical contribution is significant for advancing tourism behavioural theory in digitally evolving and emerging-market contexts.

Literature Review

Electronic Word-Of-Mouth (e-WOM) and Trust

In the contemporary digital landscape, electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) emerges as a key factor in consumer decision-making. It is a gathering of commentary, reviews, recommendations, and experiential narratives disseminated through online platforms. Compared to traditional word-of-mouth, e-WOM extends beyond personal networks and sometimes involves anonymous contributors and a variety of multimedia, resulting in greater reach and expansion capacity (Mohammed Abubakar & Ilkan, 2016). It is fundamentally rooted in perceptions of authenticity and trustworthiness, which help reduce consumers' uncertainty. This is particularly relevant in high-risk contexts of important decisions, such as tourism and commerce online (Marinao Artigas et al., 2017; Mehyar et al., 2020). The theoretical foundations of e-WOM rest on the information acceptance model (IAM) and the elaboration likelihood model (ELM), which explain how people process and accept information (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986; Sussman & Siegal, 2003). Further, several studies (e.g. Al-Haddad et al., 2022; Erkan & Evans, 2016) used these models to illustrate how these dimensions of trustworthiness, quality, and perceived usefulness can increase enthusiasm for e-WOM in boosting trust.

Trust has become a crucial construct in consumer behaviour. It serves as a medium of credibility verification of e-WOM and strengthens the impact. Research (e.g. Hong & Cho, 2011; Sleiman et al., 2021; Yum & Kim, 2024; Zhao et al., 2019) has shown the value of trust for key outcomes, such as purchase intention, customer satisfaction, and loyalty. Moreover, e-WOM reduces the risk of decision-making in high-involvement situations with the need for reliable information or trust by leveraging its pre-existing credibility (Zainal et al., 2017). Nevertheless, the anonymity associated

with many e-WOM contributors often creates ambiguity, making cues such as content quality, source expertise, and credibility essential for ensuring the persuasiveness of e-WOM (Ismagilova et al., 2020).

Empirical studies have demonstrated the wealth of literature regarding the role of e-WOM in building trust. For instance, consistent exposure to credible e-WOM mitigates perceived uncertainties and reinforces customer expectations, thereby enhancing trust (Matute et al., 2016; Wibawa & Setiawan, 2021). Moreover, perceived trustworthiness and expertise significantly enhance the credibility and adoption of e-WOM content. This effect is particularly pronounced when the information is transparent and aligns with recognized high-quality standards (Bulut & Karabulut, 2018). When reinforced by positive past experience, positive e-WOM starts an honest cycle of trust leading to repeat visits and enthusiastic advocacy (Serra-Cantalops et al., 2018; Wang & McCarthy, 2023). The opposite may also be the case, with demoralizing or inconsistent e-WOM weakening trust and underscoring the delicate nature of this relationship (Velnadar et al., 2024). For the purpose of this study, trust refers to tourists' belief that the destination will reliably deliver safe, authentic, and expected travel experiences, based on the credibility of information and prior user evaluations. Based on these findings, we propose the following hypothesis:

- H1 Higher levels of electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) exposure will significantly increase tourists' trust in a destination.*

E-WOM and Destination Image

E-WOM has emerged as a critical determinant of how tourists perceive and communicate a destination image. According to Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004, p.39), E-WOM refers to "any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual, or former customers about a product or company, which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions via the Internet." Its influence surpasses traditional advertising among customers since it has become their primary source of information (Hung & Li, 2007; Mayzlin, 2006). Moreover, the tourism sector demonstrates specific openness to e-WOM since the intangible nature of service

increases the need for consumer trust in their peers' recommendations (Casaló et al., 2015).

Several works of research have demonstrated the ability of e-WOM to change how people perceive a travel destination. According to the studies of Reza Jalilvand and Samiei (2012), Setiawan (2014), and Mohammed Abubakar and Ilkan (2016), e-WOM has a significant impact on the destination image. In the same vein, research has demonstrated that positive e-WOM increases the attractiveness of a destination, resulting in positive attitudes and perceptions (Choirisa et al., 2021; Lin et al., 2013; Torlak et al., 2014), whereas negative e-WOM reduces its attractiveness (Morgan et al., 2003).

Destination image plays a transforming role in the tourism business since it encapsulates the collective knowledge, perception, and emotions of potential tourists. Gartner (1994) described destination image as a three-dimensional framework of cognitive, affective, and conative components, including knowledge and beliefs, emotional responses, and behavioural intentions. This broad framework gives destinations a strategic advantage in segmenting their tourist identification into several traveller groups (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). According to some studies (e.g. Çoban, 2012; Hung et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2016), positive destination image fosters satisfaction and loyalty among tourists, encouraging repeat visits and promoting positive word-of-mouth recommendations.

The relationship between e-WOM and destination image is reciprocal. E-WOM has a shaping and enhancing power on destination image and a positive image influences the credibility of e-WOM. These constructs affect consumer behaviour and promote competitive excellence and long-term destination success. As digital communication technologies have risen, including e-WOM strategies within marketing frameworks is crucial to destination branding promotion. Based on these findings, we propose the following hypothesis:

- H2 Higher levels of e-WOM will significantly enhance the perceived destination image.*

Destination Image and Trust

In tourism research, the relationship between trust and destination image has been an important scholar-

ly interest, as it can influence visitor perceptions and confidence when selecting a destination. Destination image generally affects how travellers form attitudes toward destinations and decision-making concerning travel activities (Al-Kwafi, 2015; Yuan & Vui, 2023). A positive destination image can foster trust in order that the visitor potentially believes that the destination will provide or exceed their expectations. This relationship demonstrates how a destination is seen and the psychological trust that tourists have in a destination (Setiawan et al., 2021). Effective communication about unique functions such as safety and service quality increases tourist confidence, strengthening reliability and trustworthiness (Gavurova et al., 2023; Seger-Guttmann & Gilboa, 2023). A reliable destination promotes positive word-of-mouth, especially when the marketing picture matches real experience.

Empirically, different studies have shown that destination image directly influences trust (Jebbouri et al., 2022; Setiawan et al., 2021). A strong, positive image promotes a feeling of confidence in tourists concerning their selection of destination, thereby enhancing their psychological link. This trust is constructed through consistent messaging, real experiences, and the alignment between promotional efforts and reality. When travellers perceive a destination as secure, authentic, and delivering magnificent offers, their self-belief in its reliability strengthens. Consequently, this not only fosters repeat visits but also fosters high-quality word-of-mouth, in addition to reinforcing the destination's reputation for the long term. Based on these findings, we propose the following hypothesis:

- H3 *A more favourable destination image will significantly increase tourists' trust in the destination.*

Trust and Perceived Value

Perceived value and trust has obtained a substantial amount of attention in the context of consumer behaviour and tourism, and these literature review studies placed them at the centre of decision-making and customer satisfaction. The concept of trust represents the quality, credibility, and genuineness of a service or a destination. It helps as a factor that reduces vul-

nerabilities and risks that consumers or travellers may encounter, ensuring that they get what they want or expect (Curras-Perez et al., 2017; Elshaer et al., 2024; Yoo & Choi, 2022). In several sectors, such as tourism and e-commerce, trust promotes proper consumer behaviours such as loyalty, recommending other people to use the service, and frequent visits, driving long-term engagement and fulfilment (Guenzi et al., 2009; Kim et al., 2012).

Tourism is inherently a high-involvement activity, requiring substantial time, financial, and emotional investment from travellers, which makes them particularly sensitive to the value they receive. In this context, the perceived value of tourism can be understood as the quality and content of services, programmes, and experiences offered during a trip (Gallarza-Granizo et al., 2020). Petrick and Backman (2002) classified tourism value into five key dimensions and emphasized that emotional value – the affective satisfaction and enjoyment derived from the experience – exerts the strongest influence on tourist behaviour. Consequently, perceived value is a pivotal factor in motivating tourists' continued participation, loyalty, and advocacy, reinforcing the central role of trust and perceived value in shaping tourism engagement.

Trust and perceived value are dynamic factors that shape tourists' or consumers' experiences. Trust often precedes perceived value by reducing perceived risks associated with a destination or product, thereby enhancing overall value perception (Bonsón et al., 2015). Consequently, the perception of value for money is influenced not only by the destination's attributes but also by its broader social impact. This suggests that trust and perceived value are not merely determined by transactional or experiential quality but are also shaped by cultural and social considerations that define the tourism experience (Yao et al., 2020).

Trust and perceived value are two essential concepts of consumer behaviour in the digital realm, and they are closely related. In the context of e-commerce and, more generally, digital tourism, trust has a paramount impact on perceived value due to its function to ease 'costs' associated with perceptions and time in

high-risk environments such as online travel (Bonsón et al., 2015). In reducing risks, trust enhances the perceived benefits of products and services and creates a culture for repeated transactions (Beneke et al., 2013). This interplay between trust and perceived value influences consumer behaviour and buying decisions, leading to satisfaction and loyalty. Based on these findings, we propose the following hypothesis:

- H4 Higher levels of destination-based trust will significantly increase tourists' perceived value of the travel experience.*

Destination Image and Perceived Value

Destination image is widely recognized as a crucial factor influencing satisfaction and tourist behaviours, such as intentions to visit (Chaulagain et al., 2019) and willingness to recommend (Pektaş et al., 2019). This image is also shaped by information sources, personal factors (Beerli & Martín, 2004), and prior experience (Atmari & Putri, 2021).

Destination image remains a key determinant in tourism, and when considered in conjunction with perceived value, it significantly affects tourist experiences. Empirical evidence suggests that a positive destination image can enhance perceived value, as tourists' expectations regarding the benefits of visiting the destination are effectively fulfilled by what the destination offers (Libre et al., 2022; Suhud et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2016). This, in turn, leads to higher satisfaction and stronger loyalty intentions (Jeong & Kim, 2019; Loi et al., 2017). Moreover, according to Caber et al. (2020), a favourable destination image not only elevates perceived value but also reinforces the overall positive image of the destination itself.

Although both destination image and perceived value may involve economic considerations, they represent conceptually distinct constructs. Destination image reflects attribute-based perceptions of the destination, including economic attractiveness as a component of its cognitive dimension (e.g. Reza Jalilvand et al., 2012). In contrast, perceived value captures a holistic evaluative judgment of the overall travel experience relative to its cost. Thus, the two constructs operate at different conceptual levels – attribute perception versus overall trade-

off evaluation. This distinction supports modelling destination image as an antecedent of perceived value, rather than treating the two constructs as overlapping.

In practical terms, these findings imply that enhancing a destination's image can simultaneously increase perceived value and encourage stronger post-visit behaviours, such as intentions to revisit and recommend. Such strategies are critical for building long-term customer relationships in competitive tourism markets (Zhang & Niyomsilp, 2024). Based on these findings, we propose the following hypothesis:

- H5 A stronger destination image will significantly enhance tourists' perceived value of the destination.*

Trust and Visit Intention

The tourism field encounters high uncertainty because its services are difficult to separate from their intangible nature (Ding & Keh, 2017). Visitors and tourists tend to prefer destinations that appear reliable and trustworthy (Roodurmun & Devi, 2010). The work of Han and Hyun (2015) emphasized that individuals travel to places they believe are honest and offer what they promise. According to Mohammed Abubakar and Ilkan (2016) and Mohammed Abubakar et al.'s (2017) research, medical tourists seek destinations with high-quality, affordable, and reliable health services with minimal risks; to achieve this they often count on word-of-mouth and online reviews to make their decisions.

Tourists rely heavily on trust to foster confidence in their travel decisions. When the information provided about a destination aligns with their expectations, this significantly relieves concerns about service malpractice and the risk of unsatisfactory experiences (Han & Hyun, 2015).

Empirical research (e.g. Mohammed Abubakar & Ilkan, 2016; Han & Hyun, 2015; Mohammed Abubakar, 2016; Setiawan et al., 2021) showed tourists will choose destinations that they feel they can trust. When tourists trust a destination, they believe it will deliver what it has promised, which builds stronger motivation to visit. In cases where tourists see a destination as unreliable and the service quality is poor, their interest

falls since they worry about receiving poor treatment (Mohammed Abubakar & Ilkan, 2016). Based on these findings, we propose the following hypothesis:

- H6 Higher destination-based trust will significantly increase tourists' intention to visit.*

Destination Image and Intention to Visit

Destination image strongly impacts visit intention, comprising tourists' perception and motivation about visiting a destination. According to Marques et al. (2021), the destination image is formed of cognitive (perceived beliefs), affective (emotions), and unique (differentiation characteristics) elements. Generally, these elements define how people see a place under consideration and, thus, their willingness to travel there.

Empirical evidence suggests a strong, direct relationship between destination image and visit intention. For example, Chaulagain et al. (2019) indicated a positive correlation between favourable destination image and the intention to visit. This relationship functions circularly in that positive perceptions influence visit intentions and travellers' behaviour to act on their intentions, thereby strengthening the destination image through words and revisit behaviour (Assaker & Hallak, 2013).

Moreover, external stimuli such as social media (Kim et al., 2017) and personal experiences (Atmari & Putri, 2021; Ghorbanzadeh et al., 2021) improve the destination image, which increases the tourist's desire to travel. Similarly, the quality of the information, especially online reviews, plays an important role in shaping the destination image and influencing the intentions of travelling, forming a strong relationship between the constructs (Reza Jalilvand et al., 2012; Setiawan et al., 2021). Based on these findings, we propose the following hypothesis:

- H7 A more positive destination image will significantly increase tourists' intention to visit.*

Perceived Value and Intention to Visit

Tourists' perceived value is a critical factor in determining their intention to visit a destination. This concept represents a consideration involving several economic, emotional, functional, and social components,

resulting in a full view of how travellers judge destinations. A destination's perceived value is a major driver of the decisions to travel and the fostering of positive behaviour results, such as satisfaction and loyalty (Liu et al., 2023; Nergui et al., 2023).

Empirical research has consistently demonstrated the impact of perceived value on tourists' intention to visit a destination. Some examples of such studies include that of Caber et al. (2020), which demonstrated how perceived value directly impacts behavioural intentions, such as revisits and positive WOM recommendations. Moreover, in the context of a volcanic destination in Indonesia Mount Ijen, Suhud and Allan (2024) provided a direct link between perceived value and visitor intention, which shows the importance of perceived value on visitors' decisions.

Furthermore, perceived value also increases overall tourist satisfaction as more value leads to more satisfaction, more repeat visits (Allameh et al., 2014), and recommendations to others (Perera & Vlosky, 2013). These findings highlight the dual impact of perceived value, shaping both immediate visit intentions and long-term tourist loyalty. Based on these findings, we propose the following hypothesis:

- H8 Higher perceived value of the destination will significantly increase tourists' intention to visit.*

Mediation Effect

The Mediating Role of Trust in the Relationship Between Electronic Word-Of-Mouth and Intention to Visit.

Within a broader context of online interactions, trust becomes a crucial mediating construct between e-WOM and the intention to visit (Mohammed Abubakar & Ilkan, 2016; Setiawan et al., 2021; Su et al., 2022). When e-WOM becomes trusted by tourists, a higher sense of assurance is generated and tourists will feel comfortable with e-WOM as a trustworthy source when making travel decisions. To illustrate, Mohammed Abubakar and Ilkan (2016) demonstrated that in the context of medical tourism, e-WOM has a significant impact on trust, which, in turn, plays a crucial role in influencing visitors' intention to visit. Additionally, e-WOM directly and significantly affects the intention to visit, highlighting its pivotal role in

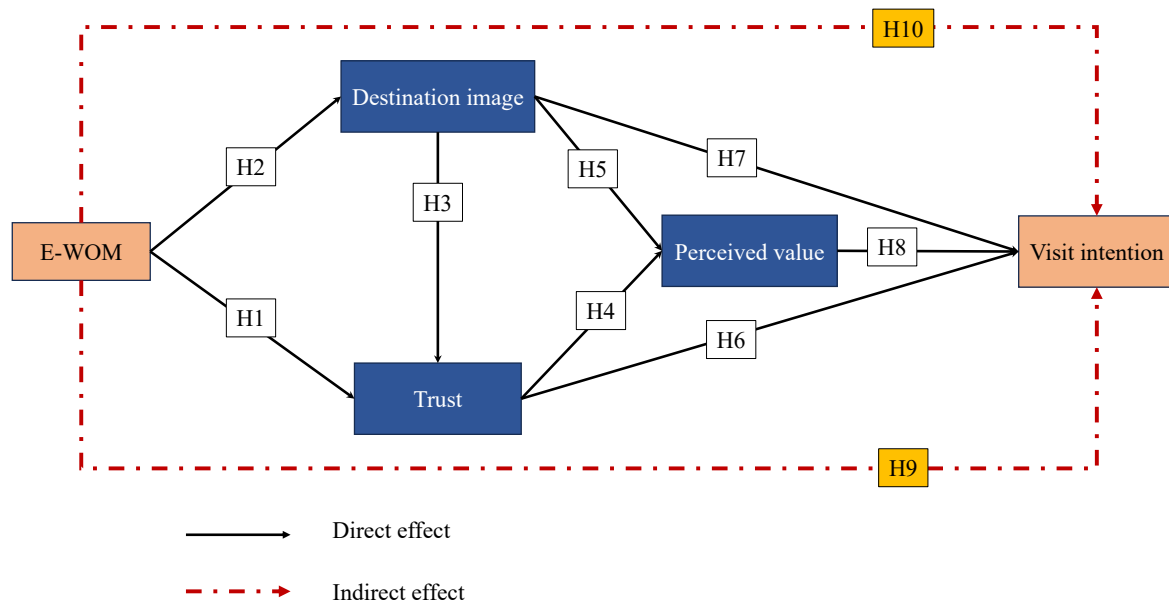


Figure 1 Theoretical Model of the Study

shaping consumer decisions (Mohammed Abubakar & Ilkan, 2016; Mohammed Abubakar, 2016). In a similar vein, Van Huy et al. (2019) expanded on this point by showing that trust closes the gap between a website's information quality and the purchase intention of travel products, thereby making shared information credible and actionable. Accordingly, this study proposes:

H9 The relationship between e-wom and intention to visit is mediated by trust.

The Mediating Role of Destination Image in the relationship Between Electronic Word-Of-Mouth and Intention to Visit.

The role of destination image as a mediating factor between e-wom and intention to visit has been identified and has gained the attention of many scholars (Aditya & Piartrini, 2023; Kusumawati et al., 2019; Rahjasa et al., 2022). Destination image critically impacts tourists' perceptions as a construct, bridging e-wom's impact on their decision-making processes. For example, in their study on Indonesian tourism, Kusumawati et al. (2019) indicated that the destination image mediates between e-wom and visit intention. Correspondingly, the study of Rah-

jasa et al. (2022) about the analysis of the perception of Bali involving foreign tourists, other than those in Denpasar, found that destination image mediated the relationship between e-wom and tourists' intention to travel to Denpasar. This enhanced destination image was a crucial factor in the increase in visit intentions. This study established that e-wom had an indirect effect on visit intentions through the destination image. This implies that destination image plays a mediator role in bridging the gap between marketing communication and real tourist behaviour. Based on these discussions, this study hypothesizes:

H10 The relationship between e-wom and visit intention is mediated by destination image.

The theoretical model illustrated in Figure 1 represents the ten research hypotheses. This figure shows the proposed structure of how e-wom affects trust and destination image, which in turn impacts perceived value and ultimately shapes the intention to travel. Additionally, the figure illustrates the mediation role of trust and destination image in the relationship between e-wom and visit intention.

Methodology

Data Collection and Sampling Methodology

The target population consisted of active or potential tourists who used online platforms to search for or plan trips to Morocco. Due to the absence of a sampling frame for this population, a non-probabilistic approach was required. We therefore selected participants using convenience sampling, drawing respondents from users present on travel discussion forums, review platforms, and social media groups related to Moroccan tourism (Sekran & Bougie, 2011). This approach is consistent with sampling strategies used in previous e-wom tourism studies (e.g. Mohammed Abubakar, 2016; Nilashi et al., 2022), where population parameters are not directly observable. Data collection was collected via a self-administered online questionnaire (Appendix 1), meticulously designed to optimize readability and minimize linguistic ambiguity for participants representing diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. To ensure accuracy and contextual relevance, the instrument underwent a rigorous translation protocol facilitated by language specialists, with lexical simplification, logical sequencing, and intuitive formatting implemented to enhance accessibility.

The questionnaire was structured into three distinct segments. The introductory section delineated the research objectives and scope. The subsequent segment operationalized five constructs through five-point Likert scales (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree), adapted from validated instruments in extant literature: electronic word-of-mouth (Mohammed Abubakar & Ilkan, 2016), trust (Marchiori et al., 2013), destination image (Reza Jalilvand et al., 2012), perceived value (Ryu et al., 2008), and visit intention (Mohammed Abubakar & Ilkan, 2016). The concluding segment captured demographic and travel-related characteristics. Prior to dissemination, the instrument was subjected to a sequential pretesting: an initial qualitative phase, wherein a purposive sample of students provided feedback on linguistic clarity and usability, followed by a quantitative phase involving 70 participants and iterative reviews by tourism scholars and academic experts to verify reliability, validity, and functional coherence.

Respondent eligibility was conditioned upon active engagement with electronic word-of-mouth (e-wom) platforms related to tourism. This criterion ensured that participants were sufficiently exposed to online travel information environments, allowing them to meaningfully evaluate constructs such as destination image, perceived value, trust, and visit intention.

Participants failing to meet these thresholds were systematically excluded. Following data collection between June and September 2025, 523 respondents constituted the final analytic sample after the removal of 123 incomplete or non-conforming responses. Rigorous quality assurance protocols were applied, including evaluations of missing data patterns, and normality distribution assessed via skewness and kurtosis indices, with marginal deviations deemed statistically permissible under established conventions (Hair et al., 2010). The adoption of five-point Likert scales was justified by their demonstrated capacity to enhance data quality relative to alternatives and to facilitate comparative analysis with seminal works in the domain (e.g. Mohammed Abubakar et al., 2017; Mohammed Abubakar & Ilkan, 2016).

Data Analyses

To evaluate the scale reliability and validity, several measures were analysed, including internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability), convergent validity (average variance extracted, AVE), and discriminant validity (Fornell and Larcker criterion). Reliability research shows Cronbach's alpha scores above 0.70 represent sufficient quality for testing internal consistency, as established by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994). An AVE value greater than 0.50 is considered satisfactory (Hair et al., 2006), while Composite Reliability above 0.70 is considered acceptable (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). According to Kline (2005), valid discrimination exists when factor interrelations maintain values under 0.85. Moreover, Fornell and Larcker (1981) indicated that construct discriminant validity exists when the squared correlations between measures fall below the AVE thresholds of individual constructs.

The analysis started with an assessment of measurement scale descriptive statistics as well as its psy-

Table 1 Demographic Data of the Sample

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender			Occupation		
Male	285	54.5%	Employee	220	42.0%
Female	238	45.5%	Entrepreneur	30	5.7%
Age			Official	115	22.0%
18–24	115	22.0%	Retired	30	5.7%
25–34	165	31.5%	Student	115	22.0%
35–44	110	21.0%	Travel Frequency		
45–54	70	13.4%	Rarely	110	21.0%
55–65	45	8.6%	Occasionally	200	38.2%
Over 65	18	3.5%	Frequently	183	35.0%
Marital Status			Very frequently	30	5.8%
Single	340	65.0%	Main Motivation for the Trip		
Married	183	35.0%	Tourism	230	44.0%
Nationality			Business	37	7.1%
Moroccan	497	95.0%	Meeting relatives/friends	165	31.5%
Not Moroccan	26	5.0%	Other	91	17.4%
Education			Duration of Trip		
Some college	50	9.6%	Same-day visitor	65	12.4%
University degree	250	47.8%	1–2 nights	95	18.2%
Master's	203	38.8%	3–4 nights	210	40.1%
PhD degree	20	3.8%	5–6 nights	85	16.3%
			7–9 nights	45	8.6%
			10 or more nights	23	4.4%

chometric properties prior to studying demographic characteristics and predictor variables. The research variables were assessed through maximum likelihood estimation in AMOS 25.0 during a structural equation modelling (SEM) analysis. The model fit was verified using multiple goodness-of-fit indices such as the chi-square test (χ^2) and normed chi-square (χ^2/df) along with standardized root mean square residual (SRMR), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), goodness-of-fit index (GFI), and comparative fit index (CFI). SEM research reveals an acceptable model fit exists when χ^2/df is below 3.0 (Hu & Bentler, 1999) and SRMR falls below 0.05 (Kline, 2016). A fit assessment using RMSEA

measures is considered excellent when values fall under 0.05, according to Hu and Bentler (1999). The GFI is an absolute measure reflecting the proportion of variance and covariance explained by the model (Byrne, 1998). The CFI, which adjusts for sample size, is recommended as a key index, with values equal to or exceeding 0.95 suggesting a good fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999).

To test the mediation effect, we used the statistical bootstrap technique with the recommended 5,000 sample size (Ringle & Sarstedt, 2015). The model was analysed using a bootstrap approach, 5,000 resamples, and 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals (Byrne, 2016).

Results

The demographic data of the sample is presented in Table 1. The survey shows a gender balance among participants, with males constituting 54.5% and females representing 45.5% of the total sample. The population data reveal that young adults, making up 31.5% of the participants, belong to the 25 to 34 age group, followed by 22% and 21% representing the 18–24 and 35–44 groups, respectively. Older populations show decreasing representation in the sample, with 13.4% aged 45–54, 8.6% aged 55–65, and 3.5% over 65 years old. The majority of survey participants (65.0%) are single, while married participants constitute 35.0% of the sample, indicating that the independent traveller segment predominates.

The survey participants demonstrate a high level of academic achievement, as 47.8% hold a university degree, 38.8% have a master's degree, and 3.8% have attained a PhD. Additionally, 9.6% of participants reported having attended some college courses. Employees constitute 42.0% of the total sample population, while students and officials each represent 22.0%. Entrepreneurs constitute 5.7%, while retirees constitute an equal share of 5.7%. Occasional travellers form the largest segment of respondents engaged in travel at 38.2%, followed by frequent travellers at 35.0%, rarely travelling participants at 21.0%, and very frequent travellers representing only 5.8% of survey respondents. The primary motive for travel is tourism, accounting for 44.0% of the total, while visiting relatives and friends stands at 31.5%, and business-related travel comprises only 7.1%. The majority of travellers spend between 3 and 4 nights on their trips, with 40.2% opting for this duration, 18.2% choosing 1 to 2 nights, and 16.2% selecting a 5 to 6 night stay. Extended stays of 7–9 nights (8.6%) and 10 or more nights (4.4%) are less frequent, indicating a preference for brief but repeated trips.

To evaluate the measurement model and the proposed relationships, data analysis began with exploratory factor analysis (EFA) using SPSS 27, followed by confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The research hypotheses were subsequently tested using IBM SPSS Amos software version 25. EFA was employed to confirm the constructs' uni-dimensionality and internal

consistency, particularly as the items were adapted from prior literature to align with the study's specific context. Five constructs were validated through EFA. CFA was then utilized to test the theoretical assumptions concerning the relationships between observed indicators and latent constructs and to refine the model for achieving acceptable goodness-of-fit indices.

The study proceeded with an assessment of reliability, validity, and model fit. Table 3 indicates that all constructs demonstrated high reliability, with Cronbach's alpha values of 0.749 or higher. Based on Hair et al. (2019), a Cronbach's alpha of 0.70 or above signifies acceptable reliability of the measurement scale. In addition, composite reliability was then assessed for the latent constructs and indicated good reliability, as it was greater than the average variance extracted (AVE) values. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) showed that all constructs exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.50, indicating satisfactory convergent validity across constructs. Furthermore, discriminant validity assessment followed the Fornell-Larcker criterion where researchers examined the square root of Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values against entire correlations between constructs. Discriminant validity exists when the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value for a construct is higher than its correlations with each of the other constructs. For example, the analysis confirmed the strong discriminant validity of e-WOM by showing that its square root of AVE (0.844) was higher than the correlations with other constructs, such as trust (0.665), destination image (0.701), perceived value (0.470), and visit intention (0.376) (see Table 3). This result was consistent across all other constructs as well. This provides strong evidence for the Fornell-Larcker criterion, highlighting the independence of each construct from the others and supporting the overall robustness of their discriminant validity.

Structural equation modelling analysis occurred subsequently. The maximum likelihood estimation outcomes indicated a strong model fit for the dataset, as evidenced by the following indices: the structural equation modelling analysis revealed evidence of a strong model fit with values of $\chi^2 = 364.976$, normed

Table 2 Mean, Standard Deviation, Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability and Average Variance Extracted

	Mean	SD	A	CR	AVE	$\sqrt{\text{AVE}}$
E-WOM	4.001	0.862	0.938	0.937	0.712	0.844
I often read online reviews written by other travellers about destinations.	4.096	0.974				
I read online travel reviews to help me choose the right destination.	3.933	0.908				
I use online travel reviews from other travellers to compare destination options.	3.966	1.061				
Before deciding where to travel, I usually look for information in online travel reviews.	4.038	1.026				
When I do not read online travel reviews, I feel less confident about my travel decisions.	3.920	0.906				
Online travel reviews make me feel more sure about choosing a destination.	4.054	1.034				
Trust	4.008	0.788	0.866	0.911	0.721	0.849
I trust online comments and reviews posted by other travellers.	4.109	0.942				
I believe most travellers share their reviews with honest intentions.	4.040	0.805				
I find online reviews from travellers to be a reliable source of travel information.	4.055	0.894				
I trust travellers' reviews more than official travel guides or promotional articles.	3.826	1.068				
Destination Image	4.103	0.769	0.907	0.897	0.636	0.797
I think the destination seems safe for visitors.	4.105	0.905				
I think the destination offers interesting places to visit.	4.111	0.881				
I believe the destination has attractive natural scenery.	4.107	0.895				
I think that the destination has a pleasant climate.	4.042	0.942				
I feel that visiting this destination offers good value for money.	4.151	0.883				
Perceived Value	3.987	0.750	0.749	0.799	0.571	0.756
I think this destination gives good value for the money I would spend.	4.008	0.867				
I think the overall value of visiting this destination is high.	3.925	0.880				
I feel that the travel experience at this destination is worth its cost.	4.027	1.005				
Visit Intention	4.110	0.773	0.833	0.833	0.626	0.791
I intend to visit this destination in the future.	4.107	0.910				
I prefer this destination over other destinations I could visit.	4.107	0.867				
I plan to visit this destination when I have the opportunity.	4.117	0.903				

Table 3 Discriminant Validity

	EWOM	Trust	Destination image	Perceived value	Visit intention
EWOM	0.844				
Trust	0.665	0.849			
Destination image	0.701	0.703	0.797		
Perceived value	0.470	0.516	0.519	0.756	
Visit intention	0.376	0.465	0.446	0.455	0.791

Table 4 Model Fit Measures

χ^2	364.976
χ^2/DF	2.074
GFI	0.938
AGFI	0.919
CFI	0.975
TLI	0.970
SRMR	0.034
RMSEA	0.045

chi-square = 2.074, $p < 0.001$, RMSEA = 0.045, CFI = 0.975, GFI = 0.938, and SRMR = 0.034 (Table 4).

The final phase involved hypothesis testing using SPSS and Amos (see Table 5). Regression analysis confirmed that 'e-wom' significantly and positively influenced 'trust' (t -value = 10.570), supporting H1. Similarly, 'e-wom' had a significant positive impact on 'destination image' (t -value = 18.539), supporting H2. Additionally, 'destination image' was found to have a significant positive effect on 'trust' (t -value = 10.850),

supporting H3. 'Trust' was also shown to have a significant positive impact on 'perceived value' (t -value = 5.656), supporting H4.

Further analysis demonstrated that 'destination image' significantly and positively impacted 'perceived value' (t -value = 5.352), supporting H5. 'Trust' significantly and positively influenced 'visit intention' (t -value = 4.215), supporting H6. Moreover, the significant positive influence of 'destination image' on 'visit intention' was validated (t -value = 2.358), supporting H7. Finally, 'perceived value' was found to significantly and positively impact 'visit intention' (t -value = 4.994), supporting H8.

Table 6 presents the results of the mediation analysis conducted using bootstrap confidence intervals. In line with established methodological recommendations for mediation testing, the significance of indirect effects was evaluated by examining whether zero was contained within the 95% bootstrap confidence intervals.

The direct effect of e-wom on visit intention was not statistically significant ($\beta = 0.017$), indicating that e-wom does not exert a direct influence on visit in-

Table 5 Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesized paths		B	Standard Error	t -value	Results
E-WOM	→ Trust	0.368***	0.035	10.570	supported
E-WOM	→ Destination image	0.562***	0.030	18.539	supported
Destination image	→ Trust	0.423***	0.039	10.850	supported
Trust	→ Perceived value	0.273***	0.048	5.656	supported
Destination image	→ Perceived value	0.264***	0.049	5.352	supported
Trust	→ Visit intention	0.220***	0.052	4.215	supported
Destination image	→ Visit intention	0.126*	0.053	2.358	supported
Perceived value	→ Visit intention	0.230***	0.046	4.994	supported

*** $p < 0.001$, * $p < 0.05$

Table 6 Mediation Effect

	Direct effect				Indirect effect			Result
	β	β	SD	t-value	Confidence Interval (95%)		p-value	
					lower bound	upper bound		
E-WOM $\rightarrow$ TR $\rightarrow$ VI	0.017 <i>P</i> (0.729)	0.078	0.023	3.391	0.037	0.126	0.000	Significant indirect effect
E-WOM $\rightarrow$ DI $\rightarrow$ VI	0.017 <i>P</i> (0.729)	0.067	0.035	1.914	-0.004	0.134	0.068	Insignificant indirect effect

E-WOM= Electronic word-of-mouth; TR= Trust; VI= Visit intention

tention once the mediating variables are incorporated into the structural model.

Regarding the indirect effects, the mediating role of trust in the association between e-WOM and visit intention was empirically supported. The estimated indirect effect ($\beta = 0.078$) was accompanied by a 95% bootstrap confidence interval ranging from 0.037 to 0.126. Since zero was not encompassed within this interval, the indirect effect is statistically significant, thereby providing support for H₉. These findings indicate that the relationship between e-WOM and visit intention operates indirectly through trust, suggesting that trust represents the primary mediating mechanism linking e-WOM to visit intention.

In contrast, the mediating role of destination image was not substantiated. The estimated indirect effect ($\beta = 0.067$) was accompanied by a 95% bootstrap confidence interval ranging from -0.004 to 0.134, which includes zero. Consequently, the indirect effect is not statistically significant, leading to the rejection of H₁₀ and indicating that destination image does not constitute a significant mediating pathway between e-WOM and visit intention in the present model.

Discussion and Conclusions

This study aimed to examine the direct and mediating effects of electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) on visit intention (VI) in the Moroccan tourism context, focusing on the roles of destination image (DI), trust (TR), and perceived value (PV). The findings provide meaningful theoretical clarification on how digital communication shapes tourist decision-making, and highlight key managerial actions for tourism stakeholders in Morocco.

Theoretical Implications

This study advances tourism theory by clarifying the psychological mechanisms through which e-WOM influences visit intention. The findings confirm that e-WOM significantly predicts both trust (Mohammed Abubakar et al., 2017; Mohammed Abubakar, 2016) and destination image (Reza Jalilvand et al., 2012; Setiawan et al., 2021), reinforcing the role of peer-generated communication in shaping tourists' cognitive and evaluative perceptions of destinations.

Importantly, the results demonstrate that trust serves as the primary mediating mechanism linking e-WOM to visit intention. Bootstrap confidence interval analysis indicates that trust significantly transmits the effect of e-WOM to behavioural intention, underscoring its role as a critical behavioural enabler. These findings highlight that beyond informational exposure, tourists' decisions are contingent upon perceptions of credibility, reliability, and psychological assurance (Pujiastuti et al., 2017; Setiawan et al., 2021). Trust thus functions as the key conduit transforming digital communication into actionable travel intention.

Although e-WOM significantly influences destination image, the mediation analysis reveals that destination image does not significantly transmit the effect of e-WOM to visit intention. The indirect effect through destination image was not statistically significant based on bootstrap confidence intervals. This finding refines prevailing assumptions in tourism research that improved image necessarily translates into behavioural intention. Instead, the results suggest that while image formation remains perceptually important, it does not independently function as a decisive behavioural mechanism in this model. Rather, trust

and perceived value appear to play more immediate roles in converting perceptions into intention (López & Parra, 2016; Verma et al., 2023).

The study's contribution further lies in its integrated mediation framework, simultaneously examining trust, destination image, and perceived value within a unified structural model. By distinguishing supported from unsupported mediation pathways, the findings provide a more precise understanding of how digital communication operates through differentiated psychological routes rather than through uniform perceptual effects.

Finally, testing the proposed model within the Moroccan context – an emerging tourism market – extends its contextual applicability by providing empirical evidence from a non-Western setting. However, given the predominance of domestic respondents, the findings should be interpreted within this specific cultural context, and future cross-cultural investigations are required to strengthen the model's broader generalizability.

Practical Implications

The findings generate several implications for tourism marketers and policymakers. Given the significant influence of e-WOM on trust and destination image, destination managers should prioritize strategic digital reputation management. Encouraging authentic user-generated content, facilitating transparent peer feedback, and maintaining responsive online communication can strengthen trust formation, which emerged as the central pathway to visit intention.

Because trust and perceived value directly influence visit intention, tourism stakeholders should emphasize credibility, service reliability, safety assurances, and clear value propositions in their communications. Active engagement with online reviews and transparent handling of traveller concerns can reinforce confidence and reduce perceived risk (Helal et al., 2023; Sobaih et al., 2025).

Although destination image remains important for shaping perceptions, the findings suggest that image enhancement alone may not be sufficient to stimulate visit intention. Marketing strategies should therefore move beyond aesthetic or symbolic positioning and

focus on building verifiable credibility and delivering tangible value.

Integrated digital and experiential strategies may further strengthen conversion from interest to intention. Collaborations with credible influencers, narrative-driven promotional content, and immersive digital tools such as virtual tours can help reduce uncertainty and enhance trust, particularly for first-time visitors (Anaya-Sánchez et al., 2024; Istiqlal et al., 2024).

Collectively, these insights provide a strategic foundation for leveraging e-WOM not merely to shape destination perceptions, but to cultivate trust and value perceptions that ultimately drive behavioural intention in emerging tourism markets.

Limitations

The study offers valuable insights into the influence of e-WOM on visit intention through mediators such as destination image, trust, and perceived value. Nevertheless, the study includes various limitations that need to be recognized. First, the research employed convenience sampling as a method. This approach decreases the potential for the general applicability of its results. The sample may not fully represent the diversity of tourists' perceptions regarding e-WOM and its influence on visit intention. Future research could benefit from employing probability sampling techniques to ensure broader representation and stronger external validity.

Second, while this research provides interesting results by examining both the direct and moderation effects of e-WOM on visit intention, it focused primarily on these relationships without considering other potential variables. For example, different elements such as cultural background, past experiences, and individual motivations might influence the way people interpret and react to e-WOM messages. These additional variables could further moderate the relationship of e-WOM, offering a more detailed and comprehensive understanding of its role in shaping visit intention. Future research could further enrich the understanding of electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) in tourism by incorporating qualitative methodologies, such as content analysis or thematic analysis of online reviews, similar to the studies

of Banyai & Glover (2012), Gerdt et al. (2019), and Marine-Roig and Anton Clavé (2015), particularly within the Moroccan tourism context. Morocco is a culturally diverse tourist destination, where symbolic meaning, perception of authenticity, perception of hospitality, and emotional discourse are the key elements of defining the experiences and expectations of tourists. The qualitative analysis of the user-generated content on travel platforms may help to identify the interpretation of international and domestic tourists regarding trust and how they make sense of the destination image, assigning value to it using culturally oriented narratives, emotions, and experience. These methods would particularly be helpful in the discovery of context-specific psychological mechanisms, including perceptions of cultural authenticity, interpersonal warmth, and safety, which may not be well covered using survey tools. By analysing tourists' narratives across different languages and cultural backgrounds, future qualitative or mixed-methods studies could provide deeper, context-sensitive insights into how e-WOM operates in Morocco, thereby complementing and extending the findings of the present quantitative model.

Moreover, the research focuses only on the Moroccan tourism context, which exhibits distinctive cultural, economic, and technological conditions. In addition, contextual factors, such as differing levels of digital literacy among tourists, may significantly shape the interpretation of electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) and thereby influence visit intention. The study findings may exclusively reflect the Moroccan tourism context since e-WOM effectiveness depends strongly on a region's digital proficiency levels and technological accessibility. Future investigation using different geographic areas will support the model's widespread applicability and help validate its refined version.

Finally, this research study's cross-sectional design only presents tourist perceptions at one specific time, restricting knowledge about how e-WOM impacts visit intent development over time. Therefore, longitudinal research would be more effective in studying tourists' online word-of-mouth reaction phases throughout their decision-making journey, from uncovering e-WOM to making travel choices.

Despite its limitations, this study offers significant insights into the influence of electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) on visit intention in the Moroccan context. It establishes a strong foundation for future research to address these limitations and expand upon the current model.

References

- Aditya, I P. M. D., & Piartrini, P. S. (2023). The mediating role of destination image in the effects of e-WOM and travel experience on revisit intention to Bali. *Russian Journal of Agricultural and Socio-Economic Sciences*, 4(136), 75–89.
- Al-Haddad, S., Ahmad Sharabati, A.-A., Harb, L., Husni, A., & Abdelfattah, M. (2022). E-WOM and consumers' purchase intention: An empirical study on Facebook. *Innovative Marketing*, 18(3), 149–158.
- Al-Kwafi, O. S. (2015). The impact of destination images on tourists' decision making: A technological exploratory study using fMRI. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology*, 6(2), 174–194.
- Allameh, S., Pool, J., Jaber, A., Salehzadeh, R., & Asadi, H. (2014). Factors influencing sport tourists' revisit intentions: The role and effect of destination image, perceived quality, perceived value and satisfaction. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 27(2), 191–207.
- Anderson, J. C., & Gerbing, D. W. (1988). Structural equation modeling in practice: A review and recommended two-step approach. *Psychological Bulletin*, 103(3), 411–423.
- Anaya-Sánchez, R., Rejón-Guardia, F., & Molinillo, S. (2024). Impact of virtual reality experiences on destination image and visit intentions: The moderating effects of immersion, destination familiarity and sickness. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 36(11), 3607–3627.
- Assaker, G., & Hallak, R. (2013). Moderating effects of tourists' novelty-seeking tendencies on destination image, visitor satisfaction, and short- and long-term revisit intentions. *Journal of Travel Research*, 52(5), 600–613.
- Atmari, N. V., & Putri, V. W. (2021). The effect of tourism experience on revisit intention through destination image and satisfaction. *Management Analysis Journal*, 10(1), 85–94.
- Baber, P., Williams, R. L., Jr., & Williams, H. A. (2022). The influence of e-WOM via social media platforms on e-reputation and the selection of tourist destinations.

- In D. Gursoy, & R. P. S. Kaurav (Eds.), *Handbook on tourism and social media* (pp. 275–286). Edward Elgar.
- Bai, P., Sattar, M. M., & Kumar, V. (2022). Measuring perceptions of consumer destination image, destination familiarity, e-wom, destination trust with destination choices. *ASEAN Journal on Hospitality and Tourism*, 20(3), 89–108.
- Baloglu, S., & McCleary, K. W. (1999). A model of destination image formation. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 26(4), 868–897.
- Banyai, M., & Glover, T. (2012). Evaluating research methods on travel blogs. *Journal of Travel Research*, 51(3), 267–277.
- Beerli, A., & Martín, J. D. (2004). Factors influencing destination image. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 31(3), 657–681.
- Beneke, J., Flynn, R., Greig, T., & Mukaiwa, M. (2013). The influence of perceived product quality, relative price and risk on customer value and willingness to buy: A study of private label merchandise. *Journal of Product and Brand Management*, 22(3), 218–228.
- Bonsón, E., Carvajal-Trujillo, E., & Escobar-Rodríguez, T. (2015). Influence of trust and perceived value on the intention to purchase travel online: Integrating the effects of assurance on trust antecedents. *Tourism Management*, 47, 286–302.
- Bulut, Z. A., & Karabulut, A. N. (2018). Examining the role of two aspects of ewom in online repurchase intention: An integrated trust-loyalty perspective. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 17(4), 407–417.
- Byrne, B. M. (1998). *Structural equation modeling with LISREL, PRELIS, and SIMPLIS: Basic concepts, applications, and programming*. Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Byrne, B. M. (2016). *Structural equation modeling with AMOS: Basic concepts, applications, and programming* (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Caber, M., Albayrak, T., & Crawford, D. (2020). Perceived value and its impact on travel outcomes in youth tourism. *Journal of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism*, 31, 100327.
- Casaló, L. V., Flavián, C., Guinalíu, M., & Ekinci, Y. (2015). Do online hotel rating schemes influence booking behaviors? *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 49, 28–36.
- Chaulagain, S., Wiitala, J., & Fu, X. (2019). The impact of country image and destination image on US tourists' travel intention. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 12, 1–11.
- Chen, N., & Funk, D. (2010). Exploring destination image, experience and revisit intention: A comparison of sport and non-sport tourist perceptions. *Journal of Sport and Tourism*, 15(3), 239–259.
- Cheng, X., Xue, T., Yang, B., & Ma, B. (2023). A digital transformation approach in hospitality and tourism research. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 35(8), 2944–2967.
- Choirisa, S. F., Purnamaningsih, P., & Alexandra, Y. (2021). The effect of e-wom on destination image and attitude towards to the visit intention in Komodo National Park, Indonesia. *Journal of Tourism Destination and Attraction*, 9(1), 49–60.
- Çoban, S. (2012). The effects of the image of destination on tourist satisfaction and loyalty: The case of Cappadocia. *European Journal of Social Sciences*, 29(2), 222–232.
- Curras-Perez, R., Ruiz, C., Sanchez-Garcia, I., & Sanz, S. (2017). Determinants of customer retention in virtual environments. The role of perceived risk in a tourism services context. *Spanish Journal of Marketing – ESIC*, 21(2), 131–145.
- Ding, Y., & Keh, H. T. (2017). Consumer reliance on intangible versus tangible attributes in service evaluation: The role of construal level. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 45(6), 848–865.
- Elshaer, I. A., Alyahya, M., Azazz, A. M. S., Ali, M. A. S., Fathy, E. A., Fouad, A. M., Soliman, S. A. E. M., & Fayyad, S. (2024). Building digital trust and rapport in the tourism industry: A bibliometric analysis and detailed overview. *Information*, 15(10), 598.
- Erkan, I., & Evans, C. (2016). The influence of ewom in social media on consumers' purchase intentions: An extended approach to information adoption. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 61, 47–55.
- Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F. (1981). Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 18(1), 39–50.
- Gallarza-Granizo, M. G., Ruiz-Molina, M.-E., & Schlosser, C. (2020). Customer value in quick-service restaurants: A cross-cultural study. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 85, 102351.
- Gartner, W. C. (1994). Image formation process. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 2(2–3), 191–216.
- Gavurova, B., Skare, M., Belas, J., Rigelsky, M., & Ivankova, V. (2023). The relationship between destination image and destination safety during technological and social changes COVID-19 pandemic. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 191, 122488.

- Gerdt, S.-O., Wagner, E., & Schewe, G. (2019). The relationship between sustainability and customer satisfaction in hospitality: An explorative investigation using ewom as a data source. *Tourism Management*, 74, 155–172. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2019.02.010>
- Ghorbanzadeh, D., Shabbir, M. S., Mahmood, A., & Kazemi, E. (2021). Investigating the role of experience quality in predicting destination image, perceived value, satisfaction, and behavioural intentions: A case of war tourism. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 24(21), 3090–3106.
- Golmohammadi, A., Mattila, A. S., & Gauri, D. K. (2020). Negative online reviews and consumers' service consumption. *Journal of Business Research*, 116, 27–36.
- Guenzi, P., Johnson, M., & Castaldo, S. (2009). A comprehensive model of customer trust in two retail stores. *Journal of Service Management*, 20, 290–316.
- Hair, J. F., Jr., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2010). *Multivariate data analysis: A global perspective* (7th ed.). Pearson Education.
- Hair, J. F., Jr., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2019). *Multivariate data analysis* (8th ed.). Cengage Learning.
- Hair, J., Black, W., Babin, B., Anderson, R., & Tatham, R. L. (2006). *Multivariate data analysis* (6th ed.). Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Han, H., & Hyun, S. S. (2015). Customer retention in the medical tourism industry: Impact of quality, satisfaction, trust, and price reasonableness. *Tourism Management*, 46, 20–29.
- Helal, E. A., Hassan, T. H., Abdelmoaty, M. A., Salem, A. E., Saleh, M. I., Helal, M. Y., Abuelnasr, M. S., Mohamoud, Y. A., Abdou, A. H., Radwan, S. H., & Szabo-Alexi, P. (2023). Exploration or exploitation of a neighborhood destination: The role of social media content on the perceived value and trust and revisit intention among world cup football fans. *Journal of Risk and Financial Management*, 16(3), 210.
- Hennig-Thurau, T., Gwinner, K. P., Walsh, G., & Gremler, D. D. (2004). Electronic word-of-mouth via consumer-opinion platforms: What motivates consumers to articulate themselves on the Internet? *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 18(1), 38–52.
- Hong, I. B., & Cho, H. (2011). The impact of consumer trust on attitudinal loyalty and purchase intentions in B2C e-marketplaces: Intermediary trust vs. seller trust. *International Journal of Information Management*, 31(5), 469–479.
- Hu, L., & Bentler, P. M. (1999). Cutoff criteria for fit indexes in covariance structure analysis: Conventional criteria versus new alternatives. *Structural Equation Modeling*, 6(1), 1–55.
- Hung, K., & Li, S. (2007). The Influence of ewom on virtual consumer communities: Social capital, consumer learning, and behavioral outcomes. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 47(4), 485–495.
- Hung, V. V., Dey, S. K., Vaculcikova, Z., & Anh, L. T. H. (2021). The influence of tourists' experience on destination loyalty: A case study of Hue City, Vietnam. *Sustainability*, 13(16), 8889.
- Ismagilova, E., Slade, E., Rana, N., & Dwivedi, Y. (2020). The effect of electronic word of mouth communications on intention to buy: A meta-analysis. *Information Systems Frontiers*, 22(5), 1203–1226.
- Istiqbal, I., Irsyad, Z., & Iswanto, D. (2024). Utilization of virtual reality technology in tourism destination promotion strategy to increase tourist attraction. *Aurora: Journal of Emerging Business Paradigms*, 1(2), 75–87.
- Jebbouri, A., Zhang, H., Imran, Z., Iqbal, J., & Bouchiba, N. (2022). Impact of destination image formation on tourist trust: Mediating role of tourist satisfaction. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, 845538.
- Jeong, Y., & Kim, S. (2019). A study of event quality, destination image, perceived value, tourist satisfaction, and destination loyalty among sport tourists. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 32(4), 940–960.
- Kim, C., Galliers, R. D., Shin, N., Ryoo, J.-H., & Kim, J. (2012). Factors influencing internet shopping value and customer repurchase intention. *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications*, 11(4), 374–387.
- Kim, S.-E., Lee, K. Y., Shin, S. I., & Yang, S.-B. (2017). Effects of tourism information quality in social media on destination image formation: The case of Sina Weibo. *Information & Management, Smart Tourism: Traveler, Business, and Organizational Perspectives*, 54(6), 687–702.
- Kline, R. B. (2005). *Principles and practice of structural equation modeling* (2nd ed.). Guilford.
- Kline, R. B. (2016). *Principles and practice of structural equation modeling* (4th ed.). Guilford.
- Kusumawati, A., Aprilia, F., & Abdillah, Y. (2019). Analyzing influence of electronic word of mouth (ewom) towards visit intention with destination image as mediating variable: A study on domestic visitors of Museum Angkut in Batu, Indonesia. *Eurasia: Economics & Business*, 1(19), 50–57.

- Libre, A., Manalo, A., & Saktian Laksito, G. (2022). Factors influencing Philippines tourist' revisit intention: The role and effect of destination image, tourist experience, perceived value, and tourist satisfaction. *International Journal of Quantitative Research and Modeling*, 3(1), 1–12.
- Lin, C., Wu, Y.-S., & Chen, J.-C. V. (2013). Electronic word-of-mouth: The moderating roles of product involvement and brand image. In P. Anussornnitarn, B. Rassameethes, H. Numprasertchai, & Nam Q. (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 2013 International conference on technology innovation and industrial management 29th–31th May 2013 Phuket, Thailand* (pp. S3-29–27). ToKnowPress.
- Liu, S., Li, S., Chen, Y., & Zheng, T. (2023). Examining relationships among food's perceived value, well-being, and tourists' loyalty. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 29(2), 161–174.
- Loi, L. T. I., So, A. S. I., Lo, I. S., & Fong, L. H. N. (2017). Does the quality of tourist shuttles influence revisit intention through destination image and satisfaction? The case of Macao. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 32, 115–123.
- López, I., & Parra, J. (2016). Is a most helpful ewom review really helpful? The impact of conflicting aggregate valence and consumer's goals on product attitude. *Internet Research*, 26(4), 827–844.
- Lujun, S., Yang, Q., Swanson, S., & Chen, N. (2021). The impact of online reviews on destination trust and travel intention: The moderating role of online review trustworthiness. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 28(4), 406–423.
- Madzík, P., Falát, L., Copuš, L., & Valeri, M. (2023). Digital transformation in tourism: Bibliometric literature review based on machine learning approach. *European Journal of Innovation Management*, 26(7), 177–205.
- Marchiori, E., Cantoni, L., & Fesenmaier, D. R. (2013). What did they say about us? Message cues and destination reputation. In L. Cantoni, & Xiang, Z. (Phil) (Eds.), *Information and communication technologies in tourism 2013: Proceedings of the international conference in Innsbruck, Austria, January 22–25, 2013* (pp. 170–182). Springer
- Marinao Artigas, E., Yrigoyen, C. C., Moraga, E. T., & Villalón, C. B. (2017). Determinants of trust towards tourist destinations. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 6(4), 327–334.
- Marine-Roig, E., & Anton Clavé, S. (2015). Tourism analytics with massive user-generated content: A case study of Barcelona. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management, Smart Destinations*, 4(3), 162–172.
- Marques, C., Vinhas da Silva, R., & Antova, S. (2021). Image, satisfaction, destination and product post-visit behaviours: How do they relate in emerging destinations? *Tourism Management*, 85, 104293.
- Martini, E., Tisadinda, F., Sultan, M. A., & Hurriyati, R. (2022). Impact of e-wom and wom on destination image in shopping tourism business. *Jurnal Dinamika Manajemen*, 13(1), 66–77.
- Matute, J., Polo-Redondo, Y., & Utrillas, A. (2016). The influence of EWOM characteristics on online repurchase intention: Mediating roles of trust and perceived usefulness. *Online Information Review*, 40(7), 1090–1110.
- Mayzlin, D. (2006). Promotional chat on the internet. *Marketing Science*, 25(2), 109–201.
- Mehyar, H., Saeed, M., Baroom, H., Al-Ja'afreh, A., & Al-Adaileh, R. (2020). The impact of electronic word of mouth on consumers purchasing intention. *Journal of Theoretical and Applied Information Technology*, 98(2), 183–193.
- Mohammed Abubakar, A. (2016). Does ewom influence destination trust and travel intention: A medical tourism perspective. *Economic Research-Ekonomska Istraživanja*, 29(1), 598–611.
- Mohammed Abubakar, A., & Ilkan, M. (2016). Impact of online wom on destination trust and intention to travel: A medical tourism perspective. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 5(3), 192–201.
- Mohammed Abubakar, A., Ilkan, M., Meshall Al-Tal, R., & Eluwole, K. K. (2017). ewom, revisit intention, destination trust and gender. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 31, 220–227.
- Morgan, N., Pritchard, A., & Piggott, R. (2003). Destination branding and the role of the stakeholders: The case of New Zealand. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 9(3), 285–299.
- Nergui, A., Myagmarsuren, O., Ulaankhuu, K., & Sereeter, E. (2023). Domestic travelers' perceived value, satisfaction and loyalty intentions. *Open Journal of Business and Management*, 11(3), 1053–1061.
- Nilashi, M., Ali Abumalloh, R., Alrizq, M., Alghamdi, A., Samad, S., Almulihi, A., Althobaiti, M. M., Yousoof Ismail, M., & Mohd, S. (2022). What is the impact of ewom in social network sites on travel decision-making during the COVID-19 outbreak? A two-stage methodology. *Telematics and Informatics*, 69, 101795.
- Nunnally, J. C., & Bernstein, I. H. (1994). *Psychometric theory* (3rd ed.). McGraw-Hill.

- Pee, L. G. (2016). Negative online consumer reviews: Can the impact be mitigated? *International Journal of Market Research*, 58(4), 545–568.
- Pektaş, F., Güneren Özdemir, E., & Tepavčević, J. (2019). The impact of destination image on destination recommendation. *Uluslararası Yönetim İktisat ve İşletme Dergisi*, 15(4), 1226–1235.
- Perera, P., & Vlosky, R. (2013). How previous visits shape trip quality, perceived value, satisfaction, and future behavioral intentions: The case of forest-based ecotourism in Sri Lanka. *International Journal of Sport Management, Recreation & Tourism*, 11(a), 1–24.
- Petrack, J. F., & Backman, S. J. (2002). An examination of the construct of perceived value for the prediction of golf travelers' intentions to revisit. *Journal of Travel Research*, 41(1), 38–45.
- Petty, R. E., & Cacioppo, J. T. (1986). *Communication and persuasion: Central and peripheral routes to attitude change*. Springer.
- Prayogo, R. R., Ketaren, F. L. S., & Hati, R. M. (2016). Electronic word of mouth, destination image, and satisfaction toward visit intention: An empirical study in Malioboro Street, Yogyakarta. In *Proceedings of the 1st International Conference on Social and Political Development (ICOSOP 2016)* (pp. 209–218). Atlantis Press.
- Pujiastuti, E., Nimran, U., Suharyono, & Kusumawati, A. (2017). Study on destination image, satisfaction, trust and behavioral intention. *Russian Journal of Agricultural and Socio-Economic Sciences*, 1(61), 148–159.
- Rahjasa, P. S. L., Utama, I. P., & Wiarti, L. Y. (2022). The effect of promotion and e-wom on tourists' intention to visit Denpasar: Destination image as a mediating variable. *International Journal of Applied Research in Tourism and Hospitality*, 1(1), 73–86.
- Reza Jalilvand, M., & Samiei, N. (2012). The effect of electronic word of mouth on brand image and purchase intention: An empirical study in the automobile industry in Iran. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 30(4), 460–476.
- Reza Jalilvand, M., Samiei, N., Dini, B., & Yaghoubi Manzari, P. (2012). Examining the structural relationships of electronic word of mouth, destination image, tourist attitude toward destination and travel intention: An integrated approach. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 1(1–2), 134–143.
- Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2015). Partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) using SmartPLS 3 [Workshop material]. NARTI. <https://narti.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2020/06/NARTI-SMART-PLS.docx>
- Roodurmun, D., & Devi, J. (2010). Influence of trust on destination loyalty-An empirical analysis-The discussion of the research approach. In *International Research Symposium in Service Management. Le Meridien Hotel, Mauritius, 24-27 August 2010* (pp. 1–23).
- Ryu, K., Han, H., & Kim, T.-H. (2008). The relationships among overall quick-casual restaurant image, perceived value, customer satisfaction, and behavioral intentions. *International Journal of Hospitality Management, Special Issue on Hospitality Management in China*, 27(3), 459–469.
- Seger-Guttmann, T., & Gilboa, S. (2023). The role of a safe service environment in tourists' trust and behaviors—the case of terror threat. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 55, 187–197.
- Sekran, U., & Bougie, R. (2011). *Research methods for business: A skill building approach* (5th ed.). John Wiley & Sons.
- Serra-Cantalops, A., Ramon-Cardona, J., & Salvi, F. (2018). The impact of positive emotional experiences on ewom generation and loyalty. *Spanish Journal of Marketing – ESIC*, 22(2), 142–162.
- Setiawan, P. Y. (2014). The effect of e-wom on destination image, satisfaction and loyalty. *International Journal of Business and Management Invention*, 3(1), 22–29.
- Setiawan, P. Y., Purbadarmaja, I. B. P., Widanta, A. A. B. P., & Hayashi, T. (2021). How electronic word of mouth (e-wom) triggers intention to visit through destination image, trust and satisfaction: The perception of a potential tourist in Japan and Indonesia. *Online Information Review*, 45(5), 861–878.
- Sleiman, K. A. A., Cai, X., Lan, J., Lei, H., & Liu, R. (2021). Relationship marketing and information technology's impact on customer satisfaction and commitment. *Open Journal of Business and Management*, 9(3), 1030–1049.
- Sobaih, A. E. E., Gharbi, H., Brini, R., & Aliane, N. (2025). Exploring the mediation effect of brand trust on the link between tourism destination image, social influence and brand loyalty. *Societies*, 15(1), 9.
- Su, L., Yang, Q., Swanson, S. R., & Chen, N. C. (2022). The impact of online reviews on destination trust and travel intention: The moderating role of online review trustworthiness. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 28(4), 406–423.
- Suhud, U., & Allan, M. (2024). Structural model of tourists' visit intention relating to Mount Ijen, a volcano

- tourism destination: The lack role of novelty-seeking, self-congruity, and destination personality? *Geoheritage*, 16(1), 21.
- Suhud, U., Allan, M., Wibowo, L. A., & Putri, K. Y. S. (2024). Volcano tourism: Destination reputation and personality of Mount Anak Krakatau and their impact on destination visit intention. *Geoheritage*, 16(3), 85.
- Sussman, S., & Siegal, W. (2003). Informational influence in organizations: An integrated approach to knowledge adoption. *Information Systems Research*, 14(1), 47–65.
- Torlak, Ö., Özkara, B., Tiltay, M., Cengiz, H., & Dülger, M. (2014). The effect of electronic word of mouth on brand image and purchase intention: An application concerning cell phone brands for youth consumers in Turkey. *Journal of Marketing Development and Competitiveness*, 8(2), 61–68.
- Tung, L. T., & My, D. T. H. (2023). Electronic word of mouth, attitude, motivation, and travel intention in the post-COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Tourism and Services*, 14(27), 181–196.
- Van Huy, L., Thinh, N. H. T., Pham, L., & Strickler, C. (2019). Customer trust and purchase intention how do primary website service quality dimensions matter in the context of luxury hotels in Vietnam. *International Journal of E-Services and Mobile Applications*, 11(1), 1–23.
- Vel nadar, R., Kumaravel, S. C., Lathief, J. T. A., Jayacyril, C. M., Rohit, Olson, B. J., & Parayitam, S. (2024). Exploring the influence of positive- and-negative electronic word of mouth on online consumer behaviour and customer loyalty. *FIIB Business Review*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/23197145241229915>
- Verma, D., Dewani, P. P., Behl, A., & Dwivedi, Y. K. (2023). Understanding the impact of ewom communication through the lens of information adoption model: A meta-analytic structural equation modeling perspective. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 143, 107710.
- Wang, P., & McCarthy, B. (2023). Beyond positive and negative ewom : The role of trust propensity and individuation in shaping consumers' perception of brand image. *International Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Administration*, 24(3), 387–414.
- Wang, B., Yang, Z., Han, F., & Shi, H. (2016). Car tourism in Xinjiang: The mediation effect of perceived value and tourist satisfaction on the relationship between destination image and loyalty. *Sustainability*, 9(1), 22.
- Wibawa, I., & Setiawan, P. Y. (2021). The role of trust in mediating the effect of ewom and shopping experience on customer loyalty. *Russian Journal of Agricultural and Socio-Economic Sciences*, 6(114), 170–181.
- Yao, D., Zhang, K., Wang, L., Law, R., & Zhang, M. (2020). From religious belief to intangible cultural heritage tourism: A case study of mazu belief. *Sustainability*, 12(10), 4229. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12104229>
- Yoo, K.-H., & Choi, J.-A. (2022). Trust in e-tourism: Antecedents and consequences of trust in travel-related user-generated content. In Z. Xiang, M. Fuchs, U. Gretzel, & W. Höpken (Eds.), *Handbook of e-tourism* (pp. 1039–1065). Springer.
- Yuan, F., & Vui, C. (2023). The influence of destination image on tourists' behavioural intentions: Explore how tourists' perceptions of a destination affect their intentions to visit, revisit, or recommend it to others. *Journal of Advanced Zoology*, 44(S6), 1391–1397.
- Yum, K., & Kim, J. (2024). The influence of perceived value, customer satisfaction, and trust on loyalty in entertainment platforms. *Applied Sciences*, 14(13), 5763.
- Zainal, N., Harun, A., & Lily, J. (2017). Examining the mediating effect of attitude towards electronic words-of mouth (ewom) on the relation between the trust in ewom source and intention to follow ewom among Malaysian travellers. *Asia Pacific Management Review*, 22(1), 35–44.
- Zelenka, J., Azubuike, T., & Pásková, M. (2021). Trust model for online reviews of tourism services and evaluation of destinations. *Administrative Sciences*, 11(2), 34.
- Zhang, B., & Niyomsilp, E. (2024). The relationship between tourism destination image, perceived value and post-visiting behavioral intention of Chinese tourist to Thailand. *International Business Research*, 13(11), 96–105.
- Zhao, J.-D., Huang, J.-S., & Su, S. (2019). The effects of trust on consumers' continuous purchase intentions in C2C social commerce: A trust transfer perspective. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 50, 42–49.

Appendix

Survey Questionnaire: The Impact of Online Reviews (e-WOM) on Visit Intention

Introduction

Dear participant,
Thank you for taking part in this survey. The purpose of this questionnaire is to understand how online reviews and comments from other travellers (e-wom) influence people's intention to visit a destination.

There are two sections:

1. Demographic Information
2. Statements about online reviews and travel intention

There are no right or wrong answers. Please choose the option that best represents your opinion.

Your answers are anonymous, and the survey takes about 5 minutes.

Thank you for your time and valuable contribution!

Section 1: Demographic Information

Please select the option that describes you.

1. Gender

- Male
- Female

2. Age

- 18–24
- 25–34
- 35–44
- 45–54
- 55–65
- Over 65

3. Marital Status

- Single
- Married

4. Nationality

- Moroccan
- Not Moroccan

5. Education Level

- Some college
- University degree
- Master's degree
- PhD

6. Occupation

- Employee
- Entrepreneur
- Official
- Retired
- Student

7. Travel Frequency

- Rarely
- Occasionally
- Frequently
- Very frequently

8. Main Motivation for Travel

- Tourism
- Business
- Meeting relatives/friends
- Other

9. Usual Duration of Trip

- Same-day visit
- 1–2 nights
- 3–4 nights
- 5–6 nights
- 7–9 nights
- 10+ nights

Section 2: Statements About Online Reviews

Please show your level of agreement with each statement.

Scale:

1 = Strongly disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Neutral

4 = Agree

5 = Strongly agree

A. Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM)

1. I often read online reviews written by other travellers about destinations.
2. I read online travel reviews to help me choose the right destination.
3. I use online travel reviews from other travellers to compare destination options.
4. Before deciding where to travel, I usually look for information in online travel reviews.

5. When I do not read online travel reviews, I feel less confident about my travel decisions.
6. Online travel reviews make me feel more sure about choosing a destination.

B. Trust in Online Reviews

1. I trust online comments and reviews posted by other travellers.
2. I believe most travellers share their reviews with honest intentions.
3. I find online reviews from travellers to be a reliable source of travel information.
4. I trust travellers' reviews more than official travel guides or promotional articles.

C. Destination Image

1. I think the destination seems safe for visitors.
2. I think the destination offers interesting places to visit.
3. I believe the destination has attractive natural scenery.
4. I think the destination has a pleasant climate.
5. I feel that visiting this destination offers good value for money.

D. Perceived Value

1. I think this destination gives good value for the money I would spend.
2. I think the overall value of visiting this destination is high.
3. I feel that the travel experience at this destination is worth its cost.

E. Visit Intention

1. I intend to visit this destination in the future.
2. I prefer this destination over other destinations I could visit.
3. I plan to visit this destination when I have the opportunity.

Thank you for your participation!

Your responses are very important for this research. They will help us better understand how online reviews (e-wom) influence people's intention to visit places. Your answers are anonymous and will be used only for academic purposes.