

Tourism In Digital Age A Cross-Countryanalysis Of Strategies Of Pakistan & China

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Abstract

Purpose: This research will be an investigative look into the effects of online marketing promotion in the digital era for tourism marketing with its focus on Pakistan as well as China. It ascertains the effects of different determinants like attitude, behavioral control, popular culture of internet (e-word of mouth) credibility, and perception of a destination on tourist intention in both the countries.

Design/Methodology: The use of positivist research philosophy is employed through a deductive method gathering the data from the tourists in Pakistan and China. Quantitative data research methods will be used and data collection will be done online through the distribution of online surveys by use of the different social media channels. Purposive sampling is a sample selection technique of which 233 respondents was used to come up with focus group participants who are involved in the tourism industry.

Findings: Through its study, the research proves substantial points in both the Pakistan and the China scenarios. Persuasion power and control of behavior anthropoid are found to increase the intentions to travel both nations. Also, the credibility of e-word of mouth plays an important role to predict attitude, behavioral control, and destination image in both place like Pakistan and China, he said. Besides, content, recommendation, trust, and utility are proven to be effective determinants of the credibility of e-word of mouth e-word of mouth not only in the United States but also in the UK.

Implications: Besides the main findings of this study, DMOs, tourism businesses and the traveling marketing sector in Pakistan and China may use them at the strategic level. Hence, the knowledge of what drives tourists to choose destinations and form a specific perception towards them reactively allows stakeholders to come up with the marketing strategies that aim at attracting and retaining tourists, improving the competitiveness and sustainability of the destination in the digital legacy.

Keywords: Digital Tourism Marketing, Online Promotions, Comparative Analysis, Pakistan, China, PLS-MGA.

1. Introduction

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1.1. Overview/Background

Tourism is the practice of individuals or organizations traveling to and staying in places other than their usual surroundings for leisure, business, or other purposes (Jingen Liang & Elliot, 2021). It involves a range of activities, including entertainment, adventure, exploring, cultural discovery, transportation, hotels, or housing, eating and drinking venues, and other amenities that meet the demands and tastes of tourists are just a few of the many activities that fall under the umbrella of tourism (Jingen Liang & Elliot, 2021; Rasool et al., 2021). Every country has its many attractions such as cultural diversity, traditional foods, and historical or attractive places. China and Pakistan also have such unique attractions (Huo et al., 2023; Rehman et al., 2020).

Tourism is a growing industry. It plays an important role in the revenue generation of any country, with a share in the gross domestic product (GDP) of 7.6% of global GDP in 2022 (7.7 trillion US dollars) where the United States of America (USA) and China presented as top contributors (Chen & Guo, 2023). To increase the economy, it is important to promote tourism through different channels. The revenue China gets in 2022 from tourism was 2.04 trillion Chinese Yan (CYN) or 0.29 trillion US dollars to the total GDP. In a similar fiscal year in 2022, Pakistan earned approximately 16 billion US dollars in tourism revenue (Azam et al., 2022).

Every nation needs effective marketing to grow its tourism sector and draw in an increasing number of visitors. Social media is one of the most widely used digital marketing platforms today. The advent of digital technology has completely changed the world of advertising. This medium is one of the most advantageous marketing tools available today due to its wide reach as well as the ease with which content can be shared (Khan et al., 2022; Mallick, 2023)

Any product or service that is marketed digitally is referred to as digital marketing. For instance, marketing using tablets, laptops, PCs, smartphones, or any other digital device. In digital marketing, the interactive use of technology such as emails, websites, newsgroups, forums, interactive television, mobile communications, and more to connect buyers and sellers electronically (Mallick, 2023; Zaib Abbasi et al., 2023). In digital marketing building a website is a successful approach for tourism businesses to preserve and grow their online presence and competitiveness in the market. Therefore, website material must be aesthetically pleasing, up-to-date, and often maintained with the needs of today's visitors (Velentza & Metaxas, 2023; Yu et al., 2024). Unheard of twenty years ago, large international firms like Google, Facebook, Amazon, Alibaba, eBay, and Uber have emerged as major stakeholders in our modern economy globally. There have been reports of digital marketing in Pakistan about digital portals, with an estimated 76.38 million internet users in Pakistan as of January 2020 (Chamboko-Mpotaringa & Tichaawa, 2023; Khan et al., 2022). The growing ubiquity of electronic devices has improved virtual consumer engagement through electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) communication that involves the customers in conversation about brands by liking, leaving feedback, and sharing content. eWOM is currently taking place on a much larger scale and has the power to influence potential customers' purchase intentions (Wu et al., 2023).

1.2. Statement of the Problem

In Pakistan, there is a lack of thorough understanding of digital tourism marketing techniques to attract tourists which causes low revenue generated. Smaller companies and travel destinations have found it hard to compete with larger competitors due to limited understanding of online promotion, limited resources, and technical problems. Examples of these problems include lack of expert of online marketing, website defects, slow loading of websites due to internet connectivity issues, and difficulty with mobile marketing (Mallick, 2023; Velentza & Metaxas, 2023; Yu et al., 2024). Customers usually trust more on electronic word of mouth than advertisement as its effects the buying decision strongly than another influencing medium (Wu et al., 2023). Additionally, negative reviews or comments in eWOM cause negative expression to customers and then ultimately showed negative buying behavior (Ismagilova et al., 2020; Wu et al., 2023). Users may be reluctant

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to divulge personal information online due to growing worries about the security and confidentiality of information, which could affect the efficacy of individualized advertising efforts (Pop et al., 2022; Velentza & Metaxas, 2023). Because internet users frequently have short attention spans, it can be difficult to grab and hold their attention. The frequency of ad-blocking software may hinder the exposure of digital ads, which can have an impact on the success and popularity of digital advertising efforts (Gaur et al., 2021; Velentza & Metaxas, 2023). Furthermore, websites lacked online services for booking hotels, travel guides, and transportation, they were unable to satisfy the demands of travelers. It is crucial to provide holistic online services of tourism through advertising to encourage tourists to explore the nation's destinations. Therefore, there is a need to identify and evaluate the comparative analysis of the two nations' digital tourist marketing initiatives' strengths and weaknesses (Velentza & Metaxas, 2023; Yu et al., 2024).

1.3. Research Gap

A disproportionate number of published research are of a modest scale, with sparse theoretical foundations and data sets. Few research studies examine how social media efforts on websites like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are performing in terms of engagement, reach, and impact in Pakistan and China in comparative analysis. Therefore, information quality should be studied. It is also important to examine how technologies improve user interaction and the traveler experience in general (Azam et al., 2022; Shahid & Qureshi, 2022). Moreover, there has been little study on how circumstances and cultural differences affect the influence of eWOM on purchasing intention. It is important to recognize that there may be subtle variations in how different societies react to internet reviews (Ullah et al., 2021). Therefore, it is important to analyze the degree to which the targeted audiences' cultural preferences and sensitivities have been considered when creating digital tourism marketing content (Gaur et al., 2021; Mallick, 2023). Use digital marketing, mobile, and social media marketing together while creating their proposal for additional research. Moreover, an absence of a social media platform influences the impact of eWOM on buying intention, where devoted followers may congregate, exchange ideas, and spread verbal messages of the brand (Gaur et al., 2021). Therefore, the study comparatively analyzed the relationship between eWOM credibility and travel intention with the mediating effect of destination image, attitude, and behavioral control in Pakistan and China.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Tourism

The travel and tourism industry, comprised of travel, lodging, entertainment, and affiliated services, contributes significantly to the international economy. It encompasses both domestic as well as foreign travel. A significant source of income for many nations is tourism (Akhtar et al., 2021; Yousaf & Xiucheng, 2018). Visitors' expenses for lodging, food, attractions, transportation, and other products and services are included in the revenue produced by tourism. Therefore, tourism helps in generating the revenue to national or international level. The indirect economic effects of supporting different industries and creating jobs are also considered (Azam et al., 2022).

Travel planning and experience have changed dramatically because of the incorporation of technology, including smartphone apps, virtual experiences, and internet booking platforms. Technology is essential for marketing, interacting with customers, and enhancing the trip experience in general (Gaur et al., 2021; Yu et al., 2024; Zaib Abbasi et al., 2023). To attract, engage, and convert potential visitors, organizations in the tourist sector must adopt digital marketing and online advertising strategies (Velentza & Metaxas, 2023). Businesses involved in the tourist industry, such as hotels, travel

agencies, and destinations, can efficiently reach and impact their target audience through the integration of digital techniques (Mallick, 2023).

2.2. Digital Tourism Marketing

Social media platforms have developed into effective tools that help travel agencies engage with their target market. Social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, WhatsApp, TripAdvisor, Agoda, and Airbnb offer a way to share interesting images, interesting content, and up-to-date information (Mallick, 2023; Zaib Abbasi et al., 2023). Businesses can use social media to promote special offers, answer questions, and foster brand loyalty by interacting directly with tourists and provide interesting and educational content too (Gaur et al., 2021). Therefore, to educate and motivate prospective travelers, travel blogs, articles, films, and other media are used. Further, it helps in conveying stories, highlighting distinctive experiences, and promoting a feeling of community (Majeed et al., 2020; Zaib Abbasi et al., 2023). Expertly written content improves a company's overall internet reputation in addition to drawing in organic visitors (Wu et al., 2023).

2.3. Tourism in Pakistan

The potential of Pakistan as a travel destination has long been acknowledged. The potential of Pakistan as a travel destination has long been acknowledged. Despite extensive media publicity as a hidden treasure, it has not been able to draw a significant number of foreign tourists due to security concerns and political unrest (A. Rehman et al., 2020)(Özgen Çiğdemli, 2022). Over time, many administrations have been drawn to the idea of making Pakistan a popular travel destination, and some efforts have been made to enhance connectivity and accessibility to remote areas, especially in the northern parts of the nation (Azam et al., 2022). The World Travel & Tourism Council's 2021 study states that in 2019, tourism contributed \$15 billion to Pakistan's GDP, or 5.7% of the country's overall GDP. This spike was followed by a roughly 25% reduction due to COVID-19 (Azam et al., 2022; Khan et al., 2022).

2.4. Tourism in China

China's tourist sector is a sizable and expanding one that highlights the nation's breathtaking landscapes, rich history, and diverse culture. China, one of the most populated and geographically varied countries on Earth, has a lot to offer visitors, from historical monuments dating back thousands of years to contemporary metropolises (Rehman et al., 2020; Shahid & Qureshi, 2022). However, most visitors in China are averse to learning about tourist destinations. These travelers pick their destinations based on popularity rather than traveling for other reasons. Top tourist destinations in China are always packed over the holidays for this reason, among others (Pop et al., 2022).

2.5. Theoretical underpinnings

Guerrero and Hughes (1972) developed the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), extending the research on identifying and quantifying human attitude to comprehend and forecast human behavior based on attitude. This "summation theory of Attitude" concludes that people's opinions about an object are influenced by their easy access to information about it. Furthermore, human behavior and attitudes influence their behavioral

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intentions. Therefore, the Theory of Planned Behavior were later extensions of this theory (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2000). According to (Jingen Liang & Elliot, 2021; Özgen Çiğdemli, 2022) prior research has confirmed the causal links within TPB that suggest behavioral intention is shaped by people's attitudes, subjective norms, and a non-volitional component of perceived behavioral control. TPB's broad application and utilization, a substantial amount of study in a variety of areas has been undertaken to investigate and comprehend human behavior (Gaur et al., 2021; Rehman et al., 2020; Wu et al., 2023; Yu et al., 2024).

The TPB model has been used in tourism research to predict visitors' behavioral intentions similarly. In conformity with prior investigations, this study uses the TPB model as a foundation for comprehending travel intentions among tourist of Pakistan and China. Destination image, and eWOM credibility are the two other important factors included in the TPB model beside attitude and behavioral control. These factors could aid in a better comprehension of the theoretical framework and guarantee the provision of futuristic findings to forecast the intention of tourists (Huo et al., 2021; Li et al., 2022; Mian, 2021; Wang et al., 2022; Yin & Choi, 2023).

2.6. Development of the hypotheses

2.6.1. Determinants of eWOM credibility

However much a person is related to or plays a role in something like a product, service, or decision is known as having a high or low level of involvement. Involvement in the great degree can play a decisive role in activity of eWoM credibility. Because of the dimension of more information processing, more contained knowledge, really experienced personal events, powerful emotional involvement, and established record of trustworthiness, high engagements positively affect trusts toward eWOM. A completely involved customer embodies an authentic eWOM source much more than the rest, and his/her knowledge and opinion are evaluated at a higher magnitude by the society (Arshad et al., 2018; Atique et al., 2024; Tariq et al., 2023).

H1: High involvement significantly influences eWOM credibility.

Another main element that influences the establishment of eWOM reputation is trust. The internet users are most likely to find the online information as trustworthy when they see a source as open and unbiased in information it shares, when they believe that the source knows what it is talking about and when they trust the source. To make sure that eWOM is trustworthy to persuade consumers to make certain choices- this kind of trust should be created and cemented (Pop et al., 2022; Yousaf & Xiucheng, 2018).

H2: Trust significantly influences eWOM credibility.

More can be discussed about general impact of recommendations on credibility of eWOM which include the source's expertise, emotional/cognitive attraction, internal consistency, transparency, social approval, use of personal user experience, and trust-worthiness of the information. Those companies that intend to outsmart all methods of

electronic WOM must comprehend their weight and its task of creating consumer perception and decisions (Mian, 2021; Zaib Abbasi et al., 2023).

H3: Recommendation significantly influence eWOM credibility.

Credibility of eWOM is achieved since content is similar for a long time and numerous platforms, which helps to build up credibility. When messages are consistent with other past experiences or statements, this helps generate a person indirectly delivering the news seem more reputable. A comment, whether good or unfavorable, can determine the kind of product based on the degree in which the customer trusts in the opinion of another person. The believability of eWOM is more likely to be enhanced by attributes like authenticity, specificity, tone, proper grammatical usage, support details, recognizing the boundaries, multimedia aspects, audience participation and its consonance with brands or product claims (Mallick, 2023; Velentza & Metaxas, 2023; Zaib Abbasi et al., 2023).

H4: Message content significantly influence eWOM credibility.

When making travel decisions via eWOM credibility, travelers can assess the quality of information by determining how helpful it is in assisting them in evaluating the trip product's features (Bilawal Khaskheli et al., 2023). According to Özgen Çiğdemli (2022), people judge the quality of information according to its perceived value. As a result, perceptual criteria are constantly used to determine the quality of information, including currency, completeness, reliability, timeliness, relevance, richness, and consistency.

H5: eWOM credibility utilitarian function significantly influence eWOM credibility.

2.6.2. Outcomes of eWOM credibility

When considering travel intention, the perceived behavioral control is significantly influenced by the credibility of eWOM. Reliable information boosts confidence, lowers perceived risk, and offers insightful knowledge all of which help people feel more in charge of their decision-making. Because of this, prospective travelers are more likely to decide to plan and go on a vacation after reading reputable eWOM (Jingen Liang & Elliot, 2021).

H6: eWOM credibility significantly influence behavioral control.

With the widespread adoption of Internet technologies, which have transformed the dissemination and impact of WOM, the significance of WOM for business has been extensively explored and studied. With estimates showing that hundreds of millions of potential visitors check online reviews annually, user-generated content regarding hotels, travel destinations, and tourism services has become a valuable source of information for tourism professionals (Khalid et al., 2023). 84% of these prospective guests said that reviews had an impact on their decision to book a trip. Both tourists and tourism businesses can benefit greatly from reading internet reviews left by other travelers. Scholars have used advanced technologies to evaluate and comprehend these reviews (Majeed et al., 2020; Pop et al., 2022). It additionally demonstrates the part information sources have in shaping the destinations image. The destination image is profoundly affected by negative word-of-mouth (WOM), which is generated when unhappy tourists share negative remarks about their

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experiences. Empirical studies have also shown that WOM influences the perception of a destination (Mallick, 2023; Wang et al., 2022).

H7:eWOM credibility significantly influences destination image.

To influence attitudes, the perceived reliability and accuracy of the information presented in eWOM are important. Positive views regarding the suggested destination are more likely to emerge if the source is perceived as trustworthy and dependable. Information presented has more credibility when eWOM is trusted which helps in making plans to travel (Yin & Choi, 2023).

H8:eWOM credibility significantly influences Attitude

2.6.3. Destination Image and Behavioral Control

A person's overall perception or the collection of all their impressions of a location is referred to as their destination image (Delval, 2024). The perception of a location can be formed by reflecting or interpreting its attributes via image. According to recent studies in the fields of tourism and marketing, travelers' subjective perceptions and destination selection are influenced by destination image, which also has an impact on their following trip evaluation and future (Delval, 2024; Huo et al., 2021).

H9:Destination image significantly influences behavioral control.

2.6.4. Destination Image and Attitude

Destination image involves cognitive perceptions that individuals have about a place. This includes knowledge about the destination's attractions, landmarks, cultural heritage, climate, and other information. A positive cognitive image can enhance the perceived attractiveness of a destination, influencing the traveler's attitude toward considering it for a visit (Chen & Guo, 2023; Jingen Liang & Elliot, 2021).

H10: Destination image significantly influences attitude.

2.6.5. Behavioral Control and Travel Intention

Travel intention is influenced by behavioral control, which shapes perceptions of how simple it is to plan a trip, how easy it is to get resources, how familiar you are with the procedures involved in traveling, how capable you are of making decisions, how much control you feel you have over your travel experiences, how easy it is to get over obstacles, how readily support systems are available, and how well you manage your time. The secret to encouraging positive travel intentions is to increase people's sense of control over the trip experience (Arshad et al., 2018; Atique et al., 2024).

H11: Behavioral control significantly influences travel intention.

2.6.6. Destination Image and Travel Intention

Subsequent research has confirmed that one of the key elements influencing the desire to return to a particular location is the picture of the destination. Findings validated the hypothesis that attitude towards behavioral intentions (travel intention) and image are related. The primary determinant of destination decision intention is destination image (Gholamhosseinzadeh, 2023).

H12: Destination Image significantly influence Travel Intention.

2.6.7. Attitudes and Travel Intention

In the study of tourism and consumer behavior, the connection between attitude and travel intention is essential. Travel intention describes a person's desire or plan to partake in travel-related activities. Attitudes frequently have emotional undertones. Travel motivation can be greatly influenced by a favorable emotional connection to a destination, such as emotions of joy, relaxation, or adventure. Positive people are more likely to be driven to visit a place that corresponds with their emotional preferences (Pop et al., 2022; Tariq et al., 2023; Wang et al., 2022).

H13: Attitude significantly influence travel intention.

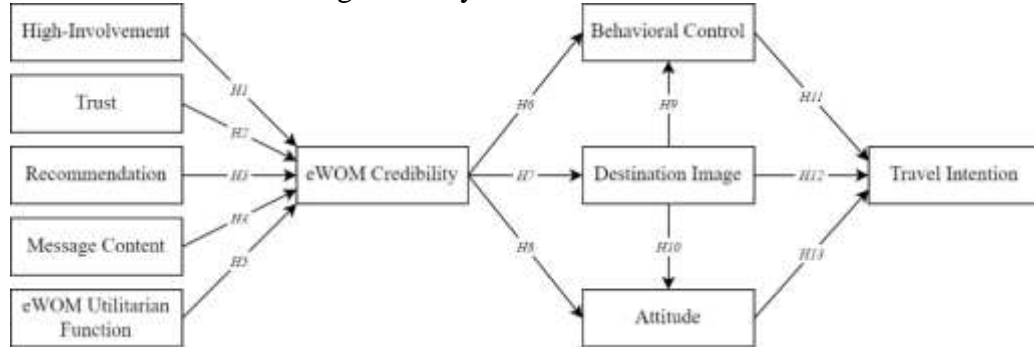


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Research Design

3.1.1. Research Philosophy

A research philosophy is an ideology concerning the methods of gathering, examining, and applying evidence related to a topic. This study used a positivistic research philosophy to examine how travel intention among tourist are affected by other variables in Pakistan and China comparatively. Through empirical observation and quantitative techniques, positivism is a research methodology that clarifies the causal links between variables (Spaak & Mindus, 2021). The study uses positivistic research philosophy to shed light on the larger environment of both countries' tourists. When quantitative methods are used, data from a large sample size may be collected, allowing for statistical analysis and the possibility of extrapolating the results to a larger population.

3.1.2. Research Approach

The deductive research technique is being used in this study to gather data. This choice is supported by numerous factors. The researchers in this study most likely derived their first findings from the theoretical framework that proposed specific correlations between the variables under investigation. They use a deductive approach to try and confirm these theoretical statements in a scientific manner, providing actual evidence to either corroborate or refute the preconceived notions. (Gregory & Muntermann, 2014; Proudfoot, 2023). This approach facilitates the methodical and comprehensive study of the research issues, leading to an advancement in the understanding of all other variables specially eWOM credibility and

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travel intention within the context of digital marketing in tourism sector of Pakistan and China (Chamboko-Mpotaringa & Tichaawa, 2023).

3.1.3. Research Choice

Quantitative research has been chosen for the current study because it allows for systematically measuring variables and testing hypotheses (Morupisi & Mokgalo, 2017; Yilmaz, 2013). The hypothesis- and theory-testing methodology can be helped by using this strategy. Theory of Planned behavior served as the foundation for the current investigation. A strong emphasis is also placed on precise measurements, statistical, mathematical, or numerical analysis of data gathered from polls, surveys, and questionnaires, as well as the manipulation of statistical data that has already been gathered using computational techniques (Daniel & Moskowitz, 2016). A bigger sample size may be obtained using the quantitative technique, and the results may be more enlightening. This method enables this research to adequately understand the effect of High involvement, trust, recommendation, message content and eWOM utilitarian function on eWOM credibility and effect of on travel intention through mediating effect of Behavioral control, Destination image, and Attitude.

3.2. Sample and Population

Total tourist population of China is 35.5 million according to the National Immigration Administration (Ali et al., 2023). However, the total number of foreign tourists in only one province of Pakistan is 1.2 million (Meo & Abd Karim, 2022). Hence, tourist from Pakistan and China will be the part of this study. Samples will be collected from different social media platforms like Facebook, twitter, Instagram, WeChat, WhatsApp, Snapchat, TripAdvisor, and Agoda.

The purpose of purposive sampling is to identify participants who are more likely to provide relevant and valuable data (Campbell et al., 2020). Purposive sampling will be used in this study to deliberately choose participants from tourism industry based on standards pertinent to the study's goals (Morupisi & Mokgalo, 2017).

The sample size of this research has been calculated using the N10 formula, in which N refers to the number of constructs in the model (Rouse & Fauchald, 1997). Therefore, as there are 10 constructs in the study's model, the study will have to collect minimum 100 sample responses from the social media platform from Pakistan and China. Hence, we have gathered 233 responses from sample population (Gregory & Muntermann, 2014; Mian, 2021; Pop et al., 2022). Table 1 shows the profile of the respondents.

Table 1: Respondents' Profile (n = 233)

	N	%
Travelled in the Past 6-Month		
China	92	39.5
Pakistan	141	60.5
Gender		
Male	110	47.2
Female	123	52.8
Age		
18-25	55	23.6

26-32	48	20.6
33-39	44	18.9
40-46	40	17.2
47 or above	46	19.7
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Education		
<hr/>		
Undergraduate	65	27.9
Graduate	53	22.7
Postgraduate	60	25.8
Others	55	23.6
<hr/>		
Sources of eWOM		
<hr/>		
Social Media	63	27.0
Review Websites	46	19.7
Blogs/Travel Forums	63	27.0
Others	61	26.2
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Interests in Travel Activities		
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Adventure	27	11.6
Cultural/Heritage	37	15.9
Food/Cuisine	46	19.7
Nature/Scenic	40	17.2
Shopping	41	17.6
Others	42	18.0
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3.3. Data Collection Tool and Instrument

Four measures of high involvement have been adapted from (Kanje et al., 2020); for example, “I felt very positive when I used tourism-related social media sites” based on a five-point Likert scale. Five measures of trust have been adapted from Atito et al. (2023); for example, “I trust most of my contacts in my friends list in the social networks I am a member of” based on a five-point Likert scale. Four measures of recommendations have been adapted from (Rahman et al., 2023); for example, “Travel reviews are posted online to boost my confidence in visiting these tourist destinations” based on a five-point Likert scale. Five measures of message content have been adapted from (Abbasi et al., 2023); for example, “Destination images posted on social media provide timely information” based on a five-point Likert scale. Five measures of eWOM utilitarian function have been adapted from Abbasi et al. (2023); for example, “I am excited to post and share on social media about tourism destinations” based on a five-point Likert scale. Four measures of eWOM credibility have been adapted from Abbasi et al. (2023); for example, “I feel that destination images posted on social media are convincing” based on a five-point Likert scale. Four measures of behavioral control have been adapted from Bae and Chang (2021); for example, “Whether or not I travel is completely up to me” based on a five-point Likert scale. Four measures of destination image have been adapted from (Rahman et al., 2023); for example, “The scenery and natural features of vacation destinations” based on a five-point Likert scale. Four measures

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of attitude have been adapted from Bae and Chang (2021); for example, “I find tourism useful as it opens up opportunities to explore new cultures and broaden my horizons” based on a five-point Likert scale. Four measures of travel intention have been adapted from My and Le Thanh (2023); (Raafat et al., 2023) for example, “I seek out destinations where I can fully immerse myself in the local culture and enjoy unique experiences without any concerns” based on a five-point Likert scale.

4. Results and Discussions

4.1. Common Method Variance

Common Method Variance (CMV) refers to the variance that is attributable to the measurement method rather than to the constructs being measured. It can arise when data on both the independent and dependent variables are collected using the same method, such as self-report surveys, leading to inflated relationships between variables. CMV can compromise the validity of study findings by artificially inflating or deflating the observed relationships between variables (Tehseen et al., 2017).

Total variance refers to the total amount of variability observed in the data (Eichhorn, 2014). In this study, the total variance being 33.712% suggests the proportion of variability in the dependent variable (travel intention) that is accounted for by all the independent variables (eWOM credibility, destination image, attitude, etc.). It indicates the overall explanatory power of the model in understanding travel intention among tourists in Pakistan and China.

4.2. Measurement Model

4.2.1. Construct Reliability and Validity

Table 2 shows the result of construct reliability and validity using PLS algorithm technique.

Table 2: Construct Reliability and Validity

	Loadings	Prob.	CR	AVE
Attitude				
A3 <- ATT	0.802	0.000	0.860	0.755
A4 <- ATT	0.932	0.000		
Behavioral Control				
BC3 <- BC	0.971	0.000	0.964	0.931
BC4 <- BC	0.958	0.000		
eWOM Credibility				
CR2 <- CR	0.957	0.000	0.966	0.933
CR3 <- CR	0.975	0.000		
Destination Image				
DI1 <- DI	0.865	0.000	0.937	0.787
DI2 <- DI	0.882	0.000		
DI3 <- DI	0.957	0.000		
DI4 <- DI	0.840	0.000		

High Involvement				
HI1 <- HI	0.966	0.000	0.978	0.917
HI2 <- HI	0.929	0.000		
HI3 <- HI	0.982	0.000		
HI4 <- HI	0.952	0.000		
Message Content				
MC4 <- MC	0.646	0.000	0.772	0.636
MC5 <- MC	0.924	0.000		
Recommendation				
R1 <- REC	0.721	0.000	0.932	0.775
R2 <- REC	0.947	0.000		
R3 <- REC	0.955	0.000		
R4 <- REC	0.879	0.000		
Travel Intention				
TI1 <- TI	0.925	0.000	0.932	0.776
TI2 <- TI	0.943	0.000		
TI3 <- TI	0.919	0.000		
TI4 <- TI	0.715	0.000		
Trust				
TR4 <- TR	0.929	0.000	0.936	0.880
TR5 <- TR	0.947	0.000		
eWOM Utilitarian Function				
UF1 <- UF	0.981	0.000	0.927	0.721
UF2 <- UF	0.649	0.000		
UF3 <- UF	0.862	0.000		
UF4 <- UF	0.841	0.000		
UF5 <- UF	0.876	0.000		

Hair et al. (2011) recommended that all the values of outer loadings must be higher than 0.60 for acceptance. As per Hair et al. (2012), composite reliability is considered acceptable when it surpasses the threshold value of 0.7, while the average variance extracted (AVE) should be at least 0.5. Upon examining the above table 2, it is evident that all variables demonstrated high reliability. Each variable's AVE value exceeded the cutoff point of 0.50, affirming the reliability of the measurement model for further analyses. Above table has shown that all indicators and constructs have achieved the suggested thresholds; henceforth, constructs were developed adequately; whereas, convergent validity has also been achieved.

4.2.2. Discriminant Validity using Fornell and Larcker (1981)

Table 3 shows the result of FLC for discriminant validity assessment.

Table 3: Fornell-Larcker Criterion (FLC)

ATT	BC	CR	DI	HI	MC	REC	TI	TR	UF
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ATT	0.869									
BC	-0.015	0.965								
CR	0.396	0.340	0.966							
DI	0.027	0.243	0.313	0.887						
HI	-0.023	-0.179	-0.151	-0.880	0.958					
MC	0.159	0.776	0.453	0.487	-0.435	0.797				
REC	0.422	0.561	0.483	0.228	-0.140	0.567	0.880			
TI	0.437	0.675	0.731	0.260	-0.191	0.789	0.824	0.881		
TR	-0.209	-0.761	-0.751	-0.327	0.170	-0.765	-0.615	-0.780	0.938	
UF	0.210	0.330	0.842	0.307	-0.105	0.306	0.317	0.494	-0.748	0.849

Above table has shown that constructs have higher square root of AVE coefficient than their correlation coefficients with other constructs as recommended by (Hair et al., 2012), providing that constructs have established their distinctiveness in the structural model (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Therefore, discriminant validity using FLC has been achieved.

4.2.3. Discriminant Validity using HTMT Ratio

Table 4 shows the result of discriminant validity assessment using the HTMT ratio.

Table 4: Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

	ATT	BC	CR	DI	HI	MC	REC	TI	TR	UF
ATT										
BC	0.140									
CR	0.425	0.354								
DI	0.117	0.208	0.282							
HI	0.057	0.160	0.139	0.939						
MC	0.245	1.006	0.628	0.876	0.817					
REC	0.609	0.625	0.497	0.168	0.133	0.750				
TI	0.560	0.674	0.792	0.188	0.175	1.028	0.906			
TR	0.249	0.834	0.822	0.263	0.159	1.067	0.695	0.840		
UF	0.240	0.414	0.885	0.278	0.095	0.433	0.367	0.533	0.834	

In SEM, researchers commonly assess discriminant validity using the HTMT ratio, which compares the correlations between constructs to determine whether they are sufficiently distinct. While a threshold of 0.90 is typically recommended, values slightly above this threshold may still indicate acceptable discriminant validity if they meet certain criteria, such as having a statistically significant probability level (Henseler et al., 2015). A probability level lower than 5% (often denoted as $p < 0.05$) suggests that the observed HTMT ratio is unlikely to have occurred by chance. Therefore, even though the HTMT ratio exceeds the conventional threshold, the low probability indicates that the observed overlap between constructs is statistically significant and may reflect genuine relationships between them

rather than measurement error or chance (Henseler et al., 2016; Henseler et al., 2015).

The above table has shown that most of the HTMT ratios between latent constructs are below the lower-bound threshold of 0.90 (Henseler et al., 2015); therefore, discriminant validity using HTMT ratio has been established for these latent constructs. However, some of the HTMT values exceed 0.90, but since they have a probability lower than 5%, therefore, they are still deemed to achieve acceptable discriminant validity. This justification is based on the guidelines provided by (Henseler et al., 2016).

4.2.4. Predictive Power of the Endogenous Constructs

Table 5 shows the predictive power using PLS algorithm and PLS blindfolding techniques.

Table 5: Predictive Power

	R-Square	Decision
Attitude	0.167	Weak
Behavioral Control	0.136	Weak
eWOM Credibility	0.773	Strong
Destination Image	0.098	Weak
Travel Intention	0.663	Moderate

(Chin et al., 1998) recommended R² values for endogenous latent variables based on 0.67 (substantial), 0.33 (moderate), and 0.19 (weak). In the structural model, attitude has weak predictive power of 0.167, behavioral control also has weak predictive power of 0.136, e-WOM credibility has strong predictive power of 0.773, destination image also has weak predictive power of 0.098, and travel intention has moderate predictive power of 0.663.

4.3. Structural Model

Table 6 and 7 show the results of path modeling analysis using PLS-MGA technique.

Table 6: PLS Path Modeling Analysis (China)

Path Relationships	Beta	S. D.	t-Stats	Prob.
ATT -> TI	0.511	0.119	4.280	0.000
BC -> TI	0.611	0.070	8.752	0.000
CR -> ATT	0.470	0.110	4.272	0.000
CR -> BC	0.260	0.106	2.455	0.014
CR -> DI	0.259	0.177	1.468	0.142
DI -> ATT	-0.058	0.119	0.485	0.627
DI -> BC	0.202	0.248	0.816	0.415
DI -> TI	0.053	0.114	0.461	0.645
HI -> CR	0.004	0.060	0.071	0.943
MC -> CR	0.300	0.136	2.204	0.028
REC -> CR	0.228	0.073	3.129	0.002
TR -> CR	0.282	0.230	1.228	0.219

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UF -> CR	0.869	0.124	6.992	0.000
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The obtained result indicated that the variable attitude has a ($\beta = 0.511$; $p < 0.05$) positively significant influence on the intention of tourists coming to China. One study showed that the attributes of destinations affected travelers' choices a lot. Resembling it, the researcher underlined the role of destination attributes in raising appeal for travelling (Nguyen et al., 2023). Moreover, destination preferences can also be driven by positive perceptions about the destination (Vada et al., 2023).

It could be concluded that a positively significant association between behavior control ($\beta = 0.611$; $p < 0.05$) and travel intention (China) has been found. Studies suggest that people tend to do things they feel they are championed at doing, which is why behavioral control bonds with the theory of planned activity (Greifenstein, 2024). Also, a survey discovered that control is a significant factor in the Chinese community because the higher the perceived control, the more positive travel intention will be (Li et al., 2023).

The study revealed that the e-word of mouth credibility positively and significantly impacts attitudes ($\beta = 0.470$; $p < 0.05$) among the Chinese people. Research suggests that consumers judge e-WOM as trustworthy, and their attitudes and purchasing intentions have become more positive. Moreover, the other assumption was that attitudes towards goods and brands in the Chinese market primarily relied on product quality (Madhura et al., 2023). Further research has shown that e-community credibility is not only relevant for Chinese shoppers in creating trust, but sadly, it has also become a significant factor (Keelson et al., 2024).

The examination has proved that online word-of-mouth credibility ($\beta = 0.260$; $p < 0.05$) significantly and positively influences consumer behavioral control in China. One study indicates that individual views of behavioral control are improved by applying reliable e-WOM (Keelson et al., 2024). Also, a study emphasized CR's role in giving consumers the power to control their choices more robustly, and they can do this, especially in the Chinese market (Hilale & Chakor, 2024).

The results indicated that the credibility of E-word-of-mouth marketing ($\beta = 0.259$; $p > 0.05$) was positively but insignificantly affected by destination image in China. Because of the considerable impact of trustworthy e-WOM, the research showed that travelers of Chinese origin consider the place high on the evaluation scale (Keelson et al., 2024). In general, in another case, the research revealed how the electronic WOM legitimacy impacts the destination choice of Chinese travelers (Madhura et al., 2023).

The finding revealed that destination image ($\beta = -0.058$; $p > 0.05$) is negatively insignificant in explaining attitude in China. A study ascertains that how travelers evaluate a place is primarily swayed by its visual image as conveyed in a destination's marketing (Mensah et al., 2023). Image destination features are being evaluated positively as qualified by another study. Accordingly, people's perception of specific features of a place dependent on its image was also brought out (Keelson et al., 2024).

The result showed that destination image ($\beta = 0.202$; $p > 0.05$) positively and insignificantly affects behavioral control in China. The minimal effect of destination image on behavioral control in China is consistent with other studies that demonstrate the role of cultural factors in shaping traveler behavior (Keelson et al., 2024). Like this, a different study highlighted the importance of individual control over outside factors and suggested that destination image may not always have a direct impact on behavior (Li et al., 2023).

The study result discovered that destination image ($\beta = 0.053$; $p > 0.05$) influences travel intention positively but insignificantly in China. According to the research, the number of tourists visiting a particular destination can be heard much if it has a good image (Mukhopadhyay et al., 2023). Research also emphasized the role of destination image in domestic and international travelling (Mensah et al., 2023).

The outcome was that high involvement ($\beta = 0.004$; $p > 0.05$) influences E-word of mouth credibility positively but insignificantly in China. According to research, there is no

significant correlation between high involvement and the credibility of e-word-of-mouth in China. This conclusion highlights the cultural differences in online communication (Ekka & Dhall, 2023). In a similar vein, a different study highlighted the intricacy of how credibility is perceived and suggested that significant involvement would not always increase the credibility of e-word of mouth in different cultural situations (Madhura et al., 2023).

The finding supported the apprehension that message content ($\beta = 0.300$; $p < 0.05$) contributes positively and significantly to the electronic word-of-mouth credibility of the country. Research done prove message content to be of very importance when it comes to estimating how credible customers consider to be internet reviews (Makhith & Ngobeni, 2023). Additionally, an account of research noted that clarity and the provision of educational content backed the assessment of e-WOM reliability (Vada et al., 2023).

After the analysis, recommendation ($\beta = 0.228$; $p < 0.05$) positively and significantly impacts the credibility aspect of word of mouth related to electronic commerce in China. It has already been proven in past studies that noticing recommendations can build trust, and a way for social approval is a sign that the various levels of uncertainty of the information could be reduced (Keelson et al., 2024). This study accepts the media capacity of recommendation to credibility perception in a digital era in word-of-mouth communication (Tarhan & Dursun, 2024).

The result revealed that trust ($\beta = 0.282$; $p > 0.05$) positively and significantly influences the credibility of E-word-of-mouth in China. A survey indicates that consumer perceptions of eWOM legitimacy are positively affected by trust (Makhith & Ngobeni, 2023). In a parallel study, the researchers showed that trust is fundamental in the consumer determining how dependable e-WOM is (Li et al., 2023).

So, the statistical analysis showed that the functional utility ($\beta = 0.869$; $p < 0.05$) positively and significantly affects E-word-of-mouth reliability in China. Research proved that consumers placed high confidence and trust in consumer reviews associated with utilitarian benefits (Madhura et al., 2023). Then, another study pointed out the importance of utilitarian value that shapes consumers' decisions about the trustworthiness of e-WOM (Mukhopadhyay et al., 2023).

Table 7: PLS Path Modeling Analysis (Pakistan)

Path Relationships	Beta	S. D.	t-Stats	Prob.
ATT -> TI	0.387	0.111	3.473	0.001
BC -> TI	0.692	0.051	13.682	0.000
CR -> ATT	0.407	0.106	3.835	0.000
CR -> BC	0.306	0.092	3.306	0.001
CR -> DI	0.366	0.074	4.971	0.000
DI -> ATT	-0.138	0.101	1.364	0.173
DI -> BC	0.138	0.075	1.855	0.064
DI -> TI	0.119	0.059	2.033	0.042
HI -> CR	0.017	0.050	0.336	0.737
MC -> CR	0.139	0.102	1.370	0.171
REC -> CR	0.146	0.076	1.921	0.055
TR -> CR	0.016	0.188	0.086	0.932
UF -> CR	0.781	0.095	8.189	0.000

The result showed that attitude ($\beta = 0.387$; $p < 0.05$) positively and significantly affects travel intention in Pakistan. According to a survey, factors like hospitality, natural beauty,

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and cultural history impact tourists visiting Pakistan (Vada et al., 2023). Another study proved that domestic and international visitors to Pakistan used the impression of the destination's qualities in their consideration process. Consequently, it positively influenced the tourists' intention to visit this country (Nguyen et al., 2023).

The outcome demonstrated how the Travel Attitude of the respondents is affected positively and significantly by behavioral control ($\beta = 0.692$; $p < 0.05$). According to research, tourists in Pakistan who have a distinct confidence in the capabilities to plan and take part in their journeys have a higher tendency to travel (Greifenstein, 2024). Research done by the mentioned visitors of Pakistan additionally showed that one and the other element of attitude and motivation, which are called perceived behavioral control, is also responsible for the decision to travel (Nguyen et al., 2024).

This indicated that e-word of mouth credibility ($\beta = 0.407$; $P < 0.05$) has a positive significant step on the attitude in Pakistan. According to an elaborated survey, the opinions of consumers from Pakistan on the brands depend positively on them and the scope of CR (electronic word of mouth, i.e., internet) (Ekka & Dhall, 2023). Additionally, the study revealed that what is credible to consumers by e-WOM dramatically affects their perception of online shopping (Tarhan & Dursun, 2024).

It emerged that electronic word-of-mouth credibility ($\beta = 0.306$; $p < 0.05$) could positively and significantly affect behavioral control among consumers in Pakistan. Per studies, Pakistanis believe they generally have more power over their travel decisions when they have trustworthy e-WOM sources (Makhith & Ngobeni, 2023). Additionally, a research paper found that the significant role of e-WOM and consumers' perceived control over their buying behavior was costed by its legitimacy (Yaping et al., 2023).

The E-word-of-mouth credibility ($\beta = 0.366$; $p < 0.05$) positively and significantly influences destination image in Pakistan. Research shows that travelers' impressions of Pakistan as a tourism destination will get a positive boost from the reliability of e-WOM (Ekka & Dhall, 2023). Moreover, a study outlined the legitimate influence of e-WOM on the image of Pakistan travel in general (Keelson et al., 2024).

As the output revealed, the destination image ($\beta = -0.138$, $p > 0.05$) signals a negatively insignificant act attitude in our country. As found in a study, tourists' attitudes become more positive about appreciating the destinations if the site has a good image (Nguyen et al., 2023). The research found considerable positive relationships between the views of visitors and the image of the place they visited (Vada et al., 2023).

The findings supported that destination image ($\beta = 0.138$, $p > 0.05$) has a positive and insignificant effect on behavioral control in Pakistan. The control exhibited by travelers when they pick their best travel options is recognized as the most important element influencing the value of Pakistani tourism image (Mukhopadhyay et al., 2023). Furthermore, the second study shows the medium level of the positive links between control and destination image (Vilkaite-Vaitone & Tamuliene, 2023).

However, study revealed that travel intention was considerably positively impacted by destination image ($\beta = 0.119$; $p < 0.05$). As per the research findings, travelers become more interested in visiting Pakistani destinations when they positively perceive the destination (Greifenstein, 2024). A different study also showed that their perception of those destinations strongly affected travelers' plans to travel to Pakistani locations (Nguyen et al., 2023).

The result was such that high involvement ($\beta = 0.017$; $p > 0.05$) had a positive but insignificant effect on the credibility of E-word of mouth in Pakistan. A study done by deeply committed customers in Pakistan usually documents a higher understanding of products and services, which is likely to result in them being more confident with e-WOM credibility (Yaping et al., 2023). Another study whose results were like ours has shown that the 'significant involvement' factor boosted the 'e-WOM legitimacy' of Pakistani customers (Vada et al., 2023).

The conclusion illustrated that messaging content ($\beta = 0.139$; $p > 0.05$) becomes an insignificant but positive factor of the E-word of mouth credibility in Pakistan. The data indicates that consumers' assurance of the reliability of e-WOM in Pakistan is likely to be enhanced by providing adequate and well-structured information (Vada et al., 2023). Conversely, another study demonstrates that the consumption of the e-WOM message content is higher among top-grade information consumers (Hilale & Chakor, 2024).

The data demonstrated that recommendation ($\beta = 0.146$; $p > 0.05$) positively and insignificantly impacts E-word-of-mouth credibility in China. The research identified that recommendations played a significant role in building credibility by having a social approval effect and lowering the risk (Khan et al., 2023). Additionally, a study revealed that a familiar face or a smiling expression positively influences a believable judgement online (Madhura et al., 2023).

The finding said that trust ($\beta = 0.016$; $p > 0.05$) is positively insignificantly associated with Pakistan's E-word-of-mouth credibility. Consumers in Pakistan believe that eWOM is legit as their trust in it tends to be high (Nguyen et al., 2023). The study also pointed out that consumers' judgments about the reliability of online reviews depend a lot on trust (Mensah et al., 2023).

The result showed that the utilitarian function ($\beta = 0.781$; $p < 0.05$) positively and significantly affects- e-word of mouth credibility in Pakistan. According to a study, Pakistanis believe online reviews' perceived authenticity to be positively influenced by utilitarian benefits (Yaping et al., 2023). Likewise, another study showed that utilitarian electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) increases customers' confidence in online recommendations (Vada et al., 2023).

Table 8 shows the comparative analysis between China and Pakistan regarding the path relationship of variables.

Table 8: Comparative Analysis between China and Pakistan

Path Relationships	Difference	Prob.	Decision
ATT -> TI	0.124	0.430	Same
BC -> TI	-0.081	0.340	Same
CR -> ATT	0.063	0.658	Same
CR -> BC	-0.046	0.738	Same
CR -> DI	-0.107	0.569	Same
DI -> ATT	0.080	0.608	Same
DI -> BC	0.064	0.592	Same
DI -> TI	-0.067	0.622	Same
HI -> CR	-0.012	0.864	Same
MC -> CR	0.161	0.329	Same
REC -> CR	0.081	0.436	Same
TR -> CR	0.266	0.350	Same
UF -> CR	0.088	0.558	Same

The above results showed no statistically significant difference between Pakistan and China regarding the relationship between attitude to travel intention (Diff = 0.124; $p > 0.05$). Research has indicated that cultural variables significantly influence people's perceptions of travel and tourism. Suppose Pakistan and China possess comparable cultural values, such as hospitality, traditionalism, and collectivism. In that case, the influence of attitude on travel intention would probably be uniform for both groups (Keelson et al., 2024).

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The above results showed no statistically significant difference between Pakistan and China regarding the relationship between behavioral control and travel intention (Diff = -0.081; $p > 0.05$). Research has shown that people's beliefs about their behavioral control regarding travel intention are strongly influenced by the availability of lodging options, transportation options, and other amenities linked to travel. People from Pakistan and China might experience equal satisfaction with their travel choices if their countries meet the threshold in the accessibility of travel resources (Khan et al., 2023).

Statistics prove no relationship between e-word-of-mouth credibility and attitude between Pakistan and China (Diff = 0.063; $p > 0.05$). Research has shown that the trustworthiness of electronic word-of-mouth sources affects people's opinions on online testimonies. Generally, the review of electronic travel by word of mouth can bring a unified voice to people in China and Pakistan if they perceive it as equally trustworthy (Sharifirad, 2023) . The above outcomes indicate no statistically significant difference in the credibility of the e-word of the mouth that influences behavioral control between Pakistan and China, respectively (Diff = -0.046; $p > 0.05$). It could be because they rely equally on website indexes and rankings. Individuals in both countries likely perceive similar levels of control over their actions due to their trust in online information, reflecting the universal influence of accessible online content on travel decision-making (Yaping et al., 2023).

The above results showed no statistically significant difference between Pakistan and China regarding the relationship between e-word-of-mouth credibility and destination image (Diff = 0.124; $p > 0.05$). People in China and Pakistan may be equally exposed to electronic word-of-mouth information about travel destinations if both nations have comparable social media usage rates and internet penetration. Moreover, studies indicate that perceptions of a destination are significantly influenced by the reliability of Internet evaluations and recommendations (Keelson et al., 2024).

The above results showed no statistically significant difference in Pakistan and China regarding the relationship between destination image and behavioral control (Diff = 0.124; $p > 0.05$). Some destination qualities that are universally appealing and contribute to perceptions of control over travel behaviors may be the reason given by previous research that there is no significant difference regarding the influence of destination image on behavioral control between China and Pakistan. We have ascertained that the widely understood examples such as safety, accessibility and infrastructure might change the thought patterns of behavioral controllers which are culturally bound. Therefore, if tourists distinguish same quality worthy in China and Pakistan, destinations images will direct tourists' behavior in both these countries(Li et al., 2023).

The related finding indicates the insurmountable difference between Pakistan and China regarding destination image and travel intention (Diff = 0.124; $p > 0.05$). Study indicates that travelers may acquire similar mentalities and wishes globally. This diffusion of destination images may be mediated by marketing, media, and internet platforms which contribute to the consistent influence on global travel intentions and various cultural contexts. Consequently, according to the above-mentioned conventional outlooks, the people of China and Pakistan probably might have a common travel desire while following the same representation of those places (Vada et al., 2023).

The above results showed no statistically significant difference between Pakistan and China regarding the relationship between high involvement and e-word-of-mouth credibility (Diff = 0.124; $p > 0.05$). Studies show that people in all cultural contexts have comparable degrees of confidence and interaction with online reviews and suggestions as digital communication becomes more commonplace. As a result, if China and Pakistan see a similar trend toward digitalization in the tourism industry, this might result in similar degrees of e-word-of-mouth credibility involvement in both nations (Hilale & Chakor, 2024).

The above results showed no statistically significant difference in Pakistan and China regarding the relationship between message content and e-word-of-mouth credibility (Diff

= 0.124; $p > 0.05$). According to the survey findings, informative, authentic, and up-to-date communication are the top criteria for cultural diversity, and they are the same in all countries. The approach implies that in case messages in China and Pakistan fit into the same box of these universal standards, they must be perceived similarly on the credibility scale in both countries (Makhith & Ngobeni, 2023).

The above results showed no statistically significant difference in Pakistan and China regarding the relationship between recommendation to e-word-of-mouth credibility (Diff = 0.124; $p > 0.05$). Study has shown that persons of varied backgrounds tend to place greater trust in information obtained from friends, experts, and influencers when examining online e-word-of-mouth CR. Therefore, Pakistan and China would believe the recommendations credible since they would reflect their and their peers' perspectives (Mukhopadhyay et al., 2023).

The above results showed no statistically significant difference between Pakistan and China regarding the relationship between trust and e-word-of-mouth credibility (Diff = 0.124; $p > 0.05$). Research with cross-cultural participants suggests that regardless of the person's country of living, they will generally formulate similar standards for assessing the reliability of online word-of-mouth CR sources as time for online CR relationships goes on. Hence, the fact that China and Pakistan are both concerned with the same global digital networks that make the credibility of their CRs perceived on a similar trust level indicates that the two countries are competing equally (Nguyen et al., 2023).

The above results showed no statistically significant difference between Pakistan and China regarding the relationship between utilitarian function and e-word-of-mouth credibility (Diff = 0.124; $p > 0.05$). Studies indicate that people from diverse cultural backgrounds tend to have more faith in electronic word-of-mouth recommendations that provide relevant, helpful, and actionable information for making decisions. Therefore, it may have equal effects on perceptions of reliability in China and Pakistan if they both show similar preferences for utilitarian content in electronic word-of-mouth communication (Makhith & Ngobeni, 2023).

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study aimed to conduct a comparative analysis of online promotion strategies in the context of digital tourism marketing between Pakistan and China. Research philosophy and research technique of positivistic type were employed by means of quantitative methods in both countries to generate data about tourists' response. Objective sampling was used in the participants of tourism industry where the snowball sampling method was used to collect data through various social media platforms. A volume of 233 participants made to the sampling. The result reported that the study had some meaningful consequences between Pakistan and China as well. Firstly, in all the surveyed markets, attitudes and behavioral measures were found to be the determinants of travel intention. Consistently, the content of the message, reference, reliability, and utilitarian function acts as the major factors to determine the e-word of mouth reliability in both countries.

The comparative study of Pakistan and China unveiled no marked shifts in the signs of attitudes, behavioral control, e-word of mouth credibility, image of the destination, people's high involvement, uptake of information, labeling, trust, and utilitarian function, which exert their impact on the psychological aspects of travel intention and destination perception. This implies a high degree of unanimity in these factors impact regardless of

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different demographic contexts, which presents a growing world tendency for digital marketing. The success here depends on the fact that travel intention is the reason for people wish to travel even though they plan their trip. In the vein of a much larger shift in tourists' preferences to plan and make decisions on their trips through digital platforms, it is key for tourism stakeholders to outline the factors that drive tourist to travel to manage marketing campaigns that are appealing to tourists and destination management strategies. The study aims to reveal the factors that determine tourists' preferences for visiting destinations in both China and Pakistan. This information can be a direct consequence for policymakers, marketers of destinations, and tourism businesses trying to make their brands appealing to the visitors.

5.2. Theoretical Implications

The present study has a few theoretical implications especially within the frameworks of Ajzen (1985) behavior theory consisting of the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). Firstly, the results of research add support to TRA and UTP as the studies have found that attitude, which is a part of TAA, and behavioral control, which is a part of TPB, have significant effect on travel intention in various cultures since the empirical results have indicated the same effects in Pakistan and China. This appeals to the principles of both TRA and TPB which believe that a person creates a resolution to take part in a certain behavior as a function of the behavioral attitude and perceived behavioral control.

As an extension, the study shows how TRA and TPB can be practiced in the context of digital tourism marketing when factors like e-word of mouth credibility, image of the destination, recommendation, trustworthiness, and functionalities that are useful to the person are considered in the travel intent metric through their effects on attitude and behavioral control. Through the addition of these factors to the TRA and TPB frameworks, this study not only advances our knowledge on the multi-dimensional relationships but also explicates the intricate linkage among psychological variables and these strategies in influencing what tourists do.

However, cultural variations enriched the comparative study between Pakistan and China as it was revealed that the very fundamental constructs of TRA and TPB were universally related across tens of cultures. The consistence evident in the finding is an indication that while this might be attributed to cultural variations, the operative mechanism travel intention in any of these two countries is similar. Besides this TRA and TPB are rewarded by the observed persistence and the thread of their applicability to the area of human behavior in tourism.

On top of this, the research emphasizes the role of digital technologies in serving as a mediator to explore factors TRA and ATT, therefore, the ever-changing situation of information dissemination and consumer decision making in nowadays tourism must be considered. Through exploring how internet advertising strategies can impact tourists' attitudes, perceptions, and intentions, the research will identify some complex relationships that these dynamic elements have with the TRA and TPB.

Generally, this study is significant because it contributes to extending the theoretical understanding on travel behavior within this area of Tourism Attitude Relevance Theory and Tourism Behavior Prediction model as well as providing some insights into the effects of digital technologies in the way people make choices as tourists within various cultural contexts. Besides, the proposed research executes significant theoretical extensions that eventually make it easier to understand how tourists' attitudes behavioral intentions and

perceptions towards destinations are formed. This study also strengthens the academic and practice fields of tourism marketing through theory building and testing, consequently provides valuable inputs for both academicians and the industry practitioner.

5.3. Practical Recommendations

Dual base on this study's result, the following are the specific practical recommendations for destination management organizations (DMOs), tourism businesses, and marketers of the operators in both Pakistan and China. Therefore, firstly, Tourism destinations and businesses should put more emphasis on attitudes and control in relation to traveling intentions in both destination as the important travel attitudes and behavioral control will help drive the favorable attitudes and feelings of control over the travel decisions. It can be accomplished via result-oriented marketing campaigns that promote the special features, facilities and the breathtaking experiences presented by the destinations and to give information and support services to assist people in their travel planning and execution.

Besides, e-word of mouth credibility can be depicted as one of the notable influential factors on attitude, behavioral control, and destination image observably; tourism stakeholders should thus boost and control online reviews, recommendations, and testimonies to positively lead to favorable impression. This involves affecting the customers on digital networks consistently, encouraging things like user created photos and videos, and responding quickly and honestly to issues raised by users. By capitalizing on the strength of the e-word-of-mouth awareness, DMOs and businesses can accomplish the building of credibility and trust perception among potential visitors and this in effect increases the travel desire.

Considering the observations expressed in this study, DMOs in both countries, tourism organizations and marketers would be wise to undertake the set of recommendations discussed below. Firstly, relying on the evident fact that the tourist's attitude and behavioral control over travel decisions significantly affect the travel intention in both countries (Tourism DMOs and businesses should, therefore, endeavor, in prioritizing the efforts to enhance the positive feelings of their travelers and perception of the travelers). With focused marketing campaigns that underline the exceptional features and experiences the destinations have to offer in addition to accessible and helpful information and services for travelers to plan and execute the tour, this can be realized.

In addition, considering the dominance of e-word of mouth credibility over attitude, behavior, and destination image, tourism stakeholders should endeavor to curb negative development and maximize development that is good for the destination image. Digital engagement with travelers plays an important role here, the efforts involve facilitating user-generated content, and prompt and transparent responses to queries and feedbacks. Through the application of the digital word of mouth, DMOs along with relevant parties can boost trust and credibility of the intended travelers and consequently increase the intention of tourism.

5.4. Limitations and Future Research

The study has not escaped its shortcomings. Although the study relies on self-reported data gathered through online surveys, those data may be limited by the response bias and social desirability bias. Such a gap can be bridged by applying methodology to the future study that combines the use of surveys with the observation or experimental techniques to increase the reliability of findings. Besides, the use of qualitative methods like the interviews and focus groups could help getting the deeper insights if the tourists' perceptions and behavior patterns are looked at, and thus a more comprehensive view is created about the factors determined travel intention and the destination perception.

Another concern is over the adoption of purposive sampling that may lead to sampling bias and therefore contributes to the limitations in the generalization of outcomes. A drawback here is the selection bias since self-selection and convenience sampling could obtain non-representative data. Researchers may use probability sampling techniques such as random sampling or stratified sampling to overcome this limitation. In addition, the generalization

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of my data and enlarging my sample size, geographically covering an even broader area, like other destinations besides the two countries, i.e. Pakistan and China, would, of course, facilitate my work and increase the validity of results as it would give a chance to make cross-cultural comparisons.

Besides, the study confined limited to the effectiveness of online promotion modes of determining travelers intends and perceptions concerning destination, forgetting the others that may also lead to decision-making process for tourists. In accordance with this, future research could investigate the withholding effects of contextual variables are on the association between digital marketing approaches and tourists conduct. As what has also been mentioned, technology like VR and AR, too, have a part to play when it comes to the shaping of tourist perceptions and experiences. Their role could give marketers new insights as to which direction digital tourism is headed to.

Besides, this research discovered that the outcomes of using online promotion strategies on tourist behavior were similar in Pakistan and China even though some gaps that might need further research remained unknown yet. Future research may go into deeper analyses in the cultural, social, and economic factors that are why some countries have effective online marketing strategies in comparison to others. These analytical approaches need to explain how internet penetration, digital infrastructure, and consumer tastes determine the effectiveness of online marketing in one way or another. Also, then, longitudinal studies, would be necessary to monitor how tourists' behavior over time changes due to the unique aspects of the digital marketing strategies in both countries.

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