The Impact of Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) on the Purchasing Decisions of Tourism Consumers: A Case Study of a Sample of Algerian Tourists

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Abstract:

This study examined and analysed the effects of credibility, quality, positivity and negativity, ease of dissemination, and interactivity on tourism consumers' purchasing decisions. A sample of 184 local Algerian visitors was surveyed via social media using an electronic questionnaire. Statistics were used with SPSS 20 to analyse the data and assess the study's hypotheses.

The findings revealed that the E-WOM had a positive, varying effect on tourism consumers' purchasing decisions. Interactivity, credibility, quality, and positivity had similar effects, but the ease of dissemination had the greatest impact.

Keywords: Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM); credibility; quality; ease of dissemination; interactivity.

Jel Classification Codes: L83, M31, D12.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the digital age, electronic word-of-mouth (E-WOM) has significantly influenced consumer behaviour, particularly tourism. Despite its growing relevance, there is limited understanding of how E-WOM dimensions, such as ease of dissemination, interactivity, and credibility, affect tourists' decision-making processes.

This study aims to address this gap by exploring the role of E-WOM in shaping consumer behaviour in tourism, identifying key dimensions, and examining their impact on destination choice and satisfaction.

Research Problem: Based on those above, the main research question is: What is the impact of Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) on the purchasing decisions of tourism consumers?

From this primary question arise the following sub-questions:

- Does the credibility of E-WOM affect the purchasing decisions of tourism consumers?
- Does the quality of E-WOM influence the purchasing decisions of tourism consumers?
- Do positive and negative aspects of E-WOM affect the purchasing decisions of tourism consumers?
- Does E-WOM's ease of dissemination influence tourism consumers' purchasing decisions?

- Does the interactivity of E-WOM impact the purchasing decisions of tourism consumers?

Research Hypotheses: To answer the research problem, the following main hypothesis was formulated:

There is no statistically significant effect at the 0.05 significance level of E-WOM on the purchasing decisions of tourism consumers.

Sub-hypotheses:

- There is no statistically significant effect at the 0.05 significance level of the credibility of E-WOM on the purchasing decisions of tourism consumers.
- There is no statistically significant effect at the 0.05 significance level of E-WOM quality on the purchasing decisions of tourism consumers.
- There is no statistically significant effect at the 0.05 significance level of E-WOM's positive and negative aspects on the purchasing decisions of tourism consumers.
- There is no statistically significant effect at the 0.05 significance level of the ease of dissemination of E-WOM on the purchasing decisions of tourism consumers.
- There is no statistically significant effect at the 0.05 significance level of the interactivity of E-WOM on the purchasing decisions of tourism consumers.

Objectives of the Study: This study aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Analyze the concept of the E-WOM in the context of tourism and identify its various dimensions.
- Study the evolution of the concept of E-WOM and its increasing impact on tourism consumer behaviour.
- Examine the decision-making process for purchasing tourist goods.
- Measure the impact of E-WOM on purchasing decisions.
- Identify the dimensions with the greatest impact on purchase decisions.

Importance of the Study: Studying tourism consumer behaviour is crucial for tourism organisations, as it helps them understand clients' needs and desires, develop products and services that meet these needs, identify target markets, and respond effectively to market changes. Therefore, this study contributes to enhancing the organisation’s competitiveness and increasing its revenues.

Literature Review:

- The study by Alia Ben Hraoua, Ibrahim Belhimer, and Mouloud Hawas, titled *"The Effect of Electronic Word of Mouth on Shaping Attitudes Toward COVID-19 Vaccination Among Algerian Consumers in the City of Chlef,"* published in *Scientific Research Notebooks*, Vol. 10, Issue 02, 2022, aimed to explore the impact of (eWOM) on shaping attitudes toward vaccination against COVID-19. Utilising the dimensions of eWOM, the study revealed significant findings, most notably that eWOM has a statistically significant effect on attitude formation. Furthermore, the study found no statistically significant differences in attitude formation toward vaccination among Algerian consumers in Chlef.
- The study by Hakima Bouanani, titled *"The Impact of Electronic Word of Mouth on Customer Loyalty,"* published in *MECAS Notebooks*, Vol. 18, Issue 02, 2022, sought

to examine the influence of eWOM on customer loyalty by analysing its dimensions. To achieve this, an online questionnaire was distributed to 132 participants. The results indicated that eWOM significantly impacts customers through positive and negative comments. Additionally, the nature of eWOM proved influential in encouraging repeated purchases.

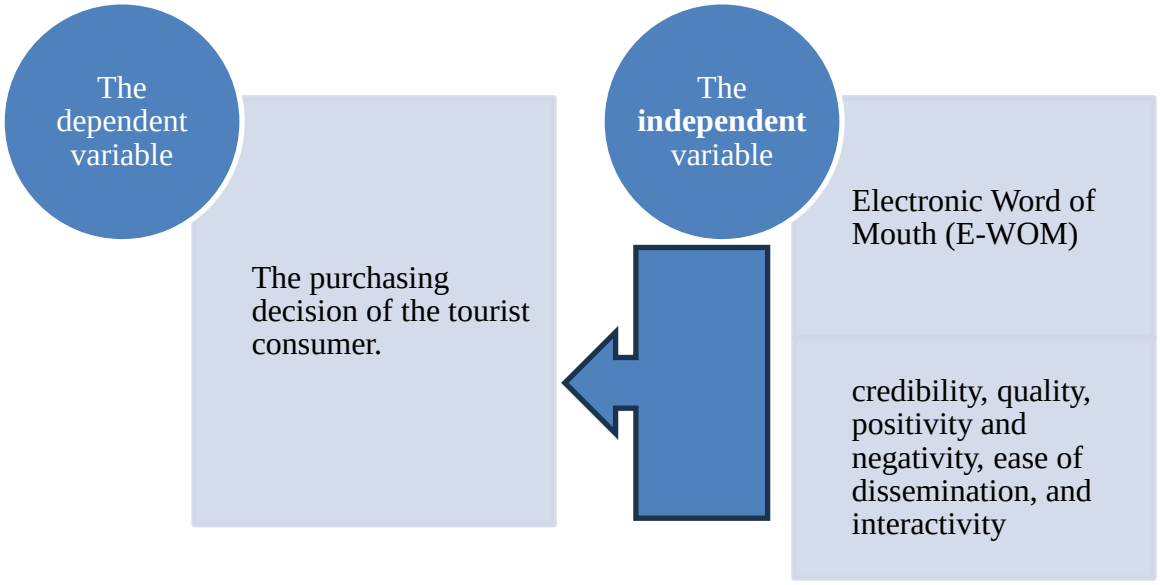
- The study by Anwar Bouima and Fateh Mjahdi, titled *"The Impact of Electronic Word of Mouth on Brand Equity Among Algerian Consumers Based on Their Trust in It (Case Study of Huawei Smartphones),"* published in *Economic Reforms and Integration in the Arab World Journal,* Vol. 15, Issue 01, 2021, aimed to assess the effect of eWOM on brand equity, with Algerian consumers' trust serving as a mediating variable. The findings demonstrated a robust impact of eWOM on the brand equity of Huawei smartphones among Algerian consumers. In contrast, trust in Huawei smartphones was found to exert an even stronger influence on brand equity.
- The study by Hamida Ben Yahia and Abdelmajid Ounis, titled *"The Role of Social Media in Influencing Consumers' Online Purchasing Decisions,"* published in *Economic Reforms and Integration in the Arab World Journal,* Vol. 14, Issue 01, 2020, aimed to identify the role of social media in influencing the various stages of online purchasing decisions. The results highlighted a statistically significant influence of social media usage on most stages of consumers' purchasing decisions, albeit with varying degrees of impact.

The methodology of the present study was informed by previous research to identify statistical measures suitable for its scope. Given that most of these studies were conducted within the Algerian cultural context, they provide a deeper understanding of the influence of eWOM on Algerian consumers. The study specifically concentrated on prior research's most frequently analysed eWOM dimensions.

Study Distinctions: This study distinguishes itself by focusing on the tourism sector, a field particularly sensitive to online recommendations and reviews. It further analysed the impact of each eWOM dimension individually, identifying the most influential ones. This approach aims to broaden the understanding of how eWOM shapes consumer behaviour, particularly in the tourism sector.

Methodology of the Study: This study adopts a descriptive-analytical approach, which is most suitable for examining the relationship between (E-WOM) and tourism purchasing decisions. Based on the principles of this approach, the first stage involves presenting the concepts related to the study's variables. Subsequently, relevant and accurate data were collected through an electronic questionnaire distributed across social media platforms. These data were then analysed using SPSS 20 software to assess the impact of the independent variable (E-WOM) on the dependent variable (purchase decision) and to test the research hypotheses. The questionnaire was designed to gather data on the various dimensions of E-WOM and its effect on the stages of tourism purchasing decision-making. Each variable was addressed in a separate section of the questionnaire, in addition to a section on the respondent's data. The survey was distributed across various age groups and social classes via social media platforms.

Fig.1. Study Model



Source: Created by the researchers.

2. Conceptual Framework of the Study Variables:

2.1. Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM):

2.1.1. Definition of Electronic Word of Mouth:

Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) definitions vary among researchers. Some of the most notable definitions include the following:

E-WOM is also defined as verbal or nonverbal interactions whose effectiveness depends on the nature of the questions posed by the information recipient and the provider and the type, quality, and persuasive techniques used, whether positive or negative. Subsequently, these interactions are disseminated across social media platforms. (Bouima & Mjahidi, 2021, p. 204)

It is " the online exchange of information and opinions about products or services between consumers. E-WOM differs from traditional word of mouth because it spreads quickly and can reach a broader audience, increasing its impact on consumers' purchasing decisions." (Cheung, Lee, & Jin, 2019)

It is also defined as " a form of word-of-mouth communication using internet applications, with social media platforms being one of the electronic channels that allow us to track word-of-mouth. It is a personal, informal communication between consumers, often individuals, through social media platforms to exchange and disseminate information in general and product-related information in particular."

It is also defined as: "The flow of information among participants via an electronic network, which differs in nature from that which occurs in natural settings, particularly in terms of the strength of the connection between participants and the level of credibility." (Sardawi & Mutairi, 2017, p. 4)

It is finally defined as: "A means of sharing both negative and positive opinions between consumers about products, brands, or companies via the internet."

From this, it follows that "(eWOM) is the process of exchanging information, opinions, and ideas about products, services, or companies among individuals through various electronic means, such as social media platforms, forums, blogs, and review sites. eWOM is an informal and effective form of social communication where consumers can directly share their experiences and opinions, significantly influencing consumer behaviour and purchase decisions. eWOM differs from traditional word of mouth in its speed, widespread reach, and ability to access a broader audience, making it a powerful marketing tool."

2.1.2. Dimensions of Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM)

eWOM consists of five dimensions:

- **Credibility**: This is one of the most important dimensions of eWOM, based on trust and experience. It relies on the truthfulness of the source's information, ensuring that it is not misleading, deceptive, or biased. The source of the eWOM must provide reliable information.(Hadef, 2022, p. 337)
- **Quality**: The persuasive power of eWOM is reflected in the quality of the comments. Consumers rely on a set of conditions and criteria to make purchasing decisions based on the quality of the information received. (Filieri, Alguezaui, & McLeay, 2021)
- **Positive and Negative eWOM**: Positive eWOM takes the form of recommendations from others to purchase a product or praise a brand based on their positive experience with it. In contrast, negative eWOM warns others about not buying or engaging with a brand. Social influence plays a significant role in how eWOM impacts purchasing decisions. Tourists tend to rely more on recommendations from friends and family than strangers. However, positive reviews from a large group of consumers can be highly influential, reinforcing the purchase decision. (Fan & Miao, 2019)
- **Ease of Dissemination**: The ease and speed of spreading eWOM help bridge the gap between organisations and their customers, facilitating direct and interactive communication, often involving new or potential customers. The ease of disseminating eWOM also accelerates transaction processes with clients anywhere. A relevant case study of the "Ease of Dissemination" can be found in the 2014 ALS Ice Bucket Challenge. This viral campaign, designed to raise awareness for ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis), leveraged social media to spread rapidly. The simplicity of the challenge, coupled with easy-to-share video content, allowed it to spread across platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Within a few weeks, the campaign raised over $115 million in donations for ALS research, demonstrating the power of easy dissemination of a message through eWOM. According to a study by Nielsen (2015), 92% of consumers trust recommendations from friends and family over any other form of advertising. The ease with which positive or negative reviews can be shared on social platforms has amplified word-of-mouth effects. For instance, brands that use social media channels effectively see a 45% increase in

engagement, with content being more likely to spread if it's easy for users to share or re-post. (Hadef, 2022, p. 337)

- **Interactivity**: Psychologists have affirmed that the attractiveness of individuals interacting with each other is based on perceived similarities in shared experiences, direct communication, and other factors. In the digital environment, research evidence suggests that it is possible to develop personal and interactive relationships among individuals within this virtual space. Although participants interact in a virtual environment and do not see each other in the real world, they form impressions, attitudes, and judgments about products, services, brands, and other matters based on the cues they receive through their interaction. A prime example of interactivity in eWOM is the influence of online product reviews on platforms such as Amazon and TripAdvisor. Consumers frequently interact with reviews by commenting, asking questions, and rating the helpfulness of other users' reviews. This interaction fosters community and trust, leading to more informed purchasing decisions. For instance, TripAdvisor's platform allows users to interact with reviews and share their travel experiences, influencing prospective travellers' decision-making. In a 2020 survey by BrightLocal, 79% of consumers say that they trust online reviews as much as personal recommendations, with 72% saying that they trust businesses with positive reviews. This trust is fostered by the interactivity within the review platforms, where users can directly engage with content and interact with companies or other consumers.(Hadef, 2022, p. 337)

2.2. Consumer Purchase Decision in Tourism:

2.2.1. Definition of Tourist Consumer Behavior:

Tourist consumer behaviour is defined as the set of mental and behavioural processes that an individual undergoes, starting from the formation of the desire to travel and continuing through the evaluation of the travel experience. A range of internal and external factors shapes this behaviour. It encompasses a variety of actions and decisions the individual makes in selecting travel destinations, making bookings, consuming services, and evaluating experiences to maximise satisfaction and enjoyment during the tourism experience. The study of tourist consumer behaviour is considered the cornerstone of success for any tourism organisation, as it enables the discovery of new marketing opportunities and the precise identification of target segments. Organisations can develop products and services that meet their expectations and provide personalised travel experiences by gaining a deep understanding of customer needs and desires. Furthermore, this research aids in responding swiftly to shifts in consumer behaviour and developing flexible marketing strategies that can influence their attitudes. Therefore, studying consumer behaviour enhances the organisation's competitive advantage, increases customer loyalty, and achieves sustainable growth. (Kafi, 2021, p. 96)

2.2.2. Factors Influencing Tourist Purchase Decisions

A tourist does not make their decision randomly; rather, it is influenced by a complex interplay of factors, which can be classified as follows (McIntosh, Goeldner, & Pritchard, 2020)

- **Psychological Factors**: Internal motivations that drive individuals to travel, such as the desire for relaxation, adventure, learning, or self-discovery. Personality traits and beliefs also play a crucial role in shaping these motivations.
- **Social Factors**: Family, friends, and society influence travel decisions. Individuals often lean toward destinations recommended by those close to them.
- **Cultural Factors**: The values, traditions, and cultural beliefs that shape an individual's view of travel and impact their choice of destinations.
- **Economic Factors**: Income, costs, and purchasing power, which determine the type of vacations a tourist can afford.
- **Geographical Factors**: Distance, climate, and terrain, which affect the ease of access to the destination and the types of activities that can be engaged in.
- **Marketing Factors**: Advertising, promotions, and special offers provided by tourism companies play a significant role in influencing purchase decisions.

2.2.3. Stages of the Tourist Purchase Decision Process

A tourist goes through several stages before making a final decision regarding their travel destination (Soum & Mahmoudi, 2021, p. 354)

- **Recognizing the Need**: The tourist must break the routine, relax, or explore new places.
- **Information Search**: The tourist begins gathering information about various destinations through the internet, travel brochures, or recommendations from friends and family.
- **Evaluating Alternatives**: The tourist compares different destinations based on criteria such as cost, quality, and available activities.
- **Making the Decision**: The tourist selects the destination that best satisfies their needs and desires.
- **Post-Purchase Evaluation**: Tourists evaluate their experience after the trip, influencing future travel decisions.

2.3. The Impact of Virtual Communities on Tourist Consumer Behavior:

The digital revolution has fundamentally altered the dynamics of the tourism industry. The advent of the internet and social media has empowered consumers to engage more interactively than ever, transforming the tourist from a mere recipient of marketing information to an active participant in shaping their travel experience. Virtual communities, as digital platforms that unite individuals around shared interests, profoundly influence consumer behaviour, particularly in tourism. These communities allow travellers to share their experiences, receive trusted recommendations, and sway public opinion regarding travel destinations. (Hajim & Fawzi, 2009, p. 184)

Tourism companies have come to recognise the significance of these platforms and have begun leveraging them to achieve their marketing objectives by actively engaging in these communities, establishing their digital groups, and analysing the data collected. By doing so, they gain deeper insights into customer needs, enabling them to refine and tailor their products and services to meet these demands. Despite the substantial advantages virtual

communities offer, they also present several business challenges. Among the most critical challenges are:

- Digital Reputation Management: The spread of misinformation and rumours, difficulty moderating discussions, and the need for prompt responses to criticism.
- Intense Competition: The challenge of reaching the target audience, outpacing competitors, and keeping up with continuous developments in the industry.
- Performance Measurement: It is difficult to assess the return on investment in these communities and identify the correct performance metrics.
- Maintaining Credibility: Ensuring transparent customer interactions and avoiding exaggerated marketing claims.

To overcome these challenges, companies must develop a clear strategy for engaging with virtual communities, train staff to manage these interactions effectively, utilise appropriate data analysis tools, and collaborate with industry influencers.

3. The Applied Framework of the Impact of E-WOM on the Tourist Consumer's Purchase Decision

3.1. Study Population and Sample:

The study population represents the target group we aim to examine and analyse, and it serves as the primary data source upon which we will base our findings. The study population consists of consumers of tourism services across the national territory. The sample is a subset of the study population chosen to represent it. A simple random sampling technique was utilised to select the sample elements. This method ensures that individuals are chosen randomly, with no individual being favoured over another. The random selection of the sample contributes to the reliability of the research and its representativeness, enhancing the generalizability of the results to the entire population. Accordingly, 200 questionnaires were distributed, 184 of which were returned and deemed suitable for statistical analysis.

3.2. Study Tool:

This study relied on the questionnaire tool, which formulated the questions clearly and precisely. The questionnaire comprised two parts: an introduction and three sections designed to collect relevant data. The first section contained statements about measuring the independent variable (E-WOM) with its five dimensions (credibility, quality, positivity and negativity, ease of circulation, and interactivity). The second section included statements related to measuring the dependent variable (tourism purchase decision), consisting of thirteen (13) statements. The third section focused on personal information, crucial for understanding the sample's characteristics and assessing their influence on the study's results (gender, age group, educational level, and average daily use of the internet and social media).

3.3. Statistical Analysis Methods:

3.3.1. Test of Reliability of the Tool:

This analysis indicates the tool's reliability in measuring the study variables. To test the reliability of the questionnaire items, we use one of the reliability coefficients, specifically Cronbach's Alpha. The acceptable minimum value for this coefficient ranges

between 0.5 and 0.6, and the higher the value, the greater the reliability of the measurement tool. The following table presents the results:

Table 1. Test of Tool Reliability

Study Variables	Dimensions	Number of Statements	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient
E-WOM	Credibility	5	0.575
	Quality	5	0.686
	Positivity & Negativity	5	0.681
	Ease of Circulation	5	0.781
	Interactivity	5	0.684
Purchase Decision		13	0.836
Questionnaire Items		38	0.892

Source: Created by the researchers based on SPSS outputs.

- Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for E-WOM dimensions was 0.681, considered acceptable. This indicates that the responses are reliable, suggesting that the items related to E-WOM dimensions exhibit adequate stability.
- The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for the purchase decision-making stages variable was 0.836, signifying that the items of this variable exhibit high credibility, thus indicating the reliability of the questionnaire and the feasibility of conducting the study.
- The overall reliability coefficient for the dimensions of E-WOM and the stages of the tourist purchase decision was 0.892, indicating a high degree of consistency and confidence between the content of the first part (dimensions of E-WOM) and the second part (stages of the tourist purchase decision).

3.3.2. Test of Validity of the Tool

Internal Consistency Validity for the First Dimension of E-WOM

Table 2. Pearson Correlation Coefficients for the E-WOM Items

Dimensions	Statement Number	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	Significance Level (sig)
Credibility	**01**	**0.387****	**0.000**
	02	**0.407****	**0.000**
	03	**0.245****	**0.001**
	04	**0.554****	**0.000**
	05	**0.495****	**0.000**
Quality	**06**	**0.404****	**0.000**
	07	**0.425****	**0.000**
	08	**0.489****	**0.000**
	09	**0.397****	**0.000**
	10	**0.499****	**0.000**
Positivity & Negativity	**11**	**0.480****	**0.000**
	12	**0.513****	**0.000**
	13	**0.573****	**0.000**
	14	**0.452****	**0.000**
	15	**0.433****	**0.000**

Ease of Circulation	**16**	**0.454****	**0.000**
	17	**0.505****	**0.000**
	18	**0.529****	**0.000**
	19	**0.514****	**0.000**
	20	**0.497****	**0.000**
Interactivity	**21**	**0.521****	**0.000**
	22	**0.519****	**0.000**
	23	**0.465****	**0.000**
	24	**0.560****	**0.000**
	25	**0.391****	**0.000**

Source: Created by the researchers based on SPSS outputs.

The table presents the Pearson correlation coefficients between each item of the first dimension (E-WOM) and the overall average of its statements. The correlation coefficients range between 0.245 and 0.573. All are statistically significant at the 0.05 significance level, as the p-values for each item are less than 0.05. Therefore, the items of this dimension are considered valid for the purpose they were designed to measure.

Internal Consistency Validity for the Second Dimension of Tourist Purchase Decision

Table 3. Pearson Correlation Coefficients for the Tourist Purchase Decision Items

Statement Number	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	Significance Level (sig)
01	**0.480****	**0.000**
02	**0.601****	**0.000**
03	**0.605****	**0.000**
04	**0.630****	**0.000**
05	**0.633****	**0.000**
06	**0.579****	**0.000**
07	**0.711****	**0.000**
08	**0.682****	**0.000**
09	**0.568****	**0.000**
10	**0.548****	**0.000**
11	**0.522****	**0.000**
12	**0.567****	**0.000**
13	**0.482****	**0.000**

Source: Created by the researchers based on SPSS outputs.

The table illustrates the Pearson correlation coefficients between each item of the second dimension (tourist purchase decision) and the overall average of its statements. The correlation coefficients range from 0.480 to 0.711, all of which are statistically significant at the 0.05 level, as the significance level for each item is less than 0.05. Thus, the items of this dimension are considered valid for the measurement they were designed to assess.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Responses of Sample Members to the Statements Related to the Dimensions of E-WOM:

Table 4. Responses of Sample Members Regarding the Credibility Dimension E-WOM

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank	Agreement Level
Statement 01	**5**	**4**	**13**	**62**	**100**	**4.347**	**0.910**		
	2.7%	**2.2%**	**7.1%**	**33.7%**	**54.3%**				

Statement 02	**21**	**33**	**56**	**48**	**26**	**3.135**	**1.204**	**1**	**Strongly Agree**
	11.4%	**17.9%**	**30.4%**	**26.1%**	**14.1%**				
Statement 03	**11**	**18**	**24**	**61**	**70**	**3.875**	**1.196**	**5**	**Neutral**
	6%	**9.8%**	**13%**	**33.2%**	**38%**				
Statement 04	**23**	**28**	**41**	**46**	**46**	**3.347**	**1.338**	**2**	**Agree**
	12.5%	**15.2%**	**22.3%**	**25%**	**25%**				
Statement 05	**11**	**28**	**53**	**69**	**23**	**3.353**	**1.071**	**4**	**Neutral**
	6%	**15.2%**	**28.8%**	**37.5%**	**12.5%**				
Overall, for the Credibility Dimension of Electronic Mouth	**3.612**	**0.701**		Agree				3	Neutral
									Agree

Source: Created by the researchers based on SPSS outputs.

The overall mean for the credibility dimension of E-WOM is 3.612, with a standard deviation of 0.701. These results suggest that the sample members' general tendency toward E-WOM's credibility was toward "agreement." This indicates that consumers of tourism services place credibility on E-WOM, perceiving it as a reliable source of information.

Table 5. Responses of Sample Members Regarding the Quality Dimension of E-WOM

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank	Agreement Level
Statement 01	**6**	**17**	**16**	**73**	**72**	**4.021**	**1.071**	**1**	**Agree**
	3.3%	**9.2%**	**8.7%**	**39.7%**	**39.1%**				
Statement 02	**20**	**35**	**59**	**54**	**16**	**3.059**	**1.126**	**5**	**Neutral**
	10.9%	**19%**	**32.1%**	**29.3%**	**8.7%**				
Statement 03	**6**	**25**	**53**	**74**	**26**	**3.483**	**1.002**	**2**	**Agree**
	3.3%	**13.6%**	**28.8%**	**40.2%**	**14.1%**				
Statement 04	**9**	**40**	**48**	**61**	**26**	**3.298**	**1.107**	**3**	**Neutral**
	4.9%	**21.7%**	**26.1%**	**33.2%**	**14.1%**				
Statement 05	**13**	**26**	**61**	**64**	**20**	**3.282**	**1.064**	**4**	**Neutral**
	7.1%	**14.1%**	**33.2%**	**34.8%**	**10.9%**				
Overall, the Quality Dimension of Electronic Mouth						**3.429**	**0.713**		**Agree**

Source: Created by the researchers based on SPSS outputs.

The overall mean for the quality dimension of E-WOM is 3.429, with a standard deviation of 0.713. These results indicate a general trend of agreement among the sample members. Statements 02, 04, and 05 received "Neutral" responses, while statements 01 and 03 were met with "Agreement." This suggests that tourism consumers perceive a certain level of quality in E-WOM.

Table 6. Responses of Sample Members Regarding the Positive and Negative Dimensions of E-WOM

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank	Agreement Level
Statement 01	**7**	**7**	**20**	**66**	**84**	**4.157**	**1.020**	**2**	**Agree**

	3.8%	3.8%	10.9%	35.9%	45.7%				
Statement 02	3	5	22	72	82	4.222	0.880	1	Strongly Agree
	1.6%	2.7%	12%	39.1%	44.6%				
Statement 03	1	13	26	72	72	4.092	0.927	3	Agree
	0.5%	7.1%	14.1%	39.1%	39.1%				
Statement 04	5	17	45	58	59	3.809	1.072	4	Agree
	2.7%	9.2%	24.5%	31.5%	32.1%				
Statement 05	7	32	37	54	54	3.630	1.184	5	Agree
	3.8%	17.4%	20.1%	29.3%	29.3%				
Overall, the Positive and Negative Dimension of Electronic Mouth						3.982	0.674		Agree

Source: Created by the researchers based on SPSS outputs.

The overall mean for E-WOM's positive and negative dimensions is 3.982, with a standard deviation of 0.674. This indicates a general agreement trend among the sample members regarding E-WOM 's positive and negative impacts. Specifically:

- **Statement 01** has a mean of 4.157 and a standard deviation of 1.020, indicating a moderate to strong agreement from respondents.
- **Statements 02 and 03** have mean values of 4.222 and 4.092, with standard deviations of 0.880 and 0.927, respectively, indicating strong agreement ("Strongly Agree" and "Agree").
- **Statements 04 and 05** have mean values of 3.809 and 3.630, with standard deviations of 1.072 and 1.184, respectively, indicating agreement.

These findings suggest that respondents generally agree on E-WOM 's positive and negative impacts on their purchasing behaviour, with a stronger emphasis on the positive effects.

Table 7. Responses of Sample Members Regarding the Ease of Consumption of E-WOM

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank	Agreement Level
Statement 01	1	7	19	88	69	4.179	0.806	5	Agree
	0.5%	3.8%	10.3%	47.8%	37.5%				
Statement 02	3	3	14	77	87	4.315	0.815	3	Strongly Agree
	1.6%	1.6%	7.6%	41.8%	47.3%				
Statement 03	3	10	9	65	97	4.320	0.917	2	Strongly Agree
	1.6%	5.4%	4.9%	35.3%	52.7%				
Statement 04	4	2	4	55	119	4.538	0.788	1	Strongly Agree
	2.2%	1.1%	2.2%	29.9%	64.7%				
Statement 05	4	6	14	74	86	4.260	0.897	4	Strongly Agree
	2.2%	3.3%	7.6%	40.2%	46.7%				
Overall, for the Ease of Consumption of Electronic Mouth						4.322	0.621		Strongly Agree

Source: Created by the researchers based on SPSS outputs.

The overall mean for E-WOM's ease of consumption dimension is 4.322, with a standard deviation of 0.621, indicating strong agreement ("Strongly Agree") among the sample members. The results show that most of the statements in this dimension received high agreement levels:

- **Statement 01** has a mean of 4.179 and a standard deviation of 0.806, indicating a strong agreement ("Agree").
- **Statements 02, 03, 04, and 05** have mean values ranging from 4.260 to 4.538, with standard deviations ranging from 0.788 to 0.917, all indicating strong agreement ("Strongly Agree").

These results suggest that the sample members perceive E-WOM as easy to consume and understand, highlighting its accessibility and effectiveness for the participants.

Table 8. Responses of Sample Members Regarding the Interactivity of E-WOM

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank	Agreement Level
Statement 01	2	11	14	71	86	4.239	0.909	1	Strongly Agree
	1.1%	6%	7.6%	38.6%	46.7%				
Statement 02	17	26	45	59	37	3.396	1.219	4	Neutral
	9.2%	14.1%	24.5%	32.1%	20.1%				
Statement 03	17	22	31	80	34	3.505	1.187	2	Agree
	9.2%	12%	16.8%	43.5%	18.5%				
Statement 04	23	32	43	45	41	3.266	1.322	5	Neutral
	12.5%	17.4%	23.4%	24.5%	22.3%				
Statement 05	25	28	37	36	58	3.402	1.414	3	Agree
	13.6%	15.2%	20.1%	19.6%	31.5%				
Overall, the Interactivity of Electronic Mouth						3.562	0.817		Agree

Source: Created by the researchers based on SPSS outputs.

The overall mean for the interactivity dimension of E-WOM is **3.562**, with a standard deviation of **0.817**, indicating general agreement among the sample members.

Key Findings:

- **Statement 01** (regarding the clear and direct nature of E-WOM) has the highest mean value of **4.239** with a standard deviation of **0.909**, indicating strong agreement ("Strongly Agree").
- **Statement 02**, on the other hand, was rated lower with a mean of **3.396** and was classified as "Neutral".
- **Statements 03, 05, and others** generally show a moderate level of agreement with the dimension of interactivity.

This suggests that while most participants agree that E-WOM is interactive, the level of interactivity varies, with some statements receiving stronger agreement and others remaining neutral.

Table 9. Responses of Sample Members Regarding the Tourist Purchasing Decision-Making Process

Statement	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**	**Rank**	**Agreement Level**
Statement 01	5	8	52	75	44	3.788	0.948	10	Agree
	2.7%	4.3%	28.3%	40.8%	23.9%				
Statement 02	5	14	39	86	40	3.771	0.965	11	Agree
	2.7%	7.6%	21.2%	46.7%	21.7%				
Statement 03	0	9	25	87	63	4.108	0.815	4	Agree
	0%	4.9%	13.6%	47.3%	34.2%				

Statement 04	6	14	36	79	49	3.820	1.016	8	Agree
	3.3%	7.6%	19.6%	42.9%	26.6%				
Statement 05	1	10	11	57	105	4.385	0.867	1	Strongly Agree
	0.5%	5.4%	6%	31%	57.1%				
Statement 06	1	9	24	68	82	4.201	0.885	2	Strongly Agree
	0.5%	4.9%	13%	37%	44.6%				
Statement 07	4	10	20	81	69	4.092	0.945	5	Agree
	2.2%	5.4%	10.9%	44%	37.5%				
Statement 08	9	20	29	67	59	3.798	1.148	9	Agree
	4.9%	10.9%	15.8%	36.4%	32.1%				
Statement 09	2	10	33	75	64	4.027	0.919	6	Agree
	1.1%	5.4%	17.9%	40.8%	34.8%				
Statement 10	5	13	39	77	51	3.858	0.976	7	Agree
	2.2%	7.1%	21.2%	41.8%	27.7%				
Statement 11	19	23	35	65	42	3.478	1.258	12	Agree
	10.3%	12.5%	19%	35.3%	22.8%				
Statement 12	2	11	22	76	73	4.125	0.917	3	Agree
	1.1%	6%	12%	41.3%	39.7%				
Statement 13	26	21	47	50	40	3.309	1.316	13	Neutral
	14.1%	11.4%	25.5%	27.2%	21.7%				
Overall, for the Tourist Purchasing Decision-Making Process						**3.905**	**0.580**		**Agree**

Source: Created by the researchers based on SPSS outputs.

Key Findings:

- **Statement 05** ("I always prefer acquiring tourism services with clear and explicit information about them") has the highest mean value of **4.385**, indicating **Strong Agreement**.
- **Statement 06** ("I always look for the best alternatives for the services I intend to acquire") also shows a high level of agreement with a mean of **4.201**, classified as **Strongly Agree**.
- **Statement 13** ("I am neutral about sharing my tourism experiences on social media") has the lowest mean of **3.309**, indicating **Neutral** agreement.

The overall mean for the tourist purchasing decision-making process is **3.905,** with a standard deviation of **0.580**, indicating general agreement. The findings suggest that consumers are more engaged in information gathering and evaluating alternatives than sharing their tourism experiences online.

Table 10. Evaluation of the Dimensions of E-WOM and Tourist Purchasing Decision

Agreement Level	Standard Deviation	Mean	Dimensions	Rank
Agree	0.701	3.612	Credibility	1
Agree	0.713	3.429	Quality	2
Agree	0.674	3.982	Positivity and Negativity	3
Strongly Agree	0.621	4.322	Ease of Dissemination	4
Agree	0.819	3.562	Interactivity	5
Agree	0.492	3.781	E-WOM Dimensions	6
Agree	0.580	3.905	Tourist Purchasing Decision	7

Source: Created by the researchers based on SPSS outputs.

Key Findings:

- **Ease of Dissemination** ranks first among the E-WOM dimensions, with a mean of **4.322** and **Strongly Agree**.
- **Positivity and Negativity** follow with a mean of **3.982**, showing **Agreement**.
- **Credibility** is the third-ranked dimension, with a mean of **3.612**, and **Agreement**.
- **Interactivity** and **Quality** come next, with means of **3.562** and **3.429**, respectively, classified under the **Agreement**.
- The **Tourist Purchasing Decision** dimension has a mean of **3.905**, indicating **Agreement**.

The results show that the dimension of **Ease of Dissemination** holds the highest importance for the sample members, with a mean value of **4.322**, followed by **Positivity and Negativity**. Most of the other dimensions have closely aligned mean values, suggesting that they are perceived as similarly important. The **Ease of Dissemination** stands out as the most influential dimension of E-WOM from the perspective of the sample group. This indicates that ease of spreading and sharing word of mouth is crucial in the effectiveness of E-WOM and consumer decision-making in tourism.

5. EXPERIMENTAL

Testing the Effect of the Dimensions of E-WOM (Credibility, Quality, Positivity and Negativity, Ease of Dissemination, Interactivity) on Tourist Purchasing Decision

Table 11. Testing the Distribution of Sample Data

Variables	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Value	Significance Level
E-WOM	0.56	0.200
Tourist Purchasing Decision	0.062	0.081

Source: Created by the researchers based on SPSS outputs.

The results show that the sample data follows a normal distribution, with greater significance levels than 0.05. This suggests that parametric tests can be used for further analysis.

Table 12. Results of Analyzing the Effect of E-WOM Dimensions on Tourist Purchasing Decision

Variable	Standard Error (A)	B (Coefficient)	Significance Level	Hypothesis Validity
Constant	0.939	0.264	0.000	Reject Null Hypothesis
Credibility (X1)	0.067	0.052	0.081	0.006
Quality (X2)	0.053	0.034	0.067	0.004
Positivity and Negativity (X3)	0.255	0.061	0.296	0.000
Ease of Dissemination (X4)	0.276	0.063	0.295	0.000
Interactivity (X5)	0.138	0.046	0.195	0.003

Source: Created by the researchers based on SPSS outputs.

- The results show that all dimensions of **E-WOM** (Credibility, Quality, Positivity and Negativity, Ease of Dissemination, and Interactivity) have **statistically significant coefficients (B)** with significance levels less than 0.05. This indicates that these dimensions influence the **Tourist Purchasing Decision**.

- The standard error values are smaller than the coefficients (B) for each variable, supporting the strength of the statistical significance and the influence of these dimensions on the purchasing decision.

As all hypotheses are rejected, we accept the alternative hypotheses that each E-WOM dimension significantly affects tourist purchasing decisions: **Credibility**, **Quality**, **Positivity and Negativity**, **Ease of Dissemination**, and **Interactivity**.

This leads to the multiple regression equation:

Y=0.939+0.067X1+0.053X2+0.255X3+0.276X4+0.138X5Y = 0.939 + 0.067X_1 + 0.053X_2 + 0.255X_3 + 0.276X_4 + 0.138X_5Y=0.939+0.067X1+0.053X2+0.255X3 +0.276X4+0.138X5

Where:

- **Y** represents the Tourist Purchasing Decision.
- **X1**: Credibility
- **X2**: Quality
- **X3**: Positivity and Negativity
- **X4**: Ease of Dissemination
- **X5**: Interactivity

This equation suggests that all E-WOM dimensions significantly impact the tourist purchasing decision. The coefficients indicate the strength of each dimension's effect, with **Ease of Dissemination** and **Positivity and Negativity** having the largest influence.

Testing the Main Hypothesis

The study hypothesises that (eWOM) does not affect tourist purchasing decisions.

Table 13. Results of Analyzing the Effect of eWOM Dimensions on Tourist Purchasing Decision

Statement	Correlation (R)	Determination Coefficient (R^2)	Regression Coefficient	F Calculated	T	Significance Level (SIG)
Effect of eWOM	0.620	0.385	1.141	113.832	10.679	0.000

Source: Created by the researcher based on SPSS outputs.

- **Correlation (R)**: The correlation between (eWOM) and tourist purchasing decisions is 0.620. This indicates a **moderate to strong positive relationship** between eWOM and the decision-making process.
- **Determination Coefficient (R^2)**: The value of **0.385** indicates that **38.5%** of the variance in tourist purchasing decisions can be explained by eWOM, which means that the dimensions of eWOM (including ease of dissemination) have a significant explanatory power over the purchasing decisions.
- **Regression Coefficient**: The regression coefficient is **1.141**, indicating the change in the tourist purchasing decision for each unit change in eWOM.
- **F Calculated (F = 113.832)**: The F-statistic shows the regression model's overall significance. A high value of F indicates that the model is statistically significant.
- **T Value and Significance Level (SIG = 0.000)**: The T-value is **10.679**, and the significance level is **0.000**, which is less than 0.05, indicating that the relationship between eWOM and tourist purchasing decisions is **statistically significant**.

We reject the null hypothesis since the significance level (SIG) is 0.000, less than 0.05. This means that E-WOM has a statistically significant effect on tourist purchasing decisions.
Based on the regression results, the equation for the model is:
Y=1.141+0.731XY = 1.141 + 0.731XY=1.141+0.731X
Where:

- **Y** is the tourist purchasing decision,
- **X** is the (eWOM).

This equation confirms that eWOM positively influences the tourist purchasing decision, with a moderate to strong relationship (correlation of 0.620).

5. CONCLUSION

E-WOM plays a pivotal role in influencing tourist purchase decisions by enhancing trust, providing detailed and accurate information promptly and in appropriate quantities, and helping to mitigate purchase risks. Thus, studying the impact of eWOM on purchase decisions is paramount for both institutions and individuals.
Each dimension of eWOM—credibility, quality, positivity and negativity, ease of exchange, and interactivity—affects the tourism purchase decision to varying degrees of strength. Among these, ease of exchange, positivity, and negativity had the most significant impact, followed by interactivity, which demonstrated moderate to strong influence. The dimensions of credibility and quality, however, exhibited the least effect on tourism purchase decisions among the sample group.

Recommendations of the Study:

- Using E-WOM has become essential, as it provides tourists with a more comprehensive understanding of the nature of services offered.
- Not all reviews on social media platforms can be considered reliable or reflective of personal opinions; some may be paid advertisements.
- E-WOM substantially impacts tourism purchase decisions; therefore, reviewers and influencers must describe tourism services with utmost credibility and quality.
- It is important to emphasise that decisions should not be made based on a single aspect of E-WOM but on a holistic evaluation.

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7. Appendices:

Ministry of Education and Scientific Research

The first axis: Terminology Related to Electronic word of mouth.

Dimension	***Statements***	***Strongly agree***	***Agree***	***Neutral***	***Disagree***	***Strongly disagree***
Reliability	Tourists share their experiences about touristic destinations online.					
	Individuals who share reviews about tourist destinations are a trusted source for me.					
	The reputation of social media influencers affects their credibility.					
	The information I get from online user reviews is more credible than travel agency information.					
	I believe that online reviews have a high level of credibility.					
Quality	It is easy to access and obtain information about tourism services online.					
	I think the information I get from social media is accurate and factual.					
	I think the information I get from social media is understandable and clear.					
	The opinions of commenters meet my various requirements for gathering information.					
	The online comments are relevant to the time in which they were posted.					
Positive and negative feedback	Positive and negative feedback influences my purchasing decisions.					
	Positive feedback motivates me to make a purchase.					
	Positive feedback motivates me to look for the agency's complementary services.					
	Contradictory feedback makes me withdraw from the purchase decision.					

	Negative comments influence my purchasing decisions, even if they are few.					
Access to information	Electronic information is shared and exchanged among individuals through websites.					
	Social media platforms facilitate the search for information about tourism services.					
	Photos and videos enhance the clarity and understanding of the commentators' ideas.					
	The Internet helps people obtain information quickly.					
	Timely access to information contributes to my purchasing decision-making process.					
Interactivity	I believe that websites contribute to dialogue and exchanging opinions about tourism services.					
	I interact with user comments about tourism services.					
	I leave my questions in the comments if there is insufficient information in the reviews.					
	In case of dissatisfaction with the service, I share my dissatisfaction in the comments.					
	In case of severe dissatisfaction with the service, I file a complaint on the agency's page.					

The second axis: Phrases related to the tourism purchasing decision.

Dimension	***Statements***	***Strongly agree***	***Agree***	***Neutral***	***Disagree***	***Strongly disagree***
	The idea of buying tourism services came based on user talk on social media.					
	The positive feedback I've read about tourism services on social media has made me want to try them**.**					
	Online reviews of tourism consumers who have tried tourism services are an important source of information before purchasing.					
	I always take into account the online opinions of others when making tourism purchasing decisions.					
	I always prefer to buy tourism services about which I have clear and explicit information.					
	I always look for the best alternatives to the services I intend to purchase.					
	Before purchasing, I compare the number of positive and negative comments about tourist services.					
	Once I have confirmed the validity of the reviews, I am ready to finalise the purchase.					
	I make a purchase decision based on the opinions of actual users.					
	I share my experience and expertise with social media users.					

	If the tourist services fulfil my needs, I will make it one of my first options next time.					
	I've found that my content plays a crucial role in highlighting emerging tourism.					

Axis III: Personal information: Please tick (X) the appropriate box.

1. Gender: Male ( ) Female ( )
2. Age range:

Less than 20 years old ( ) 21 to 35 years old ( )
36 to 55 ( ) 56 years and above ( )

3. Educational level:

( ) Less than high school ( ) High school ( ) University ( ) Postgraduate ( )

4. Average internet and social media usage per day:

Less than 01 hours ( ) Between 01 and 03 hours ( )
Between 03 and 05 hours ( ) More than 05 hours ( )