JAVStudies Journal of Academic Value Studies

Available online at http://dx.doi.org/10.29228/javs.67634
ISSN: 2149-8598

Research Article

The Effect of e-Word of Mouth on Social Media on Destination Preference

Sibel Akın [a]

[a] *Department of Banking and Insurance, Nigde Omer Halisdemir University, Nigde, Türkiye*
sibelakin@ohu.edu.tr

Abstract

This study aims to investigate the effect of electronic word of mouth on destination preference. The population of the research consists of data collected by 400 people from social networking sites such as Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, or from different online information sources. Survey questions were sent to known people in social media groups and were asked to share them with their acquaintances. Snowball sampling was used because the population covers a large area. According to the results of the analysis, it has been determined that electronic word of mouth communication in social media has a significant effect on destination preference. A linear relationship was found between destination preference intention and consumer opinion, involvement and credibility, and a nonlinear relationship with reliability. This relationship contributed to the creation of a mathematical regression model that would contribute to future studies.

Keywords: Social Media, e-WOM, Destination

For Citation: Akın, S. (2023). The Effect of e-Word of Mouth on Social Media on Destination Preference. Journal of Academic Value Studies, 9(1), 83-94. http://dx.doi.org/10.29228/javs.67634

Received: 10.01.2023 Accepted: 26.03.2023 This article was checked by ***intihal.net***

1. Introduction

New developments in technology and communication have caused significant changes in consumer habits. The way people seek, find, read, collect, share, develop and consume information has changed day by day and this change will continue. Reaching the products on the internet instead of buying from stores has become more attractive for the consumer. Nowadays, where the concept of time has great importance, consumers avoid spending time for consumption as much as possible. The products and brands which are recognized and previously tried do not constitute a problem for the consumer. However, using an unknown may cause the consumer's anxiety to increase. Consumers want to know about the product or brand that they have not tried before because they do not know that. At this point, the ones who tried the product and brand before play a role of reference for the consumers. The Internet enabled consumers to share their reviews about the products or services potentially in a large mass easily. Consumers need to share their reviews about the product that they tried with others, sometimes because of having a very positive experience, sometimes because of anger and rage. Electronic word-of-mouth marketing (e-WOM), also defined as reviews and comments about products or brands purchased on social media applications, gives the consumer the information that they need as a platform that provides consumer information about the product.

2149-8598 / Copyright © 2022

From the marketing point of view, word-of-mouth is a significant issue and a key player in marketing. Word-of-mouth communication is when people share their opinions about a certain product or brand with each other in a way that does not contain commercial content (Göker and Ayar, 2020). Word-of-mouth communication is the most reliable method that people adopt in the process of purchasing and which facilitates the decision-making process. e-WOM, on the other hand, which spreads to great masses via the internet is the process of providing information about the product and brand to other consumers. Many consumers, share their experiences about the product or brand with their friends, families, and their social environments after they use them. The effect of this connection and therefore its contribution to consumption is very important (Park et al., 2011), express that the power of word-of-mouth marketing is greater than traditional advertising in terms of the ability to develop negative or positive attitudes in consumers.

Consumers share about the products that they use through e-WOM. They share the qualities like quality, affordability, practicality, or the quality of the services acquired, cleanliness, the beauty of the environment, the easiness of accessibility of the product, etc. One of the sectors where information is shared on the Internet is the tourism sector. The data which were published every year indicate that potential visitors pay regard to online reviews and shape their travel destinations by way of the reviews they read, and online reviews have become important sources of information for them (Pan et al, 2007). It states that most of these visitors are strongly influenced by e-WOM that come from other consumers in their decision-making processes and they perceive the comments they read as more up-to-date, entertaining, and reliable than the information provided by travel service providers (Ye et al., 2011).

Consumers pay regard to the opinions of people who have experienced it before when choosing a destination. All positive or negative thoughts and reviews through e-WOM on social media have a significant impact on the consumer and consumers make decisions in line with the reviews and suggestions they receive from social media.

Studies in literature have shown that consumers consider comments on social media before they make online travel purchases and the impact of them on their decisions as they believe that online reviews help them make their purchasing decisions.

2. Conceptual Framework and Literature Review

Marketing is a process in which products and services are introduced to potential consumers. Marketing leads reputation of the business and sales to increase and healthy rivalry to maintain. It is necessary to identify the best consumers, understand their requests and needs and implement the most effective marketing strategies to do effective marketing. Consumers who are heavily exposed to advertising bombardment consider user reviews and opinions rather than advertisements. The Internet has provided consumers with many ways to obtain information about the product by way of considering reviews of other consumers and opportunities for consumers to share reviews about their consumption (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). Information sharing and comments made by the users of the product have more impact on the consumers. The advantage of word-of-mouth marketing is that advertising is done by the people who are trusted by the person that we are trying to market directly (Kumar et al., 2017).

The development of the Internet has seen and adopted new ways of consumer trends. People have started to communicate in a different way than traditional ways with the widespread use of the Internet. e-WOM has involved in the system with a completely new way of communication by adopting Internet technology. Named electronic word-of-mouth communication, e-WOM, can be defined as a positive or negative statement presented to a large group of people about a product, brand, or business. Today, online social networks are widely used for personal and commercial purposes. This widespread popularity makes e-WOM an ideal platform for advertisements. Social media can be used both directly and through e-WOM (Kumar et al., 2017).

2.1. Word-of-Mouth and Electronic Word-of-Mouth

The rivalry among businesses and the increase in product diversity have set consumers up against various product options. In today's digital world, it has become more difficult to convince consumers who are aware of businesses and products. Consumers who do not trust advertisements and do not see them as reliable, consider consumer reviews which they see as a more realistic and reliable source of information. One of the most important factors that can enable consumers to make a rational purchase decision is Word-of-Mouth communication which provides information flow

among consumers. Word-of-Mouth communication can be defined as the exchange of information between one and others (Goyette et al., 2010). According to Ghorban and Tahernejad (2012), a positive word-of-mouth communication has a strong effect on determining brand and product choice, while a negative word-of-mouth communication prevents thinking about the brand and product (Virvilaite et al., 2015). Ghorban and Tahernejad (2012), stated that positive word-of-mouth communication is an important marketing strategy that shapes consumer behaviour. Word-of-mouth communication affects consumer choices because consumers tend to trust information shared by people who have real experience. Being a powerful marketing tool to reach more consumers quickly and transmit the brand at a lower cost, has led marketers to focus on word-of-mouth in order to strengthen their brand and gain the advantage of rivalry in the target markets (Hanaysha, 2021). The available literature shows that consumers effectively evaluate feedback and gather relevant information when purchasing any product or service (Bocalli, 2022).

Since word-of-mouth communication can be either positive or negative, some researchers have linked word-of-mouth communication with the level of satisfaction. Steinkuehler and Williams (2006) offered two main theories to consumers are who involved in word-of-mouth marketing:

1) Satisfied consumers, share their ideas with others for some reasons, including,

- To draw attention to themselves
- To reduce the cognitive conflict
- To avoid being negative
- To seem knowledgeable
- They enjoy helping others.

2) Dissatisfied consumers communicate by word-of-mouth for the following reasons,

- To warn others
- To show their dissatisfaction.
- To reduce the anxiety

While information communication mostly relies on word-of-mouth communication and face-to-face communication, with the emergence of technological developments information and comments have been shared more and in an easier way on social networks in the digital environment (Kimmel and Kitchen, 2014), and face-to-face communication has moved it to electronic platforms (Jalilvand and Samiei,2012). With the massive penetration of the Internet, the way consumers interact with each other has undergone a paradigm shift. Virtual social media and other e-platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, blogs, websites, and discussion forums have enabled consumers to share their purchasing experience and product-related information with potential users, helping them make an informed purchasing decision. Thus, WOM has turned into e-WOM (Kumar et al., 2023).

In this context, e-WOM has a spreading concept to large masses via the Internet, and the information and messages transferred in communication reflect the ideas of the sender (Christodoulides et al., 2012). With e-WOM, users convey their information to many people and freely share their thoughts. Therefore, consumers are now increasingly focusing on social media to learn about products and services. He found that social media e-WOM are key factors influencing consumers (Park, 2020).

Since consumer behaviour is becoming less influenced by advertising and other marketing communications day by day, e-WOM is becoming a more significant topic in marketing. e-WOM is a more effective communication tool than traditional mass media tools such as television and radio (Miao, 2015). It refers to a potential, real or positive or negative statement made by former consumers about a product or business which is available to many individuals and institutions via the Internet (Litvin et al., 2008).

e-WOM allows individuals to deliver messages to complex targets easily and effortlessly, and the messages between the sender and the receiver are anonymous and does not have a geographical restriction (Tran and Strutton, 2020). e-WOM is the same as traditional relationship which is a verbal tool based on person-to-person communication, between two or more people however, in e-WOM, the Internet is the main tool for this communication. In short, e-WOM is different in that it involves communication online instead of verbal or face-to-face communication (Albarq, 2014). Consumers share their knowledge and experiences with others by using primarily social media, microblogs, social networking sites, and video-sharing sites, and by doing this they can influence the decisions of consumers (Teng et al., 2014). Consumers generally tend to e-WOM behaviour with motivations such as the desire for social interaction, conveying concerns to others, and improving their self-respect in addition to economic incentives (Hennig-Thurau et

al., 2004). e-WOM reflects a marketing strategy implemented by businesses to keep existing consumers and reach new ones (Demirağ et al., 2022). e-WOM, which can convince consumers about a product by using its digital power (Pedersen et al., 2014), is offered to many individuals or institutions via the Internet. The combination of social media and mobile technologies has also affected all the steps of people planning travel behaviour since the way people communicate has changed. e-WOM is shown as one of the most important information sources in the process of consumers' purchasing decisions. Since it is difficult to evaluate touristic products which are intangible and service-oriented before consumption, e-WOM is one of the most used communication channels by consumers (Göker and Ayar, 2020).

2.2. Social Media

Social media can be defined as online communities which allow users to connect and communicate with each other (Enders et al., 2008). Social media is a way of advertising through digital media. What makes social media sites unique is not that they allow individuals to meet strangers, instead, they are media tools that play an active role in spreading the messages from participants to share their experiences, reviews, and suggestions with others (Boyd, et al., 2008) who are part of their own social media by communicating them. Social media builds a long-term relationship and trust by establishing genuine, honest, and sincere relations between businesses and consumers. It is one of the new ideas that offer online opportunities by providing the highest amount of sharing among users (Çelik, 2014).

Social media has changed marketing communication as well as traditional communication, has increased its role in daily communication and become the number one communication tool among consumers. Users spend time on social media platforms and share information on these platforms. Consumers who share information, suggestions, opinions, and reviews about brands, products and services can also access the information that they want to learn from here (Blackshaw and Nazzaro, 2006). Social media platforms, which provide two-way communication between consumers and brands, have enabled the consumer to be an active part of the communication process instead of a passive role in traditional communication (Maria et al., 2019). Social media has offered a new approach for businesses to reach target consumer groups more quickly and impartially. It is easier, faster, and cheaper to create and publish content for many potential audiences through existing social platforms. By gaining solid insights into how people perceive their brands and products on social media platforms, businesses can learn about their customers' needs and opinions and interact with them in a direct and personalized way. In their research, he concluded that social media has a positive effect on brand loyalty and e-WOM. (Dülek and Aydın, 2020). As a result, brands are putting intense communication and campaigns on social media to interact with users and consumers. This novel marketing communication can create opportunities for brands, and at the same time, it can increase consumers' purchasing decisions and the popularity of brands and products after social media interactions. Information shared by consumers plays an important role in purchasing behaviour, post-purchase behaviour and experience gained after using a brand or product (Divol et al., 2012). The popularity of brands is not the number one source of consumers in purchasing decision process. Now consumers rely on information shared by other consumers rather than brands (Chi, 2011).

2.3. Social Media and Electronic Word-Of-Mouth Marketing Relationship

Electronic word-of-mouth communication (e-WOM) is a new form of word-of-mouth communication that uses social media platforms to interact on the Internet. e-WOM has been involved in a new form of communication by adopting internet technology. Consumers share positive or negative information about a product, business, or brand through e-WOM via the Internet (Rizky et al., 2017). While the information shared could be positive comments like a taste of a meal eaten, the quality of a dress used, the beauty of a place visited etc., it can also be related to negative ones like poor quality, tasteless, perishable etc. The information shared by users is very valuable for new consumers. Consumers consider and give a lot of importance to opinions which prevents from unnecessary spending of time and money.

E-WOM is highly influenced by social media marketing in a positive and meaningful way. Social media users who see and use the product are more likely to indirectly talk about the product and promote it to consumers. The use of social media is inextricably linked with the possibility of a particular product becoming the subject of discussion among consumers. In other words, increased use of social media also requires the formation of more e-WOM. Their study shows that social media marketing has a positive and significant relationship with e-WOM. (Winarno and Indriwati, 2022).

Brands can have the opportunity of having interactive communication with their consumers according as they can transmit information about their products, catalogues, discounts, and special promotions to their consumers via social media via e-mail, SMS, MMS, websites etc. Businesses use social media to gain new insights and build strong relationships with their potential and current consumers and to communicate and interact with them. Marketing communication through social media has become an indispensable element of marketing programs by contributing to the advertising of goods and services (Hanaysha, 2021). Today, social networks take on the task of being important advisory tools and set the agenda. Individuals can convey their opinions and share them with others through social media. Blogs, discussion platforms, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other media-sharing sites have become environments in which consumers discuss and share their positive and negative experiences about the brands they bought (Dapiapis, 2015).

2.4. Destination Preference

Advances in technology and transportation have caused consumers to increase their travel desires compared to the past. Every year, many people around the world desire to travel abroad and domestically. Main reasons like saving time and money, including detailed information and easiness make consumers searching travel online. Before visiting a particular place, travellers gain a substantial amount of information about visited places from various sources. Information has a direct or indirect effect on destination selection. Social media provides the perfect environment to influence people's travel intention and destination image. For travel information, social media users have a better destination image and more travel intent. Fernandez's study in Thailand proved that the use of social media positively and significantly affects travel intention (Fernandez, 2021).

Most people who use the Internet as a source of information pay attention to user opinions.

- For providing more information about the destination
- For better planning where to go and what to do
- For sharing positive and negative experiences
- For determining must-see places (Mendez et al., 2015)

In travels made for cultural reasons to have a holiday or to have fun with friends. Individuals want their personal sense of holiday and destination characteristics to be compatible. Regardless of the purpose, the destination which will be chosen must meet the expectations of the person (Çakıcı and Aksu, 2007). The consumer who wants to have a holiday as he/she wants must be careful and attentive in the decision in order not to be disappointed. Visuals and information such as travel plans and programs are insufficient to inform the consumers completely about destination choice. Travel products are regarded as high-risk products since they are not tangible and involve complex decisions with high costs (Jalilvand and Samiei, 2012). These factors lead people to seek more information through a large variety of sources (Mendez et al., 2015). They need more detailed information about their destination to make sure that they made the best possible decision while planning a trip. People who are to decide on travel tend to make decisions in line with the information obtained by research. Travelers often feel the need to consult a variety of travel information sources when deciding on a destination. Information of tourist sites in the form of ratings and comments left by other users can be considered as a source of information. Quantitative ratings (scores) and the volume of comments (indicating the number of people supporting the selection) provide easy-to-understand data and fast processing, allowing for faster decision making. Numbered information helps to scan offers or alternatives (Fernandez, 2021).

To travel, most people look for information about travel destinations to get answers to online tourism. Tourism services cannot be seen directly, which creates a great uncertainty. Sites such as Trip-Advisor.com, LateRooms.com and Hotels.com are visited to see the current service level, quality, and customer satisfaction. Sites are where various service quality ratings are provided that help identify desired destinations. The results of the study conducted in Japan and Indonesia show that e-WOM has a positive effect on the image of the destination and the intention to visit (Setiawan et.al.,2021).

The opinions of consumers who have experience of that travel become a reference for people who will decide. The information obtained with e-WOM has become one of the main factors which reduce the perceived risk in destination preference. Consumers tend to rely more on the advice and opinions of others because travel services are products of experience and cannot be rated before consumption. Recommendations for the consumer can be perceived as more convincing than the actual features of the product. e-WOM is regarded as an important source of information that

affects travel intention and destination preference (Jalilvand et al., 2012). Sharing, images, comments and recommendations on social media serve travellers as the richest information sources in this respect. The consumer who can reach the information in the shortest time and with the minimum cost evaluates this information. Consumers are influenced by the online environment and shape their travel plans and decisions. In (2008) Gretzel and Yoo emphasised that word-of-mouth has a strong influence on decision-making processes since readers generally perceive other traveller's reviews as more entertaining and trustworthy than advertisements offered by travel agencies.

Studies in the literature have proven that e-WOM has a positive effect on destination preference.

Research by Compete (2007) has shown that consumers communicate in messages, and the reviews they do before online travel purchases help them make their purchasing decisions.

Vermeulen and Seegers (2009) put forward that positive online reviews ameliorate perceptions among potential consumers, and they are accepted as an important source of information. Albarq (2014) examined the effect of e-WOM on tourist attitudes and travel intentions and showed that it has an important impact on consumers' attitudes toward destinations and consequently their travel intentions as well. Rizky et al., (2017) in the study, demonstrated that e-WOM has a great impact on attitude d the destination. Information obtained through social media is an effective tool to influence people's destination perceptions. Those who regularly use social media for travel information have a more positive perception of their destination (Fernandez, 2021). Setiawan et.al (2021) The results of the analysis of the two respondents in Japan and Indonesia prove that e-WOM has a positive effect on the image of the destination and intention to visit. Tariyal et al., (2022), in their study in India, found that e-WOM media channels that provide information facilitate the individual's decision making and the information that travelers get from the e-WOM media website is useful. Attrı (2023) It has been determined that the information obtained by the travelers through e-WOM influences the destination decision. Adam et.al (2023) their studies showed that e-WOM plays a very important role in attracting individuals to revisit tourist attractions.

Consumers have the opportunity of accessing all the comments (past and recent) made through e-WOM on social media. Containing more photos and videos about destinations and hotels compared to traditional travel agencies (Lien, Wen, Huang, and Wu, 2015) can be regarded as one of the advantages of searching for online travel information for consumers. Sites like TripAdvisor provide unbiased information about hotels, attractions, and restaurants around the world. There are millions of unbiased reviews on TripAdvisor. An increase in such electronic interactions between individuals enables marketers to see this as an advantage for themselves and paves the way for developing online marketing strategies (Litvin et al., 2008).

3. Methodology

3.1. Survey Design

In the study, which aims to measure the Effect of e-WOM on the Destination Choice of Consumers on Social Media, while determining the travel destinations, those affected by the shares of other users on social media constitute the population of the research. In the study, survey questions created with Google drive were sent to those who followed the travel pages, and they were asked to answer them. The people to whom we sent the questionnaire were also asked to send the questionnaire to their acquaintances with the intention of traveling in their own environment, and a sample of 400 people was reached by the snowball method.

For the two scales in the questionnaire, the studies of Çakır et al., (2017) and Bozkurt and Avcıkurt (2019) were used. For the e-WOM scale, Çakır et al. (2017) and the studies of Bozkurt and Avcıkurt (2019) for destination preference intention.

Both scales were prepared with a 5-point Likert scale (1- strongly disagree, 2- disagree, 3- undecided, 4- agree, 5- strongly agree. The questionnaire consists of three parts: In the first part, the demographic characteristics of the participants, in the second part, questions about the e-WOM scale and in the last part, questions about the destination preference intention.

3.2. Sampling and Data Collection

People who live in Turkey and follow the users who give travel advice especially on social media and who have the intention to travel constitute the population of the research. Among these people, first of all, our own followers were reached, and they were asked to share the questionnaire with users in their close circles with similar characteristics. In this way, data were collected from 400 consumers with the snowball sampling method, which is one of the non-random sampling methods. Snowball sampling method is preferred because it can collect data from the population in the easiest, fastest, and most economical way. It is thought that the number 400 reached is sufficient to represent the main mass.

H1: Social media e-WOM influences destination preference.

3.3. Demographic Profile of the Respondents.

Survey data were collected from 400 people who had the intention to destination. 47% of the respondents were men and 53% were women. Thus, there is almost equal distribution in terms of gender. Detailed demographic profile of the sample is shown below in Table 1.

Table1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

		n	%
Gender	Male	188	47,0
	Female	212	53,0
	Total	400	100,0
Age	Age 18-35	116	29,0
	Age 35-55	231	57,7
	55 Years and older	53	13,3
	Total	400	100,0
Education	High School or less	63	15,8
	University	253	63,2
	Master/Phd level	84	21,0
	Total	400	100,0
Income	Less than 5000	78	19,5
	5000-10000	98	24,5
	10000-15000 TL	90	22,5
	15000-20000 TL	77	19,3
	More than 20000 TL	57	14,2
	Total	400	100,0
The most used social media	Facebook	49	9,0
	Youtube	61	15,0
	Instagram	151	38,0
	Twitter	105	26,0
	Diğer	34	9,0
	Total	400	100,0
Usage period	Less than 1 hour	37	9,3
	1 – 2 Hour	62	15,5
	2 – 4 Hour	190	47,5
	More than 4 hours	111	27,7
	Total	400	100,0

47% of the respondents are male and 53% are female. Considering the age range of the respondents, 57.7% of the respondents are in the 35-55 age range. At the education level, it is seen that the highest rate is composed of university graduates with 63.2%. When the income level of the respondents is examined, it is seen that the averages are close to each other, and the highest rate is between 24.5%- and 5000-10000-income levels. In social media usage, the highest usage rate is Instagram with 38% and Twitter is in the second place. When we look at the usage times, it is seen that the highest usage time is between 2-4 hours with 47.5% of the social media users.

3.4. Analysis and Findings

First, the reliability of the two different scales used in the study was examined, and then exploratory factor analysis was applied for the e-WOM and destination preference intention scales. The reliability and validity test results of the scales used in the research are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Loads, Variances and Reliability of e-WOM and Destination Preference Intention Scales

Factor	Items	Factor Loads	Variance Rate	Reliability
Consumer Opinion	Negative reviews presented on social media are influential in my decision to purchase a vacation.	.845	22,862	0,888
	High ratings for vacation packages influence vacation buying decision	.834		
	Consistency of opinions posted on social media influences my vacation choice and purchase decision	.815		
	Positive reviews presented on social media are influential in my decision to purchase a vacation.	.715		
	When I'm going to book a vacation online, the reviews offered on social media help with my purchasing decision.	.707		
Reliability	International recognition of social media users who offer reviews influences my vacation buying decision	.859	21,689	0,900
	Nicknames or real names of reviewers influence vacation buying decision	.849		
	I get opinions and support from people who have experience in my holiday buying decision process	.832		
	Social media credibility influences my vacation buying decision	.765		
IInvolvement	Different holiday experiences shared on social media affect my purchasing decision	.876	20,818	0,903
	If I haven't read all the comments posted on social media when I'm going to book a holiday, I doubt the correctness of my decision.	.874		
	When I'm going to book a vacation, I always read all the reviews offered on social media	.860		
	Learning from others' experiences before buying a vacation helps me make the right purchasing decision.	.838		
Ccredibility	Opinions shared electronically about holiday and tour services are realistic.	.906	11,105	0,781
	Electronically shared opinions about vacation and tour services are credible.	.901		
TOTAL			76,474	0,870
KMO				0,862
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Significance				0,000

Factor	Items	Factor Loads	Variance Rate	Reliability
Pref. Intent	I say positive things about the region I go to	.941	74,792	0,829
	I recommend the region I go to people around me, to my family and friends.	.898		
	When I have to decide again for a holiday destination in the future, I prefer the region I go to again.	.812		
	I have positive thoughts about the region I go to	.800		
TOTAL			74,792	0,829
KMO				0,782
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Significance				0,000

As a result of the exploratory factor analysis; e-WOM scale; consumer opinion, reliability, involvement, and credibility. These 4 dimensions explain 76% of the e-WOM scale, which consists of a total of 15 variables. Consumer opinion emerged as the dimension with the highest variance with 22%. The destination preference intention scale consists of 4 variables and one dimension, and this single dimension explains 74% of the total variance.

To evaluate the internal consistency of the variables in the scales, Cronbach's Alpha values were calculated and the α value in all scales was determined by Hair et al. (2006) recommended that it is above the 0.70 value (Hair et al., 2006). The reliability coefficient of the e-WOM scale was measured as 0.87. The reliability coefficients of the sub-dimensions of the scale were calculated as α=0.888 for the Consumer opinion scale, 0.900 for the reliability dimension, 0.903 for the involvement dimension, and 0.781 for the credibility dimension. The Cronbach's Alpha value of the destination preference intention scale was found to be 0.829. According to these results, it was concluded that the scales were reliable. The Kaiser Meyer Olkin (KMO) value of the e-WOM scale was calculated as 0.862 and the KMO value of the destination preference intention scale was calculated as 0.782. This led to the conclusion that the samples were sufficient for factor analysis.

Table 3. The Effect of e-WOM on Destination Preference Intention

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.389[a]	.151	.143	.92589140
a. Estimator: (Constant), credibility, involvement, reliability, consumer opinion				

The coefficient of determination showing the power of the independent variable to explain the dependent variable was calculated as 0.151. However, this value shows that its explanatory power is very weak.

Table 4. ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	60.376	4	15.094	17.607	.000[b]
	Residual	338.624	395	.857		
	Total	399.000	399			
a. Dependent Variable (Result): Destination Preference Intention						

b. Predictive: (Constant), credibility, involvement, reliability, consumer opinion

According to the result of the ANOVA analysis, the significance level of 0.05 is sufficient to accept the claim that e-WOM influences preference intention, that is, the alternative hypothesis. However, the fact that the coefficient of determination, which shows the effect power of e-WOM on the preference intention, was low, shows that it is necessary to study with larger samples in future studies.

Table 5. Coefficients Table

Model	Non-standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std.	Beta	t	Significance
(Constant)	.529	.142		.000	1.000
Consumer opinion	.150	.046	.150	3.238	.001

Reliability	-.765	.464	-.765	-1.976	.040
Involvement	.347	.046	.347	7.485	.000
Credibility	.508	.464	.508	1.981	.047
a. Dependent variable: Preference Intent					

Intention to Prefer = 0.529+0.15 Consumer Opinion - 0.765 Reliability + 0.347 Involvement + 0.508 Credibility

According to the table, the relationship of consumer opinion dimension with e-WOM was calculated as 0.150, while the relationship of reliability with e-WOM was - 0.765, the relationship of involvement with e-WOM was 0.347, and the relationship of credibility with e-WOM was 0.508. The mathematical regression model to be created was realized as follows:

Preference Intent = 0.529 + 0,150 Consumer opinion- 0,765 Reliability+0.347 İnvolvement+0.508 Credibility.

4. Conclusion

The development of the Internet and its widespread use among individuals have led to significant changes in different sectors of activity and significantly changed travel planning behaviors. Those who plan to travel now can access not only the information on official destination and/or hotel websites, but also the information shared on social media. Social media consists of many internet platforms, such as social networking sites or blogs, where travelers can share their own experiences as well as read about the experiences of others. The opinions of consumers who have travel experiences are used and preferences are made by taking their comments and suggestions into account. In addition, it offers very useful travel information, ideas, or tips for sharing about the destination and for those who will choose a destination. Social media allows those intending to travel to participate in online conversations or gain knowledge via e-WOM. The fact that e-WOM enables faster and more information acquisition, and the reliance on the information to be obtained makes e-WOM a very effective tool in destination selection. In this study, the effect of social media on destination preference intention with e-WOM was investigated. It has been determined that the results of the study are consistent with those found in the literature review and other studies (Jalilvand et al., 2012; Albarq, 2014; Çakır et al., 2017; Rizky et al., 2017; Hanaysha, 2021) and that e-WOM in social media has a positive effect on destination preference.

References

Adam, M., Mahdani, I., Teuku, R., Ilhamsyah P. and Mukhlis, Y. (2023). The effect of e-WOM model mediation of marketing mix and destination image on tourist revisit intention. *International journal of data and network scıence,*7(1),265-274.

Albarq, A. N. (2014). Measuring the impacts of online word-of-mouth on tourists' attitude and intentions to visit Jordan: An empirical study. *International Business Research*, 7(1), 14-22.

Attri, R. (2023). What Do They Search? Investigating the e-Word of Mouth Search Behaviors of Tourists. *International Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Systems*, 16(1), 74-88.

Boccali, F., Mariani, M.M., Visani, F. and Mora-Cruz, A. (2022). Innovative value-based price assessment in data-rich environments: leveraging online review analytics through data envelopment analysis to empower managers and entrepreneurs. *Technol. Forecast. Social Change* 182, 2-14.

Blackshaw P. and Nazzaro M. (2006). *Consumer Generated Media 101: Word of Mouth in The Age of The Web Fortified Consumer.* A Nielsen Buzzmetrics White Paper, 2. Edit., NY USA.

Boyd, D. M. and Ellison, N. B. (2008). Social Network Sites: Definition, History and Scholarship. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication,* 13(1), 210-230.

Bozkurt, A.K. ve Avcıkurt, C. (2019). Planlanmış Davranış Teorisi ile Yerli Y Kuşağı Turistlerin Destinasyon Tercih Etme Niyetlerinin Belirlenmesi. *Afyon Kocatepe University Journal of Social Sciences,* 21(4), 1294-1307.

Chi, H.H. (2011). Interactive digital advertising vs. virtual brand community: Exploratory study of user motivation and social media marketing responses in Taiwan. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 12 (1), 44–61.

Christodoulides, G., Michaelidou, N. and Argyriou, E. (2012). Cross-national differences in e-WOM influence. *European Journal of Marketing,* 46(11/12), 1689-1707.

Compete, Inc. (2007). Consumer Generated Content: Learning from Travel Innovators. https://media.competeinc.com/med/uploads/files/traveltrends_consumer_generated_travel_content.html.

Çakıcı, A. C. ve Aksu, M. (2007). Çekim Yeri Seçiminde Grup Etkisi: Yerli Turistler Üzerine Bir Araştırma. *Anatolia Journal of Tourism Research,* 18 (2), 183-194.

Çakır, F., N. Aybar, ve Akel, G. (2017). E-Wom'un Tüketicilerin Tatil Satın Alma Niyetine Etkisi. *Adnan Menderes Üniversitesi, Journal of the Social Sciences Institute*, 4(4), 110-127.

Çelik, S. (2014). Sosyal medyanın pazarlama iletişimine etkileri. *Erciyes Journal of Communication,* 3(3), 28-42.

Dapiapis, N.T. (2015). Pazarlama İletişimi Açısından İnternet Ortamında Kullanılan Ağızdan Ağıza Pazarlama Tekniklerinin Marka Tercihine Etkisi. *Üsküdar University Journal of Social Sciences,* 1(1), 157-182.

Demirağ, B., S. Çavuşoğlu, K. Dağ ve S.Paksoy (2022). Elektronik Ağızdan Ağıza İletişimin Turizm Destinasyon Seçimi Üzerindeki Etkisi: Planlı Davranış Teorisi Bağlamında Bir İnceleme. *Gumushane University Journal of Social Sciences,* 13(1), 421-435.

Divol, R., Edelman, D. and Sarrazin, H. (2012). Demystifying social media. *McKinsey Quarterly*,2(12), 66-77.

Dülek, B. and Aydın, İ. (2020). Effect of social media marketing on e-wom, brand loyalty, and purchase intent. *Bingöl Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi,* 10(20), 271-288.

Enders, A., Hungenberg, H., Denker, H. P., and Mauch, S. (2008). The long tail of social networking: Revenue models of social networking sites. *European Management Journal*, (26), 199-211.

Fernandez, L.V.S. (2021). Impacts of social media and destination image on travel intention in Thailand. *UTCC International Journal of Business* 13(3), 129-146.

Ghorban, Z. S. and Tahernejad, H. (2012). A Study on Effect of Brand Credibility on Word of Mouth: with Reference to Internet Service Providers in Malaysia. *International Journal of Marketing Studies*. 4(1), 26-37.

Goyette, I., Ricard, L., Bergeron, J., and Marticotte, F. (2010). e-WOM Scale: word-of-mouth measurement scale for e-services context. *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences/Revue Canadienne des Sciences de l'Administration,* 27(1), 5-23.

Göker, G. and Ayar, İ. (2020). Intermediary Role of Nostalgia Tendency in The Effect Of Electronic Word Of Mouth Communication On Tourists' Destination Visit Intentions. *Journal of tourism and services Issue* 20(11), 44-59.

Gretzel, U. and Yoo, K. (2008). Use and Impact of Online Travel Reviews. *In Information and Communication Technologies in Tourism*, 35-46.

Hair, J.F., Black, W.C., Babin, B.J., Anderson, R.E. and Tatham, R.L. (2006). *Multivariate Data Analysis,* 6. Baskı, New Jersey, Prentice Hall.

Hanaysha, J. R. (2021). Impact of Price Promotion, Corporate Social Responsibility, and Social Media Marketing on Word of Mouth. *Business Perspectives and Research* 9(3), 446–461.

Hennig-Thurau, T., Gwinner, K. P., Walsh, G. and 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.

Jalilvand, M.R. and 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.

Jalilvand, M.R., Samiei, N., Dini, B., and Manzari, P.Y. (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.

Kimmel, A. J. and Kitchen, P. J. (2014). WOM and social media: Presaging future directions for research and practice. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 20(1-2), 5-20.

Kumar, N., Chandarana, Y., Anand, K. and Singh, M. (2017). Using social media for Word-of-Mouth Marketing. *Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad*, 1(15), 391-406.

Kumar, S., Prakash, G., Gupta, B. and Cappiello, G. (2023). How e-WOM influences consumers' purchase intention towards private label brands on e-commerce platforms: Investigation through IAM (Information Adoption Model) and ELM (Elaboration Likelihood Model) Models. *Technological Forecasting & Social Change*, 187, 1-12-.

Lien, C. H., Wen, M. J., Huang, L. C. and Wu, K. L. (2015). Online hotel booking: The effects of brand image, price, trust, and value on purchase intentions. *Asia Pacific Management Review,* 20(4), 210-218.

Miao, Y. (2015). The influence of electronic-WOM on tourists' behavioral intention to choose a destination: A case of Chinese tourists visiting Thailand. *AU-GSB e-journal*, 8(1), 13-31.

Litvin, S. W., Goldsmith, R. E., and Pan, B. (2008). Electronic word-of-mouth in hospitality and tourism management. *Tourism Management,* 29(3), 458–468.

Maria, S., T. Pusriadi, Y.P. Hakim, D. C. Darm (2019). The Effect of Social Media Marketing, Word of Mouth, and Effectiveness of Advertising on Brand Awareness and Intention to Buy. *Journal Management Indonesia,* 19(2), 107-122.

Méndez, J. H., F. Muñoz-Leiva and J. Sánchez-Fernández (2015). The influence of e-word-of-mouth on travel decision-making: consumer profiles. *Current Issues in Tourism,* 18(11), 1001– 1021.

Pan, B., Maclaurin, T., and Crotts, J. (2007). Travel blogs and the implications for destination marketing. *Journal of Travel Research*, 46(1), 35–45.

Park, T. (2020). How information acceptance model predicts customer loyalty? A study from perspective of e-WOM information. *The Bottom Line*,33(1), 60-73.

Park, C., Wang, Y., Yao, Y., Kang Y. (2011). Factors Influencing e-WOM Effects: Using experience, credibility, and susceptibility. *International Journal of Social Science and Humanity*, 74-78.

Pedersen, S., Razmerita, L. and Colleoni, E. (2014). Electronic Word-of Mouth Communication and Consumer Behaviour, An Exploratory Study of Danish Social Media Communication Influence. Journal Language for Special Purposes, Professional Communication. *Knowledge Management and Cognition,* 5(1), 112-131.

Rizky, R.M., Kusdi, R. and Yusri, A. (2017). The impact of e-wom on destination image, attitude toward destination and travel intention. *RJOAS,* 1(61), 94-104.

Setiawan, P.Y., Purbadharmaja, I.B.P., Widanta, A.A.B.P. and 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.

Steinkuehler, C. A., and D. Williams (2006). Where Everybody Knows Your (Screen) Name: Online Games as 'Third Places'. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication,* 4(11), 885–909.

Tariyal, A., Bisht, S., Rana, V., Roy, S. and Pratap, S. (2022). Utilitarian and Hedonic Values of e-WOM Media and Online Booking Decisions for Tourist Destinations in India. *Journal of Open Innovation Technology Market and Complexity*, 8 (137), 1-17.

Tran, G. A. and Strutton, D. (2020). Comparing email and SNS users: Investigating e-services cape, customer reviews, trust, loyalty and E-WOM. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 53, 1-17.

Vermeulen, I. E. and Seegers, D. (2009). Tried and tested: the impact of online hotel reviews on consumer consideration. *Tourism Management,* 30 (1), 123–127.

Winarno, K.O. and Indrawati, I. (2022). Impact of social media marketing and electronic word of mouth (e-wom) on purchase intention, Journal of Applied Management (JAM), 20 (3), 668-683.

Ye, Q., Law, R., Gu, B., and Chen, W. (2011). The influence of user-generated content on traveler behavior: An empirical investigation on the effects of e-word-of-mouth to hotel online bookings. *Computer. Hum. Behav*ior, 27(4), 634–639.