

Digital Discovery: e-WOM's Influence on Attitude and Behavioural Intention Towards Adventure Destination

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Abstract

The main aim of the study is to examine the attitudes and behavior of travelers toward destinations impacted by 'electronic word-of-mouth'. In the era of digital technology, where information spreads rapidly with a single click, 'electronic word-of-mouth' (e-WOM) significantly influences adventure destinations. Attitude and behavioural intention influenced by e-WOM while choosing a destination. The study employed a quantitative approach using exploratory analysis to achieve the objective. Data was gathered through a well-organized questionnaire from tourists visiting Himachal Pradesh. A total of 173 responses received out of 210. The analysis was conducted using SPSS 28. The findings provide distinct results from previous studies. It shows that e-WOM has an insignificant influence on tourist behaviour intention and attitude. This study provides valuable insights for the government, tourism sector, destination management, and stakeholders. The study aids the tourism industry in gaining a deeper comprehension of tourists and tailoring their offerings accordingly. Additionally, it contributes to the management of destinations and the attraction of tourists. Research on electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) in Himachal Pradesh is limited, but few studies emphasise its significance in influencing tourist behaviour and attitudes. Additional investigation in this field has the potential to yield a more profound understanding and contribute to the formulation of more efficient tourist policies for the region.

Keywords: Adventure Tourism, Behavioural Intentions, Destination Choice Making, e-WOM, Tourist Attitude.

Introduction

Adventure tourism is one of the fastest growing sector of tourism industry (1, 2), attracting high spending tourists, boosting regional economies, and fostering environmentally responsible practices (3). In addition to the tourism sector, the continuous growth of this industry has a generally positive impact on the economies of the destination (4-6), the citizens there, and the environment. Adventures may be found everywhere, from exploring the deep woods around the Incan ruins at Machu Picchu to learning the long-kept mysteries of Angkor Wat in Cambodia. Explore Petra in Jordan's rock carvings or go back in time on the streets of Pompeii in Italy; holy rivers in India include the Ganges, Yamuna, Narmada, Godavari, and the whole of the Himalayan region. Fascinating and distinctive adventures are waiting to be found worldwide (7, 8). Travelers visit new places in search of exceptional, unique encounters (9, 10); six key factors- activity, motivation, risk, performance, experience, and surroundings-characterize adventure tourism (11). India has 365 days for adventure tourism destination (2) because of a varied range of products involving nature,

spirituality, adventure, and leisure to satisfy the desires of tourists (12, 13). India is an outdoor enthusiast's dream destination (2). Himachal Pradesh, with its internal strengths, provides more than just a physical challenge through its mountains, and variety of flora and fauna to enhance adventure. The state's adventure tourism industry includes mountain biking, river rafting, skiing, and trekking (14). While skiing is popular in Manali, Shimla, and Kufri, rivers like Chandrabhaga, Ravi, and Beas are ideal for rafting and kayaking. Traditionally, tourists used to take the opinions of their relatives, friends, and colleagues before visiting the destination or place. Nowadays, social media become a powerful tool (15, 16). The transformation of the world towards digitalization has changed how they collect information and make decisions about a place. Today, people are more inclined toward digital platforms to read other's opinions and reviews. Since tourists trust user-generated content like reviews and social media posts, electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) is essential to the tourism-of-mouth (e-WOM) is essential to the tourism industry due to its worldwide reach and trustwor-

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thiness. e-WOM is an important source of information that shapes tourists' perceptions and opinions of destinations. The crucial link between travelers' perceptions of destinations and their intention to visit (17). It shows that positive electronic word-of-mouth can significantly increase a tourist's desire to visit a location. e-WOM positively impacts destination trust, and online reviews can enhance the overall image of a destination (18). The role of electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) in tourist attitudes and travel intentions has attracted significant attention in the tourism sector. e-WOM refers to any online review, rating, or comment shared by current or past customers, and it plays a crucial role in how tourists perceive and select their vacation destinations (19). This phenomenon is particularly important in the tourism industry, where the intangible nature of services makes it challenging for consumers to evaluate them before they experience them (20).

Overall, electronic word-of-mouth significantly impacts tourist attitudes and travel preferences. In the digital era, understanding the functions of electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) will be essential for effectively engaging prospective tourists and improving their overall travel experiences.

The present study assesses the impact of e-WOM on tourists' attitudes and behaviors towards adventure destinations in the Himachal Pradesh region. It examines the impact of e-WOM on visitors' attitudes and assesses the influence of e-WOM on tourists' behavioral intentions towards adventure destinations.

The structure of the paper is as follows: Section 1 includes a brief introduction. The next section presents the background and develops the research hypotheses. Section 3 discusses the methodology, measurement instrument, and statistical method for analysis. Section 4 includes results, and Section 5 discusses these results and concludes the study and its implications for practice and future scope.

Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM)

The term "e-WOM" refers to "any informal communications through internet-based e-WOM", which has grown as an essential component influencing tourist destination choice. The tourist business largely relies on e-WOM since clients are more reliant on online interpersonal influence (21, 22) intangibles, like tourism services, cannot be analyzed in advance, leading to the increased risk when acquiring these items and services (23, 24). e-WOM is a valuable resource when making travel decisions and selecting travel products like destinations, hotels, and restaurants. e-WOM is a valuable resource (25). Significance of social media across both digital and physical worlds (26). Sharing

travel stories with friends, family (27), and unidentified audiences on social media has become commonplace in the modern world (28, 29). Travelers use social networking sites for various purposes, including seeking travel information, connecting with companions, and sharing advice (30, 31). Customers are more likely to share an event when they perceive it as personally meaningful (32). The impact of online travel groups on destination choice and the interpersonal role in shaping the tourism industry (33, 34). Thus, the above studies highlight the importance of e-WOM as a source of information in the tourism sector.

Attitude Toward the Tourist Destination

Attitude is a favorable or unfavorable evaluation of an object (35). Attitude plays an important role in a tourist's decision to visit the destination. Attitudes have three components: cognitive, emotional, and behavioral (36, 37). When attitudes shift, the new attitude prevails but may not completely replace the previous one (38). The person's overall assessment of engaging in the behavior is called attitude. Numerous studies have demonstrated that the attitude toward the behavior dictated the intention (39, 40). In a broader sense, a person is more likely to do something if they have a positive attitude (41). Marketing studies demonstrated that attitudes positively and significantly impact intentions (42-44). Individual's attitudes toward action reflect how seriously they take and assess the consequences of action (45). Attitudes reflect individuals' positive and negative thoughts and judgments about the action (46, 47). Traveler's attitudes were positively influenced by the perceived ease of use, socially motivated consumer innovativeness, and hedonically motivated consumer innovativeness (48). In this context, the present study focuses on the impact of e-WOM on the attitude of tourists while choosing a destination.

Behaviour Intention of Tourists

It is generally accepted that a person's intentions accurately reflect the driving forces that motivate them to act in a certain way (49). Intentions to engage in particular conduct are a sign of preparation and are thought to come before actual behavior (50, 49). Comparative to other sectors, tourism has varied definitions of what constitutes consumer satisfaction (51). As a crucial mediator in the link between behavior and attitude, behavioral intention has been acknowledged (49, 52). The positive e-WOM strengthens the consumers' belief and attitude towards destination by enhancing their trust (53).

Antecedents of e-WOM in online reviews, including the review quality, valence, credibility, and quantity have significant influence on attitude (54). The positive influence of memorable tourism experience leads to revisiting and engaging in word-of-mouth publicity (24, 55). The impact of e-WOM on platforms such as Trip Advisor on travel intentions to specific tourist attractions is examined, with the importance of online reviews in shaping tourist's decision (56). The above studies highlight the importance of behavioral intention in tourism.

Relationship between E-WOM, Tourist Attitude, and Behavioral Intention

Several research in the tourism sector have examined the structural links between eWOM, destination image, tourist attitude, and travel intention (57). e-WOM has a direct impact on tourist attitudes about a destination, which in turn influences travel (58). e-WOM positively influences destination image, attitudes toward the location, and, ultimately, travel intentions (59). e-WOM has a positive influence on the attitude of

tourist and their intention (60). The significance of e-WOM in influencing tourist attitudes and choices has been highlighted by comparing traditional and online word-of-mouth (61). Significance of e-WOM on tourist intention to revisit the destination (62). It has been evident from the above literature that e-WOM shows a positive impact on tourist attitudes. Previous studies focused on the impact of e-WOM on attitude and intention to visit the destination. However, very few studies examine the impact of e-WOM on tourist post behavior. Therefore, the present study examines the post-behavior of tourists with e-WOM to study the relationship between them. On the basis of e-WOM and intention to visit and the attitude of tourists, we hypothesize the positive relation between e-WOM and Behavioral Intention.

Based on previous studies, the present study formulates the hypothesis:

- H1 e-WOM regarding destination has a positive influence on the attitude of tourists.
- H2 e-WOM regarding destination has a positive influence on behavioral intention (post-behavior).

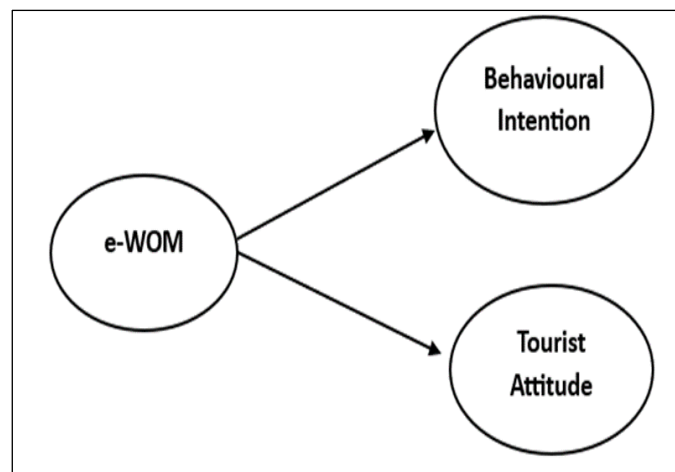


Figure 1: Conceptual Model

Figure 1 highlights the conceptual model for the study. Here, the study measures the impact of e-WOM on two key outcomes i.e. Behavioral Intention and Tourist Attitude. On the basis of above literature, the study posits that e-WOM directly shapes the tourist attitude and behavioral intention.

Methodology

Data Collection

The present study aims to examine the relationship of 'e-WOM' with tourist attitudes and behavioral intentions towards visiting a destination. The methodology used for the study is descriptive and follows a quantitative method. The target population for the study includes adventure tourists visiting Himachal Pradesh. The target audience was tourists who traveled to Kullu, Lahul

Spiti, and Kangra Himachal Pradesh, India. A total of 210 respondents were approached to participate in the survey, but only 173 of them did so adequately. The data was collected by visiting tourist places of Kangra (McLeod Ganj, Naddi, Bhagsunag, Bir billing), Kullu (Kasol, Naggar, Solang valley, old Manali, Vashisht), Lahul Spiti (Sissu, Trilokinath Keylong, near Atal tunnel) between October to December 2022 and January to June 2023. Convenience sampling is the most appropriate technique when it is not easy to cover every person. Based on the previous studies (63, 64), the present study uses Convenience sampling to include a diverse group of participants.

Measurement Instrument

The measurement instrument comprised four sections. The items from previous research studies were adapted to fit with our study (39, 65) and

changed in terms of language from the Antarctic context to the Indian context. For reliability and validity, the questionnaire was discussed with four professors. Further, the questionnaire was modified based on professor's opinion. The validity of the questionnaire was evaluated using SPSS 48, the Cronbach alpha value of 0.763 for the measurement scale, which indicates good internal consistency. The survey was pre-tested to verify the clarity and to reduce measurement error. The demographic information of the respondents, including their age, gender, marital status, country of origin, and state, was provided in the questionnaire's first section. The second segment used six statements for electronic word of mouth to understand the level of tourists using electronic media to collect information about the destination before visiting. Six statements about tourist attitudes toward their destination are made in the third part, which includes both positive and negative attitudes toward the adventure destination Himachal Pradesh. Tourist's Behavioural Intentions was the fourth section, and there were five statements in this section. It covers the statement regarding recommendations for others to visit the destination. On a '5-point Likert scale', from 5 to 1, "strongly Agree" to "strongly disagree," the assertions in sections two, three, and four were evaluated. Several researchers employed a five-point Likert scale in earlier investigations (3).

Statistical Methods

The questionnaire is used for data collection, and further Excel and SPSS 28 are used for analysis. This study makes use of SPSS for descriptive analysis, such as frequency and percentage, which assists in analyzing the demographic profile of those who participated in the study. The primary aim of descriptive tests is to provide an account of the qualities and attributes possessed by the sample. In addition, the mean, standard deviation, variance, Pearson correlation, chi-square with Phi, and Cramer's V were used for the data to do an analysis. The 'Chi-Square' test is a non-parametric test that may be used to verify statistically that there is a relationship between the variables (66, 67).

Results and Discussion

Survey respondents include 173 visitors to adventure destinations from across the nation provided the information for the evaluation of the parameters covered in the study. There are 173 respondents: 25% were from Uttar Pradesh, 17% were from different districts of Himachal Pradesh, followed by 16% from Punjab, 10% from Chandigarh, 10% from Delhi, 7% from Haryana, and 5% from Madhya Pradesh, 2% each from Bihar, Rajasthan, Kerala, and Uttarakhand and 1% each from West Bengal and Jharkhand. The data shows the representation of tourists from different regions and areas.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Education Qualification		Occupation	
High School or Less	4 (2.3%)	Private sector employee	70 (40.5%)
Graduate	61 (35.3%)	Government employee	15 (8.7%)
Post Graduate	94 (54.3%)	Own business/entrepreneur	15 (8.7%)
Doctorate	14 (8.1%)	Home Maker/ Not Working	73 (42.2%)
Gender		Marital Status	
Male	79 (45.7%)	Married	51 (29.5%)
Female	94 (54.3%)	Single	121 (69.9%)
Transgender	0 (0%)	Divorce	1 (.6%)
Age		Annual Income	
Less than 20	12 (6.9%)	Below Rs 5 lakh	115 (66.5)
Between 21 and 35	152 (87.9%)	Rs 5 lakh – Rs 20 lakh	32 (18.5%)
Between 36 and 50	8 (4.6%)	Rs 20 lakhs and above	4 (2.3%)
Above 50	1 (.6%)	Other (not mentioned)	22 (12%)

Table 1 explains in depth the variety of educational backgrounds. Only 2.3% of people were in high school or below, 8.1% had a PhD in a separate field, 54.3% were post-graduates, and 35.3% were graduates. This demonstrates the information gathered from a representative and highly qualified sample of tourists. 8.7% of people said they worked for the government, which included both state and central jobs. 40.5% were working for private companies, 8.7% had their businesses, and 42.2% were not working anywhere this included homemakers, students, and young people

who were not working. When analyzing statistics linked to Adventure destinations, the age component is quite important. Of the people who responded, only 6.9 % of respondents were under 20 years old, only 4.6 % were between 36 and 50 years old, and just 0.6 % were beyond 50 years old. 87.9 % were between the ages of 21 and 35. The best age for adventure-related activities is assumed to be between 21 and 35 years. Another crucial element that influences the choice of tourist destination and tourism activity that tourists will engage in is their annual income. Only 2.3 percent

of respondents in the current study had an annual income of more than 20 lakhs, compared to 18.5 percent, who had an income between 5 and 20 lakhs, and 66.5 percent, who had an income below Rs 5 lakh. The percentage of the annual income of the various slabs is genuinely justified by age group and occupation status.

Table 2 shows the mean analysis of 'e-WOM' factors. It is evident that the mean of all factors of 'e-WOM' is between 3 to 4, which means that e-WOM is a moderate factor. The mean value is highest with 3.84 for the statements e-WOM 1 and 3: "When choosing a desirable destination, I check online travel reviews written by other travellers" and "I frequently research a destination before I go there by reading internet travel reviews from

other people ."Thus, we can say these two factors are mostly influencing factors of e-WOM. The lowest mean is 3.23 with statement e-WOM 5, "I worry about my choice if I don't check online travel reviews from other travellers before visiting destination." The Highest standard deviation is 0.908 for statement e WOM4 "I often read other tourists' online travel reviews to know what destinations make good impressions on others" and the least standard deviation 0.845 statement e-WOM5 "I worry about my choice if I don't check online travel reviews from other travellers before visiting destination "The above analysis concludes that e-WOM shows variability in the respondents' responses.

Table 2: Mean Analysis of E-WOM

Electronic Word of Mouth	mean	σ	σ^2	Description
e WOM1. When choosing a desirable destination, I check online travel reviews written by other travelers.	3.84	.900	.811	Positive
e WOM2. Reading internet traveller reviews before visiting a place gives me confidence to travel a destination.	3.83	.903	.815	Positive
e WOM3. I frequently research a destination before I go there by reading internet travel reviews from other people.	3.84	.847	.718	Positive
e WOM4. I often read other tourists' online travel reviews to know what destinations make good impressions on others.	3.80	.908	.825	Positive
e WOM5. I worry about my choice if I don't check online travel reviews from other travellers before visiting destination.	3.23	.845	.714	Positive
e WOM6. To make sure I'm going to the right place, I generally read online travel evaluations from other tourists.	3.77	.857	.734	Positive
	3.71	0.90	0.81	Positive

Table 3: Mean Analysis of Respondent's Attitude Towards the Destination

Attitude of Tourist	Mean	σ	σ^2	Description
AT1. Himachal Pradesh Adventure destination is a very bad destination	1.92	.699	.489	Negative
AT2. Himachal Pradesh Adventure destination is a very good destination	3.90	.763	.582	Positive
AT3. Himachal Pradesh Adventure destination is a very worthless destination	1.81	.668	.446	Negative
AT4. Himachal Pradesh Adventure destination is a very valuable destination	4.05	.714	.509	Positive
AT5. Himachal Pradesh Adventure destination is a very unpleasant destination	1.81	.594	.353	Negative
AT6. Himachal Pradesh Adventure destination is a very pleasant destination	4.14	.737	.543	Positive
	2.93	1.29	1.68	Positive

The mean analysis of how tourists feel about Himachal Pradesh is shown in Table 3. Statement AT 4 (valuable destination) has the highest mean, 4.05, whereas AT 3 (Worthless destination) and AT 5 (unpleasant destination) have the lowest mean, 1.81. Based on the above findings, Himachal Pradesh is a very nice and worthwhile place to visit. Overall, the way people feel about Himachal

Adventure destination is good and pleasant destination. The highest standard deviation with 0.763, AT 2 (very good destination), whereas the lowest deviation with 0.594, AT 5 (unpleasant destination). It demonstrates different views and opinions, and we get the conclusion that most respondents had a positive opinion towards Himachal Pradesh.

Table 4: Mean Analysis of Respondents' Behavioural Intentions

Tourists Behavioural Intentions	Mean	σ	σ^2	Description
BI1. If I had to decide again, I would choose this destination	3.92	.838	.703	Positive
BI2. I will recommend this destination to friends and family	3.90	.763	.582	Positive
BI3. I will speak highly of this destination to friends and relatives	4.05	.722	.521	Positive
BI4. I intend to holiday in this destination within the next six month	3.11	.803	.645	Positive
BI5. Consider Himachal Pradesh as your choice to visit in the future	4.05	.709	.503	Positive
	3.80	0.84	0.71	Positive

Mean analyses of respondent behavior intentions are displayed in Table 4. The highest mean recorded to be 4.05 statements "I will speak highly of this destination to friends and relatives" and "Consider Himachal Pradesh as your choice to visit in the future." The lowest mean recorded was 3.11 with the statement, "I intend to holiday in this destination within the six months. The standard

deviation is lowest (0.709) for statement BI 5, "Consider Himachal Pradesh as your choice to visit in the future," and highest (0.838) for statement BI 1, "If I had to decide again, I would choose this destination." The results indicate that respondents' overall behavioral intentions towards the destination of Himachal Pradesh are favorable.

Table 5: Variables-Wise Relationship between Electronic Word of Mouth on Tourist Behavior Intention

	BI 1	BI 2	BI 3	BI 4	BI 5
e-WOM 1	-0.010	0.043	0.056	-0.032	-0.060
e-WOM 2	0.013	-0.042	0.057	-0.055	-0.023
e-WOM 3	-0.109	0.010	-0.035	-0.102	-0.054
e-WOM 4	0.116	0.095	-0.057	-0.057	0.071
e-WOM 5	-0.047	-0.008	-0.008	-0.132	-0.049
e-WOM 6	-0.090	-0.143	-0.039	0.028	0.029

Table 5 depicts the variable-wise influence of 'electronic word of mouth' on tourist behavioral intention. e-WOM1 shows a positive relation with BI 2 (0.043), and BI 3 (0.056), which means that online travel reviews are directly related to a recommendation and promotion about a destination. On the other side, BI 1 (-0.010), BI 4 (-0.032), and BI 5 (-0.060) depict a negative relation of online reviews with destination preference, promotion, and revisit to destination. e-WOM 2 illustrated a positive relation with BI 1 (0.013) and BI 3 (0.057), which shows that confidence about a destination is positively associated with destination preference and promotion. Whereas negative relation with BI 2 (-0.042), BI 4 (-0.055), and BI 5 (-0.023) means that respondent's confidence about destination is negatively associated with recommendation, revisit to destination. Few Respondents say that destination knowledge is positively associated with recommendation about a destination, e-WOM 3 with BI 2 (0.010) and negatively related with a preference of destination BI 1(-0.109), promotion

of destination BI 3 (-0.035), destination revisit BI 4 (-0.102), Plan to visit in future BI 5, (-0.054). e-WOM four, related with BI 1 (0.116), BI 2 (0.095), and BI 5 (0.071), predicts that destination selection is positively related to destination preference, recommendation, and revisit in the future. On the other side, the promotion of destination BI 3 (-0.057), and revisiting destination BI 4 (-0.057) show a negative association with the selection of destination. e-WOM 5, respondents fear about destination without visiting review shows adverse relation with all factors of behavioral intension such as destination preference (-0.047), recommendation (-0.008), promotion (-0.008), revisit in next six months (-0.132) and future visit (-0.049). The association of e-WOM six respondents' surety about destination positively correlated with BI 4 (0.028) and BI 5 (0.029) revisit to the destination in the next six months. In the future and, BI 1 (-0.090), BI 2 (-0.143), BI 3 (-0.039) are preferences of destination, recommend others, and promotion of destination shows negative relation with e-WOM6, destination surety.

Table 6: Correlation between Electronic Word of Mouth on Tourist Behavioural Intention

		e-WOM	BI
e - WOM	Pearson Correlation	1	-.076
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.318
	N	173	173
BI	Pearson Correlation	-.076	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.318	
	N	173	173

Table 6 demonstrates the correlation analysis between 'e-WOM' and tourist behaviour intentions (BI). The correlation coefficient value -0.076 indicates a slight negative trend between 'e-WOM'

and behavioral intention, but the relationship is extremely weak. It has shown that changes in e-WOM are not strongly related to behavioral intention.

Table 7: Variables-Wise Relationship between Electronic Word of Mouth on Tourist Attitude

	AT 1	AT 2	AT 3	AT 4	AT 5	AT 6
e-WOM 1	0.064	0.043	0.016	-0.052	-0.112	0.027
e-WOM 2	0.008	-0.042	0.033	-0.042	0.005	0.010
e-WOM 3	-0.060	0.010	-0.065	-0.064	-0.085	-0.028
e-WOM 4	0.168	0.095	-0.006	0.041	0.047	-0.034
e-WOM 5	-0.010	-0.008	0.048	-0.047	-0.120	-0.110
e-WOM 6	-0.009	-0.143	-0.015	0.036	0.041	-0.114

The influences of 'electronic word of mouth' on the attitudes of tourists are given in Table 7. e-WOM1 shows a positive relation with AT1(0.064), AT2 (0.043), AT3 (0.016) and AT6 (0.027), which means that online travel reviews are directly related to Himachal Pradesh as a bad destination, good destination, worthless destination, and the pleasant destination. On the other side, AT 4 (-0.052), and AT5 (-0.112) depict a negative relation between online travel reviews of a valuable destination and an unpleasant destination. e-WOM 2 illustrated a positive relation with AT1 (0.008), AT3 (0.033), AT5 (0.005), and AT6 (0.010), which shows that confidence about a destination is positively associated with Himachal Pradesh as a bad destination, worthless, unpleasant, and pleasant destination. Whereas negative relation with AT2 (-0.042), and AT4 (-0.042) means that respondent's confidence about a destination is negatively associated with Himachal Pradesh good tourist place and valuable destination. Some Respondents say that destination knowledge is positively associated with Himachal Pradesh as a good destination, e-WOM 3 with AT 2 (0.010) and negatively related with Himachal Pradesh as a bad destination AT1(-0.060), worthless destination

AT3 (-0.065), valuable destination AT4 (-0.064), unpleasant destination AT5 (-0.085), and pleasant destination AT6 (-0.028). e-WOM four related with AT1 (0.168), AT2 (0.095), AT4 (0.041), and AT5 (0.047) predicts that destination selection is positively associated with a bad destination, good destination, valuable destination, and unpleasant destination. On the other side, the worthless destination AT3 (-0.006), and pleasant destination AT6 (-0.034) show a negative association with the selection of destination. AT3 (0.048), only one statement shows a positive relationship with e-WOM 5, which means destinations without visiting a travel review are directly related to a worthless destination. All the rest statements AT1 (-0.010), AT2 (-0.008), AT4 (-0.047), AT5 (-0.120), and AT6 (-0.110) depict a negative relation with a destination without visiting a travel review. The association of e-WOM six respondents' surety about destination positively correlated with AT4 (0.036) and AT5 (0.041) valuable destination and unpleasant. Another side AT1 (-0.009), AT2 (-0.143), AT3 (-0.015), and AT6 (-0.114) are bad destinations, good destinations, a worthless destination, and pleasant destination shows negative relation with e-WOM6, destination surety.

Table 8: Correlation between Electronic Word of Mouth on Tourist Attitude

		e-WOM	AT
e - WOM	Pearson Correlation	1	-.023
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.766
	N	173	173
AT	Pearson Correlation	-.023	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.766	
	N	173	173

Table 8 demonstrates the correlation between computed factors of 'e-WOM' and tourist attitude (AT). The correlation coefficient value -0.023 indicates a slight negative trend between the 'e-WOM' and tourist attitude (AT), but the relationship is extremely weak. It has shown that changes in 'e-WOM' are not strongly correlated with tourist attitudes toward the destination.

Conclusion

The present study investigates the relationship between e-WOM, tourist attitude, and behavioral intention of tourists special focus on adventure destinations in Himachal Pradesh. The findings of the study contradicted prior studies (58,59,60,61). This research reveals that e-WOM has a negative relation with the behavioral intention of tourists after visiting a destination. According to the theory

of planned behavior, e-WOM and behavioral intention show a positive association. Similarly, the Expectancy-Disconfirmation theory also suggests a significant positive association between e-WOM and behavioral intention. On the basis of the above theories, e-WOM has a positive relation with the behavioral intention of tourists. However, this study reveals an insignificant relation between these two.

To analyze of relationship between e-WOM and Tourist attitude, results indicate an insignificant relation. As per the Affective-Behavioral-Cognitive theory, e-WOM shows a positive relation with attitude. However, the present study contrasts the ABC theory results; it highlights that e-WOM and attitude have no direct relation. The findings of the study reveal dissonance with the theory of planned behavior, Expectancy-Disconfirmation theory, and Affective-Behavioral-Cognitive theory, which show different results. The study's results differ because it specifically focuses on adventure tourists. In Himachal, the perception of adventure in electronic media differs from the experience. Consequently, our findings indicate an enhancement in social media content alongside a necessity for increased transparency. These results indicate the necessity of incorporating additional variables, such as destination-specific factors or the personal motivations of visitors. This approach could be consistent with alternative theoretical perspectives, such as the Stimulus-Organism-Response model.

The limitations of the study provide valuable insights for future research. Firstly, the study examines the impact of "e-WOM" on the behavioral intention of tourist and attitude. Future studies may extend the analysis to other variables such as trust, destination image, and satisfaction, as the TPB and ABC models suggested. Secondly, this study lacks the theoretical framework, future study incorporates the theory for more authenticity. Thirdly, the data collection was limited to three states of Himachal Pradesh. Future studies may cover other prominent destinations. The present study personally visits to collect data at the destination, future studies may utilise the social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube to cover a broader range of tourists. The present study is not generalizable because it uses convenience sampling as respondents selected based on their accessibility leads to potential bias in research. Therefore, future research suggests to employ more robust sampling for generalizability. Finally, the study is geographically limited to Himachal Pradesh, Future studies may cover other regions and comparative studies of the two regions.

This study provides important insights for government agencies and tourism organizations by

clarifying how electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) affects tourists' attitudes, behaviors, and decision-making, especially in adventure tourism locations in mountainous regions like Himachal Pradesh. By examining the role of e-WOM in shaping perceptions of destinations, this research helps policymakers develop more focused and effective marketing strategies that utilize user-generated content on their social media sites. Through social media platforms, tour operators advertise destinations by uploading photos and videos, tagging specific locations, and employing hashtags, among other techniques. The government provides support by establishing an online community for destination sharing and encouraging event management to promote the destination and attract more domestic as well as international visitors. The results support the formation of strategic partnerships with digital influencers to boost the appeal of destinations and promote positive marketing efforts.

Abbreviations

e-WOM: Electronic Word-of-Mouth, BI: Behaviour Intentions.

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Author Contributions

Anuj Kumar supervised the data collection and helped prepare the manuscript. Conceptualization — Anuj Kumar, Ashish Nag, Pratibha Sharma, Vishal Choudhary, and Vipin Kumar. Methodology — Ashish Nag, Pratibha Sharma, and Anuj Kumar. Software — Ashish Pratibha Sharma and Vipin Kumar. Validation — Anuj Kumar, and Ashish Nag. Formal analysis — Vishal Choudhary and Vipin Kumar. Investigation — Anuj Kumar and Pratibha Sharma. Writing- original draft preparation — Anuj Kumar, and Ashish Nag. Review-writing and editing — Anuj Kumar, Pratibha Sharma, and Ashish Nag. Supervision — Ashish Nag. All the authors have examined and approved the manuscript for publication.

Conflict of Interest

The authors have declared no conflict of interest with this work.

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