The effect of Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WoM) on social media networking

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Abstract. Social Media Networking is a platform that has recently become the main media in information retrieval, digital use is easy to access for anyone, anywhere. Tourism is one of the industries that use this media platform to increase tourists visits. Bandung is one of the favorite tourist destinations, many social media users who post information, comment, review and ask fellow netizen, thus it will appear a destination image of Bandung that impacting visits. The data were collected from 195 respondents. The hypotheses were examined using Partial Least Square 3.0. This research discloses that electronic word of mouth (e-wom) on social media networks can influence the image of the destination and have an impact on the revisit intention of the tourism destination. The research findings show that the construct of E-Wom on social media Instagram has a direct effect to revisit intention, but the effect is greater when through the destination image. This research provides input and a better understanding for researchers and practitioners of the tourism industry on how to develop tourism revisit from enhancing destination image and keep the positive e-Wom on Instagram.

1. Introduction

Based on data released by Hootsuite in 2019, the percentage of internet users who use social media networking platforms is at a fairly high rate: Youtube: 88%; WhatsApp: 83%; Facebook: 81%; and Instagram: 80% [1]. Social media networking becomes a space to establish communication and provide alternatives for information retrieval and decision making [2]. Communication that occurs in social media networking creates information and recommendations from one user to another, in marketing theory this is called electronic word of mouth (e-Wom). Social media such as Instagram now represents an ideal tool for e-wom [3]. Social media networks with electronic word of mouth provide benefits for the business world that is, business people can intervene in conversations between consumers to avoid negative comments that are widespread, in addition to that businesses can direct consumers to engage in positive dialogue by providing consistent brand content [4].

Netizens use Instagram a lot to get information, data on internet trends and social media in 2019 in Indonesia showing that active social media users are in 150 million accounts, up 15% from 2018. Instagram has a big role in making consumers closer to things that are interesting to them. When interested in a product or brand, 4 out of 5 Instagram users (or 81% of users) use Instagram to find more information about their preferences [5]. Instagram is a choice in information search by consumers because the information from fellow users is considered more authentic and credible compared to information submitted by advertisers. Perception about this information is very understandable because consumers can freely create and disseminate information related to everything and voluntarily display
their preferences to others through their social interactions [6]. Other Indonesian digital data show that
the use of the internet, especially e-commerce, shows that the leisure and travel category recorded a very
large average amount of routine expenditure of 9,376 million dollars in 2018 [1]. Tourism is a trending
topic that is widely discussed in social media networking. Tourism sector is developing rapidly and there
is a market competition that attracts great attention for academic and industry [7].

Based on the explanation and study that has been done, it is interesting to do research on the impact
of Instagram's electronic word of mouth in the tourism sector, given the development of communication
information technology and the tourism sector are two things that continue to develop rapidly, and
continuous studies are needed. The benefit of this research is that it can add to the literature review for
researchers or other academics, while for tourism practitioners it is known how the management and
maintenance of tourist destination images through posting photos and videos of activities that cause
positive emotions through electronic word of mouth.

2. Bandung as a tourism destination case study of electronic word of mouth
Bandung has a variety of tourist destination images, such as culinary tourism, shopping tourism, and
nature tourism [8]. So that Bandung has a diverse image as a tourist destination city, because of that
Bandung has become a trending topic of travel in social media networking, the number of posts about
#bandung in Instagram media, there are a lot of accounts and the number of related posts, this becomes
interesting.

This is in accordance with the results of research from IPSOS in 2018 which stated that Globally
Instagram has a big role in making consumers closer to things that are interesting to them, including,
various businesses. When interested in a product or brand, 4 out of 5 Instagram users (81%) use
Instagram to find more information about their preferences [5]. Visitors to tourist destinations that have
an Instagram account will certainly share their travel experiences, as well as all information related to
their visit through posting statuses, photos, and videos. Posts will spread quickly in social media
networks through embedded tags, a viral effect and buzz will occur, in this way the influence does not
only flow to the follower but also spreads from one account to another in social networks [6]. When
social network users like or follow an Instagram account, they get newsfeed updates. Users can then
"like," comment, or share posts by distributing them via their friend’s feeds. Activities in social have an
impact on the perception of destination images that can arouse interest in tourist visits [9].

3. Revisit intention in accordance with E-Wom and destination image
The intention to re-visit refers to the desires of tourists or make plans to visit the same destination again.
In the viewpoint of leisure and recreation behavioral intention is the intention of visitors to revisit and
their willingness to visit a frequent place. [10]. A location or tourist destination and even an event will
be very focused on creating revisit intention because the cost to attract new customers is felt to be higher
[11]. Many tourism academics have discussed the concept of revisit intention and benefits with the
occurrence of revisit intention namely creating positive information communication, achieving better
cost-effectiveness because it creates repeat visits, and increases economic profits [12].

The use of the internet that increasingly engages with information and communication needs greatly
strengthens the scale and scope of the spread of word of mouth (WOM). Mass communication and
information on the internet is a fertile basis for creating electronic word of mouth, with wide, transparent
and easy-to-access Internet coverage that has established a new concept of WOM, and that is why
marketers are still interested involved in WOM activities [13]. The basic concept of WOM is defined as
a process of sharing opinions and information about specific products between customers. The main
difference between e-wom and traditional WOM is the information exchange platform. The e-wom
presents a conversation and shares experiences with others to share and exchange information, about a
product or service among internet users. Messages delivered by fellow consumers will have more value
than when they will be submitted by advertisers. The use of social media is increasingly strengthening
the effects of communication and recommendations because it empowers consumers to share opinions
and experiences [6]. Social media networking is an appropriate form for such conversations. Regarding
the context of communication in social media networking, communication in the e-wom concept refers to positive or negative statements made by potential, actual, and not even customers (netizens) customers about organizations or products [13]. Specifically, e-wom communication in social media networking can be done in various platform channels available on the internet such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, linked-in, and others [6].

In previous studies Bataineh, Loureiro & Sarmento, Jalilvand, it was shown that e-wom is an important antecedent contract to review the future behavior of consumers, such as revisit intention [13-15]. The marketing strategy of e-wom in tourism studies is stated as sharing information and opinions that direct future or potential tourists from specific tourism services, brands and products when making a purchase or revisit decision [16]. In other research found that an WOM may positively affect travelers’ revisit intention [17].

Destination images consist of cognitive images and affective images. Cognitive imagery refers to beliefs and knowledge of the attributes of a tourist destination. Whereas affective images refer to emotions or feelings inherent in a tourist destination [8].

Regarding the consequences of destination images, previous research shows that destination images have a significant effect on revisit intention and satisfaction visits in another study stated that destination image can encourage visit / revisit intention, image is also a critical concept in consumer behavior research because it affects experiential satisfaction and revisits intention simultaneously [10,11,18-22]. The perception of the destination's image can arouse interest in tourist visits [9].

4. Method
This research uses a quantitative approach, through survey techniques. And analyzed descriptively. The questions used in the measurement instrument are generated from Jalilvand; Su et al. and H. Zhang et al. with minor adjustments [15,20,23]. This study was conducted in respondents by submitting the form to respondents who visited Bandung, which was 195 respondents. The analysis of PLS (Partial Least Squares) was chosen in this study as it aims to evaluate a measuring model contracted from various sources. The measurement results are presented in table 2. The criteria for meeting the first stage of measurement are the loading factor must be above 0.6, the composite reliability is more than 0.7, and the magnitude of AVE is above 0.5. Destination image variables are measured through 22 questions and grouped into 3 dimensions namely cognitive, unique, and affective, and these three dimensions meet the reliability validity criteria. Next, there are 2 questions of the e-wom variable need to eliminate as their loadings do not reach the favorable cut-off (0.7) and they lead to poor reliability and validity, which are E-wom3 and E-wom5 [24]. After elimination, the questions are successfully preserved to generate acceptable reliability and validity, in terms of Cronbach's Alpha and CR values have to be greater than the cut-off level of 0.6 and 0.7 and Fornell Larcker criterion as shown in tables 1 and 2.

| Construct / Item                  | Loading | Cronbach’s α | CR  | AVE  |
|----------------------------------|---------|--------------|-----|------|
| **Destination Image**            |         |              |     |      |
| Cognitive                        | 0.915   |              |     |      |
| Unique                           | 0.950   |              |     |      |
| Affective                        | 0.924   |              |     |      |
| **E-Wom**                        | 0.767   | 0.849        | 0.589|
| Read for knowing a good destination | 0.801   |              |     |      |
| Read for choosing                | 0.887   |              |     |      |
| Get information from online      | 0.737   |              |     |      |
| Read online make confidence      | 0.620   |              |     |      |
| **Revisit Intention**            | 0.878   | 0.925        | 0.804|
| intend to revisit                | 0.855   |              |     |      |
| I will revisit in the future     | 0.922   |              |     |      |
| likelihood of my return is high  | 0.913   |              |     |      |
Table 2. Fornell Larcker criteria (Discriminant validity).

| Destination Image | E-WoM | Revisit Intention |
|-------------------|-------|-------------------|
| Destination Image | 0.930 |                   |
| E-WoM             | 0.894 | 0.767             |
| Revisit Intention | 0.720 | 0.715             | 0.897 |

5. Results

After obtaining the measurement model with an acceptable level of reliability and validity, this study proceeds to the next stage of data analysis, i.e. a structural model for hypothesis testing. Three hypotheses set up. The path coefficient is represented by the value of the original sample, which based on the results in this study are showing a positive direction. Therefore, it can be concluded that e-WoM (β = 0.405) and Destination Image (β = 0.353) have a positive influence on Revisit intention. Moreover, the e-WoM (β = 0.894) able to give a positive influence on Destination Image. In other ways, e-WoM (β = 0.362) has a positive indirect effect on the Destination image. To confirm the robustness model, some parameters require to examine, namely R2, f2, and Q2 [24].

Table 3. Hypothesis testing result and variable effect.

| Hypothesis | Direct Effect | Indirect effect | Total Effect |
|------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Electronic WoM → Destination Image (H1) | 0.894 | 5.521** | |
| Electronic WoM → Revisit Intention (H2) | 0.405 | 2.954** | 0.362 | 2.901** |
| Destination Image → Revisit Intention (H3) | 0.353 | 2.540* | |

Notes: * p<0.05; **p<0.01

Based on the calculation statistics obtained the value of the influence of the R-square adjusted value that the revisit intention can be explained by the variable e-WoM and Destination Image of 53.9%. While destination image gained a total impact of 79.9% of the e-WoM variable. The indirect influence of E-WoM on Revisit intention through Destination Image is known by 29%, with the significance of P-values 0.001. In terms of Q2, all dependent variables herein have greater value than 0 which means the model has predictive power [24].

Figure 1. The summary of the model.

6. Discussion

Based on the recap of the instrument, it is known that those who visited tourist destinations in Bandung as many as 71.4% had visited Bandung. Of the three questions raised about revisit intention, as many as 93 respondents or 47.7% stated strongly agree if they would visit Bandung tourist destination again. A repeat visit is a sign that the tourism sector has been in demand and fulfills visitor expectations.
According to Santini, tourists often return to places they were previously visited because they had pleasant experiences or were satisfied with the cost of travel [25]. Thus, perceived value directly affects destination revisit intentions. Repeated visits are needed, especially to facilitate the development of the tourism sector, because revisit intention can reduce the cost of attracting new customers that are felt increasingly high [11]. Besides revisit intention occurs due to positive information communication, with revisit intention to achieve cost-effectiveness can be achieved because, increasing economic benefits by not incurring additional costs to obtain new consumers [12].

The results showed that they visited Bandung tourist destinations affected by E-Wom and Bandung Destination Image. Return visits Bandung tourist destinations as much as 35.3% affected by the presence of e-WoM on Instagram. While the destination image has an impact of 40.5%. E-Wom that occurs in Instagram media will form a collection of information that refers to a perception of destination images that have an impact on an image or image in the minds of consumers. This is a psychological effect when consumers get similar information from various sources. E-Wom as one of the antecedents of the formation of a destination image and also an antecedent for the occurrence of revisit intention, with the existence of E-Wom will further strengthen the interest to visit because, with the presence of e-wom, consumers get accurate information because of the information learned by friends and acquaintances is perceived as credible and trustworthy used by consumers to consider their interests [4].

Respondents stated that they got good destination information from the internet. And stated strongly agree that reading other online stories makes them confident in visiting a destination, with conditions like this it is clear that consumers have the notion that they need and trust the information contained in Instagram. With a variety of information that is considered credible because the message delivered by fellow consumers will have more value than when it will be submitted by advertisers. The use of social media is increasingly strengthening the effects of communication and recommendations because it empowers consumers to share opinions and experiences [6]. Based on the results of the study note that E-Wom has a very big impact on the formation of the destination image, as much as 89.4%. The impact is so great, this is because the information obtained from Instagram is considered credible and trusted because the information learned by friends and acquaintances, e-wom is now becoming more enjoyable thanks to social media websites because consumers increasingly rely on social networks to acquire information about brands they don't know very well but they trust about that [4,14].

7. Conclusion and managerial impact
The results of this study can be used as an important input in efforts to develop the tourism sector which is considered a main driving force for global economic growth. It is important to consider that many efforts had to be invested in laying a foundation for tourism development. This long-term sustainability of the projects they should be qualified to continue the programs and to shape future tourism development in a socially and ecologically responsible way [26].

E-Wom has an important role in the development of an object or tourist destination because it has a significant impact on an image and can be a trigger for revisit intention. Therefore, destination managers need to take part in campaigning tourist destinations and prevent negative comments that can damage netizens' perceptions of tourist destinations. Destination managers need to be actively involved in every object that becomes a trending topic in the media. Provide all the best information on Instagram. This needs to be done because consumers now have access to new sources of influence that can provide personalized product information and recommendations [14].

A repeat visit is a sign that the tourism sector has been in demand and in accordance with tourist expectation, but destination managers must understand how novelty in market segments affect revisit intentions. The attraction in a destination needs to be changed periodically so that a newness occurs so that visitors who visit again do not feel bored. Because Tourists' revisit intentions must be examined with a time-based perspective, as intentions often change over time [25].

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