

A Systematic Review of the Influence of Online Review Content on Travelers' Safety Perceptions

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Abstract

Introduction – Post-crisis, tourism destinations must rebuild visitor confidence and manage their image. eWOM (electronic word of mouth) and online reviews are critical tools in shaping safety perceptions and maintaining tourist visits.

Objective – This study reviews the influence of eWOM on travelers' safety perceptions and revisit intentions after crises, exploring how digital platforms mediate these effects and the role of cultural background in interpreting eWOM related to safety.

Methodology – A systematic literature review was conducted using the PRISMA framework, based on Scopus articles published from 2020 to 2025, complemented by bibliometric analysis using VOSviewer.

Results – eWOM and UGC on social media significantly impact safety perceptions and revisit intentions. Emotional and visual content in reviews shapes how tourists interpret safety, with cultural factors influencing these perceptions. Algorithms on digital platforms create biases in the visibility of eWOM, affecting safety perceptions.

Discussion – eWOM is essential in post-crisis recovery, with digital platforms mediating the influence on safety perceptions. The emotional tone and visual aspects of eWOM, along with algorithms, play key roles in shaping how tourists assess safety and loyalty.

Originality/Value – This study provides insights into how eWOM influences tourists' safety perceptions and loyalty post-crisis, offering practical guidance for destination managers to restore trust and manage their image through eWOM.

Keywords: eWOM, safety perceptions, destination image, user-generated content, revisit. Intention



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INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of digital technology has significantly transformed communication in the tourism industry, with social media and online review platforms becoming key sources of information for travelers. One of the crucial elements in this phenomenon is User-Generated Content (UGC) (Xie, Zhang, Morrison, et al., 2021), which includes reviews, photos, and videos shared by travelers about their experiences. E-Word of Mouth (eWOM), as a form of digital narrative originating from consumers, plays a central role in shaping perceptions of travel destinations, including those related to safety, which has become a growing concern for travelers (Guo & Pesonen 2022; Sánchez et al. 2021). In this context, eWOM serves not only as a promotional tool but also as a balancing narrative that can influence travel decisions, especially regarding sensitive issues such as safety (Su et al. 2021; Assaker & Connor 2021).

The phenomenon of eWOM has reshaped how travelers view destinations. With the increasing volume of digital content generated by tourists, perceptions of safety are now often shaped by online reviews circulating across various digital platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and Tripadvisor (Yadav et al., 2026; Ray & Bala 2021). Travelers increasingly rely on information found on these platforms to assess whether a destination is safe enough to visit. Content that features emotional, visual, and symbolic narratives has become highly influential in shaping these perceptions, both positively and negatively (Sundling & Ceccato 2022). Therefore, understanding how online review content impacts perceptions of safety is crucial in contemporary tourism studies. Despite the substantial body of research on the influence of eWOM on various aspects of the tourist experience, there is a significant gap in the literature regarding how online review content specifically shapes perceptions of safety for travelers. Previous studies, such as those by Gonz & Díaz-fern (2022), highlight the role of emotional and visual content in enhancing the appeal of destinations, but few have systematically addressed how safety concerns in reviews affect tourists' decision-making, particularly for smaller or less popular destinations. Additionally, the bias in perception caused by platform algorithms, which often prioritize certain types of content, further exacerbates the gap in the representation of safety perceptions (Arica & Corte 2021).

This study aims to fill this gap by conducting a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) to deeply analyze the influence of online review content on travelers' safety perceptions. By adopting a cross-platform (Instagram, YouTube, Tripadvisor) and cross-cultural approach, this research will explore how eWOM contributes to shaping safety perceptions and examine the role of digital platforms in influencing the interpretation and dissemination of safety-related information. Rather than focusing only on the persuasive effects of online reviews, this study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of how visual, emotional, cultural, and algorithmic factors interact in shaping travelers' perceptions of destination safety.

Through the systematic synthesis of previous studies, this research aims to identify the key mechanisms through which online review content influences safety perceptions, reveal contextual differences in travelers' interpretations of digital information, and examine potential biases emerging from platform-based content distribution. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of tourism risk perception theory by expanding the understanding of how digitally mediated information shapes travelers' safety evaluations. Furthermore, this study provides practical insights for destination managers and tourism stakeholders in designing evidence-based communication strategies that address safety concerns in an increasingly digital and uncertain travel environment.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Risk Perception in Tourism

This study adopts Risk Perception Theory as the primary theoretical framework to explain how individuals evaluate uncertainty and potential negative outcomes when making travel decisions. In tourism contexts, risk is not limited to physical safety but also includes health, psychological, social, and financial dimensions that shape travelers' destination choices (Babalou & Gibson, 2025). Risk

perception emerges due to information asymmetry, where travelers do not possess complete knowledge about a destination and therefore rely on external sources to reduce uncertainty before making decisions (Golets et al., 2023).

Within this framework, Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) functions as a key mechanism for reducing perceived risk. Reviews, experiences, and recommendations from previous travelers serve as informational cues that help potential tourists assess destination safety. Positive eWOM tends to reduce perceived risk, while negative content increases uncertainty and can discourage travel intention (Setiawan & Arli, 2026). Thus, eWOM operates as both a cognitive and social mechanism in shaping perceived safety.

Furthermore, risk perception is dynamic and continuously updated as individuals are exposed to new information from digital platforms. Algorithmically curated content, community interactions, and perceived destination value collectively influence how risk is constructed and interpreted by travelers. Therefore, Risk Perception Theory not only explains individual-level decision-making under uncertainty but also highlights how digital information environments systematically shape collective perceptions of destination safety.

E-Word of Mouth (eWOM) and Its Influence on Traveler Perceptions

Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) refers to the sharing of travel experiences, reviews, and recommendations by consumers on digital platforms, such as TripAdvisor, Google Reviews, and social media (Arica & Corte 2021). As an indirect communication tool, eWOM has a profound impact on travelers' decision-making processes, often affecting their perceptions of safety at a destination. Recent studies highlight the persuasive and emotional power of eWOM, suggesting that positive reviews can boost a destination's reputation, while negative reviews can diminish it (Xie et al., 2022). Importantly, eWOM is not merely an informational tool but also an emotional and social influencer that shapes how potential travelers perceive the safety and overall experience of a destination.

The role of eWOM extends beyond just influencing decisions; it also affects travelers' emotional connections to destinations. Jo et al. (2021) found that eWOM, particularly when it contains personal narratives and emotional content, can significantly shape perceptions of safety by building trust and establishing a sense of credibility. As travelers often look for reassurance in the form of positive feedback, eWOM serves as a valuable resource for those seeking information about potential risks at a destination. However, it's crucial to note that eWOM can sometimes be misleading, especially when reviews are influenced by biases or exaggerated emotional responses to experiences (Xie et al., 2021).

Furthermore, eWOM can play a vital role in shaping perceptions of safety long after a destination has experienced viral exposure. Manuel (2026) emphasized that destinations need to actively manage their online reputation by responding to reviews, encouraging positive feedback, and addressing safety concerns raised by tourists. As eWOM can be a long-term influence on a destination's image, a proactive strategy in managing and curating these narratives can help maintain a positive image and ensure travelers continue to perceive a destination as safe and welcoming.

Safety Perception in Tourism

Safety perception is a key factor that influences a traveler's decision-making process, particularly when assessing whether a destination is worth visiting. As safety concerns have become more prominent in the wake of global crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, travelers have become more reliant on eWOM to assess the safety of their chosen destinations Zhang et al. (2022). According to Rati & Noer (2024), perceptions of safety are heavily influenced by the content shared through online reviews, where travelers often describe their experiences with local security, health measures, and overall safety practices. This has led to an increased awareness of how online reviews can either reinforce or challenge a destination's reputation as a safe place for tourists.

The concept of safety perception extends beyond physical security; it also involves health-related

concerns, accessibility, and the overall comfort of travelers. In the context of tourism, studies have shown that destinations with higher safety ratings in eWOM are more likely to attract tourists, especially during periods of heightened global uncertainty (Azhar et al., 2022). For instance, tourists may feel reassured by reviews that highlight stringent health protocols or highlight personal safety experiences, further emphasizing the importance of eWOM in shaping safety perceptions.

Moreover, safety perception is not static, and it can evolve through the sharing of eWOM. As travelers exchange experiences online, their collective insights create a continuously updated picture of safety at a destination. This dynamic process of information sharing can significantly influence not only individual travel decisions but also broader trends in tourist behavior. For example, eWOM detailing a destination's effective crisis management during natural disasters or pandemics can reshape its safety perception positively and make it a more appealing option for potential travelers (Arica & Corte 2021).

The Role of Algorithms in eWOM Perception

Algorithms on digital platforms, such as Instagram, YouTube, and TripAdvisor, play a critical role in curating and highlighting content, including eWOM, that may influence travelers' perceptions of safety. Su et al. (2021) and Garaus (2022) discussed how platform algorithms amplify certain types of content based on user interaction, visibility, and popularity, often leading to a skewed perception of what constitutes a "safe" destination. Content that is more engaging, sensational, or visually appealing tends to be prioritized by these algorithms, which may distort travelers' expectations and lead to biased perceptions of safety.

While algorithms can drive significant traffic to popular reviews, they also introduce a degree of perceptual bias. For instance, content that receives more views or engagement, regardless of its accuracy or depth, can create a feedback loop that reinforces certain narratives. As Guo & Pesonen (2022) highlighted, this selective exposure can result in an overrepresentation of specific safety concerns or highlights, leaving out less frequently discussed but equally important aspects of safety at a destination. Consequently, travelers may only see a one-sided view of safety based on what is algorithmically amplified, which can lead to misinformed decisions (Wen et al., 2021).

To mitigate these biases, it is essential for destination managers to understand how these algorithms work and how they influence the visibility of safety-related eWOM. By promoting diverse perspectives and ensuring that safety-related information is presented transparently, destinations can better manage the narrative around their safety and reputation. In this sense, algorithms not only impact the spread of information but also shape travelers' decisions by influencing the safety-related content they encounter.

Perceived Destination Value and Its Impact on Safety Perception

Perceived destination value refers to how travelers evaluate a destination based on the benefits, quality, and satisfaction they receive, relative to the effort or costs they invest (Gonz & Díaz-fern 2022). This perception can be influenced by both tangible aspects like services and infrastructure, and intangible elements like safety and emotional experiences. In the post-viral era, perceived value becomes a critical determinant in maintaining sustained interest in a destination, especially for travelers who may have high expectations due to previous viral exposure (Ngoc et al., 2021).

A high perceived destination value is often tied to authentic experiences, consistent service quality, and a strong safety record. For example, destinations that are perceived as providing excellent safety measures, effective crisis management, and personalized traveler care tend to receive higher eWOM ratings, which reinforces positive perceptions and increases the likelihood of repeat visits (Azhar et al., 2022). In contrast, destinations that fail to live up to the safety expectations set by viral content or initial reviews may experience a drop in perceived value and an increase in negative reviews, further impacting safety perceptions (Kuo, 2024).

Furthermore, perceived value extends to how well a destination manages safety in the long term. Destinations that are proactive in responding to safety concerns and adapting to changing traveler expectations particularly through eWOM are more likely to cultivate long-term loyalty. Yadav et al.,

(2026) suggest that a focus on holistic value creation, where safety is a key component of the overall experience, will not only improve satisfaction but also contribute to the long-term viability of a destination, ensuring that safety perceptions remain positive and consistent across time.

The Impact of Community and Social Interaction on Safety Perception

The role of community engagement and social interaction in shaping eWOM and safety perceptions cannot be overstated. Zhao et al. (2024) found that reviews shared within close-knit online communities, such as Facebook groups or specialized travel forums, tend to carry more weight in shaping perceptions due to the higher level of trust between community members. These interactions foster a sense of shared responsibility for safety and well-being, influencing how destinations are perceived in terms of traveler security.

Furthermore, destinations that encourage social interaction both online and offline can leverage eWOM as a tool to build stronger safety narratives. For example, positive interactions between tourists and locals, along with effective communication about safety measures, can enhance trust and reduce anxiety related to travel safety (Chemin et al., 2025). Socially engaged communities often share more detailed, authentic, and transparent information about safety protocols, which enhances the accuracy and credibility of eWOM.

In the context of eWOM, fostering community engagement means creating opportunities for tourists to interact with both locals and fellow travelers (Marder et al., 2021). This social interaction not only enriches the travel experience but also contributes to a greater sense of security and belonging, ultimately reinforcing positive safety perceptions. For destinations, this means that focusing on community involvement both physically and digitally can play a key role in maintaining a robust and trustworthy safety image.

METHODOLOGY

Data Source

In this research, the primary data source is obtained from the Scopus database, selected for its credibility as one of the largest and most reputable academic databases globally. Scopus is a comprehensive database with multidisciplinary coverage, particularly in fields such as tourism, consumer behavior, and digital marketing, all of which are highly relevant to the research topic concerning eWOM and its influence on travelers' safety perceptions. The decision to use Scopus as the exclusive data source is based on its access to high-quality, peer-reviewed articles from leading journals, which will help identify relevant trends, theories, and empirically tested findings regarding eWOM and safety perceptions in tourism. By using Scopus for this Systematic Literature Review (SLR), the collected data is expected to reflect academic reliability and relevance to the study's focus on how online reviews influence safety perceptions of travelers.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The articles included in this analysis must meet the following inclusion criteria: (1) Studies explicitly discussing the role of eWOM in shaping travelers' safety perceptions, particularly in the context of destinations that have experienced viral exposure or high digital visibility. (2) Studies that have been published in peer-reviewed journals indexed in Scopus to ensure high-quality and credible sources. (3) Studies published between 2020 and 2025 to ensure the literature is current and relevant. (4) Studies using theoretical frameworks such as tourist behavior theory, perceived value theory, word of mouth communication theory, or tourist experience theory, with a focus on safety perception and destination reputation.

Exclusion criteria include: (1) Articles that do not focus on eWOM or its role in influencing safety perceptions. (2) Articles not indexed in Scopus or those not peer-reviewed. (3) Publications lacking relevant conceptual frameworks or empirical findings that support the research topic. (4) Articles that are not available in full text or those that are editorial, opinion-based, or non-academic (e.g., conference proceedings, blogs, etc.).

PICOS Framework

The article search for this study uses the PICOS framework (Population, Intervention, Comparison, Outcomes, and Study Design) to ensure the focus and scope of the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) is relevant to the research objectives (Moher et al., 2015). The PICOS framework helps to structure the inclusion of studies that directly address eWOM's impact on travelers' safety perceptions.

Tabel 1.
PICOS FRAMEWORK

PICOS	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Population (P)	Studies involving tourists, destinations, or communities affected by eWOM and digital exposure, particularly focusing on safety perceptions.	Studies not addressing eWOM or safety perceptions in destinations with viral exposure.
Intervention (I)	Studies discussing strategies or outcomes related to eWOM in shaping safety perceptions, such as online reviews, revisit intentions, and perceived value.	Studies that only explore eWOM without relating it to safety perceptions or destination reputation.
Comparison (C)	Studies that compare the impact of different eWOM strategies in shaping safety perceptions across destinations.	Studies that do not compare the effectiveness of eWOM strategies for safety perception.
Outcomes (O)	Studies reporting empirical outcomes such as improved safety perceptions, increased revisit intention, and sustained destination reputation due to eWOM.	Studies that focus only on short-term increases in tourism visits without addressing the long-term sustainability of safety perceptions.
Study Design (S)	Research published between 2020-2025, peer-reviewed, and available in full text.	Editorials, non-peer-reviewed studies, or sources not fully accessible.

Source: data processed by authors (2026)

Search Strategy

The article search was conducted using a combination of keywords directly related to the research focus of this study, which examines the influence of eWOM (electronic word of mouth) and online review content on travelers' safety perceptions post-viral exposure. The following Boolean search strategy was employed to ensure the selection of articles that align with the study's objectives:

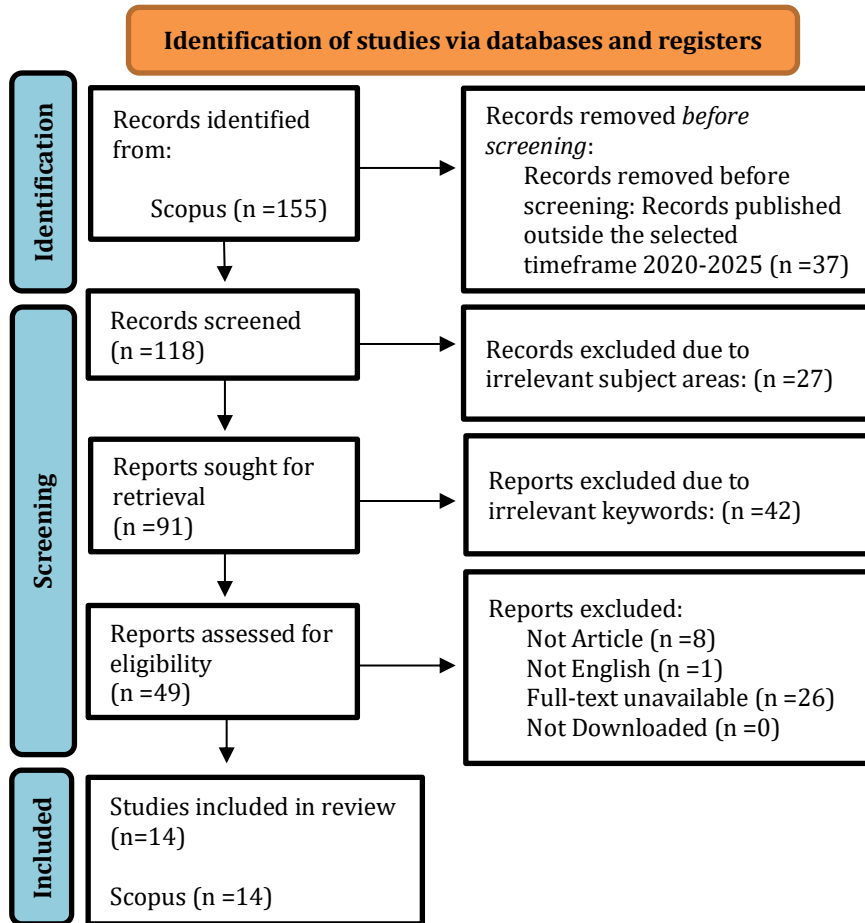
("user-generated content" OR "UGC" OR "online reviews" OR "e-word of mouth" OR "social media reviews") AND ("tourism" OR "destination" OR "travel") AND ("perception" OR "safety" OR "security" OR "risk") AND ("communication" OR "marketing" OR "public relations" OR "digital influence")

This search strategy was carefully designed to capture articles that discuss how eWOM and online reviews shape travelers' safety perceptions in the context of destinations that have experienced viral exposure. The combination of these keywords ensures that the literature review focuses on the relationship between digital reviews, safety perceptions, and the tourism decision-making process after viral exposure, addressing critical aspects such as revisit intentions and the sustainability of safety communication.

Search Result

The articles included in this analysis were selected based on their relevance to the research topic,

specifically examining how eWOM (electronic word of mouth) and online review content influence travelers' safety perceptions in the context of destinations that have gained popularity through digital exposure. The search was conducted using a Boolean strategy with keywords such as eWOM, safety perception, and online reviews, ensuring that the literature reviewed addresses the impact of eWOM on safety perceptions in tourism. Articles published between 2020 and 2025, peer-reviewed, and focused on the relationship between eWOM and safety perceptions were included. The results of the search and selection process are presented in a PRISMA flow diagram, which demonstrates the systematic approach taken to include high-quality, relevant studies directly aligned with the research focus on eWOM and safety perceptions.



Source: Research data processed by authors (2026)
Figure 1. PRISMA 2020 flow diagram adapted from Page et al. (2021)

Figure 1 presents the article search and selection process based on the PRISMA 2020 guidelines (Page et al., 2021). In the initial stage, articles were identified through a search in the primary academic database, Scopus, using predefined keywords. A total of 155 articles were initially identified.

In the second stage, an initial screening was conducted by removing articles that did not meet the criteria. A total of 37 articles were excluded because they did not meet the eligibility requirements, primarily due to being outside the last five years. The remaining 118 articles were then assessed for

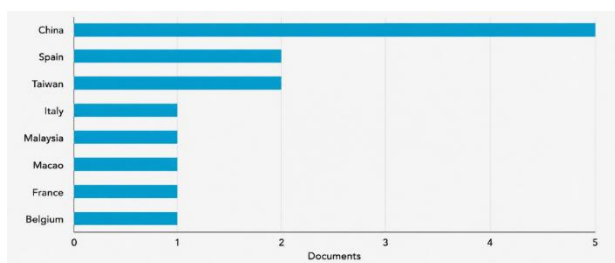
subject relevance, and 27 articles were excluded as they did not align with the scope of the research. The third stage involved retrieving full-text articles, where 91 articles were sought for retrieval. However, 42 articles were not retrieved due to not meeting the primary keywords such as Tourist Behavior, social media, Tourism Management, and Tourist Destination and Development. After this stage, 49 reports were assessed for eligibility based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria. During the eligibility assessment, several articles were excluded for the following reasons: 8 articles were not scholarly articles, 1 article was not in English, 26 articles were excluded due to full-text unavailability after retrieval attempts, and no articles were excluded due to download issues. After these exclusions, 14 articles met all the research criteria and were included in the final review.

Bibliometric Analysis and Visualization

After selecting the relevant articles for this systematic review, the next step involves visualizing the relationships between key concepts related to eWOM and travelers' safety perceptions post-viral exposure. Bibliometric data obtained from the Scopus database are analyzed to explore the distribution of articles based on publication year, subject areas, and publication sources. This allows for an understanding of how research on eWOM, safety perceptions, and related themes have evolved over time and across various academic disciplines.

For more in-depth analysis and visualization, VOSviewer software is used to create bibliometric maps. These maps help visualize the frequency of keyword usage, the interconnections between topics such as eWOM, tourist safety, revisit intention, and destination reputation, and highlight current research trends within the field of post-viral tourism. This analysis enables the identification of key research patterns and themes that have emerged globally, with a specific focus on how online reviews shape safety perceptions in tourism destinations.

The results of this bibliometric analysis will provide insights into the major themes driving research in this area, such as the role of eWOM in shaping travelers' safety perceptions and destination loyalty. By mapping the evolution of research in this field, the analysis will identify emerging trends and offer directions for future research, particularly in the management of tourist safety in destinations that have experienced viral exposure or crises. These findings will also inform future strategies for managing eWOM and enhancing safety perceptions in digital platforms, contributing to the sustainability of tourist destinations in a rapidly changing digital landscape.



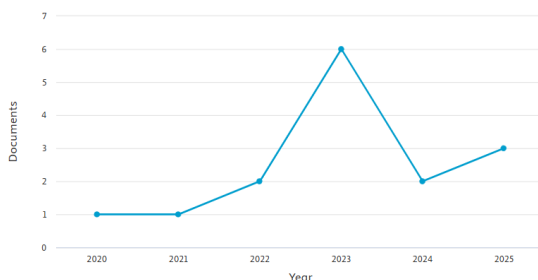
Source: Scopus Database

Figure 2. Article Publication based in country

Figure 2 illustrates the distribution of published documents by country or region for research on tourism and safety perceptions post-crisis in the context of eWOM, based on the final 14 selected studies. The country classification in this analysis was determined according to the geographical context examined in each study, including the destination location or research setting, rather than the authors' institutional affiliations. China leads with the highest number of publications (5 documents), indicating a dominant contribution to this research area and suggesting a strong academic focus on tourism-related digital behavior and safety perception within the Chinese context. Spain and Taiwan follow with 2 documents each, reflecting consistent but more moderate research activity in Europe and East Asia on destination image, tourist behavior, and eWOM-related safety

perceptions. Their presence indicates that research interest is not concentrated solely in one region but is also developing across multiple tourism markets with different cultural and contextual characteristics.

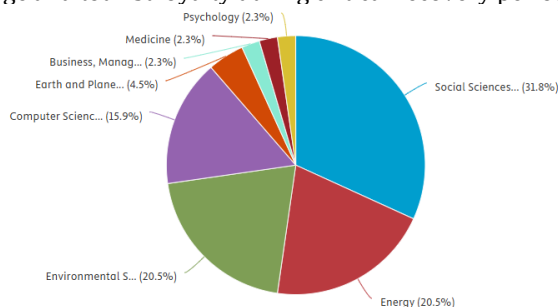
Other countries, including Italy, Malaysia, Macao, France, and Belgium, each contribute 1 document, showing a broad but fragmented geographical distribution of research output. Overall, the distribution highlights that although the selected studies represent diverse geographical contexts, China remains the primary contributor, followed by Spain and Taiwan. These findings indicate that research on eWOM and tourism safety perceptions has developed across various regions, with differences influenced by local tourism environments and research contexts.



Source: Scopus Database
Figure 3. Article Publication by Year

Figure 3 shows the trend of publications related to eWOM and safety perceptions in tourism over the past five years. In 2020--2021, there was a modest increase in publications with only 1 document. The following year, 2022, saw a gradual rise in interest, with 2 documents published. However, a significant spike occurred in 2023, where 6 documents were published, followed by a dramatic peak in 2024 with only 2 publications. In 2025, the number of publications rise back to 3 documents.

This data reflects a fluctuating interest in the topic of eWOM and safety perceptions post-crisis, with a peak observed in 2024, likely corresponding with the industry's increased focus on recovery strategies and the growing importance of digital communication in restoring tourists' safety perceptions. The cyclical nature of publications suggests that while there is occasional heightened focus on eWOM and its impact on tourist behavior, interest tends to decline in certain years, possibly due to shifting research priorities or external factors affecting the tourism industry. The spike in 2025 could also be linked to the post-pandemic recovery efforts, emphasizing the role of eWOM in shaping destination image and tourist loyalty during critical recovery periods.



Source: Scopus Database (2026)
Figure 4. Article Publication by Subject Area

Figure 4 illustrates the distribution of published documents by subject area in the context of research

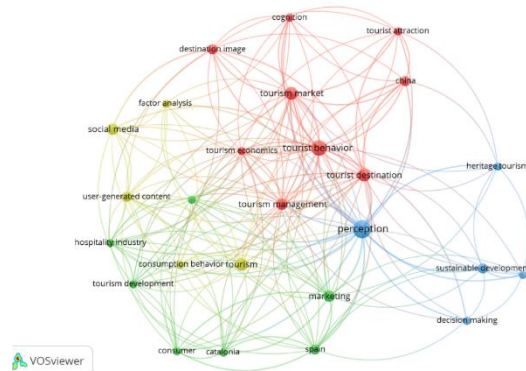
on destination communication strategies and sustainable tourism post-security crisis. The largest proportion of publications, 31.8%, comes from the Social Sciences field, highlighting the importance of understanding tourist behavior, public perception, and the cultural impact in the recovery process after a security crisis. This field encompasses research on the social dynamics of tourism, including the role of local communities, media influence, and the broader societal impact of destination image management during and after crises, which are critical when considering safety perceptions and tourist loyalty.

The next largest contributions, 20.5%, come from the Energy field, which likely reflects the growing role of sustainability and green practices in tourism recovery strategies. While less directly related to eWOM, energy considerations, particularly in sustainable tourism, are becoming an essential part of destination management as it aligns with tourism development and destination recovery efforts.

The Computer Science field contributes 15.9% of the publications, which likely reflects the increasing role of digital platforms, big data, and smart tourism technologies in enhancing eWOM and managing tourist perceptions post-crisis. Digital tools such as AI and data analysis are essential for monitoring eWOM, analyzing tourist sentiment, and tracking the evolution of safety perceptions over time.

Finally, other fields like Environmental Sciences, Business and Management, and Earth and Planet Sciences contribute smaller portions, indicating a multidisciplinary approach to post-crisis tourism management. These areas emphasize sustainability, crisis communication, and tourism management strategies, which are crucial for destinations aiming to rebuild their reputation and maintain tourist loyalty after a crisis.

This distribution demonstrates that destination image management, particularly through eWOM and safety perceptions, is an interdisciplinary field that draws from various domains, such as business, social sciences, and technology, in addressing post-crisis tourism dynamics.



Source: Processed by author through VOSviewer (2026)
Figure 5. VOSviewer Network Visualization

Figure 5 illustrates the network of relationships between key themes in research concerning destination communication strategies and safety perceptions in tourism post-crisis, with color-coded clusters highlighting different themes involved in destination image management and tourism recovery.

Cluster 1 (Blue) focuses on tourist perception, tourist behavior, tourist destination, and destination image. This cluster highlights the critical role of understanding tourists' perceptions in post-crisis tourism. eWOM and digital content are central to how tourists perceive the safety of a destination. Effective management of tourist perceptions through digital channels and social media is key to rebuilding trust and loyalty after a crisis.

Cluster 2 (Red) emphasizes tourism management and marketing, with keywords like tourism management, tourism market, tourist behavior, and tourist attraction. This cluster underlines how destination management plays a central role in addressing safety concerns and reshaping the image

of the destination through targeted marketing strategies and digital communications. Tourism management strategies are essential in shaping the narrative around safety and tourist behavior post-crisis.

Cluster 3 (Green) focuses on social media and user-generated content (UGC), which is pivotal in influencing tourists' perceptions through online reviews and digital engagement. Keywords such as user-generated content, social media, consumer, and marketing emphasize how social media platforms, where tourists share experiences, play a vital role in spreading perceptions of safety and managing the destination's image in the post-crisis period.

Cluster 4 (Yellow) explores tourism economics and sustainability, featuring keywords like tourism economics, sustainable development, and heritage tourism. This cluster reflects how the economic recovery and sustainability of a destination are influenced by how effectively tourist safety and destination credibility are communicated, particularly through eWOM and cultural tourism strategies. Sustainable tourism practices are important in restoring long-term tourist loyalty and revisit intentions.

Cluster 5 (Purple) highlights decision-making and cultural aspects, including keywords such as decision making, china, and catalonia. This cluster underscores the influence of cultural factors and decision-making processes in tourists' safety perceptions and their post-crisis recovery behavior. The intersection of cultural differences and tourist decision-making is key to understanding how eWOM and safety perceptions are interpreted across different tourist markets.

Tabel 2.
GROUP ITEM BY CLUSTER VOSVIEWER

Cluster	Item	Number of Items
Cluster 1	China, cognition, destination image, tourism economics, tourism management, tourism market, tourist attraction, tourist behavior, tourist destination	9
Cluster 2	Catalonia, consumer, hospitality industry, marketing, satisfaction, Spain, tourism development	7
Cluster 3	Decision making, heritage tourism, perception, psychology, sustainable development	5
Cluster 4	Consumption behavior, factor analysis, social media, tourism, user-generated content	5

Source: Processed by author through VOSviewer (2026)

Table 2 presents the results of the cluster analysis conducted using VOSviewer, categorizing keywords into five distinct clusters based on the thematic focus within the research related to eWOM and tourists' safety perceptions in post-crisis tourism recovery.

Cluster 1 includes 9 items such as China, cognition, destination image, tourism economics, tourism management, tourism market, tourist attraction, tourist behavior, and tourist destination. This cluster emphasizes the role of destination management and tourism behavior, particularly in the context of China and global tourism markets. It highlights the importance of destination image and how tourist behavior can be shaped by the perception of safety post-crisis. Tourism economics and tourism management are central to understanding how destination recovery strategies are developed and implemented.

Cluster 2 consists of 7 items, including Catalonia, consumer, hospitality industry, marketing, satisfaction, Spain, and tourism development. This cluster focuses on the tourism industry in regions like Catalonia and Spain, with a strong emphasis on consumer behavior and tourism development. It explores how marketing strategies, particularly eWOM and user-generated content, influence tourist satisfaction and the safety perceptions of destinations. The hospitality industry's role in restoring

tourist confidence is also a key aspect of this cluster.

Cluster 3 covers 5 items, including decision making, heritage tourism, perception, psychology, and sustainable development. This cluster examines the psychological and perceptual aspects of tourist decision-making and the influence of heritage tourism on post-crisis recovery. It emphasizes how tourist perceptions of safety are shaped by psychological factors, including cognitive processes, and the role of sustainable development in ensuring long-term recovery and resilience in tourism destinations.

Cluster 4 contains 5 items such as consumption behavior, factor analysis, social media, tourism, and user-generated content (UGC). This cluster explores consumer behavior and the impact of UGC on tourist decision-making and perceptions of destination safety. It highlights the importance of social media and how UGC influences tourist engagement and trust in the destination, shaping revisit intentions post-crisis.

Tabel 3.
SELECTED KEYWORDS

Keyword	Occurrences	Total Link Strength
Perception	10	58
Tourist behavior	7	38
Tourist destination	7	38
Tourism market	5	31
Marketing	4	25
Tourism management	4	25
Spain	3	24
Tourism	5	23
Tourism economics	3	21
User-generated content	3	20
Catalonia	2	18
Consumer	2	18
Hospitality industry	2	18
Tourism development	2	18
China	3	17
Destination image	3	17
Satisfaction	2	17
Social media	4	15
Cognition	2	14
Tourist attraction	2	14
Consumption behavior	2	12
Sustainable development	3	12
Factor analysis	2	11
Psychology	2	10
Decision making	2	9
Heritage tourism	2	9

Source: Processed by author through VOSviewer (2026)

Table 3 displays the distribution of the most frequently occurring keywords in the literature on tourism management and tourist behavior post-security crisis. The keyword "Perception" appears the most frequently with 10 occurrences and a Total Link Strength (TLS) of 58, indicating its central role in understanding how tourists perceive destinations after a crisis. This is followed by "Tourist behavior" and "Tourist destination", each with 7 occurrences and a TLS of 38, reflecting the significance of analyzing tourist behavior and destination management strategies in post-crisis

tourism recovery.

Other notable keywords include "Tourism market" (5 occurrences, TLS 31) and "Marketing" (4 occurrences, TLS 25), underlining the importance of marketing strategies in reshaping the tourism market and enhancing the destination's appeal after a crisis. "Tourism management" (4 occurrences, TLS 25) also appears prominently, demonstrating its relevance in structuring destination recovery efforts and the ongoing management of tourism services.

"User-generated content" (3 occurrences, TLS 20) and "Social media" (4 occurrences, TLS 15) are also key themes, highlighting the critical role of digital communication and online content in managing tourist perceptions and influencing revisit intentions. Keywords such as "Spain" (3 occurrences, TLS 24), "Catalonia" (2 occurrences, TLS 18), and "China" (3 occurrences, TLS 17) suggest a focus on specific regions in the tourism industry, reflecting the global perspective in destination image management and tourism behavior.

Other themes, such as "Sustainable development" (3 occurrences, TLS 12), "Decision making" (2 occurrences, TLS 9), and "Heritage tourism" (2 occurrences, TLS 9), point to the importance of sustainability and cultural tourism in the post-crisis recovery of tourism destinations. This also includes a focus on the psychological and social aspects of recovery, with keywords like "Cognition" (2 occurrences, TLS 14) and "Psychology" (2 occurrences, TLS 10) emphasizing the mental and emotional factors influencing tourist behavior.

Overall, this distribution indicates that research on post-crisis tourism is highly interconnected, with a clear focus on how destination management, tourist behavior, marketing strategies, and digital content contribute to tourist satisfaction and the sustainability of tourism destinations post-crisis.

RESULTS

In this section, the selected articles in this study reveal key insights into how eWOM and online reviews influence travelers' safety perceptions in destinations recovering from viral exposure or crises. Studies such as Zhao et al. (2024) show that negative reviews significantly impact revisit intentions by affecting affective commitment and destination reputation. Paül i Agustí (2024) highlights that Instagram images often misrepresent tourist behavior, potentially distorting safety perceptions. Other research, including Li et al. (2023), underscores the role of cultural adaptation and symbolic creativity in enhancing the usefulness of reviews, while Shang (2022) demonstrate the influence of environmental factors and staff service on satisfaction, thus shaping safety perceptions. Additionally, Chemin et al., (2025) emphasize the strategic role of UGC in destination management, showing how eWOM can enhance tourism sustainability and safety perceptions post-crisis. Collectively, these studies highlight the importance of eWOM in reshaping destination images, building trust, and maintaining tourist loyalty, making it a critical tool for managing tourist behavior and safety perceptions in destinations recovering from crises or viral exposure.

Tabel 4.
THE RESULT OF LITERATURE ANALYSIS

No	Article Title and Author (Year)	Focus Area	Methodology	Theory	Main Findings
1	Instagram public and private images as an element for the spatial monitoring of tourist behaviour in cities - (Paül i Agustí, 2024)	Analyzing the alignment between tourist behavior on the ground and images shared on Instagram	Field survey of 122 tourists, comparison of actual routes, personal photos, and public photos on Instagram	Spatial representation, destination image, digital footprint	Publicly shared photos on Instagram only partially reflect real experiences. There is a visual bias towards iconic places, and perception aspects heavily influence digital spatial data.
2	How Review Valence Shapes Visit Intention: Affective Commitment and Destination Reputation - (Zhao et al., 2024)	Explaining how review valence (positive/negative) affects visit intention through affective commitment and destination reputation	Quantitative survey with PLS-SEM; 812 respondents from the Chinese tourism sector	Affective Commitment Theory; Destination Reputation	Review valence significantly influences visit intention through the mediation of affective commitment. Negative reviews have a stronger impact than positive reviews in lowering visit intention.
3	The Impact of Consumer's Adaptation to the Creative Culture of Theme Parks on Review Usefulness - (Li et al., 2023)	Investigating the effect of consumer adaptation to the creative culture of theme parks on the usefulness of online reviews	Latent Semantic Analysis and Tobit Regression from 5929 consumer reviews of Disney	Symbolic Creativity; Cultural Adaptation; Reference Point Theory	Adaptation to creative symbols strengthens the perceived usefulness of reviews. Advanced ticket prices moderate the effect of extreme positive reviews depending on the level of creativity of the symbol.
4	Using Online Customer Reviews to Understand Customers' Experience and Satisfaction with Integrated Resorts - (Yu et al., 2023)	Exploring experience and satisfaction dimensions of customers in integrated resorts through online review analysis	Text analytics: Semantic Network Analysis, CONCOR Analysis, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), Regression	Customer Experience Theory; Service Quality Model	Four main dimensions were found: amenities, entertainment, tourist, and atmosphere. Environmental factors, staff service, and food significantly influence satisfaction. Big data methods provide deeper insights than traditional surveys.

No	Article Title and Author (Year)	Focus Area	Methodology	Theory	Main Findings
5	User-generated content (UGC) in tourist attractions and destinations: Systematic literature review and perspectives for management - (Chemin et al., 2025)	Analyzing the strategic role of UGC in destination and tourist attraction management through an SLR approach	Systematic Literature Review (SLR) from scientific articles over 20 years	Big Data in tourism, UGC, Tourism Experience	UGC becomes a strategic tool in destination marketing. However, there is a gap in utilizing UGC data for decision-making. Strengthening UGC data governance is needed for maximum benefit in tourist destinations.
6	The Impact of Group Facebook User-Generated Content on Consumer Purchase Intention – A Case in Tourism Industry - (Tung et al., 2023)	The impact of user-generated content in Facebook Groups on consumer purchase intention in the tourism industry	Online survey of tourists and potential tourists; CFA and SEM	Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and Information Acceptance Model (IAM)	User-generated content (UGC) in Facebook Groups significantly influences tourists' purchase intention. Argument quality, source credibility, and perceived usefulness of information are key determinants. IAM and TPB combined provide a more comprehensive explanation of user behavior.
7	Research of Glamping Tourism Based on the Aesthetics of Atmosphere - (Sun & Huang 2023)	Exploring glamping tourism through the aesthetics of atmosphere and online-offline communication theory	Grounded theory and content analysis of UGC & in-depth interviews	Aesthetics of Atmosphere & SOR Framework (Stimulus-Organism-Response)	Physical environment and situational interactions strongly influence perception of atmosphere and the desire to share experiences. Glamping is seen as a phenomenon combining natural beauty with comfort.
8	Topic Modeling for Hiking Trail Online Reviews: Analysis of the Mutianyu Great Wall - (Shang & Luo, 2022)	Topic analysis of online reviews of hiking trails at Mutianyu Great Wall	Text mining using LDA (Latent Dirichlet Allocation) on online reviews	Not explicitly mentioned but using data-driven exploratory framework	There are differences in perception between local (Chinese) and international hikers regarding scenery, challenges, and culture. Online reviews are effective for analyzing tourist behavior and guiding marketing policy.

No	Article Title and Author (Year)	Focus Area	Methodology	Theory	Main Findings
9	Sentiment of Chinese Tourists towards Malaysia Cultural Heritage Based on Online Travel Reviews - (Cao & Xu 2023)	Sentiment analysis of Chinese tourists towards Malaysia's cultural heritage destinations (Melaka) based on online reviews	Big data analysis from 17,555 online reviews across 9 cultural destinations in Melaka; using the BERT model for sentiment analysis; additional methods: co-occurrence analysis, semantic clustering, filtering	Cross-cultural tourism experience; Sentiment analysis in heritage tourism	Sentiment of Chinese tourists towards Malaysian culture is generally positive, but differs by age group and gender. Factors like cultural authenticity, local hospitality, and emotional experience affect destination evaluation. Strategic recommendations for more adaptive destination management are provided.
10	Exploring the Discrepancy between Projected and Perceived Destination Images: A Cross-Cultural and Sustainable Analysis Using LDA Modeling - (Chen et al., 2023)	The discrepancy between projected destination images by DMOs and perceived images by tourists	Quantitative approach using machine learning with LDA (Latent Dirichlet Allocation) for analysis of 50,000+ data from DMO sites and TripAdvisor reviews (Chinese and Western tourists)	Destination Image Formation; Cross-Cultural Communication; Information Gap Theory	There is a significant gap between the image projected by DMOs and the image perceived by tourists. Western tourists focus more on cultural attributes, while Chinese tourists focus on practical aspects and service. Cultural differences influence destination perception formation, emphasizing the need for cross-cultural approaches in DMO marketing strategies.
11	Culinary Destination Consumer-Based Brand Equity: Exploring the Influence of Tourist Gaze in Relation to FoodPorn on Social Media - (Manimont et al., 2022)	The impact of FoodPorn and User-Generated Content (UGC) on culinary destination brand equity formation	Mixed Methods: 20 semi-structured interviews and online survey (n=593), SEM analysis	Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), Tourist Gaze, Consumer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE)	Exposure to FoodPorn in UGC significantly influences perceptions and attractiveness of culinary destinations. Four main antecedents: usefulness, ease of use, affective gratification, source credibility. UGC plays a critical role in shaping destination image and visit decisions.

No	Article Title and Author (Year)	Focus Area	Methodology	Theory	Main Findings
12	Understanding Peer-to-Peer, Two-Sided Digital Marketplaces: Pricing Lessons from Airbnb in Barcelona - (Llad & Meseguer-artola 2020)	Pricing strategies in peer-to-peer platforms like Airbnb and factors influencing them	Quantitative research: Analysis of large Airbnb listing dataset in Barcelona using hedonic regression model	Hedonic Demand Theory (HDT), Cue Utilization Theory	Accommodation prices are mainly determined by intrinsic attributes (location, size, facilities) and online reputation (reviews and ratings). Interaction between review volume and valence significantly influences prices. Non-professional hosts set prices based on perceived value, unlike professional hosts who use dynamic pricing strategies.
13	Gastronomy Tourism and Well-Being: Evidence from Taiwan and Catalonia Michelin-Starred Restaurants - (Lin & Marine-roig 2022)	The relationship between gastronomy tourism and tourist well-being in Michelin-starred restaurants	Quantitative survey of tourists in Taiwan and Catalonia dining at Michelin restaurants; inferential statistical analysis	Tourism and Well-Being Theory, Experiential Consumption	Gastronomy tourism in Michelin-starred restaurants enhances emotional, social, and psychological well-being dimensions for tourists. The "meaning" and "engagement" aspects of culinary experiences have a significant impact on overall well-being.
14	Who Killed Food Tourism? Unaware Cannibalism in Online Conversations about Traveling in Italy - (Bigi et al., 2025)	Discrepancy in culinary destination image (image incongruence) in online conversations about Italy	Content analysis based on machine learning using Leximancer on 1030 conversations in TripAdvisor forums (Naples, Florence, Parma, Ferrara)	Destination Image Congruence, Online Word-of-Mouth, User-Generated Content (UGC)	Culinary attributes are not consistently discussed in online conversations, particularly among tourists unfamiliar with the destination. Weak or unhighlighted culinary images may lead to "image cannibalism," reducing the appeal of culinary tourism.

Source: Data processed by author (2026)

Table 4 provides deeper insights into how eWOM, digital communication strategies, and tourist engagement contribute to sustaining visits to destinations post-security crisis, particularly focusing on the role of online reviews in shaping safety perceptions and revisit intentions. By synthesizing various studies, this table illustrates the interconnections between digital communication strategies, emotional engagement with destinations, and tourist perceptions of safety, all of which significantly influence revisit intention. The findings emphasize that effective crisis communication strategies, especially through social media and eWOM, are crucial in rebuilding trust and fostering emotional attachment. These elements are central to maintaining tourist loyalty and encouraging repeat visits in the aftermath of a crisis. Furthermore, eWOM plays a significant role in destination image management, with studies like Zhao et al. (2024) and Chemin et al., (2025) highlighting how online reviews influence safety perceptions and shape the emotional bond tourists have with a destination. The ability of a destination to manage its online reputation and create meaningful, trust-based relationships with tourists is identified as a critical factor in sustaining visits over the long term. These insights are essential for developing targeted eWOM strategies and communication plans that help destinations recover and sustain tourist engagement and safety perceptions post-crisis.

Tabel 5.
KEY ISSUES

Key Issues	Specific Aspect	Source	Citation
Valence of Reviews	The impact of review valence (positive and negative reviews) on travelers' safety perceptions, especially in revisit intentions post-crisis.	Zhao et al. (2024)	"The valence of reviews—whether positive or negative—significantly affects tourist behavior and safety perceptions, with negative reviews having a stronger influence on reducing revisit intention."
Social Media and eWOM	The use of social media platforms and eWOM in shaping tourist safety perceptions and influencing revisit intentions post-crisis.	Tung et al. (2023)	"Social media platforms, particularly eWOM, are pivotal in influencing tourist perceptions of destination safety, and fostering revisit intentions through positive engagement."
Crisis Communication	The importance of crisis communication strategies through eWOM and social media in restoring tourist trust and revisit intentions.	Lin & Marine-roig (2022)	"Effective crisis communication using eWOM and social media restores tourist trust, improves safety perceptions, and encourages revisit intentions."
Destination Brand Image	The impact of destination brand image on tourist loyalty, safety perceptions, and revisit intentions post-crisis.	Paül i Agustí (2024)	"The destination brand image strengthened by eWOM and social media plays a key role in improving safety perceptions and tourist loyalty, crucial for sustaining tourism post-crisis."

Source: Data processed by author (2026)

DISCUSSION

RQ1: How do visual and emotional content in eWOM influence travelers' perceptions of safety at tourism destinations?

eWOM plays a central role in shaping travelers' safety perceptions, especially through the emotional and visual content embedded in online reviews. As noted by Paül i Agustí (2024), publicly shared images on platforms like Instagram often carry a visual bias, particularly towards iconic places, which may not accurately reflect the true safety conditions of a destination. This

suggests that visual content in eWOM can either distort or enhance tourists' perceptions of safety depending on the nature of the images shared. For instance, eWOM showcasing crowded or unsafe areas might increase anxiety, while positive, tranquil imagery could reassure potential visitors about safety.

Furthermore, Li et al. (2023) demonstrated that cultural adaptation influences how tourists interpret eWOM in theme park contexts, with adapted tourists finding reviews more relevant and useful. This finding suggests that emotional content, alongside visual elements, can influence safety perceptions by aligning with tourists' emotional needs and expectations. eWOM that aligns with the emotional landscape of the traveler's cultural background can increase the perceived usefulness of reviews, making them more likely to impact revisit intentions positively.

In a broader context, Bigi et al., (2025) further support the idea that UGC in tourism plays a key role in destination image management. The emotional engagement generated by eWOM content, especially through platforms like Instagram and Facebook, can significantly shape how travelers assess destination safety. The emotional tone of reviews whether positive or negative affects tourists' decision-making, particularly when they are deciding whether to trust a destination after a crisis. Hence, both emotional content and visual representations in eWOM influence safety perceptions, guiding tourist behavior and decisions regarding destination choice.

RQ2: What role do digital platforms play in mediating the influence of eWOM on travelers' safety perceptions?

Digital platforms, especially social media, play an essential role in mediating the influence of eWOM on travelers' safety perceptions. Zhao et al. (2024) found that the valence of reviews whether positive or negative has a profound impact on tourist behavior and safety perceptions. Negative reviews, in particular, significantly decrease revisit intentions, primarily because they highlight concerns around destination safety. Social media platforms like Facebook and TripAdvisor amplify this effect by providing real-time feedback from a wide range of tourists, enabling future visitors to form their perceptions of safety based on the aggregated sentiments of others.

Moreover, Chemin et al., (2025) and Sun & Huang (2023) argue that eWOM on Facebook Groups influences tourist decision-making, especially when reviews are perceived as credible and emotionally resonant. These platforms facilitate direct engagement, enabling tourists to share and access experiences regarding safety, which can either reassure or raise concerns. The credibility of information on these platforms, therefore, is a critical factor in how eWOM influences safety perceptions. Well-curated content and emotionally charged reviews on social media thus serve as powerful tools for destination managers looking to influence tourist confidence and revisit intentions post-crisis.

Furthermore, Yu et al., (2023) emphasize the importance of digital platforms in shaping customer satisfaction and, by extension, safety perceptions. Through advanced semantic network analysis and big data methods, their study illustrates how online reviews contribute to the deeper understanding of tourist satisfaction, highlighting key factors such as environmental aspects, service quality, and staff interactions. This underscores the role of digital platforms as mediators, allowing tourists to assess both the quality and safety of their experiences at destinations. By actively managing the narratives presented on these platforms, DMOs can effectively influence tourist safety perceptions and ensure positive outcomes in post-crisis tourism recovery.

RQ3: How does cultural background influence travelers' interpretations of eWOM related to the safety of destinations?

Cultural background significantly affects how tourists interpret eWOM related to safety perceptions. As Chen et al. (2023) found, Western tourists tend to focus more on cultural attributes of a destination, such as historical sites and local traditions, while Chinese tourists prioritize practical aspects like service quality and safety measures. This cultural divergence influences how eWOM content is interpreted, especially when it comes to reviews concerning safety. Tourists from different cultural backgrounds may therefore value different elements of safety, which can impact

their willingness to trust eWOM and ultimately shape their decision to visit a destination. In addition, Manimont et al. (2022) highlights the impact of cultural adaptation in shaping the perceived usefulness of eWOM content. When tourists from various cultures adapt to a destination's unique symbolic language or local culture, they are more likely to perceive online reviews as relevant and trustworthy. This is particularly important when eWOM reviews touch on safety issues, as culturally adapted tourists will more readily engage with content that resonates with their expectations and experiences. Therefore, understanding cultural nuances in interpreting eWOM can help destinations tailor their communication strategies to align with tourists' values, ensuring accurate safety perceptions are communicated.

Furthermore, Llad & Meseguer-artola (2020) emphasize the significance of cross-cultural understanding in managing destination image through eWOM. In post-crisis recovery, destination management organizations (DMOs) must adapt their strategies to accommodate the different ways tourists from diverse cultures perceive safety. For instance, Chinese tourists may focus more on practical measures like cleanliness and security, while Western tourists may be more concerned with the cultural and emotional experience of the destination. Acknowledging these cultural differences is critical for effectively utilizing eWOM as a tool for restoring tourist confidence and safety perceptions.

RQ4: To what extent do algorithms in social media platforms create perception biases regarding safety in tourism reviews?

Algorithms in social media platforms significantly influence how eWOM content is presented and consumed, potentially creating perception biases regarding safety in tourism reviews. As Lin et al. (2022) points out, Instagram and similar platforms often prioritize iconic images and posts with higher engagement, which may not always represent the actual safety conditions of a destination. These algorithmic biases can amplify certain eWOM content, such as highly visual or emotionally charged posts, which may either exaggerate or downplay the safety situation at a destination. Consequently, travelers may form skewed safety perceptions based on the visibility of certain reviews rather than the comprehensive reality of the destination's conditions.

In addition, Cao & Xu (2023) note that the curation of UGC on platforms like Facebook and TripAdvisor can influence how tourists perceive the safety of a destination. Algorithms prioritize reviews with higher engagement or those that align with prevailing sentiments, which can create a biased representation of destination safety. If negative reviews are less visible due to algorithmic filtering, potential tourists may be misled into perceiving a destination as safer than it is. This can undermine the effectiveness of eWOM as a tool for accurately communicating safety, particularly in post-crisis scenarios where transparency is crucial for restoring tourist trust.

Moreover, Shang (2022) and Tung et al. (2023) emphasize the significant role of online reputation systems in shaping perceptions of safety, where algorithms prioritize highly rated properties or destinations, even if those ratings may not fully reflect the actual safety conditions. This algorithmic influence can create a distorted view of a destination's safety, which may affect revisit intentions and tourist behavior. Therefore, understanding how algorithms influence eWOM is crucial for managing destination image and ensuring accurate safety perceptions are communicated to potential tourists.

CONCLUSION

Based on a systematic review of relevant studies, it can be concluded that the sustainability of tourist visits post-crisis is influenced by the interplay between eWOM, online reviews, and travelers' safety perceptions. The content of eWOM, especially its visual and emotional components, plays a pivotal role in shaping safety perceptions and influencing revisit intentions. Social media platforms and user-generated content (UGC) are crucial tools for managing destination image and rebuilding tourist trust after a crisis. Additionally, algorithms on digital platforms significantly affect the visibility and impact of eWOM, which can either reinforce or distort safety perceptions. To effectively manage post-crisis recovery, destinations should focus on

leveraging eWOM to provide transparent, emotionally engaging, and credible safety narratives. Future research should explore the role of artificial intelligence and predictive models in optimizing eWOM strategies to better adapt to the dynamic nature of safety perceptions and tourist behavior in the post-crisis tourism context.

LIMITATIONS & DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study has several limitations that should be considered. First, the literature is primarily sourced from the Scopus database, which may limit the inclusion of relevant studies from other databases or grey literature. This could mean some important insights into the impact of eWOM on safety perceptions in tourism recovery post-crisis have been overlooked. Second, much of the reviewed literature is focused on specific destinations or regions, and the findings may not fully reflect global tourism dynamics, especially in areas with different cultural, social, and economic contexts. Furthermore, the dominance of quantitative methodologies in the selected studies may narrow the scope, as it might not fully capture the nuanced understanding of tourist behavior and emotional responses to eWOM.

Future research should consider expanding the geographic scope and destination types to better understand how eWOM influences safety perceptions across diverse regions. Additionally, more interdisciplinary approaches could provide richer insights, combining fields such as digital marketing, tourism behavior, and psychology, to explore how emotional and visual content in eWOM shapes travelers' perceptions of safety in post-crisis scenarios. Future studies could also explore the role of emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and big data, in analyzing and enhancing eWOM strategies that influence safety perceptions during post-crisis recovery. Longitudinal studies could offer a deeper understanding of how eWOM influences tourist loyalty and revisit intentions over time, helping to track the long-term effects of eWOM in shaping destination image. Lastly, future research could also examine the role of local communities and stakeholders in shaping eWOM narratives and how their involvement contributes to safety perceptions and the overall recovery of destinations after crises.

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