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Article

eWOM trends: Shaping the future of hotel booking via social media

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Abstract: Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) has become a pivotal factor influencing consumers' decisions, particularly in the context of hotel services. With the advent of social media, it provides individuals with powerful tools to share its experiences and opinions about hotels. In this digital age, customers increasingly rely on online reviews and recommendations from their peers when selecting accommodations. eWOM on social media platforms has a substantial impact on customers' perceptions and decision-making processes. This study aims to better understand the influence of eWOM by social media platforms on purchase intention of hotel services. To understand the influence of eWOM, this study uses the information adoption model as the model has been widely used in previous eWOM studies. The information quantity construct has been added to strengthen the model. The online questionnaire was distributed to social media users by using Google forms via social media platforms and only 210 of them were responded. The SmartPLS 4.0 software is used to analyze the data as the Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) is a method to confirm the structural equation models and to test the link between inert developments. Based on results, the information quantity and information quality of hotel services on eWOM positively influences the information usefulness and the information usefulness of hotel services on eWOM positively influences the purchase intention. The results lead to increase sales of hotel services and contribute to economic growth.

Keywords: eWOM; purchase intention; economic growth

1. Introduction

The rise of Web 2.0 technologies has transformed everyday communication patterns (Verma et al., 2023). Social media platforms, blogs, and online forums have become the favored channels for individuals to disseminate information across diverse subjects (Verma et al., 2023). This shift in online discourse has fundamentally changed how consumers search for and exchange information regarding goods and services (Olanrewaju et al., 2020). Electronic word of mouth (eWOM), serving as the digital counterpart to traditional word-of-mouth, plays a crucial role as an information conduit for consumers seeking product-related insights (Ahani et al., 2019). Consumers make purchase decisions based on other customers' feedback on their consumed products or services as it provides more confidence before buying and consuming the products or services (Xabier Martinez-Rolan, 2013). As Verma et al. (2023) mentioned, 95% of consumers obtain messages through eWOM before making a purchase decision and it ranked as top five factors that impact on consumers' purchase decisions.

Based on Xabier Martinez-Rolan (2013), claimed that consumers more rely on eWOM messages than commercial advertising as the messages are more valuable and

trustworthy since other consumers have tried to use the products and services and share their opinions. It also has significantly impacted the business performance in terms of sales, revenue as well as reputation (Verma et al., 2023). For example, in Malaysia, the 10% increase in hotel rating can enhance hotel sales about 4.4% (Verma et al., 2023). Online reviews also have helped Amazon to gain about $ 2.7 billion in extra revenue (Taylor, 2018). While positive online reviews from other consumers also enhance the company's reputation (Miremadi and Haghayegh, 2022). It reveals the importance of eWOM for organizations and motivates consumers to share their opinions (Elseidi and El-Baz, 2014). Due to the significant influence of eWOM on consumer behavior, it provides opportunity for researchers to explore further on eWOM (Olanrewaju et al., 2020; Verma et al., 2023; Xabier Martinez-Rolan, 2013). Therefore, it attracts researchers to study eWOM adoption and its impact on consumers purchase decision (Cheung and Lee, 2012; Imagilova et al., 2017; Sulthana and Vasantha, 2019). Prior studies have used various theoretical perspectives such as Technology Acceptance Model, Elaboration Likelihood Model, Information Adoption Model, Heuristic Systematic Model to investigate eWOM communication and its impact on purchase decision but less attention focused on hospitality industry in Malaysia (Elseidi and El-Baz, 2014; Erkan and Evans, 2016; Taylor, 2018; Verma et al., 2023). The main goal of hospitality industry in Malaysia is to achieve estimate sales at USD4 billion in the current year and is poised to register a compound annual growth rate of greater than 6.5% during the forecast period. Malaysia's hospitality industry is rapidly growing, following the country's tourism industry. Covid-19 pandemic has had a huge impact on the tourism industry with crippling travel and tour operators as well as hotels. There were 120 hotels have closed temporarily or permanently and the industry has lost RM6.5 billion in revenues for 2020 and RM9 billion in 2021 (Miremadi and Haghayegh, 2022).

Therefore, current studies explore the impact on eWOM communication which focuses on consumers' responses to the eWOM messages and their impact on consumers' purchase intention on hotels services. Additionally, there is a need for a theory-driven comprehensive model which provides a solid finding through eWOM attributes influence purchase intention (Aditama, 2015; Verma et al., 2023). Many researchers claim that the Information Adoption Model (IAM) has been a popular foundation model in examining emerging technologies such as adoption, implementation, and usage (Filieri, 2015; Hussain et al., 2020). Moreover, Awa et al. (2015) explained that IAM framework has been used widely and focuses on eWOM studies. Therefore, the present study investigates the eWOM adoption process and its impact on consumers' purchase intention on hotels services through IAM.

From managerial aspect, this study explains consumers' perception on eWOM and its impact on their hotels purchase decision. This study provides some suggestions that managers can use to improve their consumers' purchase intention using eWOM communication. Besides that, it also offers various approaches which eWOM platforms can use to increase the adoption of eWOM messages.

2. Literature review

2.1. Electronic word of mouth (eWOM)

Word of mouth is traditionally a form of direct communication between consumers about products, services, or brand without any commercial intention (Aditama, 2015). The Internet has changed this traditional form of communication to electronic word of mouth (eWOM). Another simple word could be replaced is "online reviews", Abedi et al. (2020) and Lee and Hong (2019) have defined eWOM as consumers provide comments positively or negatively after using the products, services even brand. Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) has swiftly risen to prominence in the contemporary world, manifesting across diverse online channels like social media platforms, blogs, community forums, review sites, newsgroups, and e-commerce platforms (Elseidi and El-Baz, 2014). In fact, eWOM messages can be accessed by consumers at their convenience time and place which it is more accessible than traditional WOM (Imagilova et al., 2017). Nonetheless, many researchers said that eWOM communication is open to all customers like new customers, existing customers, potential customers, and non-customers to share their consumption experience via online platforms (Erkan and Evans, 2018). Thus, eWOM is a more active and ongoing process than traditional WOM (Sardar et al., 2021). Based on Imagilova et al. (2017) described that eWOM acts as dynamic and ongoing exchange process between potential, actual, or former consumers on products, services, brand even company via internet. Therefore, eWOM has been highly related to consumer purchasing decisions and lowering purchasing decision risks (Miremadi and Haghayegh, 2022).

2.2. Information adoption model (IAM) of eWOM

Sussman and Siegal (2003) initially proposed the Information Adoption Model (IAM), which is illustrated in **Figure 1**. It is a concept that explains how computer-based communications can be used to embrace information and impact users' behavior and intention. IAM integrates the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM). TAM is employed to understand individuals' acceptance of information systems and technology in relation to their usage intentions. On the other hand, ELM emphasizes the social aspect of how information influences attitudes, assessing the effectiveness of communications.

In the initial investigation carried out by Erkan and Evans in 2016, they presented an innovative research framework called the Information Acceptance Model (IAM). This model incorporated consumer behavior aspects related to electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) information, including information needs and attitudes towards information. The IAM was designed to be adaptable, encouraging modifications, revisions, and extensions based on subsequent research studies (Yan et al., 2016; Zhu et al., 2016). Teng and Khong (2015) noted that some researchers enhanced the explanatory power of IAM by either combining or introducing new constructs.

Drawing from the foundational work of Sulthana and Vasantha (2019) which outlined central and peripheral routes of informational influence, Ahani et al. (2019) proposed examining peripheral cues, specifically the quantity of information, in future studies on information adoption. Teng and Khong (2015) suggested considering argument quantity as a pertinent attribute of peripheral clues, while Imagilova et al. (2017) supported the idea that the volume of eWOM contributes to its helpfulness.

Expanding upon these observations, the current study embraces fundamental elements from IAM, incorporating constructs like information quality, information credibility, information usefulness, and information adoption into its foundational model. However, an innovative addition is made by incorporating information quantity into the model. The primary objective of this research is to investigate the impact of eWOM on consumer decisions when purchasing hotel services.

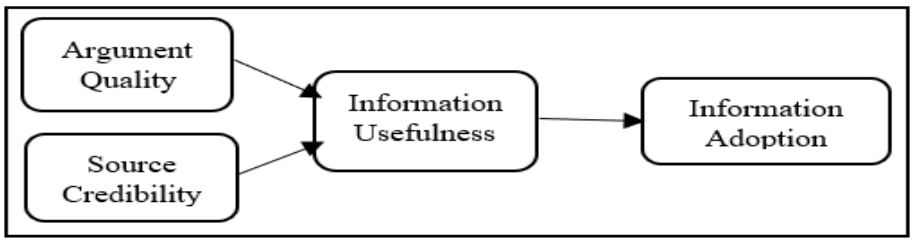

Figure 1. Information adoption model.

2.3. Information quality

Information quality, as defined by Filieri (2015) pertains to the caliber of content within electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) communication. From a consumer perspective, information quality plays a pivotal role in influencing purchasing decisions for products or services. Building on the original work of Sussman and Siegal (2003) who identified central and peripheral routes of informational influence, the central route emphasizes the attention given to message content, represented by argument quality. When booking hotel rooms, consumers often rely on online reviews, especially when exploring unfamiliar environments (Abedi et al., 2020). Hence, information quality is a significant variable in this study.

The peripheral pathway involves recipients employing simplistic decision criteria to assess the message, often influenced by the credibility of the source. Various dimensions of eWOM excellence, such as comprehensiveness, timeliness, and pertinence Shen et al. (2014) along with specificity, factual accuracy Filieri (2015), lucidity, impartiality, comprehensibility, and superior quality Wang (2016) have been recognized. Previous research has delved into the relationship between information quality and information usefulness, revealing that information quality plays a pivotal role in influencing consumers' perceived usefulness of information during their decision-making process (Ahani et al., 2019; Verma et al., 2023).

Enhanced information quality aids consumers in assessing the quality and facilities offered by hotels (Abedi et al., 2020; Alalwan et al., 2017). Moreover, Filieri (2015) emphasized information quality as the primary factor influencing information usefulness, and previous studies consistently show a positive correlation between information quality and usefulness. Henceforth, the hypothesis succinctly summarizes:

H1: The information quality of hotel services on eWOM positively influences the information usefulness.

2.4. Information credibility

Information credibility plays a persuasive role in the process of influencing consumer attitudes. The perception of persuasiveness is encapsulated in the concept

of information trustworthiness, as noted by (Cheung and Lee, 2012). Essentially, information credibility reflects the degree to which consumers believe comments made by fellow consumers about products or services they have experienced. Miremadi and Haghayegh (2022) and Shen et al. (2014) also define information credibility in terms of believability, incorporating characteristics such as trustworthiness, persuasiveness, and reliability. Credibility is heightened when information is perceived as accurate, reliable, authentic, and persuasive (Shen et al., 2014).

As highlighted by Filieri (2015), eWOM that is perceived as credible by consumers is more likely to be accepted and aids in the adoption of information. Source credibility, operating within the peripheral route of informational influence Sussman and Siegal (2003) serves as a simple evaluation mechanism for making purchase decisions based on message content. Miremadi and Haghayegh (2022) demonstrated a positive relationship between information credibility and the usefulness of information related to hotel services. Thus, the hypothesis is succinctly encapsulated:

H2: The information credibility of hotel services on eWOM positively influences the information usefulness.

2.5. Information quantity

According to Filieri (2015), information quantity refers to the frequency of consumer comments on products or services through online platforms. The argument posits that a higher frequency of consumer reviews allows for a more comprehensive evaluation of the quality of desired products, services, or brands before making a purchase, compared to a lower frequency of reviews. Miremadi and Haghayegh (2022) recommend including information quantity in this study, emphasizing its role in reducing the risk associated with consumer decision-making.

Furthermore, the inclusion of multiple consumer feedback on a product or service, as observed in the consistency of reviews by Aditama (2015), instills confidence in other consumers to gather and analyze content messages on online platforms before making a purchase (Imagilova et al., 2017). Hanh et al. (2019) assert that a high number of consumer reviews indicate good sales and a positive market image for products, fostering confidence in potential buyers. The characteristics associated with information quantity include popularity, reliability, and product performance (Ahani et al., 2019; Alalwan et al., 2017; Hussain et al., 2017).

In the realm of hotel services, the scrutiny of information quantity has been examined and proven to exhibit a favorable correlation with the utility of information (Nana, 2009; Weitzl, 2017; Zhu et al., 2016). Consequently, the hypothesis is encapsulated as follows:

H3: The information quantity of hotel services on eWOM positively influences the information usefulness.

2.6. Information usefulness and purchase intention

Information usefulness acts as a mediates variable in this study. The first step of information adoption is information usefulness (Weitzl, 2017). It refers to the response

from consumers that the information obtained is useful and helpful in their decision-making process (Aditama, 2015). Another simple definition of information usefulness interpreted by Hussain et al. (2020) is the message from consumers reviews are valuable, informative, and helpful. A consumer's probability of adopting information is increased when the information is perceived as useful because the consumer will be more likely to use information that is suitable to their needs (Sardar et al., 2021). Filieri (2015) viewed information usefulness as information diagnostics in adoption behavior. Moreover, in hotel service perspectives, some researchers suggested not to include information adoption because information usefulness is also can view as information diagnostics where consumers gather and analyse the content before buying a product or service (Gvili and Levy, 2016; Olanrewaju et al., 2020; Verma et al., 2023). They urge information usefulness has been tested in various perspectives and showed positive relationship on purchase intention. Purchase intentions will be dependent variable in this study. Purchase intention could be defined as consumers gathering the content via eWOM and analyse every single piece of information before purchase. This process builds a strong customer relationship on certain products or services and helps consumers to choose and buy a desired product without any (Sardar et al., 2021). Shen et al. (2014) claimed that purchase intention begins between the evaluation stage and purchase decision when consumers create brand ranks and preferences. In this study, the moderating effect of information usefulness is examined in the relationship between i) the quality of information (including thoroughness, lucidity, pertinence, comprehensibility, and specifics); ii) the quantity of information (accuracy of the information); and iii) the credibility of information (trustworthiness) concerning purchase intention. Consequently, an additional hypothesis has been formulated as follows:

H4: The information usefulness of hotel services on eWOM positively influences the purchase intention.

Based on the above discussion, proposed research framework for this study as shown in **Figure 2**.

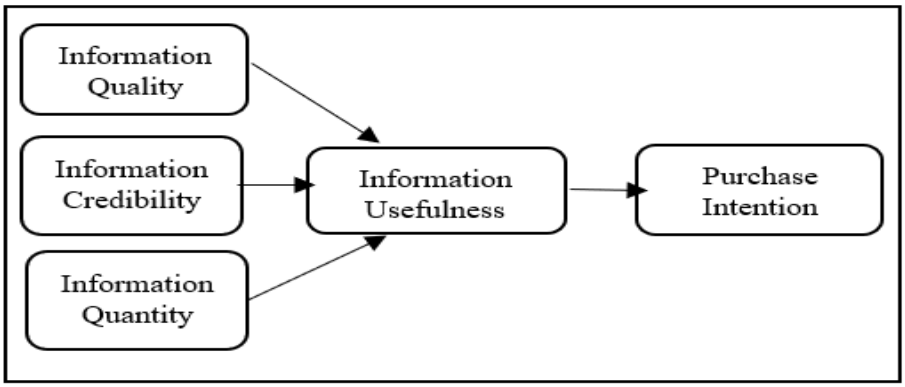

Figure 2. Research framework.

3. Research methodology

In line with the research objectives, this study adopts a descriptive causal methodology utilizing quantitative techniques. The selected research approach

involves a survey, wherein data is acquired via a questionnaire to extract numerical perspectives from the participants.

For the questionnaire, structured questions are used and consist of two sections. For Section A, the nominal and ordinal questions are used for the demographic part. Section B uses the five-point Likert scale (1. strongly disagree; 2. disagree; 3. neutral; 4. agree; 5. strongly agree) for all variables. A rating scale is used to identify the level or the strength of respondents' opinions on a particular topic (Imagilova et al., 2017). Non-probability sampling technique with purposive sampling is used in this research to obtain information from a specific target group. The sampling is confined to specific types of people who can provide the desired information and who conform to some criteria (e.g., to those consumers who find information on hotel services via eWOM). This purposive sampling is preferred when the time is short, and the information is needed quickly (Oliveira et al., 2020). The questionnaire will be distributed to 210 consumers via social media platforms. The sample size determination is based on prior studies, where Hanh et al. (2019) recommended the ten times rule to determine the sample size for a study. According to their recommendation, the appropriate sample size must be ten times the largest number of structural paths directed at a particular construct in the structural model. For example, this study has 21 structural paths directed at a particular construct in the structural model; thus, the required sample size is 210 (21 × 10) respondents. Additionally, Henseler et al. (2015) suggested that 100 is the minimum sample size if SEM is used in a study to test the hypotheses. The objective of this study is to investigate the impact of eWOM on purchase intention for hotel services, employing a modified information adoption model. Consequently, data collection for this study began on 22/03/2024 and ended on 10/05/2024. The collected data is processed and analysed using SmartPLS 4.0 software.

4. Result and discussion

The online questionnaire was distributed to social media users by using Google forms via social media platforms and only 213 of them were responded. Written consent was obtained from each participant, confirming their comprehension of the study's nature, their role within it, and the voluntary nature of their participation. The SmartPLS 4.0 software is used to analyse the data as the Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) is a method to confirm the structural equation models and to test the link between inert developments (Henseler et al., 2015). Furthermore, it can be used to test the hypotheses and quantify the path coefficients in structural models (Henseler et al., 2015).

4.1. Measurement model

4.1.1. Common method bias

VIF test was carried out to determine common method bias. The occurrence of a VIF greater than 5.0 is proposed as an indication of pathological collinearity and as an indication that a model may be contaminated by common method bias. Therefore, if all VIFs in the inner model resulting from a full collinearity test are equal to or lower than 5.5, the model can be considered free of common method bias (Kock, 2015). For

this study, VIF result showed less than 5.0 and it interpreted that free from common method bias.

4.1.2. Reliability and validity

The reliability of the variables was tested using cronbach's alpha and composite reliability. The results of reliability and validity with factor loadings are presented in **Table 1**. The recommended value for cronbach's alpha and composite reliability should be more than 0.70 and AVE should have at least 0.50, Henseler et al. (2015) and the findings for the study were achieved too. Discriminant validity was assessed through cross loadings, and it has postulated in **Table 2**. It is observed that all the factor loadings are greater than their cross-loadings, which is a sign of the discriminant validity. On that, discriminant validity was also tested using the criterion suggested by Heterotrait-Monotrait Method (HTMT) and Fornell and Lacker. The results are reported in **Tables 3** and **4** respectively.

Table 1. Item loadings, reliability, and validity.

	Factor loading	**Cronbach's alpha**	**Composite reliability (CR)**	**Average variance extracted (AVE)**	**Variance inflation factor (VIF)**
Information quality1	0.869	0.940	0.950	0.706	3.261
Information quality2	0.876				3.881
Information quality3	0.883				3.778
Information quality4	0.756				1.992
Information quality5	0.802				2.390
Information quality6	0.864				4.020
Information quality7	0.854				3.793
Information quality8	0.808				2.470
Information credibility1	0.899	0.742	0.886	0.795	1.533
Information credibility2	0.884				1.533
Information quantity1	0.879				2.623
Information quantity2	0.894				3.513
Information quantity3	0.860				2.771
Information quantity4	0.806				1.771
Information usefulness1	0.893	0.895	0.927	0.760	3.108
Information usefulness2	0.886				2.947
Information usefulness3	0.843				2.149
Information usefulness4	0.864				2.346
Purchase intention1	0.869	0.859	0.914	0.780	2.394
Purchase intention2	0.909				2.833
Purchase intention3	0.871				1.863

Table 2. Discriminant validity–cross loadings.

	Information Credibility	Purchase Intention	Information Quality	Information Quantity	Information Usefulness
Information Credibility1	0.899	0.653	0.654	0.714	0.673
Information Credibility2	0.884	0.699	0.615	0.722	0.629
Purchase Intention1	0.661	0.869	0.590	0.626	0.647
Purchase Intention2	0.683	0.909	0.634	0.715	0.690
Purchase Intention3	0.662	0.871	0.719	0.727	0.800
Information Quality1	0.667	0.698	0.869	0.727	0.729
Information Quality2	0.648	0.661	0.876	0.727	0.729
Information Quality3	0.588	0.624	0.883	0.700	0.696
Information Quality4	0.536	0.606	0.756	0.628	0.658
Information Quality5	0.588	0.598	0.802	0.633	0.598
Information Quality6	0.586	0.602	0.864	0.611	0.615
Information Quality7	0.611	0.609	0.854	0.665	0.603
Information Quality8	0.547	0.550	0.808	0.597	0.600
Information Quantity1	0.763	0.712	0.716	0.879	0.720
Information Quantity2	0.739	0.690	0.673	0.894	0.690
Information Quantity3	0.621	0.633	0.643	0.860	0.668
Information Quantity4	0.643	0.659	0.672	0.806	0.744
Information Usefulness1	0.651	0.664	0.685	0.737	0.893
Information Usefulness2	0.654	0.711	0.714	0.765	0.886
Information Usefulness3	0.620	0.724	0.661	0.663	0.843
Information Usefulness4	0.625	0.739	0.680	0.701	0.864

Table 3. HTMT.

	Information Credibility	Purchase Intention	Information Quality	Information Quantity	Information Usefulness
Information Credibility					
Purchase Intention	0.849				
Information Quality	0.850	0.813			
Information Quantity	0.894	0.894	0.860		
Information Usefulness	0.897	0.820	0.852	0.822	

Table 4. Fornell and Lacker.

	Information Credibility	Purchase Intention	Information Quality	Information Quantity	Information Usefulness
Information Credibility	0.891				
Purchase Intention	0.758	0.883			
Information Quality	0.712	0.739	0.840		
Information Quantity	0.805	0.785	0.788	0.860	
Information Usefulness	0.731	0.814	0.786	0.823	0.872

4.2. Structural model

Results for the analysis of the mediated relationships are presented in this section. The utilization of the bootstrapping technique was implemented to assess the structural paths. In testing the hypotheses, 5000 sub-samples were utilized.

Table 5 and **Figure 3** display the results derived from the implementation of the bootstrapping technique, unveiling the β values for all paths and the R^2 values of the model. In accordance with the observations in **Table 5**, support is observed for H1, H3, and H4, and the confidence interval outcomes of the structural model exhibit no overlap, underscoring the significance of the findings. Regarding H1, the positive influence of information quality of hotel services on eWOM is evident, with a β value of 0.277, a *T*-statistical value of 4.836, and a *P*-value of 0.000. This result indicates that high-quality information assists consumers in assessing the quality and amenities of hotel services (Lee and Hong, 2019; Shen et al., 2014). It suggests that information about hotel services on social media platforms possesses characteristics of information quality that effectively convey details about the services to viewers.

The findings reported in **Table 5** indicate that H2 was not supported, revealing no significant positive relationship between information credibility and information usefulness in influencing purchase intention. The statistical analysis yielded a β value of 0.098, a *T*-statistic of 1.458, and a *P*-value of 0.145, none of which meet the commonly accepted thresholds for significance. This outcome suggests that, contrary to expectations, information credibility does not play a decisive role in enhancing consumers' perceived usefulness of information to the extent that it impacts their purchase decisions. The lack of support for H2 provides valuable insights into consumer behavior in the context of electronic word of mouth (eWOM). As noted by Hanh et al. (2019) information credibility in eWOM may sometimes introduce doubt rather than assurance, especially when consumers are making hotel booking decisions based on peer-generated content. In line with this reasoning, the data implies that consumers may place disproportionate weight on isolated negative feedback, even when a majority of comments are positive. This finding underscores that, rather than serving as a straightforward predictor of purchase intention, information credibility may contribute to a sense of caution among consumers, who may hesitate due to perceived risks associated with a single negative review. Consequently, the presence of credible information does not automatically enhance its usefulness for the consumer's decision-making process, highlighting the complex interplay of eWOM credibility and consumer behavior in online contexts.

Another observation for H3 indicates that the information quantity of hotel services on eWOM has a positive influence on information usefulness, with a β value of 0.372, a *T*-statistical value of 5.342, and a *P*-value of 0.000. As asserted by Lee and Hong (2019) and Oliveira et al. (2020), a high volume of eWOM enables other consumers to find relevant and helpful information they are seeking, a viewpoint supported by a small number of reviews. This finding suggests that consumers may contribute feedback after experiencing hotel services, using methods such as rating, providing content in comment boxes, creating short videos, and tagging specific social media pages related to hotel services. This active engagement helps amplify the

volume of content and instills confidence in consumers to assess messages across various eWOM platforms before making decisions (Aditama, 2015).

According to the findings for H4, the information usefulness of hotel services on eWOM has a positive impact on purchase intention, with a β value of 0.814, a *T*-statistical value of 21.105, and a *P*-value of 0.000. This result aligns with the theory of consumer attitude, where the cognitive component encompasses characteristics such as knowledge, opinions, beliefs, and awareness. Acceptance and knowledge indicators contribute to information adoption, influencing the conative component, which, in this context, is the intention to book a room in a hotel. It can be inferred that information about booking a hotel room enhances consumer knowledge, leading to the acceptance of information and recommendations regarding hotel rooms. This, in turn, increases the likelihood that customers will develop an interest and intention to book a hotel room based on recommendations from other consumers.

Concerning the anticipatory significance ($Q2$) of the structural model, it becomes evident that the exogenous variables showcase predictive importance for the endogenous variable, given that all $Q2$ values exceed zero. Information credibility demonstrates a moderate effect size, whereas information quantity, information quality, and information usefulness manifest a considerable effect size, as delineated in **Figure 3**. Scholars such as Henseler et al. (2015), Mansoor and Paul (2022) and Shmueli et al. (2019) advocate for the utilization of R^2 analysis to evaluate the model's capacity in gauging the percentage fluctuation in constructs. In this investigation, R^2 is applied to scrutinize and elaborate on the variability in information usefulness and the purchase intention of reserving a hotel room based on recommendations from other customers.

As per the findings in **Figure 3**, the R^2 values for information usefulness and purchase intention are 0.732 and 0.662, respectively. This implies that 73.2% of the variance in information usefulness is explained by information quality, information quantity, and information credibility, while 66.2% of the variance in purchase intention is explained by information usefulness. Following the rule of thumb for R^2 proposed by Henseler et al. (2015), where 0.75, 0.50, or 0.25 for an endogenous latent variable describe substantial, moderate, or weak correlation, it can be concluded that information usefulness and purchase intention exhibit moderate prediction power.

Table 5. Evaluation of structural model results.

	Beta	***T*-statistical**	***P*-value**
H1: Information quality–information usefulness–purchase intention	0.277	4.836	0.000
H2: Information credibility–information usefulness–purchase intention	0.098	1.458	0.145
H3: Information quantity–information usefulness–purchase intention	0.372	5.342	0.000
H4: Information usefulness–purchase intention	0.814	21.105	0.000

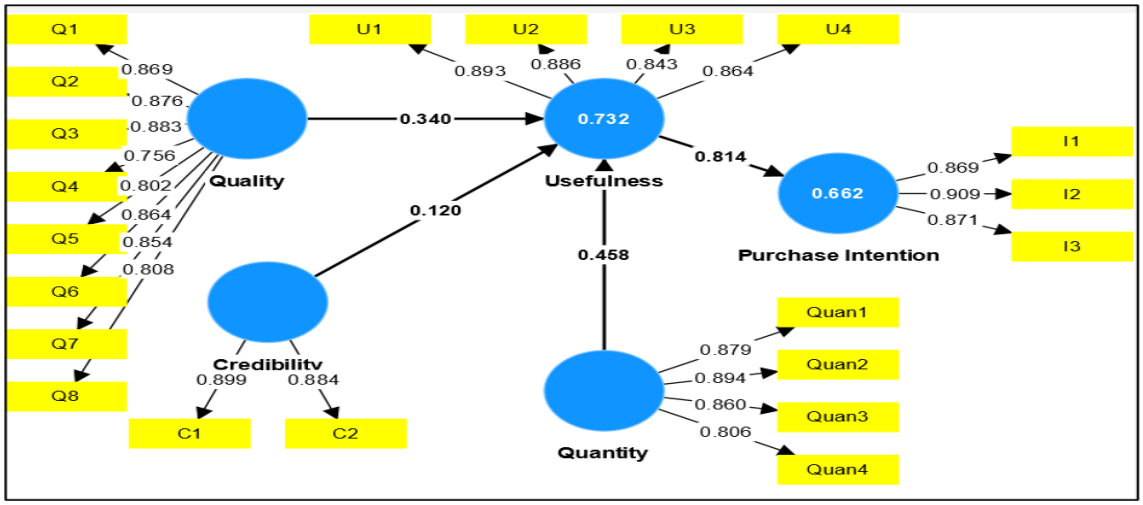

Figure 3. Path model results.

5. Conclusion and recommendations

The process of selecting hotel accommodations increasingly relies on online reviews and recommendations, with electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) recognized as a pivotal factor in shaping consumer decisions. This study extends the well-established Information Adoption Model to investigate eWOM's influence on consumer purchase intentions, modifying the model by incorporating the construct of information quantity, as suggested in recent studies (Aditama, 2015; Verma et al., 2023). This addition aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of eWOM's role in shaping consumer behaviour, particularly in the hospitality industry.

The results indicate that H1, H3, and H4 were supported, while H2 was not. Specifically, the analysis revealed no significant positive association between information credibility and purchase intention when mediated by information usefulness. However, the model's predictive validity, as reflected in moderate R^2 values for information usefulness and purchase intention, underscores that eWOM factors remain influential in consumer decision-making processes.

Based on these findings, this study offers several actionable recommendations for marketers seeking to amplify eWOM's impact. Firstly, marketers are encouraged to refine eWOM strategies by promoting various forms of user-generated content, such as customer images, succinct reviews, and videos, as these have been shown to engage consumers and enhance brand visibility. Evidence from successful case studies highlights the effectiveness of such content in strengthening eWOM reach, thereby providing a practical framework for its application in brand promotion.

Secondly, the study emphasizes the importance of optimizing eWOM strategies to align with platform-specific characteristics, acknowledging the diverse demographic profiles and usage patterns across platforms. For instance, the visual emphasis of Instagram may favor lifestyle-oriented content, whereas TripAdvisor's user base may respond more positively to detailed review responses and management engagement. This platform-specific approach enables marketers to enhance consumer engagement and credibility by meeting the distinct expectations associated with each platform's unique audience.

Finally, although the study found no direct effect of information credibility on purchase intention, maintaining and enhancing credibility remains integral to fostering trust in eWOM. Managers are thus advised to actively solicit reviews from verified users, respond comprehensively and promptly to feedback, and address any consumer concerns with transparency. These efforts collectively contribute to a more trustworthy eWOM environment, which is essential for building consumer confidence in online content. By implementing these targeted strategies, marketers can more effectively leverage eWOM to influence purchase intentions, strengthen brand visibility, and build a credible presence in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

5.1. Managerial implications

In the contemporary digital landscape, social media has emerged as a pivotal platform for consumers to communicate their experiences and opinions concerning hotel services, exerting substantial influence on the purchase intentions of potential customers. Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM), generated through customer reviews, ratings, and recommendations, represents a powerful tool in shaping consumer perceptions and guiding their decision-making processes. Marketers can strategically engage with eWOM to mold brand narratives that resonate with organizational goals. For instance, partnerships with influencers allow marketers to curate favourable reviews and control the dissemination of content that aligns with brand messaging, thereby exerting a degree of influence over consumer perceptions. This strategy also provides critical insights into customer preferences, enabling a more targeted approach to audience engagement.

Moreover, emphasizing the direct influence of information usefulness on information adoption is crucial, as this construct underpins consumers' decision-making processes. Through systematic analysis of customer reviews whether sourced from the hotel's own clientele or from competitor's marketers and managers can extract valuable insights that facilitate product enhancements and foster innovation. Customer reviews yield direct feedback on consumer expectations, satisfaction levels, and areas needing improvement, thereby supporting ongoing refinements of service offerings. By prioritizing the dimensions of information quality, credibility, and quantity within eWOM, organizations can enhance their strategic capacity to meet consumer needs with precision. These findings highlight the importance of developing targeted, persuasive messaging that aligns with consumer interests and inform management practices aimed at elevating service quality. By implementing these strategic approaches, organizations can effectively harness eWOM to build trust, refine service offerings, and secure a competitive advantage within the digital marketplace.

5.2. Limitation and future research directions

As the influence of electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) on social media continues to grow within the context of hotel services, it is essential to recognize the limitations of existing research and to identify potential directions for future investigation in this dynamic field. A key limitation in current studies lies in the potential for data bias and concerns about representativeness. Many studies have

focused on general social media platforms, which may not fully encompass the diversity of eWOM behaviours and influencer dynamics, as each platform exhibits unique characteristics and user interactions (Hanh et al., 2019; Lee and Hong, 2019). Future research could examine how influencers on specific social media platforms, such as Instagram, YouTube, or TripAdvisor, affect users' purchase decisions through eWOM, taking into account the distinct features and audience profiles of these platforms.

Additionally, while this study primarily employed a quantitative methodology, incorporating mixed methods could provide a more nuanced understanding of eWOM's impact. Combining qualitative approaches, such as interviews or focus groups, with quantitative analysis would allow for a deeper exploration of consumer responses to different forms of eWOM content. Such an approach would offer richer insights into how various content types such as reviews, ratings, and influencer endorsements affect consumer decision-making. Moreover, the use of triangulation methods like multi-method qualitative research could help capture a broader spectrum of data and mitigate percept-percept biases, thus enhancing the reliability and depth of the findings (Joseph Ng, 2023).

Furthermore, expanding research to include different cultural contexts presents another important avenue for future studies. As cultural factors may play a significant role in moderating eWOM adoption and its effect on purchase intentions, cross-cultural research could provide valuable insights into how consumers in various regions perceive and engage with eWOM. Investigating how cultural differences influence the reception and effectiveness of eWOM content would enable researchers to refine marketing strategies tailored to global audiences, adapting eWOM strategies to the cultural nuances that shape consumer behavior across diverse markets.

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