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### **CONCEPTUALISING THE ANTECEDENTS OF EWOM IN THE POST-CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOUR ASSESSMENT OF TOURISM SPORTS ACTIVITIES**

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#### **ABSTRACT**

Given the popularity of electronic media in today's digital information era, visitors are likely to share their visit experience online with their colleagues or the public, especially on popular social media platforms. Thus, word-of-mouth practice has moved from physical word-of-mouth to online word of mouth, known as electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM). Responding to this new phenomenon, this paper attempts to propose a testable research framework for assessing tourism sports activities experience at the tourist destination. In other words, this paper aims to identify the antecedents of eWOM among tourism sports customers. Methodically, desk research was carried out whereby past literature was exhaustively reviewed to establish a conceptual understanding of tourism sport experience assessments and to consolidate the variables as a working model. In this context, this paper proposed a relational model that explains the effect of the perceived value, satisfaction, commitment and electronic media (e-media) familiarity on eWOM. This model also anticipated the moderation role of e-media familiarity between commitment and eWOM. Theoretically, the proposed framework reduces the gaps related to the construction of research variables for tourism sports experience assessment. Practically, this paper provides sport tourism operators with a comprehensive testable framework that can guide them in understanding their customers' consumption behaviour assessment process and their electronic word-of-mouth response.

**Keywords:** Electronic Word-Of-Mouth, Perceived Value, Satisfaction, Commitment, E-Media Familiarity.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Tourism that is associated with sports activity is a type of tourism that incorporates sports activities into its travel agenda (Malchrowicz-Mosko & Munsters, 2018). This form of tourism is one of the most rapidly expanding tourism sectors. Regardless of whether sports are the primary secondary purpose of their visit, millions of tourists are interested in participating in sports and recreational activities. Nevertheless, the terms ‘sports tourism’ and “tourism sports” are often used interchangeably despite having different meanings. “Sports tourism” refers to individuals or groups who take part in competitive or recreational sports, either actively or passively, while visiting and residing in places outside of their typical environment (Gammon & Robinson, 2003). The main focus of sport tourism is on sport-related activities while on travel, although tourism may enhance the overall experience. The term “tourism sport”, on the other hand, denotes travellers who participate in a competitive or recreational sport as a secondary activity whilst vacation or a visit is the major purpose of the travel (Gammon & Robinson, 2003). This paper is focusing on the tourism sports travellers’ post-consumption responses, particularly on conceptualising the antecedents of eWOM as a result of their participation in sports activities at the destination.

Tourism sports activities are becoming essential to marketing strategy (Mapjabil et al., 2015). It contributes significantly to the local economy, improves the destination image, attracts tourists, and gets media attention (Jeong & Kim, 2019). It has the potential to develop into a tourism product with great economic returns for the country. For example, with an annual contribution of RM5 billion, the Malaysian Investment Development Authority (MIDA) regarded Malaysia’s sports tourism industry as a money-maker for the tourism business. This amount has proven that the tourism industry related to sports can attract domestic and foreign visitors, creating more opportunities for income generation. In this instance, tourism-related stakeholders earn money through selling accommodations, food and beverages, sales ticketing, and entrance fees (Kim et al., 2016). Recognising the immense contribution of tourism sports activities to the country, it is essential to ensure its sustainability.

One of the strategies to sustain the tourism sports business is through Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) responses. According to Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004), eWOM refers to any positive or negative online communication made by customers about a product or the company to a wide range of individuals and organisations. EWOM responses, comprising user-generated materials such as online reviews, ratings, comments, and social media posts, increasingly influence tourists' opinions and actions. It has been found that online comments about tourist destinations, such as on social media and other online platforms, have transformed how consumers gather information and assess their hospitality and travel experiences. These mediums have grown into a favoured source of information for customers (Rashid et al., 2021). Subsequently, eWOM can have a long-term impact on a variety of factors in the tourism sports industry, such as boosting destination reputation, promoting stakeholder participation, supporting conservation initiatives, including local communities, and helping the tourism and sports industries remain sustainable as a whole (Hoang et al., 2022; Vegara-Ferri et al., 2020). Therefore, encouraging tourists to share their experiences online is a valuable strategy for destination marketers to influence prospective customers through social networks and affect decision-making, ideally in a favourable way (Marmaya et al., 2018).

Despite the growing importance of eWOM in the tourism industry, there is a need to comprehend how it is created and its impact on post-consumption behaviour and decision-making. While prior research offers insights into tourists' responses at destinations (Chen et al., 2015; Reyes-Menendez et al., 2020), there is a gap in understanding this dynamic within Malaysia's sports tourism context. Consequently, it is essential to have a specific study that comprehensively explains eWOM responses towards tourism sports activities.

A comprehensive literature review confirms that perceived value, satisfaction, commitment, and familiarity with electronic media significantly shape eWOM responses to sports tourism activities, exerting a vital influence on tourists' perceptions and decision-making. The Theory of Consumption Values (TCV) proposed by Sheth et al. (1991) can explain how tourists' perceptions of value, impact their eWOM responses to sports tourism activities. This theory suggests that consumers evaluate a product or service based on different dimensions of value experienced during consumption, making each value aspect a valuable information for sports destination marketers' strategic planning.

Tourists often evaluate experiences based on the value they perceive from their purchases. It has been observed that perceived value strongly affects tourist satisfaction and intentions (Caber et al., 2020). Several researchers (Hervás et al., 2020; Kunkel et al., 2017; Narvekar & Dayanand, 2020) found that overall experience evaluation involves multidimensional perceived value. This approach uncovers specific consumption values across diverse decision scenarios to enhance marketing effectiveness (Hervás et al., 2020). However, the indecisive value dimension remains questionable due to contextual variances. The complex multidimensional approach involves many factors in study design and analysis. Therefore, the study aims to scrutinise these value dimensions and their links to better explain tourists' decisions and responses in the context of tourism sports. This paper's foundation is exploring appropriate dimensions to study perceived value in tourism sports.

Perceived value impacts various stages of purchasing, including the pre-purchase phase (Woodruff, 1997), while satisfaction is typically seen as post-purchase evaluation (Oliver, 1997). Tourist satisfaction denotes positive feelings after a tourism activity (Kim & Thapa, 2018). Diverse satisfaction standards exist among tourists. Enhancing tourist satisfaction is vital for competitive advantage (Kim & Thapa, 2018), where it guides quality improvement. Most studies in the field of tourism have consistently found strong associations between perceived value, overall satisfaction, and behavioural intentions, such as word-of-mouth recommendations (Kim & Thapa, 2018; Kunkel et al., 2017). Early research by Petrick (2004) discovered that perceived value predicts tourist satisfaction and behavioural intentions (word-of-mouth and revisit intention). In another study, Caber et al. (2020) studied the value perception of young tourists about a nature-based tourism experience and its influence on travel outcomes, which is overall satisfaction. It was demonstrated that tourists with a positive perception of multidimensional value experience high satisfaction. Thus, it is reasonable to assume that perceived value influences satisfaction development. It is suggested that destination authorities should monitor tourists' satisfaction with each service interaction and maintain a high level of satisfaction (Kim & Thapa, 2018). Therefore, tourist satisfaction research helps towards a better understanding of customer behaviour.

While satisfaction's connection to perceived value is acknowledged, further research is needed on perceived value outcomes (Vieira, 2014). Some researchers proposed perceived value as an antecedent to commitment (Kunkel et al., 2017; Pujiastuti et al., 2022; Vieira, 2014). Earlier studies revealed customer commitment

in driving online eWOM (Purnasari & Yuliando, 2015; Tsao & Hsieh, 2012). In this sense, commitment refers to tourists' dedication and intention to participate in online activities on a regular or long-term basis. High-value and satisfying experiences foster a strong commitment to the online sharing of tourism sports experiences. However, limited insight exists on how likely tourists are to share online and whether this reflects genuine commitment or trend-following. Given social networks' significance, understanding committed customers and their eWOM intention is pivotal. Hence, this study aims to establish tourists' commitment direction.

Complex mobile and computer applications hinder eWOM use (Wang et al., 2016). Positive e-media skills increase the likelihood of eWOM engagement (Jeong & Shin, 2020). While eWOM benefits in tourism are evident (Chao & Rashid, 2020), mastering effective social media posting is crucial for active engagement. Tourists need familiarity with platform features before sharing travel stories. Moreover, technology disruption negatively affects information utilisation (Reyes-Menendez et al., 2019). Commitment and eWOM links are shaped by e-media familiarity, influencing involvement. However, there is a scarcity of literature on e-media familiarity to understand the link, especially in tourism sports. Therefore, bridging this gap is vital for comprehending the implications of these interactions.

Tourist attitudes and reactions towards their post-consumption behaviour assessment vary across tourism types due to unique features, motivations, and experiences. For example, in medical tourism, the tourists' reactions emphasise on health, culture, and necessity (Giannake et al., 2023). In agricultural tourism, tourists prioritise their reactions to education, culture, sustainability, and hands-on experiences (Ciolac et al., 2019). On the other hand, in tourism sports, tourists' reactions depend on their active participation or observation towards the sports activities (Gammon & Robinson, 2003). In this context, tourists often show intense involvement and emotional bonds with activities, influence travel choices and foster camaraderie. In addition, tourism sports encompass physical activities, emotions, and experiences (Jeong et al., 2019).

Objectively, this paper aims to develop a research framework that portrays the antecedent of eWOM by emphasising the relationship between the multidimensional perceived value, satisfaction, commitment, and e-media familiarity variables, particularly in the tourism sports context. The proposed framework shall benefit destination marketers and operators by linking post-consumption evaluation and behavioural outcomes. Focusing on multidimensional perceived value aids stakeholders like event organisers, agencies, and governments in enhancing experiences, satisfaction, and involvement, thus fostering sports tourism growth and sustainability in Malaysia.

### **Tourist Experience and Perceived Value**

Developing appropriate tourism sports activities is ideal for promoting Malaysia as an excellent domestic and foreign tourist destination. Furthermore, with the availability of natural destinations (islands, beaches, sea, rivers and waterfalls, lakes, hills, and jungle) for all sports and recreational activities, may give rise to a novel tourism experience. Some popular sports and recreational activities in Malaysia include parasailing, diving, canoeing, hiking, rock climbing, cycling, paragliding, parachuting and many more. Notably, growing consideration of utilising natural areas for physical activity and recreation to promote health and well-being has increased tourist interest.

Tourists can enjoy tourism-related sports in diverse ways based on location and available activities. They can join by booking packages during travel, often provided by destinations with guided tours and gear rentals. Such packages cater to different skill levels and can be arranged through travel agencies, hotels, or local operators. Most tourism businesses now offer gear rentals like bikes, kayaks, and paddleboards, allowing tourists to enjoy sports at their own pace. Additionally, nature exploration through sports, like hiking and trekking, leads to breathtaking views and hidden waterfalls.

Understanding whether or not tourists find their visit meaningful is crucial. This understanding stems from their encounter with goods and services, which shapes their future responses. Essentially, tourists gauge their experience based on the value they derive from their visit. A concept referred to as perceived value describes how tourists actively shape experiences in pursuit of a satisfying encounter (Pujiastuti et al., 2022). According to Zeithaml (1988), perceived value refers to the benefits gained from products or services, encompassing benefits received and expenses incurred. Jin et al. (2013) further defined customer-perceived value as the belief that a service's success hinges on meeting their desires and needs.

Numerous studies have examined perceived value across various domains, including tourism, as dimensions of this concept vary in the existing literature. Despite differences, researchers concur that perceived value is constructed from a multidimensional paradigm (Hervás et al., 2020; Kim & Thapa, 2018). This approach is favoured in tourism research, considering diverse aspects of tourist experiences, encompassing affective, situational, and external factors (Caber et al., 2020). Grasping the construct of perceived value dimensions is vital for probing post-consumption behaviour assessment, notably in the service sector (Ahn et al., 2020; Rashid et al., 2017).

Perceived value has been a significant focus in the service industry since the early 1990s. Its attention extends to sports and physical activity research (Hervás et al., 2020) due to its predictive role in customer satisfaction and future intention (Kunkel et al., 2017). Past studies confirm its impact on post-consumption behaviour (Caber et al., 2020; Pujiastuti et al., 2022). Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) introduced experiential consumption dimensions, encompassing intangible and emotional aspects in consumption analysis. Babin et al. (1994) identified utilitarian and hedonic as primary consumption dimensions. Utilitarian items are functional, while hedonic items provide enjoyment and excitement (Babin et al., 1994). Consumers weigh these values, consequently influencing product assessment (Sánchez-Fernández & Iniesta-Bonillo, 2007). Some contended that a solely utilitarian view is insufficient, advocating for a more comprehensive understanding (Kim & Thapa, 2018; Sánchez-Fernández & Iniesta-Bonillo, 2007; Sheth et al., 1991).

Sheth et al. (1991) introduced five customer value dimensions (functional, epistemic, conditional, social, and emotional) in a multidimensional model rooted in the Theory of Consumption Value (TCV). This model acknowledges five values impacting consumer choices, working collectively or individually based on the context. Various disciplines have contributed to these values (Hervás et al., 2020; Kunkel et al., 2017; Narvekar & Dayanand, 2020), making the theory useful for analysing customer perception. This theory, derived from a unidimensional value definition, helps researchers understand how customers assess goods and services and how this affects their subsequent attitudes and behaviours (Sheth et al., 1991). It provides a broader view of customer evaluations and their impact (Kunkel et al., 2017).

For instance, Sweeney and Soutar (2001) developed a multidimensional perceived value scale (PERVAL) for retail, covering four domains (functional, economic, social, and emotional) to assess post-purchase behaviour. Another notable model is Petrick's (2004) Service Perceived Value (SERV-PERVAL), a multidimensional model for the service industry featuring five dimensions: behavioural price, monetary price, quality, reputation, and emotional value. Building upon prior work, Sánchez et al. (2006) introduced the Overall Perceived Value of a Purchase (GLOVAL), which investigates how the perceived value of tourism packages after purchase affects relationship quality with travel agencies. The scale includes dimensions of functional, emotional, and social value.

Perceived value has gained prominence among scholars in sports and tourism. For instance, Carlson et al. (2016) provided evidence through a seven-factor model of perceived value (functional, social, hedonic, epistemic, monetary and convenience) of the group travel experience to major events in a tourism sector. The result showed that the assessments of perceived value across seven dimensions accurately predict satisfaction and future intentions for the event, with satisfaction serving as an effective mediator in this relationship. Kunkel et al. (2017) introduced Consumers' Perceived Value of Sports Games (CPVSG): a multidimensional scale for sports games encompassing functional, economic, social, emotional, and epistemic values. The study examined how satisfaction and commitment among sports spectators are related to perceived value attributes. All the dimensions of the perceived values explained 59% of the variance in sports spectators' satisfaction. In comparison, 39% of the variance was in commitment toward their favourite team, indicating an acceptable model fit.

In the latter year, Kim and Thapa (2018) proposed a four-dimensional model covering quality, emotional, price, and social value, exploring their impact on destination loyalty. The findings indicated that examining multiple aspects of perceived value provided a more comprehensive explanation for tourists' choice of eco-travel packages than focusing only on a unidimensional perceived value (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001). The result showed that satisfaction was a factor in determining environmentally responsible behaviour and destination loyalty in a nature-based tourism setting context. Hervás et al. (2020) developed a six-dimensional scale for sporting events, considering aspects like social, efficiency, entertainment, cost, risk, time, and effort. It is shown that all the studied values (social, efficiency, entertainment, price, perceived risk, and time and money effort) account for 54% of the variance in future intentions and 51% in sports fans' satisfaction. Hence, as demonstrated by earlier research using unidimensional scales (Armbrrecht, 2021; Hyun & Jordan, 2020), Hervás et al. (2020)'s multidimensional scale of perceived value demonstrates its validity in predicting these two outcomes.

Multidimensional perceived value offers a comprehensive framework for assessing travel experiences (Carlson et al., 2016; El-Adly, 2019). This construct captures tourists' complex evaluations by recognising diverse factors like service quality, emotional value, novelty, uniqueness, and cost (Armbrrecht, 2021; Rouibah et al., 2021). This approach illuminates how these diverse elements collectively influence perceptions and post-consumption behaviours, enriching our understanding of tourists' holistic assessments.

As an underpinning theory, the Theory of Consumption Value (TCV) recognises diverse consumer value preferences impacting behaviour (Sheth et al., 1991). Variables collectively shape the perceived value of goods and services, with satisfaction mediating this framework in line with TCV. When customers sense value in numerous dimensions and are satisfied, they are more likely to commit to the brand, which is a key

component of TCV's implications. TCV considers variable circumstances and individual differences in value assessment. Even though TCV does not directly address e-media familiarity, it does acknowledge the relevance of varied circumstances and individual variances in determining value assessments. The addition of e-media familiarity as a moderator acknowledges the expanding significance of technology in consumer experiences and extends the TCV framework to the digital realm. Moreover, while not explicitly discussing eWOM, TCV's social dimension aligns with eWOM responses and is perceived as an extension of positive experiences assessment. The TCV feature supports the notion that favourable value judgments and satisfaction might lead to consumers sharing their positive experiences via eWOM.

### **Post-Consumption Behaviour Assessment**

Researchers in the field of tourism have recently started to address the requirement for a multidimensional value perspective and have explored how it connects to other post-consumption behaviours such as satisfaction and behavioural intentions (Kim & Thapa, 2018; Narvekar & Dayanand, 2020; Rashid et al., 2017). Numerous studies have shown that post-consumption behaviours will generally affect how consumers behave in terms of loyalty (Ghorbanzadeh et al., 2021), recommendation (Narvekar & Dayanand, 2020), repeat visit (Oliveira Santini et al., 2018), and electronic word-of-mouth (Ahn et al., 2020). Additionally, it is thought that satisfaction is the post-evaluative assessment of current experience as well as the fulfilment of pleasure through an overall assessment of the product or service (Elahi et al., 2020).

Tourism businesses should consider factors such as tourist satisfaction and its impact. Favourable intentions result from consumer satisfaction, affecting recommendations (Narvekar & Dayanand, 2020). Studies have explored post-purchase evaluation's influence on behaviour, notably for experienced tourists (Chang et al., 2018; Sharipudin et al., 2023). It has been noted that post-consumption behaviour assessment, for example, satisfaction and loyalty, drives positive recommendations (Humagain & Singleton, 2021). In the hotel industry, post-stay evaluations shape electronic word-of-mouth and the intention to revisit (Chao & Rashid, 2020; El-Adly, 2019). Hence, tourism operators can predict future behaviour via perceived value (Kim & Thapa, 2018). In this instance, perceived value is connected to satisfaction, commitment, and eWOM (Paisri et al., 2022; Pujiastuti et al., 2022; Roy et al., 2020). Furthermore, satisfaction and experience also predict future intentions (Narvekar & Dayanand, 2020; Rashid et al., 2021).

In the domain of tourism sports, the primary focus lies on active engagement and involvement. Tourists are increasingly inclined to participate in physical pursuits such as skiing, surfing, hiking, or sporting activities instead of solely visiting landmarks or cultural places (Ahmad et al., 2019). Individuals may possess specialised skills or experience that are directly relevant to the sport, potentially influencing their decision-making process when it comes to travel arrangements (Jeong et al., 2019). This degree of interest distinguishes tourism sports tourists from general tourists who may not have any specific interest during their travel. Furthermore, it should be noted that tourism sports encompass activities that require physical exertion, potentially impacting visitors' health and fitness regimens, dietary patterns, and overall lifestyle decisions throughout their journeys (Malchrowicz-Mosko & Munsters, 2018). Engagement in sports-related tourism has the potential to generate a robust sense of community and camaraderie among the individuals involved (Kim & Thapa, 2018). Tourists who participate in group sports frequently interact with fellow

enthusiasts, fostering a sense of camaraderie that may be comparatively less pronounced in other tourism industry segments.

The motivations underlying participation in tourism sports frequently centre on the pursuit of adventure, personal growth via self-challenge, and the desire to engage in the exhilaration of competitive experiences (Narvekar & Dayanand, 2020). The objectives can give rise to distinct travel behaviours in contrast to those driven by incentives for leisure, cultural immersion, or professional purposes. Moreover, tourists are often emotionally attached to their sports and recreational pursuits (Kunkel et al., 2017). Engaging in outdoor recreational activities with skills can elicit strong feelings of accomplishment and satisfaction, substantially impacting the vacation experience. Consequently, this will encourage people to return to locations that offer their preferred sports activities, encouraging the growth of specialised sports markets.

### **Tourist Satisfaction**

Satisfaction has been extensively studied in relation to customer behaviour. Satisfaction is defined as “the consumer’s fulfilment response”, “a judgment that a product or service feature, or the product or service itself, provides a pleasurable level of consumption-related fulfilment” (Oliver, 1997, p.13). In the present study, tourist satisfaction is the pleasant emotion felt after visiting a place. Satisfied customers tend to buy more, and positive experiences boost word-of-mouth (Rouibah et al., 2021). However, as with the definition of customer satisfaction, the literature does not contain a comprehensive list of attributes contributing to customer satisfaction in tourism sports (Sánchez-Rebull et al., 2018).

Numerous studies confirm that perceived value influences satisfaction in services, tourism, and hospitality (Montesinos-saura et al., 2018). Tourists' interactions with tourism services shape positive experiences, leading to satisfaction (Kim & Thapa, 2018). Prior research in tourism explores the relationship between multidimensional perceived value, visitor satisfaction, and future intention. For example, Carlson et al. (2016) found that a seven-factor model of perceived value (functional, social, hedonic, epistemic, monetary, and convenience) related to group travel events accurately predicts satisfaction and future intentions. Satisfaction acts as a significant mediator in this relationship.

Recently, Tu et al. (2023) researched Chinese travellers' intentions during the COVID-19 pandemic, finding a noteworthy link between three perceived value dimensions (emotional, economic, social) and satisfaction. In their study, social value particularly impacts satisfaction. The authors proposed that improving and distinguishing perceived value, a key influencer of post-purchase behaviour, aids tourism research progress and provides insights into travellers' purchasing and consumption behaviours.

The general service marketing literature establishes links between perceived value, customer satisfaction, and eWOM (Chao & Rashid, 2020). Various studies show that perceived value aspect significantly affects satisfaction (Kim & Thapa, 2018; Narvekar & Dayanand, 2020), which in turn connects value perception and loyalty to destinations or service providers (Caber et al., 2020; Carlson et al., 2016). Tourists valuing different trip aspects like quality, enjoyment, and convenience find overall satisfaction, impacting their engagement in eWOM (Kunkel et al., 2017; Purnasari & Yuliando, 2015; Tsao & Hsieh, 2012). In this context, as tourists are satisfied with their experiences, they are more inclined to use eWOM platforms to spread the word about their travels. Satisfied tourists tend to use eWOM platforms to share their positive

experiences (Chao & Rashid, 2020) and actively participate in discussions, reviews, and recommendations (Ahn et al., 2020; Chen et al., 2022). Therefore, a tourist's level of satisfaction is important in determining how much they believe they gained from their experience and how committed they feel to sharing it via eWOM.

Thus, this study examines how tourist satisfaction mediates the link between multidimensional perceived value and commitment. It sheds light on how value judgments impact commitment and the intricate relationship driving visitor engagement during travels. In our research framework, tourist satisfaction represents post-consumption behaviour and reflects the fulfilment of travellers' needs and wants.

### **Commitment**

Undoubtedly, tourism-related products and services define the quality of the tourist experience. This paper posits that the tourist experience affects perceived value perception, thereby influencing overall satisfaction. While satisfaction as a perceived value outcome is established, further outcome requires further investigation (Vieira, 2014). Some researchers suggested that perceived value could precede commitment (Kunkel et al., 2017; Pujiastuti et al., 2022; Vieira, 2014). The literature confirms satisfaction's direct impact on commitment (Purnasari & Yuliando, 2015), as well as driving recommendations and preferences (Dimitriades, 2006; Gustafsson et al., 2005).

Morgan and Hunt (1994) emphasised commitment as a pivotal aspect of relationship marketing, emerging when a connection is significant. Mpinganjira et al. (2017) in their study, defined commitment as a psychological emotion affecting attitudes towards commercial partnerships. Commitment is viewed contextually across disciplines. Vieira's (2014) meta-analysis explored perceived value antecedents and outcomes, highlighting commitment's substantial impact. According to research by Kunkel et al. (2017) on the relationship between perceived value, commitment, and satisfaction among sports attendance, multidimensional perceived value predicts both commitment and satisfaction. Therefore, perceived value's strategic importance lies in enhancing commitment, satisfaction, and word-of-mouth (Vieira, 2014). Hence, it is sensible to deduce that positive perceived value elevates commitment, linking it with satisfaction and post-consumption behaviour.

According to Mpinganjira et al. (2017), satisfaction with the provider affects the decision, as past interactions shape commitment. According to earlier studies, a customer's assessment of their level of satisfaction with their consumption experience has a favourable impact on how committed they feel (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). For instance, Purnasari and Yuliando (2015) found that in the hospitality sector, customers' satisfaction positively impacts affective commitment, suggesting that current satisfaction influences future commitment. Satisfied customers are believed to be more likely to remain committed (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2002). Moreover, prior research showed that customer commitment drives online eWOM activity (Purnasari & Yuliando, 2015; Tsao & Hsieh, 2012). It is argued that increasing commitment enhances the probability of participating in positive information sharing, discussions, and promotion (Tsao & Hsieh, 2012). Commitment yields favourable eWOM, including referral intent (Paisri et al., 2022). A recent study by Ali et al. (2022) reveals that eWOM significantly impacts customer commitment in e-commerce. As commitment grows, the intention to share eWOM on social media rises.

Hence, it is reasonable to ascertain the direction of tourists' commitment in this study. This is due to the fact that boosting perceived value would increase customer satisfaction, commitment and positive eWOM (Vieira, 2014). Hence, it is crucial for the service industry to understand the causal relationship between these factors. The proposed framework emphasises the role of tourists' commitment to eWOM responses, connecting multidimensional perceived value, satisfaction, and digital engagement. Tourists' value-based evaluations directly affect satisfaction and subsequent commitment, driving eWOM responses. Higher perceived value yields more satisfaction and stronger commitment, driving active eWOM participation to translate positive experiences into online endorsements.

### **Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) responses**

Choosing a tourist spot requires significant financial and time investment, leading to complex decisions. Social media, especially electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), aids tourists in reducing decision uncertainties (Rajendran & Arun, 2021). Modern technology enables widespread information exchange, reshaping social interactions and fostering non-commercial information sources, including eWOM. Electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) encompasses favourable or unfavourable remarks about products or companies shared by potential, current, or former customers publicly (Marmaya et al., 2018). Unlike traditional word of mouth, modern eWOM allows swift online communication via platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, enabling quick access and interaction (Huete-Alcocer, 2017; Reyes-Menendez et al., 2019). This form of communication aids users in exchanging experiences, forming opinions, and improving decision-making (Lai et al., 2022). As social media provides a space for such sharing, marketing professionals increasingly incorporate the Internet into their communication strategies (Lai et al., 2022).

In the hospitality and tourism industry, eWOM recommendations serve as vital consumer decision-making resources (Rajendran & Arun, 2021). Prior to personal experiences, tourists often rely on others' insights (Reyes-Menendez et al., 2020). In tourism sports, favourable eWOM can influence return visits, making encouraging online experience sharing a valuable strategy for destination marketers (Marmaya et al., 2018). Previous studies link multidimensional perceived value and eWOM intention (Chao & Rashid, 2020; Zeqiri et al., 2023), suggesting positive experiences and value boost eWOM engagement. However, commitment and knowledge of e-media tools precede sharing experiences. Research highlights customer commitment driving online eWOM (Purnasari & Yuliando, 2015; Tsao & Hsieh, 2012), especially among those with higher commitment in spreading positive e-WOM (Paisri et al., 2022). Greater customer commitment leads to a higher chance of consumers engaging in online activities to share positive information, thoughts and promote the seller (Tsao & Hsieh, 2012). Understanding commitment's influence on eWOM response intention is crucial, given the significance of social networks.

In recreational tourism sports, perceived value leads to customer satisfaction, commitment, and a desire for eWOM interactions (Caber et al., 2020). Tourists frequently share opinions and experiences online (Chen et al., 2015). While eWOM research has largely focused on text and ratings, visual cues significantly influence consumer perceptions and decisions (Jing et al., 2017). This paper depicts eWOM as textual or pictographic responses, where tourists use online platforms like discussion forums, instant messaging, and social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok) to share experiences at sports destinations.

Within the proposed research framework, tourists' eWOM responses, encompassing text and visuals, capture intricate digital experiences. This reflects how people often use written and visual elements, like photos and videos, to express opinions and suggestions. The cycle of positive reinforcement links multidimensional perceived value and eWOM in tourism sports, fostering growth, brand recognition, and ongoing involvement. High perceived value drives positive eWOM, attracting more tourists and enhancing sharing inclination, promoting growth and brand engagement within tourism sports.

### **E-Media Familiarity as a Moderator**

Familiarity gauges one's knowledge or understanding influenced by information and experience (Baloglu, 2001; Ha & Perks, 2005). It reflects how much someone knows about a subject, acquired through education, experience, or media exposure (Prentice, 2004). Therefore, degrees of familiarity differ, particularly in e-media familiarity in this study. E-media familiarity is pivotal in eWOM responses, encompassing sharing product information through digital channels like social media, reviews, and forums (Cheung & Thadani, 2010). It influences eWOM perception and responses in various ways. However, tech-savvy individuals tend to trust eWOM due to a better understanding of its features, while those less familiar may be more sceptical, seeking extra info before sharing. Therefore, e-media familiarity shapes eWOM interactions, which is essential in comprehending eWOM's impact on consumer behaviour (Sanz-Blas et al., 2019).

Familiarity's moderating effect on behavioural intention has been studied across contexts (Kuhzady et al., 2020; Sanz-Blas et al., 2019). For example, a study by Sanz-Blas et al. (2019) explored how informational and behavioural familiarity moderate destination image's impact on satisfaction and satisfaction's effect on behavioural intentions. The findings show that familiar tourists strongly influence satisfaction, while first-time visitors associate satisfaction with higher intentions. Informational familiarity's degree influences outcomes, with higher familiarity boosting satisfaction's impact and driving greater intentions (Sanz-Blas et al., 2019).

Generally, familiarity significantly aids consumer decision-making and meets their needs (Ha & Jang, 2010). As new technologies impact daily lives, understanding consumer commitment and willingness to adopt these technologies becomes crucial. Prior sections establish that customer commitment boosts positive eWOM, like higher recommendation intent (Tsao & Hsieh, 2012). It has been shown that committed customers are more likely to share an organisation's benefits (Purnasari & Yuliando, 2015). Thus, commitment can be an essential factor in how individuals respond to eWOM. Committed individuals engage more due to loyalty and attachment, sharing with friends and followers (Jeong & Shin, 2020). Conversely, less committed individuals may doubt or engage less, sharing less due to weaker social media attachment. Prior studies investigated commitment, familiarity, and eWOM's relationship, particularly their impact on engagement, sharing, perceptions, and attitudes (Bickart & Schindler, 2001; Sanz-Blas et al., 2019; Tsao & Hsieh, 2012). The authors examined how commitment and familiarity affected the effectiveness of eWOM in influencing consumer attitudes and behaviours. Bickart and Schindler (2001) found that higher commitment and familiarity increased eWOM influence likelihood.

Hence, this paper refers familiarity as e-media familiarity, signifying knowledge of a topic, while commitment as an individual's level of involvement towards responding to eWOM. The commitment-eWOM link can vary based on e-media familiarity. Thus, the relationship between commitment and eWOM

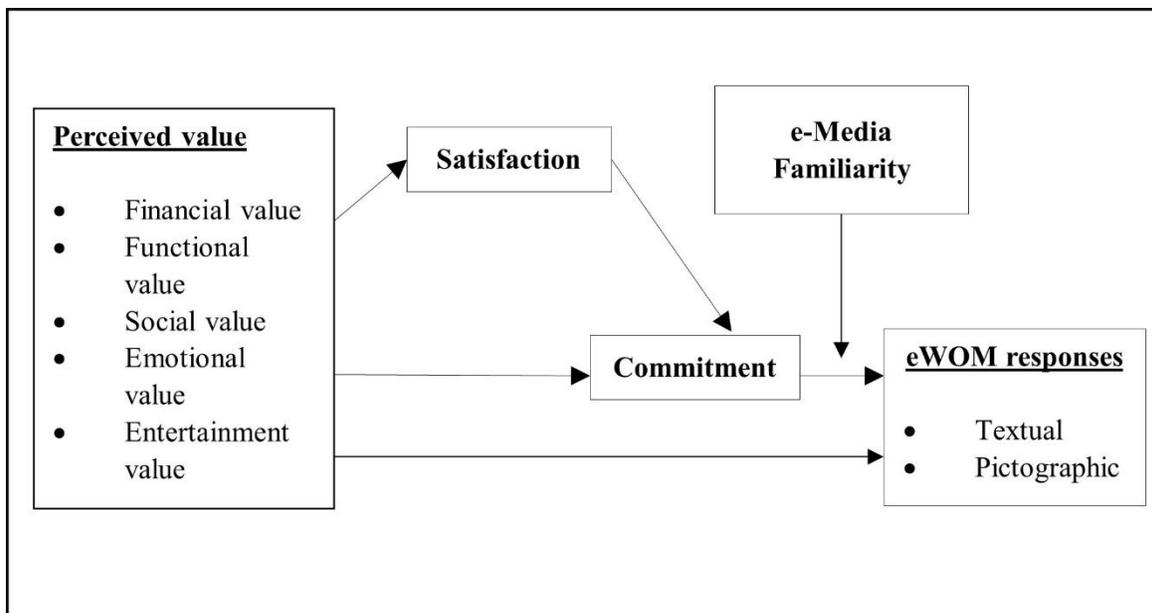
can be influenced by an individual's level of familiarity with the technology and social media features. Understanding this relationship is crucial for businesses using eWOM to shape behaviour. This study proposes stronger eWOM responses in those with higher e-media familiarity. It has been deduced that varying familiarity levels influences post-consumption behaviour (Kuhzady et al., 2020; Sanz-Blas et al., 2019). This research enhances comprehension of eWOM responses' mechanisms, aiming to formulate effective digital strategies in the tourism industry.

### **Consolidating the Variables**

Based on previous discussions, this paper suggests that post-consumption perceived value is critical in determining a product or service's effectiveness. Perceived value is postulated to have a direct impact on satisfaction. Additionally, the commitment of tourists is also significantly influenced by perceived value. The relationship between commitment and satisfaction has also been demonstrated in the literature, making satisfaction a mediator between perceived value and commitment. With regard to the role of e-media familiarity as a moderator, this paper proposes that those with greater e-media familiarity may be more committed to eWOM responses than those with less e-media familiarity. As a result, the relationship among these variables can be conceptualised as a research framework depicted in Figure 1.

**Figure 1**

*Proposed Research Framework*



The framework is posited for analysing the tourist experience in the context of tourism sports. In this framework, the variables under investigation include perceived value, satisfaction, commitment, e-media familiarity, and eWOM responses. In terms of classification, perceived value is an independent variable, whereas satisfaction acts as a mediator between perceived value and commitment. E-media familiarity is a

moderating variable between commitment and eWOM responses. Specifically, this framework examines the influence of tourists' perceived value on satisfaction, commitment and eWOM responses. Additionally, commitment is expected to influence tourists' eWOM responses. The impact on eWOM responses can be examined directly and indirectly via perceived value, satisfaction, and commitment. Furthermore, the strength of the relationship between commitment and eWOM responses may vary depending on the moderating level of e-media familiarity. Arguably, testing this framework as a post-consumption behaviour model, particularly in a tourism sports setting, would provide a meaningful contribution to the literature and the industry alike.

Prior research focused on individual concepts like perceived value, satisfaction, and eWOM responses in isolation. However, there is a gap in studying how these connect in the context of Malaysian tourism sports. This paper aims to holistically understand their combined influence on tourists' experiences by considering multidimensional perceived value, satisfaction, commitment, e-media familiarity, and eWOM responses. E-media familiarity and eWOM responses are vital due to digital platforms' prevalence in travel planning and sharing. This framework recognises the digital impact on tourists' perceptions and behaviours, guiding stakeholders (e.g., event organisers and travel agencies) to boost experiences and satisfaction in Malaysian tourism sports. The cultural diversity, natural attractions, and sports events in Malaysia serve as significant factors that attract travellers, thereby making a substantial contribution to the expansion of the tourism industry. Analysing these factors provides insights into culture's role, event marketing, and tourists' engagement. This paper expands knowledge by integrating dimensions and offering a methodological approach for future researchers. The framework's insights extend to other tourism or industry contexts, broadening research impact.

## **CONCLUSION**

This paper argues that an in-depth post-consumption experience evaluation of perceived value influences how tourists perceive their experiences. The tourism and sports industries can both benefit from using this proposed evaluation framework. It is postulated that the outcome of perceived value and satisfaction assessment is essential in gaining tourists' commitment to further actions. In this case, committed tourists are anticipated to use electronic word of mouth to spread the outcome of their visit. The proposed framework theoretically fills in the gaps for tourism sports visit experience evaluation research. In practice, it helps tourism operators and stakeholders understand the tourist experience assessment process and their future behaviour, particularly the electronic word-of-mouth responses. Nonetheless, the robustness of this framework must be tested to affirm its effectiveness.

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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