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# Influence of Electronic Word of Mouth on Visitor's Interest to Tourism Destinations

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## Abstract

The contribution made by the tourism sector is strategic enough to provide job opportunities and increase the state's foreign exchange which will be followed by development in the information and technology sectors. The population of this study includes all domestic tourists who visit the Batu City Angkut Museum over 17 years of age and who have obtained information via eWOM from other tourists. Based on the measurement, a minimum of 160 respondents must be selected as the research sample. Non-probability sampling techniques are used to select samples. Social media had been used by companies to provide information, services, and products related to tourism, and it was utilized by tourists to share information about their traveling experiences. Nowadays, tourists have become more selective and critical in selecting their destinations as they have become good observant in finding adequate information about certain destinations before deciding to visit the place. This reaction can be influenced by positive eWOM communication, positive image, and trust given to certain tourist destinations. Therefore, improving the number of visits requires the management of certain tourism service companies to apply proper marketing strategy and provide various advantages and best service quality to attract more visitors and give satisfaction to visitors.

**Keywords:** eWOM, Visitor Interest, Image, Trust, Tourism Destination

**JEL Classification Code:** L82, L83, L86, Z32

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## 1. Introduction

The rapid development of the interactive tourism business gives significant contributions to some community groups (Pujiastuti et al., 2017). This field of business recently has been considered as one of the major contributors to the global industry and the state's revenue (Pangestuti, 2017). In Indonesia, tourism has become a strategic sector. It is a medium of integration between various development sectors (Purnomo et al., 2020). Indonesia, a rich archipelago in Southeast Asia is urging more aggressive responses toward tourism establishment benefiting respective destination from

the profits contributed by progressive imported goods and service as well as job opportunities (Lee & Syah, 2018).

Along with the rapid development of the information and technology sector, more research on tourism has been conducted with the main focus on the utilization of information and technology as social media and informative media for promotion. The data released by the association of Internet providers in Indonesia or Asosiasi Penyelenggara Jasa Internet Indonesia (APJII) showed that there were 132.7 million Internet users in Indonesia by the end of 2016 out of the total population of Indonesia which reached 256.2 million today. In September 2016, the penetration of Internet users reached 50.4% and there has been a 33.4% increase in the penetration of Facebook subscribers in Indonesia. Meanwhile, by June 2017, the number of Facebook subscribers increased by 47.8%. The results of a survey conducted by the Internet world stats in 2016 showed that there were only 88 million Facebook subscribers.

Table 1 explains that social media ranked 1<sup>st</sup> as the frequently-visited site on the Internet. Internet users use the Internet to access social networks or social media with a percentage of 97.4%, followed by entertainment at

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96.8%, news at 96.4%, education at 93.8%, commercials at 93.1% 91.6% for public services. The APJII survey also showed that 82.6% of the community used Instagram. Meanwhile, the number of Internet users who accessed Path, Chatting/Messenger media, Line, Whatsapp, and BBM were 49.6%, 90.5%, 79.3%, and 33.1%, respectively. The data concluded that the majority of internet users use the internet to access social media daily.

The Internet has constructed a new paradigm in Word of Mouth (WoM) communication which created the term electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM). Few studies focus on exploring the aspect of consumer skepticism in the acceptance of eWOM information (Dinh & Doan, 2020). The knowledge exchange through online and public platforms is known as eWOM (Charo et al., 2015). eWOM can positively and negatively form the image of a certain tourist destination. Empirical evidence shows that online reviews significantly influence the image of a certain destination (Govers & Go, 2004).

Before deciding to visit a destination, tourists will collect information about the destination. One of the most-searched information of a destination is its image. Pitana and Diarta (2009) mentioned that the image reflects tourists' trust in certain products or services that they have bought or will buy. The image reflects the company in general that helps tourists to select the right product or service. Positive images will be easily remembered by tourists and will affect how tourists determine their visits to a certain destination.

Suwarduki et al. (2016) showed that the destination image has a significant influence on tourists' interest to visit. The credibility and trust the users have in the Instagram account, Indtravel, which exposes tourism brands with the tagline "Enchantment of Indonesia" and "Wonderful Indonesia" increases followers' interest to visit various destinations. Strengthening this view, Lien et al. (2015) stated that the image of a hotel positively influences the trust of visitors.

**Table 1:** The Behavior of Internet Users in Indonesia

Types of Content Accessed on the Internet	Number of Users (Million)	Percentage (%)
Social Media	129.2	97.4
Entertainment	128.4	96.8
News	127.9	96.4
Education	124.4	93.8
Commercial	123.5	93.1
Public Service	121.5	91.6

With the positive image of a tourist destination, other tourists will grow the belief that they will get pleasure while on vacation or unwind at the destination. Trust is one of the factors that can influence tourists' interests in visiting a certain destination. Moorman et al. (1993) defined trust as the individual's willingness to rely on other parties based on trust. How one believes in the reliability and integrity of the other party is called trust (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Trust has been considered as a catalyst in various transactions between sellers and buyers that customer satisfaction can be realized as expected (Yousafzai et al., 2003).

Trust is also defined by Rousseau et al. (1998) as a psychological statement that entrusts positive expectations of one's interests to others. Jarvenpaa and Tractinsky (1999) and Gefen (2000) also asserted that a higher level of trust in tourist destinations leads to a stronger interest to visit. Whereas, theoretically, this kind of interest is distinguished from attitude as it is perceived as a potential tendency to show a certain reaction (Simamora, 2002).

As a response to this education-based tourism trend, East Java Park (Jatim Park) Group has established several educational tourism destinations. Of the several tourism objects developed by the East Java Park Group, one that stands out is the Museum Angkut.

Museum Angkut plus Movie Star Studio is a museum with the concept of education and entertainment. Museum Angkut is the first modern transportation museum in Indonesia and Asia that combines the elements of art and culture. Museum Angkut is also a superior tourism product from the Jatim Park Group. The data released by BPS of Batu City in 2017, the number of Museum Angkut visitors reached 196 thousand visitors, or an average of 16 thousand visitors each month. Regarding this massive number of visits, Museum Angkut has been considered successful in establishing an attractive museum.

Modern museums hold preservation, research, and communication functions, conveying the mission of education and recreation for the community (Weil, 1990; Hooper-Greenhill, 1994). The management of Jatim Park Group has been able to maintain good communication with the community by collaborating with local and national media, building local and national support networks, business, cultural education and communication, and implementing various marketing strategies (Pamuji, 2011).

Even though many new destinations have emerged and offered new attractions at cheap rates, the majority of tourists still choose Museum Angkut as the preferred tourist destination. The museum does not only function to store rare and expensive items it also serves as a cultural institution that serves the community. The museum has begun to develop itself into an institution that is open to society (Pamuji, 2011).

Besides, Macnaghten and Urry (1998) stated that at this time the post-modern museum began to emerge. Market

potential and profit margins in the tourism business are quite large as this market is quite open for any player or competitor to penetrate the market. Tourists are given many choices and can select the best ones for them. On the other hand, the rapid development of information technology that can be easily accessed by the public has brought positive changes in the field of marketing.

The eWOM phenomenon is considered as an evolution of traditional interpersonal communication to the new generation of cyberspace. The advancement of information technology allows consumers to seek sufficient information they need related to a certain product before making a purchase (Semuel & Lianto, 2014). EWOM can be either negative or positive statements made by actual, potential consumers about a certain product or company where this information is available for people or institutions on the internet (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004).

eWOM has the ability to influence tourists' purchase decisions, including tourists' interest in visiting a certain tourist destination. eWOM also disseminates the quality of certain tourist destinations in the form of positive destination images which eventually trigger stronger trust. eWOM improves the image of certain tourist destinations and it affects consumer satisfaction and loyalty. More frequent and more positive eWOM shared by consumers on social media leads to a greater level of satisfaction and customer loyalty (Setiawan et al., 2014).

Macnaghten and Urry (1998) supported this view and stated that tourist destinations are often chosen based on consumers' fantasy or expectations, or based on the image of the destination. These fantasies and images are then constructed and maintained from promotion. Besides, non-tourism activities are equally influential, such as academic work, academic meetings (seminars, workshops), and mass media.

Social media users can affect eWOM which is believed to be a form of marketing communication that influences the image of a certain destination, tourist' trust, and interest in visiting based on others' reviews. From the background above, this study was conducted to examine the influence of (1) eWOM on destination image, trust, and visitor's interest, (2) destination image on trust and interest to visit, (3) trust on visitor's interests.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. The Relationship between eWOM and Destination Image

Several studies found that eWOM has a positive influence on the image of the destination. Jalilvand and Samiei (2012) examined the effect of eWOM on brand image and purchase intention with case studies on the car industry in Iran. The results of the study found that eWOM communication had a positive

influence on the image of the destination. Meanwhile, Charo et al. (2015) also conducted a study to see the effect of eWOM on brand image and purchase intention towards the adoption of online opinions. The results of this study found that the effect of eWOM on brand image is having potential and can affect the recipient's perceptions of the product or service. Torlak et al. (2014) also found that there was a significant positive relationship between eWOM on brand image.

Based on the results of several research studies above, it shows that eWOM influences the image of the destination. Although these studies are related to a product, the empirical results can be used as a basis for developing further research in different case studies, namely related to tourist destinations.

### 2.2. The Influence of eWOM on Trust

Previous research has confirmed that eWOM positively influences trust. Abubakar and Ilkan (2015) found that eWOM communication had a significant influence on trust. The results of the data analysis showed that online WOM positively influenced the trust and visitors' interest to travel; Besides, trust positively influenced ones' interest to travel; furthermore, higher-income strengthened the relationship between online WOM and interest to travel; while higher-income weakened the relationship between trust and visitor's interest to travel.

In more recent research, Abubakar et al. (2017) found eWOM communication to have a significant influence on trust. While research conducted by Ladhari and Michaud (2015) noted that positive feedback improved the level of visitors' trust in certain destinations. When tourists found the information provided by informative companies, they tend to trust websites. Comments posted online by other travelers related to certain services provide clues about how trusted a company is.

### 2.3. The Relationship between eWOM and Interest to Visit

Several studies showed that eWOM has a positive influence on visitors' interest. Jalilvand et al. (2013) found that eWOM communication significantly influenced visitors' attitudes and interests. Jalilvand and Samiei (2012) have built a model in which eWOM influences the purchase interest through the brand image as a partial intervening variable. Jalilvand and Samiei (2012) also reported similar findings that brand image even fully mediated the purchase interest.

Charo et al. (2015) found the significance and potential of eWOM in both direct and indirect manners on purchase interest. The influence of eWOM on purchase interest can be explained by brand image. Research indicates that there is a significant impact of the brand image on the purchase interest.

This research support Fan and Miao (2012) focused on the cultural effects of gender on the extended Elaboration Likelihood Model and purchasing decisions in e-commerce virtual communities. Study results show that involvement has the most significant effect on perceived eWOM credibility. Study results showed that perceived eWOM credibility has a significant effect on eWOM acceptance and intent to purchase. Study results also showed the male customers have different e-commerce shopping behaviors than female customers.

Those findings show that eWOM has a certain influence on visitors' interest. eWOM can directly influence both purchase interest and visitor's interest and indirectly influences them through intermediary variables such as a brand image or destination image.

#### **2.4. The Relationship between Destination Image and Trust**

Research showed that the destination image positively influences trust. Lien et al. (2015) examined the direct and mediating effects of brand image, perceived price, trust, perceived value on consumers' booking intentions and compares the gender differences in online hotel booking. The outcomes confirm most of the direct and indirect path effects and are consistent with findings from previous studies. Consumers in Taiwan tend to believe the hotel price is affordable, the hotel brand is attractive, the hotel is trustworthy, the hotel will offer good value for the price and the likelihood of their booking intentions is high. Brand image, perceived price, and perceived value are the three critical determinants directly influencing purchase intentions. However, the impact of trust on purchase intentions is not significant. The differences between males and females on purchase intentions are not significant as well. Managerial implications of these results are discussed.

Correspondingly, the results of the Pujiastuti (2017) found that destination image had a significant impact on trust and satisfaction had a strongly significant impact on trust. However, she found that the destination image did not have any significant impact on the destination, while satisfaction did not significantly influence behavioral intention. It was also found that trust did not have any significant impact on behavioral intention. This research also showed that satisfaction directly affects behavioral intention through trust. The findings of the research proposed a correlation between destination image, satisfaction, and trust. All of those variables were known to have a certain impact on behavioral intention in the future. More importantly, this research also showed that trust plays a vital role in tourist villages.

Research results obtained by Prasetya (2014) confirmed the positive relationship between brand image and trust.

In this study, trust was an intervening variable that connected the brand image quality and product quality to purchase interest. The results of the research showed that the brand image variable which consisted of producer image, store image, and product image had a significant effect on trust. Besides, the result of this research has been reinforced by Yolanda and Alamsyah (2013) who also found that better brand image led to greater or higher trust. The results of those research showing that destination image affects trust was used as the initial reference to determine the correlation between destination image and trust.

#### **2.5. The Correlation between Destination Image and Visitors' Interest**

Some previous research showed that the destination image positively influences visitor's interests. Chalip et al. (2003) found that the destination image significantly influenced visitors' interest in visiting certain destinations. Bigné et al. (2005) reported a positive effect between the general image of a certain destination among the residents and the residents' interest in promoting their place to be visited. Meanwhile, Jalilvand and Samiei (2012) found that a destination's image had a significant influence on visitors' interest in visiting various destinations.

The results of those previous research proposing that destination image influences the visitor's interest which was used in this research to determine the destination image as an intervening variable. This intervening variable would connect eWOM and visitors' demand to visit. The research also examined the direct and indirect influences between eWOM on visitor's interest mediated by destination image.

#### **2.6. The Correlation between Trust and Visitors' Interest**

Previous research showed that trust has a positive influence on visitors' interests. Ponte et al. (2015) found that trust significantly influenced the interest in online travel purchases. The research showed that ones' trust in websites played an important role in the success of e-commerce because consumers would not shop online if they did not trust the site.

Ling et al. (2011) also supported the view on the positive influence of trust on online purchase interest. In this research, trust was set as the intervening variable that mediated the relationship between perceived technology and perceived risks toward online purchase interest using SEM analysis. Becerra and Korgaonkar (2011) also stated that brand trust influences online purchase interest. This insight can be used to improve online sales. In this research, trust was set as the intervening variable that mediated eWOM and visitors' interests. Hence, both direct and indirect effects of eWOM on visitors' interests can be identified through trust.

## 2.7. The Correlation among eWOM, Destination Image, Trust and Visitors' Interest

Regarding the previous explanation, eWOM will generally influence the destination image, trust, and visitors' interest. The model below describes the five main constructs. First, the influence of eWOM on destination image, eWOM on trust, eWOM on visitors' interests, destination image on trust, destination image on visitors' interest, and trust on visitors' interests. The influence of eWOM on destination image has been proven by Jalilvand and Samiei (2012), Charo et al. (2015), and Torlak et al. (2014). The influence of eWOM on trust has been demonstrated by Abubakar and Ilkan (2015), Abubakar et al. (2017), and Ladhari and Michaud (2015). Furthermore, the influence of eWOM on visitors' interests was confirmed by Jalilvand et al. (2013), Charo et al. (2015), and Fan and Miao (2012). While the influence of the destination image on trust is shown by the results of research done by Lien et al. (2015), Prasetya (2014), and Yolanda and Alamsyah (2013). The influence of the destination image on visitors' interest has been confirmed by Chalip et al. (2003), Bigne et al. (2005), and Jalilvand and Samiei (2012). Finally, the influence of trust on visitors' interest was confirmed by Ponte et al. (2015), Ling et al. (2011), and Becerra and Korgaonkar (2011).

WoM refers to informal interpersonal communication about brands, companies, products, or services (Semuel & Lianto, 2014). WoM increases consumer awareness, thus, WoM plays an important role in consumer behavior (Bone, 1995). Consumers who are exposed to positive WoM are more likely to make purchase decisions. Whereas, consumers who are exposed to negative WoM tend to avoid making purchase decisions. Buttler (1998) stated that WoM communication can affect several types of conditions including awareness, expectations, perceptions, attitudes, desires, and behavior. In this context, behavior refers to consumer behavior in making purchases as preceded by consumer interest in a certain product or service.

Research done by Semuel and Lianto (2014) showed that eWOM also affects ones' direct purchase interest. This study was conducted to understand the influence of eWOM, through the Internet, on Brand Image, Brand Trust, and Buying interest. More specific objectives of this research are to analyze the influence of eWOM on brand image, brand trust, and buying interest of a smartphone. The results obtained, eWOM directly affects the brand image, brand trust, and buying interest, while brand image directly influences brand trust and buying interest, and brand trust influences the buying interest. Brand image, brand trust is the mediation between eWOM and buying interest, such that in total it strengthens the influence. The strongest relationship is that eWOM positively influence brand image and eWOM positively influence buying interest.

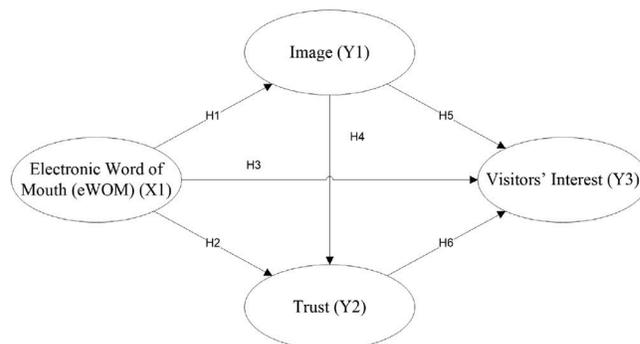


Figure 1: Research Hypothesis

The following hypotheses are proposed in this research:

- H1:** eWOM has a significant influence on destination image.
- H2:** eWOM has a significant influence on trust.
- H3:** eWOM has a significant influence on visitors' interest.
- H4:** Destination image has a significant influence on trust.
- H5:** Destination image has a significant influence on visitors' interest.
- H6:** Trust has a significant influence on visitors' interest.
- H7:** eWOM has a significant influence on visitors' interest through destination and trust as intervening variables.

## 3. Research Methods and Materials

### 3.1. Approach, Population, and Sample

This research was conducted in the form of explanatory research. The population of this research included all domestic tourists who visited Museum Angkut Batu City aged over 17 years and who had obtained information through eWOM from other tourists. The criteria of the research population were: (1) Domestic tourists of Museum Angkut aged over 17 years (2) Domestic tourists who visited Museum Angkut for the first time. (3) Domestic tourists who have sought information about Museum Angkut on social media (Facebook, Instagram, Website, and others).

Based on the measurement, a minimum of 160 respondents should be selected as research samples. Non-probability sampling technique was employed to select the samples. According to Bungin (2005), the non-probability sampling technique allows a researcher to partly apply probability law, meaning that not all population units have equal opportunity to be selected. Samples were also selected using purposive sampling, which according to Bungin (2005) is used in research that prioritizes research objectives rather than the nature of the population. This technique was employed because the researcher could not access all tourists since each respondent must meet the criteria in this study.

Questionnaires were distributed online and offline where the researchers handed the questionnaires in the front exit of Museum Angkut. Before questionnaires were given, respondents had been asked about how many times they visited Museum Angkut. Questionnaires were only given to those who made their first visit at that time.

In this research, the Likert Scale was employed. Likert Scale is designed to investigate the extent to which respondents agree to the statement given. A 5-point Likert scale was employed to describe respondent responses; strongly disagree, disagree, doubtful, agree, and strongly agree.

### 3.2. Research Variables

This research included some variables including eWOM, destination image, trust, and visitor's interest. eWOM is a type of communication among visitors of Museum Angkut through social media such as Website, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter also about certain products or services offered by Museum Angkut. The indicator of eWOM as mentioned by Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) and Wang et al. (2015) are (1) Personal benefit which refers to the need to share a personal experience to add up their personal images as smart consumers (b) suggestions from others, which refers to the need to be given tips and supports from other users to have a better understanding about how to use certain product or service.

Destination image refers to visitors' beliefs, views, and impressions of certain tourist destinations. Destination image is indicated by several indicators as stated by Gartner (1994) including (a) Cognitive image that is defined as one's knowledge of certain tourist destination which can be either organic or induced. (b) Affective image, referring to one's personal feelings about a certain tourist destination. (c) Conative image, which is defined as the outcome of the cognitive phase and affective phase that determine one's interest.

Trust is a form of visitors' belief about eWOM communication among the visitors of Museum Angkut regarding the products and services offered by Museum Angkut. As mentioned by Luarn and Lin (2003), trust is reflected in several indicators which are (a) Integrity. Integrity is defined as the truthfulness of a party and how one fulfills the promises. (b) Goodness. It is defined as the attention and motivation to act for the good of those who have given their trust. (c) Competence. It is defined as the ability of a trusted party to fulfill certain needs. (d) Probability. It is defined as one's behavioral consistency.

Visitors' interest is the reflection of one's attitude and pleasure regarding the products and services which in this context refer to the ones offered by Museum Angkut, followed by the action to visit. The indicators of interest according to Hsu and Huang (2016) include (a) Motivation, which is defined as the cognitive feature which is the outcome of a certain motive or situational interaction. (b) Attitude, which

refers to the affective actions that are determined by one's belief. (c) Subjective norms, which refers to one's normative expectation of a certain tourist destination. (d) Perceived behavior control, which refers to the individual's belief about how a certain tourist destination affects their attitude.

### 3.3. Data Analysis Technique

Path analysis was conducted using SPSS software (Statistical Package for Social Science). The path analysis was then expanded to examine the direct and indirect influences of research variables which might have certain influences on other dependent variables (Priadana & Muis, 2009). The path analysis conducted in this research also analyzed the possible cause-effect relationship in multiple regression if the independent variables have both direct and indirect influences on the dependent variables (Retherford & Choe, 2011). Path analysis is administered to:

- (1) Describe and analyze certain mathematical models using relevant equations.
- (2) Explain the correlation between variables within a certain systematic model.
- (3) Apply a basic model to examine the relationship between variables.
- (4) Measure the strength of correlation between one or more exogenous variables and the endogenous variables.
- (5) Identify the causes or factors that make one variable have a certain influence on the other variable.

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1. Results

#### 4.1.1. Overview of the Research

Museum Angkut is one of the tourist attractions in Batu City under the management of Jatim Park Group (JTP). Based on the data released by BPS of Batu City in 2017, the number of Museum Angkut visitors reached 196 thousand or approximately 16 thousand visitors every month. This number placed Museum Angkut in 5<sup>th</sup> rank out of 25 tourist destinations in Batu City. It indicates that Museum Angkut has been able to compete with other attractions in Batu City.

As a relatively new attraction in Batu City, Museum Angkut offers a museum with educational and entertainment facilities. Museum Angkut was established on March 9, 2014, on 3.8 hectares of land. The museum displays the history of vehicles in the world which is expected to grow awareness, sympathy, empathy, appreciation, and respect from the society about history. In addition to the enhancement of visitors' knowledge about transportations, the museum also offers the first Movie Star Studio ever built in Malang.

#### 4.1.2. Results of Hypothesis Testing

Path analysis was administered to see either the direct or indirect effects of eWOM variables, destination image, and trust on visitors' interest. Research data was processed using the SPSS computer program. The Complete Path Analysis Model can be seen in Figure 2 below.

A *T*-test was administered to determine whether or not the independent variables partially have significant effects on the dependent variable. The degree of significance was set at 0.05. If Sig. < probability of 0.05, the hypothesis is accepted. Table 2 shows the sig value of each variable.

#### 4.1.3. Model Accuracy

The accuracy of the model hypothesized was based on research data which was measured from the relationship of determination coefficient ( $R^2$ ). The results of calculating the accuracy of the model describe the contribution of the model to explain the structural relationship of the four variables studied which reached 79.06%.

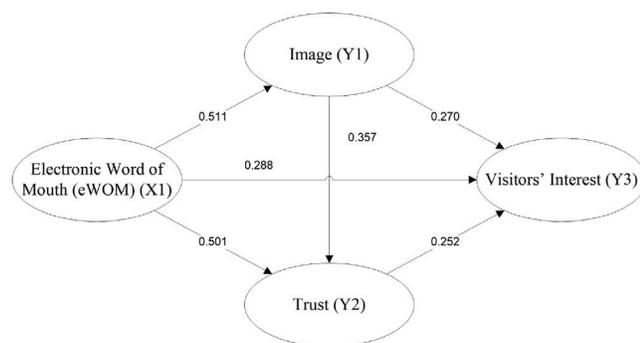


Figure 2: Results of Path Analysis

Meanwhile, the remaining 20.94% can be explained by other variables that were not included in this research model. The results of the analysis show the values of the direct effect and the indirect effect of variable X on the variable Y3. The value of direct influence from eWOM variables on the visitor's interest was (0.288) greater than the value of indirect influence, either through variable Y1 (destination image; 0.138) or through variable Y2 (trust; 0.126) as an intervening variable. Therefore, variable Y1 (destination image) and variable Y2 (trust) has a partial effect on the correlation.

## 4.2. Discussion

### 4.2.1. The Influence of eWOM (X1) on Destination Image (Y1)

The research results show that eWOM has a positive and significant effect on the destination image with a coefficient of 0.511, t-count of 7.152, and a significance of 0.000 (<0.05). These results support the research conducted by Wang et al. (2015) who also confirmed the existence of a positive and significant relationship between eWOM and destination image. This result is also strengthened by the frequency distribution. The average eWOM variable is 4.43, with the strongest indicator of 4.47, indicating that eWOM will lead to an improvement in destination image when tourists read online reviews from other travelers, leading to a stronger belief to travel to a certain destination.

Respondents were also active in finding various information from social media as seen from the general description, in which 55.63% of respondents sought Museum Angkut information from a web browser, and 24.38% access the information from Instagram and 8.75% from Facebook.

Table 2: Results of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Coefficient	Significance	Notes
H1   eWOM (X) significantly influences the destination image (Y1)	0.511	0.000	H1 accepted
H2   eWOM(X) significantly influences the WOM (Y2)	0.501	0.000	H2 accepted
H3   eWOM (X) significantly influences the visitors' interest (Y3)	0.288	0.000	H3 accepted
H4   Destination image (Y1) significantly influences the trust(Y2)	0.357	0.000	H4 accepted
H5   Destination image (Y1) significantly influences the interest (Y3)	0.270	0.000	H5 accepted
H6   Trust (Y2) significantly influences the visitors' interest (Y3)	0.252	0.000	H6 accepted

This finding says that the technological environment in tourism is closely related to innovation and the development of information communication technology. Therefore, the management of Museum Angkut must be able to manage tourism promotion media through online media properly and must be always up to date in improving the destination image of Museum Angkut.

#### 4.2.2. The Influence of eWOM (X1) on Trust (Y2)

The research results show that eWOM has a positive and significant effect on trust with a coefficient of 0.501, *t*-count of 8.480, and significance of 0.000 (<0.05). These results support the findings of research conducted by Abubakar and Ilkan (2015) and Abubakar et al. (2017). This result is also strengthened by the frequency distribution. It is known that the average eWOM variable is 4.43, with the strongest indicator of 4.47, indicating that eWOM will lead to trust in Museum Angkut when tourists read online reviews. Therefore, the trust will be higher, encouraging tourists to visit Angkut Museum.

The influence of eWOM on trust is also strengthened by the active participation of respondents in using social media to find tourist destination information as proven by a general description of respondents showing that 55.63% of respondents sought Museum Angkut information from a web browser, then 24.38% from Instagram and 8.75% from Facebook. Positive information about Museum Angkut will further increase trust. The majority of respondents have a proper education as most of them have studied at a university. Therefore, in this study, it was assumed that the existence of education was adequate in allowing respondents to sort out positive information about Museum Angkut and would support tourists' trust for Museum Angkut.

#### 4.2.3. The Influence of eWOM (X) on Visitors' Interest (Y3)

The research results show that eWOM has a positive and significant effect on visitors' interest with a coefficient of 0.288, *t*-count of 7.256, and significance of 0.000 (<0.05). These results support the research conducted by Jalilvand et al. (2013) who also confirmed that eWOM communication had a significant influence on the visit and interest in visiting certain destinations. The result of this research also supports Wang et al. (2015) who found that eWOM was positively and significantly related to visitors' interest.

The result of this study is also strengthened by the general description of respondents related to the age of tourists. The majority of respondents (24.36%) aged 21–25. Hence, most of the respondents are people who are familiar with technology who is commonly known as the millennial generation.

This generation always comes up with the newest trends and show self-existence. This view is reinforced by the respondent's answer that most of the respondents were interested in visiting the Museum Angkut because they saw other people's status updates on social media (43.13%), that is, from Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, and Web browser media. Some of them (33.13%) wanted to visit a new destination. Meanwhile, those who visited the place because of its uniqueness and prestige were 16.25% and 7.50% respectively.

#### 4.2.4. The Influence Destination Image (Y1) on Trust (Y2)

The research results show that the destination image has a positive and significant effect on trust with a coefficient of 0.357, *t*-count of 5.668, and significance of 0.000 (<0.05). These results support the research of Pujiastuti et al. (2017) who confirmed that destination image significantly affected trust.

A destination is a unit of tourism attraction that consists of various types of organizations and tourism operational activities within a certain geographic area, including hotels, transportation, attractions, and so on. The image of the Museum Angkut as a tourist destination is strengthened by the ease of transportation access. Various choices of transportation facilities are available to bring visitors to Museum Angkut. Most respondents reached the place by bus (57.50%), indicating that they visit the place in groups. Private cars followed the rank with 28.13%, followed by plane 6.88%, followed by trains with 4.38% and motorbikes 3.13%.

The result of this study is also strengthened by the frequency distribution of 4.30, meaning that the respondents gave a positive rating and with the highest loading factor on tourism items as Museum Angkut offered a different concept. It can be understood that a positive destination image improves trust in certain tourist destinations.

#### 4.2.5. The Influence of Destination Image (Y1) on the Visitor's Interest (Y3)

The research results show that destination image has a positive and significant effect on visitor's interest with a coefficient of 0.270, *t*-count of 6.943, and significance of 0.000 (<0.05). This finding supports the research result obtained by Chalip et al. (2003), Bigne et al. (2005), Jalilvand et al. (2012), Wang et al. (2015), and Pujiastuti et al. (2017) who also found out that destination image positively and significantly affected visitor's interest.

The different and unique concept offered by Museum Angkut becomes a magnetic attraction for tourists. This supports the concept of destination image as it includes a special place that offers a different atmosphere from daily life

atmosphere, culture, history, archeology, or nature (Rojek & Urry, 1997). This result is also strengthened by frequency distribution which showed a value of 4.30, meaning that the respondents gave a positive rating and with the highest loading factor on tourism items. Museum Angkut offered a different concept of tourism. Therefore, it has been confirmed that a positive destination image will lead to increases in visitor's interest in visiting certain tourist destinations.

#### **4.2.6. The Influence of Trust (Y2) on the Visitor's Interest (Y3)**

The research results show that trust positively and significantly influenced visitor's interest with a coefficient of 0.252, *t*-count of 5.363, and significance of 0.000 (<0.05). This finding goes in line with Pujiastuti et al. (2017) who stated that trust influences visitor's interest. Visitor's interest in visiting certain destinations is aligned with the interest in making online purchases. Hence, the results of this study are also in line with the results of research by Ponte et al. (2015), Ling et al. (2011), and Becerra and Korgaonkar (2011) who found that trust has a significant influence on the interest in making online travel purchases.

This result is also strengthened by frequency distribution. The average frequency showed a value of 4.26 for trust. Museum Angkut obtained the strongest average value of 4.42, indicating that this destination is included in the positive area, implying that the museum successfully meets tourists' expectations. Therefore, it can be stated that trust improves visitors' interest in visiting certain destinations.

#### **4.2.7. The Influence of eWOM (X) on the Visitor's Interest (Y3) through Destination Image (Y1) and Trust (Y2)**

The research results showed that eWOM has an indirect influence on visitor's interest through destination image and trust. The indirect influence of eWOM on visitor's interests further strengthens its direct influence on visitor's Interests. This finding supports Jalilvand et al. (2012) and it also goes in line with the results of the research by Semuel and Lianto (2014).

It is proven in this research that eWOM has a major influence on the interest in visiting a tourist destination. With the advancement of information technology and ease of access in obtaining tourist information digitally or electronically, building a positive destination image would be a good effort to improve visitor's interest in visiting the destination. Through both direct and indirect influence of eWOM on visitor's interest, companies will grow stronger motivation to carry out effective marketing strategies by optimizing the use of information technology.

## **5. Conclusions and Limitations**

### **5.1. Conclusions**

Based on the results of data analysis carried out in this research and the results of hypotheses testing, conclusions were drawn as follows. (1) eWOM influences the destination image, trust, and visitors' interest. (2) Destination image influences the trust and visitor's interest. (3) Trust influences the visitor's interest.

Regarding those conclusions, suggestions are formulated as follows. (1) Future researchers are recommended to broaden respondents' characteristics to obtain more comprehensive findings. This can be done by involving international tourists in the samples. (2) It is suggested that the Regional Government of Batu use the results of this research as the basis in the management and development of tourist attraction destinations in this region. Electronic media and social media should be utilized to promote various tourist destinations in Batu. (3) Recommendations are also directed to the board of management of tourist destinations, especially Jatim Park Group to regard the findings of this research in improving the management and promotion of Museum Angkut. This improvement can be carried out by improving the quality of services for visitors. Furthermore, better promotion can be carried out by optimizing the use of websites and social media such as Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook as promotional media. (4) It is also recommended that people who are interested in visiting Museum Angkut seek information and references for Museum Angkut before deciding to visit the place.

### **5.2. Research Contribution**

This research has confirmed that eWOM shares a direct positive and significant influence on visitor's interest. Besides, eWOM also has an indirect positive and significant influence on visitor's interest through destination image and trust. In this research, destination image has been found to have a direct positive and significant influence on the visitor's interest. Besides, trust has been confirmed to positively and significantly influences visitor's interest as well.

The findings of this research strengthen the results of previous research on the correlation of eWOM and destination image, trust, and visitor's interest. The results of this research add up to the literature on business studies, especially the ones about tourism services. This research is expected to give a positive contribution to the management of the tourism business as it provides valuable insights to take proper decisions related to marketing strategy, management, and the development of tourist destinations

### 5.3. Research Limitations

Despite its success, this research suffers from several limitations that occurred during the process which might affect the results of this research as follows. (1) Time constraints in the implementation of this research only allowed the researcher to focus on one research object; Museum Angkut in Batu City. It is expected that this research can be further developed in the future by involving more research objects or expanding its scope. (2) Respondents involved as samples were all domestic tourists. Therefore, in future research, samples can be broadened to international tourists as well. (3) The results of this research strengthen the results of previous research. More variables are expected to be included to develop this research in the future.

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