

The Impact Of Airbnb Customer Satisfaction On Electronic Word Of Mouth (eWOM) Generation

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Abstract: Previous studies mainly focused on the implications of electronic word of mouth (eWOM) rather than the antecedents of eWOM. To fill in this gap, this study aims to further examine the effect of service quality, expectation-confirmation, and perceived value on customer satisfaction and examine the effect of customer satisfaction on eWOM generation in the context of Airbnb customers in Indonesia. To examine the effects, this study adopts the S-O-R framework as the conceptual model. The data were collected from millennial Indonesian Airbnb customers through an online survey and a total of 410 questionnaires were collected. The data obtained were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) and the results revealed that service quality, expectation-confirmation, and perceived value all have a significant effect on customer satisfaction. Moreover, customer satisfaction has a significant effect on eWOM generation and has a mediating effect between the independent variables and the dependent variable. This study contributes to extending the literature of the antecedents of eWOM generation among Indonesian Airbnb customers. Furthermore, the findings of this study found the mediating effect of customer satisfaction between the relationship of expectation-confirmation and eWOM generation, which have not been checked by previous studies.

Keywords: Customer satisfaction, eWOM generation, Service quality, Expectation-confirmation, Perceived value

I. INTRODUCTION

Sharing economy has risen significantly, especially in the hospitality industry. The sharing economy has expanded rapidly and increased in popularity over the last decade (Zhu et al., 2020). Peer-to-peer (P2P) accommodation service is one of the instances of the sharing economy in the tourism sector, one instance of a P2P accommodation service is Airbnb (Shin & Kang, 2021). According to James Lambert from Oxford Economics, Airbnb is an online platform for renting space and has significantly boosted Indonesia's tourism industry

contributing IDR 14.4 trillion to the country's GDP post-COVID-19 (Airbnb, 2023). This positive impact can be seen in a number of developments in Indonesia. For instance, Airbnb has contributed to various developments of Indonesia's tourist sector, such as the shift of travel from urban to rural regions and the increasing demand for longer stays facilitated by the opportunity to live and work remotely (Kumara, 2023).

The convenience and speed of access to information and consumer reviews on social media, with no time constraints, can affect how individuals make purchasing decisions in the digital era (Indrawati et al., 2023). This exchange of word of

mouth (WOM) between customers acts as a marketing tool which gives businesses and customers benefits and provokes customer spending (Nguyen et al., 2021). With the advent of Web 2.0 and new media platforms, WOM has evolved into electronic word of mouth (eWOM). Online customer reviews of a business or product are referred to as eWOM communication (Verma & Yadav, 2021).

Most customers consult online reviews before making a purchase, with electronic word of mouth (eWOM) being a significant factor. Social media platforms account for 72.6% of eWOM sources, indicating that consumers not only receive but also generate and share brand and product information (Dana et al., 2023). Therefore, it's also critical to keep an eye on how eWOM may affect consumers' opinions of the company's products. Previous studies have predominantly focused on the impact of eWOM, rather than why individuals engage in eWOM (Kanje, et al., 2020; Liu et al., 2021). Thus, this study is researching from the perspective of people's motivation to write reviews in the context of Airbnb. Aside from this, scholars found that P2P consumers tend to prefer reading online reviews instead of writing their own. Only 40% of consumers utilize online reviews and only 20% consumers leave a negative review post their stay (Berg et al., 2020). Hence, it is crucial to identify the factors that contribute to eWOM generation since the P2P industry is review dependent.

There is still limited research regarding Airbnb customers in Indonesia. Previous studies were examined in other countries, such as Vietnam and the United States (Do & Pereira, 2023; Redditt et al., 2022; Zhu et al., 2020). Thus, this study focuses on Millennial Airbnb customers residing in Indonesia. Compared to other generations, millennials are more likely to favor on-demand mobility booked accommodation through Airbnb (Amaro et al., 2018). Millennial travelers resulted in the emergence of P2P accommodation service as an alternative to booking conventional hotels (Ketter, 2019). Due to their size and significant purchasing power, millennials are an important market segment for short-term rental platforms like Airbnb (Amaro et al., 2018).

This study uses the stimulus-organism-response (S-O-R) framework in attaining the stated objectives. This study contributes to examine how service quality, expectation-confirmation, and perceived value in the Airbnb industry impact customer satisfaction and the effect on eWOM generation. Meeting customer satisfaction will serve as a motivation for them to generate electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM). Consequently, the concept of assessing these variable relationships through a mediating factor is relatively new. This highlights the significance for Airbnb hosts to implement effective customer satisfaction initiatives, which will eventually contribute to the spread of positive word-of-mouth about their accommodations.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

S-O-R FRAMEWORK MODEL

The S-O-R framework was proposed by environmental psychologists Mehrabian and Russell in 1974 and afterwards

utilized to examine user behavior in diverse contexts. The concept asserts that a person's internal assessment state (organism), which in turn causes positive or negative behaviors (reaction), can be triggered by clues (stimulus) observed from the environment (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). External environment (stimulus) influences an organism's mental and cognitive health, triggering stimulating internal (attitudes) and exterior (behavioral) reactions via psychological and cognitive processes (Zhu et al., 2020). Previous studies used the S-O-R framework to comprehend human behavior phases and forecast the cognitive judgment and subsequent actions or intentions of internet users. (Zhu et al., 2020). The framework of this study hypothesizes that service quality, expectation-confirmation, and perceived value are stimuli, customer satisfaction is organism, and eWOM generation is response.

SERVICE QUALITY

The effect of customer's comparison of their expectations and the actual outcome of services is known as service quality (Parasuraman et al., 1985; Serra-Cantalops et al., 2020). To quantify service quality, the SERVQUAL model was developed (Parasuraman et al., 1985; Rita et al., 2019). Customer-centric organizations' performance is heavily reliant by offering superior service quality, which generates business value, resulting in customer satisfaction and loyalty (Slack & Singh, 2020).

The concept of service quality is closely associated with customer satisfaction and it is based on the expectancy-disconfirmation theory (Grönroos, 1982; Nunkoo et al., 2019; Parasuraman et al., 1985). Customer satisfaction and behavioral intent are both predictors of service quality that contribute to an organization's profitability (Kim et al., 2016; Prentice et al., 2019; Shi et al., 2014). Customer satisfaction arises from a cognitive process that matches customer expectations and experiences, as perceived performance can lead to dissatisfaction and vice versa (Serra-Cantalops et al., 2020). A number of studies had researched regarding the relationship of service quality and customer satisfaction. It was found that service quality has a significant impact on customer satisfaction (Balinado et al., 2021; Fida et al., 2020). Therefore, this study proposes:

H1: Service quality has a significant effect on customer satisfaction.

EXPECTATION-CONFIRMATION

The Expectation-Confirmation Model (ECM) is one of the main models that aids in explaining users' post-adoption behavior (Tam et al., 2018). The Expectation-Confirmation Theory (ECT) was used to develop the ECM. According to Oliver's (1980) expectation-confirmation theory (ECT) explains that prior to making a purchase, consumers form expectations based on their prior knowledge and experiences. Satisfaction and repurchases are driven by how well perceived performance matches initial expectations (Chiu et al., 2020).

The eWOM writing behavior with ECM is influenced by offline (actual experiences) and online (reviews) expectation confirmation, which in turn influences consumers' eWOM and

acts as a source of new expectation confirmation (Nam et al., 2019).

Evaluation of user expectations following actual use is known as confirmation of expectation. According to the ECM, affirmation is favorably correlated with perceived usefulness and user satisfaction (Bhattacharjee, 2001; Gupta et al., 2020). Numerous research have looked at the effects of expectation-confirmation and customer satisfaction. It is found that expectation-confirmation is positively correlated with satisfaction (Nam et al., 2020). Moreover, confirmation was found to be the key that influences customer satisfaction (Dai et al., 2020; Thong et al., 2006; Park, 2019) and customer satisfaction occurs when customer's expectations are met (Albashrawi & Motiwalla, 2017; Chiu et al., 2020; Oghuma et al., 2016; Susanto et al., 2016).

Therefore, this paper hypothesizes:

H2: Expectation-confirmation has a significant effect on customer satisfaction.

PERCEIVED VALUE

According to the definition of perceived value, it is "the consumer's overall assessment of the product's utility based on the perception of what they get as a return for what is being offered," according to Zeithaml (1988) and Karjaluo et al. (2019). According to Li and Mao (2015), perceived value provides a foundation for analyzing customer behavior in the context of e-services. In both traditional and e-commerce situations, theories and empirical data have demonstrated that perceived value is positively correlated with customer satisfaction (Yang & Peterson, 2004). When purchasing a good or service, the output-to-input ratio is known as perceived value (Tam, 2004). While inputs comprise the expenses that must be paid in order to achieve certain outputs, outputs also include advantages gained (Vy et al., 2022).

Customer satisfaction will fluctuate depending on whether expenses or revenues change after the purchase, changing how the value is perceived (Demir et al., 2020; Omar et al., 2011).

Perceived value is acknowledged as a factor that affects customer satisfaction (Cronin et al., 2000; Fornell et al., 1996), in the multi-channel industry it is also proven that perceived value is positively correlated with customer satisfaction (Carlson et al., 2015; Hamouda, 2019).

Therefore, this paper hypothesizes:

H3: Perceived value has a significant effect on customer satisfaction.

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Customer satisfaction is a person's opinion or reaction to the quality of the product or service they received in comparison to their expectations (Tahanisaz & Shokuhyar, 2020). Evidence suggests that high customer satisfaction is a driver of success in the accommodation sector (Zhu et al., 2020). A considerable amount of research has found a link between satisfaction and behavior, that includes the tendency to repurchase or share positive WOM (Line & Hanks, 2019). Findings by past studies have confirmed that the willingness to write eWOM on various platforms is likely done by highly satisfied customers (Line & Hanks, 2019; Nguyen et al., 2021;

Salah et al., 2023). However, studies by Serra-Cantalops et al., (2020) and Redditt et al. (2022) showed that customer satisfaction does not ensure the creation of positive eWOM.

Thus, this paper intends to further research the relationship of customer satisfaction and eWOM that are not conclusive yet. Therefore, this paper hypothesizes:

H4: Customer satisfaction has a significant effect on eWOM generation.

Previous studies have addressed the mediating role of customer satisfaction on eWOM generation in various industries. Studies by Ahmadi (2019) and Khoo (2022) discovered that the relationship of service quality and word of mouth is mediated by customer satisfaction. Therefore, this paper hypothesizes:

H5: Customer satisfaction has a mediating effect between service quality and eWOM generation.

As mentioned previously, past research has found the effect of expectation-confirmation to customer satisfaction (Dai et al., 2020; Nam et al., 2019; Park, 2019). Moreover, scholars have addressed that customer satisfaction has a significant effect on eWOM generation (Line & Hanks, 2019; Nguyen et al., 2021; Salah et al., 2023). However, previous studies have not checked the mediating effect of customer satisfaction between expectation-confirmation and eWOM generation. Therefore, this study aims to fill in the gap by checking the mediating effect of customer satisfaction. Therefore, this paper hypothesizes:

H6: Customer satisfaction has a mediating effect between expectation-confirmation and eWOM generation.

In a study by Konuk (2019), it is found that there is a partial mediating effect of customer satisfaction between perceived value and behavioral intentions of customers, such as revisit and word of mouth. There is still limited research regarding the mediating effect of customer satisfaction between perceived value and eWOM generation. Thus, this study further examines the mediating effect of customer satisfaction. Therefore, this paper hypothesizes:

H7: Customer satisfaction has a mediating effect between perceived value and eWOM generation.

ELECTRONIC WORD OF MOUTH (EWOM) GENERATION

eWOM is defined as any opinion expressed on a firm or product that is made available to numerous individuals and institutions over the Internet, whether it be good or negative (Phan et al., 2020). eWOM is a strong tool for interaction that has allowed customers to take control of enterprises, particularly in certain industries, such as the travel and tourism sector. Positive eWOM generation is extremely essential for accommodations, not only because it improves the company's reputation, but also allows them to acquire new customers (Serra-Cantalops et al., 2018). In tourism marketing, eWOM can be a source of destination information and a suggestion for a specific place (Kanjje, et al., 2020).

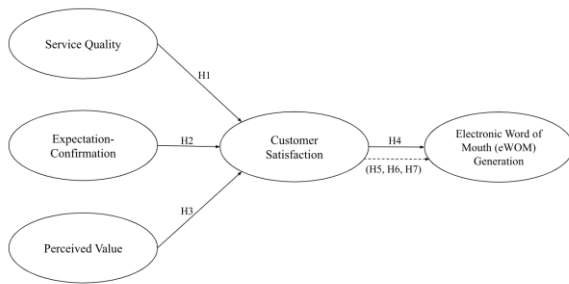


Figure 1: Research Framework

III. METHODOLOGY

This cross-sectional study used a quantitative approach by conducting a survey. The survey uses a questionnaire and is distributed online to Indonesian Airbnb users who had used Airbnb to book accommodation at least once within the last one year and have posted a review after the stay. This study uses a non-probability sampling method, specifically judgmental sampling and snowball sampling. The variables in this study are measured using a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The questionnaire is prepared through Google Form with six sections. The first section measures service quality with seven items (Serra-Cantallops et al., 2018). The second section measures expectation-confirmation by six items (Hsu and Lin, 2015 and Nam et al., 2019). The third section measures perceived value with six items (Aruan & Felicia, 2019). The fourth section measures customer satisfaction by four items (Paulose & Shakeel, 2021). The fifth section measures eWOM with three items (Serra-Cantallops et al., 2018). The last section contains the questions about the profile of the respondents.

For the pre-test, this study takes a sample of 30 respondents to ensure the validity and reliability of the questionnaires. The hypothesis testing should be tested to a minimum sample size of 300, which is ten times the total 30 questions from all the variables, based on the principle of the common rule of thumb (Hair et al., 2011). The data were collected between November 2023 and December 2023 through Google Form, the target of minimum sample size exceeded with a final sample size of 410 respondents.

The data gathered are analyzed by using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) and tested using SmartPLS software. To ensure the data is valid, the loading factor must be greater than 0.7, and to ensure the reliability Composite Reliability (CR) must be greater than 0.7 (Hair et al., 2018). To ensure the convergent validity is met, the AVE values should be higher than 0.5 and Cronbach's Alpha should be higher than 0.7 (Hair et al., 2018). This study uses path analysis and descriptive analysis to interpret the results of the testing. Inferential analysis is also used to test hypotheses. This study began with a pilot test of 30 samples to ensure the measurement items are valid and reliable. Based on the result, the loading factor ranges from 0.726 to 0.929, the Cronbach's Alpha ranges from 0.847 to 0.926, the Composite Reliability (CR) ranges from 0.894 to 0.941, and the Average Variance Selected (AVE) ranges from 0.677 to 0.802. Therefore, the measurement items used in this study are valid

and reliable. After conducting the pilot test, a sample size of 410 respondents were taken during December 2023.

The respondents consist of 45.9% male and 54.1% female with the dominant age group of 27-35 years old (53.4%) and the majority of respondents live in Java (57.6%). As for the marital status, 82.7% respondents are married, 13.7% respondents are single, and 3.7% respondents are widowed. In terms of educational attainment, 74.4% respondents have a Bachelor's degree, 17.8% respondents have a Diploma degree, and 7.8% have a Master/Ph.D degree. Regarding the occupation, 59.8% respondents are identified as employees, while 28.8% are entrepreneurs, 10% are freelancers, 1% are housewives, and 0.9% are students. The monthly income revealed that the majority of respondents (42.2%) falls into the range of Rp 15.000.001 to Rp 25.000.000.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

This study began the analysis with evaluating the validity and reliability of the measurement items used. From the results, it can be seen that the lowest Composite Reliability (CR) is eWOM generation with the value of 0.912 and the highest is service quality with the value of 0.958, indicating that the constructs are reliable. The results show that the variable with the lowest AVE is expectation-confirmation with 0.754 and the highest AVE is customer satisfaction with 0.779. Moreover, the variable with the lowest Cronbach's Alpha value is eWOM generation with the value of 0.855 and the lowest is service quality with the value of 0.949. The results for AVE and Cronbach's Alpha indicate that the convergent validity is met. Therefore, it is possible to say that the measurement items used are valid and reliable.

STRUCTURAL MODEL

To evaluate the structural model, a bootstrapping procedure was used to check the path coefficient between variables. The results are presented in Table 3, it can be seen that SQ → CS (H1), EC → CS (H2), PV → CS (H3), and CS → eWOM (H4) have p-values that are less than 0.05, which indicates that the relationship are accepted. In references to the direct effects between customer satisfaction and eWOM intentions, the path from service quality, expectation confirmation and perceived value are supported. Likewise, people who are pleased with their stay at Airbnb accommodations will be more motivated to write eWOM. As a result, H1, H2, H3, and H4 for the direct relationship in this study are supported.

Construct	Relationship of the Variables				
	β	SD	T	p-value	Accepted
SQ - CS (H1)	0.429	0.076	5.638	0.000	✓
EC - CS (H2)	0.323	0.062	5.174	0.000	✓
PV - CS (H3)	0.220	0.072	3.083	0.002	✓

CS - eWOM (H4)	0.912	0.010	89.729	0.000	✓
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Table 1: Direct Relationships

The indirect relationships were also evaluated through the bootstrapping procedure to find out the mediating effects. As shown in table 2, all of the independent variables namely SQ, EC, and PV have indirect relationships to the dependent variable (eWOM) through the mediating effect of CS, as the p-values of all the indirect variables are less than 0.05. Thus, the findings support H5, H6, and H7.

Construct	Relationship of the Variables				
	β	SD	T	p-value	Accepted
SQ - CS - eWOM (H5)	0.391	0.069	5.658	0.000	✓
EC - CS - eWOM (H6)	0.295	0.057	5.153	0.000	✓
PV - CS - eWOM (H7)	0.201	0.066	3.070	0.002	✓

Table 2: Indirect Relationships

The overall model's goodness of fit was then tested by using R². Based on the result, the independent variables affect customer satisfaction by 91.9%, whereas customer satisfaction affects eWOM generation by 83.2%.

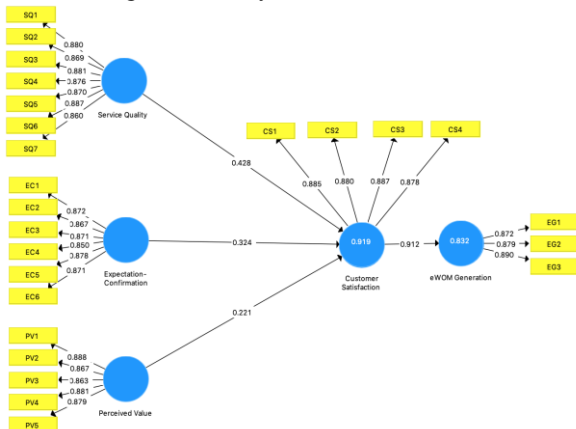


Figure 2: Evaluated Model

This study utilized the S-O-R framework model to establish a framework of theory. First, service quality has a significant relationship with customer satisfaction (H1), the results are consistent with the findings of previous studies (Thaichon et al., 2020; Supriyanto et al., 2021). The result supports H2, which shows that expectation-confirmation has a significant relationship with customer satisfaction, which is in line with previous studies of (Nam et al., 2020). In the sharing economy context, customer switching can occur to dissatisfied customers when their expectations are not met (Wang et al., 2019). Therefore, it is essential for Airbnb hosts to ensure the customer's expectations are met when they are experiencing the service. Third, H3 was also supported in the findings which indicate that customer satisfaction is significantly influenced by perceived value. This finding is consistent with prior studies by An et al. (2019), Hamouda (2019), and Zhang et al. (2022). The findings of this study also revealed that customer satisfaction is a predictor for eWOM generation, prior research also found this association (Do & Pereira, 2023). Thus, it is important to make sure that guests feel

satisfied when staying at an Airbnb, since Airbnb guests tend to not post a review when they do not have satisfactory experience (Sánchez-Franco & Alonso-Dos-Santos, 2020)

This current study found that customer satisfaction mediates the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. Consistent with prior studies by Ahmadi (2019) and Khoo (2022), this study confirmed that customer satisfaction and eWOM generation is mediated by customer satisfaction. Although prior studies have not examined the mediating effect of customer satisfaction on the relationship between expectation-confirmation and eWOM generation, this study revealed that customer satisfaction has a mediating role in the relationship. Lastly, the result is also parallel with the study by Konuk (2019), which stated that the relationship of perceived value and eWOM generation is mediated by customer satisfaction. As there are limited studies discussing the mediating effect of customer satisfaction, thus the result of this study contributes in further extending the literature.

V. CONCLUSION

This study investigated the effect of customer satisfaction on eWOM generation by adopting the S-O-R framework in the context of Indonesian Airbnb customers. Based on the results, it shows that service quality, expectation-confirmation, and perceived value all have a significant effect on customer satisfaction. Among the independent variables, service quality has the strongest effect on customer satisfaction followed by expectation-confirmation and perceived value. The result of this study also confirmed the significant effect on customer satisfaction on eWOM generation. Moreover, customer satisfaction can mediate the relationship of service quality, expectation-confirmation, and perceived value on eWOM generation.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

The study highlights the importance of the peer-to-peer industry, especially in platforms like Airbnb, and the key factors influencing customer satisfaction and eWOM generation. It emphasizes the need for service quality, consistent offerings, competitive pricing, and setting realistic expectations. Satisfied consumers are more likely to engage in eWOM, influencing others' decisions.

THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

This study examines the effects of service quality, expectation confirmation, and perceived value on customer satisfaction and eWOM generation on Indonesian Airbnb using the S-O-R framework. It fills a gap in research by exploring Airbnb's customer motivation in eWOM generation. The study uncovers new ideas about customer satisfaction as a mediating factor in the relationship between these variables, offering a deeper understanding of eWOM generation among Indonesian Airbnb customers.

LIMITATIONS

The research identified significant findings, however, it is not without limitations. First, the research findings may not represent the variations in consumer behavior because the subjects of the study are exclusively Indonesian individuals. Thus, the findings might not capture the behaviors of Airbnb customers in other countries. Secondly, this research uses non-probability sampling and it may not represent the entire population. Third, this research uses a quantitative approach so it does not get in-depth understanding from customers and may overlook detailed experiences of customers. To develop upon these findings, future studies might explore this topic using compared analyses across countries that have comparable variables such as economy, culture, and other relevant factors. Second, future researchers can implement probability sampling methods to enable researchers to make generalizations from sample or population characteristics. The use of probability sampling methods also mitigate selection bias. Third, future research uses a mixed method approach to get more insight from customers and prevent researcher bias.

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