



Tomas Bata University in Zlín
Faculty of Management and Economics

Doctoral Thesis

Factors to Enhance Tourists' Ecotourism Loyalty, Moderation Effect of Prosocial Behaviour and Social Media Influence

**Faktory, které zvyšují loajalitu turistů k ekoturistice, mírný
účinek prosociálního chování a vliv sociálních médií**

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ABSTRACT

Ecotourism loyalty management is a function that leveraged desirable outcomes for tourists through satisfactory experiences and to the community through sustainable development. This management includes environmental conservation and tourism earnings to enable the destinations to cater to their future needs through the revenue. Ecotourist loyalty is a composite variable that depends on behaviours and attitudes after consuming a tourism product. Sustainable approaches reduce marketing costs through satisfactory services that leverage recommendations and word of mouth marketing. Expectation confirmation theory and theory of planned behaviour provide critical insight on how destination managers may shape the quality of services and tourist activities. The primary objective of this study is to determine ways that enhance tourist's ecotourism loyalty. Moreover, this study's central research question is how prosocial behaviour and social media influence moderate the relationship between e-WOM consumption and ecotourism loyalty. The research show that e-WOM consumption before the trip affects destination image and this effect is stronger when visitors have a favourable impression of the residents' altruistic manner or positive social media influence. In addition, tourist satisfaction is related to ecotourism loyalty and this relationship is stronger when tourists perceive positive social behaviour or tourists receive more interactions from social networks (after the trip).

ABSTRAKT

Ekoturismus řízení loajality je funkce, která využívá žádoucí výsledky pro turisty prostřednictvím uspokojivých zkušeností a pro komunitu prostřednictvím udržitelného rozvoje. Toto řízení zahrnuje ochranu životního prostředí a příjmy z cestovního ruchu, aby mohly destinace uspokojit své budoucí potřeby prostřednictvím výnosů. Ekoturistická loajalita je složená proměnná, která závisí na chování a postojích po konzumaci produktu cestovního ruchu. Udržitelné přístupy snižují marketingové náklady prostřednictvím uspokojivých služeb, které využívají doporučení a ústní marketing. Teorie potvrzení očekávání a teorie plánovaného chování poskytují kritický pohled na to, jak mohou destinační manažeři utvářet kvalitu služeb a turistických aktivit. Primárním cílem této studie je určit způsoby, které posílí loajalitu turistů k ekoturistice. Kromě toho je ústřední výzkumnou otázkou této studie, jak prosociální chování a sociální média ovlivňují mírnění vztahu mezi spotřebou e-WOM a loajalitou k ekoturistice. Výzkum ukazuje, že spotřeba e-WOM před cestou ovlivňuje image destinace a tento efekt je silnější, když mají návštěvníci příznivý dojem z altruistického chování obyvatel nebo pozitivního vlivu sociálních médií. Spokojenost turistů navíc souvisí s loajalitou k ekoturistice a tento vztah je silnější, když turisté vnímají pozitivní sociální chování nebo turisté získávají více interakcí ze sociálních sítí (po cestě).

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ABBREVIATIONS OF KEY TERMS

DI: Destination Image

ECT: Expectation Confirmation Theory

EE: Ecotourist Experience

ES: Ecotourism Satisfaction

e-WOM: Electronic Word-of-mouth

ECOSERV: Ecotourists' Quality Expectations

LOYL: Ecotourism Loyalty

MOT: Motivation

NGO: Non-Governmental Organization

PS: Prosocial Behaviour

SMIA: Social Media Influence after the trip

SMIB: Social Media Influence before the trip

TPB: Theory of Planned Behavior

SEM: Structural Equation Modelling

SERVQUAL: Service Quality

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Ecotourism

There are numerous definitions of ecotourism, but they all emphasize the same things: the reduction of harmful effects on the environment, the generation and equitable distribution of financial benefits, and the involvement and empowerment of local residents (Blamey, 1997; Fennell & Malloy, 1999; Sharpley, 2008). All of these things are emphasized in ecotourism. The use of ecotourism as a tool for conservation and development is gaining popularity, notably in developing countries (Stronza et al., 2019; WONDIRAD et al., 2020)

Ecotourism is a modern and evolving concept linked to increasing attention on the ecological environment concerning tourism. Ecotourism is nature-based tourism grounded on the maintenance and protection of the well-being of the local communities and environment while offering satisfying experiences in nature for tourists (Mondino & Beery, 2019). Ecotourism is at the nexus of conservation and sustainable development. Tourism remains among most significant sectors of the global economy, with a growth rate of 4% in 2019 and 6% in 2020, offering over 109 million jobs (Carvache-Franco et al., 2021). Despite the economic benefits, tourism also accounts for 8.84% of gas pollutants and the exploitation of natural resources. Ecotourism aims at leveraging the economic benefits while minimizing the adverse effects on the environment. People are more interested in visiting less commercialized and more natural destinations advancing ecotourism. Most natural tourist attractions are predominantly in the global south in regions such as Asia, South and Central America, and Africa (J. (Bill) Xu et al., 2022). The developing and underdeveloped parts of the world hold the most significant proportion of natural resources, attraction sites, and biodiversity; thus, they are the hub for ecotourism development (Sowards & Banerjee, 2021). For tourism to count as ecotourism, it has to include the preservation and sustainability of cultural and natural environments and support of native cultures. Tourists are entertained unaccommodated in ways that least intrude or destroy the environment while supporting a diversity of locals and benefiting them (Holland et al., 2022). The impacts of ecotourism are not all positive, as there are adverse effects across economic, social, and community levels, but the benefits are worthwhile (Khanra et al., 2021).

The global estimated value of the ecotourism industry is \$152.5 billion as of 2021, and it is approximated to rise to \$334.4 billion in 2027, a 14.5% growth rate (Market Analysis Report, 2021). The Ecotourism sector is expected to continue growing and expanding due to the increase in travel and preference for natural global destinations by the XYZ generations. More so, there is global agreement among nations, international communities, and NGOs that ecotourism is the way to go in the future of travel and tourism and sustainable development. However, the conservative nature of ecotourism limits the amount of tourism to any one

place at a time. Ecotourism regions thus have to maximize on a small group of tourists, and most ecotourism destinations have limited entry. Therefore, the ecotourism zones in the world have to capitalize on the quality of services and establish customer loyalty to sustain the groups of tourists that genuinely seek to enjoy nature. Ecotourism loyalty thus refers to winning or gaining over the attraction of tourists to a place such that they are willing to pay the price to visit and recommend other Ecotourists to visit a site. Ecotourism loyalty is getting ecotourists to perceive a destination as a recommendable place to tour (Hermawan & Wijayanti, 2019). Therefore, the proposed research aims to explore the factors that enhance tourist ecotourism loyalty with empirical evidence from Vietnam.

1.2 Research gap

Eco-tourism destinations are a unique segment of tourism since they focus on environmental and landscape factors. Despite the high volume of eco-tourism and destination management studies, little literature has captured eco-tourist loyalty (Rivera & Croes, 2010). In most prior investigations, the connection between expectation and destination image has been examined independently. Several investigated at expectation-satisfaction-loyalty connections (e.g., Lee et al., 2011; Serenko & Stach, 2009; Vinh & Long, 2013), while others focused on destination image, satisfaction, loyalty relationships (e.g., Kanwel et al., 2019; Ramseook-Munhurrun et al., 2015; Som & Badarneh, 2011) . However, the papers published to date have left the following research gaps:

First, a strong and good image of the place has always been an essential component of effective marketing tactics for the destination (Echtner et al., 2003). A favorable image of the place may be created by marketers by means of effective marketing communications and good word of mouth, which will attract visitors to the destination in question (Govers et al., 2007). On the other hand, the image of the place is dynamic and may be altered throughout the several stages of the tourist experience (namely, before, during, and after the trip) (G. M. S. Dann, 1996; S. Lee et al., 2014). There is conceivable that the image of a location will change after people have visited it and had a tourism experience there (Chon, 1987; Pearce, 1982; Phelps, 1986). A favorable place image could turn negative owing to certain poor vacation experiences (Smith et al., 2015). In other instances, a pre-trip destination image that was either positive or neutral might be improved once the traveler had the opportunity to experience the place (Chon, 1987; B. K. Lee et al., 2014). Therefore, the operators of the location need to decide what kinds of experiences should be provided in order to cultivate a favorable image (Smith et al., 2015). If a good image of the destination is not formed, then visitors may be unhappy and spread unfavorable word of mouth, which in turn has a negative effect on the picture that prospective visitors have of the location (Tseng et al., 2015).

It is even more difficult for marketers working in specific market tourism areas, which including ecotourism, to keep a favorable post-trip destination image. This is because the image of the destination needs to not only be favorable, but also 'green,' which means that it is nature-based and environmentally friendly. This is because ecotourism is centered on these aspects (G. M. S. Dann, 1996). In addition, experiences in ecotourism should not just place an emphasis on "green" features, but they should also need attributes similar to those found in other kinds of tourism (for example, they should be unique, interesting, comfortable, or engaging) (J. K. L. Chan & Baum, 2007; Ryan et al., 2000). However, it is impractical to incorporate everything in a single experience offering, and it may be challenging to strike a balance between the "green" features and the other parts of the experience (Walter, 2013).

Previous study has focused on pre-trip image and its effect on travel choices (for example, Assaker et al., 2011; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). Destination image has been the subject of a significant amount of research over the years. However, post-trip destination image and how it is influenced by tourist experiences is less investigated (J. H. Kim, 2018). Furthermore, post-trip destination image has not been addressed in an ecotourism context, despite the relevance of this topic to the sector. As a consequence of this, the study contributes to the conversation on the significance of post-trip destination image and makes up for the dearth of research that focuses on the influence that ecotourism experiences have on visitors.

In the majority of earlier research, experience and image were connected to behavior in a distinct manner. Others looked at the relationship between image satisfaction and loyalty (Assaker & Hallak, 2013; Bigné et al., 2014; Chen & Tsai, 2007) , while others looked at the relationship between experience satisfaction and loyalty (e.g. Ali et al., 2016; Hosany & Witham, 2010; Quadri-Felitti & Fiore, 2013) . Several studies conducted the connections between experience, image, and tourist behavior. Two notable exceptions to these relationships are the research conducted by Kim (2018 and Prayag (2008). Both Prayag (2008) and Kim (2018) looked exclusively at memorable events, although Prayag et al. (2013) only looked at emotional experiences. However, experience may have several dimensions, including those unrelated to emotions, such as intellectual or physical dimensions (Pine & Gilmore, 1998).

Second, (A. K. Kim & Brown, 2012) and (Oppermann, 2000) argue that enhancing destination loyalty is challenging. Moreover, the effect of destination loyalty has been raised doubt (Buhalis et al., 2020; A. K. Kim & Brown, 2012; Parra-Lopez et al., 2018), because tourists are always looking for something new when choosing a destination (G. M. Dann, 1981) . Tourists go on vacation to get away from the ordinary and explore new experience (Albaity & Melhem, 2017) . Most tourists, even those who are really delighted, only visit a place one time (Dolnicar et al., 2015). This also applies to ecotourism situation (Rivera & Croes, 2010). Regarding tourism studies, it has been suggested that they should employ

distinct measures for measuring loyalty to different forms of touristy (A. Cheng et al., 2014). Based on definition of loyalty (Oliver, 1999), I define ecotourism loyalty as visitors' inclinations to explore other ecotourism locations. Ecotourism places may be considered as a product category. When people have a great experience when traveling to an ecotourism location, such as enjoying good sights, a favorable destination image, and high levels of satisfaction, they are more likely to desire to visit more ecotourism destinations and become a fan of this genre of travel.

Third, in addition to having a significant effect on public health, the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the tourist sector all over the globe (Samdin et al., 2022). Because of the limits placed on travel to stop the epidemic from spreading further, the travel and tourist sector is expected to see a major drop beginning in early 2020. Because of this, the income generated by the tourist industry throughout the globe has significantly decreased, and this trend is expected to continue until 2020 (Stronza et al., 2019). The decisions that visitors make in response to these never-before-seen situations are heavily influenced by the online evaluations of their fellow travelers that are posted on social media websites. 62% of online consumers in the United States read e-WOM before selecting a specific service, and 38% of those same customers reported that online reviews are important to them in the decision-making process (X. Yang, 2019). TripAdvisor is a well-known website that gives users the opportunity to share their opinions and other information on travel destinations located all over the globe (Nilashi et al., 2021) . Taking into consideration the platform that is TripAdvisor, the total number of comments has been continuously increasing since 2014, and is expected to reach roughly 884 million comments in the year 2020 (Statista, 2021).

These internet evaluations include a variety of topics that are relevant to travellers, such as hotels, restaurants, tourist destinations, and vacation rentals. Users of social media platforms disseminate a wide range of information and experiences, as well as generate electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM), in order to interact with one another (Nilashi et al., 2018). In the context of the COVID-19 epidemic, e-WOM has shown to be a useful instrument for the dissemination of information and the formulation of decisions. In recent years, social media has been a contributor to the COVID-19 epidemic, notably in the transmission of the virus among tourists. The number of vacationers who are aware of the COVID-19 outbreak has increased thanks in part to the participation of social media websites. As a consequence of this, at the stage of assessment, travelers demand extra information from third parties to aid them in making judgments on their purchases. Regarding this matter, travelers are becoming more reliant on e-WOM in order to lower their perceived risk, which in turn influences their behavioral intention and booking choices. During the COVID-19 epidemic, a substantial number of travel e-WOMs have been uploaded on various social media platforms.

These e-WOMs might be useful for making decisions about trip destination selection (Martínez et al., 2020). Although there have been a number of research conducted on e-WOM and the influence it has on the decision-making and purchasing behavior of customers, the connection between pre-trip e-WOM and ecotourism loyalty has not yet been examined.

Fourth, many researchers have suggested to study ecotourism from a social perspective because it is very complicated, including many different fields from economics to sociology (Buckley, 2020). According to (Morrison et al., 1998), tourism is primarily a social psychological phenomenon. Some psychological theories are founded on tourism. However, due to testing and validation issues, a lot of these theories are inapplicable outside of their own contexts, indicating that there are still research gaps that need to be filled (Pearce & Packer, 2013). Therefore, this research uses new moderate variables that has not been employed with previous research (prosocial behaviour, social influence).

Last, ecotourism has become a way for tourists to learn about Vietnam's rich natural resources and gain knowledge deeper about the country's cultural relics while having fun (Thuy et al., 2020). Even though domestic and international tourists bring a lot of money into Vietnam's economy, misapplying the nation's natural assets to lure them, like building hotels, resorts, and other high-end facilities on the spot, could harm the nation's economy. With so many visitors, it will be hard for the boards in charge of ecotourism areas to do their jobs. So, the government should come up with the right plans and strategies to keep the nation and the tourism industry in balance. Vietnam's ecotourism, on the other hand, is still in its beginning stages. Also, the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic has made it hard for individuals in the nation to find a good balance between safeguarding the natural environment and using it in a way that will help enhance ecotourism in the nation. In their research, Pham & Khanh (2020) say that the ecotourism procedures in the country will be hurt if short-term economic and cultural benefits are given more importance than protecting natural and biological resources. For the people of Vietnam and the government to strengthen the visitor satisfaction, it is important to make a plan and set standards for developing ecotourism, which is the fastest-growing part of the tourism business.

1.3 Motivation for the study in Vietnam ecotourism

Vietnam is rich in ecotourism products typified by a rich bio-system and fascinating culture, making it a motivating factor for the study of Vietnam ecotourism. The tropical coastline in Vietnam is estimated to be 3000k m, and exquisite cuisines are fascinating local cultures and beautiful countryside, thus significant ecotourism culture. More so, there are fantastic landscapes, and wildlife diversity with over 316 mammals, 2000 marine fish, 296 reptiles, 889 birds, and 162 amphibians, among others. There are 30 national parks spread out from the north to the south ends of the nation, and it has eight of the world's

UNESCO Heritage Sites (Khanra et al., 2021). Ecotourism is one of the country's tourism products and a source of income for local communities. USAID identifies the resources for ecotourism in Vietnam to include 31 national parks covering about 1,077,000 ha, ten species conservation areas, 58 nature reserves, 20 scientific and research centers, and 45 protected areas (Bui et al., 2018) . Some of the ecotourism activities for tourists in Vietnam include playing golf, riding water buffalo, jungle walking, cooking classes in the sun, riding in the bamboo fishing basket, visiting the silk village, seeing waterfalls, and casting nets for fish, among others. Outdoor adventures with mountain views, lake experiences, and interaction with birds, butterflies, and wildlife are also integrated aspects of Vietnam's ecotourism (McNall et al., 2016) .

The Vietnam tourism industry has grown due to increased international direct investments in the sector and local and global tourists. There were over 18 million foreign tourists and 85 million local tourists to Vietnam in 2019. The numbers accounted for a 22% increase from 2015, and local tourism increased even with the pandemic in 2020 and 2021 (Quang et al., 2022). Nha Trang city, promoted as the country's largest tourist center, is advanced to host over 10 million foreign tourists in the 2016-2019 period with revenues of \$4930 million. The annual average of visitors was 7 million in 2019 (Su et al., 2020). Following the realization of the tourism potential for Vietnam, tourism education has also been significantly developed by local and international parties. For instance, Pennsylvania and Cornell Universities began offering tourism programs and established a tourism research center in Hanoi. The investments in tourism education focusing on sustainable tourism have thus increased the recognition and development of ecotourism in Vietnam (Yee et al., 2021) . More so, there is an increase in the number of Vietnamese scholars focusing on tourism and increasing resources on ecotourism in the country in mainstream journals. International access to published works on Vietnam Ecotourism promote reach to more tourists and inform improvements of the ecotourism sector in the country. There are still challenges such as publishing in the English language and engagement in mainstream global forums due to language, culture, and low recognition, among other barriers. However, Vietnam's focus on sustainable ecotourism is increasing significantly (Yee et al., 2021).

Despite the potential of ecotourism in Vietnam, there are significant challenges to ecotourism development in the country. The barriers and challenges to ecotourism development in Vietnam against the considerable potential also motivate a study on Vietnam ecotourism. Nguyen et al. (2016) explored the obstacles to ecotourism development in Vietnam from the perspective of the locals. The barriers identified included low literacy and awareness of the ecotourism concept, poor implementation commitments, and lack of collaboration and coordination. Also, environmental degradation limits the number of resources for ecotourism alongside the lack of infrastructure and

financial resources (D. Nguyen et al., 2016). Notably, ecotourism in Vietnam's protected region does not reflect its potential, and the identified challenges and barriers facilitate that ecotourism development.

1.4 Ecotourism loyalty in Vietnam

Ecotourism loyalty is an aspect of customer loyalty that seeks to keep customers returning and referring others to visit the place due to factors that enhance attraction, relaxation, and experiences. Factors that strengthen customer loyalty are diverse, cutting across service provider factors, customer factors, and environments (Vilkaite-Vaitone & Skackauskiene, 2020). Tourists' perceptions regarding affording the ecotourism designs were noted as motivational factors for loyalty (Azinuddin et al., 2022). Another research in Ecuador identifies building personal relationships, marine nature, and escape and ego-defensive functions as crucial motivators of loyalty in ecotourism (Carvache-Franco et al., 2021). A study by Tran et al. (2015) explores the preferences of tourists towards biodiversity conservation and ecotourism services in Vietnam's protected regions to inform the country about ecotourism development. The study assessed tourists' interests and willingness to pay for ecotourism services. Findings indicated that tourists were interested and preferred the ecotourism services with a high willingness to pay for experiences such as craft market visiting, crane watching, ecosystem tours, and fishing services, among others (Tran et al., 2015).

The quality of ecotourism services in Vietnam has also been explored using the ECOSERV, SERVQUAL, and Tetraclass models. The Tetraclass model explores the interface between experience attributes and interaction in ecotourism and how the service features influence the satisfaction and dissatisfaction of tourists. The ten factors influencing satisfaction include employee assurance, reliability in delivering quality services, responsiveness, tangible support, empathy, price-quality inference, eco-tangibles, interaction with locals and other customers, and relaxation feelings (Thuy et al., 2020). The factors identified as fundamental in developing the ecotourism sectors in Vietnam include increasing relaxing environments and entertaining people in a safe and clean environment using natural ambiance. Vietnam already has the natural ambiance and resources for ecotourism products. However, developing the professional service skills among staff and managers through developing knowledge of ecotourism needs is key to advancing ecotourism in Vietnam (Hoang et al., 2022). There are several motivations for studying ecotourism in Vietnam owing to the significant potential and the failure to meet the potential due to barriers and challenges in the sectors. Ecotourism loyalty is a crucial approach to developing ecotourism in Vietnam, and various factors have proven to promote ecotourism loyalty universally and in Vietnam. The research problem advanced thus seeks to identify the importance of ecotourism loyalty and the need to research it in the Vietnam context.

1.5. Research problem

The research problem explores the factors that enhance tourists' ecotourism loyalty in the context of Vietnam. Understanding factors for ecotourism loyalty in the country helps develop ecotourism in ways that increase tourist visits and referrals by promoting loyalty (Almeida-Santana & Moreno-Gil, 2018). Developing ecotourism guided by customer identification, brand personality, and satisfaction drives consumer behavior. Destination personality enhances the satisfaction and ability of tourists to identify destinations and engage in word-of-mouth referrals and intentional revisits (Harahap & Dwita, 2020). Ecotourism loyalty builds on alternative tourism founded on community-based tourism ideals giving local and disadvantaged persons control and a source of income, a goal for Vietnam (Giampiccoli et al., 2021). Understanding ecotourism loyalty means understanding what aspects of the ecotourism industry in Vietnam promote tourist revisits and thus promote investments in them. The ecotourism sector will be able to structure the ecotourism environment and assess value for the sector to achieve its full potential (Pham & Khanh, 2020). It is established that the Vietnam ecotourism industry has the resources but still underperforms and thus fails to meet its potential. Understanding ecotourism loyalty helps achieve that full potential by leveraging existing tourists and tourists that are passionate about ecotourism (Bashir, Khwaja, & Mahmood, 2021). The factors associated with consumer loyalty are some of these limiting community-based tourism in Vietnam. The factors include infrastructure, environmental protection, and safety and security levels (Phuong et al., 2020).

Promoting ecotourism is critical to sustainable development, which benefits Vietnam and the world. Customer loyalty in ecotourism is unique because it has to meet eco-tourists needs without compromising the social, environmental, and cultural aspects of the destination and at the same time offering economic benefits and promoting sustainability (Hermawan & Wijayanti, 2019). The research is also crucial because exploration of destination image, travel motivation, familiarity, and destination image as influencers of Eco tourists' destination loyalty influencers help projects behavior in ecotourism and tap into them to boost revenues (C. H. Liu et al., 2016). Also, establishing ecotourism loyalty allows; leveraging for marketing, cutting out on marketing strategies and costs. With nature destinations, referrals and recommendations are significant influencers for the growth of the consumer base and widening the reach, especially in the international market (T. T. Li et al., 2021) . Improving the state of factors influencing loyalty can cut out marketing costs and grow the Vietnam ecotourism industry towards realizing its potential. The context of Vietnam is crucial to establishing consumer loyalty for the ecotourism industry due to the challenges of financial resources to sell the drive to the global market better. The exploration of factors that enhance ecotourism loyalty in Vietnam will enable the assessment of the state of the factors to inform their development or maintenance

to continue advancing the ecotourism sector in the country. The research findings will be integrated into ecotourism education for local communities to enhance their skills in promoting tourism in their communities

1.6. Research questions and research objectives

According to the explanation above, the fundamental purpose of the research is to create a complete model for analyzing the influence of e-WOM consumption on ecotourism loyalty. To achieve the aim of the research, the three main questions are:

RQ1: How and why does e-WOM consumption affect the ecotourism loyalty?

RQ2: Do prosocial behaviour moderate the relationship between e-WOM consumption and ecotourism loyalty?

RQ3: Do social media influence moderate the relationship between e-WOM consumption and ecotourism loyalty?

Research objectives are proposed in line with the primary goal of the study:

RO1: To explore the effects of e-WOM consumption on ecotourism loyalty.

RO2: To explore the role of prosocial behavior in moderating the relationship between e-WOM consumption and ecotourism loyalty.

RO3: To explore the role of social media influence in moderating the relationship between e-WOM consumption and ecotourism loyalty.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical lenses of the research

This thesis uses a combination of two background theories, namely ECT and TPB.

2.1.1 Expectation confirmation theory

The marketing industry has made great use of the Expectation-Confirmation Theory (ECT), which seeks to fully comprehend and explain the consuming process by analyzing consumers' post-purchase behavior and levels of satisfaction with a product or service after it has been purchased (Oliver, 1977). According to Oliver (1980), Oliver, 1999), and Bhattacharjee (2001), the primary mechanism that underlies ECT is accomplished by the execution of a process sequence. To begin, before customers actually make a purchase, they form an initial expectation of a particular service or product. This expectation could be understood as the extent to which customers have beliefs about the capability of the service provider, as well as the extent to which customers have expectations regarding the target (Coye, 2004). The consumer's impressions of the product's overall performance evolve progressively throughout the course of the usage term. The next step in the process is for consumers to evaluate the perceived performance in relation to their previous expectations about the service in order to determine the degree to which these expectations are verified. The next stage involves determining the level of customer satisfaction with the service by analyzing the customers' pre-purchase expectations, as well as confirming that there is a gap between the customers' pre-purchase expectations and their post-purchase assessments of the service (J. Lee & Kim, 2020).

Not only does customer expectation serve as a representation of the customers' beliefs on the characteristics of the service, but it also provides a benchmark from which customers may judge the quality of the service (Bhattacharjee, 2001). Simply put, it refers to an individual's prediction of consumption of a particular service or product that might happen in the future (Jomnonkwao et al., 2015), which positively affects his or her perception level of service quality during the consumption of the service or product (X. Fu et al., 2018; Jomnonkwao et al., 2015). On the other side, confirmation is established by the consumers' evaluations of how well the services they received measured up to their initial expectations (Oliver, 1980). In this aspect, having a bigger anticipation will result in a disappointment when it is confirmed. In addition, expectations are often considered to be an essential factor that directly contributes to contentment. Bhattacharjee (2001) found that consumers' high expectations are likely to increase their level of satisfaction with a product or service.

The expectation confirmation hypothesis focuses on consumer satisfaction and post-purchase behavior (Oliver, 1976). It means that the process of consuming a

service starts with beginning customers' expectations based on the client's aims and faith in the target management's service capabilities. During the consuming time, visitors set measurable perceptions and match the deliverables to which was before service expectations to validate the expectations. Eco-tourists anticipate a natural location with a pleasant atmosphere and amenities such as lodging and food production.

According to Fu et al. (2018), pre-purchase expectations influence consumer pleasure in relation to actual performance. A good destination image is created when performance exceeds consumer expectations, and a negative destination image is created when performance falls short of expectations. Consumer perceptions of service quality are favorably influenced by expectations; conversely, travelers with larger expectations get negative confirmation of service quality. These expectations immediately result in satisfaction depending on how the place provides the intended experience.

Confirmation comes when the destination provides a real experience that surpasses the customer's pre-purchase expectations. Because of happiness with the experience, this affirmation shows that the goal is satisfying. Pleasant post-service conduct results from a positive tourist experience, while bad post-service behavior results from a poor tourist experience. As a consequence, according to the notion, customer happiness stems from visitor expectations that are influenced by the destination's image and their performance. As a result, a service that exceeds traveler expectation leverages a strong destination image, resulting in impressions of a pleasant tourist experience that prompts revisits and referral intents that demonstrate loyalty.

The ECT helps us understand the link between passenger expectations, experience, and expectation confirmation. See Fig. 2.1:

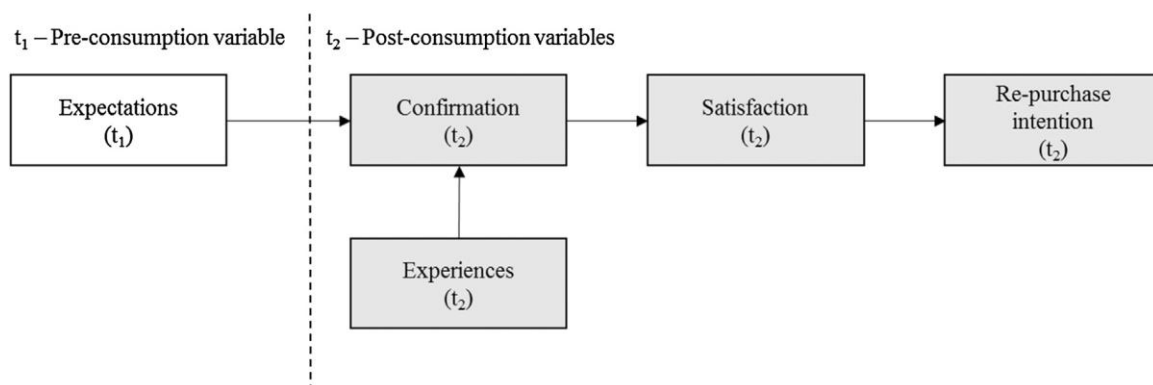


Figure 2. 1: Expectation confirmation theory

Source: Oliver (1977)

2.1.2 Theory of planned behavior

Researchers in the domains of marketing and tourism, as well as industry experts and destination managers, have shown an increasing interest in consumer

psychology and behavior in recent years, making it one of the most interesting study topics (Armitage & Conner, 2001). This theory is important for all parties involved in the tourism industry because having an understanding of how consumers think, feel, and act is the central focus of this growing interest. This is because having this knowledge makes it possible to describe, analyze, predict, and control or influence consumers as well as consumer systems and the consumption environment (Han & Kim, 2010). However, from the perspective of tourism researchers, social psychology's expansive scope and detailed analysis of human behavior and experience may be seen as both a resource and a difficulty. Therefore, not only is it vital to the applicability of certain of the ideas in social psychology, but it is also essential to the methodological adequacy (Pearce & Packer, 2013). Researchers in the field of tourism have made extensive use of a number of social psychology ideas that have been published in the academic literature (e.g. S. Cheng & Cho, 2011; Harris et al., 2018; Song & Bae, 2018; Wu et al., 2017). Because tourism is by its very definition interdisciplinary, including fields as diverse as marketing, economics, geography, sociology, social psychology, anthropology, business, and communications, many writers have put up the idea that it should be investigated from a social point of view (Fridgen, 1984; Saarinen, 2017). According to Pearce & Stringer (1991), tourism in its whole is essentially a social psychological phenomena. Research in the field of psychology may benefit from tourism's unique circumstances. However, due to problems with testing and validation, the majority of these hypotheses are unable to be extrapolated to other settings; this demonstrates that there are still some uncharted territories for study to investigate (Pearce & Packer, 2013).

The primary function of TPB, which is an expanded form of Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), is to make predictions about human behavior. Which is the criticized aspect of the theory to explain human (Bandura, 1991; Sheppard et al., 1988) The TRA said that people's actions are within their total volitional control, which is the criticized component of the theory to explain human behaviors (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977). Therefore, (Ajzen, 1991) enlarged the TRA and proposed the TPB to improve the prevalence of intention and behavior by introducing a new structure, namely, perceived behavioral control. This was done to raise the likelihood that an individual would act on their intentions (Shee & Wu, 2008). The Trafficking in Persons Act (TRA) mandates that an individual's intentions about certain actions are the primary factor in determining their conduct, which in turn is impacted by their perspective and the norms that they adhere (Ajzen, 2020). The TPB is a hypothesis that is often used and advised for predicting human behavior. According to this theory, people have a tendency to behave via changes in their attitudes (Ajzen & Kruglanski, 2019). In both the TRA and the TPB, significant views play a crucial part in establishing the cognitive and emotional underpinning for behavioral components (attitude, perceived behavioral control, and subjective norm) (M. J. Lee & Back, 2007). In

a general sense, a behavioral approach, the acceptance or rejection of relevant references, and the perception of barriers to activity are the three sources that give birth to behavioral intents (R. Lee et al., 2009). In accordance with these beliefs, a combination of subjective standards, attitudes toward conduct, and the perception of one's own power over their behavior results from the purpose to carry out a certain activity (Ostrovskiy et al., 2021).

Since its inception, TRA has looked at the role of motivation in shaping human action, drawing inspiration from Fishbein's research on how attitudes affect behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977). TRA assumes that humans are logical beings that create views and amass knowledge by exposure to many contexts and experiences, including their own lives, formal schooling, the media, and social interactions with friends and family (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2011). An individual's attitude and subjective norms towards acting on one's intentions, which constitute the important aspect of reflection of actual conduct, are said to determine the behavioral intention (Madden et al., 1992). One of the factors that influences a person's purpose to act in a certain way is the person's attitude toward the behavior in question, which is in turn influenced by the individual's behavioral beliefs about the consequences that may or may not result from engaging in the activity in question (Ajzen, 1991). According to the expectancy-value theory, a person's disposition toward an action is founded on the sum of their ideas about its consequences and their own past experiences (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1975). An individual's attitude toward an action may have an effect on whether or not they intend to engage in that conduct because of the beliefs they acquire about the behavior's potential outcomes and their subjective assessments of those outcomes (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2011). An additional factor is subjective norms, which are people's preconceived notions of how others would interpret their conduct and judge it. Put differently, it refers to how people feel pressured to act in a certain way by their peers. Importantly, subjective norms are concerned with the perspectives of those who plan to engage in the action, which may not accurately represent the opinions of others (Yuzhanin & Fisher, 2016).

When compared to other social-psychology models that have been used to predict people's actions in various contexts (Bagozzi et al., 1992; Madden et al., 1992), TRA is seen as lacking because it is possible that different factors influenced people's decision to engage in the behavior in question. Reasons including time and information constraints, as well as mental factors, mean that people aren't always making fully informed decisions and acting on their own will (Armitage & Conner, 2001; Liang et al., 2019).

Ajzen (1985) added to TPB by proposing a component, the need for perceived control in order to carry out a behavior, which was not included in the original theory. This theory expands TRA's need for just voluntary control over outcomes (Madden et al., 1992). In contrast, this model incorporates measurements of control beliefs and perceived behavioral control, which are elements that

influence people' actions. Based on the representation in Fig. 2.2, TPB is provided as an explanation for the core features of observed behavior. The likelihood that individuals will really act on their intentions is increased if they feel strongly about doing so. Nonetheless, there are a few things that shape an individual's desire to act in a certain way. Attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control are the three parts.

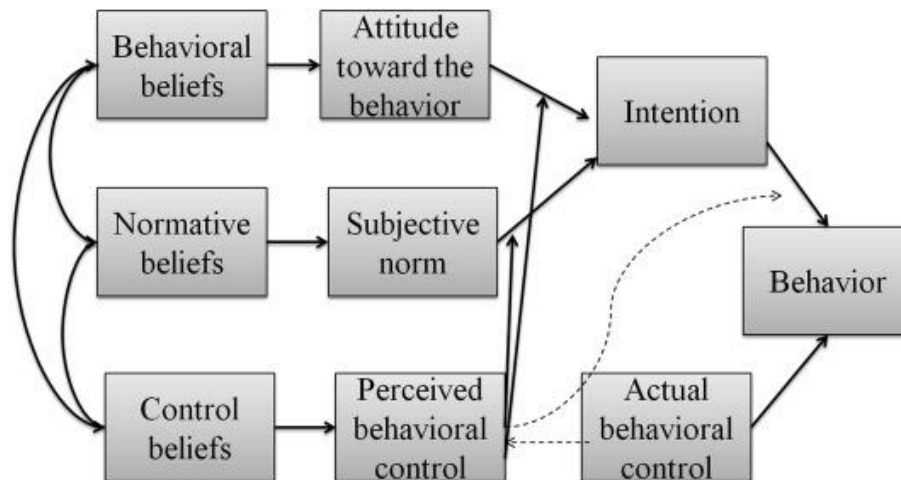


Figure 2. 2: The TPB is presented to explain actual behavior

Source: Ajzen (1991)

According to this theory, attitude, subjective norms, and behavioral control form behavior intention.

2.2 Constructs Development

2.2.1 E-WOM

Customers should be persuaded or convinced to make a purchase, which should be one of the key purposes of marketing communication. Communication in marketing gives businesses the ability to connect with the imaginations of consumers, which in turn helps build a powerful brand image and increases sales. Numerous empirical investigations have, again and again, shown a direct connection between marketing messages and a sales reaction. Nonmarketer-driven communication, such as word of mouth (WOM), is an example of an alternative influential route of communication. Marketer-driven communication, such as advertising, is one example of marketer-driven communication (KELLER, 2007).

Researchers have developed a variety of meanings of "word of mouth" during the course of their careers (WOM). According to (Buttle, (1998), "WOM can be any oral and personal communication, positive or negative, about a brand, product, service, or organization, in which the receiver of the message perceives the sender to have a noncommercial intention." This definition applies to all types of word-of-mouth communication, including positive and negative feedback about products and services. According to the definition offered by Arndt, word of

mouth involves an object such as a brand, product, service, or organization, and the subject utilizes a personal communication channel to communicate either positively or negatively about the object with the intention of not engaging in commercial activity. "any informal communications addressed towards other customers concerning the ownership, use, or features of certain products and services or their sellers," was how (Westbrook, 1987) defined WOM. In more recent times, (Barreto, 2014) provided a definition of WOM as a "oral or written communication process, between a sender and an individual or group of receivers, regardless of whether they share the same social network, to exchange and acquire knowledge, on an informal basis." According to all three of the proposed definitions, word of mouth is an informal form of communication between subjects (for example, a sender and a receiver) about an object (for example, products, brands, organizations, or sellers) or an experience (for example, ownership or usage) with the goal of sharing and acquiring information for purposes other than commercial gain.

The term "word of mouth" (WOM) has evolved into "e-word of mouth" (e-WOM) with the advent of Web 2.0 and other new media platforms. The feedback provided by clients about a service or business over the internet is referred to as e-WOM communication (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). Because of the ever-increasing number of people who use the internet and the development of Web 2.0 (Vázquez-Casielles et al., 2013), some scholars have begun to refer to e-WOM as "word-of-mouse" (Gruen et al., 2006). Consumers were able to access information via friends, friends of friends, and friends of friends of friends thanks to social networks facilitated by Web 2.0 (Barreto, 2014). This method of obtaining information and referrals over the internet has been referred to as "online word of mouth" in the research that has been done on the topic (Duan et al., 2008).

Researching this concept is very interesting because of the significant role that electronic word of mouth plays in the dynamic climate of marketing today. Initial findings from study indicate that word of mouth, along with other forms of mass communication such as advertising, is a substantial influencer (Williams et al., 2017). There is evidence from earlier research that points to the substantial role that e-WOM plays in affecting the different phases of the consumer decision-making process (Davis & Khazanchi, 2008), as well as purchase intentions (Kudeshia & Kumar, 2017). Customers may now get a comparative assessment of product qualities with only the click of a mouse thanks to the rise of electronic word of mouth, which has altered the dynamics of the purchasing environment (Varadarajan & Yadav, 2002).

Because of the intangible nature of services, it is not feasible to try them out before buying them, therefore word-of-mouth marketing may play an especially crucial role in the success of service companies. When it comes to services that are difficult to understand or that are associated with a high level of risk, word-

of-mouth marketing (WOM) is especially significant (Zeithaml et al., 1996). This is because WOM is regarded as a highly credible information source because the sender is typically independent of the organization that is providing the service and does not appear to benefit directly from advocating the service (George Silverman, 2011). Murray (1991) discovered that customers of services had higher faith in the sources of information that were personal to them, and that information that was personal had a bigger impact on the consumers' choices to buy services. As a result, WOM play an especially crucial role for those services that have traits that lend themselves to high credibility, such as the tourist sector. Recent studies conducted in the field of tourism have shown that word-of-mouth, both positively and negatively, may have an effect on tourist goods. These studies were conducted in a variety of different countries. Bruwer et al. (2013) studied wine tourism in Australia and found that visitors' WOM recommendations boost wine sales when vacationing opinion leaders return home and tell others of their experiences; Shanka et al. (2002) studied destination selection methods and found that the majority of travel decisions in Western Australia were based upon WOM communications; In a study based in the United States, Litvin et al. (2008) noted that tourists' restaurant selections were predominantly based upon WOM communications; In conclusion, the research that was conducted revealed that receiving WOM has an effect on the receiver's awareness (Sheth, 1971), attention (Mikkelsen et al., 2003), consideration (Grewal et al., 2003), brand attitudes (Herr et al., 1991; Laczniak et al., 2001), intentions (Grewal et al., 2003), and expectations (Sheth, 1971; Webster, 1991). Because of the rapid development of internet technology, an ever-increasing number of tourists are turning to the internet in order to research their destinations and complete their business transactions online. The Travel Industry Association of America (TIA, 2005) reports that 67 percent of travelers in the United States have used the internet to look up information on locations, check costs or timetables, or both. Even more astounding is the fact that 41 percent of tourists in the United States have booked at least some portions of their vacations using the media. Despite the growing significance of online communications in the tourist sector, very few studies have focused on the impact that e-WOM plays in the selection of a tourism destination (Assaker & O'Connor, 2021; Harahap & Dwita, 2020; Litvin et al., 2008). For instance, Litvin et al. (2008) described online interpersonal influence, also known as e-WOM, as a potentially cost-effective means for marketing hospitality and tourism. The authors also discussed some of the emerging technological and ethical issues that marketers face as they seek to harness emerging e-WOM technologies. They defined e-WOM as "any and all informal communications addressed towards consumers using internet-based technologies connected to the consumption or qualities of certain products and services, or the suppliers of those goods and services." This comprises interaction amongst producers and clients as well as communication between consumers themselves; both of these types of communication are essential components of the flow of WOM, and both are

clearly distinguishable from communications via mainstream media (Litvin et al., 2008). Zhu & Lai (2009) conducted research to investigate the role that internet information plays in determining tourist destinations. They discovered that a substantial correlation exists between the volume of online reviews and the tourists' blogs; however, a significant correlation does not exist between comments grades and the volume of trips consultations and the real tourist reception population. Additionally, (Y. A. Park & Gretzel, 2007) used a qualitative meta-analysis to evaluate the elements that contribute to the effectiveness of destination marketing websites. They proposed a unified framework of commonly used web site success factors that emerged from the analysis and included nine factors: information quality, ease of use, responsiveness, security/privacy, visual appearance, trust, interactivity, personalization, and fulfillment. These nine factors were included in the proposed framework. There are many different points of view on the effectiveness of e-WOM, and the majority of the previous research on this subject is based on surveys in which participants were asked to describe the influence that online reviews had on the travel-related choices they made (Gretzel & Yoo, 2008; Vermeulen & Seegers, 2009). For instance, (Vermeulen & Seegers, 2009) conducted an experimental study with 168 people involved to decide the impact of online reviews on the attitudes of travelers to hotels. They found that exposure to online reviews increases the awareness of hotels, and that good comments can improve the attitudes of travelers toward accommodations. The authors concluded that positive reviews have the potential to improve the attitudes of travelers toward hotels. In addition, a few of recent research made use of secondary data obtained from the internet and derived conclusions based on observations of the performance of real products. According to the findings of Clemons et al. (2006), the magnitude of the most favorable quartile of evaluations as well as the variation in ratings have a substantial bearing on the expansion of the craft beer market. According to the findings of (Serra Cantallops & Salvi, 2014), in the hospitality industry, favorable evaluations have the potential to considerably boost the number of reservations in a hotel. Furthermore, investigators are interested in studying the motives for seeking electronic word-of-mouth (Goldsmith & Horowitz, 2006) and for sharing or articulating the electronic word-of-mouth (Filieri et al., 2021), which provides implications for marketers to better understand online consumer behavior. (Hennig-thurau et al., 2004) discovered that consumers communicate their experiences with products or services to others via the web for a variety of reasons. The primary factors that lead to e-WOM behavior are a consumer's desire for social interaction, economic incentives, concern for other consumers, and the potential to enhance their own sense of self-worth. (Reza Jalilvand & Samiei, 2012) examined the advantages and disadvantages that emerge for companies as a result of the proliferation of online client feedback and articulations. A recent poll indicated that the majority of customers believe that internet reviews and ratings are just as trustworthy as

official brand websites (Akehurst, 2009). In addition to this, Goldsmith & Horowitz (2006) said that businesses should consider attempting to organize online communities as an alternative to just advertising themselves on the internet. According to the findings of these research, the potential influence of e-WOM on the decision-making process of consumers is significant. An experimental research of customers' use of online suggestion sources was utilized by Gupta & Harris (2010) in order to investigate how e-WOM effects the selection of products by customers. The many platforms, such as discussion boards and other online communication tools, which promote electronic word of mouth are rapidly coming to be recognized for the ways in which they affect the purchase and use of goods and services (Shaw et al., 2001). According to the findings of several other research that are similar to this one, e-WOM messages are a significant mechanism through which customers may get information about the quality of a product or service (Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2006). In addition, this form of messaging has the potential to successfully lessen the risk and uncertainty that customers feel when they are making a purchase of a product or service, which allows for a greater degree of influence over the customers' buy intention and decision making (Chatterjee, n.d.).

2.2.2 Destination Image

The assessment and study of destination image has received a lot of attention in the academic literature that is relevant to this topic, and it has made a substantial contribution to a fuller understanding of the behavior of tourists. Hunt (1975) was one of the first to establish its significance in terms of boosting the number of visitors who visit areas. At this point in time, there is a widespread agreement that it is possible to draw conclusions regarding the relevance of the part that appearance plays in the decision-making process, and by extension, choice (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Chen & Chen, 2010). However, in spite of the growing attention on destination image, many people are of the opinion that the bulk of the research that have been conducted up to this point are not theory-based enough. As a consequence, there is either a lack of a framework or a lack of strong conceptualization.

The term destination image refers to a person's mental representation of a location, which influences that person's actions throughout three stages: priori, loco, and posteriori. This mental representation of a location is known as destination image (Scorrano et al., 2018). The idea of an image for a location has been approached from a variety of different angles. This complex idea was broken down by (Gartner, 1994), who proposed that a destination's image is made up of cognitive, emotive, and conative components. Previous research was organized into categories by (Zhang et al., 2014) according to the following definitions: overall image, cognitive image, affective image, cognitive–affective joint picture, and self-congruity. Some people assume that there are just two parts to the picture

of the destination: the cognitive and the emotional (Stylidis et al., 2016). All of these investigations, taken together, provide information on the intricate nature of the construct's underlying structure. The majority of research have used a two- or three-component approach (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Sönmez & Sirakaya, 2002), seeing destination image as an abstract created entity (Rossiter, 2002). Researchers have a propensity to underline the composite and formative character of destination picture by naming it overall image. This is despite the fact that destination image may be defined as a two- or three-dimensional construct. Keeping this in mind, overall image is the holistic perception of a tourist destination that integrates both cognitive and affective images (Papadimitriou et al., 2015) or is affected by cognitive, affective, and conative images (Stylidis et al., 2016, 2017). Overall image was also identified as the third image component similar to cognitive and affective images (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). However, we follow (Kock et al., 2016) and use the label "overall image" as the same as destination image construct, which is defined as an individual's overall evaluative representation of a destination. Overall image was also identified as the third image component similar to cognitive and affective images. In other words, destination image (or overall image) is an abstract dimension that is also known as a higher-order construct (HOC). It is comprised of three or more concrete sub-dimensions, which are referred to as lower-order constructs. These sub-dimensions include cognitive, affective, and conative (LOC). Some academics suggest breaking out the many aspects of a destination's image into its own analyses, notwithstanding the multifaceted nature of the concept. For example, Ragb et al. (2020) argued that the importance of cognitive and affective images varied in different destinations, which should be studied distinctively when destination image is investigated. This is because the importance of cognitive and affective images varied depending on the destination (Stylidis et al., 2017). Cognitive component of the image refers to a person's beliefs and knowledge about a destination and its attributes, which together help create a mental picture of the place (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Pike, 2004). Cognitive component of the image refers to the cognitive component of the image. Cognitive component of the image refers to the cognitive component of the image. According to (Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997), the affective component of a picture is responsible for explaining an individual's emotional reactions and sentiments in relation to a destination. Last but not least, the conative aspect of destination image refers to the active contemplation, on the part of travelers, of a location as a possible future travel destination (Gartner, 1994). The conative component is connected to the probability or likelihood that one would act in a specific manner towards the object, according to Bagozzi (1993) definition, and it has been described as behavioral inclination (White, 2014). The conative process is the antecedent of intention to pursue a goal (Bagozzi, 1993); nevertheless, regrettably, conation that is comparable to desire and intention without any explanation have been used interchangeably (White, 2014). The cognitive image was the primary focus of

research in prior studies (Zhang et al., 2014), followed by the overall picture and the emotional image, respectively. The tendency has been altered as a result of a recent rise in the number of researchers who are aware of the significance of emotive image.

Echtner et al. (2003) state that the literature does not provide a precise definition of the term "destination image," nor does it identify its components. Some studies refer to destination image as a unidimensional construct (Bui and Le, 2016, Sharma and Nayak, 2019b), while others refer to it as a multidimensional construct that is measured by cognitive, affective, and conative dimensions (Assaker & Hallak, 2013; Ulker-Demirel et al., 2020). Some studies measure destination image as a unidimensional construct (Bui et al., 2018; Sharma & Nayak, 2019). According to the findings of various research, image is conceived of in terms of either its cognitive or emotive component as a unidimensional construct. This is shown by the table. In reference to the root disciplines of the image concept, measuring an image only by its attribute lists or concentrating on any component of destination image would not result in a complete measurement (Echtner et al., 2003). Whether or not destination image is defined as a multidimensional or unidimensional construct is dependent on the purpose of the research being conducted, however.

Although several researcher make frequent use of the phrase "destination image," these studies often do not conceptualize this word in a clear manner. Despite the widespread use of the idea in the empirical setting, a number of writers have pointed out that its definition is hazy, and it does not have a robust conceptual framework (Fakeye & Crompton, 1991). The research that was conducted by Gallarza et al. (2002) included a comprehensive review of the previous research that had been done on this topic. They also proposed a theoretical model that defines image in terms of the following four attributes: complicated, various, relativistic, and interactive.

The most recent studies (Marques et al., 2021; Ragb et al., 2020; Sönmez & Sirakaya, 2002) tend to consider image as a concept formed by the consumer's rational and sentimental explanation as the consequence of two closely interrelated components: perceptive/cognitive evaluations referring to the individual's own knowledge and beliefs about the object.

There is a widespread consensus, from a theoretical point of view, that the cognitive component is an antecedent of the emotional component, and that the evaluative reactions of consumers come from their understanding of the things in question (Mohamed et al., 2021). In addition, the interaction of these two aspects results in the formation of an overall impression, also known as a composite picture, that is connected to the favorable or negative evaluation of the item or brand. In the context of tourism, Tavitiyaman et al. (2021) demonstrate empirical evidence that these perception and emotional assessments have a significant

impact on the overall image, and that the former, through the latter, also has an indirect influence on that image.

When considered within the context of the traveler's purchasing behavior, the function of a destination's image in the tourism industry carries with it a marketing relevance that is amplified. In the field of research on consumer behavior, many scholars have hypothesized that the buying process of a consumer is multi-staged and that a customer's inspiration to pay for a product is triggered by an assumption that the item of buying will satisfy his felt needs. This is one of the hypotheses. According to Karl (2018), the fundamental premise of these cross modeling techniques of consumer decision making is that, in the process of making a purchase decision, a consumer goes through the phases of need acknowledgement, information seeking, assessment, selection of product or service, and post-purchase evaluation.

If a traveler's decision to visit a specific location is related to the image of that location that the traveler has of that location, then an analysis of the process by which the image is formed may help clarify how a tourist institution can impact the change of a subjective experience of a location. An image is a collection of ideas by which a thing is understood and through which individuals define, remember, and react to it. These meanings make up an image. To put it another way, an image is the end product of the interplay between a person's beliefs, thoughts, emotions, expectations, and sensations about an item. According to (Fakeye & Crompton, 1991), a destination image is the aggregate total of beliefs, ideas, perceptions, and anticipation that a visitor has about a location that is intended to serve as a tourist destination. This definition is given within the context of travel and tourism.

2.2.3 Ecotourist Experience

There is widespread agreement in the academic research that tourism must have an emphasis on the creation of memorable experiences for visitors in order to be successful (Laing et al., 2014). Vacations are often conceived of as delightful experiences, and that desire from visitors to experience something is consistent with the fundamental presumption behind the concept of a "experience economy" (Pine & Gilmore, 1998). The phrase "on a simple promise, an idea, and a socially formed picture of what makes an engaging or attractive experience" is the foundation for a significant number of tourists buying choices (Curtin, 2005). According to Pine & Gilmore (1998), the act of experiencing something is a multifaceted and highly subjective psychological process that actively involves the person in question. It "includes everything ranging from the emotional, intellectual, and aesthetic to experiences of nature, entertainment, and travel," as stated in the definition (J. K. L. Chan & Baum, 2007).

The notion of the experience economy is beneficial to destination positioning and aids in the development of competitive advantage for destinations (Neuhofer et

al., 2014). Destination is defined by Dmitrovic et al. (2009) as "a combination of customers' space and tourist items creating a comprehensive experience". In addition, because they provide the "props or cues" that are essential to the tourist experience (Laing et al., 2014), destinations are consumed within the context of a "servicescape" (Tsiotsou & Goldsmith, 2012), and they are therefore essential locations for tourists to visit in order to partake in various experiences. According to Stamboulis & Skayannis (2003), the on-site experience of visitors entails an interaction between tourists and the destinations they visit, with destinations serving as the site and travelers playing the role of players in the interaction. There is even the suggestion that the whole tourist site has the potential to be marketed as a "experience" (Quan & Wang, 2004). It is possible to package and sell travel experiences in conjunction with tourist locations due to the fact that travelers are often prepared to pay extra for these experiences (Suhartanto et al., 2021).

Using Mehmetoglu & Engen (2017) four dimensions of experience as a framework, destinations give, first and foremost, an escapist experience to visitors by giving them the impression that they have been removed from their normal lives. According to Oh et al. (2007), there are three main forms of escapes: going away, immersing oneself in a place, and taking on the role of a new persona. When vacationers go on getting-away getaways, they remove "themselves from the everyday routines, regardless of what the daily routines are, where they go, and what they do," as the phrase goes. People who seek to escape to a certain place are considered to be engaging in an immersion-into-destination escape, while partaking-a-different-character escapes relate to visitors actively participating in specific activities that are offered at the destination. In the second category, a traveler might have an entertaining experience just by observing the activities that are going on in a certain location. Thirdly, an esthetic experience is gained when the traveler actively enjoys and appreciates just being in the atmosphere of the place (Oh et al., 2007). In conclusion, a tourist has had an educational experience if they have increased their level of expertise or knowledge. There is a "sweet spot" in which all four experience dimensions operate together in the most effective manner. Each component of the experience is distinct, and the combination of the dimensions creates the best possible visitor experience (Oh et al., 2007). The idea that experience may be operationalized along these four dimensions is supported by research such as that which was conducted by Maria & Loureiro (2014) , Mehmetoglu & Engen (2017), and Oh et al. (2007).

Visitors who take part in ecotourism activities are referred to as "ecotourists," and the word "ecotourist" refers to this particular subset of tourists (Dowling & Page, 2002). According to Ayala (1996), it is possible that they seek a genuine and intricate learning experience that may be combined with a leisure experience. In addition, they are interested in the various natural and cultural characteristics of

the location. Numerous writers say that ecotourists seek for encounters that build a sense of connection with natural attractions and indigenous people. They favor experiences that take place in wilderness settings and in sites that have not been altered. According to additional empirical study, Eagles (1992) and (Fennell, 1999) show that ecotourists want to see and experience as much as they can in the time they have available, as well as having access to high-quality guide and interpretation services. As a direct consequence of this, ecotourism is seen to be an all-encompassing, experience-based product. According to F. Chan et al. (2005) as a direct consequence of this, ecotourists are more likely to see trips to ecotourism sites as an expressive experience rather than a transaction. According to the findings of this research, an ecotourism experience is defined as an individual's perspective of a single instance of environmentally conscious travel to a particular site with the purpose of contributing to the local community's efforts toward sustainable development (Lu & Stephenkova, 2012).

2.2.4 Ecotourist Satisfaction

There have been a significant number of research that have concentrated on the idea of contentment ever since the area of study of satisfaction was first established. This is because it is often believed to be the most important factor in determining whether or not a company will be successful in today's cutthroat environment (Briggs et al., 2010). In previous studies (Giese and Cote 2000), researchers have investigated not only the characteristics of this judgment but also its causes and outcomes (Mano and Oliver, 1993; Spreng and Chiou, 2002). Recent years have seen an uptick in the literature's recognition of the cognitive-affective nature (Van Dolen et al., 2004). In addition, there is new research that suggests that cognitions, such as expectations and disconfirmation, aren't the only factors that contribute to the construction of pleasure; feelings might also play a significant part in this process (Yu and Dean, 2001).

Rodr'guez Del Bosque et al. (2006), and Yoon and Uysal (2005) have all conducted research on customer satisfaction in the tourism industry with regard to travel agencies, accommodations, destinations, and tours. Nevertheless, further work is required to explore the process of providing pleasure to tourists. To put this into more concrete terms, in order to have a better knowledge of the consumer psychology behind tourism, it is necessary to do a study of the factors and the interactions between them in this process. In a similar vein, the picture of the goal has been the subject of a great deal of research since it is seen as an important variable in individual behavior. An individual's mental image of a tourist destination might be thought of as a representation of that location. The origins of this idea and how it came to be, in addition to the ways in which it affects the decision-making process, have both been investigated (Woodside and Lysonski, 1989). Regrettably, not a lot of theoretical or empirical work has been done on its effect across the many phases of the pleasure process.

The investigation of the levels of contentment experienced by tourists is an important topic not only for academics and business executives, but also for average vacationers (and their societies). According to the findings of prior research (Fernández-Ballesteros, Zamarrón, and Ruz 2001), an individual's level of life satisfaction is correlated with how satisfied they are with their health, their job, their family, and their leisure activities. According to Neal, Sirgy, and Uysal (1999), one of the primary components of an individual's sense of well-being is the degree to which they are pleased with the many aspects of their life. One such aspect is the amount of pleasure they get from their travel experiences (Oishi 2006). The hedonistic and the eudaimonic perspectives are the two primary ways that well-being may be understood and characterized (Ryan and Deci 2001). Hedonic well-being refers to the temporary pleasure that is attained via the fulfillment of subjective wants, also known as contentment in the here and now. The word "eudaimonic well-being" refers to the process of achieving self-actualization through meeting one's most fundamental desires or principles, also known as "long-term satisfaction." It's possible for vacations to contribute to both hedonistic and eudaimonic states—for instance, by easing the stress that comes with returning home after a vacation and allowing you to finally unwind (by satisfying the basic needs of competence and relatedness through experiences over time). In conclusion, one of the most essential methods to evaluate the quality of life in a society is to look at its level of well-being (Diener, Oishi and Lucas 2003).

When attempting to explain customer behavior in the tourist industry, many conflicting paradigms from the social sciences are used. Both the cognitive and emotional viewpoints are among the most influential schools of thought when it comes to the study of decision making and behavior processes (Decrop, 1999). The person is traditionally seen to be a rational being, which might be translated as a cognitive information processor (Heider 1958). The mental representations of items like as knowledge or beliefs, which are referred to as cognitions, are the crucial aspects in this context. People would go through the process of processing information from the outside about their tourist experience in order to build their own opinions and ideas. The emotional method, on the other hand, is predicated on the hypothesis that one's emotions are an essential part of the experience, given that destinations are thought of as include things like sensual pleasures, daydreams, and satisfaction (Decrop, 1999).

In accordance with the paradigms described above, the concept of satisfaction is also investigated. In example, there are substantial variations in the way this variable is conceived of by different researchers (Hult et al., 2019; T. T. N. Nguyen, 2020). The majority of the earlier research that has been done has used a cognitive approach, defining customer satisfaction as an appraisal made after purchase that an option selected at least meets or surpasses expectations (J. Lee & Kim, 2020). Other research, on the other hand, regard it to be an emotional

reaction that is the result of a consuming event (Yüksel & Yüksel, 2007). Recent years have seen a growing recognition in the literature of the cognitive-affective nature (van Dolen et al., 2004). According to the most current interpretation offered by this body of study, the term "satisfaction" refers to the mental and emotional condition of a person that is brought about by having an experience as a tourist.

In addition, study investigates not only the precursors to this notion but also its effects. The consumer's reaction to the congruence between the performance and the comparison standard is the consumer's response to satisfaction, according to a cognitive perspective (Oliver, 1980). According to this point of view, the model of expectation disconfirmation is the one that is used the most (Chou et al., 2012). According to this paradigm, the development of a sense of pleasure is heavily influenced by two types of cognitive judgments: predictive expectations and disconfirmation. This idea is primarily determined by lack of confirmation, whilst the consumer's expectations serve as the benchmark for comparison in the assessment process (Oliver, 1997). A cognitive-affective view has been recently proposed, according to which an individual's level of satisfaction is influenced by the individual's cognitive judgments as well as the emotions that are derived from the consumption experience (Phillips & Baumgartner, 2002). The most important effect that pleasure is thought to have is the formation of loyalty or commitment toward a certain brand (C. H. Liu et al., 2016).

This study develops a cognitive-affective model, which is based on the most current studies in the fields of psychology and behavior, in order to investigate the interrelationships that exist between the psychological factors that are involved in the process of providing pleasure to tourists. Oliver's integrated cognitive and emotional model, which he devised, served as an inspiration for the development of this model (Oliver, 1997). Oliver's concept suggests that cognitive assessments such as expectations and disconfirmation might have an effect on a person's level of pleasure. Additionally, both happy and negative emotions would contribute in their own unique ways to overall pleasure. In a similar vein, Giampiccoli et al., (2021) shows that an individual's total reaction throughout the consuming process will be determined by the emotions that result from their judgments. This cognitive-affective method is of high value for application in this research since emotional reactions are crucial components of the destination experiences (Bigné et al., 2014); as a result, this approach is of great value for use in this study. Over the course of the last several years, the relevance of consumers' feelings to models of their purchasing decisions has seen a major uptick (Loken, 2006). In particular, it is vital to note that both the cognitive system and emotional states play a significant role in the development of a feeling of contentment. The cognitive system would be responsible for higher mental functions such as interpretation and assessment, while emotions would be

tied to how a person feels about the service they are receiving (van Dolen et al., 2004).

According to Kozak & Rimmington (2000), tourism satisfaction is defined as the degree to which an ecotourist's evaluation of the observable characteristics of a specific place surpasses (or fails to meet) their pre-travel expectations. This was proved to be the case in their research. According to Mafi et al. (2020), the aforementioned definition may also be used to the concept of satisfaction in ecotourism. On the other hand, a number of studies are now seeking to establish the beneficial influence that a positive image of the destination has on the pleasure of visitors (Ramseook-Munhurrin et al., 2015). According to Ragb et al. (2020), the image of a site has a direct bearing on how visitors evaluate the quality of their experience and how much they enjoy their time there. In a similar vein, Ramseook-Munhurrin et al. (2015) show that satisfaction is strongly connected to the destination image, and Aliman et al. (2016) demonstrate that the larger the degree of satisfaction, the more positive the tourist's view of the site, and vice versa.

2.2.5 Ecotourism Loyalty

It is essential for the management of tourism businesses and destinations to have a solid grasp of the factors that influence customer loyalty as well as the mechanisms through which it is shaped. In the business world, loyalty is seen as the greatest indicator of future behavior, as well as a key factor in gaining a competitive advantage and achieving success in the market (A. Cheng et al., 2014). Therefore, just like any other kind of business, a tourist attraction has the same obligation to both bring in new customers and keep the ones it already has (Gursoy et al., 2014). In light of this point of view, it is of the utmost importance to have an in-depth understanding of the factors that influence a person's loyalty toward a location, as well as the ways in which these factors interact with one another to produce this effect. Because of the function that it plays in gaining profitability (Yoo & Bai, 2013) and in the following expansion and development of the destination, loyalty to the destination is an essential factor. This quality, which is shared by both businesses and locations, is even more important to consider in the context of the latter. This is particularly true in countries that are highly intertwined with the tourism industry due to the positive impact that tourism has on economic growth, employment, and the general well-being of the populace. For this reason, the assessment of loyalty need to be complemented by the quantification of the influence that this devotion towards the destination has on some variable of profitability or growth.

Academic study often revisits the subject of devoted customer relationships. According to the findings presented in the Web of Scientific, the topic of "client loyalty" has been the subject of more than three thousand papers published in social science publications that have received an impact factor since the year

1956. (WOS). On the other hand, there are only ninety-five papers on the topic of "destination loyalty," the earliest of which was published in the year 2001. The majority of these research attempt to determine the elements that precede or explain the tourist's devotion toward a certain place (Almeida-Santana & Moreno-Gil, 2018; Prayag, 2008; Vilkaite-Vaitone & Skackauskiene, 2020).

According to Gil-Soto et al. (2019), the advantages of loyalty are associated with the present and future worth of the benefits and with the continuity of the organization. In this vein, the loyalty of the tourist implies a stable source of incomes, as well as an improvement of the destination's benefits, as customer retention means less costs than those required to attract new customers. In addition, the loyalty of the tourist implies an improvement in the destination's benefits.

The majority of studies define "destination loyalty" in terms of the intention to return to the location as well as the desire to promote it (X. Li et al., 2011; Prayag et al., 2013). A complex concept, loyalty may be broken down into its component parts, with attitudes and behaviors being given the most credence. When seen from one angle, loyalty is shown by recurring business, but when viewed from another, attitudinal loyalty takes into account referrals to close friends and family. When both of these characteristics are taken into account, the construct may be anticipated more accurately (Dimitriades, 2006), and a more accurate depiction of the tourist's allegiance can be supplied (Gursoy et al., 2014). When considering a tourist's behavior just based on the number of times they have visited a certain location, it's possible that this does not accurately demonstrate loyalty given the context in which we are operating. When people go on vacation with the intention of having a new experience, it is very improbable that they would return to the same place again, indicating that destination loyalty may not always require recurrent visits (Hui et al., 2007; Matos & Pinto, 2012).

Because it is the most accurate indicator of visitors' actions after their trips, destination loyalty is an essential component of successful marketing initiatives (Chen & Chen, 2010). This loyalty may be earned by exceeding the expectations of the visitors, by giving them with experiences that are one of a kind, and by adopting a commitment with these tourists. In addition to giving weight to their points of view and making an attempt to find amicable solutions to any issues that may crop up in the course of the partnership, these clients must be treated as if they are one of a kind (Raggiotto & Scarpi, 2021). The reaction of these vacationers may be noticed in the fact that they have a good desire to return the location and that they are giving positive recommendations about it in their immediate vicinity (Mohamad et al., 2012).

Many writers have devoted a lot of time and energy to researching this idea, seeking to identify the characteristics that contribute to high values in the likelihood of repeat visits, since they believe that having the intent to go back to

the destination is an important aspect of customer loyalty (Cronin et al., 2000; Petrick et al., 2001). There are a number of studies that have been done in the tourist industry that have employed this indication as a measurement of loyalty (T. (Terry) Kim et al., 2009).

These days, one of the clearest indicators of loyalty is the possibility that the location will be recommended to other individuals. "The casual person-to-person contact between a perceived non-commercial communicator and a receiver about a brand, a product, an organization, or a service" is what's meant by "the purpose to suggest," and it's a phrase that's used in marketing (Harrison-Walker, 2001). This intention to recommend the destination is of great relevance for its success as the high perceived risk in the decision of choosing the tourist destination brings about a strong need for qualified information and trust in the tourist. This intention to recommend the destination is of great relevance for its success. In this manner, the recommendations acquired from other people are going to play a role in the decision-making process regarding the location (Qu et al., 2011; Tussyadiah et al., 2011).

Oliver (1999) identified four stages of customer loyalty, which are as follows: cognitive loyalty, in which the customer is aware of the product; affective loyalty, which implies increased commitment; conative loyalty, which refers to the behavioral intentions; and action loyalty, in which the customer's intentions are realized. Following that, (Zhang et al., 2014) provided a summary of the three primary definitions of destination loyalty that can be found in the tourism literature. These definitions are: composite loyalty, behavioral loyalty, and attitude loyalty. The term "attitudinal loyalty" refers to a visitor's propensity to suggest their vacation spot to others. Patronage or the desire to return are examples of behavioral loyalty, while composite loyalty refers to a combination of the two. A mixed method approach to loyalty measurement has been considered an appropriate tool to assess tourist loyalty (Chi & Qu, 2008; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). This classification has been substantiated by subsequent studies (Almeida-Santana & Moreno-Gil, 2018), whereby a mixed method approach to loyalty measurement has been considered. Despite the fact that such research is lacking in its ability to accurately predict actual actions based on assessments of intentions, the "attitude-behavior" gap persists throughout the tourism and marketing research domains. As a consequence of this, the most typical assessment items used in studies of destination loyalty are respondents' intentions to both refer and return to a certain location (Meleddu et al., 2015).

It is common practice to count as desired outcomes for tourist sites the likelihood that visitors will return to such locations and will also recommend them to others. According Anderson & Srinivasan (2003), these results formed excellent indicators for determining the level of loyalty shown by customers. As a consequence of this, the tourist's propensity to come back or suggest the location to others might therefore raise revenues, while simultaneously cutting down on

marketing expenses (Oppermann, 2000). Typically, one will use either behavioral, attitudinal, or composite metrics in order to evaluate the idea of loyalty. The actual or reported purchase behavior is what serves as the basis for behavioral metrics. The latter were separated into five categories by Jacoby and Chestnut (1978): brand purchase, buy percentage, purchase likelihood, synthesis measurements, and miscellaneous measures. These specific methods of measuring loyalty have come under fire have been seen to be arbitrary and too simple. This is due to the fact that they do not take into account any investigative aspects that point to instances of disloyalty (Oppermann, 2000).

Other measures of loyalty, such as attitudes, depend on the probability that a tourist would suggest a place to other customers and/or his or her desire to return to the location in question (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Soo Kim (2005) has been a proponent of using attitudinal measurements rather than behavioral measurements. He further suggests that behavioral measures do not differentiate between intentionally loyal and spurious loyal, and that they may create measurement and conceptual problems. On the other hand, attitudinal measurements explain an additional portion of the variance that behavioral measurements are unable to account for (Petrick et al., 2001). In conclusion, composite measures of loyalty take into account both an individual's actions and attitudes toward the organization. This type of measurement is considered to be the most comprehensive, but it is not the most practical type of measurement because it requires lengthy questionnaires; in addition, assigning weight to attitudinal and behavioural components might cause measurement problems. Nevertheless, this type of measurement is generally accepted as being the most accurate type of measurement (Soo Kim, 2005). Because there hasn't been a lot of research done on ecotourist loyalty, this study takes an exploratory approach and incorporates a number of different attitudinal measurements, such as whether or not a tourist is likely to return to a destination and whether or not they intend to recommend the location to others.

However, increasing destination loyalty is challenging (Oppermann, 2000), and the significance of destination loyalty has been called into question (Assaker et al., 2011). This is because novelty seeking plays a significant role in the behavior of selecting a destination (Dann, 1981). People go on vacation to get away from the everyday and experience new things (Albaity & Melhem, 2017). Even travelers who are completely satisfied with their trip sometimes only visit one location (Dolnicar et al., 2015). This is likewise the case in the area of ecotourism (Rivera & Croes, 2010). As a consequence of this, it has been recommended that "tourism researchers should utilize multiple measuring variables or constructs for gauging loyalty to diverse sorts of touristic goods in addition to locations" (Gursoy et al., 2014).

As a result, ecotourism loyalty, which can be defined as visitors' intents to visit other ecotourism places, was investigated in this article. Because a location for

ecotourism is considered a "product," the term "product category" may be used to refer to ecotourism locations. Tourists who visit a particular ecotourism location and have enjoyable travel experiences, a favorable image of the destination, and/or a high level of satisfaction as a result of their trip are likely to be interested in visiting additional ecotourism locations and may become brand loyal to this tourism category.

2.2.6 Prosocial Behaviour

It's amazing when people behave in a socially responsible way. People are kind to complete strangers whom they may never see again, they give their time and assets to charitable organizations, and they have a deep concern for their loved ones and friends. In direct proportion to its pervasiveness, the study of altruistic conduct has attracted an extraordinary amount of interest throughout the course of the last several years (see Fig. 2.3). The present level of study on prosocial behavior is analogous to a field filled with wildflowers in various ways, including the following: it bears with it a stunning variety of forms and ways of expressing itself. Besides, the field is an unruly, wild place that has not been tamed.

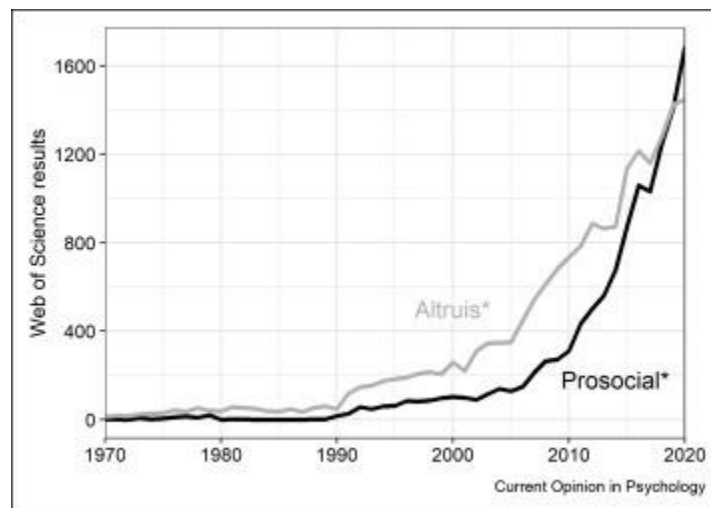


Figure 2. 3: The number of studies in "prosocial" were published on Journals indexed by Web of Science since 1970 to 2020

Source: (Pfattheicher et al., 2022)

The term "prosocial conduct" refers to voluntary actions that are performed with the intention of benefiting another individual (A. H. Lee et al., 2023). It is a hierarchical category that encompasses several types of behaviors, such as assisting, sharing, and providing comfort, as well as actions that are carried out for a variety of different causes. Prosocial behavior can be motivated by a variety of factors, including egoistic concerns (such as the desire for reciprocity, a cinderblock benefit, or social approval, or the desire to alleviate one's own aversive emotional arousal), practical concerns (such as the desire to prevent waste of goods), other-oriented concerns (such as sympathy), or moral values (such as the desire to uphold internally held moral principles like those related to

the worth or equality of all people or a reluctance Prosocial behaviors that are motivated by other-oriented or ethical worries instead of ego driven or pragmatic concerns are often defined as belonging to the subtype of prosocial behavior known as altruistic behaviors (Adcock et al., 2021). Altruistic behaviors are a subtype of prosocial behaviors.

According to the findings of a large number of academics and thinkers, empathy and sympathetic concern are often the driving forces behind acts of generosity (Nitschke et al., 2022). For instance, Coghlan (2015) proposed that compassion is linked to the desire to alleviate the suffering or need of another person, and as a consequence, it is likely to occur in acts of selflessness on their part. As was mentioned before, Batson also claimed that the egoism desire to minimize one's own sorrow is related with personal discomfort since it is an unpleasant experience. It is common for individuals to attempt to lessen their own emotions of discomfort by avoiding contact with the needy or troubled other if it is feasible to do so without incurring an excessively high cost (e.g., strong social disapproval). Batson said that people who are going through difficult times in their own lives should only be required to help other people when it is the simplest way for them to feel better about themselves.

Researchers have investigated the relationships between prosocial behaviors and contextual compassion reacting (compassion and understanding in a specific context aimed at a particular individual or individuals) as well as extraversion (trait-like) measures of empathy-related reactions (Baumsteiger & Siegel, 2019). Prosocial behaviors include helping others, volunteering time, and donating money. It would seem that there is a positive connection between empathy-related responses, particularly sympathy, and prosocial acts, particularly those that are likely to be relatively motivated by altruism. This is the general consensus among researchers. When it comes to situational empathy-related responding (also known as empathy that is elicited in particular contexts), many researchers have looked at self-reported situational sympathy and personal distress, and a smaller number of researchers have evaluated frontal and physiological reactions to empathy-inducing stimuli (Adcock et al., 2021; A. H. Lee et al., 2023). For instance, Batson et al. (1991) conducted a series of studies with adults to demonstrate a relation between helping (or being willing to help) and either reported feelings of sympathy (labeled "empathy" by Batson) or involvement a treatment group induced to experience sympathy (e.g., through perspective taking). These studies were typically conducted in situations where the possibility of social approval/censure or rewards was minimal, and the potential helper could avoid contact with the needy/disabled person. On the other hand, those who looked to be going through some kind of personal difficulty were less inclined to provide assistance in these kinds of situations. On the other hand, several research found a positive correlation between helpful behavior and conscience indicators of situational personal distress (Batson et al., 1991). Batson observed that when

individuals were presenting on their own proxy emotions, they frequently had some trouble discriminating between anguish for another person and distress that was centered on themselves (van Lange, 2008).

2.2.7 Social Media Influence

People are becoming more inclined to migrate their interactions to virtual platforms as they see social media programs as being an increasingly significant part of their day-to-day lives (i.e. Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter) (Martínez et al., 2020). This, in turn, has a favorable reflection on their attitudes and behaviors toward all forms of social media technology (Alalwan et al., 2016; H. Zhu et al., 2015). Therefore, it has come to everyone's attention that apps for social media platforms are among the most effective and influential consequences that have gradually been involved in the majority of facets of people's lives.

In general, academics and practitioners have been focusing their attention on social media in order to learn more about how such applications might be effectively accepted and deployed (Sanderson et al., 2016). This is because of the demand to get a deeper understanding of the primary factors that must be satisfied prior to the effective deployment of such technology, as well as the extent to which investment decision in such applications may be practical (Hutchins, 2014). In this respect, Hutchins (2014) provided strong support for the significance of exploring the function of social media throughout a variety of situations in order to extend the current knowledge toward such significant concerns about social media. In the same vein, Knoll (2016) and (Rowe, 2014) credited the importance of tackling the related problems utilising social media sites to the evolving nature of these technologies as well as the fact that the current state of research over this area is beyond the initial, exploratory stage, which, in essence, considered necessary further interest and knowledge. All of these studies were published in the same line. In addition, in their recent review study, (Filo et al., 2015) debated that despite the fact that there are a good number of studies that have examined social media and its applications over different areas of interest, there is still a gap of proposing a theoretical model encompassing the most critical aspects that could have either a positive or negative influence on the success of implementing such systems. They argued that this need exists despite the fact that there are a good number of studies that have examined social media and its applications over different.

Since a long time ago, the usage of the internet has been widespread in the tourist sector, and technologies that are based on the internet are applied at every step of the marketing process in the hospitality and tourism industries. Through the use of web sites, intermediaries as well as providers have been capable of developing intimate ties with prospective consumers (Zamani et al., 2015). This sector is inexorably impacted by the new business climate brought about by the proliferation of ICTs, and as a result, travelers and vacationers have become co-

marketers, co-designers, co-producers, and co-consumers of travel & leisure activities (Sotiriadis & van Zyl, 2013). These emerging forms of technology and social media are increasingly essential to the expansion of the tourist business, which is distinguished by its emphasis on experiencing aspects to the extent that customers find it difficult to assess traits before making a decision (Filieri et al., 2021). Because of the unique nature of the services offered by hospitality and travel businesses, this industry has proven to be an ideal breeding ground for the fast expansion of social media and its usage by visitors and tourism businesses (Kakirala & Singh, 2020)

Practitioners in the tourism and hospitality industries need to take into consideration how customers assess the information content and booking options offered across a variety of digital channels (Leung et al., 2015). It has been suggested that tourist businesses utilize social media in order to generate interest in their properties, introduce promotions, attract the attention of the media, and generate awareness, recognition, and marketing of their businesses (Hvass & Munar, 2012). Because the messages that tourism businesses publish on social media platforms serve as their primary medium of advertising and promotion, even a single slightly unfavorable word or tweet, post, or comment that is circulated on social media has the potential to severely damage the reputation and image of the company (Leung et al., 2015). As a direct result of this, the expansion of social media has transformed the playing field more fair for tourist enterprises, providing them with the ability to conduct advertising campaigns that are targeted at big audiences (Mirzaalian & Halpenny, 2021). Also on the demand side, visitors arrange their whole trips, including airline and hotel reservations, as well as auto rentals, on the website (Wheeler & Fracs, 2020). This indicates that the tourist business in its whole, including all of its components and aspects, is free to make use of social media. The intangible and time-sensitive nature of the services provided in the travel and tourism business makes it more dependent on word-of-mouth advertising than any other industry. The sole method for consumers of a tourist product to get further information about that product is to either attempt the service (if it is feasible to do so) or speak with someone who has previous experience using the item. Because of this, buyers are more likely to base their purchasing decisions on informal sources such as "recommended by friends." In social media, the term "friends" may also be referred to as "Para-Social Interaction," or PSI for short. PSI refers to the illusion of a face-to-face connection that is created by utilizing media as a tool (Scott & Ravenscroft, 2017).

The concept of social influence seems to be a significant one that has the ability to impact each and every one of our choices. According to Chandrasekara et al. (2021), it is understood to refer to a directed function that "actors" have in influencing the ideas and behaviors of a person. Numerous academic fields, including sociology (Goldsmith and Goldsmith, 2011), marketing (Risselada,

Verhoef and Bijmolt, 2014), legislation (Mertzani and Pitt, 2022), finance (Akhtar, Thyagaraj and Das, 2017), and psychology (Turner, Oakes, 1986), have conducted research on the effect that social influence has on people. These types of research show that people's mentalities may be altered by social influence after they have selected an action based on logical considerations (Chik et al., 2019). According to the findings of some researchers, social influence may be conveyed via a variety of channels, including society, country, relatives, acquaintances, relations, colleagues, and bosses (Crano, 2000). In particular, the social influence exerted by one's "family and friends" is especially potent when it comes to making personal choices such as those pertaining to leisure travel (Jadhav et al., 2018). A trip for pleasure is one that is often planned in advance and discussed with close friends and family members in order to acquire perspective.

There is evidence today of the rising involvement in and effect of virtual communities, which raises the likelihood of increased social influence (Wang et al., 2016). Recent studies (Ozuem et al., 2021) have shown that participation in online communities may have an effect on an individual's thoughts and behaviors. It is believed that the emergence and expansion of social media, particularly Facebook, is a strong phenomenon that enhances the social effect on its consumers (Hollenbeck & Kaikati, 2012). Facebook in particular is the social media platform that has received the most attention. It is estimated that each Facebook user has an estimate of 339 family and friends connected to their account on the social networking site. 15 percent of those who use Facebook in 2020 have roughly 550 friends (A. Pereira Correia et al., 2014). In addition, approximately 1.54 billion people who use Facebook spend an average of over 30 minutes every day actively communicating with their relatives and friends (Martínez et al., 2020). The sheer expansion of the internet, the amount of friends and family members that participate in social media, mobility, and speed have made platforms such as Facebook a highly strong platform that further increases social impact on its users, according to research (Hussain et al., 2020). The expanded reach of social impact in the travel and tourism industry is a direct result of the enhanced connection made possible by social media. For instance, a research by the United States Department of Commerce found that 31 percent of the 25.4 million people who traveled for the holidays in 2015 were inspired to travel by social media (National Telecommunications and Information Administration, 2008). In a similar vein, research reveals that tourists often seek post-activity affirmations from close family members and friends through social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter. It has also been stated that 52 percent of passengers altered their initial vacation plans as a direct consequence of feedback obtained through media platforms (Mitropoulos et al., 2021).

In addition, the information that is exchanged about previous travel experiences has evolved into a significant source that plays a role in the choices that would-be vacationers make (F. X. Yang, 2017). A poll that was conducted on Facebook

by 'The Australia.com' found that 72% of respondents used Facebook to look for "vacation ideas," and 82% of those respondents said that Facebook inspired them to go to Australia. The research also revealed that seventy percent of vacationers change their Status update while they are away from home in the hope of receiving positive feedback from their loved ones.

2.3 Hypotheses Development

2.3.1 The Relationship between Word-of-Mouth, Destination Image and Ecotourism Experiences

According to Lawson & Baud-Bovy (1977), the term "destination image" refers to a compilation of individual or collective impressions that are associated with a particular location (e.g., a country or a resort). Within the realm of ecotourism, the concept of a destination's image also includes visitors' opinions of whether or not traveling to a certain location was seen as being ecologically sustainable (Kim & Chen, 2016). According to the findings of Kock et al. (2016), the picture of a location is shaped by both a priori and actual impressions of the surrounding area. However, the authors (Kim & Chen, 2016) did not relate their results to the field of ecotourism in any way. As a result, it is not known how precisely ecotourists conceptualize the destinations they visited after returning from their trips. Indeed, past research has a tendency to concentrate on the image of the destination before the trip rather than the image of the destination after the journey (Chi & Qu, 2008). Because of this, we rely on ECT to imply that the image of a site functions as "confirmation," which is concurrently impacted by word-of-mouth marketing and the experiences of ecotourists. However, there are no current studies on the topic of ecotourism that would put e-WOM, destination image, and ecotourism experiences in a model that is comparable to the ECT. This is the case since no such model exists (Kanwel et al., 2019).

The travel and tourism industry is one that benefits tremendously from the use of e-WOM (Park & Kim, 2008). Because they can't be assessed in advance, intangibles like tourist services come with a large measure of risk attached to them. As a consequence of this, tourists usually depend on the indirect feedback and experiences of other visitors, as well as the recommendations that these visitors provide, in order to reduce the likelihood of experiencing any adverse outcomes (Amblee, 2016). According to Huete-Alcocer (2017), e-WOM is crucial in that it captures how customers utilize digital platforms to discuss their feelings both before and after they travel. According to the findings of this research project, e-WOM refers to the process through which knowledge about a location spreads rapidly across many platforms.

Visitors who take part in ecotourism activities are referred to as "ecotourists," and the word "ecotourist" refers to this particular subset of tourists (Dowling & Page, 2002). According to Ayala (1996), it is possible that they seek a genuine and intricate learning experience that may be combined with a leisure experience. In

addition, they are interested in the various natural and cultural characteristics of the location. Numerous writers say that ecotourists seek for encounters that build a sense of connection with natural attractions and indigenous people. They favor experiences that take place in wilderness settings and in sites that have not been altered. According to additional empirical Fennell (1999) show that ecotourists want to see and experience as much as they can in the time they have available, as well as having access to high-quality guide and interpretation services. As a direct consequence of this, ecotourism is seen to be an all-encompassing, experience-based product. According to Chan (2005), as a direct consequence of this, ecotourists are more likely to see trips to ecotourism sites as an expressive experience rather than a transaction. According to the findings of this research, an ecotourism experience is defined as an individual's perspective of a single instance of environmentally conscious travel to a particular site with the purpose of contributing to the local community's efforts toward sustainable development (Lu & Stepchenkova, 2012).

The ECT (Oliver, 1997) allows us to get a better understanding of the interaction between previous expectations, experience, and confirmation of expectations, as well as how these factors contribute to traveler satisfaction. Additionally, the ECT enables us to get a better understanding of how these factors contribute to traveler satisfaction (Oliver, 1980). The next section provides a description of the journey taken by a traveler who makes use of the ECT. According to this theory, a traveler's expectations of a certain service are developed at the beginning (in this case about their forthcoming travel). The formation of expectations takes place before the culmination of the service or its reception (i.e., prior to travelling). The tourist will then be offered services that will allow them to make the most of their vacation. The word "experience" refers to an individual's private impression, which might be very different for different people who have walked the same path. After returning home from their trip, the tourist evaluates how well the experience lived up to their anticipations. This is a comparison to determine the degree to which the event lived up to the anticipation that had been built up. The traveler is said to be in the state of confirmation when the experience of the trip lives up to or even surpasses the expectations that the traveler had for the trip.

As Oliver (1977) suggests, expectations are created as a result of obtaining external information from a variety of sources; hence, e-WOM is a viable source of expectations for customers working in the tourist business. In addition, belief confirmation was described by Oliver (1980) as the degree to which a product or service's performance fulfills a priori expectations as well as perceived performance numbers.

According to Lai & Li (2016), the concept of destination image stands for the confirmation of beliefs. The degree to which actual performance conforms to expectations and perceived performance is evaluated using this concept. The results of this evaluation are used to develop impressions of various locations for

ecotourism. In accordance with ECT, we postulate that e-WOM and ecotourism experiences influence destination image via cognitive and affective processes that are comparable to the interactions between expectations, perceived performance, and confirmation, respectively. People will often look up information on a place on the internet before going there, for instance. They will acquire a good impression of the site if they are presented with a significant quantity of positive information on the destination, such as the high quality of the services offered, the diverse and appealing natural scenery, and the pleasant people who live there. After then, the picture of the place changes gradually during the course of the tourist's time there (Chon, 1987). An image of a region that was formerly seen favorably may become less desirable as a consequence of certain unsatisfactory travel experiences (Smith et al., 2015). In other cases, a negative or neutral pre-trip opinion of the place may be increased upon arrival, as stated by Chon (1987). Therefore, the hypotheses are proposed as follows:

H1: e-WOM positively affects destination image.

H2: Ecotourism experiences positively affects destination image.

2.3.2 The Links Between Destination Image, Ecotourism Satisfaction and Ecotourism Loyalty

It is a fact that tourists' subjective perception, subsequent behavior, and destination choice are all influenced by a destination's image (Castro et al., 2007). This fact has been acknowledged by a large number of researchers. It is reasonable to anticipate that tourists' actions will be influenced, at least in part, by the mental picture they have of their locations. Image will impact visitors in the process of selecting a place, the following appraisal of the trip, and in their future plans. Image is important.

Several writers have conducted research on how image factors into the decision-making process for a place (Ma & Li, 2023). It is often held that locations with more upbeat public perceptions will have a greater chance of being considered throughout the decision-making process. In addition, the image of the destination has a beneficial impact on both the quality that is perceived and the level of pleasure experienced. A more positive image will lead to increased levels of satisfaction among tourists. In turn, the assessment of the trip's overall experience will have an impact on the image and cause it to change (Tan, 2017). Last but not least, the image of the location influences the behavior and decisions of visitors. For instance, Su et al. (2020) discovered that the image of the destination that was being studied had a favorable influence on the intention of tourists to return to the location at some point in the future.

According to the findings of PH et al. (2011) the following order should be followed: image > quality > satisfaction. According to this hypothesis, buyers' perceptions of a product's quality would be influenced by its image; a more favorable image would be correlated to a higher perceived quality. Because

satisfaction is the result of customers' evaluations of the perceived quality (Kozak & Rimmington, 2000), perceived quality will in turn determine whether or not customers are satisfied (Fornell, Johnson, Anderson, Cha, & Bryant, 1996; Kozak & Rimmington, 2000).

The majority of the early study work focused on levels of pleasure on a worldwide scale (Oliver, 1980). Only very lately have scholars begun to pay attention to conceptualizations of the determinants of pleasure at the attribute level (e.g. Oliver, 1997). According to Oliver (1997), overall satisfaction and attribute satisfaction are separate but linked entities. The degree to which an individual is satisfied with their attributes has a considerable, positive, and direct influence on their overall level of contentment, and it also accounts for a significant percentage of the variance in that degree of comfort (Joo et al., 2020).

According to studies conducted on customer satisfaction in the fields of tourism and leisure, visitors' levels of contentment with certain aspects of a destination are directly correlated to their level of contentment with the location as a whole (Kim, 2018). It is essential in the tourism industry to differentiate between overall contentment and satisfaction with individual traits. This is due to the fact that certain aspects of tourism have a significant impact on the level of pleasure experienced by visitors (Baloglu et al., 2004). In addition to the general features that set services apart from products, such as their intangibility, inseparability, heterogeneity, and perishability (Al-Ansi & Han, 2019), tourism and other types of services have a few unique distinctions of their own. Clarke (2005), for instance, brought attention to the interdependence and subsector interlinkage of several tourism-related industries. When tourists visit an area, they take use of a variety of services, including those provided by hotels, restaurants, shops, and other attractions, among other things, and they may grade each component of those services independently. A happy visitor is one who is satisfied with the experience as a whole, not just with one aspect of the place (Kozak & Rimmington, 2000). The level of overall satisfaction with a hospitality experience is a function of the level of satisfaction with the individual elements and attributes of all of the products and services that make up the experience, such as the accommodation, the weather, the natural environment, the social environment, etc (Boo & Busser, 2018)

According to ECT, a customer is said to be in a state of confirmation when the experience that they have had is greater than the expectations that they had. When an event or experience lives up to or even beyond one's anticipations, contentment might result (or dissatisfaction, if the experience is less than what was expected). Finally, the customer will produce a behavioral intention, which will vary according on the level of pleasure they have experienced (Oliver, 1977). In line with ECT, we propose that travelers who have a favorable picture of their location after their journey (their tourist experience exceeded their tourist expectation) are happy and subsequently have the desire to either return or promote the place.

However, even very satisfied tourists often only visit a location once (Dolnicar et al., 2015), since the primary reasons people travel are to break away from their normal lives and experience new things (Dann, 1981). This is also the case in environments associated with ecotourism (Rivera & Croes, 2010). In light of this, the research puts out the following hypothesis as a means of determining whether or not the ECT is still relevant to ecotourism, and the hypotheses are proposed as follows:

H3: Destination image positively affects ecotourism satisfaction.

H4: Ecotourism satisfaction positively influence ecotourism loyalty.

2.3.3 The Moderating Effects of Prosocial Behaviours

Interactions between tourists and residents, who come from a wide range of cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, are becoming more common (Z. Liu & Tung, 2017). Previous tourism research has looked at the effect that Host-Tourist Interactions, or HTIs, have on the levels of satisfaction and attitudes that visitors have toward a certain location (Chien & Ritchie, 2018; Palmer et al., 2013). Previous research, on the other hand, concentrated more on the attitudes of locals than on those of tourists. For instance, Tung & Tse (2022) conducted an investigation on the hatred of residents against visitors, which is an issue that is felt across the whole community. Because of this, our research makes a contribution to the ECT by integrating the altruistic behavior of local inhabitants as a moderating variable. This is done because we want to investigate the HTIs from the viewpoint of tourists.

Prosocial behaviors are often characterized as actions that are carried out with the intention of expressly assisting other people (Goh et al., 2021). If we apply this idea to ecotourism, then it's possible that locals may spend their own time or money to assist visitors who get disoriented in the wild (Seo et al., 2021). Despite the fact that some authors, such as Kim & Qu (2020), have suggested that prosocial behaviors have an effect on tourists' levels of satisfaction, there is a lack of information regarding how exactly prosocial behaviors could be incorporated into the ECT or how this concept relates to e-WOM intentions (Seo et al., 2021).

Tung (2019) argued that prosocial behaviors strongly improved the experiences of tourists in order to explain how prosocial behaviors applied to tourism. However, this study did not elaborate on whether ecotourists felt motivated to discuss such experiences on digital platforms. Tung's argument was that prosocial behaviors strongly improved the experiences of tourists. Prosocial behaviors are significant in the context of ecotourism because ecotourism itself can be considered an example of a prosocial behavior with the goal of preserving the environment and helping others; as a result, the prosocial behaviors of local residents may have a strong effect on e-WOM intentions and similar constructs in this setting (Li et al., 2017). However, further research on the topic of prosocial behaviors (Manosuthi et al., 2020) has, to this point, ignored any explanations of

how the prosocial behaviors of local inhabitants impact the behaviors and perceptions of ecotourists.

According to the ECT, expectations are pre-trial views about a product (or service) that serve as standards or reference points for assessing the performance of the product. These beliefs are formed before the actual testing of the product (Oliver, 1977). In addition, the expectations of visitors are the things that they feel "should" or "ought to" take place (Bigne, 2001). According to Zeithaml and colleagues, this constitutes the perfect state of service. (1993). According to Li et al. (2011), the expectations of tourists are often considered to be of a normative character. According to what is suggested by the theory (Oliver, 1977), anticipation serves as a point of reference against which actual experience is evaluated. In light of this, any shift in one's expectations, whether they lower or higher, will result in a different confirmation. When a traveler is connected to social media (such as Facebook, a blog, or a forum), they are able to gain additional input and/or insights from their network of friends (Fotis et al., 2012), which changes the expectations that they have for their trip. To be more specific, if a tourist receives a number of positive comments about the considerate actions of a local resident, this helps to cultivate "affection" for the region and increases the visitor's interest in and engagement with e-WOM about the destination on social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter. This is quite important in order to promote a favorable picture of the place. In contrast, if a visitor has a poor opinion of remarks connected to residents' prosocial conduct, they are less sensitive to e-WOM on social networks, which leads to less influence on destination image. E-WOM is a kind of word-of-mouth communication. As one of novelty issues of my thesis, the hypothesis below is proposed to assess the moderating role of Prosocial behaviors of local resident in the relationship between e-WOM and destination image before the ecotourism trip(s).

H5: Prosocial behaviours of local residents moderate the relationship between e-WOM consumed by ecotourists and destination image.

As was said earlier, one of the most important factors that travelers consider when selecting a place is the quality of the experience they expect to have there (Quynh et al., 2021). Tourists often depend on the experiences of other tourists to construct a picture of the place, or they may even rely on their own recollections or experiences to form an image of the destination and make decisions about whether or not to visit the destination (Chiu et al., 2014). In order to shape a favorable picture of a place, prosocial activities are very necessary. The link between a destination's image and the ecotourist experience is, however, moderated by the prosocial actions of visitors (H. Fu et al., 2016). If participating in charitable activities may improve one's ecotourism experience, this suggests that these activities have the potential to dramatically influence the correlation between a destination's image and one's ecotourism encounters (Li et al., 2021). It is crucial for the locals who are acting as hosts to demonstrate prosocial

behaviors in order to provide visitors with the greatest possible experience while they are there (Pfattheicher et al., 2022). Imagine for a minute that the locals are eager to engage in conversation with the visitors and share their way of life and experiences. In such instance, they will construct a wonderful representation of the place, which they can then convey to other tourists who may be interested in traveling there.

The image of the location, and the level of happiness it provides to ecotourists, are directly influenced by prosocial activities such as locals offering assistance to visitors who get lost (Goh et al., 2021). Therefore, prosocial activities are very necessary because of the considerable moderating role that they play in the link between ecotourist happiness and the image of the destination. The desire of the people to engage in the community needs in their immediate area is a significant factor that contributes to the enhancement of both the prosocial behaviors and the image of the destination. Therefore, the expectations and beliefs of the visitors are satisfied, which results in the loyalty of the tourists. Similarly, the hypothesis below is proposed to assess the moderating role of Prosocial behaviors of local resident in the relationship between ecotourism satisfaction and ecotourism loyalty after the ecotourism trip(s).

H6: Prosocial behaviours of local residents moderate the relationship between ecotourism satisfaction and ecotourism loyalty.

2.3.4 The Moderating Effects of Social Media Influence

Previous research indicates that the word of mouth has an effect on the image of the place (Reza Jalilvand & Samiei, 2012). In this day and age, word-of-mouth is commonly disseminated via social media networks, which have not only become key tools for discovering information about locations, but also big platforms where travelers can discuss their experiences from trips and intents to visit other places (Bizirgianni & Dionysopoulou, 2013; Pantano & Pietro, 2013). Because visitors are able to obtain comments on social media, this input has the potential to interfere with their initial motives to travel as well as their initial expectations about the location, both of which are reflected in the image of the place (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004).

According to Pan et al. (2021), the picture that visitors have of a site does not remain unchanged over time; rather, it is significantly impacted by the influences of peer pressure and social media. They point out that even if visitors do not have a distinct picture of their trip, this image will be developing and converging with the image of the place that is sent through social media. On the other hand, (Chandrasekara et al., 2021) claim that social media makes it possible to gather various responses to a certain location from a variety of sources. On the basis of this information, a hypothesis can be formulated which states that the association between e-WOM consumption and destination image will be stronger and more positive when there is a high level of social media use before the trip; however,

the link between e-WOM consumption and destination image will be more obscure for tourists who have a low level of social media use because there are fewer information sources used in the formation of the destination image. Therefore, the following is how the next hypothesis should be formulated:

H7: Social media influence moderates the relationship between e-WOM and destination image.

According to (Al-Adamat et al., 2020), the image of a place also has a role in determining future visit intentions, which may be seen as a sign of loyalty. In addition to this, the impact of social media may also have an effect on the desire to return. This provides evidence that there may be the existence of moderating factors, which, if identified and accounted for, may make it possible to extend the applicability of the ECT to the setting of ecotourism.

According to the findings of Jamshidi et al. (2021), comments on tourist postings on social networks contributed to the construction of memories linked with the trip, as well as the satisfaction of visitors and their eventual allegiance. Almeida-Santana & Moreno-Gil (2018) discovered in the course of a study that included approximately seven thousand respondents that social media activity had a significant influence on visitors' loyalty, which was assessed by tourists' intentions to return and suggest.

As a result, the function of social media may include both the dissemination of information and the expression of values (Lyu, 2016) . It is anticipated that higher levels of social media usage would result in a tighter connection between visitor motivation and their eventual picture of the place. At the same time, when there is a lot of feedback and value expression on social media, one may anticipate a greater link between the image of the destination, the amount of happiness customers have, and their loyalty.

According to findings from recent studies in marketing, the proliferation of social media has considerably lowered the barriers for consumers in terms of recommending the goods or services they have tried (Garay, 2019). People would have to spend more time and effort on face-to-face discussion about their experience with a vacation trip with their friends, families, and acquaintances before they could make recommendations using the conventional method of word of mouth. At high levels of social media usage, on the other hand, all that is required to make a travel suggestion is to click on a "share" button, drastically reducing the amount of time and effort required. Because of this decrease in the psychological obstacles that visitors must overcome in order to promote a location, travelers will be able to click the like and share buttons frequently without giving any thought to how satisfied they were with their own personal experience during their trip. As a consequence of this, one may anticipate a lower correlation between visitor pleasure and the amount of loyalty they exhibit at

increasing levels of social media usage. The conclusion that may be drawn from this is as follows:

H8: Social media influence moderates the relationship between ecotourist satisfaction and ecotourism loyalty.

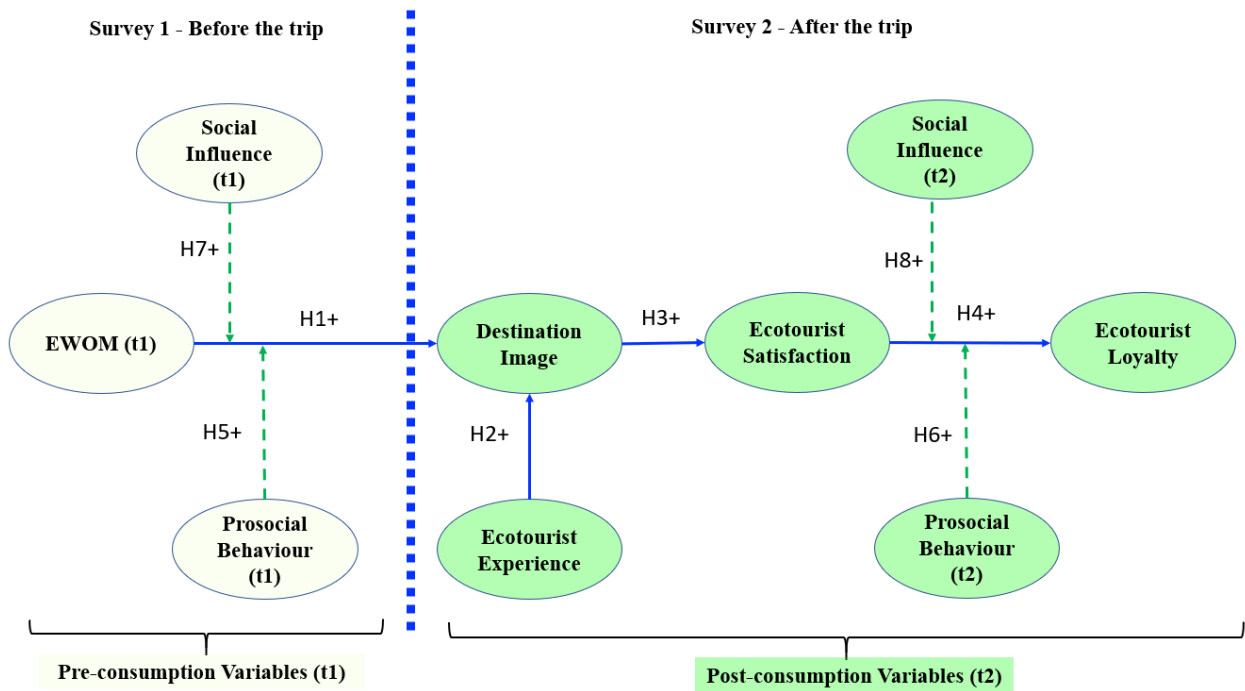


Figure 2. 4: The Conceptual Framework.

Source: The author's works

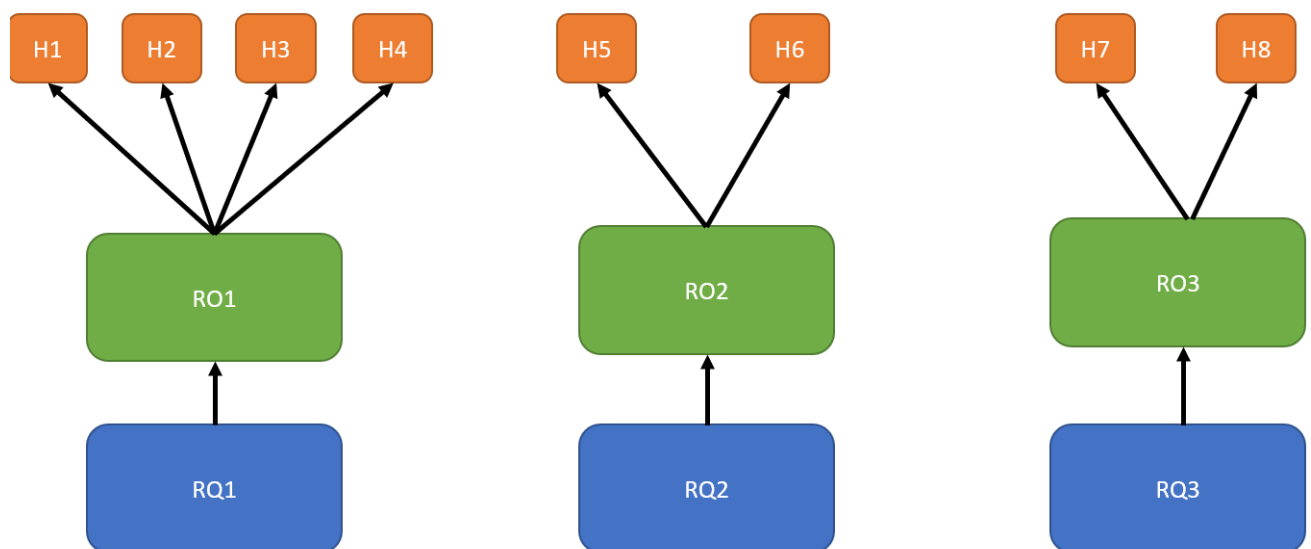


Figure 2. 5: Research question – research objective - hypotheses Source: The author's works

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Qualitative method

In this thesis, the qualitative technique is used since it has the potential to give an efficient way to establish theory development. It is more useful to obtain insight into ecotourism and its antecedents, which may affect ecotourists' loyalty, and identify the gaps between academic research and commercial practice. This is because ecotourism and its antecedents may affect ecotourists' loyalty (Mark N.K. Saunders et al., 2019). In qualitative research, in-depth interviews are conducted two to three months before the official questionnaire survey. The purpose of these interviews is to compare the knowledge gained from earlier studies with the real-world context and research proposal. These interviews follow a structured interview protocol and require a consent form to be signed before information can be disclosed. Because there is no set rule to follow when selecting the sample for an in-depth interview, the focus interviewees have been chosen in a manner that is not random in order to ensure the quality of the research. These interviewees include five tour managers, ten ecotourism tour guides, two academics, and three experts in the field of tourism industry (Appendix 1a). As a result, their contributions have the potential to assist the author in determining the significant difficulties that have either not been discussed in the prior research or are absent from the model. This stage also serves as a preliminary examination of the questionnaire by evaluating the replies that were recorded. The qualitative study produces a research result that helps the author to better understand the link between the expectations of tourists and the loyalty of ecotourism businesses. In addition, the findings from the study will be used to explain why and how visitor anticipation influences ecotourism loyalty using the ecotourism industry as the research technique. On the basis of the assessment conducted by the specialists, the precise links that exist between the expectations of tourists and their commitment to ecotourism will be elucidated. The semi-structured interview process, which was built from the suggested measurement of constructs as shown in Table 3.1, includes questions and pertinent probes in both Vietnamese and English. The procedure can be found in its entirety in Appendix 1b, and depth interviews will be delivered to interviewees in advance so that they may use them as a point of reference and get ready for the interview. This is done to make interviewees feel as comfortable as possible during the interview. The interviews would take place in person, but it also has the option of taking place online through the use of a platform such as Microsoft Team or Google Meet. Concurrently, a consent letter will be signed by both the author (in the role of interviewer) and the interviewees to guarantee that the information gathered will be shared if only their permissions are gained. This will be done to ensure that the interviewees' privacy is protected. Interviews can be conducted in person, over the phone, or even through video conferencing. Recordings of interviews can be made in the form of video or audio files, and

then the data can be transcribed and analyzed using NVivo. As a consequence of the fact that the findings of the qualitative study serve as the basis for determining whether or not the constructs of the model and the associated indicators are appropriate, the next step of the process, which is quantitative analysis, involves the preparation of a survey questionnaire. Indicators that have a rate of agreement that is lower than 75% will neither be included in the questionnaire, nor will they be produced for it.

Table 3. 1: Measurement of constructs

Constructs	Measurement	Source
e-WOM (eWOM)	(eWOM_1) I often read other tourists' online travel reviews to know what destinations make good impressions on others (eWOM_2) To make sure I choose the right destination, I often read other tourists' online travel reviews (eWOM_3) I often consult other tourists' online travel reviews to help choose an attractive destination (eWOM_4) I frequently gather information from tourists' online travel reviews before I travel to a certain destination (eWOM_5) If I don't read tourists' online travel reviews when I travel to a destination, I worry about my decision (eWOM_6) When I travel to a destination, tourists' online travel reviews make me confident in traveling to the destination	(Reza Jalilvand et al., 2012) (Abubakar et al., 2017) (Assaker & O'Connor, 2021)
Destination image (DI)	(DI_1) ... is safe and secure (DI_2) ... offers exciting and interesting places to visit (DI_3) ... has a beautiful scenery and natural attractions (DI_4) ... has a pleasant climate (DI_5) As a tourist destination, ... offers good value for money	(Reza Jalilvand et al., 2012)
Ecotourist experience (EE)	(EE_1) I really enjoyed the activities on this trip (EE_2) I completely escaped from reality on this trip (EE_3) My experience on this trip was visually interesting	(Schmitt, 2010) (OH et al., 2015)

Constructs	Measurement	Source
	(EE_4) I increased my connection with others through my experience on this trip	
Ecotourist satisfaction (ES)	(ES_1) I believe that I did the right thing in attending the festival. (ES_2) On the whole, I am happy with the festival. (ES_3) Overall, I am satisfied with the festival.	(Oliver, 1997) (Dolnicar et al., 2015)
Ecotourism loyalty (LOYL)	(LOYL_1) I will tell good experiences from the tour to other people. (LOYL_2) I will recommend the tour to other people. (LOYL_3) I will revisit the country and participate in the tour in the future	(Dolnicar et al., 2015)
Prosocial behavior before the trip (PSB)	(PSB_1) Tourists expect that the local residents treat tourists with high esteem. (PSB_2) Tourists expect that the local residents are happy to provide local information to tourists. (PSB_3) Tourist expects that the local residents are willing to offer help to tourists when needed	(Baumsteiger & Siegel, 2019)
Prosocial behavior after the trip (PSA)	(PSA_1) Tourist feel that the local residents treat tourists with high esteem. (PSA_2) Tourist feel that the local residents are happy to provide local information to tourists. (PSA_3) Tourist feel that the local residents are willing to offer help to tourists when needed	(Baumsteiger & Siegel, 2019)
Social media influence before the trip (SMIB)	(SMIB_1) I used social media to obtain specific views and opinions about this trip (SMIB_2) I asked my friends on social networks about what to expect during this trip (SMIB_3) I typically check comments on social media about my holiday destination	(Sedera et al., 2017)
Social media influence after the trip (SMIA)	(SMIA_1) My friends and followers positively commented on the photos I had posted during my trip	Sedera et al. (2017).

Constructs	Measurement	Source
	(SMIA_2) My friends and followers liked photos I shared on social media during my trip (SMIA_3) I received the desired number of likes and comments on my holiday posts on social networks	

Source: The author's works

3.2. Quantitative Research

3.2.1 Questionnaire and Sampling

In this thesis, quantitative research is used to examine the ecotourists' attitudes and behavior before and after the trips to an eco-destination through responding a 5-likert questionnaire, which is answerable via email with assistance of tour managers and tour guides. The questionnaires are designed in two forms: one for pre-trip which will be sent to tourists before the trip to examine their expectation about the coming destination (detailed in Appendix 2a), and another for post-trip to assess their perception, attitude and behaviour after the visit (detailed in Appendix 2b).

The constructs are represented by indicators, commonly referred to as "scale," that are outlined in Table 1 based on the definitions and literature analysis. All questionnaires distributed in Vietnam were provided in both English and Vietnamese. The study observed variables from the questionnaires were anchored on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5).

Before officially conducting the survey in large numbers, the 5-likert scale (in Vietnamese and English, as described in Appendices 2a & 2b) will be pre-tested with 20 to 30 respondents who are local tourists to identify any areas that need improvement and to assess the quality of the content and the validity of the measures. The next phase After the questionnaire has been updated based on the responses from the pre-testing phase, the official survey will be carried out.

Contacting the tour manager to complete the survey is quite difficult because of the intense competition in the ecotourism sector and the tour manager's key function. Consequently, a nonprobability sampling approach is used for the survey in this work. The minimum sample size is advised to be 10 observations for each independent variable (J. Hair et al., 2017). Despite the fact that Hair et al. (2017) advise that the sample size for PLS-SEM may be determined by multiplying 10 by the variable with the greatest forward arrows to itself (10*3=30), the minimum same size may be selected to go over the conventional threshold and deploy 300 observations. A questionnaire will be distributed to respondents through connections on more than 1000 social networking sites (such

as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc.), with an estimated response rate of 15%. At least 300 replies may be acquired (Mark N.K. Saunders et al., 2019)

According to the methodology suggested by Hair et al. (2017), before being analyzed using SmartPLS software, the information gathered in the design setting range 1 to 5 representing strongly disagree to strongly agree, will be dealt with as follows:

Missing data will be identified as 99. A questionnaire's observation will be deleted from the data file if there are more than four missing replies.

The data file associated with the observation that had the questionable answer (such as one that was inconsistent, illogical, or directly, such as giving everyone the same score) will be removed.

3.2.2 Conceptual Model Evaluation and Hypothesis Testing

The PLS-SEM model is a statistical "causal-predictive" method for modeling complicated multidimensional linkages in causal links between indicators and constructs or factors. PLS-SEM is also sometimes referred to as the "path model" (Shmueli et al., 2019; Vinzi et al., 2010). The PLS-SEM model is typically utilized in the process of theory development within the context of exploratory research (Hair et al., 2017). To put it another way, the PLS-SEM models are route patterns because they are variance-based. This means that numerous factors may be the effects of other variables, but at the same time, these variables continue to be the antecedents of variables that happen later in the expected causal order. G. David Garson (2016), Shmueli et al. (2019), and Vinzi et al. (2010) advocate using PLS-SEM in complicated models having limited sample sizes. Shmueli et al. (2019) also makes this recommendation. In addition to this, they assert that PLS-SEM is capable of providing a superior answer to the problem of estimating factor models (reflective measurement) in order to correct the contradictory findings produced by the conventional PLS method in the absence of data that is normally distributed.

The theoretical model is offered in the forms of Structural models and Measurement models respectively, and it is founded on the aims and assumptions of the study as well as the Systematic approach that Hair et al. (2017) developed. The structural models, which are also known as inner models, present the relationships between the predictive constructs (e-WOM, Ecotourist experience), mediators (Destination image, Ecotourist satisfaction), moderators (Social influence, Prosocial behavior), and target construct (Ecotourist loyalty), in the form of measurement models with relevant indicators.

Evaluation of the Reflective measurement models

The internal consistency, convergent validity, and discriminant validity of the Reflective measurement models, together with their pertinent indicators and

thresholds, are shown in Table 3.2 and are considered to be the most critical indicators for evaluating reflective measuring models.

Table 3. 2: Evaluation Reflective measurement models

Metrics	Indicators	Thresholds
Convergent validity	Loadings	≥ 0.708
	Average variance extracted – AVE	≥ 0.50
Internal consistency	Cronbach’s alpha	0.60 - 0.95
	Composite reliability	0.60 - 0.95
	Rho-A	0.70 – 0.95
Discriminant validity	Heterotrait-monotrait - HTMT	< 0.90

Source: Hair et al. (2017, 2019)

The method of analyzing the Reflective measurement models begins with the first phase, which is to determine the models' convergent validity. Hair et al. (2019) propose that outer loading measures be adjusted to at least 0.7 in order for the construct to be able to explain over than 50% of the variance (AVE) of the indicator. If this is not the case, then the indicators are considered to be acceptable. In order to begin analyzing the Reflective measurement models, this stage of the process must first be completed. In the second step of the process, Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability are utilized in order to establish the extent to which a construct comprises indications that are internally consistent with each other. According to Hair et al. (2019), an assessment model's consistency is decided when the Cronbach's alpha, the lower limit, is a minimum of 0.60 in exploratory research, and a maximum of 0.95, and the composite reliability is within the 0.60 to 0.95. In exploratory research, the value of Cronbach's alpha should be in range of 0.6 to 0.95. In other words, the Cronbach's alpha should be at least 0.6, in order for a measurement model's thresholds are presumed to be accurate if they fall anywhere in the range of 0.60 to 0.95 when using the rho-A metric, which is the fourth metric for evaluating the dependability of the internal consistency of a construct. The third and last phase in the process of evaluating the reflective measurement model is called the discriminant validity step. Cross-loadings, the Fornell-Larcker Criterion, and the HTMT are the three metrics that Hair et al. (2017) recommend for assessing the measurement model's discriminant. However, Hair et al. (2019) and Henseler et al. (2014) agree that when there is a high concentration of HTMT, there may be cause for concern regarding the discriminant validity. Because of this, Hair et al. (2019) propose that the minimum value for HTMT should be 0.90.

Evaluation of the Structural Model

For the purpose of assessing the structural model, this process is carried out in six phases, with the essential key indicators outlined in Table 3.3.

Table 3. 3: Evaluation of the Structural Model

Steps	Metrics	Thresholds
Collinearity Assessment	Root mean square residual covariance - RMS_{θ}	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ < 0.12: a well-fitting model ▪ > 0.12: lack of fit
Structural Model Path Coefficients	Path coefficients (β)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Close to +1: strong positive relationships ▪ Close to -1: strong negative relationships
Coefficient of Determination	R^2 value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ≥ 0.75: substantial ▪ 0.5: moderate ▪ 0.25: weak
f^2 effect size	f^2 value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ >0.02: small effect sizes ▪ >0.15: medium effect sizes ▪ >0.35: large effect sizes
Blindfolding and predictive relevance	Predictive relevance - Q^2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ >0: small predictive relevance ▪ >0.25: medium predictive relevance ▪ >0.50: large predictive relevance
q^2 effect size	q^2 value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ >0.02: small predictive relevance ▪ >0.15: medium predictive relevance ▪ >0.35: large predictive relevance

Source: Hair et al. (2017; 2019)

Hair et al. (2019) advocate using the Coefficient of Determination stage to evaluate model fit using RMS_{θ} , also they advise its minimum value of 0.12. If the RMS_{θ} value is less than 0.12, then the model is considered to be well fitted; otherwise, the model is not well fitted.

The second stage is to evaluate the structural model's path coefficients, or to evaluate the predicted links between the components. Hair et al. (2019) suggests that the path coefficients should be in range from -1 to +1. This means that when the estimated route coefficients are near to +1, the connections are highly positive, and when they are close to -1, the associations are strongly negative. In addition, numbers that are closer to zero indicate weaker correlations between the components (Hair et al., 2017). In a similar vein, p-values are used in order to determine the significance of various aspects of the connection. According to Hair et al. (2019), the p-values need to be lower than 0.05 in order to guarantee that the correlations are statistically significant at the 5% level.

In the process of evaluating a structural model, the third step is to calculate the determination coefficient, which is then compared to the R^2 value to determine how well the model can predict the future. R^2 value between 0 and 1, with higher

values indicating greater degrees of forecast validity (Hair et al., 2017). According to Hair et al. (2017; 2019), R^2 values of 0.75, 0.50, or 0.25 are recommended to be classified as considerable, moderate, or weak, respectively, whereas R^2 values larger than 0.9 are considered to be overfitted.

In the fourth stage, the f^2 effect size is computed to determine how much of an influence a predictive construct has on an endogenous construct in terms of the latter's ability to explain the former (Hair et al., 2010). Particularly, the f^2 effect size is employed in the structural model to determine how much a predictive construct relates to the R^2 value of a target construct. Despite the fact that Hair et al. (2012) admit that "it is somewhat redundant to the size of the path coefficients," this analysis is still performed. The values 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35, respectively, reflect minor, medium, and high impacts of the exogenous, which allows one to examine the importance of constructs in explaining chosen endogenous constructs (J. F. Hair et al., 2012). According to (Cohen, 1992), a medium effect size will demonstrate an impact that is "visible to the naked eye of a diligent observer." Cohen suggests this effect size.

The last phase is called Blindfolding and Predictive relevance Q^2 , and its purpose is to determine the level of out-of-sample predictive power or predictive relevance possessed by the model (Hair et al., 2012). According to Hair et al. (2012), Q^2 values are recommended larger than 0, 0.25, and 0.5, respectively, to indicate the modest, medium, and large predictive importance of the path model. They also propose that these values should be greater than zero.

In conclusion, the effect sizes of q^2 may be used to evaluate an independent variable's contribution to the Q^2 value of a dependent variable serving as the predictive relevance. The q^2 value of 0.02 for the independent variable, 0.15 for the dependent variable, and 0.35 for the dependent variable reveals that the predictive importance of the independent variable is little, medium, or substantial, respectively, for the given dependent variable (Hair et al., 2021).

Mediating Effect Analysis

According to (Nitzl et al., 2016), the mediating effect requires the inclusion of a third variable that serves as an intermediary in the relationship that exists between the independent and dependent variables. The formula for calculating the media effect, also known as the indirect effect, is as follows:

$$\textit{Indirect effect} = \textit{Total effect} - \textit{Direct effect}$$

After ensuring that all of the quality requirements of the measurement models have been met, the mediation model is then reviewed (Hair et al., 2021), and the significance of the indirect impact may be examined via the use of a bootstrapping process (Cohen, 1996). The hypothesis of this study is that direct involvement (DI) acts as a mediator between electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) consumption, ecotourist experience, and ecotourist satisfaction. The

existence of this mediating effect will be investigated, as well as the nature of the effect, if it is found to exist.

Moderating Effects Analysis

If an exogenous construct alters the relationship or extent the connection between two variables included in the framework, the moderating effect is produced (Hair et al., 2012). In this study, prosocial conduct and social media influence are expected to function as moderators, influencing the association between e-WOM consumption and destination image (before the trip), ecotourist satisfaction, and ecotourism loyalty (after the trip). There are two kinds of moderating factors: categorical moderator variables and continuous moderator variables (Hair et al., 2017); however, in this research, prosocial behavior and social media impact are classified as continuous moderator variables. According to Hair et al. (2017), the moderator effect will be given as a new variable, such as 'e-WOM*PB,' which directly impacts DI in the hypothetical model. Ramayah et al. (2017), Hair et al. (2017) conduct moderating effect assessment and model evaluation utilizing a two-stage technique as recommendations.

CFA analysis

A significant number of subfields within the behavioral sciences now recognize confirmatory factor analysis as an essential method of data examination. It is a member of the SEM method family, which includes methods that enable the exploration of causal links among latent and observable variables in theory-derived models that have been established in advance. The primary benefit of CFA rests in its capacity to assist researchers in closing the gap that is often seen to exist between theory and observation.

A CFA was first carried out in order to check and see whether or not the gathered observed variables loaded accurately onto the theoretical components. In addition, CFA is necessary since it helps eliminate the possibility of bias caused by the conventional technique. In canonical factor analysis, the latent factors are normalized and centered such that they have a mean of zero. This allows them to be distinguished from the scale of the observable variables. In order to perform a preliminary assessment of the linkages, descriptive statistics of the variables and correlations between latent components were computed.

After conducting a CFA, a hierarchical regression analysis was carried out in order to investigate the link between latent variables and find out how prosocial behavior might moderate its impacts. Because the order in which variables are included in the model matters in this scenario, and because both moderating and direct effects cannot be investigated at the same time, hierarchical regression analysis is the method of choice. This is because hierarchical regression analysis makes it possible to measure both direct and moderating effects.

Data bias controlling

The term "common measurement variation" (CMV) refers to "variance that is attributed to the measuring technique rather than to the constructs that the measurements reflect"(Podsakoff et al., 2003). CMV generates a perceived correlation among variables that are caused by their same source, which gives the impression that there is some kind of internal consistency. If the participants have a tendency to offer consistent responses to gather data from the respondents that are not otherwise connected, then the self-report data may establish spurious correlations in these kinds of situations. Therefore, typical procedures may lead to systematic measurement mistakes, which can either exaggerate or understate the observed connections between constructs, resulting in both Type I and Type II errors.

4. FINDINGS

4.1 Qualitative research

The interviewees, consisting of two academic scholars, three experts in the field of tourism industry, five tour managers, and ten tour guides in ecotourism (detailed as Table 4.1), contributed many consultation opinions and fruitful ideas with deeply and clearly explanation to develop the questionnaire for survey. In general, the discussions were positive because all of interviewees admitted that the reciprocal correlations among the proposed constructs were existing and they had strongly effects on the target construct Ecotourism loyalty. The qualitative result is not only the foundation for questionnaire design, but also is one of the prerequisites to answer the two research questions of the thesis when all proposed constructs and relevant indicators have been verified with the agreeing rate from 80% to 100%.

Table 4. 1: Interview results - Agreeing responses of qualitative study

Constructs and Indicators		Agreeing responses				Total %
		Scholars (2)	Experts (3)	Managers (5)	Tour guides (10)	
Destination image (DI)	DI1	2	2	5	10	95
	DI2	2	3	5	9	95
	DI3	2	3	5	10	100
	DI4	2	2	5	8	85
	DI5	2	3	5	10	100
Ecotourism experience (EE)	EE1	1	3	5	8	85
	EE2	2	3	5	10	100
	EE3	2	3	4	10	95
	EE4	1	3	5	7	80
Ecotourism satisfaction (ES)	ES1	2	3	5	9	95
	ES2	2	2	4	10	90
	ES3	2	3	4	9	90
Electronic-Word-of-mouth (EWOM)	EWOM1	2	2	5	10	95
	EWOM2	2	3	5	10	100
	EWOM3	2	3	5	8	90
	EWOM4	2	3	5	10	100
	EWOM5	2	3	4	8	85
	EWOM6	2	3	5	10	100
Ecotourism loyalty	LOYL1	2	2	5	10	95
	LOYL2	2	3	5	10	100
	LOYL3	2	3	5	10	100
	PSA1	2	3	4	10	95
	PSA2	2	3	4	9	90

Constructs and Indicators		Agreeing responses				Total %
		Scholars (2)	Experts (3)	Managers (5)	Tour guides (10)	
Prosocial behaviour after the trip (PSA)	PSA3	2	2	5	10	95
Prosocial behaviour before the trip (PSB)	PSB1	2	3	5	10	100
	PSB2	2	2	4	9	85
	PSB3	2	3	5	10	100
Social media influence after the trip (SMIA)	SMIA1	2	3	5	10	100
	SMIA2	1	3	4	9	85
	SMIA3	2	3	5	10	100
Social media influence before the trip (SMIB)	SMIB1	2	3	5	10	100
	SMIB2	2	2	4	8	80
	SMIB3	2	3	5	10	100

Source: The author's works

In general, qualitative research yields impressive results. Taken together, these findings give important insights into ecotourism and forecast visitor attitudes and behavior before and after the ecotourtrip from the perspectives of researchers and practitioners (experts, managers, and tourguides) in Vietnam setting. The findings of this section are compiled into a questionnaire (Appendix 2a and 2b). Each question in the following section is taken from a appropriate metrics and assessed by consumers through a quantitative research survey.

4.2 Quantitative research

4.2.1 Results of Questionnaire survey

In order to explore the relationship between pre-trip e-WOM and ecotourism loyalty, a longitudinal survey was carried out over the course of two different times in Vietnam. The study was carried out in the national park known as Cat Tien, which is located near Ho Chi Minh city. This location was selected because it is protected and expansive, and it provides opportunities for activities such as hiking, canoeing, cycling, sightseeing, and bird watching. These activities emphasize the preservation of natural resources and sustainable practices.

The primary data were collected via the administration of two structured online questionnaires, the first of which was completed before the trip and the second of which was completed after it. Both Vietnamese and English were used in the writing of the questionnaires. The questionnaire was first translated into Vietnamese by two language professionals, who then returned it to its original form in English. Ecotourists who traveled in groups and used the services of tour operators as intermediaries were sought in order to get a bigger sample size. In

the first study, a questionnaire was given to 1000 visitors before they went on their vacation and they were asked to fill it out. The total number of legitimate replies received from travelers was 723. A week after returning from the trip, the second survey was carried out. A week's worth of separation was employed in order to reduce the likelihood of previous replies having an impact on subsequent assessments of the destination picture. A total of 521 replies were received in response to the questionnaire that was given to those visitors before and after their trip. It was determined that these 521 replies could be included in the analysis. The participants' histories are detailed in Table 4.2, which may be seen below. The percentage of women in the sample was much greater (57.8%), compared to the percentage of males (42.4%). The majority of the respondents fell into the age range of 30–39 years (29.6%), followed by the age range of 18–29 years (24.6%), then the age range of 40–49 years (20.3%), 50–59 years (17.7%), and 60 years and over (7.8%). The proportion of travelers who had only made one trip was 66.4%, while the percentage of travelers who had made two trips was 24.6%, and the percentage of travelers who had made three trips or more was 9%. Finally, 44.1% of the respondents accessed their social media accounts between 5 and 10 times per day, 19.6% accessed their accounts between 2 and 4 times per day, 25.7% accessed their accounts more than 10 times per day, and 10.6% accessed their accounts between 0 and 1 time per day.

Table 4. 2: Background of Respondents

Categories		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Female	301	57.8%
	Male	220	42.2%
Age	18-29	128	24.6%
	30-39	154	29.6%
	40-49	106	20.3%
	50-59	92	17.7%
	60+	41	7.8%
Times Visited	Once	346	66.4%
	Twice	128	24.6%
	Three and over	47	9%
Frequency checking social media	0-1	55	10.6%
	2-4	102	19.6%
	5-10	230	44.1%
	10 and over	134	25.7%

Source: The Author's works

For statistics, there are 521 responses satisfied the research requirements. Figures in Table 4.3 show that almost all respondents agreed with the questionnaire with the Median of 4. The popular Standard deviation from 0.968

to1.169 also presents that there are large differences between the mean of the observation and among responses. However, this metric cannot reflect the correlation between responses or constructs in the model. To evaluate these correlations, a more detailed data analysis is required.

Table 4. 3: Statistic descriptions

Indicators	No. of responses	Mean	Median	Observed min	Observed max	Standard deviation
DI1	521	3.516	4.000	1.000	5.000	1.086
DI2	521	3.512	4.000	1.000	5.000	1.166
DI3	521	3.474	3.000	1.000	5.000	1.096
DI4	521	3.434	3.000	1.000	5.000	1.113
DI5	521	3.520	4.000	1.000	5.000	1.157
EE1	521	3.390	3.000	1.000	5.000	1.147
EE2	521	3.363	3.000	1.000	5.000	1.158
EE3	521	3.338	3.000	1.000	5.000	1.181
EE4	521	3.315	3.000	1.000	5.000	1.169
ES1	521	3.324	3.000	1.000	5.000	0.982
ES2	521	3.303	3.000	1.000	5.000	0.999
ES3	521	3.363	3.000	1.000	5.000	0.999
EWOM1	521	3.415	3.000	1.000	5.000	1.032
EWOM2	521	3.428	3.000	1.000	5.000	1.082
EWOM3	521	3.342	3.000	1.000	5.000	1.032
EWOM4	521	3.357	3.000	1.000	5.000	1.057
EWOM5	521	3.422	3.000	1.000	5.000	0.987
EWOM6	521	3.440	3.000	1.000	5.000	1.017
LOYL1	521	3.493	4.000	1.000	5.000	1.088
LOYL2	521	3.476	4.000	1.000	5.000	1.101
LOYL3	521	3.503	4.000	1.000	5.000	1.070
PSA1	521	3.455	4.000	1.000	5.000	1.094
PSA2	521	3.489	4.000	1.000	5.000	1.031
PSA3	521	3.432	4.000	1.000	5.000	1.060
PSB1	521	3.720	4.000	2.000	5.000	1.002
PSB2	521	3.687	4.000	1.000	5.000	1.009
PSB3	521	3.739	4.000	1.000	5.000	0.968
SMIA1	521	3.436	4.000	1.000	5.000	1.100
SMIA2	521	3.482	3.000	1.000	5.000	1.028
SMIA3	521	3.415	4.000	1.000	5.000	1.059
SMIB1	521	3.722	4.000	2.000	5.000	1.000
SMIB2	521	3.687	4.000	1.000	5.000	1.009
SMIB3	521	3.741	4.000	1.000	5.000	0.968

Source: The Author's works

4.2.2 Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is performed in this study to examine the relationships between the observed variables collected via the questionnaire and the latent variables they indicate or manifest in the theoretical model. Furthermore, several CFAs are run to compare the baseline model with alternative models and to ensure distinctiveness of the original variables. The baseline model includes all factors from the theoretical model, namely: Ecotourism Experience (EE), Ecotourism Satisfaction (ES), Destination Image (DI), Prosocial Behaviour Before the Trip (PSB), Prosocial Behaviour After the Trip (PSA), ecotourism loyalty (LOYL) and e-WOM consumption. Alternative models are constructed with two or more latent variables combined into one factor. The models are compared based on the reported Chi-square statistic, Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) and Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) (Table 4.4)

4.2.3 Data bias controlling

Since all observed variables have been collected using the same technique, namely an online questionnaire, the common method bias could emerge, which is responsible for the common method variance (CMV). This implies that some responses could be affected by the familiarity of the respondents with online forms, the quality and stability of the Internet connection, and presentation of the response choices. The latter could also produce the bias associated with the tendency of respondents to pick the option in the centre rather than on extreme points. This avoidance of extremes by the surveyed people was documented in both recent and older empirical studies. Even though Harman's single factor test is one of the oldest tools used to detect CMV, its validity has been questioned (Jakobsen & Jensen, 2015), and CFA marker is argued to be a stronger technique to test CMV (Schaller et al., 2015). Therefore, the latter approach was adopted in this study. The inclusion of a marker variable in CFA, which theoretically should not be related to other latent variables, resulted in a good fit.

Table 4. 4: Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Model	chi-sq	df	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR
EE, ES, DI, PSB, SMIB, LOYL, PSA, SMIA, EWOM, CMV	976.696	377	0.902	0.887	0.055	0.039
EE, ES, DI, PSB, SMIB, LOYL, PSA, SMIA, EWOM	863.422	304	0.907	0.892	0.061	0.041
EE+ES, DI+PSB+SMIB, LOYL+PSA+SMIA, EWOM	1858.119	318	0.732	0.705	0.096	0.078
EE, ES+DI, PSB+SMIB+LOYL, PSA+SMIA+EWOM	2272.725	318	0.660	0.625	0.109	0.114

Model	chi-sq	df	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR
EE+ES+DI, PSB+SMIB+LOYL+PSA+SMIA, EWOM	2346.738	321	0.648	0.615	0.110	0.096
EE, ES+DI+PSB+SMIB, LOYL+PSA+SMIA+EWOM	2514.031	321	0.619	0.583	0.115	0.103
EE+ES+DI+PSB+SMIB, LOYL+PSA+SMIA+EWOM	2856.912	323	0.560	0.522	0.123	0.108
EE+ES+DI, PSB+SMIB+LOYL+PSA+SMIA+EWOM	2756.341	323	0.577	0.541	0.120	0.105
EE+ES+DI+PSB+SMIB+ LOYL+PSA+SMIA+EWOM	3219.347	324	0.515	0.474	0.131	0.110

Source: The author's works

The best fit is demonstrated by the original model with all factors (chi-sq = 863.422, df = 304, CFI = .907, TLI = .892, RMSEA = .061, SRMR = .041). This implies that the variables used in the research are distinguishable. The results also show that CMV was not a significant issue in measuring the variables. This conclusion is also supported by simulations ran by (Fuller et al., 2016), who showed that CMV should be substantially high in order to threaten the validity of results in SEM, where observed variables are measured on the Likert scale. Thus, even if some CMV is present, it can be tolerated.

4.2.4 Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

A full correlation matrix with descriptive statistics that can be used by future researchers to replicate the results are reported in Table 4.5. The table provides the mean, the standard deviation (SD) and correlation coefficients between the observed variables and control variables, which represent the background information on ecotourists such as their age, gender (0 = female; 1 = male), at the number of times they visited the same destination, and frequency of checking SM daily ranging from never (0) to 10 times and more.

Table 4. 5: Descriptive statistics and correlations

	α	Mean	SD	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Age (1)		40.082	14.006		-.036	-.030	-.484**	-.007	.044	-.007	.019	-.018	-.012	-.004	-.007	-.013
Gender (2)		.422	.494	-.0360		.028	.112*	-.013	.003	.005	-.086*	-.054	.008	-.015	-.016	-.089
Times Visited (3)		1.614	1.252	-.0300	.0280		.072	-.013	-.028	.008	-.085	-.004	-.026	-.060	-.087	-.02
Frequency (4)		6.840	6.024	-.484**	.112*	.072		-.029	-.044	-.049	-.043	.017	-.017	.038	0.21	0.23
EE (5)	.793	3.351	.914	-.007	-.0130	-.013	-.029		.383**	.376**	.263**	.258**	.300**	.303**	.247**	.302**
ES (6)	.725	3.330	.798	.0440	.003	-.028	-.044	.383**		.307**	.270**	.307**	.625**	.341**	.521**	.309**
DI (7)	.812	3.491	.85	-.007	.005	.008	-.049	.376**	.307**		.465**	.326**	.268**	.377**	.389**	.514**
PSB (8)	.799	3.720	.834	.0190	-.086*	-.085	-.043	.263**	.270**	.465**		.286**	.286**	.587**	.589*	.413
SMIB (9)	.756	3.354	.841	0.108	-.075*	-.091	-.038	.276**	.298**	.423**	.312**		.211**	.041	.588	.311**
EINT (10)	.823	3.490	.934	-.0180	-.054	-.004	.017	.258**	.307**	.326**	.286**	.388**		.413**	.328**	.567*
PSA (11)	.824	3.447	.915	-.0120	.008	-.026	-.017	.300**	.625**	.268**	.286**	.413**	.294**		.279*	.489**
SMIA (12)	.821	3.512	.834	-.0131	.009	-.0256	-.021	.315*	.711**	.195*	.469**	.319*	.612**	.366*		.451**
EWOM (13)	.855	3.400	.788	-.004	-.015	-.060	.038	.303**	.341**	.377**	.587**	.328**	.294**	.217**	.341**	

Notes: N = 521; ** significant at 1%; * significant at 5%; † significant at 10%. Bootstrap samples: 50000; CI: 95% Confidence Interval. EE: Ecotourism Experience; EWOM: EWOM consumption; DI: Destination Image; ES: Ecotourism Satisfaction; EINT: EWOM Intention; PSB: Prosocial Behavior before the trip; PSA: Prosocial Behavior after the trip, SMIB: social media influence before the trip, SMIA: social influence after the trip.

4.2.5 Evaluating measurement models

Based all the figures in Table 4.6, internal loadings for all indicators vary from 0.705 to 0.868, which is considerably higher than the criterion of 0.70, and average variance extracted (AVE) values for the constructs range from 0.570 to 0.744, which is substantially higher than the threshold of 0.5. (Hair et al., 2017; 2019). Furthermore, the findings show that the model's internal consistency is reliable when the Composite reliability values, Cronbach's alpha, and rho-A are within the stated criteria of 0.845 to 0.897, 0.725 to 0.855, and 0.725 to 0.862, respectively (Hair et al., 2019).

Table 4. 6: Consistency reliability and Convergent validity

Constructs and Relevant Indicators		Convergent validity		Internal consistency reliability		
		Loadings ≥0.70	AVE >0.50	Composite Reliability 0.60 - 0.95	Cronbach's Alpha 0.60-0.95	Rho_A 0.70-0.95
Destination image (DI)	DI1	0.764	0.570	0.869	0.812	0.818
	DI2	0.769				
	DI3	0.741				
	DI4	0.720				
	DI5	0.781				
Ecotourism Experience (EE)	EE1	0.832	0.614	0.864	0.793	0.810
	EE2	0.705				
	EE3	0.809				
	EE4	0.784				
Ecotourism Satisfaction (ES)	ES1	0.800	0.645	0.845	0.725	0.725
	ES2	0.822				
	ES3	0.788				
Electronic-Word-of-mouth (EWOM)	EWOM1	0.734	0.579	0.892	0.855	0.862
	EWOM2	0.754				
	EWOM3	0.730				
	EWOM4	0.844				
	EWOM5	0.745				
	EWOM6	0.753				
Ecotourism loyalty	LOYL1	0.849	0.738	0.894	0.823	0.826
	LOYL2	0.860				
	LOYL3	0.868				
Prosocial Behaviour After the Trip (PSA)	PSA1	0.855	0.742	0.896	0.826	0.827
	PSA2	0.865				
	PSA3	0.864				
Prosocial Behaviour Before the Trip (PSB)	PSB1	0.841	0.718	0.884	0.804	0.805
	PSB2	0.854				
	PSB3	0.847				
	SMIA1	0.855	0.744	0.897	0.828	0.828

Constructs and Relevant Indicators		Convergent validity		Internal consistency reliability		
		<i>Loadings</i> ≥0.70	<i>AVE</i> >0.50	<i>Composite Reliability</i> 0.60 - 0.95	<i>Cronbach's Alpha</i> 0.60-0.95	<i>Rho_A</i> 0.70-0.95
Social media influence after the trip (SMIA)	SMIA2	0.867				
	SMIA3	0.866				
Social media influence before the trip (SMIB)	SMIB1	0.841	0.714	0.882	0.800	0.801
	SMIB2	0.849				
	SMIB3	0.845				

Source: The author's works (computed by SmartPLS)

Furthermore, the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) is utilized to assess the model's discriminant validity. All of the figures in Table 4.7 are less than 0.9, indicating that the discriminant validity of the measurement models has been double validated (Hair et al., 2017). As a result, the measurement models may be considered verified.

Table 4. 71: Discriminant validity (HTMT)

Constructs	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
DI (1)													
EE (2)	0.468												
ES (3)	0.399	0.505											
EWOM (4)	0.451	0.367	0.434										
LOYL (5)	0.399	0.321	0.399	0.392									
PSA (6)	0.321	0.357	0.800	0.347	0.485								
PSB (7)	0.562	0.328	0.341	0.694	0.359	0.348							
SMIA (8)	0.324	0.364	0.801	0.354	0.497	0.885	0.348						
SMIB (9)	0.585	0.323	0.356	0.711	0.350	0.358	0.819	0.350					
SMIA*ES (10)	0.019	0.051	0.040	0.061	0.168	0.045	0.051	0.039	0.048				
SMIB*EWOM (11)	0.039	0.066	0.056	0.295	0.107	0.131	0.305	0.123	0.325	0.022			
PSB*EWOM (12)	0.046	0.069	0.059	0.276	0.094	0.136	0.319	0.117	0.302	0.045	0.855		
PSA*ES (13)	0.016	0.051	0.038	0.049	0.174	0.046	0.052	0.043	0.059	0.890	0.036	0.033	

Source: The author's works (computed by SmartPLS)

4.2.6 Evaluation of Structural Model and Hypothesis Testing

The process of evaluating the structural model and testing the research hypotheses is based on the figures presented in Table 4.8.

Table 4. 82: Suitability and predictive relevance of the model

Metrics		Estimated Model	Remarks
Root mean square residual covariance (RMS_{theta})		0.111	A well-fitting model
Path coefficients (β)	eWOM → DI	0.130	Positive
	EE → DI	0.255	Positive
	DI → ES	0.310	Positive
	ES → LOYL	0.095	Positive
	PSB*eWOM → DI	0.174	Positive
	PSA*ES → LOYL	0.262	Positive
	SMIB*eWOM → DI	0.045	Positive
	SMIA*ES → LOYL	0.112	Positive
Coefficient of determination (R²)	DI	0.42	Moderate
	ES	0.45	Moderate
	LOYL	0.46	Moderate
f² effect size	eWOM → DI	0.026	Small effect
	EE → DI	0.086	Small effect
	DI → ES	0.106	Small effect
	ES → LOYL	0.070	Small effect
	PSB*eWOM → DI	0.033	Small effect
	PSA*ES → LOYL	0.021	Small effect
	SMIB*eWOM → DI	0.024	Small effect
	SMIA*ES → LOYL	0.031	Small effect
Predictive relevance (Q²)	DI	0.288	Medium
	ES	0.111	Small
	LOYL	0.161	Small
q² effect size	DI → ES	0.077	Small
	DI → LOYL	0.024	Small
	ES → LOYL	0.058	Small

Source: The author's works

Therefore, the estimated model based on the thesis results is depicted as Figure 4.1

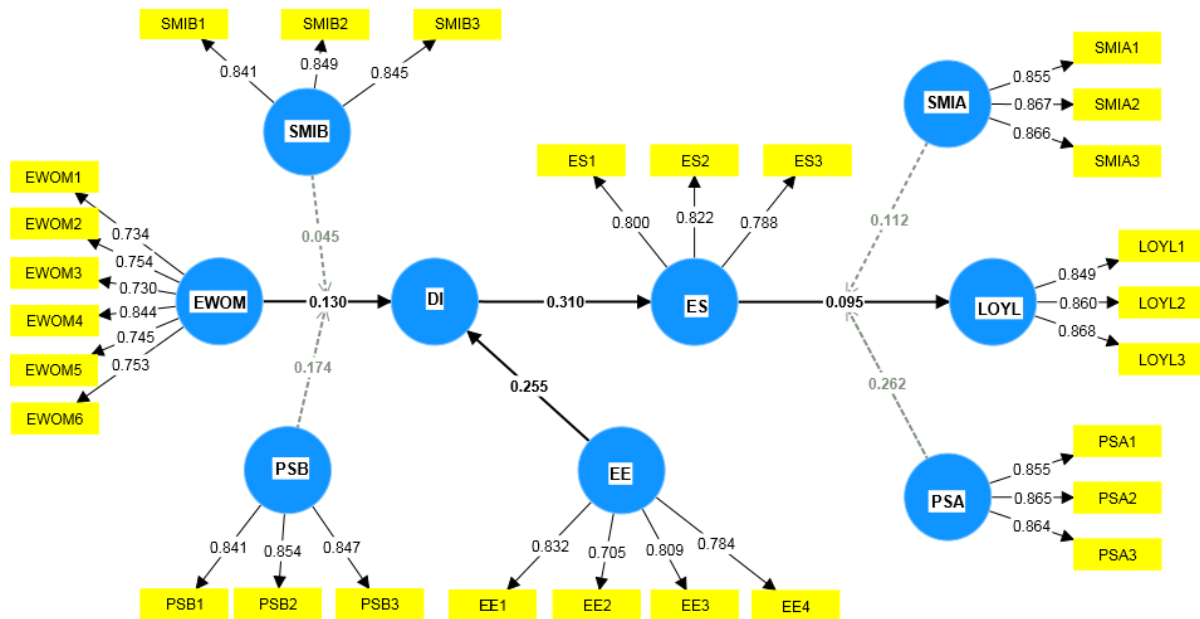


Figure 4. 1: The estimated model with moderator PSB, PSA, SMIB, SMIA

Source: The author's works

The bootstrapping approach will be used as the foundation for significance testing to determine if predictors substantially impact target constructs in conceptual models (Hair et al., 2017). In this study, the bootstrapping approach is used using 5,000 samples at a significance level of 5%, as advised by Hair et al. (2017), with SmartPLS assistance. The results are summarized in Table 4.9.

Table 4. 9: Summary of Hypothesis testing

	Hypothesis	f ²	Original sample	Sample mean	p-value	Remarks
H1	eWOM → DI	0.026	0.130	0.132	0.003	Support
H2	EE → DI	0.086	0.255	0.257	0.000	Support
H3	DI → ES	0.106	0.310	0.312	0.000	Support
H4	ES → LOYL	0.070	0.095	0.097	0.000	Support
H5	PSB*eWOM → DI	0.033	0.174	0.109	0.002	Support
H6	PSA*ES → LOYL	0.021	0.262	0.211	0.000	Support
H7	SMIB*eWOM → DI	0.024	0.045	0.109	0.000	Support
H8	SMIA*ES → LOYL	0.031	0.112	0.106	0.002	Support

Source: The author's works

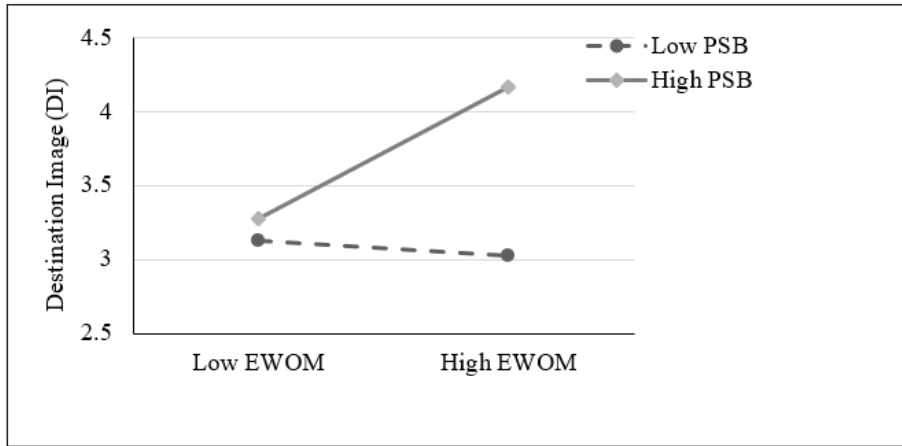


Figure 4.2. a: Moderation of PSB on the DI-EWOM relationship

Source: The author's works

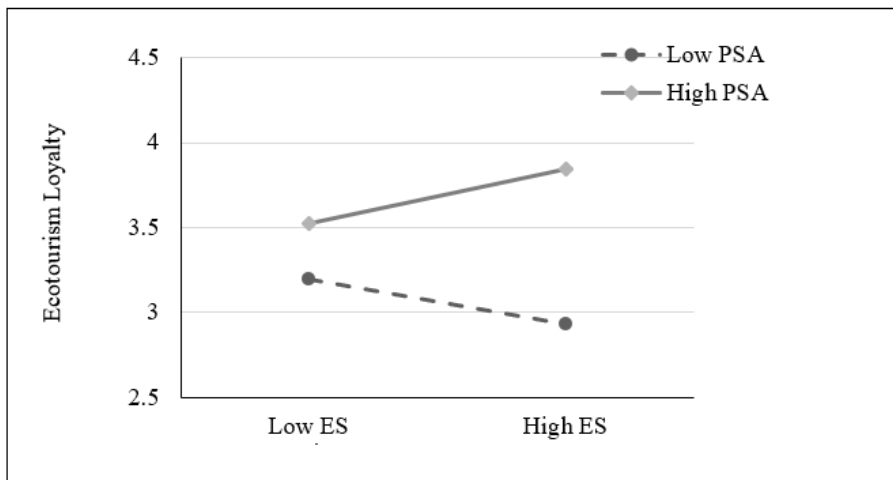


Figure 4.2. b: Moderation of PSA on the ES-LOYL relationship

Source: The author's works

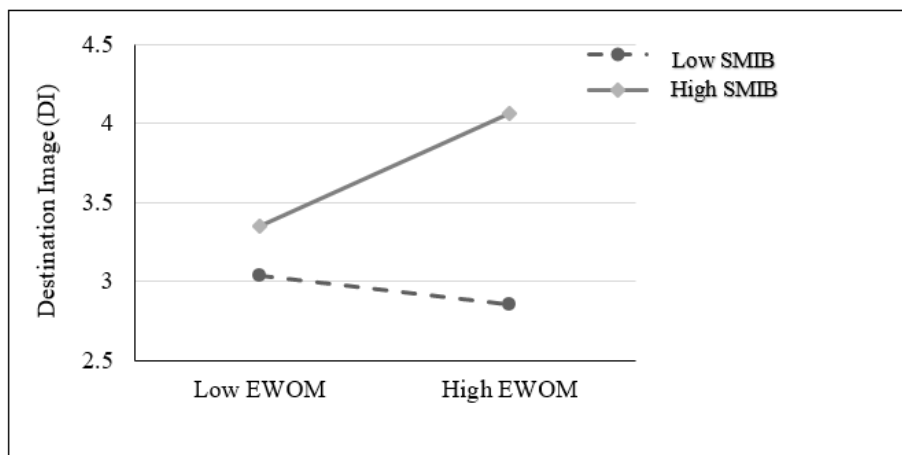


Figure 4.2. c: Moderation of SMIB on the DI-EWOM relationship

Source: The author's works

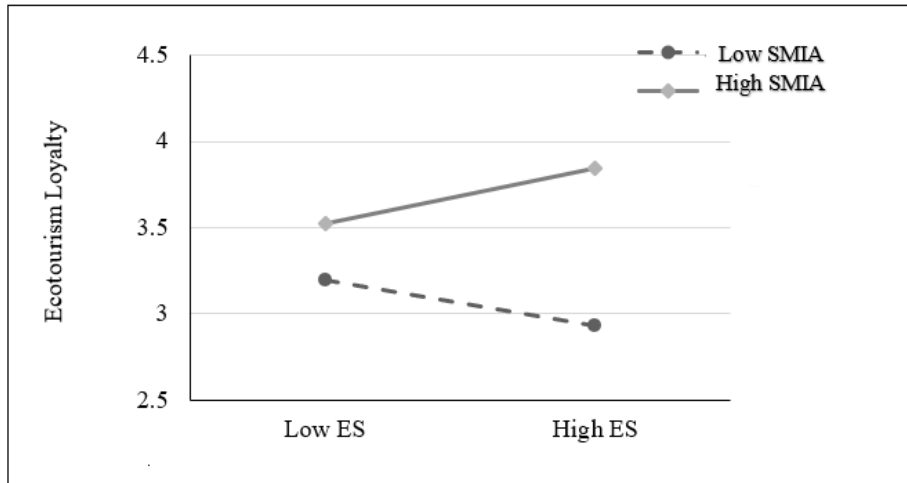


Figure 4.2. d: Moderation of SMIA on the ES-LOYL relationship

Source: The author's works

The results show that the interaction between e-WOM and prosocial behavior before the trip/social media influence before the trip influence significantly and positively destination image, especially prosocial behavior before the trip/social media influence before the trip at average and high levels.

The results show that the interaction between ecotourist satisfaction and prosocial behavior after the trip/social media influence after the trip influence significantly and positively ecotourism loyalty, especially prosocial behavior after the trip/social media influence after the trip at average and high levels.

5. DISCUSSIONS

This research aims to investigate the relationship between e-WOM consumption and ecotourism loyalty with the moderation effect of prosocial behaviour and social media influence. These findings are highlighted and discussed with respect to the three research questions as follows:

RQ1: How and why does e-WOM consumption affect the ecotourism loyalty?

RQ2: Do prosocial behaviour moderate the relationship between e-WOM consumption and ecotourism loyalty?

RQ3: Do social media influence moderate the relationship between e-WOM consumption and ecotourism loyalty?

5.1 The role of e-WOM in shaping ecotourism loyalty (RQ1)

Hypothesis 1 positing that there is a direct effect of e-WOM on destination image, and the results support this hypothesis. This result is consistent with previous studies (Abubakar et al., 2017). Building confidence in the image of the destination is possible via the use of a positive e-wom statement. A traveler who has already visited the location and had personal experience there might serve as a reference when providing details about it to other people who are considering going there. Because it is likely to assist destination managers in developing a good image of the location and, more importantly, because it will enhance visitors' intents to travel, the influence of e-WOM on the choice of a tourism destination is substantial.

It is helpful for managers of destinations to have an understanding of the many types of activities that seem to be likely to produce in good e-WOM. The pleasant experiences that travelers have with the facilities, services, and other resources that are given by tourism locations might lead to return visits and could also spread favorable electronic word of mouth about the place among travellers. In point of fact, suggestions derived from prior trips might be considered the most dependable information sources for future visitors to consult. For visitors who are interested in traveling, suggestions to other individuals in online settings are one of the most significant pieces of information that they may get. When tourists have a positive travel experience that is punctuated by the provision of high-quality services by the destination, it inspires them to exhibit prosocial behaviour towards to the desired location and creates a psychological tension within the tourists that compels them to share their positive experiences with other individuals in an online setting. It is important for those in charge of managing a destination to bear in mind the connection between delivering a nice experience for tourists and the creation of a favorable image in the minds of those who have never been there. Additionally, managers are able to construct online tourist communities. The community section of a tourist website is the primary location where visitors may meet and share information inside virtual settings. Within this

section, passengers are allowed to discuss their own travel experiences, as well as the quality of service provided by restaurants and hotels. The e-WOM information that is spread across the community is distinct from the propagation that is done by tourism businesses. It is characterized by information flow in both directions as well as the absence of any kind of financial incentive (Zhu & Lai, 2009). Therefore, the spread of e-WOM has a greater effect on the decisions that travelers make than does the promotion of tourism enterprises. The website of a tourism company should develop a community for travelers to share their experiences in an easy-to-access forum, and it should also encourage the enterprise's spread via electronic word of mouth. It is the responsibility of management of destinations to make an effort to engage visitors in conversation within the destination's online community. When the number of reviews left by visitors on a location is large, more information about that location will be spread among prospective tourists. As a consequence, the likelihood of tourists selecting that location will rise when the volume of reviews left by tourists is high. However, at the moment, there is not a lot of activity with passengers publishing their thoughts on tourist blogs and review websites. Therefore, those in charge of a place should do everything in their power to encourage tourists to write evaluations of their experiences there. For instance, locations may provide community members with incentives in exchange for the publication of tourist reviews or the creation of blogs by those individuals (Zhu & Lai, 2009). In addition, the qualities of an online travel community, such as its practicality and user-friendliness, could also contribute to the development of a more upbeat attitude toward tourism. Tourists should be encouraged to take part in travel site communities by having management promote the advantages of taking part in these communities and enabling customers to recognize the value of participation. This would drive tourists to participate in online travel communities. According to Casalo et al. (2008), ease-of-use is positively correlated with improved knowledge of both the information and the framework of the community, in addition to providing users with a more pleasant environment. Managers may also choose to monitor the amount of electronic word-of-mouth in order to assess the reputation of a tourist site and the tourists' perceptions of the location based on the nature of online reviews. The management of a tourist site may consciously shape the image of the location in order to boost the services they provide. In addition, managers need a deeper comprehension of the process of image formation and the factors that influence it. Managers of destinations are able to conduct an analysis of the feedback received and sort it into many categories, including structural and social ecosystem, environment, local habitat, and cultural environment. Quantitative methods allow for the evaluation of one's level of contentment with certain aspects. Counting the number of good or negative adjectives that users have used is one way to quantify reviews, whether they are favorable or negative overall. There is a possibility that the review website will also give geographic and demographic information that may be useful. It is

possible to build a continuous tourist stream in the location by working conscientiously with such destination choice evaluation. Because of the significant beneficial impact that e-WOM may have on perceptual and cognitive assessments when it serves as an essential information source for visitors, destinations should investigate strategies to encourage tourists to utilize e-WOM.

Hypothesis 2 indicated that destination image is impacted by tourist experience, which is similar with the findings of earlier research (Smith et al., 2015). In addition, in the context of present-day ecotourism, acting, enjoyable education, and emotional experience were significant factors in shaping both the essential element and the holistic aspects of destination image. The picture of the place was affected in a variety of ways by the three aspects of the encounter. The amount of effect that acting and having fun while learning had on both dimensions of destination image was substantially more than that of emotional experience. The theory of destination image construction might provide an explanation for these findings. According to this theory, information sources are essential components in the process of creating a picture of a destination (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). Conditions that are put up by various types of information at various stages of an event, such as secondary research just before vacation and fundamental sources of info after a journey, impact the picture that people have of a location. Through acting (such as guided walks through into the rock formations) and fun acquiring knowledge (such as an interpretation of the natural surroundings), vacationers received considerable information about the natural environment (such as rock formation) and the destination (such as its history). This allowed for the development of a feasible and complex destination image that was distinct from the prior trip image (Phelps, 1986).

Hypothesis 3 indicated that destination image positively effect ecotourist satisfaction. According to a number of studies, a positive image is directly correlated to increased levels of visitor (Adam, 2021; Boo & Busser, 2018; Cong, 2021). In turn, the appraisal of the experience provided by the destination has an effect on the perception that visitors have of the location According to the findings of PH et al. (2011)the relationship between image and satisfaction should go as follows: image > quality > satisfaction. In other words, tourists' perceptions of a destination's quality are influenced by its image, with a more favorable image equating to greater levels of perceived quality. The satisfaction level of the tourist is directly proportional to their perception of the destination's quality. In today's highly competitive travel industry, it is more challenging for marketers to entice tourists. Tourists have several choices for fulfilling their travel demands; thus, it is crucial that locations evaluate tourists' satisfaction. Managers and marketers must also grasp how to boost the destination image over time.

According to hypothesis 4, visitors were more inclined to stick to the ecotourism tourism category as opposed to a particular ecotourism location. This may be due to the fact that many tourists are interested in experiencing new things throughout

their travels. Previous research (Rivera & Croes, 2010) that questioned the usefulness of the concept of destination loyalty and suggested loyalty to a travel form as an alternative to destination loyalty was confirmed by these results. The results also suggested that destination loyalty could be replaced with loyalty to a travel form. Again, the findings of Kim's (2018) study provide credence to the hypothesis that tourism experience has an indirect influence on customer loyalty through the destination's image and level of satisfaction. Previous research that examined the influence that experience and image had on tourist behavior through the experience-satisfaction-loyalty chain (Quadri-Felitti & Fiore, 2013) and through the image-satisfaction-loyalty chain (Gallarza & Saura, 2006).

Satisfaction was the factor that had the most impact on ecotourism loyalty. This supported certain similar consumer theories that imply consumers' favorable opinion of a brand might lead to the buying of other businesses in the same group (Libai et al., 2009). These theories show that customers' valuable feature of a brand can lead to cross-brand shopping. People's positive experiences, satisfaction, and a desirable comprehensive destination image impacted their desire to visit other ecotourism destinations, which suggests that participants were 'soft' tourists rather than 'hard' tourists in terms of their commitment to the environment (Lee et al., 2013).

5.2 The moderating role of prosocial behaviour (RQ2)

According to Hypothesis 5, finding the information of prosocial behaviour of local residents before the trip moderates the relationship between e-WOM and destination image. This hypothesis was tested by creating an interaction term between EWOM and PSB and regressing DI on this interaction and the rest of the control and independent variables as shown in Table 4.8. The results support Hypothesis 5, with the interaction term revealing a statistically significant positive association with destination image in Vietnam. The detected moderating effect implies that the relationship between e-WOM and destination image becomes stronger when tourists look for information on prosocial behaviour of residents.

Hypothesis 6 suggests that when tourists have experienced prosocial behaviour of locals, this behaviour will moderate the relationship between the tourist satisfaction and the tourist intention to spread e-WOM about the trip. This hypothesis was tested by regressing EINT on the interaction between PSA and ES along with the rest of the independent and control variables reported in Table 4.8. The coefficient for the interaction term was positive and statistically significant at the 5% level. This can be explained by the assumption that international tourists might perceive local people in Vietnam friendly, and even though the facilities and infrastructure could be less attractive in Vietnam, the attitude of the locals attracts more tourists and makes them more willing to spread e-WOM. Both results support Hypothesis 6. This finding means that tourist

satisfaction will result in a stronger intention to spread e-WOM about the destination if the tourist experienced positive prosocial behaviour of the locals who offered help or aided with information than if the satisfaction derived solely from experience without prosocial behaviour of the residents.

5.3 The moderating role of social media influence (RQ3)

The research validated hypotheses 7 and 8 on the moderating effects of social media impact on the links between e-WOM and destination image, as well as between visitor satisfaction and ecotourism loyalty. There is a considerable positive relationship between motivation and destination image at high levels of social media impact. There is no substantial association between e-WOM and destination image at low levels of social media impact, indicating that social media plays a major role in forming the destination image in the minds of visitors before they go. Similarly, at high levels of social media impact, there is a considerable positive relationship between visitor pleasure and ecotourism loyalty. The association between visitor happiness and loyalty is insignificant at low levels of social media impact. This phenomena may be explained by travelers' usage of social media to suggest locations, as well as the significant influence that likes and comments on social media have in tourist choices to return to a location. This implies that visitors in Vietnam are more influenced by social media, and their destination image is primarily molded by the social media they consult before to their journey. Furthermore, ecotourists in Vietnam grow devoted to the place when they are both happy and get great comments on social media. The key conclusion is that social media influence is more essential as a source of information to pick an ecotourism location in Vietnam, and social media influence is more important as a tool for value expressions rather than a source of information.

6. CONTRIBUTION

6.1 Theoretical contributions

This research, which was based on ECT, investigated the association between e-WOM before and after the trip, as well as the moderating influence of prosocial conduct via the lens of a case study centered on Vietnam. In particular, the findings confirmed that actual experience does not directly influence tourist satisfaction; rather, it is the disparity between expectations and actual experience that determines satisfaction and ultimate e-WOM intentions in Vietnam. These expectations are evidenced in the destination image. This conclusion lends credence to some of the earlier assertions made by (Lee & Kim, 2020), but it also casts doubt on the idea that visitor happiness is entirely dependent on the quality of their experiences, an idea that has been supported by a number of research in the past (Petrick et al., 2001).

Additionally, ECT was extended in a different direction. This research related visitor happiness to a concept of loyalty that was represented by the e-WOM intents of visitors. Rather than taking visitor satisfaction as the ultimate endogenous variable, this study used a different approach. As a consequence of this finding, the final theoretical framework establishes a connection between the consumption of e-WOM before to the trip and the post-trip intentions towards e-WOM. Some of the earlier research made an effort to investigate either the impacts of satisfied tourists on the spread of word of mouth (Wang et al., 2017) or the contribution of e-WOM consumption to the development of the destination (Jalilvand & Heidari, 2017). The fact that no research were able to properly merge these two concepts into a single holistic framework is something that may be explained by the challenges associated with organising panel polls with the same sample of vacationers. This research was able to accomplish such a combination thanks to the assistance of tour operators, and the expansion of ECT led to the creation of a comprehensive framework for e-WOM that was applied to the context of ecotourism, which led to an addition to the existing body of literature.

This research makes a significant theoretical contribution by demonstrating that the prosocial behavior of local people moderates the links between e-WOM and destination image as well as between satisfaction and e-WOM goals. This finding is the study's primary theoretical contribution. This moderating impact was not investigated in any of the other trials, which demonstrates that ECT may be used in even more contexts. Previous research (Meimand et al., 2017), on the other hand, solely focused on the perspectives of locals about visitors and the behavior of tourists, while ignoring the viewpoint of tourists. In addition, despite the fact that this study is in agreement with the prior evidence that greater satisfaction leads to greater loyalty of tourists (Mirzaalian & Halpenny, 2021), it has discovered an additional trigger that makes tourists more willing to spread positive e-WOM about the visited destination, and this trigger is the prosocial behavior of the locals. This study found that tourists were more willing to spread positive e-WOM about the visited destination when locals displayed prosocial. If this trigger wasn't there, then happy visitors would post good remarks about the location a little bit less often.

This study confirmed, in accordance with the Expectation Confirmation Theory, that the attitudes of ecotourists toward the destination, as reflected in the affective destination image, have a significant impact on the ecotourists' intentions to return to the destination as well as their intentions to recommend the destination, both of which have been considered to be components of ecotourism loyalty. This association was mediated by tourists' feelings of contentment, an aspect that was often ignored in earlier research that directly related destination image to loyalty (Xu et al., 2021). This research found that the effect of social media also considerably moderates the link between visitor pleasure and their loyalty, which highlights the multifaceted and intricate nature of this relationship.

There is an abundance of academic study on the image of a place before a trip, but there is a dearth of information about how ecotourists interpret the image of a destination after they have been. In order to fill this gap, the current study concentrated on the post-trip destination image and showed that, in contrast to previous studies that had found an effect of tourist experience on the formation of the cognitive destination image (Suntikul, 2017), the relationship is much more complicated. According to Li et al. (2021), not only does the experience form the destination image, but it also influences the level of pleasure that a visitor has, and the two are connected to one another. Even while there is evidence of direct impacts that visitor experience has on satisfaction, there is also evidence that the image of the location partially mediates this effect. Previous research that was based on the cognitive-affective-conative theory had a tendency to ignore the indirect effects that were investigated in this research (Yuksel et al., 2010).

In accordance with the findings of Al-Adamat et al. (2020), this research discovered that the impact of social media contributed to the process of shaping the image that visitors have of a location. In addition, the ECT has been improved as a result of this research thanks to the addition of the moderating influence of social media on the connection between satisfied tourists and loyal visitors to a certain location. Important differences were found when comparing the two groups' responses, which suggested that ecotourists in Vietnam use social media as a source of information when selecting a destination, and that they primarily use social media as an expression mechanism to share their reaction and receive feedback.

6.2 Practical contribution

In addition to the contributions to theory that this work has produced, there are also implications for practice that can be drawn from it. Positive e-WOM that is distributed by travelers is essential for the success of tour operators, hotels, and other local businesses since it will encourage more people to go to the region. In addition to this, consumers who want to spread good word-of-mouth through e-WOM are also more likely to return to the location on many occasions. Reviews, comments, and suggestions that are positive help to increase interest in ecotourism locations, which in turn may have an effect on the income of the companies that are affiliated with such locations. According to the findings of this research, the image of a place and the level of satisfaction experienced by visitors are key factors that influence e-WOM intentions. Therefore, in order to allow a broader spread of good word-of-mouth from ecotourists who visit the region, tour operators should strive toward developing a favorable image of the place. The findings of the research also shown that one of the significant contributing elements is the altruistic behavior of the local people, which helps to mediate the link between satisfied tourists and their intents to spread positive word of mouth online. It is advised that local companies in the hospitality and tourism industries work to improve their customer service and provide more

assistance to visitors who are in the area in order to facilitate the spread of e-WOM. This will not only have benefits in the short term but also long-term implications, which can be seen in the continued rise of the number of visitors visiting the place in the future. This discovery also has repercussions for organizations that are not-for-profit, such as regional governments, who are interested in increasing the number of ecotourists that visit their region. It is strongly suggested that these organizations have active social media presence in order to assist the quicker transmission of e-WOM. This tip is also applicable to enterprises in the hospitality and tourism industries, such as travel agencies and hotels. It is also advised that these later entities develop informational portals for ecotourists. These portals should assist ecotourists in navigating the region, locating points of interest, and finding information in several languages.

The results of this research show that ecotourists' impressions of a location as a pleasant and interesting place to visit are greatly influenced by the aesthetic, escapist, and educational components of the tourist experience. It is thus advised that marketers emphasize not only the environment and gorgeous landscape of the site but also the fact that this destination is ideal for outdoor activities such as hiking in order to attract a greater number of people who are interested in ecotourism to this location.

It was discovered that the image of the destination had a beneficial impact on the customer's overall contentment. However, the level of satisfaction with the quality of services provided was shown to have a much greater influence on intentions to promote the location and return, and this variable exhibited a larger loading when compared to other manifest factors. This suggests that tour operators and marketers at the location should focus on improving the quality of services in order to gain clients' loyalty not just to ecotourism in general but also to the particular area in question. The practitioners should strike a balance between developing a picture of the destination that is both pleasant and green and thrilling by highlighting the image of excitement linked with outdoor activities and high-quality services.

It is recommended that tour operators actively engage with both their existing customers and potential customers on social network platforms. This is due to the fact that the influence of social media plays a significant role in both the formation of the destination image and the loyalty of ecotourism visitors. It is advised that in addition to providing information that is helpful, they comment on posts and images made by visitors and become more proactive in their social media interactions.

The outcomes of the research demonstrate how important it is to properly manage one's expectations from the point of view of expectation management.

When it comes to supplying misleading information on the location, managers need to use caution. In both travel planning and tourism management, there is a

potential downside to setting travelers up with unrealistic expectations. Dissatisfied clients may transform dissatisfaction into a source of bad influence via the use of social media, which is seen as a potent source of "word-of-mouth" communication. As a result, it is essential to effectively manage your social media accounts. In addition, the results of the research shed light on the significance of capitalizing on one's social impact from the point of view of social influence. The outcomes of the research underline the fact that the link between perception and satisfaction may be influenced by social influence. As a result, managers will likely be able to raise the level of customer satisfaction via appropriate management of information connected to social media. In addition, we discovered that there is no correlation between the number of friends a person has on social media and their level of social impact in their respective networks. The outcomes of the research, on the other hand, demonstrated that a person is susceptible to the effect of their social group (peers, friends, and family). As a result, those in charge of travel and tourism should take advantage of initiatives that target influencers.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 Conclusion of the thesis

This study confirmed, in accordance with the Expectation Confirmation Theory, that the attitudes of ecotourists toward the destination, as reflected in the affective destination image, have a significant impact on the ecotourists' intentions to return to the destination as well as their intentions to recommend the destination, both of which have been considered to be components of ecotourism loyalty. Specifically, this study confirmed that ecotourists' intentions to return to the destination and their intentions to recommend the destination are significantly influenced by This link was mediated by vacationers' general emotions of happiness, a feature that was often overlooked in prior studies that directly tied destination image to loyalty. This study demonstrated that the influence of social media and prosocial activity also significantly moderates the connection between visitor enjoyment and their loyalty, which underlines the diverse and nuanced nature of this relationship.

7.2 Limitation and future research

The limits of this study provide novel prospects for the conduct of further research in the relevant area. To begin, my research concentrated only on visitors who made their way to the Vietnam from other countries. In next studies, visitors from a variety of cultural backgrounds should be used to investigate how different types of travelers react in terms of their intents to spread positive word-of-mouth about ecotourism sites. Second, the holistic destination image was the primary emphasis of this research. In the context of ecotourism, one potential direction for further study would be to investigate the interrelationships between cognitive destination image qualities, emotional destination image attributes, and their respective interrelationships. Third, the scales used in this study were derived from those that had been created and verified in prior tourist research. It is proposed that in the future, research be conducted to build and evaluate new unique scales for assessing ecotourism experience and ecotourism image rather than destination image. This is because the field of ecotourism is becoming more popular. There is presently a shortage of these scales. On conclusion, the purpose of this research was to investigate the role that e-WOM intentions have in ecotourism loyalty. In further research, it is important to broaden the scope of this concept by include not just destination loyalty but also ecotourism loyalty, which is distinct from loyalty to a particular location. This will make it possible to differentiate between intents to disseminate e-WOM in respect to a certain location and intentions to promote a specific kind of sustainable tourism.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1A. Expert interviewees

	Name	Interviewing date	Position and Institution
1	Assoc. Prof. Vo Tan Thanh	3/4/2021 7/6/2021	Academic researcher at Excelia Business School, France
2	Dr. Nhat Tan Pham	3/4/2021 7/6/2021	Academic researcher at International University, Vietnam
3	Dr. Nguyen Thi Anh Hoa	5/4/2021 10/6/2021	Deputy Director of the City Tourism Department Ho Chi Minh City
4	Dr. Tran Duc Hai	7/4/2021 12/6/2021	Director of Hanoi Department of Tourism
5	Dr. Truong Thi Hong Hanh	10/5/2021 1/7/2021	Director of Danang Department of Tourism
6	Mr. Le Quang Duc	4/4/2021 2/7/2021	Tour manager of Vietravel company
7	Mr. Cao Ba Trong	6/4/2021 8/7/2021	Tour manager of Saigon Tourist company
8	Mrs. Le Ngoc Tram	2/4/2021 10/6/2021	Tour manager of Euro Travel company
9	Mr. Dinh Ngoc Minh	3/3/2021 5/5/2021	Tour manager of Hanoi Tourist company
10	Mrs. Le Thanh Anh	10/3/2021 16/5/2021	Tour manager of Ben Thanh Tourist company
11	Mr. Dao Duy Thong	4/4/2021 2/7/2021	Tour guide at Vietravel company
12	Mrs. Tran Minh Anh	4/4/2021 2/7/2021	Tour guide at Vietravel company
13	Mr. Nguyen Nhat Tien	4/4/2021 2/7/2021	Tour guide at Vietravel company
14	Mr. Cao Thai Hoc	6/4/2021 8/7/2021	Tour guide at Saigon Tourist company
15	Mr. Vo Quang Manh	6/4/2021 8/7/2021	Tour guide at Saigon Tourist company
16	Mr. Nguyen Tien Dung	6/4/2021 8/7/2021	Tour guide at Saigon Tourist company
17	Mr. Nguyen Van Hau	2/4/2021 10/6/2021	Tour guide at Euro Travel company
18	Mr. Tran Hai Nam	3/3/2021 5/5/2021	Tour guide at Hanoi Tourist company

	Name	Interviewing date	Position and Institution
19	Mrs. Nguyen Anh Tuyet	10/3/2021 16/5/2021	Tour guide at Ben Thanh Tourist company
20	Mr. Do Quang Vu	10/3/2021 16/5/2021	Tour guide at Ben Thanh Tourist company

APPENDIX 1B: Interview protocol

1. Introduction

Greetings in Vietnamese business etiquette, according to the culture of Vietnam. Provide information regarding the goal of the interview.

The researcher is obligated to keep the following commitments:

- maintain confidentiality for any and all information provided (answers recorded will be discarded after being transcribed)
- obtain approval from a higher authority before publishing data; and
- cause no harm to any individual or organization.

2. Introductory disclaimer & guidelines

- The criteria used to choose who would be interviewed (experience, position relating to the research area and objectives)
- Instructions on how to respond to the questions
- Valuable responses and contributions (with a 60 percent agreement rate) to be contributed to the research for the purpose of further learning and to be shared with your organization or store for the purpose of further improvement (if necessary or required)

3. Interview procedure

Interviewees will get the semi-structured interview process (with in format of questions and pertinent inquiries in Vietnamese and English) in order to provide them with a point of reference and allow them to prepare for the interview before it is carried out.

Interviewees are responsible for confirming their own appointments prior to the actual interview taking place.

How to conduct an interview:

- There will be no delay of more than one hour - The language spoken will be Vietnamese
- There are three different types of interviews: in-person, online using Google Meet or Microsoft Team, and telephone interviews
- Recoding: The process of having video or audio files transcribed by Nvivo; these files will be discarded as soon as the study project is complete.
- Authors are responsible for archiving the commitment letter after it has been signed or verified through email by shop managers.

4. Questionnaire

4.1 Interviewees' background

Your position and your company/department are:...

How long have you been working for this company/department?

How long have you been in this position?

What is your highest degree?

Please give a brief description of your tasks and responsibilities in the organization or department.

4.2 Question about ecotourist experience

In your opinion, which aspects of an ecotourist's experience during their travels are the most important to consider?

Do you have any thoughts about whether or whether there is anything else, in addition to the aspects such as activity, landscape, escaping, etc.? The reasoning for the proposition

Do you think the indicators below contribute to ecotourist experience and enhance ecotourist satisfaction, ecotourism loyalty?

- i. Activities during the trip, for example challenging or relaxing activities.
- ii. During their trip, tourists entirely removed themselves from their everyday lives.
- iii. The journey provided tourists with an experience that was visually interesting.
- iv. The shared experiences that tourists had on this journey helped strengthen their relationships with one another.
- v. If there is anything else, kindly provide it.

4.3 Question about destination image

In your opinion, which aspects of tourists' destination image during their travels are the most important to consider?

Do you think the indicators below contribute to destination image and enhance ecotourist satisfaction, ecotourism loyalty?

- i. This location is risk-free and safe to visit.
- ii. This location features destinations that are both intriguing and interesting to check out.
- iii. This location offers stunning vistas and a variety of exciting outdoor activities.
- iv. The weather in this location is really pleasant.
- v. This tourist site provides excellent value for the money.
- vi. If there is anything else, kindly provide it.

4.4 Question about e-WOM

Do you think the indicators below contribute to e-WOM consumption of tourist before the trip and help tourist in choosing destination?

- i. Travelers frequently peruse the internet travel evaluations written by other travelers in order to gain insight into which destinations leave a favorable impact on others.
- ii. Online travel reviews written by previous tourists are frequently perused by vacationers before making final decisions about where to go.
- iii. Online travel reviews written by previous vacationers are frequently used as a resource by travelers when deciding where to go.
- iv. Before traveling to a specific location, many tourists consult internet travel evaluations written by previous visitors in order to acquire relevant information.
- v. When tourists go to a destination without first reading evaluations written by other tourists online, they experience anxiety about the choice they have made.
- vi. When visitors go to a destination, the internet travel evaluations that other tourists have written about their experiences there give them confidence in traveling to the destination.
- vii. If there is anything else, kindly provide it.

4.5 Question about ecotourist satisfaction

Do you think the indicators below contribute to ecotourist satisfaction and enhance ecotourist ecotourism loyalty?

- i. The tourists are confident that going to the trip was the best decision they could have made.
- ii. Tourist have a positive impression of the trip in general.
- iii. Overall, tourists are satisfied with the trip
- iv. If there is anything else, kindly provide it.

4.6 Question about ecotourism loyalty

In your opinion, how do you define ecotourism loyalty?

In your opinion, how do you differentiate destination loyalty and ecotourism loyalty?

Do you think the indicators below contribute to ecotourist loyalty?

- i. The positive memories that tourists take away from the tour will be shared with others.
- ii. People that go on the tour will tell their friends and family about it.
- iii. In the not too distant future, tourists will return to the country and take part in the tour.
- iv. If there is anything else, kindly provide it.

4.7 Question about prosocial behaviour

Do you think the indicators below contribute to prosocial behaviour (before and after the trip)

- i. The people who live here hold foreign visitors in very great respect.
- ii. The locals of the area are more than happy to give travelers with information regarding the area.

- iii. When tourists are in need of assistance, the locals are more than happy to provide it to tourists.
- iv. If there is anything else, kindly provide it.

4.8 Question about social media influence before the trip

Do you think the indicators below contribute to social media influence before the trip?

- i. The use of social media by tourists allowed them to gain more detailed views and comments regarding this trip.
- ii. Tourists queried their pals on social networks about what to anticipate during their next vacation.
- iii. Tourists always look at what people have to say on social media about where they are going on vacation.
- iv. If there is anything else, kindly provide it.

4.9 Question about social media influence after the trip

- i. Friends and followers of the tourists left encouraging comments on the photographs they uploaded on social media during their journey.
- ii. The friends and followers of the vacationers enjoyed the images of their trip that they posted on social media while they were away.
- iii. Tourists earned the ideal number of likes and comments on their vacation photos on social media.
- iv. If there is anything else, kindly provide it.

I would want to express my gratitude to you for your assistance and participation in this interview.

APPENDIX 2A. Survey before the trip

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We are conducting research entitled “**Factors to enhance tourist’s ecotourism loyalty**” to identify the role of e-WOM on ecotourism loyalty. According to The International Ecotourism Society (TIES), ecotourism can be defined as “responsible travel to natural areas that conserve the environment, sustains the well-being of the local people, and involves interpretation and education”. Everyone who is above 18 years old is more than welcome to participate in this survey.

The whole process will take you approximately 8 to 10 minutes to complete. All the information provided will be completely confidential. The results will be analyzed for academic purposes only.

Thank you very much for your participation.

Section 1: Demographic information

Please provide your personal information by choosing the available answers.

1. Your age is

- 18-29 30-39 40-49 50-59 60+

2. Gender:

- Male Female

3. Education:

- No university degree

- Bachelor

- Master

- Doctoral

4. Income:

- Low income (less than \$15,000)

- Medium low (\$15,000-\$29,999)

- Medium income (\$30,000-\$54,999)

- Medium high (\$55,000 – \$79,999)

- High income (\$80,000 or above)

5. Have you ever been to this holiday destination?

Yes No

6. Have you ever been to ecotourism trips before?

Yes No

Section 2: e-WOM consumption before the trip

1. I often read other tourists' online travel reviews to know what destinations make good impressions on others

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral | |

2. To make sure I choose the right destination, I often read other tourists' online travel reviews

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral | |

3. I often consult other tourists' online travel reviews to help choose an attractive destination

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral | |

4. I frequently gather information from tourists' online travel reviews before I travel to a certain destination

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral | |

5. If I don't read tourists' online travel reviews when I travel to a destination, I worry about my decision

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral | |

6. When I travel to a destination, tourists' online travel reviews make me confident in traveling to the destination

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral | |

Section 3. Prosocial behaviour before the trip

1. I expect that the local residents treat me with high esteem.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral | |

2. I expect that the local residents are happy to provide local information to me.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral | |

3. I expect that the local residents are willing to offer help to me when needed.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral | |

Section 4. Social media influence before the trip

1. I used social media to obtain specific views and opinions about this trip

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral | |

2. I asked my friends on social networks about what to expect during this trip

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral | |

3. I typically check comments on social media about my holiday destination

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral | |

APPENDIX 2B. Survey after the trip

Section 5. Destination image

1. The destination is safe and secure

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree |

Neutral

2. This destination offers exciting and interesting places to visit

Strongly disagree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly agree

Neutral

3. This destination has a beautiful scenery and natural attractions

Strongly disagree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly agree

Neutral

4. This destination has a pleasant climate

Strongly disagree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly agree

Neutral

5. As a tourist destination, this place offers good value for money

Strongly disagree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly agree

Neutral

Section 6. Ecotourist experience

1. I really enjoyed the activities on this trip

Strongly disagree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly agree

Neutral

2. I completely escaped from reality on this trip

Strongly disagree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly agree

Neutral

3. My experience on this trip was visually interesting

Strongly disagree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly agree

Neutral

4. I increased my connection with others through my experience on this trip

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral | |

Section 7. Ecotourist satisfaction

1. I believe that I did the right thing in attending the trip

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral | |

2. On the whole, I am happy with the trip

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral | |

3. Overall, I am satisfied with the trip

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral | |

Section 8. Ecotourism loyalty

1. I will tell good experiences from the tour to other people.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral | |

2. I will recommend the tour to other people.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral | |

3. I will revisit the country and participate in the tour in the future

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral | |

Section 9. Prosocial behaviour after the trip

1. I feel that the local residents treat me with high esteem.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral | |

2. I feel that the local residents are happy to provide local information to me.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral | |

3. I feel that the local residents are willing to offer help to me when needed

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral | |

Section 10. Social media influence after the trip

1. My friends and followers positively commented on the photos I had posted during my trip

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral | |

2. My friends and followers liked photos I shared on social media during my trip

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral | |

3. I received the desired number of likes and comments on my holiday posts on social networks

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral | |

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

AUTHOR'S CURRICULUM VITAE

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Work experience

2015 – ongoing: Lecturer at HUFLIT, Vietnam

2011-2012: Military Commercial Joint Stock Bank

Education

2019 – ongoing: Ph.D. candidate at Tomas Bata University in Zlin, Czech Republic

2012 – 2014: Master's degree at University of Montana, US

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Research interests

Sustainability tourism, marketing, business management.

Research activities at Tomas Bata University in Zlin

- Member of Research Project No. **IGA/FaME/005/2020**: “The sustainability practices in the eco and rural tourism” – Guarantor: doc. Ing. Zuzana Tučková, Ph.D.
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- Member of Research Project **IGA-K-TRINITY/004**. “Relationship between fintech development and bank stock performance in Asia: A case study in Vietnam” – guarantor: prof. Ing. Boris Popesko, Ph.D.
- Member of OP RDE project **Junior grants of TBU in Zlin**, reg. No. CZ.02.2.69/0.0/19_073/0016941 – guarantor: doc. Ing. Zuzana Tučková, Ph.D.

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Sinh Duc Hoang, Zuzana Tučková, 2021. The Impact of Sensory Marketing on Street Food for the Return of International Visitors: Case Study in Vietnam. *Scientific Papers of the University of Pardubice, Series D: Faculty of Economics and Administration*, 29(2), pp.1-14.

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prosociálního chování a vliv sociálních médií

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