UNDERSTANDING EWOM INTENTIONS FROM APPROACH-AVOIDANCE PERSPECTIVE: A COMPREHENSIVE MODEL OF DESTINATION TRUST, SATISFACTION, AND LOYALTY

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Abstract

Purpose – Using the dualistic perspective of Approach-Avoidance, this study aims to determine tourists' eWOM intentions by examining the relationship between Approach-Avoidance reactions, destination trust, and satisfaction. In particular, this study examines the effects of Approach-Avoidance reactions on destination trust and satisfaction and thus their effects on tourists' eWOM intentions.

Methodology – An online survey was conducted among Indonesian tourists who visited Pulau Komodo in Labuan Bajo, Indonesia. 333 valid responses were received. Analyses were conducted using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) with Partial Least Squares (PLS) to test the study hypotheses to provide a comprehensive overview of relationships.

Findings – The results showed that tourists' eWOM intentions were influenced by destination satisfaction and destination trust. Further, approach reaction was found to have a positive influence on destination satisfaction and destination trust. However, the results showed no significant relationship between avoidance reaction and destination trust and satisfaction.

Originality of the research – This study enhances tourism literature in tourists' eWOM intentions through dualistic perspectives. It provides detailed insights into how eWOM intentions are influenced by Approach-Avoidance reactions, destination trust, and destination satisfaction, focusing on the context of Pulau Komodo in Indonesia.

Keywords Approach-Avoidance, destination trust, destination satisfaction, eWOM intentions, Komodo Dragon, Indonesia.

INTRODUCTION

Understanding tourists' Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) intentions is critical for tourism industry, particularly in countries like Indonesia where tourism plays a crucial economic role. The role of eWOM in Indonesia's tourism sector has been extensively investigated across various tourism types, including halal (Aimon et al., 2023), heritage (Briliana, 2019; Muliawanti et al., 2024), and natural tourism (Arismayanti et al., 2024; Aviana & Alversia, 2019). These studies highlight that eWOM communication on social media serves as a primary information source for tourists (Lukiyanto et al., 2023). Tourists increasingly rely on eWOM, including online reviews and social media posts to assess the quality and reliability of tourism services such as accommodations, attractions, and tours (Coelho et al., 2018).

The intangible nature of tourism products encourages the importance of eWOM intentions in influencing travel decisions (Casaló et al., 2015; Goyal & Taneja, 2023), as tourists often base their plans on peer-shared experiences (Nilashi et al., 2022). The pervasive influence of digital platforms further amplifies eWOM's impact on tourist decisions (Zhou et al., 2021), given its wide accessibility and perceived credibility among users (Goyal & Taneja, 2023). Therefore, understanding and effectively managing eWOM intentions are critical for enhancing destination competitiveness and attractiveness, particularly in economies heavily reliant on tourism, such as Indonesia. Understanding eWOM intentions can provide insights for destination managers to develop strategies in cultivating a positive destination image (Goyal & Taneja, 2023; Setiawan et al., 2021) and enhancing tourists' intentions to visit and revisit a destination (Aviana & Alversia, 2019).

Numerous studies have been conducted to understand the drivers of eWOM intentions including individual experiences and well-being (Fan et al., 2023) and the complex dynamics of online platforms (Nasution et al., 2023). Customer satisfaction, which is closely associated with service quality, emerges as an important determinant of tourists' eWOM intentions (Meenakshy & Srivastava, 2022; Rungklin et al., 2023). The eWOM intentions have also been positively influenced by trust in the information provider (Guede et al., 2018; Hossain et al., 2024), perception of the destination (Ladeira et al., 2016; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2021), and resonance of memorable travel experiences (Moliner-Tena et al., 2023; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2021; Souki et al., 2023). In the context of Indonesia, positive service experiences and a favourable destination image significantly contribute to tourists' satisfaction and trust, thereby increasing their likelihood of sharing positive eWOM (Aimon et al., 2023). Arismayanti and colleagues (2024) examined the role of perceived value and emotional experiences in influencing tourists' eWOM

intentions in Indonesian destinations. Their research revealed that positive emotional experiences, such as awe-inspiring natural landscapes and authentic cultural encounters, were found to evoke strong positive eWOM intentions among tourists. More recent, Muliawanti and colleagues (2024) found that tourist's knowledge, involvement, and the novelty offered by a heritage destination positively affect tourist's eWOM intention in heritage tourism context.

Despite promising evidence regarding the formation of eWOM, comprehending eWOM intentions presents challenges. Previous studies have predominantly explored eWOM intentions in relation to positive factors such as satisfaction, trust, perceptions of destinations, and memorable travel experiences (Hossain et al., 2024; Moliner-Tena et al., 2023; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2021; Rungklin et al., 2023). However, there remains a scarcity of research examining the extent to which negative factors of destinations influence tourists' eWOM intentions. Furthermore, few studies investigate the simultaneous influences of both positive and negative factors of destinations on eWOM intentions. It is crucial to consider both positive and negative factors' influences on tourists' eWOM intentions because destinations typically feature a blend of positive and negative factors in their service offerings (Maeng et al., 2013). Moreover, destination marketers must understand not only the motivations behind tourists engaging in eWOM but also the reasons for abstaining from it (Mughairi & Bhaskar, 2024). Addressing these challenges is pivotal for encouraging genuine eWOM, which serves as a cost-effective marketing tool for destinations (Lukiyanto et al., 2023), while also mitigating the risks posed by fake and misleading reviews.

A promising direction in this research lies in exploring tourists' electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) intentions through a dual Approach-Avoidance perspective, which illuminates the nuanced decision-making processes influenced by both attractive and unattractive aspects of an entity (Maeng et al., 2013). Approach reactions typically arise from promotional interests and positive emotions, whereas avoidance reactions aim to mitigate perceived risks (Maeng et al., 2013). Approach-avoidance theory elucidates individuals' propensity to either engage with stimuli promising positive outcomes or avoid those potentially leading to negative consequences, thereby shedding light on the underlying motivations for their actions or inactions (Istijanto & Handoko, 2022). This theoretical framework has seen application in diverse consumer behaviours studies in Indonesia, such as in the context of purchasing bubble tea (Istijanto & Handoko, 2022) and Korean skincare products (Jung et al., 2023) In tourism research, the Approach-Avoidance framework has been notably employed to explore motivations and deterrents in various contexts, such as historic city and heritage sites (Jacobsen et al., 2019; Papadopoulou et al., 2023), sustainable destination (Ud Din et al., 2024), and seasonal tourism (Senbeto & Hon, 2019). However, its application in Indonesian tourism studies, particularly concerning eWOM intentions, remains significantly underexplored.

This study aims to better understand the formation of tourists' eWOM intentions. By using Pulau Komodo in Indonesia as a case study, this study investigates the relations between approach and avoidance reactions and destination trust and destination satisfaction to influence tourists' eWOM intentions. Pulau Komodo, known for its remote beauty and as the home of the world's largest living lizards, the Komodo dragons (Purwandana et al., 2014). Pulau Komodo offers a unique setting to examine how different factors encourage or dissuade tourists from sharing their experiences online (Nasution et al., 2023). Highlighting Pulau Komodo's rich biodiversity, this research seeks to understand how positive triggers, like its unique wildlife and natural beauty (Asriyani & Verheijen, 2020; Zug & Kaiser, 2014), and negative triggers, such as pollution or poor facilities (Cordova et al., 2021; Widaningrum & Damanik, 2016), influence tourists' trust in the destination and their overall satisfaction, thereby affecting their eWOM intentions. By analysing these dynamics, destination marketers can more effectively design travel experiences that amplify positive aspects (e.g., the island's exotic fauna and biodiversity) and address negative aspects (e.g., litter or inadequate infrastructure). Consequently, this study intends to detail the complex interactions between the destinations' stimuli for approach or avoidance reactions, destination trust, and satisfaction in shaping tourists' intentions to share their experiences, enabling marketers to tailor experiences that encourage eWOM intentions.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

The subsequent section offers a summary of current studies on Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) intentions and the Approach-Avoidance perspective, forming the foundation for developing hypotheses. Additionally, the theoretical framework supporting this research is outlined.

1.1. eWOM Intention in the Tourism Sector

In tourism, eWOM intentions describe tourists' efforts to post their travel experiences and views, including sharing opinions, recommendations, and reviews on tourism services using online platforms, such as social media, review sites, and forums (Senbeto & Hon, 2019). The rise of mobile platforms has made it much easier to create and share Word of Mouth (WOM) (Setiawan et al., 2021). Apps like TripAdvisor (Alsayat, 2023; Marine-Roig, 2022), Booking.com (Mariani & Borghi, 2023), and social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook (Silaban et al., 2023; Vieira et al., 2023) are prominent examples where technological advancements have facilitated the sharing of eWOM in tourism. These platforms enable tourists to share their views and experiences in real-time, enhancing the immediacy and impact of their messages (Gretzel et al., 2015). Further, the interactive nature of these platforms encourages more engagement, suggesting that technology not only increases the reach of eWOM but also the likelihood of participation in it (Leung et al., 2013; Meenakshy & Srivastava, 2022). eWOM is perceived as unbiased opinions (Goyal &

Taneja, 2023; Litvin et al., 2008; Setiawan et al., 2021) and thus significantly affects how potential travellers perceive destinations and their attractiveness (Gretzel & Yoo, 2008; Litvin et al., 2008), influencing their decisions to visit (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004; Litvin et al., 2008) or revisit these places (Gholipour Soleimani & Einolahzadeh, 2018; Rungklin et al., 2023).

Studies have shown that both internal and external factors shape the intentions to perform eWOM. Internal drivers include personal satisfaction from helping others and the desire for self-promotion, both of which are strongly associated with the likelihood of sharing travel experiences online (Bronner & De Hoog, 2010). People are more inclined to post about their travels if they believe it helps others or boosts their own social standing. Additionally, subjective norms, which refer to an individual's belief about whether significant others think they should perform a behaviour, have a notable impact on the decision to share eWOM (Cheung & Lee, 2009). The belief in giving back and feeling part of a community also serve as key internal motivators for sharing online (Meenakshy & Srivastava, 2022). Externally, businesses can stimulate eWOM sharing through rewards and incentives, encouraging more people to share their travel experiences (Munzel & H. Kunz, 2014).

Furthermore, a study by Rasoolimanesh et al. (2021) in heritage tourism found that factors like visitor engagement, the destination's image, and memorable experiences positively influence the likelihood of performing eWOM. In the context of resort hotels, Fan et al. (2023) suggested that entertaining experience, escapist experience, estetic experience, and educational experience indirectly affect eWOM intention through hedonic well-being. Moreover, satisfaction with a destination and trust in it are consistently identified as key drivers of eWOM. Tourists who feel satisfied are more prone to post positive reviews and recommendations online, acting as influencers within their networks (Pandey et al., 2022; Tsai, 2016; Warapsari & Rusfian, 2021). Satisfaction leads tourists to engage in eWOM to assist others in making well-informed travel decisions (Huang et al., 2010; Zhou et al., 2021). Trust in a destination, including confidence in its promises and information, also plays a crucial role. High levels of trust encourage tourists to spread positive eWOM, thereby enhancing the destination's reputation and attracting potential visitors (Del Chiappa et al., 2018; Gretzel & Yoo, 2008). Both satisfaction and trust in a destination are perceived as key factors in motivating tourists to share their positive experiences online (Bigne et al., 2005; Tsai, 2016). Briliana (2019) employed social eWOM to determine millennials' intention to travel to cultural heritage destination and found that it acted as the strongest predictors in the model.

While much attention has been devoted to understanding the drivers of eWOM intentions, there's a significant gap in our knowledge regarding what prevents people from engaging in eWOM. Few studies have delved into why individuals might hesitate to share their opinions online, often citing concerns like privacy issues, fear of negative reactions, and potential misunderstandings. Additionally, there's limited research on how people's experiences at destinations influence their willingness to share online. Talwar et al. (2021) suggested that while positive experiences leading to destination satisfaction, encourage eWOM engagement, negative aspects or obstacles might discourage it or even lead to sharing negative feedback instead. This gap indicates the importance of taking a comprehensive understanding of eWOM intentions, considering both what encourages and discourages sharing related to the destination. Approach-Avoidance theory is a useful framework for understanding eWOM generation in tourism. By examining the interplay between these encouraging (approach) and discouraging (avoidance) factors, researchers and practitioners can gain a deeper understanding of the complexities involved in online sharing behaviours. Furthermore, these insights can guide the development of targeted strategies to address barriers to eWOM engagement and enhance the effectiveness of destination marketing efforts.

1.2. Approach-Avoidance Theory in Tourist Behaviours

Current study delves into how the Approach-Avoidance theory influences tourists' decisions to participate in eWOM, highlighting its relevance to eWOM behaviours. The Approach-Avoidance theory, elucidated by Elliot (2006), offers valuable insights into human behaviour by proposing that our actions are guided by both positive (approach) and negative (avoidance) factors. According to this theory, individuals are inclined towards behaviour or objects that evoke positive feelings (approach responses) and are deterred by those associated with negative feelings (avoidance responses). The intensity of individuals' reactions to different situations or objects hinges on how we perceive them as positive or negative (Jacobsen et al., 2019). At times, individuals may encounter a dilemma where the same situation or object presents both appealing and unappealing aspects, resulting in mixed approach and avoidance reactions. These dynamics are shaped by personal experiences with the specific actions or objects under consideration.

In the tourism industry, the concept of Approach-Avoidance is observed as tourists weight the benefits of travel against the potential risks or drawbacks of visiting a destination (Bagozzi & Dholakia, 1999). For instance, a traveller might be drawn to a destination for its rich cultural heritage, a positive factor that encourages a positive response. However, concerns about issues like overcrowding or the impacts of over-tourism can act as negative factors, discouraging the traveller and affecting their overall behaviour and choice of destination (Jacobsen et al., 2019). There have been a few studies within tourism research that have utilized the Approach-Avoidance theory to analyse such dynamics. For example, Senbeto and Hon (2019) explored how this theory explains the contrasting attitudes of tourists towards visiting a destination during peak versus off-peak seasons. They discovered that the lively atmosphere and abundance of activities available during peak seasons attract tourists, generating a positive approach response. Conversely, the reduced services and attractions available during off-peak seasons result in a negative avoidance response, deterring tourists from visiting (Senbeto & Hon, 2019).

Recent research has explored how tourists respond to crowded environments through the Approach-Avoidance theory perspective (Jacobsen et al., 2019; Maeng et al., 2013; Papadopoulou et al., 2023). An approach reaction entails a positive attitude, where tourists enjoy the diversity of people, engage in social activities, and appreciate bustling environments. Conversely, an avoidance reaction manifests as feelings of stress or anxiety due to crowding, concerns about personal space, safety issues, noise, and potential cultural conflicts (Jacobsen et al., 2019; Papadopoulou et al., 2023). Interestingly, despite the assumption that crowded places may deter visitors, Maeng et al. (2013) discovered that crowded settings can indeed trigger an avoidance response in tourists, heightening safety concerns and the need for precautions. However, this reaction may lessen if the crowd comprises individuals with whom tourists identify or feel a sense of belonging.

Although the Approach-Avoidance perspective remains relatively underexplored in tourism literature, it offers a promising framework for comprehending tourist behaviour. Scholars have recommended this theoretical approach for future research to delve into various tourism aspects, including memorable experiences, visit intentions, and levels of satisfaction and trust (Guede et al., 2018; Hosany et al., 2022; Rungklin et al., 2023; Wang & Xia, 2021). Understanding the factors that attract or deter tourists from destinations and activities is pivotal for stakeholders in the tourism industry. With this understanding, they can curate and manage travel experiences that align with tourists' preferences and needs. For instance, positive experiences like exceptional customer service, cultural immersion, or breath-taking scenery can elicit approach reactions, fostering satisfaction and encouraging positive eWOM. Conversely, negative factors such as cleanliness issues, safety concerns, or instances of discrimination can trigger avoidance reactions. These negative encounters may lead to disillusionment and dissuade tourists from sharing their experiences or prompt them to share negative eWOM as a warning to others.

Further investigation into the intricate relationship between tourist satisfaction, trust, and their propensity to share eWOM is required, particularly regarding how distinct positive and negative experiences at a destination influence these factors. Positive interactions, such as encountering friendly locals, enjoying high-quality accommodations, or partaking in memorable activities, naturally enhance tourists' satisfaction and trust in the destination. This heightened level of contentment and trust serves as a potent motivator for tourists to share positive eWOM, driven by their desire to convey their satisfaction and recommend the destination to others. Conversely, negative experiences—such as encountering misleading advertising, receiving poor service, or experiencing unmet expectations—can significantly diminish satisfaction and trust. This dissatisfaction not only diminishes the likelihood of generating positive eWOM but may also prompt tourists to share negative eWOM as a cautionary tale for prospective visitors. Exploring these dynamics underscores the pivotal role of satisfaction and trust as mediators in transforming personal travel experiences into either endorsements or criticisms via eWOM.

1.3. Theoretical Framework of Relations between Approach-Avoidance Reactions, Destination Satisfaction, Trust, and eWOM Intentions

Adopting Approach-Avoidance framework, this study attempts to thoroughly investigate how both positive and negative travel experiences influence tourists' intentions to engage in eWOM. Positive experiences prompt approach reactions, increasing the likelihood of sharing positive eWOM, while negative experiences trigger avoidance reactions, dissuading eWOM sharing (Senbeto & Hon, 2019). Therefore, the interaction between a destination's positive and negative aspects may impact tourists' levels of satisfaction and trust, which, in turn, influence their eWOM intentions. This research explores how approach and avoidance reactions, stemming from tourists' experiences, affect their satisfaction, trust, and subsequent eWOM intentions. It suggests that the balance between positive and negative experiences influences satisfaction and trust, thereby impacting eWOM intentions. The objective is to provide a comprehensive understanding of how travel experiences influence eWOM intentions, offering insights for more effective destination marketing strategies.

This research aims to address the question: How do tourists' positive (approach) and negative (avoidance) reactions, based on their experiences, impact their satisfaction, trust, and intentions to share eWOM? It suggests that the combination of positive and negative travel experiences shapes levels of satisfaction and trust, thereby influencing the likelihood of sharing eWOM. The goal is to elucidate the intricate effects of travel experiences on eWOM, offering valuable insights for enhancing destination marketing strategies. Furthermore, the study presents a theoretical model illustrating the pathway from tourists' positive and negative reactions, through their experiences, to their satisfaction and trust, ultimately affecting their eWOM sharing intentions (as depicted in Figure 1). Building on this framework, the research proposes the following hypotheses:

    H1: Approach Reaction has a positive effect on Destination Satisfaction
    H2: Approach Reaction has a positive effect on Destination Trust
    H3: Avoidance Reaction has a negative effect on Destination Satisfaction
    H4: Avoidance Reaction has a negative effect on Destination Trust
    H5: Destination Satisfaction has a positive effect on Destination Trust
    H6: Destination Satisfaction has a positive effect on eWOM
    H7: Destination Trust has a positive effect on eWOM

Figure 1: **Research Framework**
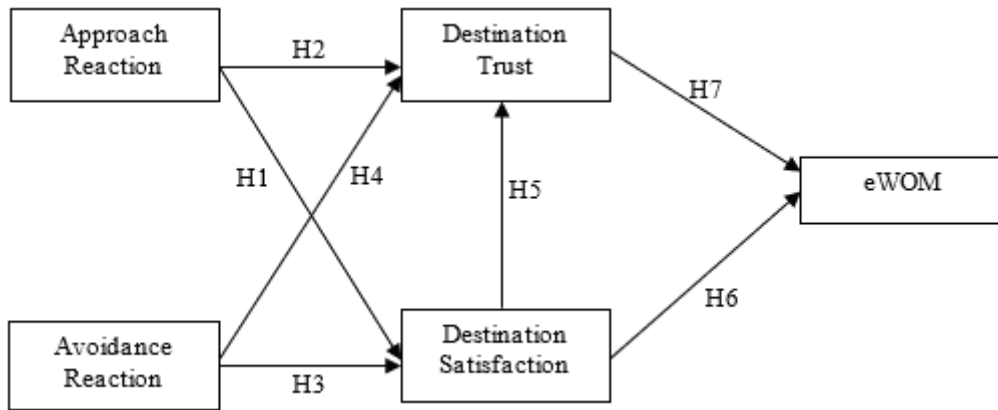
2.. METHODS

2.1. Study Site

Pulau Komodo is a place for the "surviving" giant lizard located in the eastern region of Indonesia. The site is a conservation and tourism flagship for Indonesia with a significant economic contribution to the local community (Kodir et al., 2019; Walpole & Leader-Williams, 2002). Komodo dragon is often used as the country promotional material in tourism and foreign investment proposal ("The Komodo Economy," 2012) and its natural habitat is designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1991 (UNESCO World Heritage Convention, 2024). Besides its benefits for the economy, the increased tourism activities brought by this recognition also benefits the protected animal by increasing its body mass through additional feeding (Ardiantiono et al., 2018), despite being considered an intrusive practices that alters Komodo's behaviour (Walpole & Leader-Williams, 2002). Other negative impacts brought by the tourism activities are the increased Komodo's competition and predation (Ardiantiono et al., 2018), injury and mortality from traffic accidents (Azmi et al., 2021), and increased plastic pollution around the island (Cordova et al., 2021; Germanov et al., 2019). However, despite the significant number of research on the tourism impact in KNP, studies regarding eWOM in this site is lacking. A study on the technological factors affecting eWOM sharing about Pulau Komodo by Nasution et al. (2023) found that the characteristics of online platforms (Google Reviews, TripAdvisors, and Twitter), including time dimension and interactivity, affected the depth of experience sharing performed by tourist. However, it did not discuss the factors affecting eWOM intentions based on destination's performance.

Figure 2: **Map of Pulau Komodo**
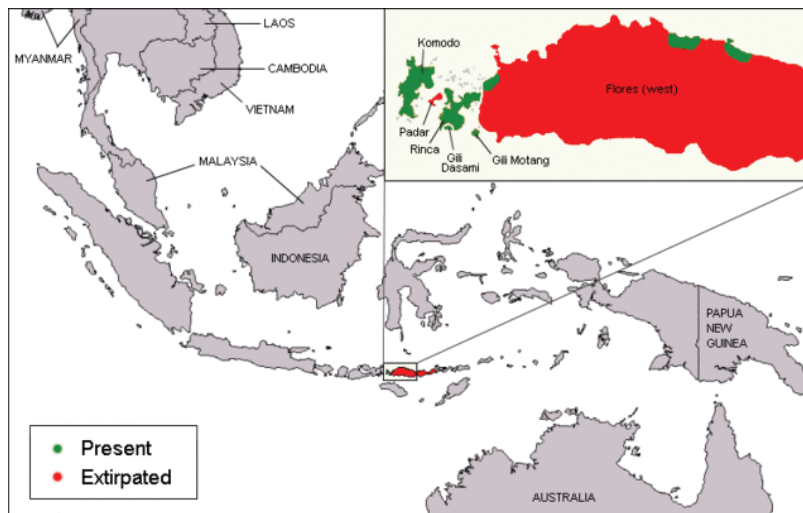
Source: Original uploader was Tommyknocker at en.wikipedia
This work has been released into the public domain by its author, Tommyknocker, at the English Wikipedia project. This applies worldwide.
[[File:Komodo dragon distribution.gif|Komodo_dragon_distribution]]
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Komodo_dragon_distribution.gif
Public Domain
Original uploader was Tommyknocker at en.wikipedia

Figure 3: **Komodo Dragon**

Source: Komodo National Park - taken during a photo trip to Indonesia in 2018 - taken by Thomas Fuhrmann, SnowmanStudios
This file is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International license, brightness enhanced
[[File:Komodo dragon (Varanus komodoensis) on Pulau Rindja - Indonesia 17.jpg|Komodo_dragon_(Varanus_komodoensis)_on_Pulau_Rindja_-_Indonesia_17]]
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Komodo_dragon_(Varanus_komodoensis)_on_Pulau_Rindja_-_Indonesia_17.jpg
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2.2. Research Method

The following section describes the methods employed to examine the role of Approach-Avoidance response in affecting eWOM intentions. Quantitative approach using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) analysis in Smart-PLS (Partial Least Square) was applied to test all of the hypotheses. All the required data are collected through an online survey which is distributed through the local and national Pulau Komodo tourists' community in Facebook with tourists who have visited Pulau Komodo targeted as the research samples. An introduction explaining the criteria for participation was provided when the survey link was posted and respondents who are active in the tourism community were asked to share the questionnaire to their colleagues that do not participate in the tourism community through short messages or social media to reach more tourists. A question to confirm their last visit to Pulau Komodo was included to ensure that they have visited the research object. The data collection process took around three months from May to August 2023.

2.3. Measurement

This study examined five variables: Approach-Avoidance Response, Destination Trust, Satisfaction, and eWOM intentions. This section will describe the method used to measure each variable. All variables are measured using an online questionnaire with two main sections: 1) respondent's socio-demographic data, 2) measurements for all research variables. Destination Trust was measured using four items adapted from (Kumar & Kaushik, 2017), i.e., confidence about the quality of destination, the ability to meet expectation, satisfaction, and never disappoints tourists (α 0.87). Approach Reaction (i.e., tourists like watching different people, speaking with other tourists, enjoying the presence of tourists from home country, and enjoying the diverse tourist) (CR 0.83) and Avoidance Reaction (i.e., tourists are worried about many people around them, not feeling safe in the crowd, thinking that other tourist behave inappropriately, thinking that it is too noisy, and perceiving that there is a cultural conflict) (CR 0.82) are measured using six items adapted from (Jacobsen et al., 2019), while Destination Satisfaction is measured using three items from (Japutra, 2020) including: good visit experience, enjoyed the destination, and satisfied with the visit (α 0.90). eWOM intention, as the dependent variable in this study, is measured using three items developed by (Pandey & Sahu, 2020) (i.e., intending to post about the destination in personal social networking site, adding information about the destination in personal blog, and making update about the destination) (α 0.855). The items measurement were adopted from articles published in high ranked journal (Q1/Q2), have excellent reliability or internal consistency (Cronbach Alpha between 0.7 and 0.9), and relevant to the research context (Hair et al., 2019). All variables measurement is assessed based on a five-point Likert's scale from 1 indicating strongly disagree and 5 indicating strongly agree.

2.4. Data Analysis and Results

This section explains the analysis processes and their results. The data are first screened and cleaned before being analysed for descriptive statistics on their demographic profiles and SEM analysis. Data screening aims to detect problematic responses to avoid response bias (Hair et al., 2019). The screening process was conducted by excluding potentially problematic data from the dataset by detecting the spurious response (Hair et al., 2019), response time (Huang et al., 2012), and Bogus Item (Niessen et al., 2016). This process reduced the usable dataset from 429 responses to 333, because 99 responses were dropped for not meeting the criteria. Common methods bias was detected using VIF value using a cut off value of 3.3 (Kock, 2015). The result of common method bias test showed the highest VIF for Outer Value of 2.28 and the highest VIF for Inner Value of 1.671, showing that the data is free from common method bias. The resulting dataset is then analysed using descriptive statistics on their demographic data and SEM PLS to test all seven hypotheses. The use of SEM PLS will provide the path coefficients and goodness-of-fit indices (e.g., R-square and Q-square) achieved from two analysis stages: measurement model and structural model assessments.

The respondent's demographic data summarized in Table 1 showed that most of our respondents are men (72.97%) than women (27.03%). Most of the respondents also hold a high school education (62.5%), followed by bachelor and diploma level education (30.6%), and lastly, those with master's and doctoral degrees (6.9%). Our respondents come from 6 regions in Indonesia, with most of the respondents live in Jakarta (18.9%) and Jawa Timur (East Java) (15%). Although the uneven distribution of respondent based on gender might limit the generalizability of the results, the respondents are relatively evenly distributed based on other demographic markers, proving that our efforts to reach Pulau Komodo tourists has reached visitors from multiple regions and demographic characteristics.

The data were then analysed for the measurement model consisting of reliability and internal consistency, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. In total, there are 20 question items, two items with outer loading below 0.5 (APRE2 and AVR 1) were excluded in the first round of analysis according to Hair Jr. et al. (2017) criteria. APRE4 and APRE5 were retained despite outer loadings of 0.666 and 0.679. The reliability and internal consistency analysis was conducted using Cronbach Alpha (see Table 2), resulting in all scores > 0.7; meeting the minimum cut-off for the excellent measure of reliability and internal consistency (Hair Jr. et al., 2017). Therefore, all items measurement for the variables are reliable and have an excellent internal consistency. In the second analysis, the convergent validity based on the Indicator Reliability (Outer Loading) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) shows excellent results (outer loading > 0.7; AVE > 0.5) (Hair Jr. et al., 2017) (see Table 2).

The last measurement model assessment is the discriminant validity assessed using the Square root of AVE (Hair Jr. et al., 2017). Good discriminant validity is marked with the highest cross-loading score in each variable, as summarized in Table 3. Another measure of discriminant validity, the Heterotrait Monotrait (HTMT) assessment also showed all results are below 0.90, showing that the data has fulfilled the discriminant validity criteria (Hair Jr. et al., 2017) (see Table 3).

The last step, structural model assessment, is conducted by testing the direct and indirect effects of the variables. The generated structural model is presented in Figure 2, with detailed results in Table 4.

Figure 4: **Structural Model Analysis**
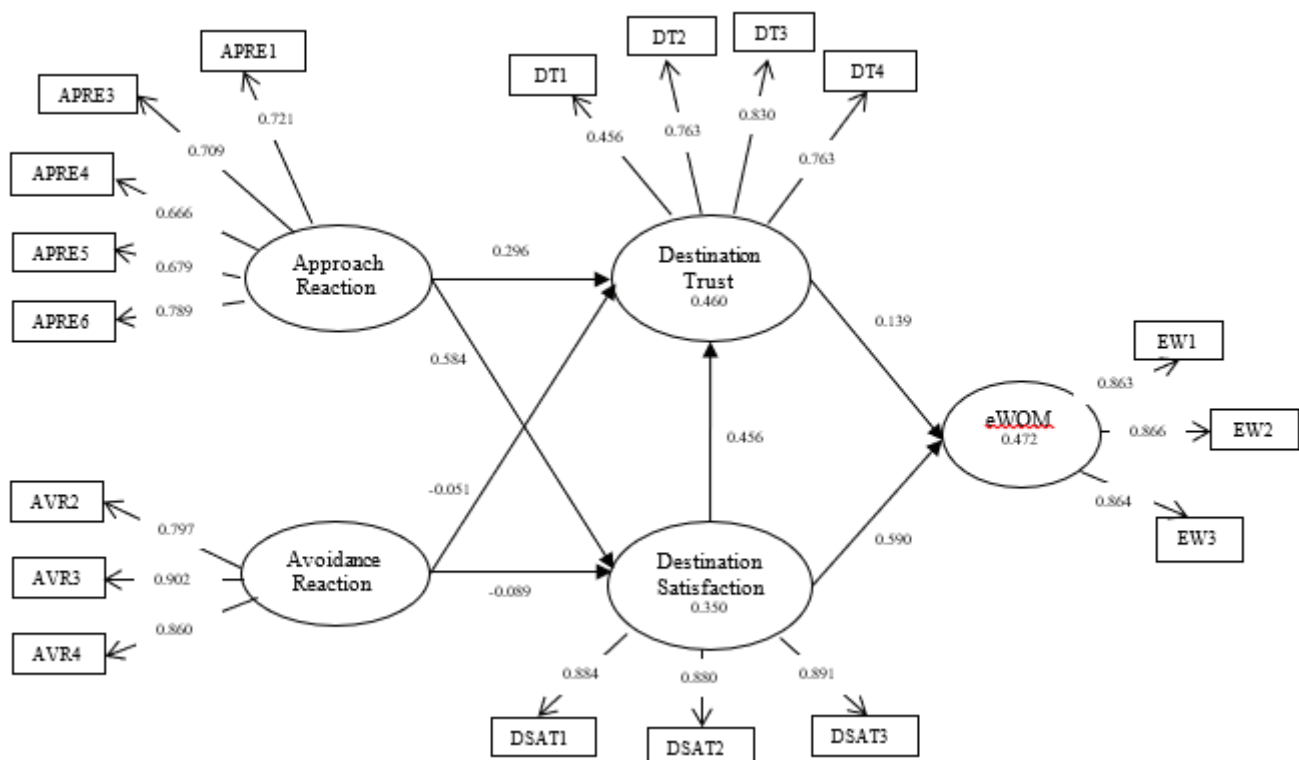
The analysis supported hypothesis 1 on the direct effect of Approach Reaction on Destination Satisfaction (t-test value of 11.614 > 1.96 and a p-value of 0.000 < 0.05), hence tourist's Approach Reaction to KNP significantly and positively affects their Destination Satisfaction. This result is similar to the result that supports hypothesis 2 with a t-test of 5.445 and a p-value of 0.000, indicating that the direct effect of tourist Approach Reaction on Destination Trust is significant at a 95% confidence level. This finding shows a positive effect of Approach Reaction on Destination Satisfaction and Trust, indicating that increased Approach Reaction in tourist will increase their satisfaction and trust toward Pulau Komodo.

The analysis on the effect of Avoidance Reaction on Destination Satisfaction shows a t-test score of 1.952 and a p-value of 0.051. Therefore, the direct effect of Avoidance Reaction on Destination Satisfaction (H3) is not supported. Hypothesis 4 on the effect of Avoidance Reaction on Destination Trust is not supported with a t-test score of 1.032 and a p-value of 0.303. This result indicates that the level of Avoidance Reaction does not determine their level of satisfaction and trust toward Pulau Komodo. Hence, despite Avoidance Reaction being a negative outcome of a visitation, tourists with high Avoidance Reaction did not develop lower satisfaction and trust toward Pulau Komodo.

Hypothesis 5 on Destination Satisfaction's effect on Destination Trust is supported with a t-test score of 7.884 and p-value 0.000, supporting hypothesis 5 with a 95% confidence level. Hypothesis 6 is on the effect of Destination Satisfaction on eWOM is supported with a t-test score of 11.820 and a p-value of 0.000. These findings show that the increase in Destination Satisfaction will increase tourist trust towards Pulau Komodo and their intention to perform eWOM for the destination. The last hypothesis on the direct effect of Destination Trust on eWOM is also supported with t-test score of 2.308 > 1.96 and p-value of 0.021 < 0.05, indicating that high trust toward the destination will increase tourist intention to recommend Pulau Komodo to other people through eWOM.

In addition to the structural model, the SEM PLS analysis also generated the goodness-of-fit indices in the form of R-square and Q-square. The overall R-square value indicating moderate effect (0.472) and the Q-square results indicated that all variables have a good predicative value (>0.268) (Chin, 2010).

3. DISCUSSION

This study aims to provide a comprehensive model of tourists' eWOM intentions from Approach-Avoidance perspective by examining the influences of tourists' Approach-Avoidance reactions on destination trust and destination satisfaction in influencing eWOM intentions. The findings found that approach reaction has a significant positive influence on destination trust. Although none of studies has discussed the relations between approach reaction and destination trust, this finding can be explained by the fact that an approach reaction typically stems from positive experiences (Chen et al., 2022). When tourists have positive experiences, it reinforces their trust in the destination (Cao et al., 2014), leading them to believe that the destination reliably offers good experiences. In addition, in line with (Papadopoulou et al., 2023) study, approach reaction also has a significant positive influence on destination satisfaction. Tourists' approach reaction towards a destination can be influenced by their initial expectations and perceptions (Maghrifani et al., 2019; Senbeto & Hon, 2019). Approach reaction, thus, can indicate the success of destination in meeting or exceeding the initial expectations, which is more likely to result in tourists' satisfaction (Jacobsen et al., 2019).

However, unexpectedly, this study found that avoidance response does not significantly affect destination trust and satisfaction. Although this is difficult to explain, this indicates tourists' avoidance reaction to certain aspects of a destination might not necessarily translate to a lack of trust in the destination or a lack of destination satisfaction as a whole. According to Chen et al. (2021), tourists' prior expectations and preconceptions about a destination play a crucial role in determining tourists' destination trust and satisfaction. If tourists have realistic expectations and are mentally prepared for potential challenges or drawbacks, they may be less affected by negative experiences (Bhattacherjee, 2001). In such cases, avoidance reactions may not significantly alter their overall satisfaction or trust in the destination. Furthermore, positive and memorable experiences can overshadow negative experiences which mitigate negative experiences impact on destination satisfaction and trust (Chen et al., 2021). Tourists may prioritize and emphasize positive aspects when making judgments about a destination, thereby downplaying the significance of avoidance reactions.

Both destination trust and destination satisfaction are found to play pivotal roles in influencing tourists' e-WOM intentions. These findings provide empirical evidences for prior studies (Karim et al., 2024; Pop et al., 2022) that destination trust and satisfaction act as critical psychological and emotional drivers that encourage tourists to engage in eWOM. Trust in a destination cultivates a sense of reliability and authenticity (Kakirala & Singh, 2020; Setiawan et al., 2021), thus prompting tourists to share and validate their experiences online. Concurrently, satisfaction, as a reflection of met or exceeded expectations (Rahim et al., 2022), acts as an emotional catalyst, thus driving tourists to disseminate positive testimonials.

4. THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study represents a significant contribution to the tourism literature by applying the approach-avoidance perspective to examine tourists' electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) intentions. Prior research has predominantly focused on the impact of eWOM on travel behaviors such as Zhou et al. (2021) and Nilashi et al. (2022). Only limited attention is given to the understanding of the factors influencing the formation of eWOM intentions, which often approach eWOM intentions from a positive standpoint, emphasizing the role of satisfaction (Rungklin et al., 2023) and memorable travel experiences (Moliner-Tena et al., 2023). However, eWOM intentions can be influenced by both positive and negative experiences due to the diverse range of emotions and perceptions tourists encounter during their travels (Muliawanti et al., 2024). While positive experiences encourage tourists to share their satisfaction and excitement with others (Aimon et al., 2023), negative experiences prompt them to express dissatisfaction and warn others, collectively shaping the destination's reputation (Mughairi & Bhaskar, 2024). Current research tends to examine the formation of eWOM intentions separately through the lens of positive (Aimon et al., 2023; Moliner-Tena et al., 2023; Muliawanti et al., 2024; Rungklin et al., 2023) and negative experiences (Mughairi & Bhaskar, 2024), which may restrict the comprehensive understanding of how eWOM intentions are formed. Therefore, our study fills this gap in the literature by investigating the formation of eWOM intentions from both positive and negative perspectives at a time. By adopting a comprehensive approach that considers the impact of both types of reactions, we aim to provide a more nuanced reality understanding of the factors shaping tourists' eWOM intentions.

5. PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

From a practical perspective, our study offers valuable insights for destination marketers and tourism stakeholders seeking to enhance destination attractiveness and competitiveness through a deeper understanding of tourists' eWOM intentions. Our findings indicate that eWOM intentions are influenced by approach reactions, mediated by destination trust and satisfaction, highlighting the significance of positive travel experiences in stimulating eWOM intentions. Therefore, destination marketers should prioritize the provision of memorable experiences by improving infrastructure and facilities for tourists, facilitating exploration of the island's pristine beaches, captivating landscapes, and encounters with the iconic Komodo dragons. For example, ensuring comfort and safety through unique vehicles that safeguard tourists from Komodo dragons during site exploration could prove advantageous. These positive experiences are poised to elicit approach reactions among tourists, consequently augmenting their satisfaction and trust in the destination and fostering positive eWOM intentions. Further, tourists might avoid recommending a destination. Instead of seeing this as dissatisfaction, destination marketers can use it as a chance to improve its destination's performance. This study also highlights the importance of sharing positive experiences from satisfied tourists in Pulau Komodo. Positive reviews from happy visitors can attract more tourists and make the destination more appealing online. These findings are useful for Pulau Komodo's marketers and tourism leaders to enhance visitor experiences and use digital word-of-mouth for long-term growth.

6. CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS, AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Understanding tourists' eWOM intentions through the Approach-Avoidance theory shows that approach reactions positively impact eWOM intentions by enhancing destination trust and satisfaction. Conversely, avoidance reactions do not significantly influence destination trust and satisfaction, thus exerting minimal effect on eWOM intentions. However, this framework may oversimplify the intricate motivations behind electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) intentions. It neglects diverse emotional and psychological factors such as cultural nuances, personal values, and situational influences that do not neatly align with approach or avoidance categories. Therefore, interpreting the findings of this study requires caution, recognizing these limitations and suggesting the potential for a more comprehensive theoretical model to accurately capture the complexities of tourist eWOM intentions.

Moreover, the study acknowledges constraints like reliance on self-reported data susceptible to memory biases and the potential lack of representativeness in the participant pool, which could limit the generalizability of findings. Future research should seek to broaden the framework's application across varied tourism contexts such as wellness, heritage and luxury tourism to enhance its broader applicability. Additionally, future studies could explore specific tourism activities (e.g., interacting with local animals and hiking) to investigate their role in shaping eWOM intentions concerning approach-avoidance reactions, destination trust, and overall quality perception. Qualitative exploration of eWOM intentions linked to approach and avoidance reactions could provide deeper insights into the factors influencing eWOM, complementing quantitative approaches by revealing nuances that they may overlook.

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APPENDICES

Table 1: **Respondent's Profile**

	Total	Percentage
Gender		
Men	243	72.97%
Women	90	27.03%
Education		
Highschool or equivalent	208	62.5%
Bachelor and Diploma	102	30.6%
Master and Doctoral	23	6.9%
Age		
12-21	68	20.32%
22-26	55	16.52%
27-31	44	13.21%
32-36	47	14.11%
37-41	40	12.01%
42-46	46	13.81%
47-51	33	9.91%
Region		
Sumatra	36	10.81%
Java	208	62.46%
Kalimantan	34	10.21%
Bali	15	4.50%
Maluku	9	2.70%
Sulawesi	31	9.31%

Table 2: **Convergent Validity, Reliability, and Internal Consistency Analysis**

Variable	Item	Factor Loading	Composite Reliability	AVE	Cronbach Alpha
Approach Reaction	APRE1: I like to watch the many different people here	0.721	0.838	0.510	0.758
	APRE3: Enjoy that there are many tourists here from my home country	0.709			
	APRE4: Tourists from other parts of the world enrich this destination	0.666			
	APRE5: The many tourists here do not bother me	0.679			
	APRE6: This place is more enjoyable because of the many tourists	0.789			
Avoidance Reaction	AVR2: I do not feel safe here because of the crowding	0.797	0.890	0.730	0.825
	AVR3: Many tourists here do not behave properly	0.902			
	AVR4: It is too noisy here because of the many visitors	0.860			
Destination Satisfaction	DSAT1: Visiting this destination has been a good experience	0.884	0.916	0.783	0.862
	DSAT2: I have truly enjoyed this destination	0.880			
	DSAT3: I am satisfied with my decision to visit this destination	0.891			

Variable	Item	Factor Loading	Composite Reliability	AVE	Cronbach Alpha
Destination Trust	DT1: I feel confident that this destination is a good tourist destination	0.701	0.850	0.586	0.763
	DT2: This destination is a destination that meets my expectations	0.763			
	DT3: This destination guarantees tourist satisfaction	0.830			
	DT4: This destination is a destination that never disappoints me	0.763			
eWOM	EW1: I would like to post about this site on an SNS or personal website	0.863	0.899	0.747	0.831
	EW2: I would like to add information about this site to my blog/social media page	0.866			
	EW3: I would like to update SNS or personal website about this site in the future	0.864			

Table 3: **Discriminant Validity Assessment**

Variable	1	2	3	4	5
Approach Reaction	**0.714**				
Avoidance Reaction	-0.011 [0.050]	**0.854**			
Destination Satisfaction	0.585 [0.718]	-0.096 [0.109]	**0.885**		
Destination Trust	0.563 [0.739]	-0.098 [0.159]	0.634 [0.781]	**0.766**	
eWOM	0.582 [0.729]	-0.080 [0.096]	0.678 [0.799]	0.513 [0.641]	**0.864**

Note: Square root of AVE is shown in the diagonal with highest value in bold, [ ] shows HTMT ratio

Table 4: **Hypotheses Testing Results**

Hypothesis	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	T-Test	p Value	Result
Approach Reaction → Destination Satisfaction	0.585	0.050	11.614	0.000	Supported
Approach Reaction → Destination Trust	0.291	0.054	5.445	0.000	Supported
Avoidance Reaction → Destination Satisfaction	-0.087	0.046	1.952	0.051	Not supported
Avoidance Reaction → Destination Trust	-0.055	0.049	1.032	0.303	Not supported
Destination Satisfaction → Destination Trust	0.459	0.058	7.884	0.000	Supported
Destination Satisfaction → eWOM	0.593	0.050	11.820	0.000	Supported
Destination Trust → eWOM	0.138	0.060	2.308	0.021	Supported