

ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECT OF FACILITATING CONDITIONS AND ELECTRONIC WORDS OF MOUTH ON AIRLINES TICKET PURCHASE DECISION THROUGH TRUST AS A MEDIATING VARIABLE

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Abstract

In today's digital age, technology advancements have transformed how consumers buy airline tickets, with facilitating conditions, Electronic Word of Mouth (EWOM), and trust playing pivotal roles in the decision-making process. Understanding these factors through the UTAUT can help airlines and travel agencies enhance their digital platforms and marketing strategies. The study aims to determine the effect of technology acceptance (UTAUT) variables, namely performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, facilitating conditions, Electronic Words of Mouth (EWOM), and trust, in the decision to purchase airline tickets online in Indonesia. The study used a purposive sampling technique and structural equation modelling to test the research hypothesis. This study used an online research questionnaire survey technique for 253 respondents. The results of the study show that the UTAUT dimension performance expectancy with t -statistic $2.207 > 1.96$, effort expectancy ($2.068 > 1.96$), facilitating condition ($2.085 > 1.96$), and EWOM ($2.348 > 1.96$) influence online ticket purchase decisions. The social influence dimension doesn't influence purchase decisions with t -statistics $0.618 < 1.96$. The study also found that Trust mediates the relationship between performance expectancy with coefficient score (0.061), effort expectancy (0.044), facilitating conditions (0.054), and EWOM (0.042) on purchasing decisions

Keywords: Facilitating Conditions, Electronic Words of Mouth, Purchase Decision, Trust

1. INTRODUCTION

Practitioners as it is considered a critical success factor in online retailing. The advances in technology, fast logistics, easy payments, and trust contribute to the increasing global spending of as much as \$1.9 trillion. Millions of consumers shop anytime and anywhere (KPMG International, 2017). Which makes studying consumer behavior in the digital era and adopting technology beneficial to research fields. Increasingly high internet access and social media allow people to access online reviews or electronic word of mouth (EWOM) for evaluations before purchasing online. The current generation, especially GenZ, grew up and lived with computers, technology, the internet, social media, and online applications (Robinson & Schänzel, 2019). They are also up to date with technological developments, refer to reviews in buying products, primarily online which cannot be researched directly, and interact with other sellers and buyers now (Dolot, 2018)

However, studies found that EWOM cannot be a solution because fake accounts or dishonest reviews can do online reviews. Online media also do not provide clear reviews.

They do not give opportunities for consumers to consult directly with sellers or consumers who have used these products to discuss which products are suitable for consumers. Reviews given by consumers have also not been able to increase buyer interest due to the use of pseudonyms which affects consumers' trust (Sen & Lerman, 2007);(Liu et al., 2018). Literature shows trust is a significant determinant in online purchasing decisions (H.-W. Kim et al., 2012).

The literature has identified various dimensions of technology adoption by users adopting a new technology (García et al (2019); Sabah (2016)). These factors affect users' cognitive and affective conditions (Bettiga & Lamberti (2017); Chu et al (2019)). In addition, the literature has mentioned that other factors, such as electronic word of mouth (EWOM) and trust, influence users' perceptions of technology adoption (Wu & Lin, 2017). That situation has triggered the development of various startups in Indonesia that focus on the travel service business, which makes it easier for buyers to buy travel tickets and accommodation (Alam & Yasin, 2010).

This research focuses on analyzing how various factors such as performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, facilitating conditions, Electronic Words of Mouth (EWOM), and trust impact the decision-making process of purchasing airline tickets online in Indonesia.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The consumer decision-making process is a stage consumers take to make the final purchase decision (Hanaysha, 2018). This behavior pattern guides consumers through different stages to ultimately make a choice (Karimi et al., 2015). Buying online can be very beneficial for consumers in terms of convenience and saving time and money (Lakshmi, 2016).

The decision-making process between offline and online is very similar. But one significant difference is the shopping environment and marketing communications. Making decisions online can be quite complex, as there are many different factors that come into play. When it comes to buying things online, the decision-making process is constantly changing and incredibly adaptable (Karimi et al., 2015). Customers rely on information to make purchasing decisions. Without it, they might question the credibility of the details guiding their choices and harbor doubts about the seller and the product's quality (Chen et al., 2017).

The landscape of the internet has evolved significantly in the past ten years, leading to the development of a wide array of decision-making aids and recommendation systems aimed at assisting shoppers in making informed choices (Karimi, 2013). Chen et al (2017); and Nadarajan et al (2017)) found that buyers will seek information and make comparisons so that, in the end, they make purchasing decisions.

This study uses a classic concept that has been used by many researchers, one of which is the study by Zhang & Benyoucef (2016). This concept is chosen because it is a fundamental concept for research related to purchasing decisions and has been used by many researchers in various aspects. However, this study only focuses on four purchasing decision processes: need recognition, information search, alternative evaluation, and purchase decision.

Research about the UTAUT, EWOM, and trust in purchasing online goods are numerous. In the context of buying tickets online (Jeon et al., 2019) mentioned that PE is the extent to which a customer believes that if they use a smartphone application to book a plane ticket, then it becomes easier and effortless.

Previous research on UTAUT held by Zhou et al (2010), focuses on performance expectancy, and effort expectancy (Escobar-Rodríguez & Carvajal-Trujillo (2014); Sharifi fard et al (2016); Jeon et al (2019); Zhou et al (2010)). Following this Escobar-Rodríguez & Carvajal-Trujillo (2014), investigate the social influence, and purchase decision (Sharifi fard et al (2016); Zhou et al (2010); Slade et al (2015)) role of SI in consumer behavior. PE, EE, SI, and FC are important factors influencing customers to shop online where they give both direct and indirect effect either on trust and purchase decision (Dewi et al (2020); Escobar-Rodríguez & Carvajal-Trujillo (2014); Lafraxo et al (2018); Sharifi fard et al (2016); Singh et al (2017)).

EWOM is any statement about products or services, either positive or negative, created by prospective customers, actual customers, or previous customers through the internet (Hennig-Thurau et al (2004); Sindunata & Wahyudi (2018)). The internet allows the dissemination of information and communication (Wang et al., 2010). Where communication is carried out by consumers who do not know each other and met before to share information about a product or service that they have used (Gruen et al., 2006). Goyette et al (2010) stated that EWOM is a technological evolution of informal verbal communication that occurs in person, via telephone, e-mail, mailing lists, or other communication methods about a service or product that serves as a source of recommendations.

In this study, the EWOM dimensions refer to (Goyette et al., 2010). Intensity, content, positive valence, and negative valence. This dimension is essential because it concerns how various opinions about a product will be seen from the content's intensity. These two points have become buyers' considerations, where the more intense content given to a product, the more confidence the buyer will have. In addition, negative and positive opinions will also be considered by buyers. Studies have shown the positive effect of EWOM on trust and purchase decisions (Cheung et al., 2009; DI Virgilio & Antonelli, 2018; Nadarajan et al., 2017).

Trust is built on the belief that individuals, groups, or businesses will make morally sound decisions and act ethically in any collaborative effort or economic transaction (Smeltzer, 1997). It is a business relationship dimension that determines the degree to which each party feels they can depend on the integrity of the promises offered by the other party Mohd Sam & Tahir (2009) and is someone's willingness to accept the consequences of the other party's actions (Svare et al., 2020).

Researchers have shown great interest in studying trust in shopping decisions. The focus of their research has been primarily on online-related activities. They have explored this topic across multiple disciplines, including e-commerce, information systems, economics, management, technology, social and institutional contexts, consumer behavior, and psychology (H.-W. Kim et al., 2012). Trust has also been emphasized as one of the most significant factors that make e-commerce popular in the travel industry (Lu et al., 2016). Customer trust is proven to affect purchase decisions (H.-W. Kim et al., 2012). This research used ability, integrity, and benevolence as indicators (Svare et al., 2020).

From the previous research above, there is still limited research on UTAUT and EWOM mediated by trust impacts on online purchasing decisions for the Z generation. Therefore, this study aims to measure the effect of UTAUT, EWOM, and trust on the online ticket purchase decision of the Z generation in DKI Jakarta.

The hypotheses of this research are as follows:

- H1 : Facilitating conditions has a positive effect on trust
- H2 : EWOM has a positive effect on trust
- H3 : Facilitating conditions has a positive effect on purchase decision
- H4 : EWOM has a positive effect on purchase decision
- H5 : Trust has a positive effect on purchase decision

Based on the literature review, the following is the proposed conceptual

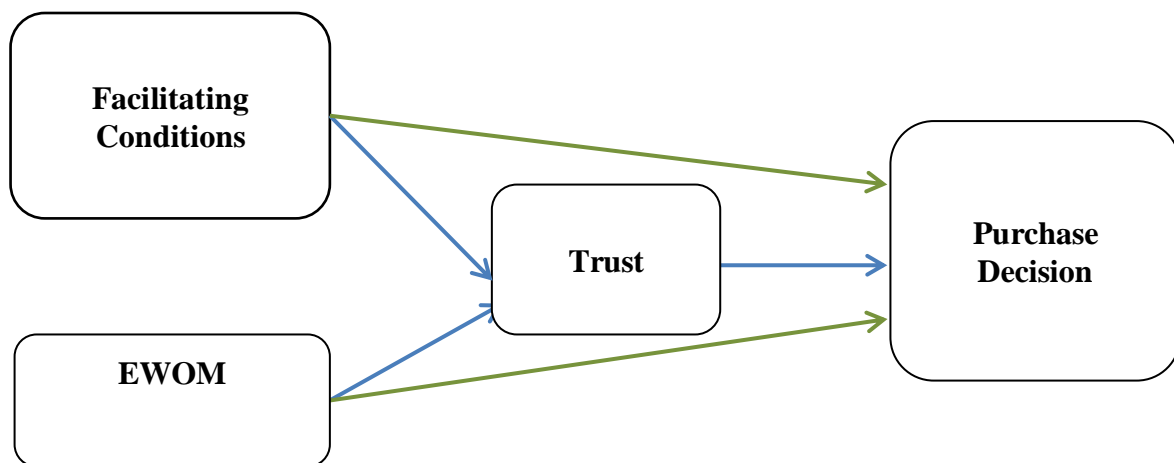


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

3. RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a quantitative approach with descriptive verificative technique to investigate the research variables. There are four variables UTAUT, EWOM, trust, and online buying decision. The data collection uses an online questionnaire with Google Forms distributed via WhatsApp and Telegram. The respondents are university students who have experience buying online airline tickets and live in Jakarta, Jakarta, Indonesia. There were 345 questionnaires distributed using the purposive sampling technique, but only 253 questionnaires were received. The scale uses a five-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agreed).

Validity tests were carried out to ensure the questionnaire was valid and reliable. The validity test uses Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to confirm the dominant factors in a variable. The validity test criteria use loading factors > 0.5 . The validity test result shows that all variables score > 0.5 which means valid. Furthermore, the reliability test uses a construct reliability value (CR) is > 0.7 and variance extracted (VE) is > 0.5 . According to the reliability test, all variables have $CR > 0.7$ and $VE > 0.5$, so all variables are reliable.

Data analysis uses descriptive and verificative analysis to describe the data to conclude

and make a generalization. Descriptive analysis is describing the data to develop a conclusion and generalization. The descriptive use the index value. The index value indicator is score range from 1 to 5. To describe the variable uses importance performance analysis (IPA). Following that, we use verification analysis to test the hypothesis with statistics using structural equation modeling (SEM) and the Lisrel program.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Research Result

The respondents of this survey are college students from the Z generation, as described in Table 1.

Table 1. Characters Of The Respondents

Measure	Items	Frequency	%
Age (years)	17 - 20	130	51.4
	21-25	123	48.6
Gender	Male	92	36.4
	Female	161	63.6
Origin	East Jakarta	149	58.9
	West Jakarta	15	5.9
	North Jakarta	27	10.7
	South Jakarta	45	17.8
	Central Jakarta	17	6.7
Frequency of flying	Often	53	21.0
	Rare	197	77.9
	Never	3	1.1

a. Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Variance Extracted

Table 2 revealed that the instruments of this study were valid and reliable and could be used for further research.

Table 2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis And Average Variance Extracted

Variables	Items	Loading Factor	AVE	Information
Facilitating Conditions	Perceived Behavioral Control	0.730	0.688	Valid
	Facilitating Conditions	0.850		Valid
	Compatibility	0.900		Valid
EWOM	Intensity	0.770	0.636	Valid
	Content	0.810		Valid
	Positive valence	0.800		Valid
	Negative valence	0.810		Valid
Trust	Competence	0.740	0.695	Valid
	Experience	0.890		Valid

Variables	Items	Loading Factor	AVE	Information
	Fulfilment	0.820		Valid
	Loyalty	0.830		Valid
	Openness	0.860		Valid
	Reliability	0.840		Valid
	Care	0.840		Valid
	Empathy	0.870		Valid
	Belief	0.800		Valid
	Receptivity	0.840		Valid
Purchase Decision	Need recognition	0.840	0.681	Valid
	Information search	0.820		Valid
	Alternative evaluation	0.810		Valid
	Purchasing decision	0.830		Valid

b. Model Goodness Of Fit

The X2 or chi-square test yielded a model fit test result of 546.60, with a p-value of 0.000 and an RMSEA value of 0.041. In terms of the index value, we can confidently say that the RMSEA meets the fit criteria. Additionally, other fit indicators like GFI, AGFI, NFI, NNFI, CFI, and RFI have demonstrated a strong goodness of fit.

c. Hypothesis test result

After testing the model's goodness of fit, the next step is to test the research hypothesis through a structural model.

Table 3. Summary of Path Coefficient estimation results and Statistical Test

Model	Path	Path Coefficient (Standardized)	t	Result	R-square
First	FC → Trust	0.215	3.204	Supported	
	EWOM → Trust	0.169	2.720	Supported	
Second	FC → PD	0.140	2.085	Supported	
	EWOM → PD	0.146	2.348	Supported	
	Trust → PD	0.215	3.204	Supported	

The finding is clearly seen that PE, EE, SI, FC, and EWOM play a significant role in shaping consumer trust, accounting for 52.6% of its formation. Moving on to the second model, we observe that performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, facilitating conditions, EWOM, and consumer trust collectively impact 60.3% of online ticket purchasing decisions.

As shown in table 4, it was discovered that most of the hypotheses were indeed supported. However, one variable, social influences, did not show a significant effect. As a result, hypotheses H3 (social influence does not affect trust) and H8 (social influence does not affect purchase decision) were rejected. On the other hand, the remaining hypotheses

were accepted, as shown by the t-statistic value of > 1.96 (significance level 5%), indicating that the test results were indeed significant.

d. The Mediating Effects

Table 4. Direct And Indirect Effect (Mediation)

	Path	Direct		Indirect Trust		Total	Conclusion
		β	t-stat	β	t-stat		
Model	FC \rightarrow Trust	0.215	3.204	-	-	0.215	
	EWOM \rightarrow Trust	0.169	2.720	-	-	0.169	
	FC \rightarrow PD	0.140	2.085	0.054	2.325	0.194	Partial
	EWOM \rightarrow PD	0.146	2.348	0.042	2.119	0.188	Partial
	Trust \rightarrow PD	0.251	3.381	-	-	0.251	-

Based on the findings in Table 4, it is evident that the total effort expectancy path coefficient on online ticket purchasing decisions through consumer trust is 0.219, showing a positive correlation. The stronger the trust-mediated effort expectancy, the more likely the online ticket purchase decision. The t-statistical value is 1.768, which is less than 1.96 (5% significance level), indicating that the test results are not significant. Trust plays a role in mediating the connection between effort expectancy and online ticket purchasing decisions. Trust acts as a perfect mediator since the effort expectancy coefficient value directly impacts shopping decisions (0.175). When consumer confidence is introduced, the coefficient value decreases to 0.044, rendering the impact of effort expectancy on online ticket purchasing decisions insignificant.

4.2. Discussion

The research suggests that factors like performance expectancy, effort expectancy, facilitating conditions, and electronic word-of-mouth significantly influence trust and purchasing decisions. However, social influence does not have a significant impact. The research model has been updated to reflect these findings.

This research highlighted the significant roles of trust as mediators in integrating the UTAUT model and EWOM in the ticket online purchase decision in Indonesia. Trust mediates performance expectancy, effort expectancy, facilitating conditions, and EWOM on online flight ticket purchasing decisions. UTAUT, with its three variables, has a higher value than EWOM. This shows that consumers will trust to order if they feel the convenience and benefits of booking a flight ticket online. Likewise, with reviews, testimonials, and information from previous users, the data increases trust, affecting trust to buy. The higher UTAUT and EWOM mediated through trust can improve online purchasing decisions.

The value of EWOM on purchasing decisions is higher without mediation. This shows that consumers continue to buy airline tickets through the application even without any element of trust. Buyers only need to read references or reviews from various forms of information related to ticket buyers, where this information can be easily found. It goes along with the research of (Litvin et al., 2008) and (J. Kim & Park, 2007).

Social influence does not have any positive effect on trust and purchase decisions. It contradicts the previous research by (Singh et al., 2017) stated that social impact positively

influences trust. Social influence usually comes from the inner circle, either families, friends, or colleagues. Individuals tend to seek other information or recommendation before purchasing something from their closest person. Therefore, social influence has become essential in purchasing decisions (Slade et al., 2015). Social influence also has a positive effect on trust before individuals buy stuff. However, several respondents do not use their social circle recommendations or information in online ticketing purchases (Litvin et al., 2008). The respondents ranged from 17 to 25 or the Z generation. They said they rarely have advice from the closest people to purchase airline tickets or recommend them to purchase online. Another research also states that social influence significantly contributes to online air flight ticket purchases. In study, the majority of the respondent are young travellers who are free to decide on their airline ticket purchase. They evaluate the rating, read about the airlines' reputation from social media, and read about the online ticket-selling platform. Meanwhile, other hypotheses are supported and in line with previous research (Sharifi fard et al., 2016); (DI Virgilio & Antonelli, 2018); (Lopez and Sicilia, 2014) that performance and effort expectancy facilitate condition, EWOM and trust support the online airline purchase decision.

5. CONCLUSION

This study contributes to a slight change in the UTAUT, EWOM, and trust in purchasing decision model. Especially in the element of social influence on trust and purchase decisions. In the Z generation, social influence does not affect trust and purchase decisions on online airline ticket purchasing. The Z generation in the big city depends on social media information and platform reviews. They are also very confident in searching for information about airline tickets and online ticketing platforms. The result, especially the rejected social influence to support trust and purchase decisions, still needs to investigate further in the following research on the Z generation from different cities or countries. This result also suggests any airline and online ticketing platform maintain their exemplary services, relationship, and communication with users so they will get a positive image and give positive reviews and experiences about the airlines.

This study also highlights the need for companies to adapt their marketing strategies to target the Z generation, who are more likely to trust information from social media and online reviews rather than traditional forms of advertising. Furthermore, the findings have implications for the development of future research in the field of consumer behavior and decision-making. Overall, this study to our understanding of the complex relationship between social influence, trust, and purchasing decisions in the digital age. By recognizing the unique preferences and behaviors of the Z generation, companies can better position themselves to attract and retain customers in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

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