

The Influence of Electronic Word of Mouth on Intentions to Purchase Ticket Hotel Booking Through Traveloka Platform

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ABSTRACT

The advancement of technology has transformed various industries, including tourism. Online Travel Agents (OTA) have revolutionized travel booking, offering convenience and accessibility. Platforms like Traveloka allow customers to compare prices, read reviews, and make informed decisions. Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) plays a crucial role in influencing consumer behavior, as positive online reviews significantly impact purchasing decisions and brand perception. This research aims to analyze the impact of electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) on hotel ticket purchase intentions through the Traveloka platform, with a focus on the mediating role of eWOM adoption. Specific objectives include examining the significance of eWOM dimensions, consumer trust, and review credibility in influencing purchase decisions. This research employs the Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) methodology to analyze relationships between eWOM dimensions and hotel ticket purchase intentions. SEM-PLS is chosen for its ability to handle complex models and evaluate latent constructs. The findings are expected to provide insights into the significance of eWOM in shaping consumer behavior and offer strategic implications for Traveloka and similar OTAs in optimizing marketing strategies. Furthermore, eWOM adoption effectively mediates the relationship between eWOM quality attributes and purchase intention. These results provide valuable insights for online travel platforms to optimize their eWOM strategies by encouraging informative and persuasive reviews from credible sources, ultimately enhancing consumer trust and booking intentions in the competitive digital marketplace.

KEYWORDS

Traveloka, OTA, eWOM, Purchase Intention.



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INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of digital technology has transformed Indonesian consumer behavior, particularly in the tourism and online travel industries. According to a report by Google, Temasek, and Bain & Company (2023), Indonesia's digital economy reached US\$82 billion in 2023 and is expected to grow to US\$109 billion by 2025, with online travel contributing significantly to this expansion. Data show that around 86% of Indonesian internet users have booked travel products online as of 2024 (Statista, 2024).

Traveloka, as one of the dominant *Online Travel Agents (OTAs)* in Indonesia, provides a wide range of travel services on one platform, including flights, hotels, trains, and tourism activities. The Traveloka mobile app has been downloaded more than 30 million times, making it the most popular travel booking app in the region (Traveloka, 2019). Based on Katadata.com (2022) data, Traveloka became the most visited travel site in Indonesia, with 7.2 million visits. In this context, *Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM)* plays an increasingly crucial role in shaping consumer purchase decisions. *eWOM* is defined as any positive or negative statement made by consumers and made available via the internet (Thurau et al., 2014). Unlike traditional word-of-mouth, *eWOM* is more scalable and persistent, originating from both known and unknown users on digital platforms.

Recent studies show that credible *eWOM* significantly boosts purchase intention (Alalwan

et al., 2017; Zhang et al., 2023). In 2022, research showed that 79% of consumers were more likely to buy a product after seeing positive reviews on social media. Platforms such as Instagram and TikTok have become hubs for influencers to share their experiences, often resulting in a viral effect. Digital marketing report data show that brands that actively utilize *eWOM* experience a 30% increase in sales compared to brands that do not use this strategy.

The relevance of *eWOM* in predicting purchasing behavior can be explained through established consumer behavior models. The *Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)*, developed by Davis (1989), posits that perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use influence technology adoption. *eWOM* contributes to perceived usefulness by offering informative and persuasive content that builds trust and reduces uncertainty. Furthermore, the *Information Adoption Model (IAM)* and the *Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)* complement *TAM* by explaining how information credibility, source expertise, and attitudes influence the likelihood of adopting online reviews (Erkan & Evans, 2016; Sussman & Siegel, 2003).

However, despite the growing popularity of *OTAs* like Traveloka in Indonesia, there is still a lack of empirical research that integrates the multidimensional aspects of *eWOM*—such as credibility, informativeness, and persuasiveness—with *eWOM* adoption as a mediating variable in predicting purchase intention. Most existing studies focus on the direct effects of *eWOM* on consumer behavior, often overlooking the underlying mechanisms and mediating pathways that shape decision-making processes.

Furthermore, few studies apply advanced behavioral frameworks such as the *Information Adoption Model (IAM)* specifically within the local Indonesian context, where consumer preferences, platform familiarity, and cultural trust dynamics differ from global *OTA* platforms like Agoda or Booking.com. This research addresses that gap by examining how key *eWOM* components influence hotel booking intentions through *eWOM* adoption, using Traveloka as a case study of a dominant local digital platform in Southeast Asia.

METHOD

This study uses a quantitative method with a descriptive and associative causal approach to analyze the relationship between *eWOM* variables and *Purchase Intention* in the Traveloka application. The research design is cross-sectional with individual units of analysis, where data is collected through questionnaires distributed to Traveloka application users without any intervention from researchers.

This study involves two main types of variables, namely independent variables (*eWOM*) and dependent variables (*Purchase Intention*). The *eWOM* variables consist of seven dimensions: *Perceived Informativeness*, *Perceived Persuasiveness*, *Source Expertise*, *Source Trustworthiness*, *eWOM Usefulness*, *eWOM Credibility*, and *eWOM Adoption*. The operationalization of variables was compiled based on the replication of relevant journals, with a total of 28 indicators measured using a *Likert* scale of 1–5 (*strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*).

The research population includes all users of the Traveloka application, totaling approximately 1.9 million users based on application download data. The sampling technique used

was *non-probability sampling* with *purposive sampling*, resulting in a minimum sample size of 280 respondents (28 indicators \times 10), according to the guidelines by Hair et al. (2017). Respondent criteria include: individuals who have not yet made a purchase through Traveloka but are interested in booking a hotel, have installed the app, used the app at least three times in the last six months, are over 18 years old, and own a smartphone that supports the Traveloka app.

Data collection was carried out through the distribution of questionnaires on the social media platform X, targeting followers of Traveloka's official account. Data analysis employed *Structural Equation Modeling* using *Partial Least Squares (PLS-SEM)* due to its suitability for small-to-medium sample sizes, complex models, and minimal distributional assumptions. Model evaluation was conducted in two stages: the *outer model* to test the validity and reliability of constructs, and the *inner model* to examine structural relationships between constructs. The validity test results showed that all constructs met the *convergent validity* criteria, with *outer loading* > 0.708 and *Average Variance Extracted (AVE)* > 0.5 . The reliability test showed a *composite reliability* value > 0.7 for all constructs. This study tested 10 hypotheses analyzing the relationships between the dimensions of *eWOM* on *eWOM Usefulness*, *eWOM Credibility*, *eWOM Adoption*, and *Purchase Intention*, using *path coefficient* and *bootstrapping* methods with a cut-off *t-value* > 1.65 and *p-value* < 0.05 .

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) Analysis

Outer Model

According to Ghozali and Kusumadewi (2023), the measurement model illustrates the relationship between observed variables and the latent constructs they are intended to represent. This outer model analysis is utilised to assess the validity and reliability of each indicator in capturing the associated latent variables. As outlined by Sholihin and Ratmono (2020), the evaluation criteria for the measurement model in SEM-PLS encompass reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity.

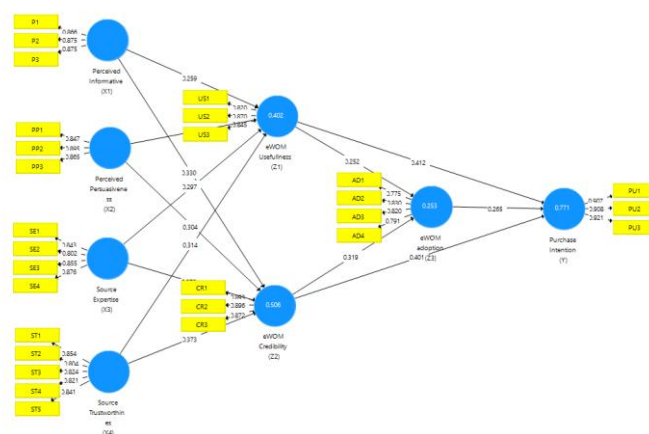


Figure 1. Outer Model

Source: Processed by the author (2025)

1. Convergent Validity

Convergent validity assessment is a crucial step in validating the measurement model, ensuring that the indicators truly reflect the latent construct they are intended to measure. As stated by Hair et al. (2021), this process involves evaluating the loading values of each indicator, which reflect the degree to which each observed variable is associated with the underlying construct. Higher loading values indicate stronger relationships and more reliable indicators. In line with this, Guenther et al. (2023) propose that convergent validity should be evaluated through both indicator loadings and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). A loading value of at least 0.708 is recommended to confirm that the indicator contributes significantly to the construct. Additionally, an AVE value of 0.5 or higher indicates that the construct explains at least 50% of the variance in its indicators, thereby confirming adequate convergent validity.

Table 1. Convergent Validity Test Result

Variable	Dimension	Item	Loading Factor	AVE	Results
eWOM	Perceived Informativeness	P1	0.866	0.760	Valid
		P2	0.875		Valid
		P3	0.875		Valid
	Perceived Persuasiveness	PP1	0.847	0.755	Valid
		PP2	0.895		Valid
		PP3	0.865		Valid
	Source Expertise	SE1	0.843	0.713	Valid
		SE2	0.802		Valid
		SE3	0.855		Valid
		SE4	0.876		Valid
	Source Trustworthiness	ST1	0.854	0.687	Valid
		ST2	0.804		Valid
		ST3	0.824		Valid
		ST4	0.821		Valid
		ST5	0.841		Valid
	eWOM Usefulness	US1	0.820	0.714	Valid
		US2	0.870		Valid
		US3	0.845		Valid
	eWOM Credibility	CR1	0.893	0.787	Valid
		CR2	0.896		Valid
		CR3	0.872		Valid
	eWOM Adoption	AD1	0.775	0.647	Valid
		AD2	0.830		Valid
		AD3	0.820		Valid
		AD4	0.791		Valid
Purchase Intention	Purchase Intention	PU1	0.907	0.832	Valid
		PU2	0.908		Valid
		PU3	0.921		Valid

Source: Processed by the author (2025)

Based on the results of the convergent validity test, all items in this study exhibit loading factor values exceeding 0.708, and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for each

construct are above the threshold of 0.50. These findings indicate that all items are valid in terms of convergent validity, as they consistently represent the constructs being measured and are strongly correlated. Therefore, the measurement instrument employed in this research meets the established criteria for convergent validity within the PLS-SEM measurement model.

2. Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity represents another essential approach for evaluating construct validity within a research model. It is based on the principle that indicators belonging to different constructs should exhibit low correlations, thereby confirming that each construct is distinct and measures a unique concept. One widely accepted method for assessing discriminant validity is the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio, as recommended by Guenther et al. (2023). According to this method, an HTMT value below 0.85 is considered acceptable under the conservative criterion, while a threshold of 0.90 may be used under a more liberal assessment.

Table 2. HTMT

	Perceived Informative	Perceived Persuasiveness	Purchase Intention	Source Expertise	Source Trustworthiness	eWOM Credibility	eWOM Usefulness	eWOM adoption
Perceived Informative								
Perceived Persuasiveness	0.088							
Purchase Intention	0.413	0.383						
Source Expertise	0.090	0.058	0.473					
Source Trustworthiness	0.043	0.07	0.393	0.050				
eWOM Credibility	0.42	0.342	0.844	0.477	0.429			
eWOM Usefulness	0.338	0.437	0.876	0.393	0.374	0.652		
eWOM adoption	0.315	0.269	0.727	0.292	0.239	0.541	0.526	

Source: Processed by the author (2025)

Based on the HTMT matrix results, all inter-construct values are below the threshold of 0.90, indicating adequate discriminant validity. For example, the highest HTMT value is 0.876 between Purchase Intention and eWOM Usefulness, but it still meets the acceptable criterion. These results confirm that each construct is empirically distinct, supporting the validity of the measurement model used in this study.

3. Reliability

The assessment of reliability is carried out to examine the precision, consistency, and

trustworthiness of the measurement instrument in capturing the intended constructs. To evaluate reliability, it is advisable to use composite reliability, as it provides a more accurate estimate compared to Cronbach's Alpha and composite reliability. A threshold value of 0.70 or higher is generally required to confirm acceptable reliability.

Table 3. Reliability Test Result

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Result
Perceived Informative	0.842	0.905	Reliable
Perceived Persuasiveness	0.839	0.903	Reliable
Purchase Intention	0.899	0.937	Reliable
Source Expertise	0.866	0.908	Reliable
Source Trustworthiness	0.886	0.917	Reliable
eWOM Credibility	0.865	0.917	Reliable
eWOM Usefulness	0.800	0.882	Reliable
eWOM adoption	0.818	0.880	Reliable

Source: Processed by the author (2025)

Based on the results in the table, the reliability of all constructs was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha and composite reliability. All constructs exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating acceptable internal consistency and measurement reliability. Cronbach's Alpha values range from 0.800 (eWOM Usefulness) to 0.899 (Purchase Intention), while composite reliability values range from 0.880 (eWOM Adoption) to 0.937 (Purchase Intention). These results confirm that all constructs Perceived Informative, Perceived Persuasiveness, Purchase Intention, Source Expertise, Source Trustworthiness, eWOM Credibility, eWOM Usefulness, and eWOM Adoption are reliable and suitable for use in further analysis within the PLS-SEM model.

Inner Model

1. R-Squared R^2

To evaluate the overall goodness of fit of the model, the R-Square (R^2) value is commonly employed. A higher R^2 value particularly those exceeding 0.70 indicates stronger predictive accuracy. R^2 is a crucial indicator in assessing the inner model, as it reflects the proportion of variance in the dependent variables that can be explained by the independent variables, thereby demonstrating the model's overall explanatory power.

Table 4. R-Squared Test Result

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Purchase Intention	0.771	0.769
eWOM Credibility	0.506	0.499
eWOM Usefulness	0.402	0.394
eWOM Adoption	0.253	0.248

Source: Processed by the author (2025)

In this study, the R^2 values for the dependent variables are as follows: Purchase Intention (0.771), eWOM Credibility (0.506), eWOM Usefulness (0.402), and eWOM Adoption (0.253). These values suggest that the model has strong explanatory power for Purchase Intention, moderate explanatory power for eWOM Credibility and Usefulness, and relatively weak

explanatory power for eWOM Adoption. The adjusted R^2 values, which consider the complexity of the model, show a similar pattern, ranging from 0.248 to 0.769. Overall, the results indicate that the model explains a substantial portion of the variance in most dependent variables, particularly Purchase Intention, while additional predictors may be beneficial to improve the explanation of eWOM Adoption.

2. GoF

Evaluating model fit criteria, which is recommended using the SRMR (Standardized Root Mean Square Residual) value and/or similar criteria such as GFI and NFI, with a cut-off value below 0.08 as an indication of model fit.

Table 4. GoF

	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR	0.047	0.05
d_ ULS	0.88	1.034
d_ G	0.439	0.433
Chi-Square	795.247	766.118
NFI	0.84	0.846

Source: Processed by the author (2025)

Based on the model fit results, the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) values for both the saturated model (0.047) and the estimated model (0.05) are below the recommended threshold of 0.08, indicating a good model fit. Overall, these results indicate that the structural model demonstrates an acceptable fit to the data and is suitable for further interpretation.

Hypothesis Test

In hypothesis testing, the analysis is conducted by examining the path coefficients obtained from SmartPLS using the Bootstrapping procedure to determine the direct effects between variables. The following figure presents the model illustrating the relationships among the variables.

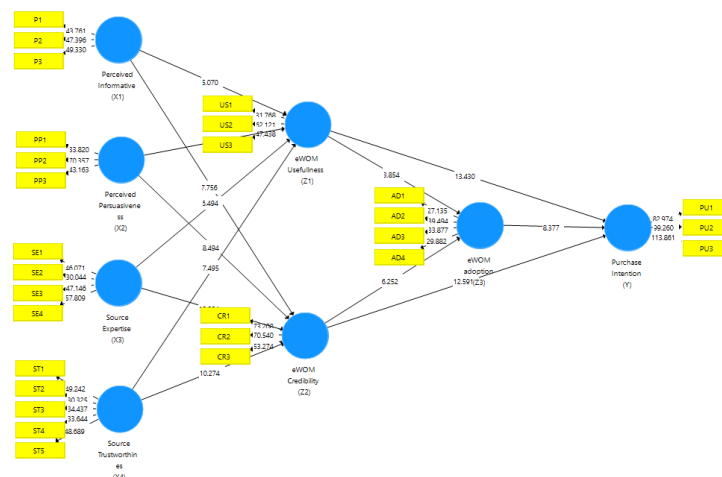


Figure 2. Bootstrapping Test Result

Source: Processed by the author (2025)

This testing can be carried out once the evaluation of both the outer and inner models meets the required criteria and demonstrates meaningful and relevant relationships. Hypothesis testing is conducted to validate the proposed hypotheses and predictions established earlier in the study. In the structural model, hypothesis acceptance is determined by examining the p-values. A hypothesis is considered supported if the p-value is less than 0.05 ($P < 0.05$) and the t-statistic exceeds 1.65.

The perceived informativeness of eWOM messages in SNSs has positive effects on eWOM usefulness.

The first hypothesis proposes that the perceived informativeness of eWOM messages on social networking sites has a positive impact on their perceived usefulness. The results provide strong support for this hypothesis, as indicated by a path coefficient of 0.259, a T-statistic of 5.07, and a p-value of 0.000. This significant positive effect suggests that when eWOM messages are rich in relevant, factual, and detailed information, consumers are more likely to find them useful in guiding their decision-making. Informative messages reduce uncertainty and increase consumer confidence in evaluating products or services.

The perceived persuasiveness of eWOM messages in SNSs has a positive effect on eWOM usefulness.

This hypothesis is also supported by the data, with a path coefficient of 0.367, a T-statistic of 8.1, and a p-value of 0.000. The result confirms that persuasiveness plays a critical role in enhancing eWOM usefulness. A persuasive message is one that effectively conveys arguments or emotional appeals that can influence beliefs or attitudes. Therefore, when consumers perceive eWOM content as convincing or influential, they are more likely to consider it useful as a basis for making purchase decisions.

These findings of both perceived informativeness and perceived persuasiveness significantly affect consumers' perceived usefulness of eWOM messages. This suggests that, in evaluating whether an eWOM message is practical and relevant to their consumption goals, consumers engage in a cognitive assessment of the message's informational content as well as its persuasive quality. These results align with the research conducted by Tien et al. (2019), which emphasizes that the effectiveness of eWOM is largely determined by how informative and convincing the message is perceived to be by its audience. Consumers tend to assign greater value to messages that not only present factual details but also persuasively articulate benefits or personal experiences, thereby enhancing their overall utility in the decision-making process.

Source expertise has a positive effect on eWOM usefulness.

The third hypothesis is supported with a coefficient of 0.297, a T-statistic of 6.494, and a p-value of 0.000, indicating that source expertise significantly contributes to the perceived usefulness of eWOM. This means that if the sender of a message is perceived to have specialized knowledge or experience related to the product or service, the information they provide is more likely to be deemed relevant, accurate, and thus, useful. The study's findings are further supported by Tien et al. (2019)'s research, which highlights that consumers are more likely to perceive

eWOM information as useful when they recognize the source as competent and credible, regardless of whether their connection with the source is personal or merely virtual. In other words, the perceived expertise and trustworthiness of the message sender play a crucial role in shaping consumers' evaluation of the message's usefulness, independent of any direct relationship between the consumer and the source. This reinforces the notion that source characteristics can significantly enhance the cognitive value attributed to eWOM content.

Source trustworthiness has a positive effect on eWOM usefulness.

A significant positive relationship is also found for this hypothesis, as reflected by a coefficient of 0.314, a T-statistic of 7.495, and a p-value of 0.000. Trustworthiness refers to the perceived honesty, integrity, and dependability of the message source. This result indicates that consumers are more likely to consider a message useful if it comes from a source they trust. It reinforces the role of perceived honesty and transparency in shaping the effectiveness of eWOM communication. In the context of e-WOM, source trustworthiness plays a critical role due to the overwhelming volume of available information, which can make it challenging for consumers to discern the authenticity of a reviewer's intent. When a reviewer is perceived as honest and sincere in conveying their experience, they are seen as trustworthy, increasing the likelihood that their message or review will be accepted and relied upon by consumers. Trust in the source thus becomes a key determinant in the effectiveness of e-WOM communication (Rusdiana et al., 2019).

The perceived persuasiveness of eWOM messages in SNSs has a positive effect on eWOM credibility

The fifth hypothesis is validated with a coefficient of 0.304, a T-statistic of 8.494, and a p-value of 0.000. This finding highlights that persuasive content is not only effective in influencing behavior but also strengthens the credibility of the message. When consumers perceive a message to be logically constructed and emotionally compelling, they are more inclined to trust its content, which enhances its credibility. In e-WOM, the persuasiveness and strength of arguments are key in shaping positive consumer attitudes and are considered a major factor in establishing message credibility, especially in online settings (Tien et al., 2019).

Source expertise has a positive effect on perceived eWOM credibility.

This hypothesis demonstrates one of the strongest effects in the model, with a coefficient of 0.378, a T-statistic of 10.084, and a p-value of 0.000. It indicates that the perceived expertise of the source significantly enhances the credibility of eWOM messages. In the context of digital communication, consumers tend to rely more on information provided by sources who appear knowledgeable and experienced in a specific domain. This result is reinforced by findings from Tien et al. (2019)'s research, which indicate that when consumers experience information overload, they are more likely to place their trust in sources they perceive as highly experienced and knowledgeable.

Source trustworthiness has a positive effect on perceived eWOM credibility.

The seventh hypothesis is also strongly supported by the data, with a coefficient of 0.373, a T-statistic of 10.274, and a p-value of 0.000. This confirms that trustworthiness is a key factor

in establishing eWOM credibility. A source perceived as honest and reliable will naturally generate more trust from consumers, making them more likely to believe and act upon the shared message.

Higher levels of eWOM usefulness create higher levels of eWOM adoption.

With a coefficient of 0.252, a T-statistic of 3.854, and a p-value of 0.000, this hypothesis is statistically supported. It suggests that the more useful consumers find an eWOM message, the more likely they are to adopt it. This adoption may manifest as taking the advice, sharing the content, or using it to inform a purchasing decision. Usefulness thus becomes a driver for behavioral engagement with eWOM. Ngo et al. (2024) stated that in the context of social media, consumers tend to adopt eWOM information when it is perceived as helpful, informative, and relevant to their needs. The more useful the content appears, the greater the likelihood that individuals will accept it and incorporate it into their purchasing decisions.

Higher levels of eWOM credibility create higher levels of eWOM adoption.

Similarly, the ninth hypothesis receives strong support with a coefficient of 0.319, a T-statistic of 6.252, and a p-value of 0.000. This indicates that consumers are more inclined to adopt eWOM information that they find credible. Credibility serves as a psychological validation that the message is trustworthy and reliable, which in turn motivates users to incorporate it into their own decision-making process. Two key factors that significantly influence consumers' willingness to adopt eWOM are its usefulness and credibility. Social media platforms create interactive environments where users freely exchange opinions and experiences, reducing uncertainty and enhancing the perceived value of shared information. When consumers view eWOM content as both credible and useful, they are more likely to engage with and utilize it in their purchase intention process. Therefore, enhancing these two perceptions is essential to increase the likelihood of eWOM adoption (Putra & Bangsawan, 2022).

eWOM adoption mediates the influence of eWOM usefulness and eWOM credibility on purchase intention.

The tenth hypothesis explores the mediating role of eWOM adoption in the relationship between eWOM message attributes, usefulness, credibility and purchase intention. The mediation analysis reveals that both indirect pathways are statistically significant. Specifically, the indirect effect from eWOM credibility through adoption to purchase intention shows a coefficient of 0.085, supported by a T-statistic of 5.261 and a p-value of 0.000, indicating a strong and significant mediating relationship. Similarly, the indirect pathway from eWOM usefulness through adoption to purchase intention demonstrates a coefficient of 0.067, with a T-statistic of 3.381 and a p-value of 0.001, which also confirms significance at the 0.05 level.

These findings suggest that eWOM adoption serves as a crucial mediating mechanism in transforming perceptions of message quality (both usefulness and credibility) into actual behavioral intentions to purchase. In other words, even if a message is perceived as highly useful or credible, it does not directly influence purchase intention unless consumers actively engage with and adopt the information contained in the eWOM message. This highlights the importance of facilitating not just the delivery of quality eWOM, but also ensuring that consumers process and internalize the information in a way that leads to adoption. Once adoption occurs, the influence on

purchase intention becomes significantly stronger, reinforcing the central role of eWOM adoption in the online consumer decision-making process.

Several previous studies support these findings by highlighting the mediating role of eWOM adoption in the relationship between usefulness, credibility, and purchase intention. Research has shown that while both eWOM usefulness and credibility directly influence consumers' intention to purchase, their effects are significantly strengthened when mediated by eWOM adoption. This suggests that consumers are more likely to form purchase intentions after they have adopted or internalized the eWOM information, rather than solely based on the perceived quality of the message itself (Tien et al., 2019; Putra & Bangsawan, 2022).

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of this study involving 280 respondents, all ten hypotheses are accepted, confirming the significant influence of *eWOM* dimensions on hotel booking purchase intentions through the Traveloka platform. The findings demonstrate that *perceived informativeness*, *persuasiveness*, *source expertise*, and *trustworthiness* significantly enhance *eWOM usefulness* and *credibility*. Furthermore, *eWOM adoption* effectively mediates the relationship between *eWOM* quality attributes and *purchase intention*. These results provide valuable insights for online travel platforms to optimize their *eWOM* strategies by encouraging informative and persuasive reviews from credible sources, ultimately enhancing consumer trust and booking intentions in the competitive digital marketplace.

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