

TOURIST ATTITUDES AS A FORMATION OF ELECTRONIC WORD-OF-MOUTH INTENTION AND VISIT INTENTION BUILT BY PERCEPTION OF SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT AND PERCEPTION OF CITY IMAGE

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ABSTRACT

Garut is one of the regions in West Java that has a lot of tourism potential. However, the number of tourists visiting Garut in 2014–2023 has not fully reached its target. This study aims to examine the effect of the perception of social media content and perception of city image on tourist attitude and their impact on electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) intentions and visit intentions. The study used a quantitative approach. The population is domestic tourists from outside Garut, who are in the provinces of West Java, Jakarta, and Banten, who in the last 3-6 months have travelled and are over 18 years old. We took the sample using the convenience sampling technique, then followed it up with snowball sampling to target 220 respondents. Data were processed using Structural Equation Modelling. This study found that perceptions of social media content and perceptions of city image affect tourist attitude. Tourists' attitude affects e-WOM intentions and visit intentions. E-WOM intentions affects visit intentions. Tourist attitude mediate the effect of perceptions of social media content and perceptions of city image on both e-WOM intentions and visit intentions. The managerial implication is that the efforts to generate tourist visit intentions are through strengthening their attitude built by perceptions of the city's image, and by encouraging their intention to actively participate in e-WOM activities related to tourism in Garut, supported by designing more attractive social media content.

Keywords: perception of social media content, perception of city image, tourist attitude, e-WOM intention, visit intention.

ABSTRAK

Garut merupakan salah satu daerah di Jawa Barat yang memiliki banyak potensi wisata. Namun, jumlah wisatawan yang berkunjung ke Garut dalam kurun waktu 2014-2023 belum sepenuhnya mencapai target. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menguji pengaruh persepsi atas konten media sosial dan persepsi atas citra kota terhadap sikap wisatawan serta dampaknya terhadap niat melakukan Electronic Word-of-Mouth (e-WOM) dan niat berkunjung wisatawan ke Kota Garut. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif. Populasi penelitian adalah wisatawan nusantara dari luar Garut, yang berada di provinsi Jawa Barat, DKI Jakarta, dan Banten, yang dalam 3-6 bulan terakhir pernah melakukan perjalanan wisata, dan berusia di atas 18 tahun. Sampel diambil dengan menggunakan teknik convenience sampling yang dilanjutkan dengan snowball sampling dengan target 220 responden. Data diolah dengan menggunakan Structural Equation Modeling. Temuan mengungkapkan bahwa persepsi atas konten media sosial dan persepsi atas citra kota memengaruhi sikap wisatawan. Sikap wisatawan memengaruhi niat melakukan e-WOM dan niat berkunjung. Niat melakukan e-WOM memengaruhi niat berkunjung. Sikap wisatawan memediasi pengaruh persepsi atas konten media sosial dan persepsi atas citra kota, baik terhadap niat melakukan e-WOM maupun terhadap niat berkunjung. Implikasi manajerial dari penelitian ini bahwa upaya yang dapat dilakukan oleh pengelola destinasi wisata di Garut untuk membangkitkan niat berkunjung wisatawan, adalah melalui penguatan sikap yang dibangun oleh persepsi atas citra kota, serta dengan mendorong niat mereka untuk berpartisipasi aktif dalam kegiatan e-WOM terkait wisata di Garut, yang ditunjang dengan merancang konten media sosial yang lebih menarik.

Kata kunci: persepsi atas konten media sosial, persepsi atas citra kota, sikap wisatawan, niat melakukan e-WOM, niat berkunjung.

1. Introduction

In many nations, the tourist sector has grown to be a significant source of foreign exchange (Pereira et al., 2019). The important role of tourism is expected to continue to increase in the future because it can develop into one of the largest industries in the world and will become one of the main sectors in increasing state income, foreign exchange, and job creation (Sugiarto, 2019).

One of the regions in West Java with a lot of tourism potential is Garut Regency. This area enjoys popularity due to its diverse range of tourism potential, which draws visitors (Tetep et al., 2021). The Central Bureau of Statistics of Garut Regency noted that there are 115 natural attractions in Garut, 40 cultural attractions, eight special interest attractions, and 71 artificial attractions spread across 42 sub-districts. This shows a very high potential for the tourism industry in Garut. However, with the large number of destinations, it turns out that the number of tourists visiting Garut in the period 2014–2023 has not yet fully reached the target. In fact, tourist visits have an impact on improving the economy in tourist destination areas (Aliansyah and Hermawan, 2019).

In the Garut Regency Regulation Number 2 of 2019 concerning the 2019–2025 Regional Tourism Development Master Plan, it is stated that “Tourism Marketing is intended to attract tourists and motivate them to buy tourism products and services offered”. This indicates that the goal of tourism marketing activities is to entice tourists to engage in tourism activities, thereby enabling them to purchase products and services from the tourism services provided. If the plan is linked to tourism activities, it is represented by the intention to visit.

Visit intention is the likelihood that tourists will visit a destination (Nguyen Viet et al., 2020), which refers to the

likelihood that travellers will actually visit a particular tourist destination (Luo and Ye, 2020).

Several previous studies have examined various variables that influence the creation of tourists' intentions to visit a region or destination. Some studies mention that image affects their intention to visit or recommend a destination (Lu et al., 2015; Kusumawati et al., 2022; El Sheikh, 2020).

However, the advent of the internet and information and communication technology has fundamentally changed how tourists plan, buy, and use travel-related goods and services. As a result, user-generated content and marketer-generated content are expanding quickly and affecting how consumers view travel-related goods. (Blasco-Lopez et al., 2019).

Today's travellers are more familiar with Internet content than other traditional marketing media (de Souza et al., 2020). Consumers depend more and more on social networking sites to guide their purchasing decisions (Wengel et al., 2022). Social media marketing is proven to shape consumers' desire to make purchases (Daratullaila & Nofirda, 2024). Other research by Latif et al. (2020) and Hidayat and La Are (2018) produced similar findings. However, studies by Helal et al. (2023) and Wengel et al. (2022) found dissimilar results, suggesting that social media content does not significantly influence tourists' intentions to revisit.

Based on the inconsistency of previous research results regarding the relationship between city image and visit intention and between perceived social media content and visit intention, the authors include tourist attitude as a mediation variable. The role of attitude on travel intentions has been tested in previous research, which shows that attitude influences travel intentions (Choirisa et al., 2021; Muzdalifah et al.,

2020; Rizky et al., 2017; Han dan Chen, 2021).

Other research findings show that visit intention is influenced by e-WOM (Gosal et al., 2020; Setiawan et al., 2021; Kembau, 2020; Thaothampitak & Wongsuwatt, 2022). E-WOM plays a crucial role in generating an individual's interest in revisiting a tourist location (Adam, 2022; Madi et al., 2024).

The importance of attitude and e-WOM variables in relation to visit intentions is also found in Rana and Arora's (2022) study that ad personalization and social influence play an important role in shaping user attitude towards social media advertisements, which significantly influence users' e-WOM intentions which in turn affect social media users' purchase intentions. Likewise, the results of Han and Chen's (2021) research show that, the credibility of the content source has a significant positive effect on the attitude of social media users, which in turn is positively related to the intention to visit the destination.

Based on the above review, the following research questions were obtained:

1. What impact does perception of social media content have on tourist attitude?
2. What impact does perception of city image have on tourist attitude?
3. What impact does tourist attitude have on e-WOM intentions?
4. What impact does tourist attitude have on tourist visit intentions?
5. What impact does e-WOM intention have on visit intention?
6. What is the role of tourist attitude in mediating the influence of social media content perception on e-WOM intentions?
7. What is the role of tourist attitude in mediating the influence of city image perception on e-WOM intentions?

8. What is the role of tourist attitude in mediating the influence of perception of social media content on visit intentions?
9. What is the role of tourist attitude in mediating the influence of perception of city image on visit intentions?

2. Literature Review

2.1 The Influence of Perception of Social Media Content on Tourist Attitude

Social media infrastructure can be a means of promoting and strengthening brands more efficiently and cost-effectively (Novandari et al., 2023). Social media has emerged as a crucial platform for quickly obtaining information about destinations (Bilal et al., 2002). Online social identity amplifies the impact of friends' travel-related Facebook posts (Latif et al., 2020). Based on this, the first hypothesis is formulated:

H1: perception of social media content has a positive effect on tourist attitude.

2.2 The Influence of Perception of City Image on Tourist Attitude

Image is significant consideration in determining how tourists view a place, how their decision-making process over visits turns out, and how likely a place is to draw tourists (Al-Gasawneh & Al-Adamat, 2020). Destination image influences tourists' attitude toward the destination (Pereira et al., 2019, Chi & Pham, 2024). We formulate the second hypothesis based on this:

H2: perception of city image has a positive influence on tourist attitude.

2.3 The Influence of Tourist Attitude on e-WOM Intention

Attitudes significantly influence e-WOM intentions (Kim et al., 2016; Cheng et al., 2021; Rana & Arora, 2022). Sharma and Arora (2023) prove that there is a significant effect of tourist attitude on

behavioral intentions and e-WOM intentions. The aforementioned study formulates the third hypothesis:

H3: tourist attitude has a positive influence on e-WOM intention.

2.4 The Influence of Tourist Attitude on Visit Intention

The greater the level of evaluation preferred by individuals will increase their willingness to perform a behavior (Wang et al., 2022). In addition, according to Kim and Kwon (2018), the role of attitude often proves to be a more fruitful area to investigate in relation to behavioral intentions. Perceptions of attitude and destination image influence travel intentions (Choirisa et al., 2021; Muzdalifah et al. (2020); Rizky et al. (2017). This study suggests that the attitude of tourists significantly influences their intentions to visit, leading to the formulation of the fourth hypothesis:

H4: tourist attitude has a positive influence on tourist visit intention.

2.5 The Influence of E-WOM Intention on Visit Intention

WOM has an important role in promoting places (Chaffey & Elis-Chadwick, 2019). E-WOM influences visit intentions (Doosti et al., 2016; Choirisa et al., 2021). This is reinforced by Jalilvand et al. (2013) that e-WOM not only influences others, but can also strengthen individuals' commitment to their own decision to visit a destination. Based on this study, the fifth hypothesis is formulated, namely:

H5: e-WOM intention has a positive influence on tourist visit intention.

2.6 The Mediation Effect of Tourist Attitude on the Influence of Perception of Social Media Content on e-WOM Intention

People's experiences with social media influence attitude, and attitude influence

behavioural intentions in terms of ordering decisions and e-WOM intentions (Muslim et al., 2020). Han et al. (2018) found that user-generated content on social media can influence attitude and behaviors and convey information. The findings of Baber et al. (2022) are that tourists' visiting intentions are positively influenced by e-WOM because online reviews affect tourists' attitude. Based on this study, the sixth hypothesis is formulated as follows:

H6: Tourist attitude mediates the influence of perceptions of social media content on e-WOM intention.

2.7 The Mediation Effect of Tourist Attitude on the Influence of Perception of City Image on e-WOM Intention

Gosal et al. (2020) conducted previous studies on the relationship between city image, attitude, e-WOM, and travel intention. Choirisa et al. (2021) found that e-WOM can influence travel intention in the presence of attitude and destination image. In addition, Doosti et al. (2016) found a link between e-WOM with tourist attitude and city image. Based on these studies, the seventh hypothesis is formulated, namely:

H7: Tourist attitude mediates the influence of perception of city image on e-WOM intention.

2.8 The Mediation Effect of Tourist Attitude on the Influence of Perception of Social Media Content on Visit Intention

Researchers Narangajavana Kaosiri et al. (2019) discovered that social media users' content is a crucial element for tourists, significantly impacting the pre-travel phase and potentially influencing the post-travel phase. People's experiences on social media shape their attitude, which in turn shape their behavioural intentions, including booking decisions and e-WOM intentions (Muslim et al., 2020).

According to Popy and Bappy (2020), the association between restaurant visit intentions and perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and trust in social media information is mediated by social media user attitude. Based on these studies, the eighth hypothesis is formulated, namely:

H8: Tourist attitude mediates the influence of perceptions of social media content on visit intentions.

2.9 The Mediation Effect of Tourist Attitude on the Influence of Perception of City Image on Visit Intention

Gosal et al. (2020) examined the relationship between city image, attitude,

e-WOM, and travel intentions. Doosti et al. (2021) revealed that tourist attitude and city image are determining factors for visit intention. Choirisa et al. (2021) found that e-WOM can influence travel intentions in the presence of attitude and destination image. Based on this study, the ninth hypothesis is formulated, namely:

H9: Tourist attitude mediates the influence of perception of city image on visit intention.

Based on the literatures study above, the research model is depicted in figure 1.

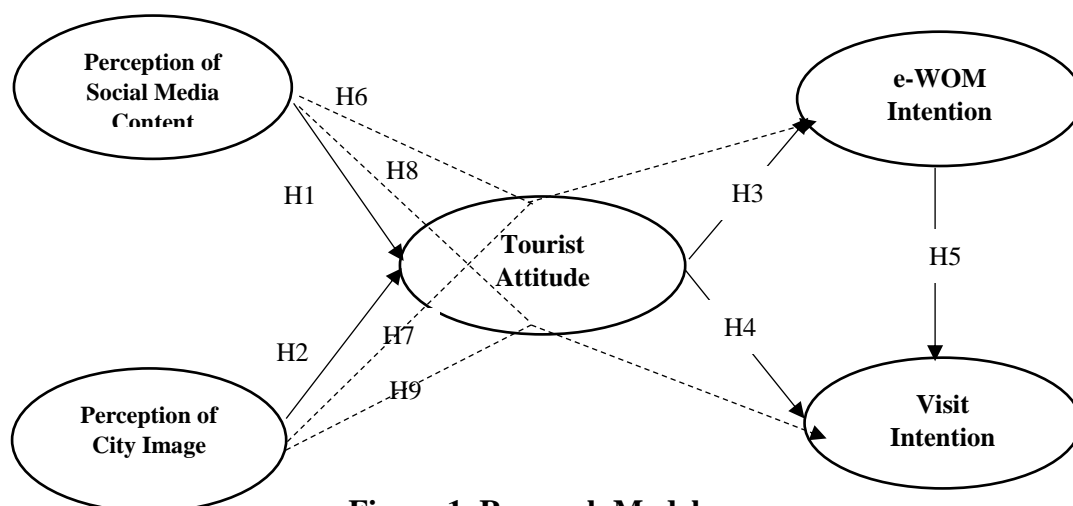


Figure 1. Research Model

3. Research Method

The research was conducted using a quantitative approach. Explanatory research methods are used to test hypotheses (Ferdinand, 2014). A questionnaire with a 5-point Likert scale provides the primary data for this research. We distributed the questionnaire online using the WhatsApp application.

The research population is domestic tourists from outside Garut, who are in the provinces of West Java, Jakarta DKJ, and Banten, who in the last 3-6 months have

traveled (tourist trips), and are over 18 years old. The determination of the sample size is based on the use of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) as an analytical tool. Hair et al. (2010) recommends that if the population is unknown, then the minimum sample size is 5 times the number of question items contained in the questionnaire. In this study, the number of indicators is 44 indicators, so the minimum sample size for this study is $5 \times 44 = 220$ respondents.

Two dimensions and eight indicators measure the perception on social media content (Poturak & Softic, 2019). Two dimensions and 16 indicators measure the perception of city image (Kim and Kwon, 2018; Gaffar et al., 2021; Lam et al., 2020; Kusumawati et al., 2022). Three dimensions and six indicators measure tourist attitude (Kim and Stepchenkova, 2015; Reitsamer et al., 2016; Pereira et al., 2019; Doosti et al., 2016). E Three dimensions and eight indicators measure E-WOM intention (Yeh and Choi, 2011; Pang and Wang, 2023; and Simay et al., 2023). Three dimensions and six indicators measure visit intention (Gaffar et al., 2021; Kusumawati et al., 2022; Rajput, 2022; Tan and Wu, 2016).

The method used to test the research model as well as test the hypothesis is Structural Equation Modeling (SEM).

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Goodness-of-Fit Model

Goodness-of-fit model aims to test whether the resulting model describes the

actual conditions, with the following hypothesis:

Ho: Model is fit (the resulting model describes the actual conditions).

Ha: Model is not fit (the resulting model does not describe the actual conditions).

In this section, the results of hypothesis testing using structural equation modeling (SEM) will be discussed. Before the discussion is carried out, the hypothesis will be analyzed for the model fit test results.

In table 1, it is known that the p value = 0.75898 > 0.05, Goodness of Fit Indices (GFI) and Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI) > 0.90, and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) < 0.05, so it can be concluded that the research model is fit or the paradigm is supported by empirical conditions.

Table 1. Goodness-of-Fit

No.	Degree of Fit	Value	Acceptable Degree of Fit	Description
1	Absolute Fit Test			
	<i>Chi Square</i>	851.17	<i>P -value</i> > 0.05	Close Fit
	<i>Normed Chi Square (x2/df)</i>	<i>P -value</i> = 0.75898		
	<i>Goodness of Fit Index (GFI)</i>	0.95	> 0.80	Close fit
	<i>Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)</i>	0.000	RMSEA ≤ 0.08 (good fit) RMSEA < 0.05 (<i>close-fit</i>)	Close fit
2	Incremental Fit Measures			
	<i>Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI)</i>	0.94	AGFI > 0.8	Close fit
	Normed Fit Index (NFI)	0.96	NFI > 0.90	Close fit
	Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	1.00	CFI > 0.90	Close fit
3	Parsimonious Fit Measures			
	Parsimonious Normed Fit Index (PNFI)	0.90	PNFI > 0.80	Close fit
	Parsimonious GFI (PGFI)	0.84	PGFI > 0.80	Fit

Source: Output of LISREL 8.7 (2024)

4.2 Structural Model Analysis

The tested structural model framework yielded the following results:

$$\text{TOURISTATTITUDE} = 0.34 * \text{Social} + 0.49 * \text{CITYIMAGE}, \zeta_1 = 0.40, R^2 = 0.60$$

(0.020) (0.16)
17.00 3.063

$$\text{NEWOM} = 0.70 * \text{TOURISTATTITUDE} \zeta_2 = 0.51, R^2 = 0.49$$

(0.091)
7.70

$$\text{VISITINTENTION} = 0.30 * \text{TOURISTATTITUDE} + 0.37 * \text{NEWOM}, \zeta_3 = 0.62, R^2 = 0.38$$

(0.11) (0.086)
4.28

4.3 Measurement Model

The results of the validity and reliability tests of the measurement model are shown in table 2 below:

Table 2. Validity and Reliability of Measurement Models

Variable	Dimension -Indicator	CODE	Loading Factor (l)	t	P-value	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Composite Reliability
PERCEPTION OF SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT	Perception of firm-created social media communication		0.76	3.87	0.00	0.759	0.926
	Satisfaction of social media users with tourism content created by the manager of tourist destinations in Garut	PKMS1	0.89	-	0.00		
	The suitability between the content of tourist content created by the manager of tourist destinations in Garut and the expectations of social media users	PKMS2	0.89	12.75	0.00		
	The attractiveness of tourist content created by the manager of tourist destinations in Garut	PKMS3	0.90	12.85	0.00		
	The tourist content created by the manager of tourist destinations in Garut is more interesting than the content created by the manager of tourist destinations in other surrounding areas.	PKMS4	0.80	11.75	0.00		
	Perception of user-generated social media communication		0.74	3.70	0.00		
Satisfaction of social media users with tourism content in Garut created by other travelers	PKMS5	0.87	-	0.00			
Congruence between the content of tourism content in Garut created by other travelers, with the expectations of social media users	PKMS6	0.83	11.74	0.00			

Variable	Dimension -Indicator	CODE	Loading Factor (I)	t	P-value	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Composite Reliability
	The attractiveness of tourism content in Garut created by other travelers	PKMS7	0.87	12.09	0.00		
	Content created by other travelers about tourism in Garut, is more interesting than about tourism in other areas around it	PKMS8	0.74	10.72	0.00		
PERCEPTION OF CITY IMAGE	COGNITIVE IMAGE		0.78	4.88	0.00	0.604	0.955
	The beauty of natural scenery	PCK1	0.78	-	0.00		
	The beauty of the beaches	PCK2	0.79	11.67	0.00		
	Quality of hotels	PCK3	0.79	11.65	0.00		
	Culinary attraction	PCK4	0.76	11.32	0.00		
	Quality of service at tourist attractions	PCK5	0.78	11.60	0.00		
	Attractiveness of souvenir shops	PCK6	0.76	11.33	0.00		
	Attractiveness of festivals	PCK7	0.74	11.13	0.00		
	Convenience of transportation	PCK8	0.78	11.61	0.00		
	Beauty of infrastructure	PCK9	0.77	11.43	0.00		
	Ease of access	PCK10	0.78	11.54	0.00		
	Friendliness of local people	PCK11	0.81	11.88	0.00		
	Clean environment	PCK12	0.79	11.65	0.00		
	Attraction of typical handicrafts	PCK13	0.74	11.16	0.00		
	Artificial tourist destinations in Garut are very interesting	PCK14	0.81	11.89	0.00		
	AFFECTIVE IMAGE		0.80	5.00	0.00	0.682	0.811
	Safe and peaceful city	PCK15	0.86	-	0.00		
	Pleasant climate	PCK16	0.79	10.72	0.00		
TOURIST ATTITUDE	COGNITIVE ATTITUDE		0.86	11.05	0.00	0.792	0.884
	Interested in traveling in Garut	SW1	0.90	-	0.00		
	Liked the tourism potential in Garut	SW2	0.88	11.52	0.00		
	AFFECTIVE ATTITUDE		0.91	11.14	0.00	0.775	0.873
	Traveling in Garut is fun	SW3	0.87	-	0.00		
	Traveling in Garut is relaxing	SW4	0.89	11.90	0.00		
	BEHAVIOUR ATTITUDE		0.90	11.35	0.00	0.775	0.873
	Tend to feel excited about visiting Garut	SW5	0.90	-	0.00		
	Think positively about trying various tourist destinations in Garut	SW6	0.86	11.80	0.00		
E-WOM INTENTION	INTENTION TO PROVIDE INFORMATION		0.98	12.04	0.00	0.636	0.875
	Intention to provide information online	NEWOM1	0.82	-	0.00		
	Intention to actively comment on others' content online	NEWOM2	0.81	11.45	0.00		
	Intention to talk about the good side of the city online	NEWOM3	0.78	11.84	0.00		
	Intention to praise the city online	NEWOM4	0.78	11.18	0.00		
	INTENTION TO GET INFORMATION		0.76	10.82	0.00	0.801	0.890
	Intention to ask for information online	NEWOM5	0.89	-	0.00		
	Intention to ask for advice online	NEWOM6	0.90	10.29	0.00		
	INTENTION TO RECOMMEND		0.94	12.54	0.00	0.681	0.810

Variable	Dimension -Indicator	CODE	Loading Factor (I)	t	P-value	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Composite Reliability
	I intend to recommend Garut to others online	NEWOM7	0.85	-	0.00		
	Intention to suggest people to visit, online	NEWOM8	0.80	11.13	0.00		
VISIT INTENTION	FUTURE VISIT		0.90	11.88	0.00	0.731	0.845
	Future visit expectations	NB1	0.85	-	0.00		
	Intention to travel for vacation	NB2	0.86	10.51	0.00		
	FUTURE CHOICE		0.83	11.14	0.00	0.706	0.827
	Choosing Garut as the main vacation destination	NB3	0.85	-	0.00		
	Prioritize Garut when choosing a tourist destination in the future	NB4	0.83	9.60	0.00		
	PREFERENTIAL CHOICE		0.94	12.51	0.00	0.757	0.862
	Seriousness will consider Garut as the main destination compared to other surrounding areas	NB5	0.88	-	0.00		
	Considering Garut first than other surrounding areas when planning a vacation	NB6	0.86	11.04	0.00		

Source: Output of LISREL 8.7 (2024)

4.4 Hypothesis Testing

Table 3 below displays the results of the hypothesis testing.

Table 3. Hypothesis Testing

No	Hypothesis	Path Coeff.	Standard of error	t- value	Prob.	R ²	Conclusion
1	Perception of social media content influences tourist attitude	0.34	0.02	17.00	0.00	0.12	Hypothesis supported
2	Perception of city image influences tourist attitude	0.49	0.16	3.06	0.00	0.24	Hypothesis supported
3	Tourist attitude influences e-WOM intention	0.70	0.09	7.70	0.00	0.49	Hypothesis supported
4	Tourist attitude influences tourist intention	0.30	0.11	2.77	0.01	0.09	Hypothesis supported
5	E-WOM intention influences tourist visit intentions	0.37	0.09	4.28	0.00	0.14	Hypothesis supported
6	Tourist attitude mediate the influence of perception of social media content on e-WOM intentions	0.238	0.03	7.072*	0.00	0.24	Hypothesis supported
7	Tourist attitude mediates the	0.343	0.05	7.413*	0.00	0.34	Hypothesis supported

No	Hypothesis	Path Coeff.	Standard of error	t- value	Prob.	R ²	Conclusion
	influence of perception of city image on e-WOM intention						
8	Tourist attitude mediates the influence of perception of social media content on visit intention	0.102	0.04	2.693*	0.01	0.10	Hypothesis supported
9	Tourist attitude mediates the influence of perception of city image on visit intention	0.147	0.07	2.037*	0.04	0.15	Hypothesis supported

Source : Output of LISREL 8.7 (2024).

Table 3's results lead to the following conclusion:

- 1) Hypothesis 1 is supported. There is a positive influence of perceptions of social media content on tourist attitude (P-value < 0.05), with R²=0.12.
- 2) Hypothesis 2 is supported. There is a positive influence of perception of city image on tourist attitude (P-value < 0.05), with R² = 0.24.
- 3) Hypothesis 3 is supported. There is a positive influence of tourist attitude on e-WOM intentions (P-value < 0.05) with R² = 0.49.
- 4) Hypothesis 4 is supported. There is a positive influence of tourists' attitude on visit intention (P-value < 0.05) with R² = 0.09.
- 5) Hypothesis 5 is supported. There is a positive influence of e-WOM intention on visit intention (P-value < 0.05) with R² = 0.14.
- 6) Hypothesis 6 is supported. By using the Sobel test, it is known that the indirect effect of the perception of social media content on e-WOM intention through tourist attitude is 0.238 (P-value < 0.05) with R² = 0.238.

- 7) Hypothesis 7 is supported. By using the Sobel test, it is known that the indirect effect of perception of city image on e-WOM intention through tourist attitude is 0.343 (P value < 0.05) with R² = 0.343.
- 8) Hypothesis 8 is supported. By using the Sobel test, it is known that the indirect effect of perception of social media content on visit intention through tourist attitude is 0.102 (P-value < 0.05) with R² = 0.102.
- 9) Hypothesis 9 is supported. By using the Sobel test, it is known that the indirect effect of perception of city image on visit intention through tourist attitude is 0.147 (P-value < 0.05) with R² = 0.147.

4.5 Discussion

4.5.1 The Influence of Perception of Social Media Content on Tourist Attitude

Perception of social media content positively influences tourist attitude towards tourism activities in Garut. This result supports the findings of Han and Chen (2021), that the credibility of content creation sources on social media has a

significant positive effect on the attitude of social media users. Social media has emerged as a crucial platform for quickly obtaining information about destinations (Bilal et al., 2022).

The perception of social media content can influence tourists' attitude, as the development of information and communication technology and the internet has dramatically revolutionized the way visitors plan, purchase, and consume tourism products and services so that ser-generated content and marketer-generated content are rapidly growing and influencing users' perceptions of tourism products (Blasco-Lopez et al., 2019).

The measurement results show that tourist perception of firm-created social media communication has a greater loading factor (0.76) compared to user-generated social media communication (0.74). This suggests that managers of tourist destinations in Garut dominate the formation of tourist perceptions of social media content.

Destination managers can significantly influence tourists' attitude through their well-planned and structured tourism content. Destination managers professionally design content to convey messages in accordance with the desired image, thereby targeting relevant market segments.

4.5.2 The Influence of Perception of City Image on Tourist Attitude

Perception of city image positively shapes tourist attitude. This result supports the findings of previous research (Pereira et al., 2019). Al-Gasawneh & Al-Adamat (2020) consider image as an important factor that influences tourists' perceptions of a destination and its potential to attract tourists.

The measurement results revealed that the affective image received a greater loading factor (0.80) than the cognitive image (0.78). This indicates that affective

images more dominantly shape the perception of city images than cognitive images.

An affective image describes the perception that Garut is a safe and tranquil city and has a pleasant climate. Meanwhile, the cognitive image encompasses natural beauty, beach beauty, hotel quality, culinary attractiveness, service quality at tourist attractions, the attractiveness of souvenir shops, the attractiveness of festivals, transportation convenience, infrastructure, ease of access, the friendliness of local people, the clean environment, the attractiveness of typical crafts, and the attractiveness of artificial tourist destinations. Of the two dimensions, it turns out that the affective image plays a more dominant role in shaping the city's image, thereby influencing tourists' attitude.

According to Lam et al. (2020), affective image is the result of cognitive image processing. Tourists initially evaluate cognitive elements such as infrastructure and natural beauty but eventually form deeper affective feelings such as perceptions of safety and comfort, as well as a pleasant climate, which then dominate their attitude towards tourism activities in Garut. Affective images influence tourists' decisions due to their more emotional nature. Moreover, the respondents in this study were mostly women, who relatively prioritize emotional aspects. According to Patiro et al. (2022), emotions can stimulate behaviour and have implications for the formation of actions.

4.5.3 The Influence of Tourist Attitude on e-WOM Intention

Tourist attitude has a positive effect on the formation of tourist e-WOM intentions related to tourism in Garut. The results of this test support previous studies (Kim et al., 2016; Cheng et al., 2021; Rana & Arora, 2022; Sharma & Arora, 2023).

The dominant aspect that shapes tourist attitude and e-WOM intention related to Garut tourism is affective attitude, namely tourists' views that traveling in Garut is fun and relaxing.

This is due to the fact that emotional content tends to elicit higher levels of engagement, even from individuals who have not personally experienced a destination. The positive emotions generated by a safe and pleasant destination image make people more compelled to share their opinions or views online, based on the expectations formed from the content they consume.

4.5.4 The Influence of Tourist Attitude on Visit Intention

Tourist attitude has a positive effect on shaping tourist visit intentions. The results of this hypothesis testing confirm the findings of previous research, indicating that attitude significantly influences travel intention (Choirisa et al., 2021; Muzdalifah et al., 2020; Rizky et al., 2017; Kim and Kwon, 2018). (2020; Rizky et al., 2017; Kim and Kwon, 2018).

Three dimensions, namely cognitive attitude, affective attitude, and behavioural attitude, measure tourist attitude in this study. An affective attitude describes tourists' tendencies about whether traveling in Garut is fun and relaxing. Behavioural attitude shows the extent to which tourists tend to feel pleased and have a positive view of travelling to Garut. The cognitive attitude shows a sense of interest and liking to travel in Garut.

Measurement results indicate that affective attitude has a larger loading factor (0.91), followed by behavioral attitude (0.90) and cognitive attitude (0.86). This indicates that the dominant aspect that shapes tourists' attitude and their intention to visit Garut is affective attitude. This implies that, within the context of this study, tourists' perceptions

of Garut as a fun and relaxing destination shape their intention to visit.

Affective attitude is a dominant factor in shaping visit intentions because emotions and feelings can more strongly influence tourists' decisions than rational evaluations or behavioral tendencies.

4.5.5 The Influence of e-WOM Intention on Visit Intention

E-WOM intention has a positive effect in shaping tourist intention. The results of this hypothesis test support previous research findings that e-WOM ultimately influences tourists' intention to visit and revisit destinations (Madi et al., 2024). This result also supports Widyasari (2018), Doosti et al. (2016), and Choirisa et al. (2021). Jalilvand et al. (2013) reinforce this result by stating that e-WOM not only influences others but also strengthens individuals' commitment to their own destination decision. These results also support Chaffey & Elis-Chadwick's (2019) opinion that WOM has an important role in promoting places.

E-WOM intention is measured by three dimensions: intention to provide information, intention to obtain information, and intention to recommend. The result of measurement reveals that the intention to provide information received the highest loading factor (0.98), followed by the intention to recommend (0.94), and the intention to obtain information (0.76). This indicates that e-WOM intention is dominantly represented by tourists' intention to provide information related to Garut tourism online, by providing information, commenting on other people's content, talking positively about the good side of Garut, and praising the city. The intention to do these things drives the creation of tourists' intentions to visit Garut. However, the intention to recommend and the intention to gather information also play a significant role in shaping tourists' desire to visit.

Even though respondents have never been to the Garut, the desire to share, obtain, and recommend information to others can make them have the intention to visit. Even though respondents have never been to the Garut, the desire to share, obtain, and recommend information to others can make them have the intention to visit. Recommendations from e-WOM are mutually beneficial, as individuals who receive information often share it if it is valuable or helpful.

When tourists engage in e-WOM activities, in this case providing information, commenting, speaking positively, or praising Garut, it indirectly increases their personal engagement with tourism in Garut. This activity can strengthen their own interest and enthusiasm to visit Garut. This is related to the principle of self-persuasion, where someone who speaks or writes positively about something tends to convince themselves about it. Lee and Koo (2012) reinforced that active participation in e-WOM activities often strengthens an individual's intention to try the discussed topic. This shows that when someone shares a positive view about Garut, then the personal intention to visit Garut also increases.

4.5.6 The Mediation Effect of Tourist Attitude on the Influence of the Perception of Social Media Content on e-WOM Intention

Tourist attitude mediates the effect of perceptions of social media content on e-WOM intentions. This result addresses the issue of how tourist attitude can enhance the impact of social media content perception in developing e-WOM intention. This aligns with the findings of Eagly and Chaiken (1995) and Fishbein and Ajzen (1975), which suggest that perception does not directly shape intention. The results of hypothesis testing demonstrate that attitude shaped by social

media content perception can foster e-WOM intention.

4.5.7 The Mediation Effect of Tourist Attitude on the Influence of the Perception of City Image on e-WOM Intention

Tourist attitude is able to mediate the effect of perception of city image on e-WOM intention. This solution addresses the issue of how tourist attitude influences the perception of city image, which in turn shapes e-WOM intention. This aligns with the theories of Eagly and Chaiken (1995) and Fishbein and Ajzen (1975), which suggest that perceptions do not directly shape intentions, but rather, perceptions must first shape attitude.

4.5.8 The Mediation Effect of Tourist Attitude on the Influence of the Perception of Social Media Content on Visit Intention

A tourist's attitude can shape their perception of social media content into their intention to visit. This also aligns with the perspectives of Eagly and Chaiken (1995) and Fishbein and Ajzen (1975), who argued that perceptions do not directly shape intentions. Perception of social media content must create positive tourist attitude in order to increase visiting intention.

4.5.9 The Mediation Effect of Tourist Attitude on the Influence of the Perception of City Image on Visit Intention

Tourist attitude has the potential to shape the perception of a city's image, which in turn encourages the intention to visit. This also aligns with the perspectives of Eagly and Chaiken (1995) and Fishbein and Ajzen (1975), who posit that perception does not directly influence intentions. Perceptions of city image can create a positive tourist attitude so as to increase visit intention. The results of this hypothesis test confirm the findings of

Doosti et al. (2021), which suggest that attitude towards the city and its image significantly influence visitors' intentions to visit. However, this study underscores the role of tourist attitude as mediators in the relationship between perceptions of city image and intentions to visit.

5. Conclusion

Perception of city image shapes tourist attitude more dominantly than perception of social media content. Furthermore, tourist attitude has a greater influence on e-WOM intention than it does on visit intention. E-WOM intentions more strongly shape visit intention than does tourist attitude.

Tourist attitude is more dominantly influenced by perception of city image because perception of city image is related to previous tourist experiences. A positive city image builds long-term trust in the destination. While social media can influence short-term decisions through visual appeal and promotion, city image can be a stronger long-term reference in influencing tourists' attitude, especially for those who have never visited a place.

On the other hand, although social media can draw attention through images or videos, the information it provides is often visual and limited to certain aspects. Meanwhile, tourists who have never been to a place need more detailed information about the facilities, safety, and overall attractiveness of the destination, which can be obtained through the perception of the overall city image.

E-WOM intention is more dominant in shaping visit intention compared to tourist attitude, even though respondents have never visited there. The reason for this is that e-WOM intentions encourage tourists to engage more with information about Garut's tourism industry. For tourists who have never been to Garut, e-WOM could become one of the main sources of information. They tend to look for

reviews, others' experiences, and recommendations through digital platforms such as social media, forums, or online reviews. The information provides an overview of destinations that they have yet to experience firsthand.

Furthermore, tourist attitude plays a more significant role in mediating the impact of city image perception on e-WOM intention. On the other hand, tourist attitude plays a more dominant role in shaping visit intentions by influencing perceptions of city image.

5.1 Managerial Implication

The findings suggest that the management of tourist destinations in Garut should foster a positive attitude among tourists and motivate them to actively engage in e-WOM activities related to tourism in Garut, thereby generating tourist visit intentions. This needs to be supported by strengthening perceptions of the image of Garut city as a tourist area and by designing more attractive social media content that can create increasingly positive perceptions.

Based on this, the manager of tourist destinations must develop and improve tourism promotion and marketing programs to foster positive attitude among tourists about tourism in Garut. The promotional program needs to emphasize the emotional side that highlights that travelling in Garut is fun and relaxing. In addition, for younger people, the TikTok platform can be utilized more deeply to stimulate positive tourist attitude from the emotional side, which can encourage tourists to share more in-depth information, thus creating a stronger affective attitude. The government and the management of tourist destinations can also increase the intensity of more interesting cultural festivals while maintaining order and security, thus building a positive perception of Garut as a safe, peaceful, and impressive city.

Garut's tourist destination managers can create or design programs or promotions on social media and online channels, primarily to encourage people to share information about their managed tourist destinations. In this case, a communication system is needed that can encourage people to provide information, comment, speak positively, and praise tourism in Garut so as to increase their involvement in online interactions, as well as strengthen their intention and arouse the desire of others to visit Garut. It can be done with ticket promotions or tour package bundling promotions, which require participants to actively spread information to others online and involve more intensive and targeted cooperation with influencers on social media.

5.2 Suggestion for Further Research

Based on the results of statistical testing, the value of R^2 for tourist attitude directly influencing tourists' visiting intentions remains relatively low, at 9%. Additionally, when tourists' attitudes mediate the effect of perception of city image on visiting intentions, the effect is only 14%. The effect of perception of city image on visit intention is only 14%. Therefore, in future research, we can investigate other variables that we believe have a stronger influence to boost tourists' intention to visit Garut. For instance, we can explore factors like social media marketing, integrated marketing communication, customer experiences, and other aspects of consumer behavior in tourism.

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