

## EFFECT OF ELECTRONIC WORD OF MOUTH (E-WOM) ON VISITING INTENTION MEDIATED BY DESTINATION IMAGE AT THE RAWA BENTO TOURISM OBJECT

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### Abstract

*This research aims to examine the effect of E-WOM on visiting intention mediating destination image at the Rawa Bento tourist attraction. The data used in this research are primary data and secondary data. The research period starts from April to August 2023. The sampling technique used is non-probability sampling with a purposive sampling method. The sample size in this study refers to the sampling formula from Hair et al (2010), with sixteen statements as indicators, so the sample size is 90 respondents. This research uses a quantitative approach with data processing and analysis using SEM PLS analysis namely Smart PLS. The research results show that E-WOM on destination image has no effect, E-WOM on visiting intention has no effect. Destination image has a significant effect on visiting intention. E-WOM (Electronic Word of Mouth) on visiting Intention mediated Destination Image has no effect*

**Keywords:** E-WOM, Destination Image, Visit Intention

### Introduction

Marketing perspective Electronic Word Of Mouth (E-WOM) is a big subject and a key player in marketing. Rachman, (2018) argues that the power of Electronic Word of Mouth has a big influence on conventional advertising in terms of its ability to create negative or positive attitudes from consumers. One of the more relevant information disseminations is that E-WOM can also contribute to the increasing interest of other people in visiting the city of Payakumbuh. This is because E-WOM has an influence that improves the image of tourist visiting areas. The rapid development of the internet has enabled consumers to more easily share their opinions about products or services with the potential to disseminate information.

Tourism is a mainstay sector of the national economy which has the potential to encourage a country's economic growth. Tourism is a sector that has recently become important and cannot be separated from human activities, especially regarding social and economic activities. In fact, tourism has developed into one of the largest industries in the world, which is marked, among other things, by the growth in the number of tourist visits and income obtained from international tourists, especially in Indonesia (Natalia et al., 2018). The tourism sector in Indonesia is developing with positive results which are marked by the growth in the number of tourist visits which increased in 2017. This makes Indonesia in second place after Vietnam and ahead of other ASEAN competitor countries such as Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia. This is in line with an increase in foreign exchange earnings from the tourism sector, an increase in the ranking of the tourism competitiveness index, and an increase in the contribution of the tourism sector (Salsabila & Lestari 2021).

The opinion of Cravens and Piercy (2009) states that brand image is a set of relationships that are memorable and remembered by consumers regarding a brand as a result of experiences and evaluative actions regarding product information. Brand image helps companies in marketing efforts (Hermiyenti & Wardi, 2019). According to Juliana et al (2020) companies/products that have a positive image will tend to be popular and trusted by consumers. Arif's (2019) research results found that brand image significantly influences consumer interest in choosing. Brands that have a positive image will also be given more priority in a purchase, because they guarantee the quality of the products/services they offer (Arif, 2019). On the other hand, Han Ji-Soo's research (2017) states that brand image encourages word-of-mouth communication, meaning that a person's experience in using a brand will encourage them to tell at least their closest family, and then pour out more positive messages to their colleagues on social media. (Han Ji-Soo, 2017). On the other hand, e-WOM provides a causal effect that is able to significantly increase the reputation of a brand, because the information becomes more widespread and the brand becomes more famous (Sanny et al., 2020). Several studies have used brand image as a mediator in the relationship between e-commerce and consumer interest in choosing, and the majority of them found a partial contribution (Hien et al., 2020; Kazmi & Mehmood, 2016; Yulianto et al., 2021; Yunus et al., 2016). These results mean that word of mouth communication via chat applications and social media is significantly driven by the positive image of the company/product, and has had an impact on growing consumer interest in choosing that brand (Hien et al., 2020).

The reason for establishing this discussion is that we want to contribute to saving local businesses that specifically operate at the Rawa Bento Tourist Attraction. It is hoped that this research can provide information and considerations regarding the best promotional strategies for regional, district and national governments as well as for MSMEs.

**Literature Review**

**Visiting Intention**

Visiting Intention is the possibility that a consumer will buy a product or service after conducting an evaluation (Kotler & Armstrong., 2008). Kazmi and Mehmood (2016) define interest in choosing as a person's desire to incur costs to get the benefits of a product or service. Then Madahi and Sukati (2012) also provide the view that purchase intention is the intention that exists within a person to purchase services or products that they already know about, whether from colleagues or family. Purchase Intention can also be interpreted as the possibility that consumers will purchase certain products/services (Fathy et al., 2015)

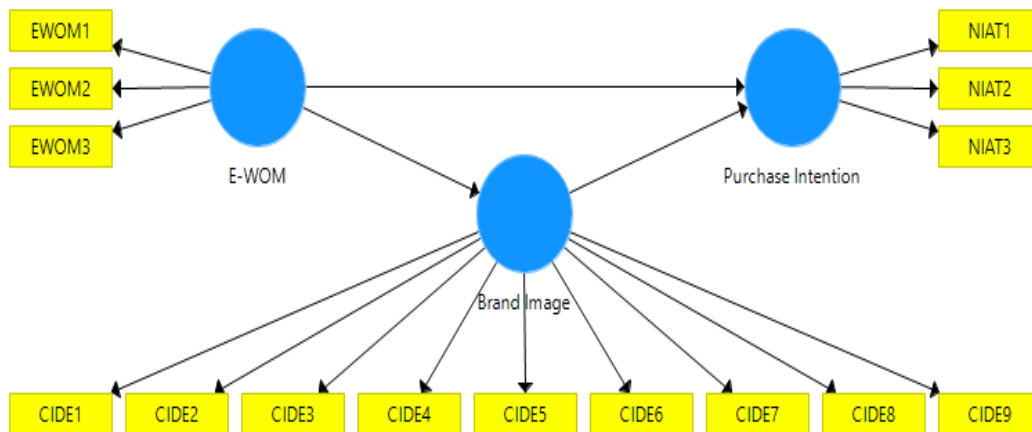
**E-WOM**

E-WOM is considered as a reference by someone before they intend to buy a product/service offered on the market (Kudeshia & Kumar, 2017). Positive opinions and good impressions shared by previous consumers will encourage other people's interest in making purchases, because a person's positive post-purchase experience has been proven to influence others' interest in choosing (Arif, 2019).

**Destination Image**

Destination image can be referred to from brand image theory. According to Aaker (2013: 72), consumers' views or perceptions of a brand reflect brand associations in consumers' memories, besides Chi et al. (2020) also interpret that objective brand image refers to the collection of connections related to the brand in the consumer's mind, which requires consumers to recreate the brand correctly from their memories.

Based on the explanation above, the framework of thinking can be described as follows:



**Figure 1. Framework**

- H1 : Destination image has a significant and positive effect on Intention to Visit
- H2 : Electronic Word of Mouth has a significant and positive effect on Visit Intention
- H3 : Electronic Word of Mouth has a significant and positive effect on Destination Image
- H4 : Electronic Word of Mouth has a significant and positive effect on Intention to Visit Mediated by Destination Image

**Methods**

The data used in this research are primary data and secondary data. Primary data is data obtained from direct observations in the field and data obtained from interviews and filling out questionnaires are visitors to the Rawa Bento tourist attraction using a Likert scale. Secondary data is a data collection technique obtained through journals, books and other supports (Gupta et al., 2018). The research period starts from April to August 2023. The sampling technique used is non-probability sampling. The sample size in this research refers to the sampling formula from Hair et al (2010), with a total of sixteen statements as indicators, so the sample size is the planned sample size was 90 respondents or equal to 15 x 6. Determination of this sample size was based on research efficiency, where most respondents were estimated to be diverse and did not come from one concrete community group. In this research, the data analysis method used is the structural equation model (SEM) analysis technique, and using the help of Smart PLS 3 software (Hair et al., 2014), the use of PLS is based on the SEM technique used in this research as well as the large number of reference literature provided. Use this software because it is more accurate and easy to translate.

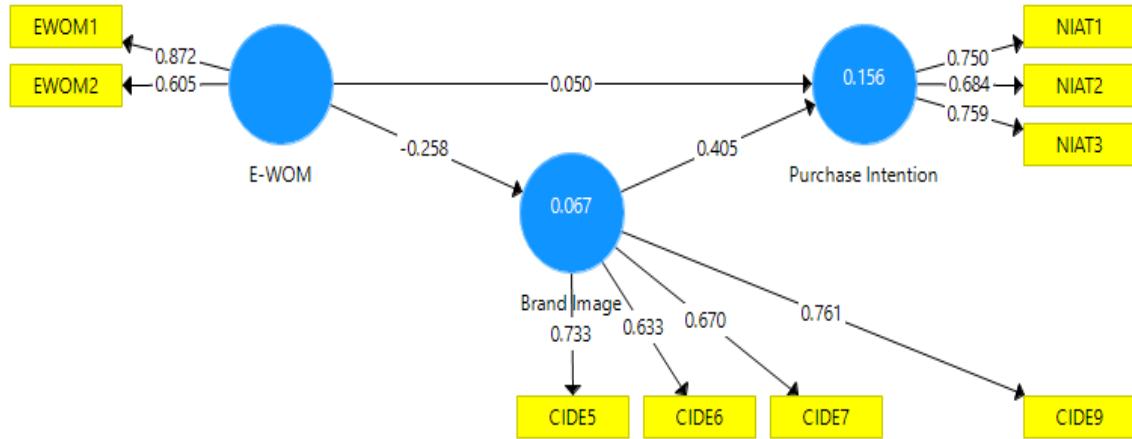
**Result and Discussion**

Characteristics of the 90 respondents from visitors to the Rawa Bento tourist attraction who were sampled in this research, if we look at the gender of visitors to the Rawa Bento tourist attraction, the largest number of

visitors to the Rawa Bento tourist attraction in the research was 54 people, men, while the smallest number of samples was female, namely 46 people.

**Outer Model**

The measurement model shows how the manifest variable or observed variable represents the latent variable to be measured. The loading factor value has high validity if it has a value greater than 0.5. Chin (1998) in Ghozali and Latan (2015) below is a picture of the path resulting from the measurement model (outer model) for each indicator using the PLS analysis tool:



**Figure 2.** Outer Model

From this picture, it can be seen that all indicators have met the requirements for testing the outer model. For more details, you can see each variable in the following table:

**Table 1.** Outer Loading of Research Variables

Variable	Indicator	Outer Loading
E-WOM (Electronic Word of Mouth)	EWOM1	0.754
	EWOM2	0.560
	EWOM3	0.485
Intention to Visit	INTENTION1	0.757
	INTENTION2	0.733
	INTENTION3	0.707
Destination Image	CIDE1	0.032
	CIDE2	-0.001
	CIDE3	-0.024
	CIDE4	0.018
	CIDE5	0.728
	CIDE6	0.691
	CIDE7	0.611
	CIDE8	0.514
	CIDE9	0.722

Source: data processed by researchers, 2023

From Table 1. It can be seen that there are 5 Destination Image indicators and 1 E-WOM indicator that measure research variables that do not meet the requirements. The condition for an indicator to be said to be good is greater than 0.5, so it can be concluded that all indicators can be said to be valid or can describe the latent variable being measured. in this research.

**Research Validity and Reliability Test**

The next test is testing the validity and reliability of the construct. Each construct is said to be valid if the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value must be greater than 0.50, while reliability testing uses the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient and the Composite reliability coefficient which must be greater than 0.7. The following are the test results using SmartPLS 3.0:

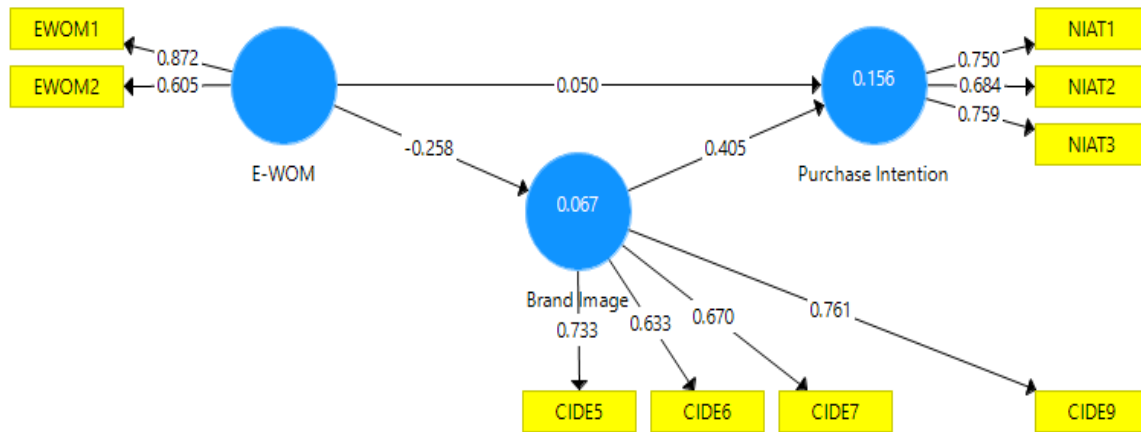
**Table 2.** Instrument Validity and Reliability Test Results

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability		Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
		Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	
Brand Image	0.655	0.656	0.794	0.592
EWOM	0.240	0.273	0.714	0.563
Purchase Intention	0.568	0.573	0.775	0.535

From table 2 it can be seen that all variables in this study have met the requirements for validity and reliability, namely having Cronbach Alpha and Composite Reliability coefficient values greater than 0.7 (>0.7), and AVE coefficient values greater than 0, 5 (>0.5), therefore all variables are suitable for use in research.

**Inner Model (Full Model PLS)**

The Inner Model is an overall model that states the causal relationship between the dimensions or variables studied. The structural model of the relationship between research variables can be seen in the following picture:



**Figure 3.** Inner Model (Influence Between Variables)

In the picture above, it can be seen that there is a positive influence on all research variables if tested directly using PLS, but to see the influence between variables more clearly, you can see the following table:

**Table 3.** Direct Influence Between Research Variables (Direct Effect)

Influence Between Variables	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ( O/STDEV )	P Values
E-WOM -> Brand Image -> Purchase Intention	0.105	0.126	0.088	1,189	0.235
Brand Image -> Purchase Intention	0.405	0.520	0.150	2,700	0.007
E-WOM -> Brand Image	0.258	0.261	0.158	1,640	0.102
E-WOM -> Purcasse Intention	0.050	0.035	0.131	0.380	0.704

**Table 4.** Total Influence (Total Effect)

Relationship Between Variables	Total effects
Brand Image -> Purchase Intention	0.007
E-WOM -> Brand Image	0.102
E-WOM -> Purcasse Intention	0.736

**Table 5.** R-square and Adjusted R-square

Total Influence (Direct + Indirect)	R-square	R-square adjusted
Brand Image	0.067	0.056
Purchase Intention	0.156	0.136

### **The influence of Destination Image has a significant and positive effect on Intention to Visit**

The third hypothesis test is to test the significant influence of destination image on intention to visit. From Table 2, it can be seen that there is a positive and significant influence of the Destination Image variable on Visit Intention of 0.007 with a P value of 0.007 ( $<0.05$ ).

Based on the tests that have been carried out, the results show that hypothesis 3 (H3) is supported. So in this research, destination image has a positive and significant effect on visit intention. This means that the image of the destination (especially the Rawa Bento tourist attraction) is able to attract tourists to visit. A good destination image will be a strength for a destination to get visits from tourists. The Rawa Bento tourist attraction, which has become popular and busy with visitors even before it officially opened, is proof that by launching the latest "waterfront city" concept in Kerinci, it has become the embodiment of the destination's own image. So the image of the destination is very important to maintain and continue to improve, so that tourist destinations are able to encourage interest in visiting tourists.

The results of this research are the same as the results of research conducted by Setyo Putra (2015) entitled "The Influence of Company Image on Visiting Interest and Visiting Decisions (Survey of Visitors to the PT. Selecta Recreation Park, Batu City, East Java)" which uses corporate image theory which can be adopted for destination image, the results show that company image has a positive and significant effect on visiting interest. Suwarduki et al. (2016) in their research entitled "The Influence of Electronic Word of Mouth on Destination Image and Its Impact on Interest and Decisions to Visit (Survey of Active Followers of Indtravel Instagram Accounts Who Have Visited Tourist Destinations in Indonesia)" also found the same results that destination image has a direct influence. significant impact on interest in visiting. So the results of this research can strengthen and develop the results of previous research. Where previous research can also be a basis for strengthening the results of this research.

### **The influence of E-WOM (Electronic Word of Mouth) has a significant and positive effect on Visit Intention**

The first hypothesis test is to test the influence of Electronic Word of Mouth on Visiting Intentions. From Table 2, it can be seen that there is no positive and significant influence from the Electronic Word of Mouth variable on Visiting Intention of 0.736 with a P value of 0.704 ( $>0.05$ ).

Based on the tests that have been carried out, the results show that hypothesis 1 (H1) is not supported. So in this research, E-WoM (on Instagram) did not have a positive and significant effect on visit intention. This means that E-WoM (on Instagram) has not been able to generate interest from tourists in visiting the Rawa Bento tourist attraction. With interaction and communication between tourists on social media (especially Instagram), they will get a variety of information that is spread widely and without borders about a destination which will give rise to a sense of curiosity, curiosity so that they will browse and look for the best information which will eventually become a an interest for them to visit a destination they have never visited. However, E-WoM (on Instagram) was ultimately unable to attract tourists' attention to the Rawa Bento tourist attraction and was able to make tourists interested and interested in visiting this tourist destination.

The research results obtained are not in line with the results obtained by Jalilvand et al. (2013) in his research entitled "Electronic Word of Mouth Effects on Tourists' Attitudes Toward Islamic Destinations and Travel Intention: An Empirical Study in Iran" where he found the results that E-WoM had a positive and significant effect on intention to travel. ). The theory of travel intention in this research can be adopted as a theory of intention to visit in this research. Samuel & Lianto (2014) in their research entitled "Analysis of Ewom, Brand Image, Brand Trust and Interest in Buying Products in Surabaya" with the theory of buying interest which can be adopted to the theory of visiting interest also found the result that E-WoM significantly influences buying interest. Furthermore, Suwarduki et al. (2016) in their research entitled "The Influence of Electronic Word of Mouth on Destination Image and Its Impact on Interest and Decisions to Visit (Survey of Active Followers of Indtravel Instagram Accounts Who Have Visited Tourist Destinations in Indonesia)" also found the same results as this research, namely E-WoM has a significant effect on visiting interest. So

the results of this research are able to strengthen and develop the results of previous research. Apart from that, previous research can also be a basis for strengthening the results of this research.

### **The influence of E-WOM (Electronic Word of Mouth) has a significant and positive effect on Destination Image**

The second hypothesis test is to test the significant influence of Electronic Word of Mouth on Destination Image. From Table 2, it can be seen that there is no positive and significant influence from the Electronic Word of Mouth variable on Destination Image of 0.102 with a P value of 0.102 ( $>0.05$ ).

Based on the tests that have been carried out, the results show that hypothesis 2 (H2) is not supported. So in this research, E-WoM (on Instagram) does not have a positive and significant effect on destination image. This means that E-WoM (on Instagram) is unable to realize and improve the destination image of the Rawa Bento Tourist Attraction, where tourists exchange information online in the form of picture posts, communication in post comments, video shows, and various features or facilities. which is available on Instagram. When someone gives a good response and feedback about the Rawa Bento tourist attraction, it will improve the image of the destination. However, vice versa, if negative responses are given, it will also reduce the value and image of the destination itself. So, the form of exposure of the Rawa Bento tourist attraction is to try to appear attractive, which is one way to improve the image of the destination.

The results of this research are not the same as research conducted by Reza Jalilvand et al. (2012) with the title "Examining the Structural Relationships of Electronic Word of Mouth, Destination Image, Tourist Attitude Toward Destination and Travel Intention: An Integrated Approach" which found that E-WoM had a significant effect on destination image. Furthermore, Suwarduki et al. (2016) in their research entitled "The Influence of Electronic Word of Mouth on Destination Image and Its Impact on Interest and Decisions to Visit (Survey of Active Followers of Indtravel Instagram Accounts Who Have Visited Tourist Destinations in Indonesia)" also found the same results as this research, namely E -WoM has a significant influence on destination image. Then, with a destination image that can be adopted and refers to brand image, Samuel & Lianto (2014) in their research entitled "Analysis of E-WoM, Brand Image, Brand Trust and Interest in Buying Smartphone Products in Surabaya" also found similar results, namely E -WoM is proven to have a positive and significant effect on brand image. So the results of this research can strengthen and develop the results of previous research. Where previous research can also be a basis for strengthening the results of this research.

### **The influence of E-WOM (Electronic Word of Mouth) has a significant and positive effect on Intention to Visit Mediated by Destination Image**

The fourth hypothesis test is to test the significant influence of E-WOM (Electronic Word of Mouth) on Visiting Intentions mediated by Destination Image. From Table 2, it can be seen that there is no positive and significant influence from the E-WOM (Electronic Word of Mouth) variable on Visiting Intentions mediated by Destination Image of 0.235 with a P value of 0.235 ( $>0.05$ )

This means that E-WOM (Electronic Word of Mouth) regarding Visiting Intentions mediated by Destination Image (especially the Rawa Bento Tourist Attraction) has not been able to attract tourists' interest in visiting. A good destination image will be a strength for a destination to get visits from tourists. The Rawa Bento tourist attraction, which was already starting to become popular and busy with visitors, even before it officially opened, had to immediately create a concept and launch the newest Rawa Bento in Kerinci, making it the embodiment of its own destination image. So the image of the destination is very important to maintain and continue to improve, so that tourist destinations are able to encourage interest in visiting tourists.

The results of this research are the same as the results of research conducted by Setyo Putra (2015) entitled "The Influence of Company Image on Visiting Interest and Visiting Decisions (Survey of Visitors to the PT. Selecta Recreation Park, Batu City, East Java)" which uses corporate image theory which can be adopted for destination image, the results show that company image has a positive and significant effect on visiting interest. Suwarduki et al. (2016) in their research entitled "The Influence of Electronic Word of Mouth on Destination Image and Its Impact on Interest and Decisions to Visit (Survey of Active Followers of Indtravel Instagram Accounts Who Have Visited Tourist Destinations in Indonesia)" also found the same results that destination image has a direct influence. significant impact on interest in visiting. So the results of this research can strengthen and develop the results of previous research. Where previous research can also be a basis for strengthening the results of this research.

### **Conclusion**

E-WoM (on Instagram) Does not have a positive and significant effect on the destination image of the Rawa Bento Tourist Attraction. This shows that E-WoM (on Instagram) has not been able to realize and improve the destination image of the Rawa Bento Tourist Attraction. The more good or positive reviews, responses and ratings for the Rawa Bento tourist attraction cannot improve the image of the destination itself.

E-WoM (on Instagram) does not have a positive and significant effect on visit intention. This shows that E-WoM (on Instagram) has not been able to generate interest from tourists to visit the Rawa Bento tourist

attraction. The more information about a destination obtained from interaction and communication from E-WoM has not been able to increase tourists' interest in visiting that tourist destination.

Destination image has a positive and significant effect on visit intention. This shows that the image of the destination (especially the Rawa Bento tourist attraction) is able to attract tourists to visit. A good destination image will be a strength for a destination to get visits from tourists. So the image of the destination is very important to maintain and continue to improve, so that tourist destinations are able to encourage interest in visiting tourists.

E-WOM (Electronic Word of Mouth) does not have a positive and significant effect on Intention to Visit which is mediated by Destination Image. This means that E-WOM (Electronic Word of Mouth) regarding Visiting Intentions mediated by Destination Image (especially the Rawa Bento Tourist Attraction) has not been able to attract tourists' interest in visiting. A good destination image will be a strength for a destination to get visits from tourists.

### **Suggestion**

It is recommended that the managers of the Rawa Bento Tourist Attraction be able to utilize E-WoM in various social media (especially Instagram) such as creating an official account for the Rawa Bento Tourist Attraction on various social media, and also building and utilizing an official website as the main media and source of tourist information. to get information related to the Rawa Bento Tourist Attraction.

It is recommended to the managers of the Rawa Bento Tourism Object to develop and increase the variety of entertainment rides such as outbound rides, provide sports facilities on the edge of the lake, provide various attractive and contemporary outdoor photobooths as backdrops and photo spots for visiting tourists, and hold various weekly or monthly events. like; art performances, sporting events, regional cooking competitions, photography contests, and various other events. This is to improve the destination image of the Rawa Bento Tourist Attraction. So, with the stronger the destination image of this tourist attraction, it will be able to attract enthusiasm from tourists and attract their attention so that it can generate interest in visiting the Rawa Bento Tourist Attraction.

### **Implications of Research Results**

Based on the research that has been carried out, several implications were found. For the management of the Rawa Bento tourist attraction, this research can be used as a source of information with the aim of exposing the tourist destination more on social media and improving the image of the destination.

The research results show that the existence of E-WoM can also be interpreted as an online exchange of information between tourists where tourists exchange experiences and share information with each other via social media (especially Instagram) about a destination. Where they publish their visit experiences in the form of posting photos, videos, etc. on social media. When those who have never visited a destination that has been published by other tourists, they will look for information related to that tourist destination through posts from other tourists from various sources or media (especially Instagram). However, the tendency of people or tourists in E-WoM is first to focus on how they can see visualizations of a destination that are exposed to other tourists on social media (especially on Instagram). When the visualization of a tourist destination is unique and able to attract attention, tourists will continue to dig up more detailed information through comments and conversations between social media users in posts related to the tourist destination. If tourists who have visited have a good experience, they will give a positive response, and vice versa, if they have a bad experience, they will also give a negative response. So this can definitely affect the image of the tourist destination. So this can be a concern and consideration for the managers of the Rawa Bento Tourist Attraction to always give a good impression of the tourist destination and all its supporting instruments in order to get a good image and improve the image of the tourist destination.

With E-WoM taking place, the exchange of information on social media (especially Instagram) can certainly be an opportunity for the managers of the Rawa Bento Tourist Attraction to expose their tourist destinations on social media so that they become better known and attract tourists to visit. The more widely known a destination is, the more likely it is to visit that destination. A good image of a destination can also be something that tourists can trust and can attract their interest in visiting someday.

Furthermore, based on the results of the research that has been carried out, it can be concluded that the destination image influences tourists' interest in visiting Rawa Bento. Where the tourist destination has a fairly good destination image, it is currently strengthening tourists' interest in visiting. So, in an effort to increase the number of tourist visits to the Rawa Bento tourist attraction, the manager of this tourist destination must create a good image for the tourist destination through the provision of facilities, services and everything that can improve the image of the destination.

### **Research limitations and further research**

Researchers realize that there are still many shortcomings in this research. Researchers hope that in the next research they can further examine and study the scope of the research, not just limited to people who live in Indonesia, in order to obtain research results that can be generalized. Future research can add other variables that can influence tourists' visit intention which were not used in this research (ex: quality of

product attributes, attitudes towards the destination, etc.). Further research can examine different objects. Where the object of this research is the Rawa Bendo tourist attraction, which is only one of the many tourist attractions in Kerinci, especially in Jambi.

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