

# Analyzing the Effect of Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) on Attitudes Toward City, City Image, and Intention to Visit Yogyakarta

S.Muzdalifah, S. Rahayu & E. Andajani

*University of Surabaya, Surabaya, Indonesia*

**ABSTRACT:** This study aims to examine the antecedents of intention to visit and its relation to e-WOM, attitudes towards city, and city image. We conducted a structural equation model (SEM) to test the relationship between research variables. An empirical test of the model was reported using data collected from a sample of 150 tourists. The results of this study found that e-WOM had a positive effect on attitudes towards city, city image, and intention to visit Yogyakarta as a destination. This study also discussed the theoretical and implications of research findings.

*Keywords:* e-WOM, attitudes toward city, city image, intention to visit

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry is predicted to experience very high growth. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) estimates that by 2020, global tourist arrivals will reach approximately 1.6 billion people. The growth rate of tourist visits is estimated at 4.1% per year. Of the 1.6 billion foreign tourists in 2020, 1.2 billion visit the intraregional area, and 0.4 billion visits the destination with long-distance travel. Indonesia, which has superior potential in natural and cultural resources, hopes to get a share of the tourists' spending money.

The number of global tourists is growing faster than UNWTO estimates. The 2020 target was reached in 2018, meaning that the number of travelers has increased rapidly. UNWTO Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili said tourism growth in recent years showed that this sector is one of the most powerful drivers of economic growth and development (Khoiri, 2019).

One of the factors that influences tourists to make decisions to determine the destination that will be visited is the image of the tourist attractions. Various studies have shown that image is an essential factor in the decision-making process of tourists choosing tourist destinations. According to Jalilvand et al. (2012), there is an influence between image and preference on tourist intentions to visit tourist attractions.

Destination image is related to tourist attitudes as determinants of behavioral intentions and explains their attitudes towards tourist destinations. The images that appear for different destinations. The difference occurs in tourists who have or have never visited these tourist destinations. The destination image is an important part of the process of selecting tourist destinations. Image of tourist destinations is important to provide an overview of tourist destinations in one's mind and determine the reputation of these tourist destinations in the world of tourism.

Word of Mouth (WOM) is the media most often used to spread information. WOM is a communication about products and services between people who are independent of the company. WOM has initially been a direct conversation idea from consumers about a product (Sen and Lerman, 2007). WOM is proven to be one of the most important sources of information from tourists (Ye et al., 2011). Commercial information sources such as brochures and magazines are important for developing awareness, while WOM dramatically influences the formation of images (Beerli and Martin, 2004).

At present, WOM is not only done through conventional methods. The internet has emerged as a means where Word-of-Mouth (e-WOM) electronic communication takes place among customers (Jalilvand and Samiei, 2012). D-WOM covers various media and types of online websites. Consumers provide reviews in the form of posts on the internet so

that these reviews significantly influence the popularity and sales of products and services.

In recent years, a new trend has emerged, namely social media, which affects the tourism system. Social media shows various forms of Customer-Generated Content (CGC) such as blogs, cyberspace communities, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and video sharing media such as YouTube. The social media trend strongly supports the development of e-WOM because social media is a means for ongoing e-WOM communication.

This study refers to the research by Doosti et al. (2016) regarding the effect of e-WOM on visiting intentions, which are influenced by attitudes towards city and image. Doosti et al. (2016) research results showed that e-WOM communication has a positive impact on tourist attitudes, tourist images, and intention to visit tourist destinations.

According to Luo & Zhong (2015) in Doosti et al. (2016), e-WOM as a source of information shows considerable differences compared to other sources, such as accessibility, convenience, real-time information services, interactive communication, etc. These features make e-WOM a single source of information that is worthy of in-depth analysis. The view that e-WOM is a good source of information reduces the importance of other sources.

## 2 RESEARCH METHODS

This research is causal research that is research aimed at testing the causal relationship between the variables studied (Maholtra, 2007: 85). In causal research, researchers intend to describe what is the cause of the problem being studied (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010: 110).

The research data used was quantitative. Quantitative data tends to be analyzed by means or statistical techniques. The data is usually obtained by using a data collection tool that answers in the form of a range of scores or questions that are weighted (Sugiyono, 2015: 23). The data source used was the primary data source.

The target population of this study was tourists who actively use social media Instagram and have read reviews of a tourist destination. The characteristics of the population determined are active Instagram users who have used Instagram as a reference in choosing tourist destinations in Yogyakarta, male or female, minimum 18 years old, and at least possess high school education or equivalent.

The sampling technique in this study was non-probability sampling, where each member of the

population does not have the same opportunity to be selected as a sample or research subject (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). The type of sampling in this study was purposive sampling, which is a study used to obtain samples from people who meet some predetermined criteria (Cozby & Bates, 2012).

The size of the study sample was determined based on the adequacy of the sample analysis technique used. Referring to Hair et al., (2010), the size of the sample adequacy in SEM analysis techniques ranged from 100 to 400. The estimated total number of samples in this study was at least 150 respondents. The data processing method used was the SPSS 21.0 program with AMOS 21.0.

## 3 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1 *Identity of Respondents*

Respondents in this study were 150 people who are active users of Instagram, and have used Instagram as a reference to choose tourist destinations in Yogyakarta. The majority of respondents were female by 80.7%, students by 70% representing millennials who use technology a lot, especially the use of social media in travel decision making. As many as 90.6% of respondents aged between 18-29 years.

### 3.2 *Validity and Reliability Test Results*

Validity and reliability tests were performed using SPSS 21.0 for windows. All indicators that made up the research variables, namely e-WOM (Instagram), Attitudes towards city, City Image, and Intention to visit, are declared valid because they have a Pearson correlation significance value  $<0.05$ . The four research variables, e-WOM (Instagram), Attitudes Towards City, City Image, and Intention to visit, have a Cronbach Alpha of more than 0.6. This shows that the four research variables are reliable. The results of the validity and reliability test indicated that the questionnaire designed to test the working hypothesis fulfills the requirements.

### 3.3 *Measurement Models*

Measurement model analysis was performed by Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) on all research constructs and indicators. According to Hair et al. (2010: 19), in the form of a CFA model, researchers can observe the contribution of each indicator measured as well as how well the measurement scale measures a concept. CFA was used to confirm the test of measurement theory in research. Indicators of

a construct can be used in the structural model analysis if the construct indicator has a significant estimate value on the construct being measured. Significance can be seen from the size of the critical ratio value estimate. If the value of the critical ratio > 1.96, the relationship is statistically significant.

Table 1 Goodness-of-fit Test Results

Criteria	Result	Critical Score	Remarks
CMIN/DF	1.852	≤ 2.00	Good Fit
RMSEA	0.076	≤ 0.08	Good Fit
GFI	0.858	≥ 0.90	Marginal fit
TLI	0.881	≥ 0.90	Marginal fit
CFI	0.903	≥ 0.90	Good Fit

Source: data processing results, processed

The suitability of the measurement model with its empirical data was measured by the Goodness-of-Fit (GOF) index. GOF indicates how well the determined model produces an observable covariance matrix between each indicator (Hair et al., 2010: 664). Goodness-of-Fit test results in table 1 show: CMIN / DF, RMSEA, and CFI are declared a good fit, whereas GFI and TLI are declared marginal fit.

Table 2. Estimated Value and Significance of Relationship between Indicators and Constructions

Research Construct	Indicator	CR	AVE	Construct Reliability
e-WOM (instagram)	EW1	5.854	0.5	0.831
	EW2	5.810		
	EW3	-		
	EW4	7.911		
	EW5	7.058		
	EW6	5.724		
Attitudes towards city	AT1	-	0.5	0.790
	AT2	6.521		
	AT3	7.429		
	AT4	8.783		
City Image	CI1	6.666	0.5	0.804
	CI2	9.315		
	CI3	-		
	CI4	6.649		
Intention to Visit	IV1	-	0.5	0.793
	IV2	7.523		
	IV3	8.433		
	IV4	7.273		

Source: data processing results, processed

The measurement of validity and reliability in table 2 uses standardized loadings Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and Construct Reliability (CR). The measurement results showed that all indicators have standardized loadings above 0.5, and have CR and AVE values above criteria. The reliability test was used to determine the reliability of a measurement

result that is relatively consistent if the measurement is repeated. High reliability indicates that the indicators have high consistency in measuring latent constructs. According to Hair et al. (2010, p.710), the acceptable construct reliability value is ≥ 0.7. Based on Table 2, it can be seen that the four variables have to construct reliability value ≥ 0.7, so it can be said that the four research constructs used are reliable. The overall results of the measurement model test showed that these indicators are valid and reliable so that they can be used in research.

### 3.4 Structural Models

The structural model analysis was used to investigate the influence between variables or hypothesis testing. Indicators of the construct can be used in the structural model analysis if the indicators of the construct have a significant estimate value on the construct to be measured. Significance can be seen from the critical ratio value higher than 1.96, or the p-value is 0.05.

Table 3. The Results of Structural Model Compatibility Test

Criteria	Result	Critical Value	Remarks
CMIN/DF	2.168	≤ 2.00	Marginal fit
RMSEA	0.089	≤ 0.08	Marginal fit
GFI	0.833	≥ 0.90	Marginal fit
TLI	0.838	≥ 0.90	Marginal fit
CFI	0.863	≥ 0.90	Marginal fit

Source: data processing results, processed

Table 3 shows the values of CIMN/DF, RMSEA, GFI, TLI, and CFI have fulfilled the required values (Wijanto, 2008).

### 3.5 Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing was done by looking at the value of the critical ratio (C.R.) calculation of loading each relationship between constructs in the research model for each coefficient. Estimated values in the standardized regression weights output were used to determine the direction and strength of the relationship if the hypothesized effect is proven to be significant. The construct has a significant effect on other constructs, if the value of the critical ratio > 1.96, with a significance level of 5.0%.

Table 4. The Results of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Estimate	C.R.	Remarks
H1: EW-AT	0.389	4.320	Supported
H2: EW-CI	0.199	2.215	Supported
H3: EW-IV	0.365	3.529	Supported
H4: AT-CI	0.432	3.777	Supported
H5: AT-IV	0.296	2.243	Supported
H6: CI-IV	0.522	3.848	Supported

Source: data processing results, processed

Table 4 summarizes the results of this hypothesis testing. The first path coefficient indicates that the first hypothesis, e-WOM (Instagram), has a positive effect on attitudes towards Yogyakarta city is supported. The path coefficient shows that the second hypothesis, e-WOM (Instagram), has a positive effect on the city image of Yogyakarta is supported. The third path coefficient indicates that the third hypothesis, e-WOM (Instagram), has a positive effect on the intention to visit Yogyakarta is supported. The fourth path coefficient shows that the fourth hypothesis, Attitudes towards city has a positive effect on Yogyakarta city image is supported. The fifth path coefficient indicates that the fifth hypothesis, namely attitudes towards city, has a positive effect on the intention to visit Yogyakarta is supported. The sixth path coefficient indicates that the sixth hypothesis, City image, has a positive effect on the intention to visit Yogyakarta is supported. All the results of testing this hypothesis support the results of previous studies conducted by Doosti et al. (2016).

#### 4 CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study indicated that e-WOM had a positive influence on Attitudes Towards City to visit Yogyakarta. The number of uploads and positive comments about Yogyakarta on Instagram raises good perceptions for other tourists towards Yogyakarta. Various e-WOMs on Instagram about Yogyakarta also affect the image of Yogyakarta. This is evident from the many comments that say Yogyakarta is a beautiful, amazing, and fun tourist destination. These comments raised positive attitudes towards Yogyakarta and led to a desire to visit Yogyakarta.

#### REFERENCES

- Beerli, Asuncio`n & Josefa D. Marti´n. 2004. Factors Influencing Destination Image. *Annals of Tourism Research* 31 (3): 657–681.
- Cozby, P. C., & Bates, S. C. 2012. *Methods in behavioral research*. Singapore: Mc Graw Hill.
- Doosti, Shabnam et al. 2016. Analyzing The Influence Of Electronic Word Of Mouth On Visit Intention: The Mediating Role Of Tourists’ Attitude And City Image. *International Journal of Tourism City* 2 (2):137 – 148
- Hair, Joseph F., Jr. William C. Black. Barry J. Babin. Rolph E. Anderson. 2010. *Multivariate Data Analysis*. 7th Edition. Pearson
- Jalivand, M.R. & Siamei, N.. 2012. The Impact of Electronic Word of Mouth on a Tourism Destination Choice. *Emerald Internet Research*. 22(5).

- Kementerian Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional/ Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional. 2014. *Ringkasan Eksekutif: Menata Perubahan Mewujudkan Indonesia yang Sejahtera, Demokrasi dan Berkeadilan Pencapaian Kinerja Pembangunan KIB I (2004-2009) dan KIB II (2009-2014)*. Available at : <http://www.bappenas.go.id/files/2714/2846/5605/Ringkasan.pdf>
- Khoiri, Ahmad Masaul. 2109. UNWTO: *Jumlah Turis Internasional Tumbuh Lebih Cepat dari Target*. <https://travel.detik.com/travel-news/d-4400242/unwto-jumlah-turis-internasional-tumbuh-lebih-cepat-dari-target>, retrieved on October 5, 2019
- Luo, Q., & Zhong, D. 2015. Using Social Network Analysis to Explain Communication Characteristics of Travel-related Electronic Word-of-Mouth on Social Networking Sites. *Tourism Management* 46: 274-282.
- Malhotra, Naresh, 2007. *Marketing Research : An Applied Orientation*. Pearson Education, inc., fifth edition. New Jersey : USA.
- Sekaran, U., & Bougie, R. 2010. *Research Methods For Business A Skill-Building Approach* (5th ed.). Haddington John Wiley & Sons.
- Sen, S. & Lerman, D. 2007. Why are You Telling me This? An Examination into Negative Consumers Reviews on the Web. *Journal of Interactive Marketing* 21(4), 76-94
- Sugiyono 2015. *Metode Penelitian Kombinasi (Mix Methods)*. Bandung: Alfabeta.
- Wijanto, S. 2008. *Structural Equation Modelling dengan Lisrel* 8.8. Graha Ilmu, Yogyakarta
- Ye Q., Law R., Gu B., 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. *Computers in Human Behavior*. Vol. 27(2): 634-639.