

Factors Influencing Information Adoption in Hotel Reservation Decisions of Chinese Consumers: An Analysis of Information Quality, Credibility, Needs, and Attitudes

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Recommended citation:

He, Xu (2024). "Factors Influencing Information Adoption in Hotel Reservation Decisions of Chinese Consumers: An Analysis of Information Quality, Credibility, Needs, and Attitudes". *Profesional de la información*, v. 33, n. 3, e330312. <https://doi.org/10.3145/epi.2024.0312>

Manuscript received on 12th November 2023

Accepted on 18th February 2024



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Abstract

Internet and digital media are the prevailing paradigm to determine the decision making of consumers who use different websites and social media platforms to surf for the latest information about their desired products and services. With this rising trend in the consumers, and focusing on the provided online information, this study designed its objectives to elucidate the impact of hotel booking intentions of the consumers on their engagement with the mediation of information adoption. The sample of the study comprised 220 participants, picked randomly through convenience sampling technique. Using the quantitative survey-based strategy, the study used online questionnaires to gather data from hotel consumers in China. The questionnaire assessed different dimensions of information such as needs, attitudes, quality and credibility. The data analysis technique was PLS-SEM, and the bootstrapping method was integrated for the SEM analysis. Findings reveal that there is a positive correlation between hotel booking intention and the consumers' engagement, information need, credibility, and attitude towards information. This implies that booking intentions act as a stimulus to get credible information to help consumers make an appropriate decision on acquiring a specific product or service, such as hotels.

Keywords

Information Adoption, Information Credibility, Quality, Consumers Engagement, Hotel Industry, Consumers Intentions.

1. Introduction

The use of internet and related technologies has resulted in the advancement and customized diversification in the hospitality industry, particularly in the reservation process (Adekuajo *et al.*, 2023; Nikopoulou *et al.*, 2023). Owing to multiple options available, the information quality enables or hinders the decision-making process of the end users or consumers while booking a hotel reservation (Lee *et al.*, 2024). The information quality and decision making depend on the relevance and completeness of the content made available to the consumer, which defines the extent of confidence placed by the consumer (Wang *et al.*, 2023). Moreover, the information related to credibility is contingent on how credible the source information is, thereby influencing the extent of consumer consideration (Añaña; Barbosa, 2023). Furthermore, each consumer needs a distinct perspective about how information would impact their hospitality reservation decision (Backhaus *et al.*, 2023).

There are several critical factors that affect the adoption of information when the consumers make hotel reservation decisions (Shukla; Mishra, 2023). It is, however, important for both the hotel operators and the consumers to be aware of such factors.



Previous studies related to hotel reservation decisions by Chinese consumers have investigated some of these factors like hotel's location or tariffs (Liu *et al.*, 2023; Li *et al.*, 2023); however, no comprehensive research has addressed factors like information Quality, Credibility, Needs, and Attitudes of the consumers, aiding the decision-making process of the consumers in making hotel reservation choices. Khan *et al.* (2024) indicated that it is vital to examine the impact of information quality and credibility on consumers. Similarly, Selem *et al.* (2024) rightfully pointed out the need to comprehend the relationship between perceived needs and attitudes necessary to drive consumer behaviour regarding online bookings.

The current study aimed to analyse factors influencing information adoption in hotel reservation decisions among the consumers. The specific objectives of this study included: (i) to examine how hotel booking intentions impact Chinese consumers' activity; (ii) to test the mediating effect of information adoption quality and the relationship between booking intentions and consumers' activity by examining how the precision and relevance of the information affect this relationship; (iii) to examine the relevance of the information credibility, and the mediating role of the type of information source concerning the number of factors that affect consumer engagement in booking hotel accommodations (Shukla; Mishra, 2023); (iv) to investigate the mediating role of information adoption needs and how consumers' needs affect the relationship between booking intentions and engagement (Ali *et al.*, 2024); (v) finally, to examine the mediating capacity of information adoption, which has been proposed as an antecedent with direct impact but not mediation in prior related research (Hapsari *et al.*, 2023).

The significance of this study lies in the fact that this research employs the Information Adoption Model to analyse Chinese consumers' choices regarding hotel booking. This research also makes contributions to expand the knowledge regarding consumer behaviour by investigating the impact of information quality and credibility, perception of needs, and overall attitude toward information use. It serves as a reference for hotels and marketers to improve their strategies and cater to the requirements of the consumer segment in order to improve loyalty and overall decision-making.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Hotel Booking Intention

Hotel booking intentions are impacted by positive online consumer reviews as hotels with higher ratings receive more bookings. This shows that individual behavior and intentions are fueled by their distinct attitudes and beliefs (El-Said, 2020). Perceived price is another factor that influences consumers intention towards hotel booking. Consumers compare prices online to evaluate them and to make an informed decision (Augustine; Adnan, 2020). It is argued that mixed reviews influences the consumers intention as they change their decision on the basis of greater number of reviews, either positive or negative (El-Said, 2020). Nanu *et al.* (2020) assert that physical ambience of the hotel is another essential factor for consumers attraction and satisfaction, and influencing their hotel booking intention. There is evidence that physical environment alters the consumers purchase decisions. Physical environment plays an essential role specifically when it comes to the hedonic consumption such as the hotel products. Physical environment also affects the emotions and feelings of consumers which changes their intentions towards it (Nanu *et al.*, 2020).

2.2. Information Adoption

2.2.1. Quality

Quality is considered a critical component of consumers' perception about the usefulness of information as it determines their level of information adoption (Ngarmwongnoi *et al.*, 2020). Khwaja and Zaman (2020) believe that the information adoption is often perceived as a notion which impacts the decision either in favor of something or against it. In other words, Information cannot be attained without the absence of core metrics, wherein quality is considered a core metrics for information adoption. Quality metrics impacts the decisions of consumer. Consumer reviews often highlight the quality of services provided by the hotels which facilitates the information adoption process. Positive portrayal of services is essential for reducing the consumers perception of risk (Khwaja; Zaman, 2020). Jiang *et al.* (2021) state that information quality refers to the subjective judgement of consumers that whether the information provided meets their needs and intentions. The information quality through online reviews can also be assessed as high-quality reviews strongly influences the product evaluation and purchase intentions (Ngarmwongnoi *et al.*, 2020).

2.2.2. Credibility

Ngarmwongnoi *et al.* (2020) highlight the significance of Information Adoption Model (IAM) and state that consumers are influenced by credible information obtained through any communication channel. Information quality and source credibility are the critical components in information adoption model as they are components of consumers perception towards the information adoption. These interactive channels consider the credibility of information, which has no relation with data literacy but it is a necessary component for information adoption (Jiang *et al.*, 2021). Quality information is also associated with credibility and information adoption. Consumers are using credibility as a filter for checking the usefulness of information (Ngarmwongnoi *et al.*, 2020). The differential effects need the trust factor for providing insights to the researchers about the usefulness of information. In other words, trust triggers the knowledge sharing and its willingness towards adoption (Jin *et al.*, 2021).

2.2.3. Needs

Hu (2020) argues that online reviews impact the need for information adoption of users as well as meet the information needs of the consumers. These reviews also impact the decision-making process of the consumers. Infante-Moro *et al.* (2021) assess that decision-making is supported by many factors and consumer need is an important factor that should be taken into account as a slightest change in the need factor of the consumer can change the decision completely. While reviews fulfill the need of a user in information adoption, the internet of things influence their needs (Infante-Moro *et al.*, 2021). In fact, consumer look for information that aligns with their need, online reviews are obtained from various users where various aspects of services are discussed which can facilitate the informational need and adoption of users (Hu, 2020). Green-hotels have also influenced the needs of consumers as their intentions to book or rebook has been influenced. It is observed that consumers after receiving information about the green-hotels are willing to pay more for services and products (Arun *et al.*, 2021). With the broad scale of information available consumers are consistently evaluating information in order to locate information which aligns with their needs (Ngarmwongnoi *et al.*, 2020).

2.2.4. Attitude

Kim *et al.* (2020) refers to attitude as a degree to which a person has either favorable or unfavorable evaluation of the behavior that is in question. Attitude is a psychological tendency which is expressed by evaluating the particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor. Positive or favorable attitudes represents the consumers ability of interest in the information adoption regardless of its credibility (Ngarmwongnoi *et al.*, 2020). Online reviews play a role in shaping the attitude of consumers according to Akhtar *et al.* (2020) but they can contain mixed, contradictory, and conflicting informational attributes about the services of hotel which can confuse the consumers which influences their attitude. The antecedents of attitudes are evaluated in relation with the attributes, benefits and quality of the services (Kim *et al.*, 2020). There are several sites which provide multiple reviews on the services of hotel such as TripAdvisor, MailOnline and Hospitalitynet and they all show different reviews with contradictions and conflicts, this impacts the users information processing ability and attitude towards information adoption and its usefulness and significantly impacts the decision of consumers (Akhtar *et al.*, 2020).

2.3. Consumer Engagement

Srivastava and Sivaramakrishnan (2021) define consumer engagement as a multidimensional construct which is comprised of cognitive processing, affection and activation. Vo *et al.* (2020) states that consumer engagement represents a positive effect on the satisfaction levels and loyalty of consumers. This entails that the engagement levels of consumers can be used for effective incoming customer data. Consumers satisfaction level and loyalty are dependent on the engagement behaviors and quality of service provided by the hotel. The different perspectives of consumer engagement are linked with different framework of services (Vo *et al.*, 2020). The mental cognition also plays a role in effective engagement of consumers as consumer's affection towards a brand shows the fondness and comfort of consumer with their services (Srivastava; Sivaramakrishnan, 2021).

2.4. Theoretical Framework

The Information Adoption Model (IAM) was adopted as a theoretical framework of the study as it explains how individuals adopt knowledge and information from different sources. The model was introduced for persuasion and for information processing and has been adapted in many fields. The key components of the model are information quality, information credibility, perceived usefulness, perceives ease of use and consumer attitude and behavioral intentions (Ngarmwongnoi *et al.*, 2020). Figure 1 exhibits this research model.

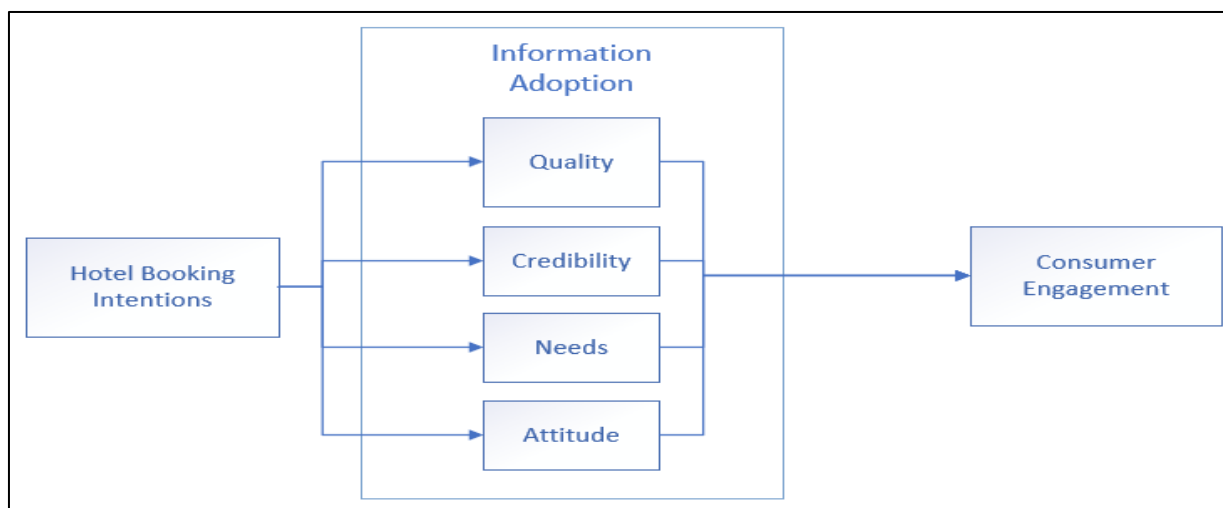


Figure 1: Research Model.

2.5. Hypotheses Development

2.5.1. Hotel Booking Intention and Consumer Engagement

The familiarity with brand plays a significant role in shaping consumers booking intention in hospitality business. A familiar brand facilitates consumers in reducing their perceived risks as the brand name is a representation of its quality. Brand image is linked with the brand reputation as consumers intend to book hotels with positive image despite having unsatisfactory experience (Wen *et al.*, 2021). Consumers also often prefer familiar hotels to the unfamiliar ones. This familiarity depends upon their engagement as well as meaningful interaction with a hotel and its guests. Such an engagement is beyond the ordinary relationship between consumer and business. This connection is aspired to build a connection which is full of memories and is long-term. To engage consumers, hotels provide with exceptional services and obtain positive feedback by predicting their needs and desires for customized personalized experiences. Consumer engagement is also considered as a multidimensional construct which involves several cognitive aspects such as absorption, enthusiasm, attention, emotional aspects such as identification and behavioral intentions (Mohammad *et al.*, 2024). Hence, the first hypothesis of the study is stated as:

H1: Hotel booking intentions significantly impact consumer engagement.

2.5.2. Mediation of Information Adoption

The quality of information system is determined by services which meet the consumers' expectations and needs. In the hotel industry, the quality of information adoption depends upon itinerary services, reliable information, instant information, accurate operations and ease of access (Masri *et al.*, 2020). Jin *et al.* (2021) state that online information obtained has to be tested for credibility using three areas such as source credibility, message credibility and medium credibility. The IAM model focuses on different characteristics of information and quantity of information is also essential for shaping the judgment of consumer regarding the credibility. Consumers also need validation of content and information online as they feel the need to verify the information before using it for making any decisions (Ngarmwongnoi *et al.*, 2020). Consumers attitude towards the online reviews and information impacts the purchase decisions. Some consumers show negative attitude towards online reviews and information as they consider it unimportant to their decisions and sponsored for marketing purposes. Consumers attitude towards the information influences their perception about its usefulness (Ngarmwongnoi *et al.*, 2020; Sun *et al.*, 2020). Hence, the resulting mediating hypotheses focusing on characteristics like quality, credibility, need and attitude, in this study are stated as:

H2: Hotel booking intentions are mediated by information adoption quality for consumer engagement.

H3: Hotel booking intentions are mediated by information adoption credibility for consumer engagement.

H4: Hotel booking intentions are mediated by information adoption need for consumer engagement.

H5: Hotel booking intentions are mediated by information adoption attitude for consumer engagement.

3. Methodology

To fulfill the main research aims and objectives, the study followed the questionnaire-based survey strategy and conducted an online survey of consumers in China. As per the main context of the study i.e., Chinese hotels, the consumers of Chinese hotels were involved in the survey practice. The questionnaire was distributed online relying on the pattern of convenience sampling technique. Overall, the study gained 265 responses, some of which were excluded due to inaccurate and incomplete information. Hence, after the initial data screening, the final data set comprised 220 responses integrated into the data analysis.

The questionnaire was designed using multiple scale items developed from past studies. In this myriad, the variable hotel booking intentions (IV) was determined based on three items borrowed from (Chakraborty; Biswal, 2020). Next, the mediator information adoption as information needs, attitudes, credibility and quality were measured with four, two, three and three items respectively which were identified and adapted from different previous studies (Hussain *et al.*, 2017; Soroya *et al.*, 2021; Zha *et al.*, 2018). Finally, consumer engagement was measured with four items from the study by Vo *et al.* (2020). The respondents were asked about their latest experience and interaction with online databases and to give their perceptions and ratings. All measurement items were scaled on a Likert scale with extremes as 1=strongly disagree and 5= strongly agree.

The data analysis technique was PLS-SEM Partial-Least-Square Structural Equation Modelling (Hair Jr *et al.*, 2021). The data analysis technique was performed in the software Smart-PLS 4.0. A PLS-SEM is a non-parametric method that unlike the covariance-bases structural equation (which makes distributional assumptions to measure the constructs association) uses the formatively specified constructs and assesses the measurement and structural model (Sarstedt *et al.*, 2021). In addition to the PLS-SEM, the Importance Performance Map (IMPA) was also used to complement the derived results. The IMPA is a graphical presentation of the total effect exerted by the latent constructs on a specific construct i.e., dependent variable (Hauff *et al.*, 2024). In this study, the IMPA helped to assess the level of impact of all exogenous variables including the independent variable and mediators on customer engagement.

4. Results

4.1. Measurement Model Assessment

All the measurement models of the constructs were identified reflectively because they were evaluated through the outer loadings, internal consistent reliability and construct validity (Hair Jr et al., 2021). As shown in Table 1. All outer loadings encompassed the minimum criteria of 0.7 and proved that all factors comprise more than 50% of the variance power of each indicator. Next, the reliability values for all latent constructs through Cronbach alpha value, Rho-A and composite reliability were greater than the recommended threshold of 0.7 (Hair Jr et al., 2017; Henseler et al., 2014), hence, the internal consistent reliability was met. Moreover, in the construct validity, the convergent validity and discriminant validity were evaluated (Bhandari, 2022). In the convergent validity, the Average Variance Extracted AVE values for all constructs were greater than 0.5 (Table 2). Subsequently, the discriminant validity was also achieved where the Fornell and Larcker criterion showed that the square root of the AVE values for each construct was higher than its highest correlation with any of the other constructs (Table 3) (Fornell; Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2019).

Table 1: Measurement Scales Loadings.

Construct	Items	Outer Loadings
Consumer Engagement (CE)	CE1	0.947
	CE2	0.893
	CE3	0.921
	CE4	0.962
Hotel Booking Intentions (HBI)	HB1	0.908
	HB2	0.886
	HB3	0.944
Information Attitudes (IA)	INA1	0.955
	INA2	0.941
Information Credibility (INC)	INC1	0.802
	INC2	0.821
	INC3	0.874
Information Need (INN)	INN1	0.887
	INN2	0.901
	INN3	0.889
	INN4	0.839
Information Quality (INQ)	INQ1	0.917
	INQ2	0.929
	INQ3	0.856

Table 2: Reliability and Validity Statistics.

Latent Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Consumer Engagement	0.949	0.952	0.963	0.867
Hotel Booking Intentions	0.899	0.905	0.937	0.833
Information attitudes	0.888	0.899	0.947	0.899
Information Credibility	0.780	0.796	0.872	0.694
Information Need	0.902	0.904	0.931	0.773
Information Quality	0.884	0.896	0.928	0.812

Table 3: Discriminant Validity: Fornell-Larcker Criterion.

	Consumer Engagement	Hotel Booking Intentions	Information Attitudes	Information Credibility	Information Need	Information Quality
Consumer Engagement	0.931					
Hotel Booking Intentions	0.632	0.913				
Information attitudes	0.648	0.693	0.948			
Information Credibility	0.511	0.382	0.403	0.833		
Information Need	0.646	0.653	0.653	0.458	0.879	
Information Quality	0.546	0.591	0.577	0.473	0.730	0.901

Note(s): Correlations among constructs are shown below the diagonal; the square roots of the AVEs are shown on the diagonal

4.2. Structural Model Assessment

Table 4: Model Estimates.

Hypothesis	Effect	Path Coefficients	t values	P values
1	Hotel Booking Intentions -> Consumer Engagement	0.218	2.788	0.006
2	Hotel Booking Intentions -> Information Quality -> Consumer Engagement	-0.008	0.181	0.856
3	Hotel Booking Intentions -> Information Credibility -> Consumer Engagement	0.083	2.801	0.005
4	Hotel Booking Intentions -> Information Need -> Consumer Engagement	0.161	2.539	0.011
5	Hotel Booking Intentions -> Information Attitudes -> Consumer Engagement	0.177	3.518	0.000

Note: *p < 0.01

After the successful evaluation of the measurement models of six constructs, the significance of the structural-

model associations was estimated with bootstrapping-5000 methods. In the results of the SEM, the hotel booking intentions with information adoption parameters except information quality showed a positive and significant association with the consumers' engagement. With these results, H1, H3, H4 and H5 of the study were accepted. Meanwhile, H2 was rejected due to the low significance of $0.85 > 0.05$. Table 4 and Figure 2 show the detailed results of the estimates.

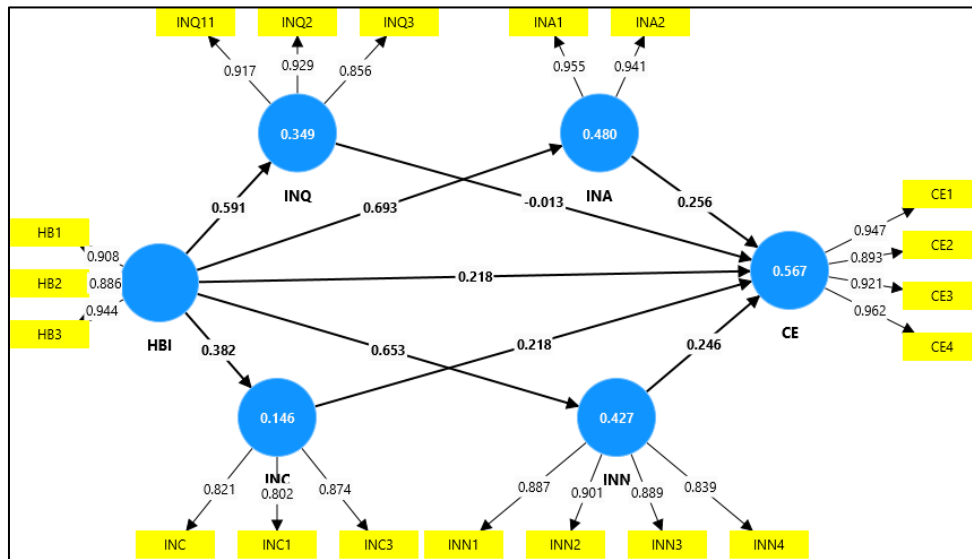


Figure 2: Model Estimates.

Next, the IMPA facilitated the understanding of the importance of the performance of each construct. In this matter, the IMPA showed that hotel booking intention was the strongest and most important predictor of consumer engagement with the highest importance and performance. Following this, the information attitudes showed a higher performance with slightly low importance for the dependent variable. In the end, the information quality gained the lowest importance which is reflective of the derived SEM results as well (Figure 3).

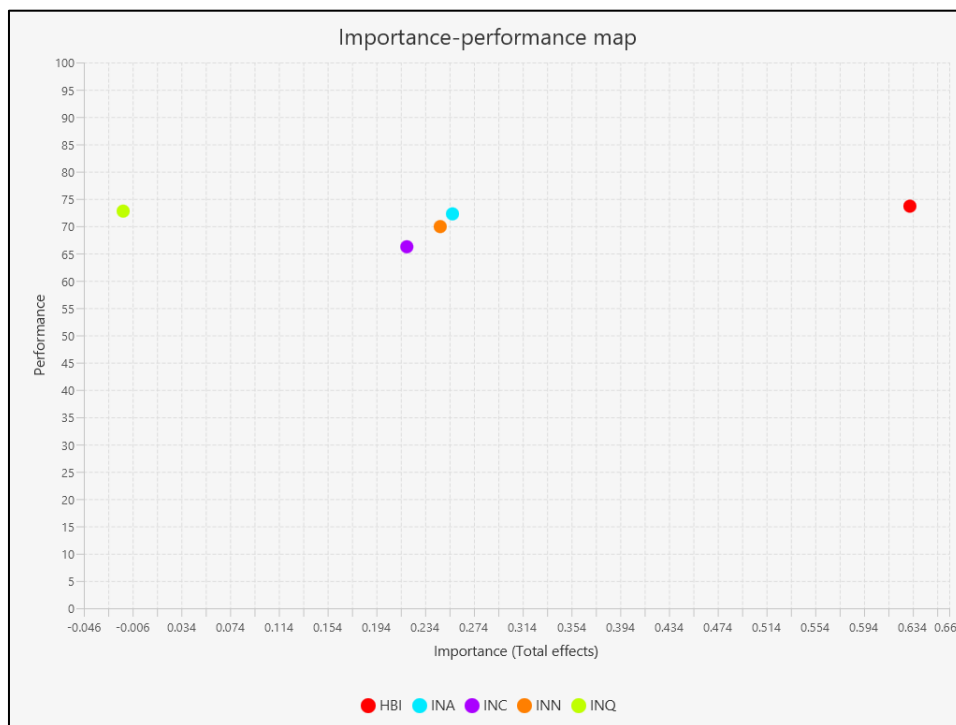


Figure 3: The SEM Results of IMPA (construct level).

To complete the PLS-SEM analysis, the coefficient of determination was evaluated which was potentially high. The predictive power of all exogenous variables for the consumer engagement was 0.567 or 56.7% and for the mediators, it was in a range of 14.6%, 34.9%, 42.7% and 48.0% for information credibility, quality, need and attitudes respectively. All the coefficients are pretty high informing that the model has very strong explanatory power.

5. Discussion

This research explored the determinants of information adoption in Chinese hotel reservation decisions, investigating the relationships between factors such as intentions to book hotels and consumers' needs for information, credibility in the information, perceived attitudes, and information quality (Korstanje, 2022). The findings reveal that there is a positive correlation between hotel booking intention and the consumers' engagement, information need, credibility, and attitude towards information. With respect to the findings, it is evident that high booking intention, increased information need and positive attitude towards information encourage the consumers to engage in hotel information. This implies that booking intentions act as a stimulus to get information. This helps consumers allocate time and effort to acquire information that will help them make an appropriate decision on acquiring a specific product or service, such as hotels (Song *et al.*, 2021).

These findings are consistent with those of Mohammad *et al.* (2024), who also found a positive correlation between consumers' booking intentions and their interactions with hotel information increases consumer engagement. Since consumers look for information about hotels proactively, their levels of engagement also rise, thus improving their relation with the hotel brand. Therefore, hotels can leverage this factor by offering relevant, time-sensitive, and customised information that fosters the consumption pattern among the consumers and in the process, turning them into loyal clients.

Based on the arguments outlined in the research by Vo *et al.* (2020), factors that are vital in determining the consumer engagement and trust in the hotels' information are the credibility of the information sources. It is therefore a clear indication that when consumers find the hotel information credible, they tend to interact with the information. Hence, it improves their level of trust and confidence in the respective hotel brand. Nasrolahi Vosta and Jalilvand (2023) suggest that word of mouth including official websites of the hotels, review websites, and reliable travel agents act as pillars of trust to help consumers make the right decision. On the other hand, information from untrustworthy sources can be destructive and repel engagement. Hotels can therefore not afford to post information which may be misleading to their customers (Vo *et al.*, 2022). Thus, there is a need to disseminate information using reliable channels so as to create credibility with the clients.

These findings correlate with Makanyeza *et al.* (2021), who established that a positive attitude helps the consumers to be receptive, so that they can understand the importance and the need for more information regarding hotels. Hence, it is in line with the findings which suggest that the aspect of attitude makes hotels to offer interesting, informative and customised information to the consumers which in turn increases the optimism of the consumers to accept information from hotels. In addition, although the analysis established a non-significant relationship of information quality with the level of consumer engagement, research suggests that information quality still facilitates changes in the purchase intentions and cognitions about the hotel information (Furner *et al.*, 2022).

Exclusive content which meets the criteria such as accuracy, relevance, and up-to-date information create the basis for trust establishment with consumers. However, with regard to study's findings, it may not directly increase engagement, but information quality affects consumer attitudes and their willingness to adopt hotel information, thus, determining engagement levels (Vo *et al.*, 2020). These results have implications for hotel marketers placing emphasis on information credibility, needs, and attitudes to increase consumers' attention and likelihood of booking hotels. With this knowledge, hotel marketers can adjust the nature of information presented and disseminated to suit Chinese consumers, so as to influence their attitude positively.

5.2 Implications

The findings of this paper have practical implications for hotel marketers and managers, since they need to accentuate information credibility, perceived needs, and attitudes to improve customers' engagement and intention to book. Firstly, hotel managers should ensure that there are channels that consumers can rely on for information which include the official hotels' website and recognised hotels' reviewing website. Secondly, they need to learn about the information requirements of their customers and ensure delivery of appropriate content to their target audiences. If hotel marketers and managers use these strategies, they are likely to improve consumers' attention, and encourage them to book more, therefore improving on the overall revenue and customer loyalty. In addition, the result can be useful in formulating a proper system to manage information, and hence can help the hotel marketers to target their marketing strategies appropriately for a better hotel experience. Thus, understanding the importance of information for consumers' decisions, hotel managers will have a competitive advantage in the market, leading to business performance and development.

5.3 Limitations and Future Research

Following limitations and future research directions to this study can be stated. Firstly, the research target market was the Chinese consumer only and thus, future research should target more varied cultural and consumer groups. Secondly, the study targeted the hotel industry, thus it is recommended that subsequent research to examine the validity of the theoretical framework in different industries as well as different settings. The future research should

incorporate the effects of new technologies like the artificial intelligence and virtual reality techniques on consumer information requirements (Ameen *et al.*, 2021). Furthermore, research should be conducted on the relative suitability of the information channels and modes, including social media, videos, and podcasts in engaging the consumers (Atherton, 2023). In this way, the future research can contribute to a more holistic view of the interconnections between information adoption, consumers' participation, and pre-booking decisions.

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