



Gastroia: Journal of Gastronomy and Travel Research, Vol. 5, Issue 3, 420-446, 2021
*Impact of Electronic Word of Mouth Communication and Destination Image on Behavioral Intentions: The
Case of Eskisehir Turkey*
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**IMPACT OF ELECTRONIC WORD OF MOUTH COMMUNICATION AND DESTINATION IMAGE
ON BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS: THE CASE OF ESKİŞEHİR TURKEY**

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Yayın Bilgileri

Kabul tarihi: 24.08.2021

Yayın tarihi: 08.10.2021

Yazar İletişim Bilgileri

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ABSTRACT

Electronic word of mouth communication is an important concept in the tourism industry since sharing information and experiences on various online platforms can affect tourists' perceived destination image and behavioral intentions. The aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between electronic word of mouth communication, destination image and behavioral intentions in the context of Eskişehir case. The sampling technique used was non-probability sampling with both purposive sampling and convenience sampling. In this context, the created questionnaire form; in various digital platforms; was presented to the people who visited Eskişehir in the last 3 years. Data were collected from 392 domestic tourists between December 2020-January 2021. The socio-demographic data obtained from the participants was interpreted by calculating the frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation values from descriptive statistics. The top three digital platforms where the participants read/watch the most travel reviews on the internet are respectively; Instagram, Tripadvisor, and various personal travel blogs. Regression analysis with the help of SPSS program was used to test the hypotheses in the model created for the relationship between variables. The findings of the study show that electronic word of mouth communication has positive and significant results on both destination image and behavioral intentions. Also, the destination image has a positive and significant influence on future behavioral intentions.

Keywords: Electronic Word of Mouth Communication, Destination Image, Behavioral Intentions, Domestic Tourists, Eskişehir.



1. INTRODUCTION

Social media with all its aspects, including electronic word of mouth communication (eWOM), has become a part of our daily life (Litvin, Goldsmith & Pan, 2018). The number of internet users can be stated as 4.5 billion and it is 3.8 billion with social media users. In other words, approximately 60 percent of the world's population have been connected to the WEB (Kemp, 2020). In parallel to the increase in numbers of social media platforms, online reviews and opinions have increased as well (Zarifah Dhabitah Mahat & Hafiz Hanafiah, 2020) and people use electronic communication channels like e-mails, social media apps, blogs, networks, chat rooms, online reviews and websites with user generated comments to share their experiences – these tools emerge to hold vital importance with regard to making promotion and communication decisions (Ishida, Slevitch & Siamionava, 2016).

The foremost factors which lead to eWOM behavior can be counted as the need to be socially connected, financial motivation, having concern for other consumers, and enhancing self-esteem. Among these factors, social utility has affected people the most (Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, Dwayne & Gremler, 2004). eWOM is reckoned to be a more reliable source of information rather than adverts since eWOM helps consumers in avoiding risks and making better purchase decisions. When it comes to purchasing tourism and hospitality goods, interpersonal communication and affection becomes quite significant (Chen & Law, 2016). Tourism services have intangible nature and service is present solely during the consumption, therefore it can be stated that there is a great sense of ambiguity during the process of making purchasing decisions. This abstractness urges visitors to visit websites which rank various tourism products and services (Abubakar, 2016). In addition to this, consumer generated reviews is more important for consumers when purchasing high involvement products since they have a tendency to trust on those reviews and it is due to the fact that travel is a high collaboration product (Gretzel & Yoo, 2008). People share their experience and views on a wide range of issues such as the transportation companies, accommodation businesses, food and beverage businesses, natural and historical areas, recreation areas, the quality of the personnel providing tourism-related services, the tourist image of the city, etc. by means of eWOM. From this perspective eWOM and destination image can be regarded as two significant factors having influence on tourists' visiting intention. Thus, it is a must to create and put into practice some certain strategies to improve the destination image (Ran, Zhenpeng, Bilgihan & Okumus, 2021).

In summary, today more and more tourists utilize the internet online resources for their information needs and travel purchases. Therefore, eWOM can affect the destination image. In addition, destination image can be regarded as a key mediating factor in terms of affecting decision making, behavioral intentions, and attitudes of tourists with a marketing perspective (Ran et al., 2021). Based on this, this research basically aims to contribute to determine the relation between eWOM and destination image literature, while also investigate the behavioral intentions of tourists (Jalilvand, Samiei, Dini & Manzari, 2012) in the context of Eskişehir case. Eskişehir is chosen as the study area because it is acknowledged that it is one of the most popular destinations for domestic tourism in Turkey. Increasing the number of domestic tourists every year, Eskişehir was visited by 313.383 people in 2017, 395.059 people in 2018 and 617.510 people in 2019 (Eskişehir Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2020). Within



the scope of the research, an online questionnaire was applied to domestic tourists who have visited Eskişehir for the last 3 years and the empirical findings obtained were interpreted by using the literature. This article is expected to provide useful theoretical and practical implications for policy makers, destination-related decision-makers, tourism markets, and other tourism stakeholders, as well as to develop an awareness of the online marketing strategies to promote Eskişehir. In addition, the results and suggestions of the relations between electronic word of mouth communication, destination image and behavioral intentions are estimated to give an idea to various tourism stakeholders in other destinations.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. eWOM

In parallel to the emergence of the internet, eWOM has become one of the prominent influences on consumers' product or service assessment. Also the integration of social media to the daily life has resulted in a great growth in terms of the production, spread and utilization of WOM online (Pourfakhimi, Duncan & Coetzee, 2020). Litvin, Goldsmith & Pan (2008: 461) define eWOM as "all informal communications directed at consumers through Internet-based technology related to the usage or characteristics of particular goods and services, or their sellers". The communication mentioned here can mean the contact between producers and consumers as well as the one between consumers themselves. It may conclude positive or negative reviews from former, potential, and actual customers regarding a good or a brand on the Net (Cheung & Thadani, 2012). eWOM can be considered as recommendations which are pivotal to the public since they reveal consumers' experiences in a written form (Ran et al., 2021). It is especially efficient on consumers' information search, evaluation, and subsequent decision making. It sustains information regarding product performance and the social and psychological results of the purchase decision (Goldenberg, Libai & Muller, 2001; Brown, Broderick & Lee, 2007). Thanks to eWOM, people decrease the level of risk and uncertainty while making purchasing decisions on products or services. Thus, the main focus of the studies on the effectiveness of eWOM has been on the service industry (Abubakar & Ilkan, 2016; Abubakar et al., 2017).

Previous studies have put forward that WOM messages affects the receiver in various ways such as awareness, consideration, intentions, expectations, and brand attitudes (Grewal, Cline & Davies, 2003; Lee, Park & Han, 2008; Vermeulen & Seegers 2009; Gupta & Harris, 2010; Zarrad & Debabi, 2015). Various motivations also plays a significant role in generating eWOM, expectations of pre-purchasing, customer delight, and customer behaviors in general (Abubakar, Ilkan, Al-Tal & Eluwole, 2017). Researches on tourism have shown that eWOM is taken into account as a significant information source having influence on tourists' travel intention (Jalilvand, Ebrahimi & Samiei, 2013; Zarrad & Debabi, 2015; Abubakar, 2016), destination image (Jalilvand et al., 2012; Jalilvand, 2017; Doosti, Jalilvand, Asadi, Khazaei Pool & Mehrani Adl, 2016), destination choice (Jalilvand & Samiei, 2012), choice of travel products such as travel destinations, hotels and restaurants (Wen, 2009; Sparks & Browning, 2011; Xie, Miao, Kuo & Lee, 2011), persuasive impact on purchase intention (Wen, 2009; Gajendra, Ye, Sun, & Li, 2012; Soares, Pinho, & Nobre,



2012), and its role in reducing travelers' perceptions of risk when booking accommodation (Gretzel, Yoo & Purifoy, 2007).

With the emergence of a more global competition, tourism policymakers and stakeholders are aware of the affect that positive online reviews can have on a city's image (Ran et al., 2021). Hence, eWOM has fulfilled its promise to become a major influence on the tourism industry and will continue to play an essential role in tourism marketing for the foreseeable future is inevitable (Litvin et al., 2018).

2.2. Destination Image

Destination image is a multidimensional structure, both cognitive and affective, and should be studied by combining both cognitive and affective aspects (Baloglu & Mangalolu, 2001; Beerli & Martin, 2004; Hosany, Ekinci & Uysal, 2007; San Martín & Del Bosque, 2008; Chew & Jahari, 2014). Beerli & Martin (2004) stated that cognitive image is the precursor of the affective component. Accordingly, individuals first form the cognitive image and then the affective image based on the information they gathered about the destination (Chen & Phou, 2013; Souiden, Ladhari & Chiadmi, 2017). Baloglu & Mangalolu (2001) stated that a destination does not consist of only physical properties, therefore focusing on the cognitive component is not sufficient to examine the destination image. Gartner (1993) proposes the theory that cognitive, affective, and conative are three types of image and it can be stated that the literature differentiates between them and many scholars supported the theory (Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997; Konecnik & Gartner, 2007; Stepchenkova & Mills, 2010; Agapito, Oom do Valle & da Costa Mendes, 2013; Woosnam, Styliadis & Ivkov, 2020). It is made of several products, appeals, and ascribes which are added into the total impression. Besides, individual creates an impression regarding the destination as a result of a selection process through various pieces of information (Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; Whang, Yong & Ko, 2016). "Urban planning", "natural environment", "cultural attractions", "value", "security", "quality of accommodation", "price levels", "climate", and "convenience" are the dimensions of a destination that form the overall image of the destination. eWOM and marketing strategies, tourism infrastructures affect this perceived image (Ladhari & Souiden, 2020). Also, there are other autonomous agents; such as the news media; that are believed to influence the destination image significantly when they cast a dramatic event happening at a destination like natural and human caused disasters (Tasci & Denizci, 2009).

In the correlation to the concepts of image and travel destinations, the cognitive component refers to tourist's knowledge, recognition, beliefs, thoughts and awareness of each attribute of a tourism destination (Crompton, 1979; Beerli & Martin, 2004) while the affective component refers to the personal value on the destination which is formed by the travel motives (Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997) and to the feelings that the individual links with the destination. Finally, the conative component refers to action; in other words, the individual's desire and conduct to go back and advise the destination to other travellers or to spread positive word of mouth (Agapito et al., 2013) especially if they have narrow information or limited experience of a destination (Fakeye & Crompton, 1991). In other respects, destination image creates awareness and knowledge so that it diminishes the perceived risks (Shuqair & Cragg, 2017). In short, to make tourism industry more powerful in the market,



destinations image holds vital importance as a powerful managerial feature in today's World (Afshardoost & Eshaghi, 2020). Destination image provides some important information for tourism managers who want to understand how destinations are perceived by tourists and mobilize positive behavioral intentions. With the help of the destination image, managers can identify the strengths and weaknesses of the destination and plan their marketing strategies accordingly (Sert & Dündar, 2019).

2.3. Behavioral Intentions

In the 1970s and 1980s, marketing strategies were high level of satisfaction oriented, however, today behavioral intentions are taken into account as a better predictor of performance (Nowacki, 2009; Zabkar, Brencic & Dmitrovic', 2010). Attitudes and the perceptions of a tourist are effective on the behaviors (Rodriguez Molina, Frías-Jamilena, & Castañeda-García, 2013) and past deeds have been shown to explicate future behavior intentions (Ramkissoon & Uysal, 2011). It is common in the field of tourism that the researchers in the field often consider behavioral intentions as the desire to revisit, repurchase, and volunteering in the tourism product to others (Ramkissoon & Uysal, 2011; Gupta, Khanna & Gupta, 2018). Revisit intention which means that tourist with positive tourism experiences is avid to revisit the destination and the intention to give reviews or recommendations to potential travelers and it occurs when tourists are willing to chat with their friends and relatives regarding their experiences (WOM/eWOM) (Widjaja, Jokom, Kristanti & Wijaya, 2020). As to Bigovic' (2012) it can be stated that tourist intention to revisit and recommend, besides retelling and recalling can be counted as positive tourist behaviors about the destination.

2.4. Relationship between eWOM, Destination Image, and Behavioral Intentions

eWOM, which affects many different sectors, has an important role in the service industry such as tourism and hospitality (Jalilvand & Heidari, 2017). Gathering information from eWOM is rather efficient when a consumer has insufficient preknowledge regarding the service provider (Gretzel & Yoo, 2008). Thanks to the internet, people are able to share their ideas and reviews with other potential consumers very easily and in time, online reviews; which are user generated; regarding travel destinations, hotels, and tourism services have become the one of the main source of information with reports which reveal that hundreds of millions of travellers check these reviews while the planning process of their travels (Jalilvand et al., 2013). It is clear that today, eWOM serves as an opportunity for developing countries to increase their destination images (Ran et al., 2021). Destination image is also seen as an important factor affecting tourist behavior (Echtner & Ritchie, 1993; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Chi & Qu, 2008). Perceived value and future behavior intentions, including revisit intention and recommendations to others which are called tourists' post-purchase evaluations and behaviors are affected by destination image (Phillips, Wolfe, Hodur & Leistriz, 2013).

A study conducted by Jalilvand et al., (2012) with 264 international tourists in Iran reached the conclusion that eWOM positively influences the destination image, tourist attitude, and



travel intention. Jalilvand et al., (2013) in their research on 189 international tourists visiting Iran, has also put forward that eWOM has a significant impact on their attitudes and intentions to travel to Islamic destinations. Ladhari & Michaud (2015) analysed 800 Candian University students and their user generated reviews on Facebook. It is fair to state that the results have proved the power of eWOM. As a result of the research, it is determined that there is a linear relationship between the comments on a hotel and the booking intentions and attitude towards the hotel. The more positive the comments are, the more positive booking intentions and attitudes are.

Ayeh (2015) as a result of the data collected from 661 consumers; reached the result that the findings highlight the critical factors relevant to the cognitive processes which determine online travelers' affective and conative responses to the use of consumer-generated media for travel planning. In this context, researchers commented that adoption of information can expand the understanding of eWOM usage in vacation planning context. As a result of the data collected from 216 tourists in Cyprus, Abubakar (2016) detected that eWOM is positively related to travel intention and is positively related to destination trust, and destination trust is positively related to travel intention. Doosti et al., (2016) studied how eWOM, attitude, and city image affect tourists' intention to visit Pool City in Iran with 241 tourists. As a result; it is revealed; via empirical results; that eWOM has an affirmative and important influence on tourists' attitude and overall city image. Besides, they have reached the conclusion that eWOM, attitude toward the city, and overall city images were vital factors of visit intention. Accordingly Jalilvand & Heidari's (2017) study with 678 tourists, it is clear that eWOM has a stronger influence on destination image, attitude, and travel intention compared to traditional WOM. Mehmood, Liang & Gu (2018) found that personal WOM has a significant impact on their attitudes and travel intention to the heritage site in a study conducted with 280 tourists visiting Mount Huangshan which is under UNESCO protection in China. Sari & Pangestuti (2018) have studies the relations amog the eWOM variable, intention to visit, and the decision to visit. Sari & Pangestuti's research (2018) was carried out in the Coban Rais. As a result of data collected from 123 people, it is clear that eWOM has a significant positive effect on travel intention and travel decisions. It was also determined that travel intention has an important positive effect on travel decisions.

Zarifah Dhabitah Mahat & Hafiz Hanafiah (2020) studied the effect of Tripadvisor comments on behavioral intentions and they based their study on the feeling of trust towards the eWOM reviews. For this purpose, as a result of the research carried out with 410 Tripadvisor users in Kuala Lumpur, it was determined that traveler behavioral intentions was quite influenced by the credibility and usefulness of Tripadvisor eWOM information. The researchers underlined the significance of eWOM in terms of tourism industry and the feeling of trust towards eWOM. Muzdalifah, Andajani & Rhayu (2020) analysed the impact of eWOM regarding travel intention, travel decision, destination image, and attitude towards visiting a tourism city. As a result of their research with 150 respondents, they found out that eWOM had an important impact on attitude, city image, travel intention, and travel decision. It can be statead that while the attitude variable had a significant impact on image of the city and travel intention and the travel intention had an important impact on travel decisions; the city image had no effect on travel intention.



Many research results in the literature have shown that eWOM is considered as the most significant and influential information source that has a positive and strong impact on consumer attitudes, behavioral intentions and destination image (Jalilvand et al., 2012; Doosti et al., 2016; Mehmood et al., 2018; Sari & Pangestuti, 2018). On the other hand, the quality and the magnitude of these impacts are not certain although the effect of destination image on behavioral intentions is broadly documented. In some circumstances, contradictory results may be the case. Some may have determined the positive effect of destination image on tourists' intentions (Doosti et al., 2016; Chaulagain, Wiitala, & Fu, 2019), and some stated that there exist no relationship (Pratt & Sparks, 2014; Muzdalifah, et al., 2020). This study aims to investigate the relationship between eWOM, destination image and behavioral intentions. Hence, the hypotheses of this study were formed from the results of studies examining all three variables together. From the above arguments, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

H1: eWOM has a positive and significant impact on destination image.

H2: eWOM has a significant effect on behavioral intentions.

H3: Destination image has a positive and significant influence on behavioral intentions.

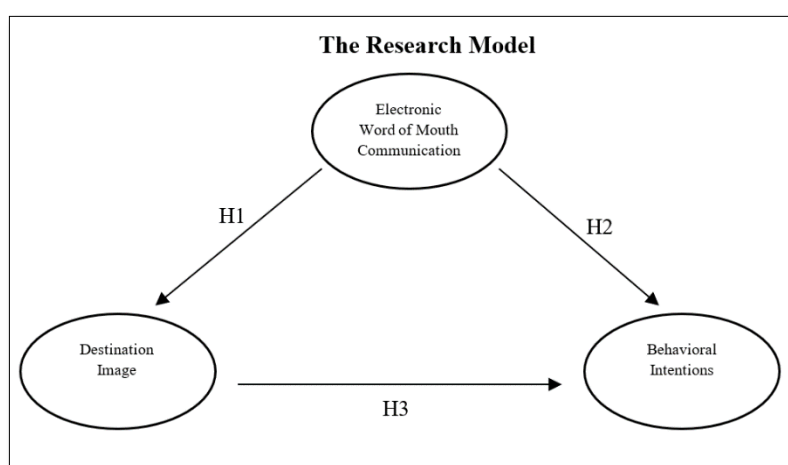


Figure 1. Research Model

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Study Area

Eskişehir and its surroundings, located in the Central Anatolia Region, date back to 3000 BC. Yazılıkaya, which was the religious center of the Phrygian Kingdom in the 700s and located at a distance of approximately 75 km from the city center of Eskişehir, and the Phrygian Valley are important cultural heritage sites (Kültür Portalı, 2021). Another cultural area that makes Eskişehir attractive as a touristic destination is the Odunpazarı Historical Urban Site, which is located in the city center and has been on the tentative list of The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), since 2012. In



Odunpazarı, there exist some historical sites from Seljuk, Ottoman and Turkish Republic periods; such as Alaaddin Mosque (1271), Kursunlu Mosque Complex (1525), Hacı Hasan Mosque (13th century) etc. The Kursunlu Mosque Complex which is one of the few religious centers of Anatolia, and is an example for Ottoman architecture is located at the centre of the site. Eskişehir Handicraft Center which is famous for being home to almost extinct traditional handicrafts (master-apprentice system) like hand writing, gilding, marbling, miniature and reed flute is also in this complex (UNESCO, 2021). The Odunpazarı Region, with its many museums that shed light on the history of the city and include modern arts (Kurtuluş Museum, City Memory Museum, Meerschaum Museum, Yılmaz Büyükerşen Wax Sculptures Museum, Contemporary Glass Arts Museum, Odunpazarı Modern Museum, etc.) is a tourist attraction. In addition, tourists can buy souvenirs made of meerschaum special to Eskişehir in Atlıhan Handicrafts Bazaar in Odunpazarı and in many shops located between the streets. There are also many small local food and beverage businesses in this region where tourists can taste local gastronomic products.

Having three universities, the city is mostly populated with young people and therefore there are many places for nightlife and entertainment. The Porsuk River, which passes through the center of the city and has many cafes on its edge, is one of the main places of tourists visiting Eskişehir. It is also possible to take a boat and gondola tour on the Porsuk River. The bars, which are in a close location, offer many venue alternatives for tourists who want to have fun. Finally, Eskişehir is also famous for its recreational parks. Science, Culture and Art Park is a place popular with adults, and especially with children. Park has an amphitheatre that allows a variety of demonstrations, the implementation of the old narrow gauge railway line on which a mini train that crosses the park, Ship Museum and Fairytale Castle. Besides, Turkey's largest Japanese Garden is there. Science center, planetarium, aquarium and zoo are all other tourism hotspots (Eskişehir Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2021). Another important tourist attraction center is Kent Park. Here is a first in Turkey with an artificial beach and swimming pool. Thus, tourists visiting Eskişehir have the privilege of going to the beach in a city where there is no natural sea (Eskişehir İl, Kültür ve Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2021).

According to Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Republic of Turkey, the data of 2021, 37 accommodation businesses serve in Eskişehir (T.C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2021). When the number of tourists is examined, the striking increase in the number of tourists visiting Eskişehir over the years draws attention. Especially, this increase is seen to be on the basis of domestic tourists. Accordingly, 166.195 domestic tourists and 7.266 foreign tourists were accommodated in the accommodation facilities in 2010, and this figure increased to 617.510, with an increase of 272% especially in domestic tourists in 2019. In the same year, there was an increase of 536% in foreign tourists compared to 2010 and the figure reached 46.259 (Eskişehir Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2020). On the other hand, it is estimated that the number of tourists is much higher than stated since no statistics are kept for those staying in rented residences other than the hotel business and those who come to visit relatives and friends.



3.2. Questionnaire Design and Pilot Test

The questionnaire used in the study consists of two parts. In the first part; there are eWOM scale, destination image scale, and behavioral intentions scale. The scales are rated in 5-point Likert type (1: strongly disagree-5: strongly agree). In the second part, 9 questions were asked about the socio-demographic information of the participants (Jalilvand et al., 2012; Prayag & Ryan, 2012). The first 3 items in the eWOM scale (4 items) were taken from Ishida et al.'s (2016) study, and the fourth item was created from the studies of Yüksel & Kılıç (2016). Destination image scale (20 items) was adapted from Ladhari & Souiden's (2020) studies and the behavioral intentions scale (4 items) from Hosany, Prayag, Deesilatham, Caušević & Odeh (2014). The scale items in the questionnaire were originally sent to two researchers who are tourism academicians. Scale translations were examined, some corrections were made in the questionnaire in line with the necessary recommendations and it was made ready for a pilot test. Kline (1994) states that a sample of 200 people will usually be sufficient as an absolute criterion to extract reliable factors in factor analysis, and this figure can be reduced to 100 in cases where the factor structure is clear and small. For this reason, the researcher collected data from 155 people via various digital platforms in November to be used in the pilot study, taking into account the time limit 2020. As a result of the pilot test; eWOM (0.896), destination image (0.834) and behavioral intentions (0.953) scales were found to be highly reliable. In addition, 7 items that aim to measure the destination image of the participants and which are included in the dimensions of the vehicle, which consists of 20 items, have low factor loadings (below 0.40) and also cause interlocking are omitted. In the literature, it is stated that factor loadings ranging from 0.30 to 0.40 can be taken as the lower cut-off point in the creation of the factor pattern (Cathell & Baggaley, 1960; Neale & Liebert, 1980; Büyüköztürk, 2007). In this study, the lower cut-off point was accepted as 0.40.

3.3. Sample Framework and Data Collection

The research population consists of domestic tourists who have visited Eskişehir in the last 3 years. The number of domestic tourists and excursionists who come to Eskişehir with their own means or tours cannot be predicted. Therefore, for the case where the size of the population is 100000 and above, assuming that it is calculated as 384 with a 95% confidence level and ± 5 margins of error (Altunışık, Coşkun, Bayraktaroğlu, & Yıldırım, 2010), at least 384 people were targeted. During the determination of the sample group in which the research was conducted, purposive sampling and convenience sampling was used from nonprobabilistic sampling types. Purposive sampling refers to a group of sampling techniques that depend on the judgement of the researcher on selecting target units (e.g. people, case/organisations, events, pieces of data). It is necessary to recruit the audience meeting the criteria and qualifications which are predetermined by the researcher (Sharma, 2017). Easy accessibility, geographical proximity, availability at a certain time, volunteering to participate are included in the study in terms of convenience sampling. Researching subjects of the sample which the researcher has an easy access to is also referred (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016). In this context, the online questionnaire created in this direction was shared through various digital platforms (Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, Telegram,



e-mail) between December 2020 and January 2021 and was shared in the information letter of the questionnaire, where only those who visited Eskişehir in the last 3 years were asked to fill out the questionnaire. Thus, it is aimed to include domestic tourists who have recently gained experience in Eskişehir city. Among the participants who accepted to answer the questionnaire between the aforementioned dates, 392 valid out of a total of 405 questionnaires were evaluated.

3.4. Tools and Techniques

The data obtained in the study were analyzed using the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) for Windows 25.0 program. The socio-demographic information obtained from the participants was interpreted by calculating the frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation values, which are among the descriptive statistics. In the questionnaires using Likert type scales, data doesn't display a normal distribution. Compliance with normal distribution can be examined with Q-Q Plot drawing (Chan, 2003). In addition, the normal distribution of the data used depends on the skewness and kurtosis values between ± 3 (Qin, Leung & Shao, 2002). eWOM skewness value -0.931, kurtosis value 0.735, destination image skewness value -1.327, kurtosis value 2.839 and behavioral intentions skewness value -1.468, kurtosis value 1.352 were found to be normally distributed. Since the scales used showed normal distribution, parametric tests were used in statistical evaluations.

4. FINDINGS

4.1. Socio-demographic Characteristics of Participants

The socio-demographic characteristics of the participants is given in Table 1. According to this, the average age of the participants is 39.2 and the majority (36.5%) is in the 31-40 age groups. In addition, 55.4% of them are women, 59.7% are university graduates, 71.4% are working and 70.9% have middle income.

Table1. Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Participants (n=392)

		n	%
Age	30 years and below	88	22.4
	31-40	143	36.5
	41-50	98	25.0
	51 years and above	63	16.1
Gender	Female	217	55.4
	Male	175	46.6
Educational level	Secondary school/High school	118	29.1
	Associate degree/Bachelor's degree	234	59.7
	Postgraduate	40	10.2
Working condition	Working	280	71.4
	Nonworker	112	28.6
Monthly income	Low	45	11.5
	Middle	278	70.9
	High	69	17.6



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Number of previous visits to Eskişehir	Once	198	50.5
	Twice	112	28.6
	Three times	42	10.7
	4 times and above	40	10.2
Reason to travel Eskişehir before *	Leisure, recreation and holiday	285	72.7
	Visiting relatives and friends	113	28.8
	Cultural events	98	25.0
	Artistic events	97	24.7
	Education	53	13.5
	Business	48	12.2
	Health	13	3.3
	Sports-related events	10	2.6
Digital platforms with the most travel reviews read / viewed on the Internet *	Instagram	300	76.5
	Tripadvisor	252	64.3
	Personal travelblogs	130	33.2
	YouTube	126	32.1
	Trivago	108	27.6
	Booking.com	48	12.2
	Airbnb	27	6.9
	Facebook	14	3.6
	I don't read anyone else's travel reviews on digital platforms	3	0.8
Researched issues related to the city visited from a digital platform on the Internet *	Places to visit	368	93.9
	Activities to do	296	75.5
	Eating and drinking	273	69.6
	Accommodation	223	56.9
	Transportation	141	36
	Best time to visit the city	81	20.7
	Currency of destination	49	12.5
	The language of the destination	45	11.5
	I don't research on these subjects on digital platforms	3	0.8

“**”Participants were able to mark more than one option in the questions.

Half of the participants (50.5%) consisted of people who visited Eskişehir once in the last 3 years. When the question in which the participants stated their reasons for visiting Eskişehir and could select more than one option, is examined; The first three reasons are; leisure, recreation and holiday (72.7%), visiting relatives and friends (28.8%) and cultural activities (25.0%). The top three digital platforms where travel reviews are read/viewed on the Internet are Instagram (76.5%), Tripadvisor (64.3%), and various personal travel blogs (33.2%). The three most researched topics related to the city visited from a digital platform on the Internet are determined as; places to visit (93.9%), activities to do (75.5%), and eating and drinking (69.6%).

4.2. Findings Obtained from the Scales

In order to determine the distinctiveness of the items in the eWOM, destination image and behavioral intentions scales, the raw scores obtained from each factor are ranked in ascending order, the mean scores of the groups in the lower 27% and upper 27% are



compared with the independent sample t-test. The minimum required value for the total-item test correlation to be sufficient is specified as 0.20 (Kline, 2000). It was observed that the items of the scale, whose item correlations we examined, were above 0.20. As a result of the comparison, among the average of the lower and upper group item scores of the eWOM and behavioral intentions scales for all items; for destination image scale, it was determined that there is a significant difference at $p < 0.05$ level for all items for each sub-dimension between the averages of the lower and upper group item scores. Therefore, it can be said that scales are distinctive in terms of measuring the desired quality. AVE and CR values were checked to ensure convergent validity. Accordingly, CR values are; Calculated as (0.818) for eWOM and behavioral intentions. CR values for the dimensions of the destination image variable were determined as “urban”(0.810), “hygiene”(0.772), “culture”(0.733) and “convenience”(0.682). AVE values; calculated as (0.532) for eWOM and behavioral intentions. AVE values for the dimensions of the destination image variable are “urban”(0.590), “hygiene”(0.533), “culture”(0.491) and “convenience”(0.426). Fornell & Larcker (1981) recommended a CR value of 0.60 or more. Hair, Anderson, Tatham & Black (1998), on the other hand, stated that if CR values are greater than 0.60, an AVE of less than 0.50 is acceptable, and construct validity is sufficient. $AVE < CR$ convergent validity was observed. Therefore, these values are at an acceptable level.

Table 2 contains the analysis results regarding the reliability of the scales. Before the explanatory factor analysis (EFA), the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test was applied to the scales in order to test whether the sample size was suitable for factor analysis. According to KMO, it was concluded that the sampling adequacy of eWOM and behavioral intentions scales was good enough for factor analysis, while destination image scale was sufficient. As KMO value, values between 0.5-1.0 are considered acceptable, while values below 0.5 indicate that factor analysis is not suitable for the data set (Altunışık et al., 2010). Also, when Bartlett's Sphericity test results were examined, it was seen that the obtained chi-square value was acceptable. EFA was conducted to reveal the factor pattern of the measurement tools. It is seen that the factor loadings of the instrument, which aims to measure eWOM and consists of 4 items, ranged from 0.743-0.862 and was good. eWOM explains 64.357% of the variance. A variance of 30% or more explained in single factor designs seem sufficient (Tavşancıl, 2005). In this framework, it is seen that the contribution of a defined factor to the total variance is sufficient.

The reliability of the eWOM scale (0.811) is observed to be high (Table 2). The 13-item tool, which aims to measure the destination image of the participants, was developed on the basis of four theoretical dimensions. In order to reveal the factor pattern of destination image scale, principal component analysis was chosen as the factorization method, and varimax, one of the orthogonal rotation methods, was chosen as rotation. In the explanatory factor analysis conducted to reveal the factor pattern of the destination image scale, it was determined that the factor loading values were above 0.40. In the analysis for four factors, when the items were evaluated in terms of whether the factor loadings meet the acceptance level, it was determined that the factor loadings were at the desired level. It is seen that the factor loadings are between 0.564-0.864. In Varimax rotation results, items were grouped under a total of 4 factors. These factors explain 66.351% of the total variance. In multi-factor designs, 40% to 60% of the variance explained is considered sufficient (Tavşancıl, 2005;



Büyüköztürk, 2007). In this framework, it is seen that the contribution of a defined factor to the total variance is sufficient. As seen in the table, the first factor “urban” explains 23.808% of the total variance, the second factor “hygiene” 17.082%, the third factor “culture” 14.820%, and the fourth factor “convenience” 10.640%. It is seen that the destination image scale (0.701) is reliable (Table 2). Finally, it is seen that the factor loadings of the tool, which aims to measure behavioral intentions and consists of 4 items, are between 0.690-0.968 and are decent. Behavioral intentions explain 81.606% of the variance. It is sufficient for the variance explained in single factor designs to be 30% or more (Tavşancıl, 2005). In this framework, it is seen that the contribution of a defined factor to the total variance is sufficient. It is seen that the reliability of the behavioral intentions scale (0.893) is high (Table 2).

Table2. Reliability Analysis

Variable	Scale Item	Eigen value	Factor Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	% of Variance
Electronic Word of Mouth Communication (eWOM)	eWOM1	2.574	0.773	0.811	64.357
	eWOM2		0.826		
	eWOM3		0.862		
	eWOM4		0.743		
	KMO =0.784; $\chi^2(6) =532.265$; Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (p) = 0.000				
Destination Image (DI)	Factor 1: Urban			0.701	66.351
	DI8	2.857	0.805		
	DI12		0.849		
	DI13		0.864		
	Factor 2:Hygiene				
	DI9	2.050	0.795		
	DI10		0.816		
	DI11		0.855		
	Factor 3:Culture				
	DI3	1.778	0.736		
	DI4		0.822		
	DI5		0.810		
	Factor 4:Convenience				
	DI1	1.277	0.564		
DI6	0.832				
DI7	0.794				
KMO =0.664; $\chi^2(66) =1313.385$; Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (p) = 0.000					
Behavioral Intentions (BI)	BI1	3.264	0.965	0.893	81.606
	BI2		0.959		
	BI3		0.968		
	BI4		0.690		
	KMO =0.822; $\chi^2(6) =1939.189$; Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (p) = 0.000				

***p<0.05

Model fit of item-factor structure obtained from EFA was tested with confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Standardized coefficients, error variances and t values obtained as a result of CFA regarding the scales were calculated. Accordingly, factor loadings of eWOM and



behavioral intentions scales are above 0.40. The DI2 item in destination image scale was removed because the factor loading value was below 0.40.

Table 3 shows the structural equation model results of the scale according to the CFA of the scales. It was determined that the structural equation modeling results of the eWOM scale were significant at the $p = 0.000$ level, and the items forming the scale were related to the scale structure. No improvements are conducted in the model. Afterwards, it was seen that the accepted values for the fit index were met in the renewed fit index calculations. Considering the goodness of fit indexes of the eWOM scale according to the results of the first level multi-factor analysis; RMSEA 0.067; GFI 0.993; CFI 0.993; NFI 0.990; If χ^2 , it can be said that it is at an acceptable level with the values of 2.730 ($p = 0.000$). It was determined that the structural equation modeling result of destination image scale was significant at the $p = 0.000$ level, and the items and four factors that make up the scale were related to the scale structure. Improvements were conducted in the model. While making improvements, variables that reduce compliance were determined, and new covariances were created for those with high covariance among residual values. Afterwards, it was seen that the accepted values for fit indices were met in the renewed fit index calculations. Considering the goodness of fit indexes of destination image scale according to the first level multi-factor analysis results; RMSEA 0.060; GFI 0.954; CFI 0.948; NFI 0.915; If χ^2 , it can be said that it is at an acceptable level with values of 2.406 ($p = 0.000$). Finally, it was determined that the structural equation modeling result of the behavioral intentions scale was significant at the $p = 0.000$ level, and the items forming the scale were related to the scale structure. No improvement was conducted in the model. Afterwards, it was seen that the accepted values for fit indices were met in the renewed fit index calculations. Considering the goodness of fit indexes of the behavioral intentions scale according to the results of the first level multi-factor analysis; RMSEA 0.072; GFI 0.992; CFI 0.998; NFI 0.997; It can be said to be at an acceptable level with 3.030 ($p = 0.000$) values.

Table 3. Fit Indices of the Scales

Variables	Goodness of Fit Measures	Excellent Fit Measures	Acceptable Model Fit	Findings
Electronic Word of Mouth Communication (eWOM)	CMIN/Df	$0 \leq \chi^2/df \leq 3$	$3 \leq \chi^2/df \leq 5$	2.730
	GFI	$\geq 0,90$	$\geq 0,80$	0.993
	CFI	$0,90 \leq CFI \leq 1,00$	$0,80 \leq CFI \leq 0,90$	0.993
	RMSEA	$\leq 0,05$	$\leq 0,08$	0.067
	NFI	$0,95 \leq NFI \leq 1,00$	$0,80 \leq NFI \leq 0,95$	0.990
Destination Image (DI)	CMIN/Df	$0 \leq \chi^2/df \leq 3$	$3 \leq \chi^2/df \leq 5$	2.406
	GFI	$\geq 0,90$	$\geq 0,80$	0.954
	CFI	$0,90 \leq CFI \leq 1,00$	$0,80 \leq CFI \leq 0,90$	0.948
	RMSEA	$\leq 0,05$	$\leq 0,08$	0.060
	NFI	$0,95 \leq NFI \leq 1,00$	$0,80 \leq NFI \leq 0,95$	0.915
Behavioral Intentions (BI)	CMIN/Df	$0 \leq \chi^2/df \leq 3$	$3 \leq \chi^2/df \leq 5$	3.030
	GFI	$\geq 0,90$	$\geq 0,80$	0.992
	CFI	$0,90 \leq CFI \leq 1,00$	$0,80 \leq CFI \leq 0,90$	0.998
	RMSEA	$\leq 0,05$	$\leq 0,08$	0.072
	NFI	$0,95 \leq NFI \leq 1,00$	$0,80 \leq NFI \leq 0,95$	0.997

(Sources: Browne & Cudeck, 1993; Şimşek, 2007; Simon, Kriston, Loh, Spies, Scheibler, Wills & Härter, 2010; Meydan & Şeşen, 2011)



4.3. Testing of the Hypotheses

When we look at the correlation coefficients of the variables of the study, there is a statistically significant and positive direction between eWOM and destination image ($r = 0.185$; $p < 0.05$), and a statistically significant and positive direction between eWOM and destination image ($r = 0.294$; $p < 0.05$), there is a statistically significant and positive relationship ($r = 0.270$; $p < 0.05$) between behavioral intentions and destination image (Table 4).

Table 4. Relationship Between eWOM, Destination Image and Behavioral Intentions

Variables	1	2	3
1. Electronic Word of Month Communication (eWOM)	-		
2. Destination Image (DI)	0.294*	0.270*	
3. Behavioral Intentions (BI)	0.185*	-	-

* $p < 0.05$

Hypotheses are tested by regression analysis. First, regression analysis was conducted to explain the effect of eWOM on destination image. When the significance level corresponding to the F value is examined, it is seen that the model established is statistically significant ($F = 36.802$; $p < 0.05$). When we look at β coefficients of independent variables, t value, and significance levels; it is seen that eWOM has a statistically significant effect on destination image ($p < 0.05$). It is seen that 8.4% of the change on destination image is explained by eWOM (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.084$). According to the results, the effect of eWOM on destination image is seen as $\beta = 0.294$. It has been observed that eWOM positively affects destination image (Table 5). Accordingly, it was concluded that the H1 hypothesis was supported.

Table 5. The Results of Simple Linear Regression Analysis to Explain the Effect of eWOM on the Destination Image of the Participants

Dependent variable	Independent variable	β	t	p	Beta	F	Model (p)	Adjusted R^2
Destination Image (DI)	Constant	46.635	27.497	0.000		36.802	0.000	0.084
	Electronic Word of Mouth Communication (eWOM)	0.564	6.066	0.000	0.294			

In Table 6, it is seen that the model explaining the effect of eWOM and destination image on behavioral intentions of the participants in the research is statistically significant ($F = 18.070$; $p < 0.05$). When β coefficients, t value and significance levels of independent variables are examined; It was determined that eWOM ($\beta = 0.108$), destination image ($\beta = 0.113$) had a statistically significant effect on behavioral intentions ($p < 0.05$). In this case, it can be said that as the scores obtained from eWOM and destination image increase, the level of behavioral intentions will increase. It is seen that 8% of the change in behavioral intentions is explained by eWOM and destination image (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.080$). When the VIF values



showing whether there is a multiple linear connection between the independent variables were examined, it was seen that there was no multiple linear connection since it was less than 10. Based on Durbin Watson test statistics for autocorrelation detection, it was concluded that there is no autocorrelation. The effect of destination image on behavioral intentions is more than the other independent variable ($\beta = 0.235$). Therefore, the results support the H2 and H3 hypotheses.

Table 6. Results of Regression Analysis Performed to Explain the Effect of eWOM and Destination Image on Behavioral Intentions

Dependent variable	Independent variable	β	t	p	VIF	Beta	F	Model (p)	Adjusted R^2
Behavioral Intentions (BI)	Constant	10.479	7.465	0.000*			18.070	0.000*	0.080
	Electronic Word of Mouth Communication (eWOM)	0.108	2.292	0.022*	1.094	0.176			
	Destination Image (DI)	0.113	4.640	0.000*	1.094	0.196			

Durbin Watson statistics=2.177

* $p < 0.05$

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study aims to investigate the relationship between eWOM, destination image and behavioral intentions. For this purpose, the city of Eskişehir, which is a highly preferred destination within the scope of domestic tourism activities, has been selected. First of all, the socio-demographic data of 392 people participating in the study were analyzed. It is observed that the majority of the participants is between the ages of 31-40, women, university graduates, employees and have middle income levels. In this direction, it can be said that the majority of the sample of the study are Gen Ys who are active, educated and have a certain expenditure level. It is observed that the majority of the participants obtained information about travel and destination by using eWOM resources before visiting a place. In this context, the top three digital platforms where the most travel reviews are read / viewed on the internet; have been identified as Instagram, Tripadvisor, and various personal travel blogs. Considering that most of the participants in the study are between the ages of 31-40 and the average age of all is 39.2, it can be said that it is an expected result that Instagram is strikingly preferred and prominent by the participants. Because many researches in the literature emphasize that Instagram is one of the world's most popular and fastest-growing social media platforms especially with Gen Y and Gen Z generations (Hanindharputri & Pradnyanita, 2018; Cocco & Brogna, 2019; Djafarova & Bowes, 2021). Also, this social media phenomenon (Fatanti & Suyadnya, 2015) is considered to be a very powerful tool for promoting and marketing tourism destinations (Hanan & Putit, 2014; Smith, 2018). Shuqair & Cragg (2017) found in their research that Instagram posts are effective in changing the



viewers' perceptions and it can influence viewers' behavioral intentions during the pre-visit stage. Similarly, it has been concluded that Tripadvisor, the eWOM tool used by the participants as a secondary tool in this study, affects the travel decisions or image formations of individuals in the previous studies in the literature (Miguens, Baggio & Costa 2008; Amaral & Tiago, 2014). Finally, regarding a destination they are planning to visit, the participants are mostly stated that they search for places to visit, activities to be done, and eating and drinking.

As a result of the questions directed to the participants about Eskişehir; It was determined that half of them visited this place for the first time. The main reasons for these people to visit Eskişehir are; leisure, recreation and holiday, visiting relatives and friends, cultural and artistic activities. Considering the urban and touristic structure of Eskişehir, the result in question is quite meaningful. Eskişehir, which is a university city, has many cafes and entertainment venues where young people can spend their free time. Besides, Eskişehir attracts attention due to the fact that it has various theme parks which are unique. The city, which has a symphony orchestra, opera halls and theater, also has many museums where examples of traditional and modern handicrafts are exhibited and many workshops where these arts are taught. In addition, many cultural and art festivals are organised in the city.

It is thought that eWOM will become more common in the future with the developments in technology and it is acknowledged to play a considerable role in influencing and forming consumer attitudes and behavioral intentions (Jalilvand et al., 2013). Also, destination image and the selection of the destination were significantly influenced considerably by the information sources that a tourist obtained (Mehmood, et al., 2018). Online information, namely eWOM, regarding the destination affects the overall image of a destination (Doosti et al., 2016). Majority of the tourists have a tendency to look for websites using eWOM for quicker and more reliable information compared to the information gathered from travel companies. Thus, it can be stated that the image of a destination can affect behavioral intentions and eWOM (Abubakar & Ilkan, 2016). In other words, the destination image has an impact on the whole process of the visit. Thus, destination image created during previsit, on-site and postvisit is significant for tourist decision making and behavioral intentions (Ishida et al., 2016; Tasci, Hahm & Terry, 2019; Ladhari & Souiden, 2020). When the hypotheses created as a result of the literature review were tested, it was found that all three hypotheses were supported. According to the results of the first hypothesis, it is seen that eWOM has positive and significant results on destination image. The finding in question coincides with Jalilvand et al., (2012), Doosti et al., (2016), and Jalilvand & Heidari's (2017) research results. The second hypothesis, "eWOM has a significant effect on future behavioral intentions" is in line with the results of the research conducted by many researches (Jalilvand et al., 2012; Jalilvand et al., 2013; Abubakar, 2016; Mehmood et al., 2018; Sari & Pangestuti, 2018). Finally, it has been confirmed that the destination image perceived in the H3 hypothesis has a positive and significant influence on future behavioral intentions. It was consistent with the findings of Doosti et al., (2016).

According to the findings, it is seen that the majority of the participants read the recommendations, thoughts, and comments on digital platforms before visiting Eskişehir. The results show that the participants of the research will recommend Eskişehir to other



people, say positive things about the city and want to visit Eskişehir again in the near future (in the next 3 years). Although half of the participants (50.5%) visited Eskişehir only once, reaching the aforementioned result can be explained by the fact that Eskişehir's destination image is quite good, positive, and strong. The measurement of the destination image was conducted on the tangible and intangible qualities (physical and service quality) of the destination. In this study, the measurement of the destination image perceived by domestic tourists regarding Eskişehir was measured by taking into account Eskişehir's urban structure, natural and artificial attractions, historical and cultural attractions, infrastructure, climate, safety, hygiene, convenience and value. According to the findings obtained, it is seen that the city perception of the domestic tourists about Eskişehir is generally positive, and in this context, “urban”, “hygiene”, “culture”, and “convenience” factors come to the fore. The impact of the successful municipal projects and implementations of Eskişehir Metropolitan Municipality in creating this perception is indisputable, for, Eskişehir has been awarded in many international city competitions. For example; in the researches of CNBC-e Business and Forbes magazines regarding “Turkey's most livable cities”, Eskişehir was selected second following Ankara (Esgazete, 2017). In the contest organized by WRI Ross Center, which aims to offer a better life to millions of people living in cities, and in which 115 cities participated with approximately 200 projects, Eskişehir with its successful urban applications, outdistanced the metropolises such as London, Barcelona, New York and Dubai behind and reached the finals (Eskişehir Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2018). In the list prepared by the international research company Numbeo every year according to certain criteria and in different categories, Eskişehir was chosen the eighth most reliable city in the world in 2020 (NTV, 2021).

5.1. Implications and Suggestions

This work has a number of theoretical and practical implications. First of all, this study contributes to the theoretical literature on eWOM, destination image, and behavioral intentions from two perspectives. First, if eWOM communications people make before visiting a place are positive, it has a significant effect on both the destination image and the people's future behavioral intentions for that location. Second, if those who have visited a destination before have developed positive perceptions, this reflects positively on their future behavioral intentions. They will have a desire to visit that destination again, as well as show positive behaviors such as recommending and encouraging other people to go there. In this context, it can be said that eWOM has a strong and dynamic effect on both the pre-visit images of a destination and the post-visit image of a destination, and this affects behavioral intentions.

This study puts forward significant managerial implications for practitioners in tourism industry. In the light of the data obtained from this research, it is possible to make a number of recommendations to decision makers and tourism marketers in Eskişehir. In this context, the main point that can be suggested is that local administrations and tourism enterprises should provide tourists with quality services and facilities and ensure their satisfaction. Because the tourist who is satisfied with the city experience will not only visit the city again, but also recommend and advertise the city to strangers through digital platforms. Thus, many



potential tourists will be able to visit the city. Secondly, it is the fact that every public, private and non-governmental organization (NGO) stakeholders providing touristic services related to the city should use eWOM (especially social media) effectively as a promotional and marketing tool of the destination. Even while doing this, various award-winning competitions (story, memory, short film, photo, etc.) can be organized in order to increase the eWOM sharing of those who visit the city and to improve the positive perception of those who do not visit the city.

Especially in the metropolitan municipality and the enterprises (museums, workshops, culture-art-congress centers, theater and opera halls, theme parks, boat and gondola tour, science center, planetarium, aquarium etc.) and corporate websites, it is seen that their work on both social media tools is quite comprehensive and successful. In addition, it can be said that accommodation businesses, restaurants and bars and private museums in the city use social media effectively and thus attract visitors to the destination. However, it is seen that neither the metropolitan municipality nor the private tourism enterprises are carrying out effective eWOM studies for the promotion and marketing of some potential tourism types. For instance; It draws attention that Eskişehir, which has important underground waters and thermal springs, does not stand out in the scope of health tourism such as Afyon, Kütahya and Bursa, which are neighboring cities. Or, it is seen that there are neither sufficient tourist infrastructure and superstructure nor eWOM works for the regions where the most difficult struggles of the War of Independence were passed within the scope of dark tourism, and also for İnönü Turkish Aeronautical Association Glider and Parachute Camp, which may attract the attention of adventure tourists. Similarly, it is thought that the promotion and marketing activities of the Phrygian Valley, which is a cultural heritage area and some of which is located within the borders of Eskişehir, are quite insufficient. In this context, it is thought that infrastructure and superstructure studies should be carried out in accordance with nature and history by carrying out joint and integrated projects with neighboring provinces Kütahya and Afyon, which cover the borders of the Phrygian Valley. It is vital to act together as tourism professionals, including marketers and decision-makers about the destination in this region which has the potential to become the “Second Cappadocia” of Turkey with its both geomorphological formations and historical richness. After these studies are completed, the resulting touristic services should be introduced to people through digital media and social media. Another suggestion is to increase the number of tourism information offices where visitors can easily access and obtain information on important touristic spots of the city, and to include these offices in digital platforms and social media applications popularly used by people.

5.2. Limitations and Future Research

This study has some limitations. The first is to collect the data of the research through digital platforms due to the Covid 19 pandemic. The second is that its population includes only domestic tourists who have visited Eskişehir in the last 3 years and the full count cannot be reached. In this respect, the findings of the study cannot be generalized. In future studies, the models and relationships revealed within the scope of the research can be tested in



various destinations and their results can be compared. It can also contribute to the development of the relevant literature in this way.

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