

## Article

# Green Marketing and Repurchase Intention in the Airline Industry: The Mediating Role of Electronic Word-of-Mouth

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## Abstract

The aviation industry faces increasing pressure to reduce its environmental footprint, prompting airlines to adopt green marketing practices that align with sustainability goals. Grounded in the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), this study investigates the influence of green marketing on consumers' repurchase intentions, with electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) as a mediating factor. An online survey was conducted among 390 airline passengers in Turkey, and the data were analyzed using structural equation modeling. The results indicate that green marketing significantly enhances both e-WOM and repurchase intention. Additionally, information quality and credibility exert significant effects on e-WOM and make a modest direct contribution to repurchase intention. While e-WOM is positively associated with repurchase intention, its mediating role in the relationship between green marketing and repurchase intention is not statistically supported. These findings suggest that e-WOM functions as a reinforcing rather than a transmitting mechanism linking green marketing to repurchase intention. The model explains 68.9% of the variance in repurchase intention and 18.9% in e-WOM. The study contributes by integrating green marketing, e-WOM, and information characteristics within an ELM-based framework for the airline context, offering actionable insights for sustainability-oriented marketing strategies.

**Keywords:** elaboration likelihood model (ELM); green marketing; aviation industry; repurchase intention; electronic word-of-mouth

## 1. Introduction

“Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs [1].” Environmental concerns became part of the international public agenda in the 1970s. However, the United Nations' 1987 Brundtland Report brought this issue to the attention of governments and international organizations. In particular, the fact that people can clearly feel the effects of climate change has increased the emphasis on sustainability.

The Brundtland Report of 1987 examines sustainability across social, economic, and environmental dimensions. Commercial operations also influence these three domains. Certain enterprises adversely impact the environment to a greater extent than others. The aviation sector significantly contributes to the climate catastrophe due to its substantial carbon emissions. Consequently, numerous airlines and aircraft manufacturers are adopting environmentally sustainable practices to mitigate their ecological footprint.

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Turkey has become a critical hub in air transportation, serving as a strategic cross-roads connecting Asia, Africa, America, and Europe [2]. In line with the Paris Agreement—ratified by Turkey through a Presidential Decree in 2021 [3]—and the Green Deal Action Plan published by the Ministry of Trade of the Republic of Turkey [4], compliance with new environmental standards has been designated as a strategic priority for the aviation sector. The European Green Deal, the “Fit for 55” package, and revisions to the aviation sector within the scope of the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS) impose regulatory pressure on Turkish airline operators.

These regulatory pressures translate directly into consumer-facing marketing practices, such as communicating sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) usage, waste-reduction initiatives, or carbon-offset policies within pricing and promotional messages. Consequently, airlines have adopted practices such as SAF trials, waste-reduction, and energy efficiency initiatives as mandatory areas of compliance [5]. These developments bring sustainability marketing to the forefront of the aviation industry. Therefore, due to the increasing environmental regulatory pressure and the rapidly growing aviation market, Turkey constitutes a critical and timely case for examining the impact of green marketing on airline customers in this study.

In this context, to minimize environmental damage and promote sustainable promotion, many airlines are applying green marketing strategies [6] (p. 1077). Green marketing aims to integrate environmental values into business and marketing efforts, providing consumers with clearer information about the environmental features of products and services [7] (p. 460).

Through green marketing, businesses work to reduce their negative impact on the environment while meeting customer needs and achieving their goals [8]. Airlines, in particular, focus on cutting greenhouse gas emissions by adopting greener practices throughout their operations. This helps them offer more sustainable services to customers and contribute to environmental protection.

The burning of fossil fuels in jet engines is the largest contribution of airlines to the emergence of the sustainability problem. In addition to carbon dioxide, jet engines produce greenhouse gases such as nitrogen oxides, water vapor, soot particles, and other gases such as sulfur oxides [9] (p. 89). An all-electric aircraft has been proposed as a solution to this problem. However, existing aircraft and engine technologies aim to improve fuel efficiency during the development of these aircraft to reduce greenhouse gas emissions [10].

Airlines operate in the service industry, where value is co-created through passenger experiences and service delivery can vary across flights [11]. However, capacity and regulatory constraints (e.g., fleet/seat availability, slots, and operational requirements) also shape airline marketing decisions beyond demand conditions [12]. Within these constraints, passenger demand and satisfaction remain critical drivers of airlines’ marketing decisions [9,12]. Environmentally conscious passengers, in particular, expect airlines to implement eco-friendly practices [13]. In addition to meeting these expectations, such initiatives also support airlines’ compliance with increasing environmental standards and help mitigate their climate impacts. Through these environmentally friendly initiatives, airlines can attract passengers who are aware of environmental issues [12]. At the same time, not all sustainability practices in aviation are purely discretionary marketing initiatives, as some reflect broader institutional and regulatory pressures.

Consumers’ post-purchase experience sharing provides guidance for potential buyers. Such information is especially important for individuals who see purchasing as risky and want to spend money wisely. Since it occurs on digital platforms, e-WOM extends the influence of traditional word-of-mouth marketing and reaches more customers. It is

known that, especially for certain product categories, digital platform sharing significantly influences consumers' purchasing decisions [14] (p. 458).

The core product of airlines is the flight. Consumers can evaluate flights only after experiencing and consuming them [14] (p. 458). The reviews of other passengers are invaluable for understanding the service and the brand and for shaping purchase intentions. For this reason, e-WOM is a key marketing tool for hotels and airlines, which are product groups where consumers seek information from online platforms [15] (p. 1311).

Consumers evaluate various important criteria for themselves when forming repurchase intentions. The widespread use of digital communication by consumers and businesses emphasizes the influence of e-WOM in consumers' purchasing decisions. Therefore, businesses need to better understand the factors that drive consumer purchase intentions by considering interactions in the digital communication sphere [16] (p. 245). In this context, this research examines the impact of green marketing on product repurchase intentions, using e-WOM as a mediating variable.

Previous studies indicate that airlines' environmentally conscious initiatives impact airline customers in areas such as customer satisfaction [9], consumer purchasing behavior [17], and consumer attitudes toward airlines [18]. Although there are numerous studies on green marketing, research that simultaneously explores green marketing, repurchase intention, and e-WOM in the airline industry is scarce globally and has yet to be conducted in Turkey. This study investigates the effect of green marketing on repurchase intention through e-WOM within the airline industry. By addressing this gap in the literature, the research makes a theoretical contribution while also offering practical guidance for the advancement of sustainability practices in the aviation industry.

To address this gap, the present study is guided by the following research questions:

**RQ1:** How does the green marketing mix influence consumers' repurchase intention in the airline industry?

**RQ2:** How do information characteristics (information quality, credibility, and quantity) shape electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) in the context of airline green marketing?

**RQ3:** Does electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) mediate the relationship between green marketing and repurchase intention?

## 2. Conceptual Framework and Hypothesis Development

### 2.1. Conceptual Background

The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) developed by Ref. [19] posits that individuals evaluate persuasive messages through two distinct cognitive processes: the central and the peripheral routes. In the central route, individuals carefully and logically evaluate information [19,20]; in this process, the quality and content of the information are decisive. In the peripheral route, by contrast, decisions are shaped by more superficial factors such as the source's attractiveness and credibility [19,20]. In short, the theory explains how individuals process information. In this study, ELM provides a robust theoretical framework to conceptualize the effects of e-WOM's information quantity, quality, and credibility on repurchase intention in the context of green marketing in the airline industry.

Recent studies reveal that consumers evaluate information-rich messages and messages containing heuristic cues within sustainability-related content differently. For example, ref. [21] states that "green advertising stories" supported by strong arguments, having a simple structure, and containing credible eco-labels are processed as complex and diagnostic information via the central route.

From a 4P perspective, messages about the green marketing mix can be considered persuasive signals that are processed through both central and peripheral routes, depending on how complicated the information is. Airlines implement initiatives such as carbon offsetting and fuel efficiency programs using verifiable data. The consumer may process

these through the central route, depending on their level of environmental knowledge. On the other hand, green pricing and advertising strategies try to encourage people to buy things by using mostly intuitive signals that do not require much thought. This context may link green pricing and promotion to the peripheral route [22].

Prior research applying ELM to sustainability and green communication contexts indicates that argument strength and credibility-related cues play a key role in shaping consumer responses to environmentally oriented messages [22].

The ELM also provides an explanation for the effects of e-WOM characteristics, one of the study's variables. Consumers make an effort to verify the accuracy of social media comments. Together with this verification, they believe that such information is useful. Since it represents the persuasive power of a message, information quality is generally considered a precursor of the central route. Information credibility, on the other hand, represents the peripheral routes by reflecting the recipients' perception of the credibility of a message. Consumers participate in the communication method in which they evaluate the information as reliable [23]. Similarly, information quantity also functions as peripheral cues by enabling less effort and cognitive connection in consumers' decisions. Based on this, in this study, relying on [23], information quality is accepted as the central route, and information quantity and credibility are accepted as the peripheral route.

In summary, the ELM explains the persuasion process through two different routes, namely the central and peripheral routes. In the study, there are variables representing the peripheral and central routes from the green marketing mix and e-WOM elements. Therefore, these elements will affect consumers' repurchase intention through different mechanisms.

Accordingly, ELM is employed in this study as a theoretical lens to classify information characteristics and green marketing cues into central and peripheral routes, rather than as a framework to test differential route choice or involvement effects.

## 2.2. Green Marketing

From a consumer decision-making perspective, green marketing practices serve as informational and symbolic cues that shape consumers' evaluations of firms' environmental commitment. In experience-based service contexts like aviation, these cues are especially important in post-purchase evaluations, where customers use communicative signals to figure out how satisfactory the service is and what the company stands for [24]. In this sense, green marketing practices function as signals through which firms communicate their underlying environmental commitment to consumers, particularly in contexts where direct assessment of sustainability performance is difficult. This view is consistent with signaling theory, which explains how firms use observable actions and communications to reduce information asymmetry and convey unobservable qualities to consumers [25].

Green marketing encompasses the entire process of product and service development, implementation, pricing, distribution, and promotion, with the aim of minimizing environmental damage during these processes [26].

Customers' interest in environmentally friendly products also significantly influences how businesses prioritize environmental concerns. Environmentally conscious customers prefer businesses and products that are environmentally responsible [17]. As a result, businesses integrate sustainability into their operations by considering both customer preferences and local, national, and international regulations.

### 2.3. e-WOM

Electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) has been recognized in the marketing literature as a key element of consumer–firm interaction in digital environments. Research indicates that the vast majority of consumers indicate that online reviews, as one form of e-WOM communication, significantly influence their purchase-related decision processes [27] and that online reviews convey valuable information that assists prospective buyers in assessing quality and forming purchase intentions [28].

e-WOM is accessible to the public because it occurs over the internet. It is therefore a dynamic and ongoing process available to many individuals and organizations, where information about a product, service, brand, or business is exchanged among existing, current, or potential customers [29] (p. 83). Some studies have added that the shared information about the product includes positive or negative evaluations based on comments and analyses from those who have purchased or used the product [29] (p. 83). In summary, e-WOM is the sharing of positive or negative opinions about a business or product by potential, current, or former customers via the internet [30].

e-WOM plays a particularly critical role in experience-based service industries such as aviation, where consumers are unable to evaluate the core service prior to purchase and can only assess service quality after consumption [31]. In such contexts, consumers face higher perceived risk and therefore tend to rely on the experiences and evaluations shared by other customers to reduce uncertainty and form expectations [14,32]. As a result, e-WOM constitutes an important informational input for understanding airline services, interpreting service performance, and shaping post-purchase evaluations and subsequent behavioral tendencies [15].

### 2.4. Repurchase Intention

Repurchase intention refers to a customer's decision to buy products and services again from the same or a different vendor [33] (p. 330). Repurchase, being associated with loyalty, significantly contributes to the future success of businesses [34] (p. 252). Therefore, the literature includes many studies on repurchase behavior and intention because of its significance to businesses.

In service industries based on experience, such as aviation, service quality can be evaluated after consumption. Accordingly, the intention to repurchase reflects the learned experiences gained from service experiences [31,32]. Recent studies in the context of airlines also support these conclusions [35].

### 2.5. Green Marketing and Electronic Word-of-Mouth

Consumers share information about businesses' green marketing efforts through social media and online reviews. These posts include not just details about companies' green marketing activities but also their opinions. Environmentally conscious consumers are more likely to share businesses' green marketing practices via e-WOM. This, in turn, helps businesses build a positive reputation through their green marketing initiatives [36].

From a consumer information processing perspective, green marketing practices also trigger communication among consumers such as electronic word-of-mouth when such evaluations are expressed publicly [37]. ELM asserts that e-WOM externalizes persuasive cues related to sustainability. Consistent with the signaling perspective, green marketing practices are interpreted as observable environmental signals that motivate consumers to share their experiences [38].

Ref. [16] conducted a study concluding that green marketing has a significant and positive impact on e-WOM. According to the research, consumers who prefer green products share information about green products and businesses to encourage broader

adoption of green products in society. They view posts focused on businesses' green marketing activities as part of environmental protection.

Ref. [11] conducted a study examining how Indian airlines' social media usage characteristics impact electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM), trust, and brand equity. Most other research also focuses on social media and e-WOM in the airline industry [39,40]. However, there are limited number of studies that explore the effect of green marketing mix elements on e-WOM specifically in airlines.

## 2.6. e-WOM and Repurchase Intention

Some researchers have examined the impact of e-WOM on purchase intention. The study by [29] examined how e-WOM affects repurchase behavior, specifically considering the role of brand trust in the context of Garuda Indonesia Airlines. The results of the study confirmed a significant and positive effect of e-WOM on repurchase behavior.

From a theoretical perspective, e-WOM, a social influence tool that incorporates consumers' post-consumption evaluations, provides rich information for future purchasing behavior. In other words, e-WOM influences purchase and repurchase intentions through individual evaluations as a mechanism accessible to other consumers [41].

Anyone with internet access can share their opinions through digital platforms without any control mechanisms. This means that consumers can both encounter and share positive and negative perspectives on digital platforms. However, the present study operationalizes e-WOM as sharing/posting intentions, and therefore focuses on how information characteristics (quantity, quality, credibility) relate to e-WOM generation. The uncontrolled nature of digital platforms makes it necessary to question the quality of the information shared via e-WOM. At this point, the concept of information characteristics on digital platforms becomes important.

The impact of e-WOM on consumers primarily revolves around the information characteristics, which include the quantity, quality, and credibility of the messages they encounter. In particular, for airlines that offer intangible services, elaborating on the idea of information characteristics in e-WOM is very valuable. Refs. [11,40] studied the effect of three information characteristics of airlines' social media, namely information quantity, information credibility, and information quality, on brand equity and trust through e-WOM. Therefore, in this study, the concept of e-WOM in airlines will be examined in detail with three variables named information quantity, information quality, and information credibility.

### Information Characteristics

Each e-WOM message does not influence consumers equally. Especially with the rise in smartphones, the internet has become accessible at any time, removing the constraints of time and location for consumers to share messages. This trend has led to a buildup of messages in e-WOM. Among this flood of messages, those with informative content are the ones that truly connect consumers with businesses. For customers, obtaining information about the product or business becomes a key aspect of the communication channels between the company and the consumer.

It has been suggested that information positively impacts e-WOM [42]. The concept of information characteristics includes three dimensions of information: information quantity, information quality, and information credibility.

In the following subsection, information quantity is addressed first. Before purchasing tangible products, the ability to see and experience them in a physical store offers consumers a significant sense of comfort. However, consumers tend to conduct more thorough research for products that they cannot experience prior to purchase. In this context, e-WOM has made it easier for consumers to access additional information [43] (p. 75).

Social media facilitates interactions between individuals with no prior acquaintance, allowing users to add comments beneath shared information. Within social media, messages with higher engagement become more visible and reach a larger audience. As a result, there is a direct link between the amount of information shared and the number of comments generated [44] (p. 1014). Therefore, the influence of information quantity on sales of products that cannot be physically experienced before purchase—such as books, games, films, and hotel rooms—has become an intriguing area of research for scholars.

Another factor that affects consumers' purchasing behavior in e-WOM is information quality [45] (p. 650). Information quality has three main factors: accuracy, timeliness, and relevance. Timeliness refers to having information available when the consumer needs it. Relevance means that the information addresses the consumer's questions and concerns. For example, an environmentally conscious consumer, while researching whether an airline shares the same issue, looks for posts and content about the airline's environmental practices. Among these factors, the accuracy of the information in e-WOM is the most important for consumers. In this context, information quality means the correctness, timeliness, and relevance of what consumers know about a product or brand. Ref. [46] found that social e-WOM and information quality have a strong impact on customers' chances of repurchasing.

Another aspect of the information's characteristics is its credibility. The concept of information credibility refers to the consumer's perception of a message about a product or business as trustworthy. Information credibility exists when consumers believe that the technical features of the product and user experiences are accurately represented in the information source [40] (p. 291). Consumers establish credibility when they perceive the information source as impartial and objective. If consumers regard the information reliable, their likelihood of engaging with the business and brand through e-WOM increases [34]. Numerous studies have demonstrated that information credibility positively influences consumers' purchase intentions [34].

The concept of information characteristics, which includes three dimensions of information, has been the focus of e-WOM research [11,40]. Information quality, quantity, and credibility are conceptualized as antecedents to e-WOM. Building on this theoretical background, and following ELM, in the e-WOM context, review quality (argument quality) is treated as a central cue, whereas source credibility and review quantity are treated as peripheral cues; therefore, the influence of these information characteristics on e-WOM is theoretically expected [47]. Furthermore, it is theoretically expected that information characteristics have a direct effect on repurchase intention, and that e-WOM mediates this relationship.

### *2.7. Green Marketing and Repurchase Intention*

According to reports, airlines that adopt business policies aligned with sustainability goals, such as fuel savings, waste reduction, and recycling, earn the title of "environmentally friendly airlines." In other words, an environmentally friendly airline detects environmental problems caused by its activities and makes changes through solutions that reduce or eliminate these issues [48]. The sustainability efforts of airline companies are noticed by passengers who are more aware of environmental concerns and help airlines build an environmentally friendly image [18] (p. 437). Many studies indicate that the green image created through green marketing activities encourages consumers' repurchasing behavior [49,50].

From an ELM perspective, green marketing mix elements can function as persuasive cues processed through central and peripheral routes. Concrete sustainability practices lead to conscious evaluations of airlines' environmental actions, while symbolic and communication-based cues lead to intuitive evaluations. These evaluation processes shape

consumers' perceptions of airlines' overall value proposition, which can increase their intention to repurchase from the same company [19,35,51, 52].

In this study, green marketing is defined as strategies that enable firms to effectively target and meet consumer needs in an environmentally sustainable manner. Traditional marketing mix elements address airlines' green marketing strategies, which include green products, green prices, green places, and green promotion. Importantly, some sustainability-related airline claims may simultaneously communicate promotional information and reflect pricing decisions (e.g., stating that carbon offset is included in the ticket price), while others are grounded in product-level environmental attributes (e.g., emphasizing that new-generation aircraft reduce environmental harm). Accordingly, green airline marketing may involve interactions among multiple marketing-mix elements rather than isolated components.

#### 2.7.1. Green Product

The green product, which is at the center of the green marketing mix, refers to environmentally friendly products whose ecological impact is minimized throughout their life cycle [53]. The main product of airlines is the flight. Therefore, the airplanes that operate flights should be examined in terms of sustainability. Most airlines are focusing on decarbonization efforts to meet the 2050 net-zero emissions target [54] (p. 732). Passenger numbers, aircraft type, and aircraft age are among the factors affecting greenhouse gas emissions. Older aircraft produce more greenhouse gases than newer ones. Since new aircraft incorporate the latest technology, they also support sustainability by reducing fuel consumption. An alternative solution for decreasing greenhouse gas emissions is biofuels [55] (p. 1234).

Another issue related to flights is in-flight waste management. In this context, choosing recyclable products is one of the sustainability steps [56]. Designing and operating flights, which are the core products of airlines, within the framework of sustainability as described above influences passengers' repurchase decisions [9].

#### 2.7.2. Green Price

"Green price" refers to the cost of green products that includes expenses related to environmental awareness. Since pricing is the only element of the marketing mix that generates revenue, the green market plays a significant role in green pricing. Green pricing is defined as "the consumer's sensitization and willingness to pay more for the environmental performance of products" [57] (p. 47).

The results of a study conducted in Switzerland showed that 20% of passengers are willing to pay more for green products in aviation. Additionally, studies indicate that passengers are willing to cover the extra costs associated with biofuels [58] (p. 2). In price-sensitive markets such as Turkey, consumers tend to prioritize fare affordability over sustainability-related price premiums, which may constrain willingness to pay for green pricing practices. Prior research in the Turkish aviation context indicates that ticket price remains a dominant determinant of airline choice, while even environmentally conscious segments—such as Generation Z passengers—exhibit green purchase intentions that are sensitive to price considerations [7,59]. Furthermore, research has identified a direct link between green pricing and purchasing behavior [38,60].

#### 2.7.3. Green Promotion

Green communication refers to communication activities aimed at providing information, reminding, or persuading consumers to purchase environmentally friendly products [61]. The increasing sensitivity of consumers to the environment encourages businesses such as airlines, which are known for environmental harm, to adopt green

advertising [62] (p. 461). Ref. [38] concluded that green advertising influences consumers' purchasing behavior. Another element of the promotion mix is public relations. Airline advertising and public relations efforts emphasize the sustainable aspects of the flight service and the airline's eco-friendly image [62] (p. 463). For airlines, digital marketing tools, especially social media platforms, are crucial in shaping consumers' attitudes toward sustainability. The study by [63] highlights how messages delivered through green promotion impact consumers' purchasing decisions. In summary, studies reveal that components of the green promotion mix can influence consumers' purchasing behavior [49].

#### 2.7.4. Green Place

The airline industry uses a variety of distribution channels to connect the product and the customer. Technological advancements have led to the replacement of traditional channels like tour operators and travel agency systems with web-based direct sales [64] (p. 208). This way, airlines have adopted more environmentally friendly practices and started green distribution channels. As a result, reducing physical activities helps promote environmental sustainability. Ref. [60] found a positive link between green distribution and repurchase behavior.

#### 2.8. *e-WOM as a Mediator Between Green Marketing and Repurchase Intentions*

Research on repurchase intentions in the airline industry has used service quality and customer satisfaction as variables [65].

In the literature, studies focus on subtopics of green marketing, such as green product quality and green brand image [66], as well as the concepts of e-WOM and purchasing behavior. Studies on green marketing have emphasized the relationship with purchasing behavior has been emphasized. However, research that simultaneously examines green marketing, repurchase intention, and e-WOM is limited. Specifically, no study has tested this relationship within the airline industry. This study addresses these gaps by contributing to the theoretical literature as well as providing fresh perspectives on sustainability practices in the airline sector.

Ref. [16] studied the mediating role of e-WOM in the link between green marketing and repurchase intention in the Garnier brand context. However, no research has been found that explores the mediating role of e-WOM in the connection between green marketing and repurchase behaviors in the airline industry. In line with the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), e-WOM represents an outcome of the persuasion process that can influence consumers' behavioral intentions, such as repurchase intention [47].

From a process-oriented perspective, the influence of green marketing on repurchase intention may operate through indirect mechanisms rather than solely through direct effects. Consistent with the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), sustainability-related marketing cues shape consumers' cognitive evaluations of firms' environmental practices, which may subsequently be externalized through electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM). This communicative outcome renders individual evaluations socially visible and cognitively accessible, thereby accompanying and potentially reinforcing consumers' future-oriented behavioral intentions [14,47].

Similarly, information characteristics that enhance the perceived quality, credibility, and sufficiency of sustainability-related content may encourage consumers to engage in e-WOM. Prior research suggests that information perceived as diagnostic—by reducing uncertainty and supporting evaluation—can motivate consumers to share their assessments and, indirectly, shape their behavioral [67, 68].

Based on the conceptual framework and prior empirical findings, the following hypotheses are proposed:

**H1.** *Green Marketing positively influences e-WOM.*

**H2.** *Information Characteristics positively influence e-WOM.*

**H3.** *Green Marketing positively influences Repurchase Intention.*

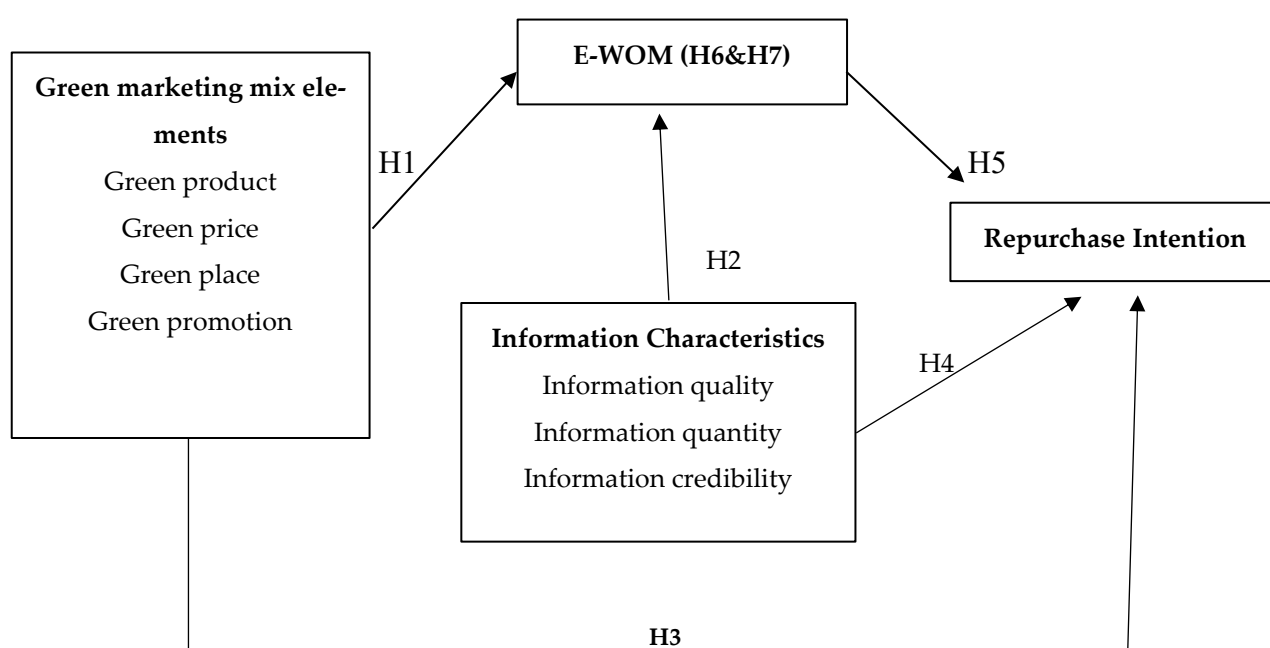
**H4.** *Information Characteristics positively influence Repurchase Intention.*

**H5.** *e-WOM positively influences Repurchase Intention.*

**H6.** *e-WOM mediates the effect of the Green Marketing on Repurchase Intention.*

**H7.** *e-WOM mediates the effect of Information Characteristics on Repurchase Intention.*

Based on the proposed hypotheses, the conceptual research model is presented in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Research Model.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Research Design

In line with the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), the constructs in the structural model were operationalized as central and peripheral cues. According to Petty and Cacioppo (1984), information quality was conceptualized as a central cue necessitating greater cognitive elaboration, whereas information credibility and information quantity were regarded as peripheral cues [19]. Within the Green Marketing, green product and green place which rely on verifiable sustainability attributes were conceptualized as central-route components, whereas green promotion and green price were treated as peripheral-route cues due to their heuristic nature. This explicit operationalization ensures that the measurement and structural model are theoretically grounded in the dual-route information processing assumptions of the ELM framework.

Convenience sampling was selected due to the absence of a complete sampling frame for airline passengers and its widespread use in exploratory behavioral research [69].

While methodologically acceptable, this approach is non-probabilistic and may limit generalizability. To address this limitation, the sample distribution was examined across demographic subgroups, and robustness checks were performed in the structural model to minimize potential sampling bias. A quantitative, cross-sectional design was adopted to examine the structural relationships among the green marketing mix, information characteristics, electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM), and repurchase intention. The conceptual model was developed based on prior literature indicating that customers' evaluations of environmentally responsible marketing practices can influence their online sharing behavior and subsequent purchase decisions. The model assumed that e-WOM would serve as a mediating variable between green marketing mix and repurchase intention. In addition, the model also tested whether the information characteristic influenced e-WOM. The model also assumed that e-WOM would mediate the effect of information characteristics on repurchase intention.

### 3.2. Participants and Measures

A total of 407 individuals completed the survey; however, responses where all questions were answered the same were excluded, resulting in an analysis based on 390 participants. When the population exceeds 100,000, a sample size of 384 is generally considered adequate [66]. Of the 390 participants, 182 (46.7%) were female and 208 (53.3%) were male. Examination of the age distribution shows that most participants are between 36 and 45 years old (27.9%), followed by those aged 46 to 55 (24.6%).

All constructs in the study were measured using items adapted from scales whose validity had been established in previous research. A five-point reflective Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree was used for all measurements. The operational definitions of the concepts used in the study and the measurement details are presented in Table 1:

**Table 1.** Operational Definitions.

| Variables            | Operational Definition                                                                                                                                                             | Measurement Details<br>Number of Items/Source            |
|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Green product        | Products that seek to protect or enhance the environment during production, use, or disposal by conserving resources and minimizing the use of toxic agents, pollution, and waste. | It was measured with six items (adapted from [70,71]).   |
| Green Price          | The perception related to consumers' willingness to pay more for environmentally responsible airlines.                                                                             | It was measured with three items (adapted from [70,71]). |
| Green promotion      | There is a perception that airlines use digital distribution channels to ensure environmental sustainability.                                                                      | It was measured with five items (adapted from [70,71]).  |
| Green place          | The perception of airlines' efforts to communicate environmental sensitivity and green product-oriented advertising and social media messages.                                     | It was measured with three items (adapted from [70,71]). |
| Information Quantity | Related to consumers' perception of the quantity of information-rich messages contained in airline e-WOM posts.                                                                    | It was measured with three items (adapted from [11]).    |
| Information Quality  | Consumers' perception of the accuracy of airline e-WOM posts.                                                                                                                      | It was measured with three items (adapted from [11]).    |

|                         |                                                                                   |                                                          |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Information credibility | Consumers' perception of the trustworthiness of airline e-WOM posts.              | It was measured with three items (adapted from [11]).    |
| e-WOM                   | Reflects consumers' tendency to share evaluations about airlines via social media | It was measured with three items (adapted from [11]).    |
| Repurchase Intention    | The passengers' behavioral tendency to use the airline again in the future.       | It was measured with three items (adapted from [72,73]). |

The green marketing mix was modeled as a second-order latent construct composed of four first-order dimensions: green product, green price, green promotion, and green place. Each first-order dimension was assessed using three to five observed indicators adapted from validated sources in the sustainability and marketing literature. In this study, CB-SEM was used, and second-order structures were considered reflective [51,74]. The second-order structure was estimated using a two-stage CB-SEM: (i) first-order reflective constructs were validated with CFA; factor scores were extracted once reliability and discriminant validity were established; and (ii) the structural model was constructed using these scores as indicators of the second-order construct. Two-stage was chosen because it better manages measurement error and reduces parameter inflation. Reflective constructs are advantageous when analyzing complex relationships involving intertwined dimensions, as indicated by some papers it suggests that incorporating constructs measured with multiple indicators into the same model may necessitate additional analytical constraints, which solidifies the rationale for clearly defining constructs based on their interrelations [75]. Although the Green Marketing and Information Characteristics consist of multiple dimensions, previous research generally models them reflectively [74,76]. The dimensions are conceptually manifestations of a broader latent construct rather than forming it. Therefore, a reflective second-order specification was used. A two-stage CB-SEM approach was applied to minimize measurement error and avoid parameter inflation. Zhang et al. (2020) demonstrates how CB-SEM allows for accurate estimates of model parameters and effects, reinforcing its suitability for constructing and analyzing complex model structures, including those with formative indicators [76]. The electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) and repurchase intention constructs were each made up of three observed indicators. Item wordings were slightly refined to fit the airline service context, and a pilot test with 30 participants confirmed face validity and clarity. Importantly, the green marketing mix score was not computed as a simple arithmetic mean of its dimensions. Instead, a second-order reflective latent construct was specified and estimated using a two-stage CB-SEM approach. This approach allows the relative contribution of each first-order dimension (green product, green price, green promotion, and green place) to be empirically estimated through standardized factor loadings, rather than imposing equal weights. Consequently, the composite green marketing construct reflects a weighted aggregation determined by the measurement model, ensuring that dimensions with stronger empirical relevance exert greater influence on the higher-order construct.

The data were tested for normality. The normality test results were significant, which is undesirable. If the skewness and kurtosis values of the data are appropriate, they can be used in parametric tests [69]. Therefore, it was decided that the data could be used in parametric tests. VIF values are below 5. Correlation analysis was performed to evaluate for multicollinearity. It was concluded, after examining the correlations, that there was no such issue.

All analyses were conducted in R Studio (9.5.191.578) using maximum likelihood estimation with robust (Huber–White) standard errors and the Yuan–Bentler T2\* scaled test

statistic. The model converged successfully after 81 iterations using the NLMINB optimizer. Although Mardia's multivariate normality test indicated significant non-normality ( $p < 0.001$ ), skewness and kurtosis values remained within acceptable limits ( $|\text{skew}| < 2$ ,  $|\text{kurtosis}| < 7$ ). Therefore, maximum likelihood estimation with robust (Huber–White) standard errors and the Yuan–Bentler T2 statistic was employed to correct for non-normality. Multicollinearity diagnostics showed acceptable levels ( $\text{VIF} < 5$ ), allowing all constructs to remain in the model. The first loading of each latent construct was fixed to 1.0 to ensure model identification. Two higher-order factors green marketing mix and information characteristics were modeled to reflect conceptual aggregation. Model estimation included both the measurement and structural components within a single simultaneous framework. For clarity, all hypotheses (H1–H7) were placed at the end of the conceptual framework section and directly aligned with the structural paths tested in the model.

The overall fit statistics (Table 2) of the second-level SEM indicate that the model fits the data well ( $\chi^2(392) = 927.686$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ; CFI = 0.953; TLI = 0.948; RMSEA = 0.059, 90% CI [0.054, 0.064]; SRMR = 0.067; PNFI = 0.830). In particular, the CFI/TLI values very close to 0.95 and the RMSEA around 0.06 imply that the proposed measurement and structural constructs are compatible with the data. The SRMR remaining close to the 0.07 threshold also indicates an acceptable level of fit. These results collectively support that both the measurement and structural components of the model provide an adequate fit.

**Table 2.** Model Fit Indices.

| Measure                 | Value                | Recommended Criterion |
|-------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) | 927.686              | —                     |
| Degrees of freedom (df) | 392                  | —                     |
| <i>p</i> -value         | <0.001               | >0.05                 |
| CFI                     | 0.953                | ≥0.95                 |
| TLI                     | 0.948                | ≥0.90                 |
| RMSEA (90% CI)          | 0.059 [0.054, 0.064] | ≤0.06                 |
| SRMR                    | 0.067                | ≤0.08                 |
| PNFI                    | 0.83                 | —                     |

Convergent validity and internal consistency were assessed using composite reliability (CR) and average variance extraction (AVE).  $\text{CR} \geq 0.80$  and  $\text{AVE} \geq 0.50$  were found for all constructs (Table 3). Despite having the lowest loading (info\_quality1,  $\lambda = 0.53$ ), the AVE for the info\_quality construct remained above 0.50. AVE values for the marketing mix dimensions (g\_product, g\_prom, g\_place) and outcome variables (e-WOM, repur) were high ( $\approx 0.74$ – $0.87$ ), indicating that the indicators satisfactorily explained the construct.

**Table 3.** Convergent Validity and Reliability.

| Construct                 | Items  | Standardized Loading ( $\lambda$ ) | Composite Reliability (CR) | Average Variance Extracted (AVE) |
|---------------------------|--------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Green Product (g_product) | Item 1 | 0.902                              | 0.96                       | 0.86                             |
|                           | Item 2 | 0.947                              |                            |                                  |
|                           | Item 3 | 0.928                              |                            |                                  |
|                           | Item 4 | 0.931                              |                            |                                  |
|                           | Item 5 | 0.916                              |                            |                                  |

|                                    |        |       |      |      |
|------------------------------------|--------|-------|------|------|
| Green Price (g_price)              | Item 1 | 0.605 | 0.83 | 0.55 |
|                                    | Item 2 | 0.841 |      |      |
|                                    | Item 3 | 0.768 |      |      |
| Green Promotion (g_prom)           | Item 1 | 0.862 | 0.93 | 0.74 |
|                                    | Item 2 | 0.909 |      |      |
|                                    | Item 3 | 0.817 |      |      |
|                                    | Item 4 | 0.839 |      |      |
| Green Place (g_place)              | Item 1 | 0.913 | 0.94 | 0.85 |
|                                    | Item 2 | 0.901 |      |      |
|                                    | Item 3 | 0.957 |      |      |
| Information Content (info_cont)    | Item 1 | 0.823 | 0.89 | 0.71 |
|                                    | Item 2 | 0.931 |      |      |
|                                    | Item 3 | 0.756 |      |      |
| Content Reliability (cont_relia)   | Item 1 | 0.898 | 0.88 | 0.69 |
|                                    | Item 2 | 0.932 |      |      |
|                                    | Item 3 | 0.623 |      |      |
| Information Quality (info_quality) | Item 1 | 0.53  | 0.84 | 0.54 |
|                                    | Item 2 | 0.922 |      |      |
|                                    | Item 3 | 0.695 |      |      |
| e-WOM                              | Item 1 | 0.888 | 0.93 | 0.82 |
|                                    | Item 2 | 0.934 |      |      |
|                                    | Item 3 | 0.896 |      |      |
| Repurchase (repur)                 | Item 1 | 0.94  | 0.95 | 0.87 |
|                                    | Item 2 | 0.945 |      |      |
|                                    | Item 3 | 0.906 |      |      |

For the second-order constructs, the Fornell–Larcker criterion was met: the diagonal values of g\_mix and informationchar ( $\sqrt{\text{AVE}} \approx 0.93$  and  $\approx 0.87$ ) were greater than the correlation between them ( $\rho = 0.42$ ), indicating that the two factors were distinguishable from each other. For the higher-order green marketing construct, internal consistency was assessed indirectly through the composite reliability of its first-order dimensions, consistent with recommended practices for second-order latent constructs in CB-SEM. Given the reflective specification, reporting Cronbach's alpha at the higher-order level is not strictly required, as reliability is captured through the reliability of the underlying first-order constructs.

Standardized factor loadings for first-level latent variables reveal that most indicators strongly reflect the relevant constructs. Loadings for the product (g\_product), price (g\_price), promotion (g\_prom), and place/distribution (g\_place) dimensions were mostly concentrated in the 0.80–0.95 range; similarly high and significant loadings were obtained for information content (info\_cont), content reliability (cont\_relia), and information quality (info\_quality). However, items info\_quality1 (0.53) and cont\_relia3 (0.62) were relatively lower but within acceptable ranges. Loadings for e-WOM (ewom) and repurchase

intention (repur) were concentrated in the 0.89–0.95 range, indicating that these two constructs are quite robust from a measurement perspective. The overall picture indicates strong convergent validity and low levels of measurement error.

In the second-level construct (Table 4), the green marketing factor is particularly and prominently represented by promotion (0.967) and place/distribution (0.950) within its sub-dimensions; the contribution of product (0.865) remains high, while price (0.275) appears to be a weaker component. This distribution suggests that communication and channels shape the perceived impact of the mix more strongly, with price receiving a relatively lower weight. The second-level factor, informationchar, has high correlations with content reliability (0.944) and information quality (0.962) and moderate correlations with information content (0.518). This pattern suggests that the qualitative dimensions of information (reliability and quality) are decisive in cognitive evaluations. The second-order loadings indicate that the green marketing mix is predominantly represented by green promotion and green place dimensions, followed by green product, while green price exhibits a comparatively weaker loading. This pattern confirms that the dimensions contribute unequally to the composite construct, further supporting the use of a weighted latent variable approach rather than an unweighted aggregation.

**Table 4.** Higher-Order Factors.

| Second-Order    | First Order Factor | Std. Loading | <i>p</i> |
|-----------------|--------------------|--------------|----------|
| g_mix           | g_product          | 0.865        | <0.001   |
| g_mix           | g_price            | 0.275        | <0.001   |
| g_mix           | g_prom             | 0.967        | <0.001   |
| g_mix           | g_place            | 0.950        | <0.001   |
| informationchar | info_cont          | 0.518        | <0.001   |
| informationchar | cont_relia         | 0.944        | <0.001   |
| informationchar | info_quality       | 0.962        | <0.001   |

Discriminant validity and Bifactor CFA (Tables 5 and 6) was tested using HTMT between higher-order constructs. All HTMT values between the green marketing mix (second-order), information features (second-order), e-WOM, and repurchase intention were below 0.85 (maximum 0.812). This result demonstrates that high-level discriminant validity was achieved. The first-order dimensions were modeled as part of the same superstructure, so the high HTMT values between them were expected.

**Table 5.** Bifactor CFA.

| Model                                        | Bifactor CFA (General + 4Ps)                                                 |
|----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| $\chi^2/df$                                  | 2.11                                                                         |
| CFI                                          | 0.98                                                                         |
| TLI                                          | 0.97                                                                         |
| RMSEA [90% CI]                               | 0.06 [0.05, 0.08]                                                            |
| SRMR                                         | 0.03                                                                         |
| General Factor Loadings ( $\lambda_{std}$ )  | Product: 0.78–0.82 Price: 0.16–0.33 Promotion: 0.75–0.88<br>Place: 0.84–0.91 |
| Specific Factor Loadings ( $\lambda_{std}$ ) | Product: 0.39–0.53 Price: 0.53–0.83 Promotion: 0.10–0.50<br>Place: 0.10–0.35 |

**Table 6.** 2nd Order Factors HTMT.

| Construct                                  | 1     | 2     | 3     | 4 |
|--------------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|---|
| 1. Global Marketing Mix (gmm)              | 1     |       |       |   |
| 2. Information Characteristics (info_char) | 0.477 | 1     |       |   |
| 3. e-WOM                                   | 0.42  | 0.614 | 1     |   |
| 4. Repurchase Intention (repur)            | 0.812 | 0.49  | 0.464 | 1 |

The structural model (Table 7) reveals that the  $g\_mix \rightarrow repur$  path is forceful and significant ( $\beta\_std = 0.746$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). This finding suggests that the marketing mix (especially considering the dominance of promotion and place/distribution) directly and significantly strengthens repurchase intentions. The  $informationchar \rightarrow repur$  path has a more modest but significant effect ( $\beta\_std = 0.102$ ,  $p = 0.018$ ), suggesting that the quality of information provides an additional, but more limited, contribution to repurchase intentions. Examining the determinants of e-WOM, the  $informationchar \rightarrow e\_WOM$  ( $\beta\_std = 0.440$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and  $g\_mix \rightarrow ewom$  ( $\beta\_std = 0.242$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) paths are significant, indicating that both the marketing mix and the quality of information increase electronic word-of-mouth (WOM). In contrast, the effect of the  $e\_WOM \rightarrow repur$  path remained marginal ( $\beta\_std = 0.081$ ,  $p = 0.056$ ). This suggests that e-WOM is a component that works together with  $g\_mix$  and informational attributes and contributes to the total effect, rather than a direct trigger of purchase intention on its own.

**Table 7.** Structural Path Coefficients.

| Dependent | Independent     | $\beta\_std$ | $p$    | 95% CI (Unstd.) |
|-----------|-----------------|--------------|--------|-----------------|
| e-WOM     | $g\_mix$        | 0.242        | <0.001 | [0.172, 0.426]  |
| e-WOM     | informationchar | 0.440        | <0.001 | [0.399, 0.685]  |
| repur     | $g\_mix$        | 0.746        | <0.001 | [1.144, 1.571]  |
| repur     | e-WOM           | 0.081        | 0.056  | [−0.003, 0.242] |
| repur     | informationchar | 0.102        | 0.018  | [0.031, 0.339]  |

Note: Standardized coefficients are reported; 95% confidence intervals are based on unstandardised estimates (bootstrap,  $n = 5000$ ).

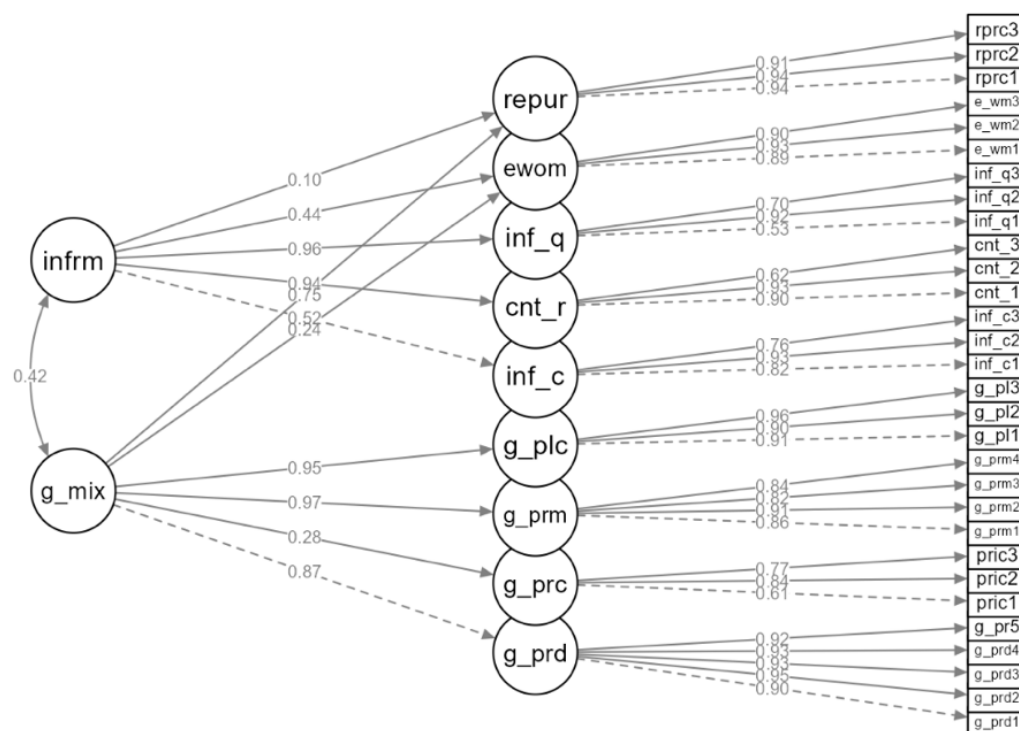
The indirect effects, assessed with bootstrap ( $n = 5000$ ) confidence intervals, are marginal (Table 8):  $ind\_mix = 0.036$  ( $p = 0.096$ ) for  $g\_mix \rightarrow ewom \rightarrow repur$  and  $ind\_info = 0.065$  ( $p = 0.074$ ) for  $informationchar \rightarrow ewom \rightarrow repur$ , both close to the threshold for statistical significance. However, the total effects are significant and striking in magnitude: the total effect of  $g\_mix$  is 1.393 ( $p < 0.001$ ), and the total effect of  $informationchar$  is 0.250 ( $p = 0.006$ ).

**Table 8.** Indirect and Total Effects (Bootstrap).

| Effect                                                       | Coefficient | SE    | $p$    | 95% CI          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------|--------|-----------------|
| $ind\_mix$ ( $g\_mix \rightarrow e\_WOM \rightarrow repur$ ) | 0.036       | 0.021 | 0.096  | [−0.003, 0.083] |
| $ind\_info$ ( $info \rightarrow e\_WOM \rightarrow repur$ )  | 0.065       | 0.036 | 0.074  | [−0.005, 0.140] |
| total_mix                                                    | 1.393       | 0.171 | <0.001 | [1.109, 1.769]  |
| total_info                                                   | 0.250       | 0.090 | 0.006  | [0.079, 0.432]  |

Consequently, while the confidence intervals are suggestive of an indirect effect via e-WOM, they warrant cautious interpretation; from a practical perspective, the direct effects (especially  $g\_mix$ ) appear to be more dominant in increasing repeat purchases.

In the path diagram (Figure 2), the second-level representation of the marketing mix (g\_mix) stands out, particularly through high loadings on the promotion and place/distribution dimensions; this factor directly and strongly predicts repurchase intention. Informational attributes (informationchar) significantly increase e-WOM and make a more limited but direct contribution to repurchase. The coefficient for the e-WOM → repur path is positive but close to the significance threshold, suggesting that e-WOM plays a more supportive/reinforcing role (Table 9).



**Figure 2.** Path Diagram. Note. The first indicator of each latent construct was fixed to 1 for model identification (marker-variable method). Dashed paths represent fixed parameters.

**Table 9.** Hypothesis and Results.

| Code | Hypothesis (H)                                                                     | Structural Path Tested    | Evidence (Std. $\beta$ , $p$ , 95% CI)             | Verdict       |
|------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| H1   | The Green Marketing Mix (g_mix) positively influences e-WOM.                       | g_mix → e-WOM             | $\beta = 0.242$ , $p < 0.001$ , CI [0.172, 0.426]  | Supported     |
| H2   | Information Characteristics (info_char) positively influence e-WOM.                | info_char → e-WOM         | $\beta = 0.440$ , $p < 0.001$ , CI [0.399, 0.685]  | Supported     |
| H3   | The Green Marketing Mix (g_mix) positively influences Repurchase Intention.        | g_mix → repur             | $\beta = 0.746$ , $p < 0.001$ , CI [1.144, 1.571]  | Supported     |
| H4   | Information Characteristics (info_char) positively influence Repurchase Intention. | info_char → repur         | $\beta = 0.102$ , $p = 0.018$ , CI [0.031, 0.339]  | Supported     |
| H5   | e-WOM positively influences Repurchase Intention.                                  | e-WOM → repur             | $\beta = 0.081$ , $p = 0.056$ , CI [−0.003, 0.242] | Not supported |
| H6   | e-WOM mediates the effect of g_mix on Repurchase Intention.                        | g_mix → e-WOM → repur     | Indirect = 0.036, $p = 0.096$ , CI [−0.003, 0.083] | Not supported |
| H7   | e-WOM mediates the effect of info_char on Repurchase Intention.                    | info_char → e-WOM → repur | Indirect = 0.065, $p = 0.074$ , CI [−0.005, 0.140] | Not supported |

## 4. Discussion

This study investigated the influence of green marketing on electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) and repurchase intention in the airline industry.

In the present study, the Elaboration Likelihood Model is employed as a theoretical lens to explain how different types of information cues may be processed by consumers, rather than as a framework to predict differential component-level effects on behavioral outcomes. Accordingly, the empirical model focuses on the aggregated influence of green marketing and information characteristics on e-WOM and repurchase intention. Although the green marketing mix was operationalized as an aggregated construct in the empirical model, its individual components were discussed conceptually to clarify their theoretical relevance within the airline sustainability context. The empirical results, however, reflect their combined and weighted influence as captured by the second-order latent construct.

The findings indicate that green marketing has a positive and direct effect on repurchase intention. This pattern is consistent with the role of environmental value-added components in shaping consumer preferences in service contexts where brand trust and sustainability cues are important. Information characteristics were also found to significantly enhance e-WOM. In particular, information quality acted as a central evaluative cue, whereas information credibility and quantity functioned as peripheral cues, with quantity playing a complementary role. Although e-WOM was positively associated with repurchase intention, its mediating effect between the Green Marketing and repurchase intention was marginal. Therefore, e-WOM appears to act as a complementary element alongside the Green Marketing, rather than as a statistically significant mediating pathway between green marketing and repurchase intention. In other words, e-WOM may accompany and reinforce sustainability-related evaluations, rather than serving as the primary pathway through which green marketing translates into repurchase intention in this sample; accordingly, the hypothesized mediating effect was not supported at conventional significance levels.

It is important to acknowledge that, for airline passengers, core service attributes such as safety and on-time performance are likely to be evaluated prior to sustainability considerations. From this perspective, sustainability may be perceived as a supplementary rather than a core service attribute. Consistent with the Elaboration Likelihood Model, such supplementary attributes are more likely to operate as peripheral cues once passengers' primary expectations regarding safety and punctuality are satisfied.

This study conceptualizes e-WOM as consumers' intention to share *positive* evaluations and recommendations. Accordingly, the relationship between e-WOM and repurchase intention is interpreted in terms of positive e-WOM, rather than the mere occurrence of e-WOM.

The analysis also indicates that the quality and credibility of information shared on social media about airlines, as well as the amount of information, have a positive and statistically significant effect on e-WOM. These findings suggest that passengers may be more inclined to share information about airlines' sustainability efforts on digital platforms when they perceive the information to be credible and of high quality. This supports previous studies by [16,77] who found that consumers tend to recommend eco-friendly companies when they perceive authentic environmental commitment [16,46]. Similarly, Ref. [78] emphasize that genuine sustainability practices increase customers' willingness to promote brands through e-WOM.

In addition, information characteristics showed a statistically significant direct association with repurchase intention, suggesting that the quality and credibility of information make a supplementary contribution to passengers' repurchase decisions. Despite being statistically significant, this effect clarifies the importance of credible and reliable sustainability communication in shaping repurchase behavior. This interpretation is

consistent with Harsono (2024) [79], who found that information quality, quantity, and credibility significantly influence purchase intention.

Although e-WOM shows a positive association with repurchase intention, the effect remains statistically marginal and does not reach conventional significance levels. This indicates that, contrary to some expectations in the literature, e-WOM does not function as a strong or decisive driver of repurchase intention in the present context. This pattern is broadly consistent with prior work reporting that positive e-WOM is often associated with favorable customer-related outcomes in airline and service settings (e.g., [29,80]); however, the present results suggest that in the airline context such associations may be weaker and contingent on structural decision constraints (e.g., route availability, schedule, and price), limiting e-WOM's ability to translate into a strong repurchase intention effect. While customers recognize that traditional advertising forms part of a deliberate marketing strategy, they view e-WOM as authentic feedback from real passengers. Accordingly, positive e-WOM can provide credibility reinforcement for airlines' reliability and sustainability claims; however, in the present context this reinforcement appears insufficient to translate into a strong direct effect on repurchase intention.

The analysis further shows that Green Marketing has a direct and substantial impact on Repurchase Intention. This aligns with the findings of Pancić et al. (2023), Safitri et al. (2024), and Huang et al. (2024), confirming that consumers prefer companies that minimize their environmental footprint [49,50,72]. In the airline context where the industry's environmental impact is significant green marketing efforts are vital for retaining environmentally conscious passengers.

The positive and statistically significant association between green marketing mix and repurchase intention may be interpreted in light of psychological benefits discussed in the sustainability and pro-environmental consumption literature. One possible explanation is that sustainability-oriented marketing practices may evoke psychological benefits, often referred to as "warm glow" [48,81]. While not directly measured in this study, one possible theoretical explanation is a 'warm-glow' effect; we therefore interpret this mechanism cautiously and as a theoretical insight rather than an empirically verified pathway.

Similarly, sustainability-oriented communication within the overall green marketing mix may contribute to the development of trust and positive brand-related perceptions. Previous studies indicate that credible and transparent sustainability communication fosters green trust and brand loyalty, which are important psychological antecedents of repurchase intention [49,82].

Based on the ELM, airlines' sustainability-oriented practices and messages shared on social media serve as social proof for consumers [83]. In this sense, e-WOM can be considered a complementary channel that enhances the perceived authenticity of green marketing practices. Therefore, the statistically marginal mediation via e-WOM should not be interpreted as a negative outcome, but rather as a context-specific insight indicating that passengers may rely primarily on their overall evaluations of airlines' sustainability-oriented marketing efforts.

It is important to note that electronic word-of-mouth reflects passengers' perceptions and interpretations of airlines' sustainability-related practices rather than objective assessments of their actual environmental impact. Consumers are more likely to observe and discuss visible and experience-based initiatives (e.g., cabin waste reduction or service-related changes) than less observable technical improvements. Therefore, e-WOM should be interpreted as a perception-driven communication outcome, which may not always correspond to the full environmental significance of underlying practices.

Although it is frequently emphasized in the literature that (positive) e-WOM increases repurchase intention, in this study the relationship between e-WOM and

repurchase intention remained statistically marginal; additionally, e-WOM was found not to exhibit a strong mediating effect in the relationship between green marketing and repurchase intention. These findings suggest that e-WOM functions not as a transmission mechanism but rather as a complementary/reinforcing element that strengthens the effect of green marketing; this interpretation is also consistent with [16], which argues that e-WOM amplifies—rather than fully transmits—the influence of green marketing on customer loyalty.

This study offers several theoretical contributions to the literature on green marketing and consumer decision-making in the airline industry. First, by integrating green marketing practices with electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) within a unified empirical framework, the study extends prior research that has largely examined these constructs in isolation. Second, the findings contribute to elaboration likelihood model (ELM)-informed research by demonstrating how information characteristics and green marketing jointly shape post-purchase evaluations, even when direct behavioral outcomes such as repurchase intention are not uniformly influenced. Third, by focusing on an emerging and highly price-sensitive aviation market, this study provides context-specific insights that complement and refine existing evidence derived primarily from developed economies.

In summary, the study confirms that while informational and sustainability-related factors enhance e-WOM, repurchase behavior is primarily driven by perceptions of green marketing. Together with information characteristics, this serves as a complementary rather than mediating channel, reinforcing these effects.

#### *4.1. Managerial Implications*

The findings offer practical advice for airline managers seeking to strengthen customer loyalty through sustainability-driven marketing strategies. In the highly competitive aviation sector, retaining existing customers is more cost-effective than acquiring new ones, making repurchase intention a key performance indicator of profitability. This study demonstrates that elements of green marketing play a decisive role in fostering repeat purchases. Customers tend to favor environmentally responsible airlines, and this preference significantly increases their likelihood of repurchasing.

Among the practical applications, the options that are more feasible in the short term include airlines reducing cabin waste and the use of single-use plastics, thereby supporting recycling practices, and opting for low-carbon meal services. In addition, the use of SAF should be prioritized, while in the longer term, younger fleets that provide fuel efficiency and enable lower carbon emissions should be planned.

Green Marketing positively influences electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) by resonating deeply with consumers through environmentally oriented practices. When airlines actively communicate their sustainability commitments, customers are more likely to share and recommend these efforts online. Such positive e-WOM enhances customer engagement and strengthens brand visibility on digital platforms. As digital channels continue to shape customer perceptions, airlines should make environmental responsibility a core pillar of their marketing communications and highlight green initiatives prominently on social media. Although airlines feature a sustainability section on their websites, their social media presence remains relatively weak. Supporting user-generated content—such as encouraging passengers to share their green travel experiences—can be implemented as a more engaging approach.

Despite the statistically non-significant mediating effect of e-WOM, the findings suggest that e-WOM may function as a complementary and reinforcing element alongside the green marketing mix. While e-WOM alone is not a strong predictor of repurchase intention in this sample, it may support customer engagement and the visibility of airlines' sustainability efforts on digital platforms. Moreover, the information characteristics

underlying e-WOM such as message quality, credibility, and consistency—strengthen online engagement. The modest direct effect of these informational attributes on repurchase indicates a need for managers to emphasize sustainability communication. In particular, they should convey reliable, accurate, and consistent information through digital platforms to stimulate repurchase intention. Based on these insights, airline managers should prioritize digital sustainability initiatives supported by high-quality and trustworthy communication. In this context, airline managers should deliver messages with consistent, standardized, and up-to-date content across various digital platforms as part of integrated marketing communications. While the corporate sustainability reports published on websites are necessary to ensure access for all stakeholders, they remain outside the consumer's everyday digital environment. Therefore, it is recommended that social media accounts targeting customers be designed in a way that incorporates more easily understandable, practical applications and thereby creates social proof.

Furthermore, by closely monitoring developments in social media, airlines can keep interactive communication with their customers. To achieve this, airlines should analyze customers' social media activities and online sharing—especially related to the green marketing mix—to gain more profound insights into customer data. This approach will help airlines better understand customer preferences within green marketing. In particular, customers' social media data will allow airlines to build stronger relationships with them. To achieve this, airlines need to allocate resources to social media analytics and green marketing initiatives. This investment should also include training in-house professionals in these areas. Among the concrete steps related to this issue, offering personalized deals via social media for environmentally conscious consumer segments has the potential to become one of the most important practical contributions in terms of the impact of green marketing on repurchase behavior by enabling a more personal and relationship-oriented approach.

Researchers have identified a significant positive effect of the information characteristic components of e-WOM on e-WOM itself. As information quality, credibility, and quantity increase, the role of e-WOM in influencing repurchase intention becomes even more prominent. Therefore, airlines should strengthen their information access channels. They should also maintain active engagement on social media platforms to keep relationships with customers warm and ongoing. In particular, by emphasizing environmentally sensitive activities, airlines can attract the attention of customers who prioritize such concerns. By disseminating high-quality, credible, and abundant information about green marketing, airlines can encourage environmentally conscious customers to engage in positive e-WOM. In this context, airline social media managers should prioritize producing highly engaging short videos and interactive content. In addition, providing prompt and effective responses to customer reviews, criticisms, and questions with a sustainability focus is valuable for encouraging e-WOM and strengthening repurchase intention.

#### *4.2. Theoretical Implications*

Driven by technological advances and economic factors, airlines have seen consistent growth. However, this expansion has also led to increased competition by bringing more players into the industry. In particular, the emergence of low-cost carriers provides passengers with more affordable flight options. Therefore, in such a highly competitive environment, retaining current customers is just as crucial as attracting new ones for airlines to stay sustainable and competitive. The most important step toward achieving this advantage is staying updated with modern trends. Green marketing and digital marketing strategies serve as key tools that support sustainable growth for airlines.

In the literature, no study has been found that specifically examines repurchase intention, green marketing, and e-WOM together within the airline industry. However, a

few studies have been conducted that analyze the effect of green marketing mix elements on repurchase intention through e-WOM in other sectors. By addressing this gap, the present study provides an academic foundation for understanding how green marketing mix elements relate to repurchase intention and e-WOM in the airline industry. In line with the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), e-WOM is conceptualized as an outcome of the persuasion process that may shape consumers' post purchase evaluations and behavioral tendencies rather than as a direct or dominant driver of repurchase intention in all contexts.

Building on this theoretical background, in the e-WOM context, review quality (argument quality) functions as a central cue, whereas source credibility and review quantity function as peripheral cues; therefore, the influence of these information characteristics on e-WOM is theoretically expected [47]. Consistent with this expectation, the findings confirm that information quality and credibility operate as central/peripheral cues within the ELM framework, significantly shaping the process of e-WOM generation and dissemination.

#### *4.3. Limitations and Future Research*

This research has yielded several valid and up-to-date findings, yet certain limitations should be acknowledged. First, the study involved a sample of 390 respondents, which is not sufficient to represent the entire population of Turkey. Because recruitment occurred online, the sample likely over-represents digitally active passengers and relatively frequent flyers. This may inflate e-WOM tendencies relative to the broader passenger population. Future probability-based sampling or the use of calibrated weights is recommended to improve generalisability. To obtain more reliable results, future research should include larger samples and extend the analysis to other countries in order to allow for cultural comparisons. Developing different models that explore the relationship between green marketing and repurchase intention may also provide further insights.

This study examined the mediating role of e-WOM in the link between green marketing and repurchase intention within the airline industry. Future research could test this model across different sectors and product categories or explore additional mediating and moderating variables to extend theoretical understanding. Research examining the correlation between green marketing and repurchase intention in a more expansive context, rather than confining itself to a singular sector, would yield insights that are more broadly applicable. Since recruitment occurred online, the sample likely over-represents digitally active passengers and relatively frequent flyers. This may inflate e-WOM tendencies relative to the broader passenger population. Future probability-based sampling or the use of calibrated weights is recommended to improve generalisability.

This study examined e-WOM broadly, without distinguishing between specific social media platforms. Future research could instead focus on individual channels—such as only Instagram or only YouTube—and analyze the impact of platform-specific shares separately. In this way, the effects of green marketing communications on repurchase intention and behavior across different social media environments can be compared. Such an approach would reveal how platform-specific user dynamics and interaction patterns may differentiate the relationship between green marketing and e-WOM, thereby providing more fine-grained contributions to the literature.

In addition, repurchase intention in the airline context should be interpreted as a conditional behavioral tendency rather than an absolute choice. Passengers' decisions to fly may depend on situational factors such as route characteristics and the availability of alternative transportation modes. As the present study focuses on post-purchase evaluations among airline passengers, alternative travel options were not explicitly modeled.

Future research could extend the framework by incorporating modal choice considerations or by comparing repurchase intentions across different transportation alternatives.

This study treated the green marketing mix as a single composite construct; therefore, we cannot infer the relative importance of individual dimensions. Future studies should test component-level effects using alternative model specifications.

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