



The Effect of Digital Content Marketing on Tourists' Purchase Intention

Serife Yazgan Pektas¹ , Azize Hassan² 

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to reveal the effect of digital contents on tourists' purchase intention using the persuasion knowledge model. For this purpose, data were collected by purpose sampling method between 25 December 2018 and 31 January 2019 with the approval of Bartın University Social and Humanities Ethics Committee. The obtained 105 data were analyzed. As a result of the analysis, it was found that there were significant positive relationships between tourists' purchase intention, eWOM and suspicion sub-dimensions (reliability, disbelief). While the reliability of the sub-dimensions of the suspicion scale influenced eWOM and tourists' purchase intention, it did not appear to have an impact on persuasive information. In addition to the negative correlation between persuasion and suspicion sub-dimensions, it was found that the sub-dimensions of suspicion did not affect persuasion.

Keywords

Digital content marketing, Persuasion knowledge model, Electronic word-of-mouth, Suspicion, Tourists' purchase intention

1 **Correspondence to:** Serife Yazgan Pektas (Lec.), Bartın University, School of Advanced Vocational Studies, Department of Transportation Services, Bartın, Turkey. E-mail: yazgan.serife@gmail.com ORCID: 0000-0001-7467-6669

2 Azize Hassan (Prof.). Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University, Faculty of Tourism, Department of Tourism Management, Ankara, Turkey. Email: azize.hassan@hbv.edu.tr ORCID: 0000-0003-2509-1415

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Introduction

Both the rapid progress of technology and the ease of accessing the internet from anywhere via smartphones have increased the consumer's interest in digital contents. Consumers act with suspicion towards information contained in digital contents, research from different sources and compare this information. Particularly by creating a difference in the digital platform where the competitive environment is intense, people try to attract consumers' attention. In this context, the establishment of positive relations with the consumer has become inevitable. For this reason, the concept of suspicion towards digital contents is an important element. Skepticism about advertising was described by Obermiller & Spangenberg (1998) as the general tendency towards distrust of advertising claims, and assumed a fundamental market belief about persuasion and variability among individuals. They also stated that suspicion of advertising is an important element of consumer persuasion knowledge. In this context, digital networks encourage marketers and consumers to communicate and share information easily with eWOM. Therefore, if this information sharing is intended to persuade, the perceived value of consumers changes. Consequently, consumers create persuasion structures and these structures are fed with information over time to form a point of view. In this context, it is important to determine whether the tourists' purchase intention is formed or not.

In this study, where digital contents are handled with Persuasion Knowledge Model, it is thought that individuals will provide important information especially when using digital contents. The main purpose of this study is to examine how digital contents are shaped to create purchasing intention with Persuasion Knowledge Model (PKM). The suspicion approach was evaluated based on the relationship between persuasive information, eWOM and intention to purchase. In the literature, authors have attempted to explain the concept of suspicion by the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) or the Heuristic-Systematic Model (HSM) (Petty et al., 1981; Ritchie & Darke, 2000). In this study, a new perspective is introduced with the Persuasion Knowledge Model (PKM), which interprets the active consumer view with an inclusive approach. In addition, it was observed that the studies were mostly directed towards advertising in the related literature (Boush et al., 1994; Obermiller & Spangenberg, 1998; Obermiller & Spangenberg, 2000; Elpeze Ergeç, 2004).

Theoretical Framework

In the theoretical framework, digital content marketing, electronic word-of-mouth, and persuasion knowledge model that tries to explain how the consumer decides which information to process and what to choose (Friestad & Wright, 1994) are included.

Digital Content Marketing

In the 1990s Web 1.0, Web 2.0 began to be used actively after the 2000s and Web 3.0 which is also called semantic web, was introduced after 2010. Web 4.0, which is an ultra intelligent electronic agent, is expected to be the digital travel companion that accompanies tourists who are constantly connected to the internet. With Web 4.0, it is stated that it can be communicated with as if talking to a friend to get information (Gelter, 2017: 8). Changes in digitalization and electronic media have led to development in factors such as information gathering, communicating with people, making decisions about traveling or giving up travel decisions and this has increased the importance of online and web resources (Singh & Bhatia, 2016). Such developments in the digital world attract more consumer attention. In this respect, Kotler et al. (2018: 167) defines content marketing as a marketing approach that aims to create interesting, useful content for the target audience, to distribute content and to comment on the content. Institutions or organizations can publish information about their products through different digital channels of Web 2.0, such as blogs, social networking sites, online videos and dictionaries, e-books, e-articles, smartphone and mobile application content. Consumers can learn about these products as well as share their ideas and experiences. In this context, content marketing is tactically measured in five categories as awareness, association, research-ability, action and sharing (Kotler et al., 2018: 182). As digital contents are important sources of information, it should be emphasized that future marketing approaches will be realized in digital environments, especially in social media and mobile environments (Stephen, 2016: 17). De Pelsmacker et al. (2018) stated that digital marketing strategies and tactics indirectly affect hotel performance along with the volume and value of online reviews. It is stated that this is more apparent in chain hotels than in independent hotels and in high-star hotels compared to low-star hotels. In the study in which Meydan Uygur et al. (2018) examined food and beverage businesses with analysis content method in terms of digital marketing, it is stated that the websites of food and beverage businesses are compatible with mobile devices, have up-to-date contact information and include brand experiences. In addition, it is stated that these businesses have links to their social media accounts on their websites so that customers communicate with each other and businesses communicate with customers. Therefore, consumer behavior in digital environments should be emphasized. In particular, it is important to focus on the behavior of women, young people who are influential elements of the digital age, and the so-called net people (Kotler et al., 2018: 59) who work to improve the Internet for the benefit of the world.

Electronic Word-of-Mouth Communication (eWOM)

In marketing, the rapid spread of the internet has led to the transition from customer-to-customer communication to digital networks, a form of traditional word-of-mouth

(WOM) to electronic word-of-mouth communication (eWOM) (Golan & Zaidner, 2008: 959). In particular, the rapid adaptation of new generations to innovations has enabled electronic word-of-mouth communication to gain importance (De Bruyn & Lilien, 2004). Electronic word-of-mouth communication (eWOM) is defined as all informal communication directed to consumers through internet-based technology related to the use, features or vendors of certain goods and services (Litvin et al., 2008). Stephen (2016) reviewed the studies published on consumers in digital and social media marketing environments and identified five themes: consumer digital culture, advertising, impact of digital environments, mobile and online WOM. The study found that the majority of available data focuses on online WOM, which is only part of the digital consumer experience. Digital networks encourage marketers and consumers to communicate and share information easily with eWOM. This has led many researchers to focus on eWom-related issues (Henning-Thurau et al., 2004; Çetin & Dinçer, 2014; Teng et al., 2014; Stephen, 2016; Teng et al., 2017), and studies focused more on resource reliability (Wu and Wang; Li & Zhan, 2011; Yoon, 2012). However, Ennew et al. (2000) stated that if the information comes from a reliable and credible person, word-of-mouth communication is effective in purchasing decisions. In the study conducted by Cova & Cova (2002), it was shown that comments made on the electronic media affect consumers more than traditional marketing activities and are found reliable by consumers. In addition, because managers think that the success of a product depends on word-of-mouth communication, managers give importance to this type of communication (Godes & Mayzlin, 2004: 545). Ismagilova et al.'s (2019) study identified the best, the most promising and the least effective predictors of intention to buy in eWOM research.

Persuasion Knowledge Model

The Persuasion Knowledge Model demonstrates how consumers' knowledge of persuasion affects their response to attempts to be thus persuaded (Aytekin & Ay, 2015: 346). According to this model, at the same time as evaluating the opinions of the consumer about the goods or services, it also considers the reasons underlying persuasion attempts (Elpeze Ergeç, 2004). In this context, Friestad & Wright (1994: 1) have created a model of how people's persuasion knowledge affects their responses to persuasion attempts. In the model, the consumer is defined as a target in the face of persuasion attempts and three knowledge structures are mentioned, namely subject knowledge, persuasion knowledge and agency knowledge (Friestad & Wright, 1994: 2). Subject knowledge includes opinions about the subject of the message to be delivered; persuasion knowledge includes actions to fully evaluate the message given to the consumer to develop attitude. Environmental and cognitive factors influence the development of persuasion knowledge (Aytekin & Ay, 2015: 353). The realization of the cognitive process improves persuasion knowledge and provides insight into

the consumer's response to persuasion attempts; agency knowledge is defined as the party attempting to persuade the consumer. These three knowledge structures are used to evaluate the results of the persuasion attempt. Kachersky & Kim (2011) emphasize in their study on the persuasive status of all-inclusive pricing and segmented pricing that subject knowledge is important for pricing to be a persuading element. Here, the consumer focuses on what is important to them and while making a purchase decision, the consumer's level of consciousness and awareness is considered by the agency. Campbell & Kirmani (2000) state that the cognitive capacity of the consumer and the ability of the agency to reach the secret intent are important in understanding the persuasion intention that underlies the behavior of sales personnel. The concept of persuasion is the channel most used by marketers to influence consumers. In this regard, many studies have been conducted in the literature about the persuasion knowledge model. Boush et al. (1994) handled the knowledge of daily persuasion by focusing more on knowledge of persuasion tactics and their effects. Also Hardesty et al. (2007) measured contextual objective persuasion tactics with different scales and developed persuasion knowledge scale on pricing tactics (PTPK). In addition, Carlson et al. (2007) measured subjective knowledge with five items adapted from Brucks (1985), and found that the pricing tactic was effective in the relationship between subjective and objective knowledge.

Research Framework and Hypotheses

The first hypothesis of the study focuses on the effect of suspicion toward digital contents on persuasion knowledge. In their study of the effects of television commercials, Friestad & Wright (1995) introduced seven ideas, namely the difficulty of revealing emotions, necessity, impact, awareness, effectiveness, sequence, and the beginning. The difficulty of expressing emotions is related to the success of individuals in expressing their emotions; necessity shows how experienced emotions are necessary during the persuasion process; impact includes the effect of emotion on the purchase; awareness is about how individuals are aware of the psychological tactics they are exposed to; activity relates to how much individuals are used to evaluate the psychological effects of an advertisement to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the advertisement; sequence expresses the order of emotions that emerge during persuasion; the beginning is about the thoughts about whether the emotions are caused by external cause or internal cause. Bearden et al. (2001), on the other hand, considered the knowledge of persuasion as the trust of consumers against the persuasion tactics of marketers. However, Artz & Tybout (1999) stated that paying attention to the reliability of the agency does not always increase persuasion when attempting to persuade. Obermiller & Spangenberg (2000), in their study emphasized the consumer's skepticism about the sources of information. They also stated that the suspicion of advertising is an important element of consumer persuasion knowledge (Obermiller & Spangenberg, 1998). In support of

this view, Elpeze Ergeç (2004), revealed that the consumer's skepticism tendencies towards advertisements fall into two dimensions namely distrust of advertising claims and disbelief in information elements in advertising. In addition, Elpeze Ergeç (2004) emphasized that consumers are aware of the advertiser's persuasion initiative and that there is no strong relationship between demographic characteristics and persuasion knowledge about the advertiser's goals. In this direction, the first hypothesis of the research is as follows:

Hypothesis 1. There is a significant relationship between suspicion against digital contents and persuasion knowledge.

The second hypothesis in this study is the effect of suspicion on digital contents to electronic word-of-mouth communication. Since a certain persuasion tactic activates persuasion knowledge, which is not always consistent in consumers (Ham et al., 2015: 26). In this respect, the persuasion level of the information contained in the digital contents may cause a change in the behavior of consumers. This is because of the factors that shape the persuasion knowledge, such as social impact, personality traits, age and education which affect the consumer's skepticism towards advertising (Obermiller & Spangenberg, 1998). Suspicion was expressed as a tendency of disbelief or lack of confidence in the actions of sellers. In particular, sharing experiences gained through the use of different tools of digital contents in online environments causes consumers to interpret this information and question it from other sources. Thus, these shares play an active role in consumers' decision making. Two components are important here; the message given in the content and its format (Bird, 2016: 137). Particularly the shares differ in format in different digital media. For example, while photos and videos can only be shared on Instagram, there are photos and information on websites, and sometimes the same information can be seen as a blog post. In addition, with the increase of smart phones, social media tools are used more frequently in digital contents with the facilitating features of mobile applications. For this reason, all shares made in digital environment are important. In this respect, the second hypothesis of the research is as follows:

Hypothesis 2. There is a significant relationship between suspicion of digital contents and electronic word-of-mouth communication.

In the third hypothesis of the study, the effect of suspicion against digital contents on tourists' purchase intention is investigated. Calfee & Ford (1988) claimed that consumers should believe in the accuracy of the information contained in advertising in order to understand the impact of advertising on consumers. Therefore, consumers may be skeptical about digital contents because they are afraid of being deceived. In addition, while Friestad & Wright's (1994) study, which proposed the Persuasion Knowledge Model, evaluated consumers' opinions about goods and services, it

was stated that they focused more on the causes of persuasion attempts. This raises suspicion, and the suspicion develops a defense mechanism for consumers to ensure that the information contained in the digital contents are correct or incorrect. Ford et al. (1990) found that they were skeptical about what was told about the products they had not experienced before, but their suspicions diminished over time. In this respect, the third hypothesis of the research is as follows:

Hypothesis 3. There is a significant relationship between the suspicion against digital contents and tourists' purchase intention.

In the fourth hypothesis of the study, the effect of persuasion knowledge on tourists' purchase intention is examined. Persuasion knowledge is seen as a necessary source for individuals to be aware of and evaluate the threats they may face in life and to make the right decisions (Aytekin & Ay, 2015: 360). Studies in the relevant literature using the Persuasion Knowledge Model reveal that advertisements are a more persuasive element (Ward, 1972; Friestad & Wright, 1995; Thompson & Malaviya, 2013). Xie et al.'s (2013) studies emphasized that consumers create a negative perception against the product and the product is not considered reliable when the sales intention is not explicitly stated. In this respect, the fourth hypothesis of the research is as follows:

Hypothesis 4. There is a significant relationship between persuasion knowledge and tourists' purchase intention.

In the fifth hypothesis of the study, the focus is on the effect of electronic word-of-mouth communication on tourists' purchase intention. Digital contents take online opinions of other consumers and checks their reliability from other sources for consumers before deciding whether to purchase goods or services. Similarly, the sharing of personal experiences and ideas provides important information about which product customers will buy or not (Picazo-Vela et al., 2010: 685). Teng et al. (2014) state that persuasive electronic word-of-mouth messages affect the acceptance of information. In addition, Teng et al.'s (2017) study emphasized that persuasive electronic word-of-mouth messages are a critical factor affecting the attitudes and behavior of Chinese and Malaysian users. In addition, Goldsmith & Horowitz (2006: 3) stated that consumers prefer to make the purchase decision because it reduces the perceived risk. In this respect, the fifth hypothesis of the research is as follows:

Hypothesis 5. There is a significant relationship between electronic word-of-mouth communication and tourists' purchase intention.

The research model formed in line with the hypotheses of the research is shown in Figure 1. According to this model, suspicion against digital contents, persuasive knowledge and the effect of eWOM on purchasing intent are investigated.

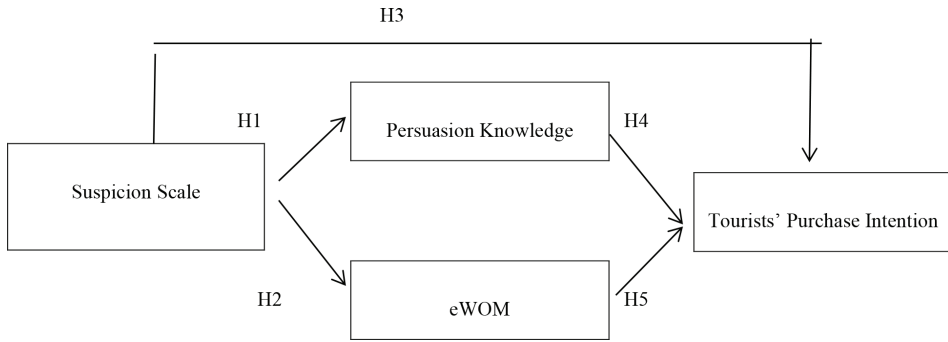


Figure 1. Proposed conceptual model

Methodology

The purpose of this research is to determine effect of digital contents on tourists' purchase intention with persuasion knowledge model. An attempt was made to determine the effect of the subjective evaluations of individuals against the information contained in the digital contents and the persuasion levels of the information contained in the digital contents on the tourists' purchase intentions. The importance of digital contents have attracted the attention of researchers and many studies have been conducted in the literature (Stephen, 2016; Gelter, 2017; Meydan Uygur et al., 2018; De Pelsmacker et al., 2018). It is thought that this study, where digital contents are handled together with the persuasion knowledge model, will provide important information especially for individuals to develop a new perspective while using digital contents. In addition, the majority of studies in the field of persuasion knowledge model (Boush et al., 1994; Obermiller & Spangenberg, 1998; Obermiller & Spangenberg, 2000; Elpeze Ergeç, 2004) were observed to be related to advertising. In the literature, the concept of suspicion is explained by the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) or the Heuristic-Systematic Model (HSM) (Petty & Cacioppo, 1981; Ritchie & Darke, 2000). In this study, a new perspective has been introduced with the Persuasion Knowledge Model (PKM), which interprets the active consumer view with an inclusive approach.

The field research of the study consists of a total of 549 academic personnel including 21 professors, 36 associate professors, 160 assistant professors, 124 lecturers and 177 research assistants who work in Bartın University (Bartın University, 2019). The study focuses on skepticism against digital contents, and since it is assumed that academics have more knowledge about digital contents depending on their educational background and their work, it is aimed to examine the academicians' skepticism towards digital contents. However, reaching all academic personnel was impossible because of time,

difficulty in control and ethical obligations. In the study, an attempt was made to reach all the academicians while data was being obtained. Since sampling was attempted to be achieved in a particular place and at a given time (Kozak, 2014: 118), convenience sampling method was used. Data were collected between 25 December 2018 and 31 January 2019 with the approval of Bartın University Social and Humanities Ethics Committee. Individuals were asked to participate in survey voluntarily.

The questionnaire consists of two parts. In the survey, 8 closed ended expressions for demographic features of participants and 33 expressions on likert scale are included. In order to form the questionnaire, the scale developed by Obermiller & Spangenberg (1998), who included 21 statements to measure participants' suspicion against digital contents, was used. We also used the scale developed by Van Reijmersdal et al. (2016), which included 4 statements to measure participants' to purchase intention. In addition we used the scale developed by Vashisht & Roynce (2016) containing 5 expressions for measuring persuasion knowledge 3 expressions for measuring electronic word-of-mouth communication were developed by Maxham & Netemeyer (2002) and were translated into Turkish. The control of the statements translated into Turkish was carried out by three academicians. Five point likert-type scale (1: Strongly disagree; 2: Disagree; 3: Neither agree nor disagree; 4: Agree; 5: Strongly agree) was used for measuring participation levels of in the expressions included in scale.

In order to measure the reliability and validity of the questions, 54 people were pre-tested. 33 expressions were included in the original survey form without any need to edit expressions because of not having difficulty in understanding them. The survey form was sent along with an introductory message to the e-mail addresses of 549 academic personnel working in Bartın University. The reason for sending the questionnaire via e-mail was to ensure that the questionnaire was completed in a controlled manner and in a relaxed environment, with the thought that the participants could answer the questions more carefully and diligently in a wider time. A total of 105 academics responded to the questionnaire which was sent to 549 academic personnel and all of them were evaluated. Appropriate sample size varied according to the objectives of the research and the existing limiting factors (Arıkan, 2004: 152). At the significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$, ± 0.10 sampling error was accepted. Sapnas (2004) claims minimum sample sizes including 100 and over data is enough.

Findings

Demographic and Descriptive Characteristics of the Participants

In the study, the main focus was on the distribution of the participants according to their demographic characteristics. Table 1 presents the distribution of participants according to their demographic and descriptive characteristics.

Table 1
Demographic and Descriptive Characteristics of the Participants

	n=105	%
Gender		
Female	46	43.81
Male	59	56.19
Age		
18-25	5	4.76
26-34	41	39.05
35-49	54	51.43
50-64	5	4.76
Education		
Bachelor	24	22.86
Postgraduate Degree	26	24.76
Doctoral Degree	55	52.38
Marital status		
Married	76	72.38
Single	29	27.62
Title		
Lecturer	36	34.29
Research Assistant	23	21.90
Assistant Professor	33	31.43
Associate Professor	5	4.76
Professor	8	7.62
Devices used in online shopping		
Smartphone	51	48.57
Computer	52	49.52
Tablet	2	1.91
Contents used in online shopping		
Picture/ Photo	16	15.24
Video	2	1.90
Social media contents	7	6.67
Blog contents	4	3.81
e-mail contents	1	0.95
Consumer-generated contents	32	30.48
Corporate website contents	32	30.48
Smartphone and mobile application contents	11	10.47
The incentive of digital contents to online shopping		
Nevermore	3	2.86
Rarely	13	12.38
Sometimes	61	58.10
Often	24	22.86
Always	4	3.80

Of the 105 participants taking part in the study, 43.81% were women and 56.19% were men. It is seen that 51.43% of the participants are within an age range of between 35-49 and 72.38% are married. The educational level of the participants is at the doctoral level (52.38%) and their titles are Lecturer (34.29%). The participants stated

that the most commonly used device in their online shopping is a computer (49.52%). Following the computer, is the smartphone (48.57%) and tablet usage is 1.91%. The participants pointed out that they mostly benefited from consumer generated contents (30.48%) and corporate website contents (30.48%) in online shopping. The majority of the participants (58.10%) expressed that digital contents sometimes made them more willing in online shopping. Furthermore, 2.86% of the participants do not affect the willingness of digital contents in online shopping.

Findings Regarding Reliability and Validity of Scales

Factor analysis was applied to each scale separately to examine the construct validity of the scales and reliability coefficient (Cronbach Alpha) was used to determine whether the scales used in the study were reliable. As a result of the reliability analysis, three expressions (Q1, Q5, Q14) in the suspicion scale (21 expressions) were excluded from the scale because they reduced the reliability of the scale. In addition, as a result of factor analysis, three expressions (Q10, Q15, Q17) in which one expression was loaded in each factor dimension were excluded from the scale. The reliability coefficient was 0.896 for the suspicion scale (15 expressions), 0.777 for the persuasion knowledge scale (5 expressions), 0.818 for the eWOM scale (3 expressions) and 0.906 for the tourists' purchase intention scale (4 expressions). Lorcú (2015: 208) stated that the α coefficient was highly reliable between 0.80 and 1.00, and quite reliable between 0.60 and 0.80. When the reliability coefficients of the scales are examined, it is seen that the persuasion knowledge scale is quite reliable and the other scales are highly reliable.

Table 2
Exploratory Factor Analysis Towards Variables (n=105)

	FL	C	Mean
Reliability (eigenvalue: 6.316; % of variance: 42.108% Cronbach's $\alpha=0.891$; grand mean: 3.1377)			
Q2. Digital contents express facts well.	0.742	0.490	2.7238
Q3. Digital contents are necessary.	0.648	0.477	3.6762
Q6. I believe that digital contents are informative.	0.376	0.374	3.5429
Q7. Digital contents are reliable information source about quality and performance of touristic product.	0.647	0.422	2.9143
Q9. Digital contents offer useful information about touristic product.	0.768	0.615	3.3619
Q11. Digital contents offer actual image of touristic product introduced generally.	0.656	0.348	2.9238
Q16. I feel that digital contents inform correctly.	0.759	0.500	2.9143
Q18. Digital contents offer necessary basic information about touristic product.	0.595	0.486	3.2571
Q19. I rely on accuracy of digital contents.	0.728	0.538	2.8952
Q20. Digital contents are generally reliable.	0.735	0.553	2.9524
Q21. Digital contents is a good way to get information about touristic product.	0.782	0.665	3.3524
Disbelief (eigenvalue: 1.602; % of variance: %10.682 Cronbach's $\alpha= .768$; grand mean: 3.5214)			
Q4. Digital contents can significantly reduce the time that I spend on purchasing decisions.	0.402	0.438	3.7048

Q8. I tend to ignore digital contents.	0.703	0.586	3.4286
Q12. I don't get useful information from digital contents.	0.903	0.648	3.5905
Q13. I think digital contents are distracting.	0.890	0.780	3.3619
Persuasion Knowledge (eigenvalue: 2.689; % of variance : %53.778 Cronbach's α = 0.777; grand mean: 3.6000)			
Q26. Digital contents try to take consumer in hand smartly in a way I don't like.	0.706	0.498	3.3429
Q27. I think touristic product offered in digital contents is tried to be sold.	0.842	0.709	3.7905
Q28. I notice tricks used to introduce touristic products in digital contents.	0.544	0.296	3.4952
Q29. I think digital contents clearly try to persuade to buy touristic product.	0.810	0.656	3.7429
Q30. I am disturbed by the fact that digital contents try to keep consumer under control.	0.728	0.530	3.6286
eWOM (eigenvalue: 2.200; % of variance: %73.337 Cronbach's α =0.818; grand mean: 3.2540)			
Q31. It is likely form e to say positive things about touristic product that I saw in digital contents.	0.850	0.722	3.0095
Q32. I advise touristic product that I saw in digital contents to my relatives and friends.	0.893	0.797	2.9714
Q33. If I think touristic product that I see in digital contents will be useful, I advise it to my friend.	0.825	0.680	3.7810
Tourists' Purchase Intention (eigenvalue: 3.151; % of variance: %78.777 Cronbach's α = 0.906; grand mean: 2.9429)			
Q22. I plan to buy touristic product offered in digital contents.	0.926	0.857	3.0857
Q23. I intend to buy touristic product offered in digital contents.	0.912	0.832	2.9524
Q24. I think of buying touristic product offered in digital contents.	0.934	0.873	3.0667
Q25. I make an effort to buy touristic product offered in digital contents.	0.767	0.589	2.6667

FL: Faktör Load; C: Communality

Exploratory factor analysis was carried out to test the construct validity of the expressions in the model (Figure 1). In order to determine the factor structure and to obtain meaningful factors, basic components analysis was selected, promax technique was used and the factor load of the expressions was over .30 (expected value > 0.30, Büyüköztürk, 2003: 119). Bartlett's Test of Sphericity and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy were performed to determine whether the data were suitable for factor analysis. When KMO (suspicion scale KMO=0.880; persuasion knowledge KMO=0.784; eWOM KMO=0.695; tourists' purchase intention KMO=0.834) and Bartlett test (suspicion scale Bartlett: $\chi^2=681.129$, $p=.000$; persuasion knowledge Bartlett: $\chi^2=145.370$, $p=.000$; eWOM Bartlett: $\chi^2=111.537$, $p=.000$; tourists' purchase intention Bartlett: $\chi^2=314.483$, $p=.000$) results are analyzed for each scale, it is seen that the sample is sufficient and there are relationships between the variables. The expressions of suspicion scale were gathered under two dimensions and the dimensions were named as reliability and disbelief. Obermiller & Spangenberg's (1998) study, is similar to the number of dimensions.

Findings Related to Hypothesis Testing

Correlation analysis was performed to determine whether there is a relationship between reliability of digital contents, disbelief in digital contents, persuasion knowledge, eWOM and tourists' purchase intention. The analysis results are given in Table 3.

Table 3
Correlations and Descriptive Statistics

Variables	Mean	SD	CrA	CR	AVE	1	2	3	4	5
Reliability	3.1377	0.53769	0.891	0.904	0.469					
Disbelief	3.5214	0.68738	0.768	0.828	0.565	0.536**				
Persuasion knowledge	3.6000	0.62141	0.777	0.850	0.537	-0.211*	-0.246*			
eWOM	3.2540	0.76310	0.818	0.891	0.733	0.533**	0.373**	-0.047		
Tourists' purchase intention	2.9429	0.74377	0.906	0.936	0.787	0.673**	0.386**	-0.071	0.456**	

SD: Standart Deviation; CrA: Cronbach's Alphas; CR: Composite Reliability; AVE: Average Variance Extracted, **p<0.01, * p<0.05

When the relationships between the variables in Table 3 were examined, it could be said that there was a low level, positive and significant relationship between disbelief in digital contents ($r(105)=.386$ and $p=.000$) and eWOM ($r(105)=.456$ and $p=.000$) with tourists' purchase intention. There was moderate, positive and significant relationship between tourists' purchase intention and reliability of digital contents ($r(105)=.673$ and $p=.000$). Besides, there was low level, positive and significant relationship between eWOM variable and disbelief in digital contents ($r(105)=.373$ and $p=.000$). In addition, there was moderate, positive and significant relationship between eWOM and reliability of digital contents ($r(105)=.533$ and $p=.000$). While there was no significant relationship between tourists' purchase intention and eWOM with persuasion knowledge variable ($r(105)=-.071$ and $p=.473$; $r(105)=-.047$ and $p=.632$), It was determined that there was a low level, significant and inverse relationship between persuasion knowledge variable with disbelief in digital contents ($r(105)=-.246$ and $p=.011$) and reliability variables in digital contents ($r(105)=-.211$ and $p=.030$). As the level of persuasion knowledge increases, the reliability of the digital contents and the credibility of the information contained in digital contents decreases. Moreover, while the persuasion knowledge variable had a higher mean (mean=3.6000) compared to the other variables, the tourists' purchase intention variable was found to have a lower mean (mean=2.9429). Composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) were used for convergent validity. The values of CR exceeded the threshold, (0.70) (Domino & Domino, 2006), spreading between 0.828 (Disbelief) and 0.904 (Reliability). This implied that the items utilized in the survey were internally consistent and reliable. In order to obtain information about the validity of the measurement model of the research, AVE values should be examined. All values of AVE overpassed the recommended value, (.40 and above) (Hair et al., 2017: 138), dispersing between .469 (Reliability) and .787 (tourists' purchase intention) values. To ascertain discriminant validity, the values of squared root of AVE and correlation were compared. The correlations were all smaller than the value of squared root of AVE, which showed an acceptable level of discriminant validity among the variables. As the model was well-fitted to the data and validities displayed proper levels, the hypotheses tests were conducted as a next step. Regression analysis was

performed to test the hypotheses of the study. The results of the regression analysis explaining the effect of the suspicion on persuasion knowledge are given in Table 4.

Table 4
Linear Regression Analysis

Independent Variables	B	SD	β	t	p
Reliability	-0.128	0.131	-0.111	-0.982	0.328
Disbelief	-0.169	0.102	-0.187	-1.651	0.102

R=0.264, R²=0.070, ΔR^2 =0.051, F=3.812, Durbin Watson=1.927, p=0.025
 ***Dependent variable: Persuasion knowledge; SD: Standard deviation

The results of the analysis showed that the regression model was not significant and that the independent variable had no significant effect on the dependent variable. In this case, the first hypothesis of the study was not supported. Although it is stated that digital contents present the actual image of tourism product, it is seen that it is seen as a good way to obtain information about tourism product, it does not have any effect on persuasive knowledge.

Table 5
Linear Regression Analysis

Independent Variables	B	SD	β	t	p
Reliability	0.664	0.140	0.468	4.748	0.000
Disbelief	0.135	0.109	0.122	1.238	0.218

R=0.543; R²=0.295; ΔR^2 =0.281; F=21.331; Durbin Watson=2.071; p=0.000
 ***Dependent variable: eWOM; SD: Standard deviation

When Table 5 was examined, it was seen that reliability (β =.468, t=4.748, p=.000) had a significant and positive effect on eWOM. It was concluded that if the digital contents are a reliable source of information about tourism product quality and performance and the correct information is provided, the participants will share the information acquired with those around them. However, it was determined that disbelief in digital contents (β =.122, t=1.238, p=.218) did not affect eWOM.

Table 6
Linear Regression Analysis

Independent Variables	B	SD	β	t	p
Reliability	0.905	0.120	0.654	7.544	0.000
Disbelief	0.037	0.094	0.035	0.399	0.691

R=0.673; R²=0.454; ΔR^2 =0.443; F=42.335; Durbin Watson=1.809; p=0.000
 ***Dependent variable: Tourists' purchase intention; SD: Standard deviation

When Table 6 was examined, it was stated that reliability of digital contents (β =.654, t=7.544, p=.000) significantly and positively influenced participants' purchasing intentions. It was seen that disbelief in digital contents (β =.035, t=.399, p=.691) did not affect eWOM. It was concluded that although the participants tend to ignore the information contained in the digital contents and the digital contents are thought to be disturbing, it does not affect the tourists' purchase intention.

Table 7*Linear Regression Analysis*

Independent Variables	B	SD	β	t	p
Persuasion knowledge	-0.059	0.105	-0.049	-0.559	0.577
eWOM	0.443	0.086	0.454	5.156	0.000

R=0.459; R²=0.211; Δ R²=0.195; F= 13.617; Durbin Watson= 1.996; p=0.000

***Dependent variable: Tourists' purchase intention; SD: Standard deviation

According to the results of the regression analysis given in Table 7, it was determined that the variable of persuasion knowledge ($\beta=-.049$, $t=-.559$, $p=.577$) did not affect the tourists' purchase intention and the fourth hypothesis was not supported. eWOM ($\beta=.454$, $t=5.156$, $p=.000$) was found to be significant and substantially determinant on tourists' purchase intention. Accordingly, the fifth hypothesis of the study was supported. In this context, hypothesis test results are given in Table 8.

Table 8*Results of Hypothesis Test of Research Model*

Hypotheses	(β)	t-value	p-value	Result of Hypothesis
Reliability → Persuasion knowledge	-0.111	-0.982	0.328	Not supported
Disbelief → Persuasion knowledge	-0.187	-1.651	0.102	Not supported
Reliability → eWOM	0.468	4.748	0.000	Supported
Disbelief → eWOM	0.122	1.238	0.218	Not supported
Reliability → Tourists' purchase intention	0.654	7.544	0.000	Supported
Disbelief → Tourists' purchase intention	0.035	0.399	0.691	Not supported
Persuasion knowledge → Tourists' purchase intention	-0.049	-0.559	0.577	Not supported
eWOM → Tourists' purchase intention	0.454	5.156	0.000	Supported

Conclusion and Discussion

In this study, the effect of digital contents on tourists' purchase intention with the persuasion knowledge model was examined. As a result of the study, it was found that the suspicion scale had a two-dimensional (reliability and disbelief) structure. In the study of Obermiller & Spangenberg (1998), suspicion was expressed in two dimensions as the tendency of sellers to disbelieve or not trust their actions. It was found that while the reliability of the sub-dimensions of the suspicion scale influenced eWOM and tourists' purchase intention, it did not have effect on persuasion knowledge. However, there is a significant and inverse relationship between the sub-dimensions of the suspicion scale and persuasive knowledge. In this context, if digital contents were believed to be informative and reliable in its accuracy, they concluded that the tricks used to promote tourism products were not noticed and that the tourism products were not intended to be sold. Similarly, the lack of any useful information from the digital contents and the fact that the digital contents were considered to be uncomfortable showed that they were not attempted to persuade to buy tourism products. These results support the study of Elpeze Ergeç (2004). The study found that consumers were aware of the advertiser's persuasion initiative and that there was no

strong relationship between demographic characteristics and persuasion knowledge of the advertiser's goals. At the same time, Artz & Tybout (1999) stated that paying attention to the reliability of the agency does not always increase persuasion when attempting to persuade. Xie et al.'s (2013) studies, it is emphasized that when the sales intention is not explicitly stated, consumers create negative perception towards the product and the product is not reliable. It was found that disbelief, one of the sub-dimensions of the suspicion scale, had no effect on eWOM and tourists' purchase intention. However, it was seen that there was a positive and significant relationship between eWOM and tourists' purchase intention with the disbelief variable, one of the sub-dimensions of the suspicion scale. In this respect, it can be said that disbelief in the sub-dimensions of the suspicion scale constitutes a general idea in the formation of eWOM and tourists' purchase intention among consumers, but it does not affect the tourists' purchase intention and eWOM. One of the findings is that persuasive knowledge does not affect the tourists' purchase intention. It can be said that digital contents do not have an impact on purchase intention expressions that contain persuasive knowledge such as trying to manipulate consumers in a way that they do not like, and disturbing the consumer by trying to control them by digital contents.

In the Persuasion Knowledge Model, different individuals constitute more or less a specific persuasion structure in their life experiences. In this respect, participants highlighted that they benefited from digital contents at different strategic points and at different periods of their lives. As a result of the research, it was determined that eWOM affects the tourists' purchase intention. Sharing information that is deemed useful from digital contents with others affects consumers' purchasing intentions. Teng et al. (2014) stated that persuasive electronic word-of-mouth messages affect the acceptance of information. Also in Teng et al.'s (2017) study, persuasive electronic word-of-mouth messages were found to be critical factors affecting attitudes and behaviors. Similar results were obtained in these studies. eWOM, as well as disseminating information, enables consumers to access information quickly. Therefore, easy access to the internet, increasing active use and saving time have made it inevitable to benefit from digital contents. For this reason, it is important for businesses and digital contents creators to provide honest, realistic and reliable information to attract consumers. Creating the right brand image in digital environments will ensure sustainable competitive advantage. Persuasion is one of the important concepts that form the basis of marketing. In this respect, insisting on direct sales is seen as a driving factor for consumers. Developing a consumer-oriented sales policy in digital environments will be more effective on consumers. Thus, the perception of digital contents as convincing for consumers will strengthen its recommendation to others through electronic word-of-mouth communication. In addition, the creation of consumer-oriented content will contribute to the benefit of consumers.

Participants mostly prefer computers and smart phones for online shopping. In this case, these devices may be easier to access and easy to use. Participants stated that they sometimes use digital contents in their online shopping and stated that they use content created by consumers and corporate website contents more than these contents. Shares such as photos/videos are encouraging and provide an incentive for the participants' purchase intention. Thus, the perception that they are trying to be persuaded if they trust the digital contents decreases and it is seen that the digital contents affect the tourists' purchase intention. The participants stated that they are not willing to do online shopping if they do not find the digital contents convincing.

One of the limitations of this research is that it was carried out only among academic personnel of Bartın University. Another limitation is that the sample size is limited and the use of sampling method according to the purpose causes the research results not to be generalized. That the Persuasion Knowledge Model should be dealt with by focusing on the process of using persuasion knowledge is suggested for future studies. At the same time, it is suggested that a cultural dimension should be added in order to make the results generalizable, and a study involving participants from many countries should be conducted.

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