The Model of Electronic Word-of-mouth (eWOM) Information Acceptance in Hotel Booking

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Abstract

The objective of this research is to analyse the factors that influence hotel booking decisions. In Spain, the hotel industry plays a crucial role, making it essential to understand what elements motivate consumers to make hotel reservations. To address this issue, several key factors are considered, such as the IACM theory of eWOM, habit, attitude, and enjoyment. These elements are considered fundamental to understanding consumer motivations in the hotel booking process. In this study, structural equation analysis is used to examine and measure the relationships between these factors. The goal is to determine the influence that each of these factors has on consumers' final hotel booking decisions. The findings of this research will contribute to the knowledge and understanding of consumer behaviour in relation to hotel reservations. They will also be highly beneficial to the hotel industry, as these insights can be used to enhance the offerings and consumer experience in hotel establishments.

Keywords

Word-of-mouth, Information Acceptance, Purchase Decisions, Booking, Social Media, Hotels.

1. Introduction

In recent years, electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) has attracted substantial attention across diverse domains tied to the realm of digital marketing. Scholars such as **Cheung and Thadani** (2012), **Hennig-Thurau; Walsh, and Walsh** (2003), and **Ward and Ostrom** (2006) have delved into the exploration of eWOM within the digital marketing sphere. The landscape of new media marketing has been profoundly reshaped by the emergence of social media tools, morphing into a conduit where customers actively partake as agents in the co-creation of brands, participating along the customer journey. The act of disseminating viewpoints concerning product or service attributes and user experiences holds a direct nexus with perceptions of contentment and brand fidelity (**Barbosa; Saura; Bennett**, 2024).

The landscape of social media, including platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, has burgeoned into widely embraced and potent conduits for the dissemination of user-generated content (**Saura; Palacios-Marqués; Ribeiro-**

Soriano, 2023). These platforms facilitate seamless and immediate interactions among users, as highlighted by **Sánchez Torres; Solé-Moro, and Argila-Irurita** (2018). In the words of **Hennig-Thurau *et al.*** (2004), electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) encompasses affirmative or adverse statements articulated by potential, existing, or past patrons concerning a product or enterprise. These statements, accessible to a vast multitude through the Internet's avenues, interactions, and the mechanisms provided by social media, form the essence of eWOM: discussion forums, boycott websites (**Hennig-Thurau *et al.***, 2004), news groups, chat rooms, user groups, personal and corporate blogs, general social networking sites, specialized networks for travel and tourism, specialized networks for music, and microblogging sites (**Goldsmith; Horowitz**, 2006) are all channelling market views and user opinion on a swirl of content (**Rejón-Guardia, *et al.*** 2013).

According to the general media report published by the Association for Media Research (AIMC), in 2022 there were 41.1 million individuals aged 14 or older in Spain. Of these, 89.2% (36.7 million) had used the Internet in the last 30 days. Within this group, 25.6 million (69.7%) had used social media during the same period. Regarding social media usage, Facebook remains the most popular platform, although its penetration appears to be decreasing. Notably, there have been significant growth in Instagram, but particularly in TikTok.

Specifically, the realm of TikTok offers a diverse array of tourist-centric videos, spotlighting local marvels and personal narratives, showcased both by anonymous creators and renowned figures. TikTok offers users a gateway to explore captivating content encompassing gastronomy, landscapes, and beyond (**Valdovinos Kaye *et al.***, 2021), engendering an enriched existence and a respite from daily strains. Evidently, TikTok has emerged as one of the foremost hubs for user-generated content (UGC), solidifying its role in people's lives. UGC denotes the tapestry of images, videos, or text that users craft and share through the canvas of social media platforms. Notably, during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, TikTok's official data (https://www.TikTok.com) underscores a daily video search demand that eclipsed 400 million, as user ranks burgeoned. The pandemic's stay-at-home mandate kindled a significant surge in the TikTok video audience, underlining the heightened thirst for digital content consumption (**Li *et al.***, 2021).

Within the sphere of Covid-19, user-generated content (UGC) became a novel avenue for destination promotion, with TikTok carving out a niche as a formidable platform (**Wengel *et al.***, 2022), thereby elevating UGC's clout in destination marketing. The allure of user-generated content (UGC) has grown as a beacon for enticing travellers to their chosen havens (**Buhalis; Parra López; Martinez-Gonzalez**, 2020). Marketing strategies have increasingly embraced UGC-based social media, reaping the rewards this avenue proffers (**Fan; Buhalis; Lin**, 2019). Ultimately, UGC-based social media marketing harnesses allure through entertainment, interaction, trends, personalization, and the mechanics of electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) (**Hennig-Thurau; Hofacker; Bloching**, 2013).

A more recent exploration by **Muda and Hamzah** (2021) accentuates the positive influence of perceived source credibility on consumer-driven eWOM in the realm of UGC. In an era defined by Internet's evolution, the realm of WOM via social media has undergone exponential growth, allowing UGC contributors to effortlessly disseminate invaluable videos within their circles. This observation resonates with prior studies linking favorable content perceptions to sharing intentions (**Graham; Wilder**, 2020), in parallel with the notion that youth are propelled to share positivity-infused online videos (**Nikolinakou; King**, 2018).

Considering everything stated above, this research is justified as a lack of research detected in the scientific literature in connecting the direct implications of eWOM in the reservation of hotel establishments. Much of the research in this field is aimed at determining the influence of eWOM on users' intention to book hotels (**Kumari; Sangeetha**, 2022), while it is difficult to find works that delve into the relationship between eWOM and definitive reservation in accommodation. To develop the research, the case of Spain has been selected, as it is one of the main tourist destinations in the world with 71.7 million visitors and 72.9 USD billion receipts in the year 2023, as well as for having a hotel industry consolidated for decades and with important companies with international presence.

For this study, we have set the line of analysis based on the following research questions:

RQ1: How do user comments (eWOM) influence consumers' decision to book a hotel?
RQ2: Do consumer habits influence hotel bookings?
RQ3: How do consumer attitudes towards hotels influence their decision to book or not?
RQ4: How do fun factors influence consumers' decision to book a hotel?

The above research questions aim at achieving the following objectives to establish guidelines for the analysis:

OB1: By describing the different variables proposed to analyse consumer's behaviour towards eWOM in hotels and how they influence their decision to book or not.
OB2: By referencing to the interaction between different factors that influence hotel bookings and which ones have a greater impact on the consumer's final decision.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. An approach to eWOM in Scholarly Sources

As the Internet has evolved, the concept of Word-of-Mouth (WOM) has undergone a metamorphosis, evolving into its digital iteration, known as electronic Word-of-Mouth or eWOM. **Ismagilova *et al.*** (2017) define eWOM as the vibrant and ceaseless exchange of information concerning brands, products, companies, or services among past, present, and potential consumers, a discourse that unfurls online, open to all. The advent of the Internet and its early platforms such as blogs, community discussion forums, review websites, news groups, and e-commerce (**Shen; Cheung; Lee**, 2013) has endowed eWOM with swiftness, convenience, and a one-to-many span, expanding its influence far beyond the precincts of traditional WOM (**Sun *et al.***, 2006). Nonetheless, the nascent version of eWOM missed the "interpersonal" (**de Matos; Rossi**, 2008) and "face-to-face" (**Jeong; Jang**, 2011) traits that confer potency upon conventional WOM. Online readers grappled with gauging the credibility of anonymous posts, which could even originate from marketers (**Jeong; Jang**, 2011), undermining the personal touch and credibility inherent to traditional WOM.

> "Undeniably, social media's imprint has irreversibly reshaped communication dynamics and the interplay between purveyors and consumers. Contemporary youthful patrons place more trust in peer-generated endorsements and communal wisdom disseminated on social media, eclipsing conventional corporate promotional efforts. Over time, these grassroots reviewers amass sufficient influence to overshadow traditional opinion leaders and luminaries. This sway intensifies when these reviewers wield celebrity status. In line with **Zhu *et al.*** (2022), the interplay between prominent figures on TikTok spotlighting a specific tourist haven and the subsequent travel intent is robust. With present consumers leaning towards UGC as their lodestar while making purchase determinations on social media, businesses are inclined to democratize facets of their branding strategies"

However, the ascendancy of social networking sites introduced a pivotal shift. Equipped with visible personal profiles and interwoven social networks, these platforms inherited the interpersonal and face-to-face qualities that grant traditional WOM its sway. Social networking sites foster a dynamic and interactive milieu for eWOM, where individuals can seamlessly transition between being providers, seekers, and transmitters of opinions (**Chu; Kim**, 2011). This marks a crucial departure from the limitations of the earlier manifestation of eWOM, by reintroducing the authenticity and credibility that resonate with the core of interpersonal communication.

In the context of the tourism industry in general and the hotel industry in particular, eWOM has long captured the attention of researchers and professionals due to its ability to reduce perceived risk for consumers when purchasing intangible offerings that involve a large number of participants. In the specific case of the Spanish market, according to data provided by the National Commission on Markets and Competition, 8.4% of the total transaction volume corresponds to the Travel Agencies and Tour Operators sector, while 4.0% corresponds to Hotels and similar accommodations.

However, consider in the table below, the volume originating from abroad with Spain as the destination, and it can be gathered than almost half of the volume corresponds to the two mentioned sectors: 36.3% Travel Agencies and Tour Operators and 9.3% Hotels and similar accommodations.

Table 1: Turnover of E-commerce in Spain.

TURNOVER OF E-COMMERCE IN SPAIN (4thQ. 2021 to 3rdQ. 2022)						
Origin/Destination Data In €	TOTAL		Travel agencies and tour operators		Hotels and similar accommodations	
	TOTAL	%	TOTAL	% total	TOTAL	% total
Within Spain	22,115,367,375	31.7%	1,480,052,284	2.1%	445,469,339	0.6%
From abroad to Spain	8,619,766,015	12.4%	3,128,884,836	4.5%	805,438,768	1.2%
From Spain to abroad	38,930,732,368	55.9%	1,221,623,877	1.8%	1,565,292,445	2.2%
TOTAL	**69,665,865,758**	**100%**	**5,830,560,996**	**8.4%**	**2,816,200,552**	**4%**
Source: based on data provided by Spanish National Commission of Markets and Competition.						

Consumer reviews compress personal encounters and so stand as distinct, autonomous information sources apart from the company's discourse. This dichotomy prompted **Goldsmith and Horowitz** (2006) to assert that electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) wields greater influence and pertinence compared to traditional advertising.

In the annals of research, **Bansal and Voyer** (2000) dissected the dynamics of information transmission between senders and recipients. Antecedent to Hennig-Thurau's (2004) identification of eight driving factors for eWOM motives, **Wu; Mahajan, and Balasubramanian** (2003) delineated three factors —focus-related utility, consumption utility, and approval utility— that fuelled the initiation of online reviews. This broadening of focus engendered the incorporation of variables like venting negative sentiments, empathy for fellow consumers, self-expression yearnings, advisory quests, social benefits, economic incentive pursuit, platform reinforcement, and company support (2004). Furthermore, researchers such as **Chu and Kim** (2011) introduced a gamut of variables rooted in social theory, illuminating the positive impact from eWOM evolution. This underscores the insight that individuals with extensive social connections wield to engage wider audiences, amplifying their potential to influence and rendering WOM a potent instrument (**Rejón-Guardia *et al.***, 2013).

The panorama of eWOM research culminates in the revelation of the situation over ultimate purchase decisions, resonating in variables like perceived product value and purchase intent. This intertwining drives eWOM's intimate affiliation with consumer purchase determinations, concurrently mitigating risks within the decision-making matrix (**Miremadi; Haghayegh**, 2022).

> This research is justified as a lack of research detected in the scientific literature in connecting the direct implications of eWOM in the reservation of hotel establishments

Based on the preliminary studies from behavioral theories, authors such as **Sussman and Siegal** (2003) or **Shen *et al.*** (2013) propose integrating all this prior knowledge with the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), which suggests that individuals are influenced by a message through two routes, namely the central and peripheral routes. The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) is a persuasion theory developed by **Petty and Cacioppo** (1988). This model attempts to explain how individuals process and respond to persuasive messages. According to the ELM, there are two pathsways for an individual to process persuasive information: the central route and the peripheral route. The central route involves careful and thorough processing of the information, where the receiver evaluates the message's arguments and implications. This chain of events is cognitively demanding and requires motivation and the ability to process information. When managed through the central route, the receiver's attitude toward the message will be more enduring and resistant to change.

On the other hand, the peripheral route involves superficial processing of the information, based on external cues such as the source of information or the aesthetics of the message. This process is less cognitively demanding and can be quicker, but the receiver's attitude toward the message will be more susceptible to change.

From research studies conducted by **Hennig-Thurau *et al.*** (2004) exploring the diffusion of eWOM through consumer opinion platforms, the motives that drive consumers to express themselves online, from the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), it is established that attitude toward technology and usage intention are related to the perception of usefulness and ease of use of the technology (**Davis**, 1989). In the specific context of eWOM, the perception of usefulness refers to whether the information is relevant and beneficial to the consumer, while ease of use refers to the accessibility of eWOM information for the consumer.

Building upon these contributions, the Information Adoption Model (IAM) was developed, drawing from the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) proposed by **Davis** (1989) and used to understand people's acceptance of information systems and technology in their intention to use (**Hong; Zhang; Liu**, 2021; **Menant; Gilibert; Sauvezon**, 2021), versus ELM, that adds the social aspect of information influence on attitudes to measure communication effectiveness.

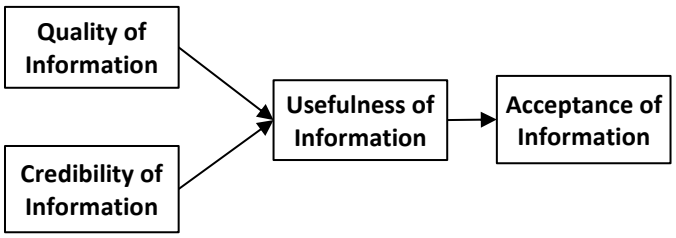

Figure 1: Information Adoption Model (IAM).
Source: **Sussman and Siegal** (2003)

The integration of the IAM model unveils insights into how individuals are impacted by the interplay between information and internet communication platforms. This discourse is explored by **Erkan and Evans** (2016). While the initial eWOM studies align with the "adoption" model of information, as elucidated by **Filieri** (2015) and **Tien; Rivas, and Liao** (2019), IAM delves solely into information characteristics, a scope that need not be constraining.

The trident of core variables delineated in figure 1 yields direct ramifications on consumers' assimilation of information (**Chu; Kim**, 2011): firstly, Information Quality gauges the extent to which consumers perceive the imparted information as accurate, pertinent, and comprehensive; secondly, Credibility quantifies the degree to which consumers deem the information source to be dependable and forthright; thirdly, Information Utility assesses the extent to which consumers regard the disseminated information as valuable for their decision-making.

> The IACM concentrates on the embracement of eWOM information and its influence on consumer attitude and purchase choices

In this context, **Erkan and Evans** (2016) posit that the sway of eWOM on purchase or repurchase decisions ought to be assessed by incorporating two additional variables: the information needs of consumers and their attitude towards adopting that information. The IACM contends that consumers who embrace eWOM information are more predisposed to cultivate purchase intentions, thus unravelling the dynamics of behavioural intent. In summation, the IACM concentrates on the embracement of eWOM information and its influence on consumer attitude and purchase choices.

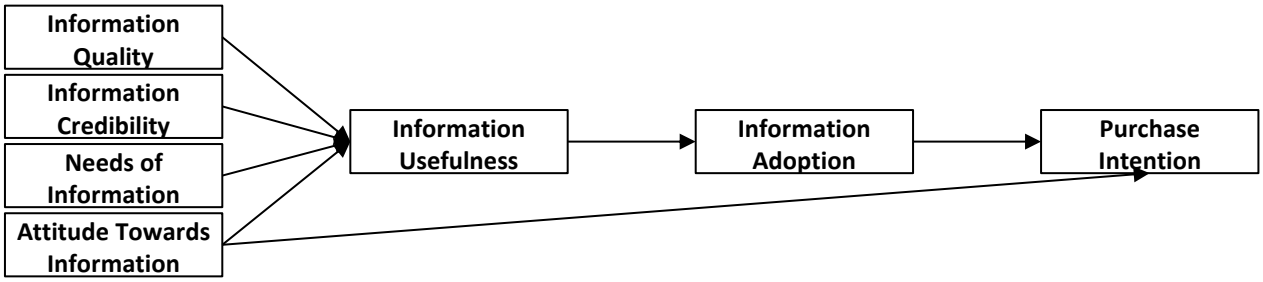

Figure 2: Information Acceptance Model (IACM).
Source: Erkan & Evans (2016)

In finality, recent research delves into how the "acceptance" of eWOM information resonates in both attitude and purchase decisions (**Erkan; Evans**, 2016). The Information Acceptance Model (IACM), crafted by Erkan & Evans, 2016, expands on the Information Adoption Model (IAM) (**Sussman; Siegal**, 2003), integrating the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), which asserts that behavioral intention stems from attitude (**Ajzen; Fishbein**, 1980). This framework is widely employed by researchers to scrutinize the nexus between eWOM and purchase intent (**Cheung; Thadani**, 2012). **Erkan and Evans** (2016) posit that this model accentuates information characteristics and stipulates that the influence of eWOM on consumer purchase intent hinges on consumers' attitudes towards eWOM information.

3. Guidelines for the Variables Intersecting with eWOM

3.1. The Relationship between Information Quality and Information Utility

Information quality is understood as the optimal content of a message in the electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) communication process (**Filieri**, 2015) or as the strength of the message to influence consumers' decision-making (**Erkan; Evans**, 2016). The concept of information quality is essential in delivering a message that meets users' expectations (**Erkan; Evans**, 2018). Some authors such as **Xue; Lee, and Mu** (2018) argue that there is a positive relationship between information quality and information utility, which influences behavioral intentions. **Indrawati; Putri Yones, and Muthaiyah** (2023) affirm in the context of electronic word-of-mouth communication on social media that information quality is related to information utility. Therefore, we can state that higher information quality will help consumers evaluate the quality of specific products, services, or brands (**Khoa**, 2021). Given this context, we propose the following research hypothesis:

H1: Information quality has a positive relationship with information utility.

3.2. The Relationship between Information Quantity and Information Utility

Information quantity can be defined as the number of times information or reviews are viewed by users (**Filieri**, 2015) or the amount of reviews or information users generate about a product, service, or brand. **Ngarmwongnoi *et al.*** (2020) argue that there is a positive relationship between information quantity and information utility. They also indicate that a large amount of information reduces users' perceived risk of reviews or information on social media. Other authors such as **Yan *et al.*** (2016) in the context of e-commerce and **Abedi; Ghorbanzadeh, and Rahehagh** (2020) in the context of mobile social networks indicate that information quantity is positively associated with information utility. Consequently, we propose the following hypothesis:

H2: Information quantity has a positive relationship with information utility.

3.3. The Relationship between Information Credibility and Information Utility

Information credibility can be defined as the content perceived as accurate, reliable, authentic, and persuasive (**Ho; Pang; Choy**, 2020). Information provided by credible sources is considered valuable (**Erkan; Evans**, 2016) and a determining factor in consumers' decision-making (**Indrawati *et al.***, 2023). Numerous research studies have found evidence of the relationship between information credibility and behavioral intentions, especially when the information is useful and adaptable (**Sánchez Torres *et al.***, 2018; **Ngarmwongnoi *et al.***, 2020; **Indrawati *et al.***, 2023). Consequently, we propose the following hypothesis:

H3: Information credibility has a positive relationship with information utility.

3.4. The Relationship between Attitude Towards Information and Information Utility

The Theory of Reasoned Action by **Ajzen and Fishbein** (1980) synthesizes the relationship between attitude and behavioral intention. Attitude as a core cognitive conduit refers to consumers' predispositions, formed by previous experiences. **Erkan and Evans** (2016) have already verified the association between attitude and information developed through electronic word-of-mouth communication and behavioral intention. More recently, in the context of social networks in Spain, **Sánchez Torres *et al.*** (2018) and **Leong; Loi, and Woon** (2022) demonstrated the relationship between attitude towards information and utility, which is also associated with behavior. Consequently, we propose the following hypothesis:

H4: Attitude towards information has a positive relationship with information utility.

3.5. The Relationship between Information Enjoyment and Information Utility

In the context of information adoption on social media and its relationship with purchase intention, enjoyment has become a determining variable. Although no evidence has been found in the literature to relate enjoyment to information adoption, some authors such as **Li *et al.*** (2019) indicate that enjoyment will be associated with social media platforms users or the content they engage with in the tourism context. Consequently, we propose the following hypothesis:

H5: Enjoyment has a positive relationship with information adoption.

3.6. The Relationship between Information Utility and Information Adoption

Information utility can be defined as the content that provides supportive thoughts to users' perceptions to enhance their performance (**Yeap; Ignatius; Ramayah**, 2014). **Indrawati *et al.*** (2023) argue that information utility is highly related with information quality, information quantity, information credibility, and attitude towards information (**Leong *et al.***, 2022). **Erkan and Evans** (2016) state that information utility is the main predictor of information adoption and purchase intention. Previous studies have shown that the intention to use information is positively related with users that perceive it as useful (**Dachyar; Banjarnahor**, 2017) or that a good information system will contribute to consumers' useful knowledge, enhancing their purchase intention (**Indrawati *et al.***, 2023). Consequently, we propose the following hypothesis:

H6: Information utility has a positive relationship with information adoption.

3.7. The Relationship between Habit and Information Adoption

Habit can be defined as the innate behaviors performed by consumers due to acquired experience and knowledge over time. Some authors like **Hussain *et al.*** (2019) indicate that consumers develop a learning habit automatically when using information from social media, making habit a predictor of information adoption (**Venkatesh; Thong; Xu**, 2012). **García de Blanes Sebastián; Sarmiento Guede, and Antonovica** (2022) state that organizations are developing platforms that create positive experiences to simplify the learning process for users and generate habits quickly, making habit a decisive factor in information adoption. Given this context, we propose the following hypothesis:

H7: Habit has a positive relationship with information adoption.

3.8. The Relationship between Information Adoption and Reservation Intention

Social media has increased electronic word-of-mouth communication and the exchange of information, opinions, and reviews among consumers and users evolved to widen the scope of the phenomenon, as a result. **Sánchez Torres *et al.*** (2018) state that the adoption of such information on social media directly influences behavioral intention. Along the same lines, **Palos-Sanchez; Saura, and Correia** (2021) indicated that the purchase intention is related to the level of trust that the consumers who use social media have in the information provided. The information adoption model is primarily used to develop a better understanding of how intentions are formed through messages received via electronic word-of-mouth communication (**Sardar *et al.***, 2021), so many authors have shown that there is a positive relationship between information adoption and reservation intention (**Palos-Sanchez *et al.***, 2021; **Syed; Suroso**, 2018; **Escobar-Rodríguez; Carvajal-Trujillo**, 2014), and consequently, hotel booking (**Molin-Collado *et al.***, 2022). Consequently, we propose the following hypotheses:

H8: Information adoption has a positive relationship with purchase intention.
H9: Reservation intention has a positive relationship with hotel reservation.

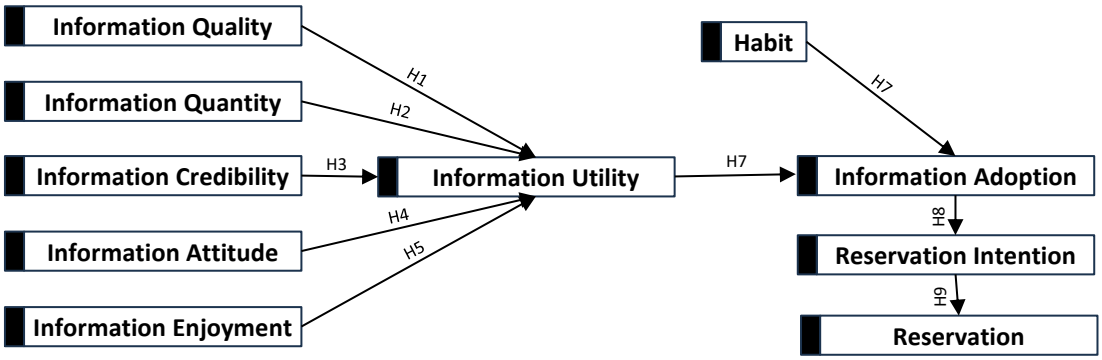

Figure 3: Theoretical Model Proposed.

4. Methodology

The method to collect and analyze data as part of this research follows a quantitative and statistical approach.

4.1. Methodology Design and Data Collection

The method is set base on a survey for a questionnaire with concepts and items extracted from critical literature. The

questionnaire consists of 42 questions and is divided into two parts. The first part collects the participants' demographic profile and second part is for assessing the guiding constructs as this measure across the items: Information Quality, Information Quantity, Information Credibility, Attitude towards Information, Information Adoption, Perceived Usefulness, Enjoyment, Habit, Purchase Intention, and Actual Reservation. Each item is evaluated using a five-point Likert scale, where 1 represents "totally disagree" and 5 "totally agree." A non-probabilistic sampling approach is used to collect data through surveys. The non-probabilistic sampling approach is chosen due to the convenience and accessibility of the participants, allowing for a faster and more efficient data collection process. Before distributing the survey, a pilot test is conducted with a reduced sample of participants. The aim of the pilot test is to evaluate the clarity of the questions, the efficiency of the data collection process, and the overall understanding of the questionnaire by the respondents.

4.2. Distribution of Measurement Instruments

The survey distribution is conducted using the "Google Forms" platform over a period of three months, from February to April 2023. To increase the visibility and reach of the survey, links are disseminated through multiple channels, such as social media, online groups, and emails to potential participants. A total of 362 collected questionnaires were collected, with no outliers or missing values in the sample.

4.3. Analysis

In order to test our theoretical model, a two-stage Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis is performed. Initially, a confirmatory factor analysis is conducted to verify its consistency and validity, with a focus on content, convergence, and discrimination validity criteria. Subsequently, SEM analysis with maximum likelihood estimation is employed to assess the hypotheses' validity. The robustness of the measurement model and SEM analysis is evaluated using model fit tests. All stages of the analysis and estimations are carried out using IBM SPSS and AMOS 27.0.

4.4. Sample Results

After 362 valid questionnaires were collected, socio-demographic data obtained is shown in table 2, which offers an overview of the characteristics of the participants and their online preferences. Regarding gender, the sample is predominantly composed of women, representing 56.9% of the total, while men constitute 43.1%. This reflects a higher willingness of women to participate in surveys or a possible gender presence difference in the studied domain. The distribution by date of birth is diverse, with significant groups born in different periods. However, it is worth mentioning that almost half of the respondents, 46.1%, were born after the year 2000, suggesting that the sample is mainly composed of young people or Generation Z. This could have implications on how they use social media and their influence on opinion formation. Concerning the educational level, the majority of participants, 74.3%, have a university degree or equivalent. This high rate in post-secondary education respondents is related to the frequent use of social media and the ability of this demographic age band to access and evaluate information online. By attending at the amount of time on social media, the results show that 50.6% of the respondents spend between 1 and 3 hours per day on these platforms. This data suggests significant and frequent use of social media, as shown in the sample, which speaks of key factors in accessing information and sharing opinions on various topics. Regarding the use of social media, the vast majority, 93.4% of the respondents, use travel and online booking platforms, indicating their engagement as part of their everyday life. This data is relevant to understand how opinions are disseminated and shared in the digital era. Finally, the fact that 92.5% of the respondents stated having booked hotels suggests a noticeable tendency to use this type of service. This percentage shows the growing use of accommodation booking preferences that have implications for the hotel industry among this segment.

Table 2: Sample Demographic Bands.

Item	Band/Category	Bands/Options	Frequency	Percentage
1	Sex	W	206	56.9
		M	156	43.1
2	Age	-1965	55	15.2
		1965-1979	69	19,1
		1980-1999	71	19.6
		2000-	167	46.1
3	Level of studies	High School or below	16	4.4
		Bachelor’s	77	21.3
		University degrees	269	74.3
4	Average social media use	1- 3 hrs	183	50.6
		6 - 7 hrs	129	35.6
		+ 8 hrs	41	11.3
		5	9	2.5
5	Access to social media and online tools	Yes	338	93.4
		No	24	6.6
6	Hotel Reservations	Yes	335	92.5
		No	27	75

5. Results

Next, the analysis of the structural equation model provides an evaluation of the variables in relation to each other so that the foundation for supporting the conclusions and recommendations derived from the links. Results obtained after contrasted data, will be discussed and presented in context for the overall analysis.

In order to validate and establish the reliability of the indicators, each underlying construct is assessed and scrutinized for a confirmatory factor analysis. The measurement model is encompassing to all the factors that must remain unlinked. This entails the computation of factor loadings, which elucidate the correlation between individual indicators and their respective latent constructs. Additionally, for quality assessment, an evaluation of model fit indices such as the goodness-of-fit index (GFI), comparative fit index (CFI), and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) is conducted. These metrics collectively facilitate an appraisal of the congruence between the data and the envisaged theoretical framework.

Second, the analysis requires an evaluation of the structural model, upon testing the hypotheses to determine whether the relationships between the constructs are significant and aligned with the theoretical expectations. Path coefficients (β) are calculated, representing the strength and direction of the relationships between variables. Furthermore, R^2 values (coefficient of determination) are examined to indicate the amount of variance explained in the endogenous variables by the exogenous variables.

5.1. Evaluation of the Measurement Model

In order to assess the reliability of individual items, the factor loadings or simple correlations between the indicators and their corresponding constructs, a basic rule –indicators with loadings equal to or greater than 0.7 are acceptable to be part of the construct–; however, some researchers, more flexible with the initial stages of scale development, allow values above 0.6 or even 0.5 (**Chin**, 1998; **Barclay; Higgins; Thompson**, 1995). They also suggest that indicators with loadings below 0.4 should be removed (**Hair *et al.***, 2014). Subsequently, an assessment of construct reliability is carried out using "composite reliability" (ρc) to check the internal consistency of all indicators when measuring the concept. An acceptable value for composite reliability is 0.7 (**Hair *et al.***, 2019).

Table 3: Results of the Measurement Model Developed.

Constructs	Critical Studies	Standard Factorial Loads	CR	AVE
Information quality	IQ1 **Erkan and Evans** (2016); **Sánchez Torres *et al.*** (2018); **Sardar *et al.*** (2021)	0.767	0.867	0.619
	IQ2 **Erkan and Evans** (2016); **Sánchez Torres *et al.*** (2018); **Sardar *et al.*** (2021)	0.818		
	IQ3 **Erkan and Evans** (2016); **Sánchez Torres *et al.*** (2018); **Sardar *et al.*** (2021)	0.758		
	IQ4 **Sánchez Torres *et al.*** (2018); **Sardar *et al.*** (2021)	0.803		
Information quantity	IQn1 **Erkan and Evans** (2016)	0.798	0.828	0.617
	IQn2 **Erkan and Evans** (2016)	0.803		
	IQn3 **Erkan and Evans** (2016)	0.754		
Information credibility	IC1 **Erkan and Evans** (2016); **Sánchez Torres *et al.*** (2018); **Sardar *et al.*** (2021)	0.832	0.885	0.657
	IC2 **Erkan and Evans** (2016); **Sánchez Torres *et al.*** (2018); **Sardar *et al.*** (2021)	0.808		
	IC3 **Erkan and Evans** (2016); **Sánchez Torres *et al.*** (2018); **Sardar *et al.*** (2021)	0.828		
	IC4 **Erkan and Evans** (2016); **Sánchez Torres *et al.*** (2018); **Sardar *et al.*** (2021)	0.774		
Attitude	ATI1 **Erkan and Evans** (2016); **Sánchez Torres *et al.*** (2018); **Sardar *et al.*** (2021)	0.796	0.853	0.659
	ATI2 **Erkan and Evans** (2016); **Sánchez Torres *et al.*** (2018); **Sardar *et al.*** (2021)	0.799		
	ATI3 **Erkan and Evans** (2016); **Sánchez Torres *et al.*** (2018); **Sardar *et al.*** (2021)	0.841		
Information Adoption	IA1 **Sánchez Torres *et al.*** (2018); **Sardar *et al.*** (2021)	0.752	0.869	0.624
	IA2 **Sánchez Torres *et al.*** (2018); **Sardar *et al.*** (2021)	0.847		
	IA3 **Sánchez Torres *et al.*** (2018); **Sardar *et al.*** (2021)	0.815		
Perceived utility	PU1 **Erkan and Evans** (2016); **Sánchez Torres *et al.*** (2018); **Leong *et al.*** (2022)	0.828	0.885	0.658
	PU2 **Erkan and Evans** (2016); **Sánchez Torres *et al.*** (2018); **Leong *et al.*** (2022)	0.739		
	PU3 **Erkan and Evans** (2016); **Sánchez Torres *et al.*** (2018); **Leong *et al.*** (2022)	0.865		
	PU4 **Erkan and Evans** (2016); **Sánchez Torres *et al.*** (2018); **Leong *et al.*** (2022)	0.804		
Enjoyment	HM1 **García de Blanes Sebastián; Antonovica, and Sarmiento Guede** (2023a)	0.941	0.956	0.678
	HM2 **García de Blanes Sebastián *et al.*** (2023a)	0.942		
	HM3 **García de Blanes Sebastián *et al.*** (2023a)	0.929		
Habit	HB1 **García de Blanes Sebastián *et al.*** (2022)	0.78	0.87	0.691
	HB2 **García de Blanes Sebastián *et al.*** (2022)	0.894		
	HB2 **García de Blanes Sebastián *et al.*** (2022)	0.816		
Reservation Intention	RI1 **Sánchez Torres *et al.*** (2018); **Sardar *et al.*** (2021); **García de Blanes Sebastián; Azuara Grande, and Sarmiento Guede** (2023b)	0.857	0.863	0.678
	RI2 **Sánchez Torres *et al.*** (2018); **Sardar *et al.*** (2021); **García de Blanes Sebastián *et al.*** (2023b)	0.779		
	RI3 **Sánchez Torres *et al.*** (2018); **Sardar *et al.*** (2021); **García de Blanes Sebastián *et al.*** (2023b)	0.845		
	RI4 **Sánchez Torres *et al.*** (2018); **Sardar *et al.*** (2021); **García de Blanes Sebastián *et al.*** (2023b)	0.784		
Reservation	R1 **Escobar-Rodríguez and Carvajal-Trujillo** (2014); **Syed and Suroso** (2018); **Palos-Sanchez *et al.*** (2021)	0.835	0.867	0.698
	R2 **Escobar-Rodríguez and Carvajal-Trujillo** (2014); **Syed and Suroso** (2018); **Palos-Sanchez *et al.*** (2021)	0.813		
	R3 **Escobar-Rodríguez and Carvajal-Trujillo** (2014); **Syed and Suroso** (2018); **Palos-Sanchez *et al.*** (2021)	0.857		

Subsequently, an assessment of convergent validity strives to ascertain both the coherence of items designed to gauge a specific construct and the extent of their correlation. The metric employed, "Average Variance Extracted" (AVE), quantifies the proportion of variance attributed to a construct via its indicators in relation to the variance stemming from measurement inaccuracies. AVE is typically considered satisfactory when it exceeds 0.50, as suggested by **Hair *et al.*** (2019).

Finally, assessing the discriminant validity involves determining the extent in the difference between constructs. It is expected that a construct will have weak correlations with other constructs measuring different phenomena. For proper discriminant validity, a construct should share more variance with its indicators than with other constructs in the model (**Barclay *et al.***, 1995). AVE is also used to assess discriminant validity (**Hair *et al.***, 2019).

Once it is established that the measurement model meets the mentioned evaluations, the assessment of the structural model is conducted. The results of these evaluations are presented in Table 3, confirming that the set of constructs meets the criteria established for the validation of the measurement model and ensuring the reliability and validity of the results.

The collected data, as shown in Table 3, support the fulfillment of the requirements established for discriminant validity. The AVE (Average Variance Extracted) value of each construct exceeds the shared variance between that construct and the other constructs in the model, demonstrating that the employed measurements are appropriate, and the constructs are significantly distinct from each other. Therefore, it can be concluded that discriminant validity has been satisfactorily achieved in this study.

Table 4: Fornell-Larcker Criterion.

	A	QI	IQ	CI	AT	IA	PU	HM	HA	RI
A	**0.787**									
QI	0.763	**0.79**								
IQ	0.754	0.78	**0.81**							
CI	0.687	0.79	0.79	**0.81**						
AT	0.652	0.73	0.63	0.84	**0.79**					
IA	0.766	0.67	0.89	0.74	0.62	**0.81**				
PU	0.127	0.55	0.67	0.78	0.7	0.64	**0.94**			
HM	0.865	0.68	0.88	0.73	0.63	0.8	0.76	**0.83**		
HA	0.653	0.77	0.78	0.81	0.69	0.87	0.79	0.77	**0.823**	
RI	0.639	0.67	0.74	0.72	0.78	0.88	0.78	0.79	0.745	**0.8**

The fit of the proposed model in the study guidelines are set according to statistical techniques GFI, CFI and RMSEA (Table 5). The obtained goodness-of-fit indices (GFI) and comparative fit index (CFI) were 0.93 and 0.924, respectively, indicating a good fit of the model (**Hair *et al.***, 2014). Additionally, the calculated root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) was 0.075, a value below the recommended threshold of 0.08, which also suggests a reasonably good fit (**Hooper; Coughlan; Mullen**, 2008).

Table 5: Fit Adjustment of Measurement Model.

Measure	Estimate
GFI	.930
CFI	.924
RMSEA	.075

After the analysis and sample evaluation, the measurement model meets the criteria for individual item reliability, construct reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. The results indicate that the measurements used are reliable and the validity of the assessment for the proposed variables.

5.2. Evaluation of the Structural Model

Explained Variance (R^2) is a key aspect that needs to be analyzed, for obtaining the ratio underlying *Intention* and *Actual reservations*, and to be able to assess the robustness of the structural model (see Table 5).

5.2.1. Explained Variance (R^2)

Table 5 presents the values of R^2 for each construct. This indicates that the model explains the variability of the exogenous (endogenous) variables satisfactorily, thereby enhancing its predictive power and the validity for applied research.

Table 6: Explained variance (R2).

Construct	Explained Variance
Intention: Booking intent	0.687
Reservations: Bookings	0.592

5.2.2. Evaluation or Goodness of Fit of the Global Research Model

Next, the goodness of fit of the model is evaluated, for determining the model fit along with the data.

Table 7: Fit of the Global Research Model.

Measure	Estimate
GFI	.908
CFI	.904
RMSEA	.070

5.3. Hypotheses Validation

Once a positive evaluation of the measurement model has been performed, the hypotheses are tested (see table 8), considering the results obtained from the evaluation of the structural model. For a hypothesis to be accepted, three specific conditions must be met. First, the amount of variance of an exogenous variable explained by the predicting constructs (R^2) must be equal to or greater than 0.1. Second, the relationship between the constructs involved in the hypothesis must show a path coefficient (β) greater than or equal to 0.2. Finally, the parameters must be statistically significant.

Table 8: Hypotheses Validation.

Hypothesis		Estimate β	t value	p value	Final assessment
H1	Information quality has a positive relationship with information utility.	.379	10.625**	. .000	Accepted
H2	Information quantity has a positive relationship with information utility.	.170	4.730**	.000	Accepted
H3	Information credibility has a positive relationship with information utility.	-.066	-2.259*	.025	Accepted
H4	Attitude towards information has a positive relationship with information utility.	.215	5.190**	.000	Accepted
H5	Enjoyment has a positive relationship with information utility.	-.079	-2.416*	.016	Accepted
H6	Information utility has a positive relationship with information utility.	.206	7.796**	.000	Accepted
H7	Habit has a positive relationship with information utility.	.184	4.552**	.000	Accepted
H8	Information adoption has a positive relationship with information utility	.330	11.780**	.000	Accepted
H9	Purchase intention has a positive relationship with hotel booking.	-.072	-2.063*	.040	Accepted

Note: * p<.05 /**p<.01. Source: authors

Finally, the results from the structural equation modelling analysis presented in Table 8 show that it is possible to accept the nine hypotheses raised in the theoretical model shown in Figure 3, obtaining a statistical significance of less than 0.05 in all of them. Attending the results obtained for each hypothesis proposed, it is observed that, despite all the hypotheses being accepted, some of them provide a more significant contribution to the model than others. In this sense, Table 8 shows that H3, H5 and H9 have a lower statistical significance than the rest of the hypotheses, being between 0.01 and 0.05, indicating minor contribution to the value of the proposed model. On the contrary, results of the validation of hypotheses H1 and H9 demonstrates they are the most valuable of the entire model, with the greatest predictive capacity. Likewise, in Table 5 it is found that the R^2 of the Booking intention construct explains 68.7% of the model, while the R^2 of the Reservation construct would explain 59.2% of the entire proposed model. Although both constructs have a wide predictive capacity, it can be seen that the Reservation construct explains less than the Booking Intention construct.

6. Discussion

This study analyses significant precursors to information adoption, intention to book, and actual booking. A model based on eWOM (Electronic Word-of-Mouth) information acceptance is tested using data from 362 surveyed participants. Nine hypotheses are confirmed significantly at a confidence level of 99%.

“This study analyses significant precursors to information adoption, intention to book, and actual booking. A model based on eWOM (Electronic Word-of-Mouth) information acceptance is tested using data from 362 surveyed participants. Nine hypotheses are confirmed significantly at a confidence level of 99%”

Perception of information quality was positively associated with perceived information utility, as individuals tend to value information more positively when they perceive it as reliable, accurate, and relevant to their needs (hypothesis 1). The perception of quality in information generates trust and credibility in the content, thereby promoting a positive attitude towards the information and receptivity towards the message, including its utility.

Consequently, it needs to be considered that a greater amount of information provides individuals with a more comprehensive and detailed view of the topic, enabling them to form an opinion from an informed standpoint (hypothesis 2). This is consistent with the fact relative to quantity of information: the higher amount of bits will associate with a more positive attitude towards information utility at reception. There should be a balance to avoid information overload, an effect that lowers lack of engagement in the process, leading to a negative attitude due to the difficulty in processing and assimilating large data bits.

“The meta-analysis indicates that information acceptance has a positive and significant relationship on purchase intention. Consumers who consider the provided information to be reliable and relevant are more likely to express a higher intention to make a purchase”

The credibility of the information source is also a determining factor in the perception of information utility (hypothesis 4).

When individuals consider the source to be credible and providing unbiased and accurate information, they are more likely to trust the presented information and, so, consider it more useful. The credibility of the source is significantly related to the acceptance and evaluation of the information and, therefore, its utility, as trust in the source is a key factor in decision-making. These results are supported by previous research (**Indrawati *et al.***, 2023; **Xue *et al.***, 2018; **Ngarmwongnoi *et al.***, 2020).

> The application of the IACM theory of eWOM in the context of hotel reservations is particularly innovative and provides a new perspective on how opinions and recommendations from online users wield significant value to potential customers and towards booking decisions

Attitude towards information is significantly associated with utility, as seen in the expected guided hypothesis 4. Since attitude is confirmed as a relevant factor, a user's attitude influences how a person seeks, selects, and processes information. Users with a positive attitude are more likely to be active in seeking relevant and diverse information, considering multiple perspectives and sources. On the other hand, those with a negative attitude may avoid actively seeking information or select only that which supports their pre-existing beliefs. Once a person has accessed and processed the information, they evaluate its perceived utility. This evaluation is based on whether the information is relevant to their needs, trustworthy, and applicable for problem-solving, decision-making, or increasing knowledge about a specific topic. This is where attitude towards perceived information utility plays a relevant role. These results are also supported by previous studies (**Sánchez Torres *et al.***, 2018; **Leong *et al.***, 2022).

Hypothesis 5 was also confirmed in the research, as the positive relationship between the enjoyment of use and information utility is explained by various psychological and emotional factors that affect the perception and evaluation of information. When individuals find the process of obtaining and using information entertaining and enjoyable, they are more likely to associate positive feelings with the information itself. This can lead to a higher valuation of the information and considering it as more useful and relevant to their needs. Enjoyment of use is positively associated with users' level of involvement and attention towards the information. When individuals are more interested and engaged in the usage experience, they are more likely to pay greater attention to the presented information, which, in turn, enhances their perception of utility. This is consistent with previous studies (**Li *et al.***, 2019).

> Understanding the factors related to reservation decisions will enable marketing strategist and hotel managers to design more effective marketing from previously identified areas for improvement and to work towards providing higher-quality service

The perception of information utility is related to decision-making and subsequent actions (hypothesis 6: information utility has a positive relationship with information adoption). If a person perceives the information as useful, they are likely to use it for informed decision-making and take actions based on data. Conversely, if perceived utility is low, the information will not significantly impact a person's actions. This aligns with the results of other research (**Indrawati *et al.***, 2023; **Dachyar; Banjarnahor**, 2017).

Hypothesis 7 is confirmed, as the association between usage habit and information adoption is detected. Once individuals have developed a habit of using certain information, there is a tendency to continue using that information continuously and automatically. This can be supported by previous research that has shown the importance of habit in information adoption (**García de Blanes Sebastián *et al.***, 2023a; **García de Blanes Sebastián *et al.***, 2023b).

> The objective of this research is to analyse the factors that influence hotel booking decisions. In Spain, the hotel industry plays a crucial role, making it essential to understand what elements motivate consumers to make hotel reservations

The relationship between information adoption, intention to book (hypothesis 8), and actual booking (hypothesis 9) has been studied from different angles in marketing and consumer psychology. Some studies have found evidence that there is a significant connection between these factors, supporting the claim that information adoption influences intention to book, and this, in turn, is a predictor of actual booking behavior. In the context of the hotel industry, it is found that the perception of the quality of information provided by hotels is positively associated with the intention to book a room in that hotel. Consumers who trusted the information presented on the hotel's website and measured it credible and useful for decision-making show a higher intention to make a reservation (**Syed; Suroso**, 2018). **Ismagilova *et al.*** (2020) comprised studies from a multiple approach perspective to critically examine several studies related to information adoption and consumer behavior. From this approach, the meta-analysis indicates that information acceptance has a positive and significant relationship on purchase intention. Consumers who consider the provided information to be reliable and relevant are more likely to express a higher intention to make a purchase. Therefore, the findings of this study, in line with previous studies, support that information adoption acceptance is an important factor in forming the intention to book or purchase, and in turn, the intention to book becomes a predictor of actual booking behavior, confirming hypotheses 8 and 9.

7. Conclusion and Closing Remarks

This research presents a model based on the acceptance of eWOM information and its association with the intention to book in the hotel industry context. A quantitative and statistical approach is used to collect and analyze data through surveys, designed with base on existing literature. The results of the structural equation analysis support the hypotheses posed in the critical review, and therefore, research question RQ1 could be adequately answered, for the following reasons: the factors *quality, quantity*, and *credibility* of information are significantly related to the *perceived usefulness* of the information. Higher perception of these three factors is associated with greater perceived usefulness. In addition, it was detected that *perceived usefulness* of the information has an association with *information adoption*. Users who perceive information as being useful are more likely to use it for making informed decisions and taking action based on data insights. Furthermore, it is seen that usage *habit* is related to information adoption, as individuals who have a continuous habit show greater adoption of a specific string of information. For this reason, it is possible to answer what was raised in question RQ2. Additionally, there is a positive relationship between *attitude* towards the information and *perceived usefulness*, indicating that users with a positive attitude towards the information rated its usefulness higher. This aspect answers the elements proposed in question RQ3. Also, *enjoyment* derived from the process of using information is positively associated with information adoption. When individuals found the process of obtaining and using information entertaining and pleasurable, they tended to value and use it more. This allows answering question RQ4. Finally, it is found that information adoption is significantly related to the *intention to book*, and this, in turn, became a predictor of actual booking behavior. Therefore, users who adopt the information are more likely to have the intention to book and eventually make a hotel reservation.

For all these reasons, it is possible to affirm that the objectives of this research have been achieved. Firstly, the variables proposed in the study in relation to eWOM have been correctly described, in order to detect their relationship with hotel reservations (OB1). Secondly and finally, the interaction between the different factors has been exemplified and the most significant factors detected (OB2).

7.1. Theoretical Implications

This research contributes to the tourism and hospitality scholarly literature by exploring into the factors associated with hotel reservation decisions. By considering key elements of the IACM theory of eWOM, namely habit, attitude and enjoyment, it expands the knowledge about consumer behavior in the hotel industry in Spain. The application of the IACM theory of eWOM in the context of hotel reservations is particularly innovative and provides a new perspective on how opinions and recommendations from online users wield significant value to potential customers and towards booking decisions. Furthermore, the insertion of habit as an important factor in the model provides insights from consumers' past bookings that have a lasting impact on future decisions. This helps better understand consumer behavior patterns and loyalty towards specific platforms. The consideration of attitude and enjoyment as key factors in hotel reservation decisions is also essential for understanding how emotional and psychological aspects relate to the consumer's decision-making process, allowing a better understanding of how consumers perceive and evaluate their prospective hotel experience and how this affects their decisions.

7.2. Practical Implications

Results of this research are valuable for the hotel industry in Spain since it is expanding the bottom-line for marketing professionals, by identifying the factors associated with booking decision. Understanding the factors related to reservation decisions will enable marketing strategist and hotel managers to design more effective marketing from previously identified areas for improvement and to work towards providing higher-quality service. Organizations should develop websites or social media that generate positive, fun experiences and contain quality information to simplify the learning process for users. In this way, habit would be a decisive factor in the adoption of information.

Furthermore, this study provides valid information for customizing hotel services and offerings, allowing the tourist industry to meet customer needs and improve the overall customer experience, such as improving hotels' online reputation, encouraging positive recommendations, and offering more attractive and enjoyable experiences for customers. To achieve these goals, hospitality organizations could create virtual spaces on their websites that allow customers to leave comments and share opinions about the brand's products or services. This way, professionals would have greater control over reviews and would know what information about products develops a positive attitude. Therefore, it is advisable for hotels to hire social media management specialists to ensure their brand image and counteract the negative opinions that are said about them. It is also important for hotel sector managers to identify opinion leaders and hotel brand ambassadors so that they can positively influence or interact with them to recommend their products or services.

Likewise, users consider valuable the quality, quantity, and credibility of the information about products or services that they can obtain through social networks in the form of opinions, recommendations, reviews, or advice. Online reputation management becomes essential for brands and companies in the digital age. A positive reputation can boost sales and strengthen customer loyalty, while a negative one can have devastating effects on public perception and a

company's profitability. e-WOM is a powerful tool that can shape that reputation. This is where an understanding of consumer psychology is crucial. From this psychological perspective, understanding customer motivations will enable companies to respond more effectively.

Managing comments and criticism empathetically, swiftly, and constructively can turn an unsatisfied customer into a loyal one. Ignoring or responding defensively to criticism, on the other hand, can worsen the situation and affect the perception of other consumers. Companies should actively encourage positive e-WOM by incentivizing satisfied customers to share their experiences. This could be done through loyalty programs, rewards for leaving reviews, or simply by offering exceptional products and services that customers feel the need to praise.

On the other hand, active monitoring of brand mentions on social media, review sites, and other digital spaces allows companies to identify and address potential issues before they turn into crises. To do this, understanding confirmation biases should be a primary concern. If a customer already has a negative opinion of a brand, they are more likely to pay attention to other negative comments and share them. Companies should be aware and actively work to change these perceptions, not only through the management of individual reviews but also through positive marketing campaigns and genuine engagement with customers. Therefore, as negative comments can arise from misunderstandings or a lack of information, companies in the industry should work to educate their customers about their products or services, clarify misunderstandings, and provide transparent and easily understandable information.

In conclusion, online reputation management in the context of e-WOM is an ongoing process that requires a deep understanding of consumer psychology. Companies that approach this task with empathy, proactivity, and authenticity will be better positioned to build and maintain a positive reputation in the digital space. In addition, this interaction with customers or employees could provide useful information to improve products or even serve as inspiration to develop a new product or service.

Finally, customers tend to share more visual content than text, so hotel managers should provide spaces where customers could capture moments of their daily lives and encourage sharing them on social networks or opinion websites. In this way, hotels would reach to potential customers in a less intrusive way than conventional media.

8. Limitations and Future Research Agenda

This research has some limitations that should be considered when interpreting the results. Firstly, as it focused solely on the hotel industry in Spain, the findings may not be generalizable to other regions or cultures with different consumer contexts and preferences. Decisions and behaviors in hotel reservations are not merely transactional. They are deeply rooted in psychological aspects that encompass identity, security, a sense of belonging, self-esteem, and the need for enriching experiences. These aspects can also be directly related to cultural preferences, economic and social factors, access to technology, and changing political and security considerations based on the geographical location of users. These motivations, often underlying and not directly expressed, play a crucial role in the final choice of accommodation. Hotel brands and booking platforms that understand and address these psychological motivations will be better positioned to connect with their customers on a deeper level and design more personalized and meaningful experiences for guests. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct similar studies in different countries or regions to gain a broader and global understanding of consumer behavior in hotel reservations.

Secondly, the non-probabilistic sampling approach used in this research could have led to biased participant selection, potentially affecting the representativeness of the results. To increase the external validity of the findings, future research could employ alternative sampling methods.

The data used in this study were based on self-administered participant responses. This approach may be subject to biases and limitations in response accuracy. To enhance the validity of the results, future studies could combine these self-administered questionnaires with other research methods.

This research analyzed various key factors influencing hotel reservation decisions, but there may be other important variables that were not considered in the study. It would be relevant to include additional variables in future research to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the factors influencing consumer behavior and hotel reservation decisions.

Regarding future research, as explained in these limitations, a cross-cultural comparative approach examining different cultures and countries would allow for an understanding of how influential factors vary in different geographical and cultural contexts. This would provide information for the hotel industry at an international level. Additionally, conducting longitudinal studies that follow consumers over time would allow for a better understanding of changes in their behaviors and preferences regarding hotel reservations. This would help identify long-term trends and potential shifts in influencing factors.

Finally, an in-depth case study analyzing different hotels and their marketing strategies could provide detailed information on how specific factors affect reservation decisions in different scenarios. This would allow hotel managers to obtain practical and applicable insights to improve their services and attract more customers. Another potential

research direction would be to analyze sustainability and corporate social responsibility as influencing factors in intention and reservation, exploring how these practices impact hotel reservation decisions. Consumers increasingly value ethical and sustainable aspects when choosing where to stay, making it relevant to investigate how these practices may influence their decisions.

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9.1. Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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