

Stimulus-Organism-Response Mechanism in Predicting Continuous Usage Intentions toward Digital Travel Platforms

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ABSTRACT

The Digital Travel Platforms are considered an essential component of the traveler's journey from planning to booking a room or airlines tickets on the platform. With the Digital Travel Platforms industry experiencing significant growth, this study will examine how key determinants and perceived value influence customers' decisions to continue using these platforms. This research employs a structured questionnaire of age: 20-50+ regarding the selection of Digital Travel Platforms for hotel bookings, focusing on Agoda and Booking. Undefined Closed questions help to get accurate and non-biased data. The study found no significant link between Information Quality and Perceived Value, contradicting prior research. Key factors influencing continuous usage of Digital Travel Platforms include perceived interactivity, security, privacy, price, promotion, and e-WOM, with nuanced effects on behavioral intentions and purchase decisions. The methodological approach taken in this paper enables researchers and practitioners to examine key factors like information quality, website interactivity, safety, pricing, and online reviews. The research aims to uncover how these elements influence customers' ongoing use of Digital Travel Platforms. It also introduces the idea that perceived value plays a crucial role in whether customers decide to keep using the platform.

Keywords: Digital Travel Platforms, continuous usage intention, stimulus-organism-response, digital platform

INTRODUCTION

The internet has significantly changed the travel and tourism industry, impacting every stage of a traveler's experience, from planning to booking and exploring new destinations. Digital platforms have become essential for both travelers and industry professionals to navigate this dynamic market (Sadie, 2023). Among the various digital platforms, Digital Travel Platforms have gained prominence. In 2023, the Digital Travel Platforms industry saw a remarkable recovery, with several companies exceeding their pre-pandemic revenue levels. Booking Holdings led the way with approximately \$21.4 billion in revenue, followed by Expedia Group with around \$12.8 billion, and Airbnb with \$9.9 billion. According to Statista Mobility Market Insights, the online travel and tourism market generated over \$850 billion globally in 2023, covering sectors such as hotels, package holidays, vacation rentals, and cruises (Statista, 2023).

Since travel is considered a complex social phenomenon (Yang & Nair, 2014), travelers need to gather essential information to make informed decisions about their journeys. Customers have the option of booking their travel arrangements directly from the service provider's website, e.g. hotel website or directly through Digital Travel Platforms website that offers users to book travel services, such as flights, hotel rooms, car rentals, and vacation packages (Sousa, 2024). The hospitality industry, especially the hotel industry, is growing rapidly in the tourism industry, providing accommodation to travelers (Hospitality Global Market Report, 2023). The increasing popularity of Digital Travel Platforms and the intensifying competition have spurred

academic research. Much of the academic research is concentrated on the pre-purchase effect (Pee et al., 2018) such as consumer perception associated with Digital Travel Platforms (Shalini et al., 2020). Some other examples of prior research investigated on various aspects of consumer behavior within the Digital Travel Platforms context, including satisfaction (Jedin & Ranjini, 2017), customer loyalty (Dwikesumasari & Ervianty, 2017), and service quality determinants (Dutta et al., 2017). Furthermore, Zailin et al. (January 2020) conducted research on Malaysian consumers' attitudes toward online travel websites. However, according to Pee et al. (2018), while research has extensively studied how signals (price, brand, safety, information on websites to name a few) influence consumers' initial purchase decisions, there is limited understanding of how these signals affect their intention to repurchase a product. Specifically, the impact of pre-purchase signals on future buying behavior and the interaction between these signals and post-purchase experiences remain underexplored.

Existing research on repurchase intentions includes studies by Fang et al. (2016) on how customer relationships influence online consumers repurchase decisions, Prodomos et al. (2022) studied on repurchase intentions in retail shopping where he emphasized key factors such as brand image, price sensitivity, perceived value, and customer satisfaction, which are crucial in improving customer retention and driving repeat business. Sajjad et al. (2023) concluded in their research that a company should actively engages with its customers by using artificial intelligence technology (e.g. social media) to enhance the overall customer 's experience which in turn can create a positive cycle that encourages repeat business. Ng et al. (2023) also investigated there's a significant relationship between brand image, perceived value, and trust and intention to repurchase on Digital Travel Platforms. Ozturk et al. (2017) noted that despite technological advancements, significant research gaps remain regarding website interactivity and safety and privacy concerns in the hotel industry and according to Beránek et al., 2015 concluded that online tourism services must learn the factors that can influence the repeat purchase behavior of customers. Therefore, investigating this area could uncover the specific factors that drive repeat purchase behavior, addressing a gap in the current literature. To address this gap, this research aims to explore online travel websites that affect customers' ongoing intention to use them."

The significance of this study lies in its exploration of the key factors influencing customer decisions to rebook through Digital Travel Platforms, In the rapidly evolving digital landscape, understanding these factors is crucial for businesses seeking to gain a competitive advantage in e-commerce (Ficky et al, 2023). Furthermore, the online customer experience is the focus of attention focus for marketers (Jaiswal and Singh, 2020). Hence, the study is conducted with the following objectives:

- (a) To examine the key determinants of the Digital Travel Platforms that influence the customer's continuous usage intention.
- (b) To explore the impact of perceived values on customer's continuous usage intention on Digital Travel Platforms.

Both objectives contribute to a thorough understanding of the factors influencing customer usage intention on online travel websites.

Research questions:

- (a) In what ways do the key determinants of Digital Travel Platforms influence customers' continuous usage intention in the context of online travel agencies?
- (b) How does perceived value impact customers' continuous usage intentions on Digital Travel Platforms?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The research framework of this study is based on the S-O-R model by Mehrabian and Russell (1974), which explains that individuals' behaviors arise from internal organismic processes activated by external stimuli. This

model, often applied in environmental psychology, has been adapted in marketing and digital behavior studies to understand consumer responses to website features and digital interactions.

External stimuli can include physical surroundings, social cues, or digital interfaces such as website layout or app functionality. In this study's context, the visual appeal, navigability, and presentation of an online travel agent (OTA) act as stimuli that influence user emotion and cognition. The "organism" represents internal affective and cognitive states, such as enjoyment, excitement, or control (Hewei & Youngsook, 2022). These emotional and psychological states ultimately shape the "response," which manifests in behaviors like completing a booking or returning to the site.

By applying the S-O-R model, this study identifies key psychological triggers that OTAs can leverage to enhance user experience and loyalty. However, it is acknowledged that the current model observes behavior at a single point in time. Future studies could enhance this framework by incorporating longitudinal data to understand how emotional and behavioral responses evolve with repeated platform use.

Digital Travel Platforms: Digital travel platforms facilitate the booking of travel-related services. They are widely used due to their comprehensive listings, user-generated reviews, and ease of access (Talwar et al., 2020). Expedia and Priceline were early entrants, establishing the foundation for the global growth of OTAs (Barthel & Perret, 2015).

Numerous factors influence user trust and loyalty on these platforms, including accessibility, pricing, and service quality (Jedin & Ranjini, 2017). A consistent finding across studies is that trust—built through reliable reviews, user experience, and perceived website security—is a primary driver of repeat use (Setiawan & Widanta, 2021). Website serviceability has also been shown to impact customer satisfaction, brand attachment, and customer loyalty (Lee et al., 2017). Brand image, perceived value, and trust have a strong influence on repurchase intention (Pham & Nguyen, 2019; Razak et al., 2014), with user reviews and past experience playing critical roles in consumer satisfaction and ongoing platform use.

Tourist Behavior in Online Information Search: Social media is integral to travel planning, with platforms like Instagram and TikTok offering peer-generated content that influences destination choices (Islam, 2021; Armutcu, 2023). Tourists actively search, compare, and share travel experiences online, making digital word of mouth a dominant force in travel decision-making. The integration of GPS features makes it easier for tourists to share real-time experiences and location check-ins, helping future travelers in their planning process.

Online reviews and recommendations remain a critical source of information, with approximately 68% of consumers reading reviews before booking (Roller, 2023). Experienced travelers tend to rely on prior knowledge, while first-time travelers are more dependent on comprehensive and credible online content.

Research Model and Hypotheses

This research constructs an S-O-R model of the influence of continuous purchase intention on online travel agents. By understanding how environmental stimuli (S) influence internal states (O), and how these states drive behavior (R), online travel agents can better design their platforms to enhance user experience and continue to use the platform.

Information Quality: Information quality plays a pivotal role in influencing user behavior. It includes accuracy, relevance, completeness, and the presentation of content. Yeap et al. (2014) defined it as the usefulness of the provided information to the consumer. In online tourism platforms, quality content supports decision-making, increases satisfaction, and builds trust (Wang & Yan, 2022). Jeong and Shin (2020) emphasized that in intangible service environments like tourism, accurate and reliable content significantly affects users' experiences. High-quality information—such as on destinations, accommodations, and user reviews—encourages users to revisit and reuse the platform. Lata and Rana (2021) also confirmed that information quality predicts online hotel booking intentions.

H1: Information quality has a positive influence on perceived value

Perceived Interactivity: Perceived interactivity refers to the extent to which users feel they can meaningfully engage with a website. Buhalis & Martinez (2020) defined it as users' ability to interact with site features. High interactivity—such as personalization and user-friendly interfaces—enhances user engagement and satisfaction. When information is perceived as complete, accurate, and relevant, users process it more deeply, forming positive attitudes toward the destination (Wang & Yan, 2022). A positive experience with these elements drives continued usage and loyalty.

H2: Perceived Interactivity has a positive influence on perceived value

Safety and Privacy: Ensuring the safety and privacy of users is essential in online environments. Users are more likely to engage with platforms they perceive as secure (Liu et al., 2005; Hermawan, 2022). Elements like data protection, clear privacy policies, and visible security features promote user confidence. Trust in the platform influences behavioral intentions (Lisdayanti & Hapsari, 2024; Sidanta et al., 2022). Therefore, implementing robust safety measures enhances user loyalty and fosters continuous engagement.

H3: Safety and Privacy has a positive influence on perceived value

Price and Promotion: Effective pricing and promotional strategies are key in attracting and retaining OTA users. Consumers are motivated by competitive pricing and the availability of deals (Yoon et al., 2014; Sharma et al., 2022). OTAs serve as intermediaries between providers and consumers, and price transparency significantly impacts decision-making. Tools like price comparison, dynamic pricing, and personalized offers encourage repeat use. These strategies influence perceived value by making travel services feel more affordable and accessible.

H4: Price and promotion have a positive influence on perceived value

Electronic word of mouth (e-WOM): Electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) significantly influences consumer behavior, especially for experiential services like travel (Sharma et al., 2022). Reviews, ratings, testimonials, and user-generated content shape perceptions of service quality and reliability. Positive e-WOM reinforces trust and creates a cycle of continuous use and recommendation (Ryu & Park, 2020). Customers who encounter favorable content are more likely to engage in repeat purchases and recommend the platform to others (Kaya et al., 2019).

H5: Electronic word of mouth has a positive influence on perceived value

Perceived Value: Perceived value is a key determinant of satisfaction and loyalty in OTA use. It involves a user's evaluation of benefits versus costs (Kim et al., 2021; Gao et al., 2024). Factors such as user-friendly navigation, excellent customer service, and booking convenience shape this perception. Tourists consider extrinsic influences such as previous experiences and perceived risks when assessing value (San-Martín et al., 2020). Numerous studies affirm that perceived value positively affects repurchase intentions (De Moraes Watanabe et al., 2020; Kuo et al., 2009).

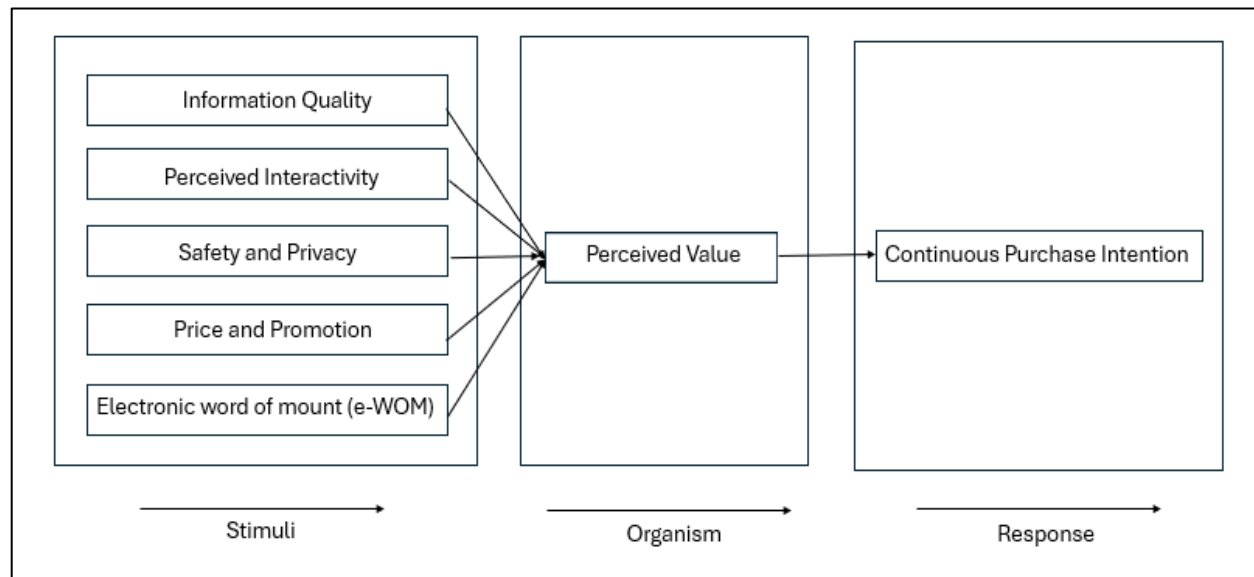
While this study captures perceived value at a single time point, future research should consider how value perceptions shift over time. Longitudinal approaches would help track how users develop trust and loyalty through repeated interactions.

H6: Perceived value has a positive influence on continuous usage intention

Online booking continuous usage intention: Continuous usage intention refers to users' propensity to revisit the same OTA platform for future bookings. Clement et al. (2021) argue that continuous use arises from immersive and interactive experiences. In travel contexts, features like virtual tours, real-time updates, and customized recommendations sustain user interest. Satisfaction with the platform encourages not just repeat purchases but also advocacy behavior (Buhalis & Martinez, 2020).

While this study takes a cross-sectional view, understanding long-term usage patterns would benefit from longitudinal methods that track evolving behaviors, preferences, and satisfaction over time.

Framework



MATERIAL AND METHODS

Data collection

Quantitative techniques involve scientific and structured procedures for data collection and analysis, aimed at producing precise, categorizable, and numerical findings. This study investigates the factors that influence customers in selecting one Digital Travel Platform over another when booking tourist destinations online. By utilizing quantitative methods, the study seeks to improve the accuracy of results and minimize the ambiguity often associated with qualitative approaches, thereby reducing mono-method bias and aligning with theoretical priorities in understanding consumer choice in digital travel services.

The survey targeted users of popular platforms such as Agoda and Booking.com. Data were collected using Google Forms, with a total of 150 participants selected through random sampling across various age groups. The questionnaire was distributed via social media platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp, ensuring easy access and minimal respondent inconvenience. It was structured into two main sections: one focused on demographic information, and the other on need-based and perception-based factors influencing customer preferences toward Digital Travel Platforms. However, it is important to note that while the sample size is adequate for exploratory analysis, the findings may have limited generalizability due to the relatively small and regionally concentrated participant pool. This constraint should be considered when interpreting the broader applicability of the results.

The demographic profile of the respondents has been presented based on gender, age, occupation and education level which has been presented in the cross tabulation below wherein a total of 150 respondents have participated in the study. Regarding gender distribution, the respondents were almost equal: 52% male (78) and 48% female (72). Distribution by age also reveals 60.7% (91) of the respondents fall in the 21-30 years age bracket. Other age respondents are Those with age 31-40 years account 14.7% with 22 respondents, 20 years old and below which accounts 10.7%, 41-50 years old which accounts 9.3% with 14 respondents and 51 years old and above, they account for 4.7% with 7 respondents. In terms of occupation, four categories emerged whereby the largest group comprised of students representing 52.7%: 79 in number. The largest group among the respondents was the employed individuals, out of which 40 respondents replied to be 26.7%. In the same vein, the self-employed /businessowners were 11.3% (17 respondents); while the retirees were 4.7% (7 respondents). Another 4.7% or seven respondents fell under the unemployed category.

Table 1 Demography respondents

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	78	52
Female	72	48
Age		
20 years old and below	16	10.7
21 - 30 years old	91	60.7
31 - 40 years old	22	14.7
41 – 50 years old	14	9.3
51 years old and above	7	4.7
Occupation		
Student	79	52.7
Employed	40	26.7
Self-employed/ Business	17	11.3
Unemployed	7	4.7
Retired	7	4.7
Education Level		
Primary school	2	1.3
High school	18	12.0
Diploma	40	26.7
Bachelor	84	56.0
Master	6	4.0

RESULTS

Model assessment using PLS-SEM

Table 2 shows PLS-SEM measurement model analysis based on Hair, Hollingsworth, Randolph, and Chong's (2017) guidelines starting with indicator reliability being greater than 0.70 and convergent validity being below 0.40. The result reveals that the observed scores of the construct and the predicted values for the pairs of items have the highest and lowest correlation coefficients due to construct validity of the test, where IP3 and GSI4 have the highest and the lowest scores, respectively. The best values for composite reliability (CR) should be equal to or above 0.7 and the AVE values equal to or above 0.5.

Table 2 Measurement Model

Construct	Loading	Cronbach α	CR	AVE
Information Quality (IQ)		0.795	0.859	0.551
IQ1.	0.806			
IQ2.	0.781			
IQ3.	0.756			
IQ4.	0.677			
IQ5.	0.683			
Perceived Interactivity (PI)		0.844	0.887	0.615
PI1.	0.713			
PI2.	0.619			
PI3.	0.863			
PI4.	0.818			
PI5.	0.877			
Safety and Privacy (SP)		0.793	0.856	0.545
SP1.	0.798			
SP2.	0.746			
SP3.	0.723			
SP4.	0.787			
SP5.	0.623			
Price and Promotion (PP)		0.895	0.924	0.712
PP1.	0.669			
PP2.	0.878			
PP3.	0.859			
PP4.	0.904			
PP5.	0.887			
Electronic Word of Mouth (EWM)		0.939	0.957	0.847
EWM1.	0.927			
EWM2.				

EWM3.	0.953			
EWM4.	0.921			
Perceived Value (PV)		0.832	0.889	0.668
PV2.	0.731			
PV3.	0.848			
PV4.	0.890			
PV5.	0.792			
Continuous Usage Intention (CUI)		0.711	0.839	0.636
CUI1.	0.703			
CUI2.	0.858			
CUI3.	0.823			

Discriminant validity

In the analysis, discriminant validity was determined using Fornell-Larcker's test to reduce the probability of cross loading measurement as presented in the table 3 below. Third, the AVE for value added through triangulation was found to be larger than the correlations yet smaller than 0. 90, as established by Kline (2023) and Hair et al. (2019).

Table 3 Fornell-Larcker's test

	(CUI)	(EWM)	(IQ)	(PI)	(PV)	(PP)	(SP)
Continuous Usage Intention (CUI)	0.797						
Electronic Word of Mouth (EWM)	0.802	0.920					
Information Quality (IQ)	0.686	0.522	0.742				
Perceived Interactivity (PI)	0.724	0.647	0.746	0.784			
Perceived Value (PV)	0.791	0.686	0.642	0.868	0.817		
Price and Promotion (PP)	0.847	0.658	0.560	0.717	0.923	0.844	
Safety and Privacy (SP)	0.894	0.779	0.728	0.892	0.852	0.836	0.738

Structural Model Analysis

The estimates of the modelled relationships between the constructs are elaborated by the PLS algorithm. The coefficients of these paths were statistically analyzed using the bootstrap procedure in which t-values of each path estimate were obtained. The model fit of the analysis was assessed using R-Squared (R2) and Predictive relevance as the two criteria for evaluating the outcome variables. Hair et al (2019) Tables for R-Square include high: 0.67/0.33/0.19. The R-squared values of the endogenous latent variables Perceived Value (PV) & Continuous Usage Intention (CUI) are 96.1% & 62.6% respectively which supposes high level of model

fitness. The effect size for each relationship is reported in Table 4 and the interpretation of the f^2 is as follows: 0.02 (small), 0.15 (medium), and 0.35 (large).

As recommended by Hair et al. (2019) the presence of multicollinearity was examined. Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) for all the two endogenous variables were below 4, recommended cut off value, thus, suggesting no collinearity bugbear. Subsequently, model fit was evaluated using standardized root mean square residual (SRMR). As the SRMR value of this research model was 0.07, it is less than the cut off 0.08, thus, it can be concluded that the model is well fitted. The PLS analysis was done on the structural model presented in table 5 shows the estimates path coefficients and t-values.

Out of them, only H1 is rejected in the present study while the other five research hypotheses are supported in table 4. T-statistics value is used to accept or reject any hypothesis, and the value should be greater than 1.96. H2 also hypothesizes that PI has a significant impact on PV, and we find that this hypothesis holds true in our study. From the result of H2 within this study as presented by T-statistic of 11.607, the Path coefficient (β) of 0.668, P value of .000 or <0.0001. Based on T-statistic significant value more than the table value of 1.96 and P values less than 0.05, thus, the Perceived Interactivity (PI) has an influence towards the Perceived Value (PV). This result provides empirical evidence for Hypothesis 2.

The results for Hypothesis 4 and 5 depict that the path coefficients of various constructs are as follows: Price and Promotion (PP) is 0.79 Electronic Word of Mouth (EWM) is 0.126 is less than 0.4. The hypothesis H2b suggests a significant and positive impact of Price and Promotion (PP), as well as Electronic Word of Mouth (EWM) on Perceived Value (PV). Out of these, Price and Promotion had the highest significance in determining the Perceived Value. However, Safety and Privacy (SP) is negative and significantly influential towards the Perceived Value (PV) with the Path coefficient (β) of -0.479 and the P values of 0.000. This is empirically supportive of Hypothesis 3.

Table 4 Hypotheses

Hypothesis	Path	Beta	T-statistic	P-value	Decision	f^2
H1	Information Quality (IQ) -> Perceived Value (PV)	0.001	0.012	0.990	Not Supported	0.000
H2	Perceived Interactivity (PI) -> Perceived Value (PV)	0.668	11.607	0.000	Supported	0.256
H3	Safety and Privacy (SP) -> Perceived Value (PV)	-0.479	6.613	0.000	Supported	0.533
H4	Price and Promotion (PP) -> Perceived Value (PV)	0.791	19.392	0.000	Supported	0.403
H5	Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) -> Perceived Value (PV)	0.126	4.114	0.000	Supported	0.156
H6	Perceived Value (PV) -> Continuous Usage Intention (CUI)	0.791	19.392	0.000	Supported	0.670

Perceived Value as Mediator

Regarding the mediating role of Perceived Value on the relationship between Information Quality (IQ), towards Continuous Usage Intention (CUI), mediation relationship was found, since the indirect effect through Perceived Value was significant ($\beta = 0.201$, $T = 2.107$, p Value = 0.004). Perceived Interactivity (PI), Safety and Privacy (SP), Price and Promotion (PP) and Electronic Word of Mouth (EWM) are partially mediators

toward Continual Usage Intention (CUI) through Perceived Value and the beta value is 0.092, 0.073, 0.108 and 0.123 respectively as depicted in Table 5.

Table 5 Mediating Effect

Path	Beta	T-statistic	P-value	Decision
Information Quality (IQ) -> Perceived Value (PV) -> Continuous Usage Intention (CUI)	0.201	2.107	0.004	Fully mediation
Perceived Interactivity (PI) -> Perceived Value (PV) -> Continuous Usage Intention (CUI)	0.092	1.964	0.006	Partially mediation
Safety and Privacy (SP) -> Perceived Value (PV) -> Continuous Usage Intention (CUI)	0.073	2.972	0.001	Partially mediation
Price and Promotion (PP) -> Perceived Value (PV) -> Continuous Usage Intention (CUI)	0.108	2.378	0.019	Partially mediation
Electronic Word of Mouth (EWOM) -> Perceived Value (PV) -> Continuous Usage Intention (CUI)	0.123	4.969	0.003	Partially mediation

DISCUSSION

The first research question of this study was to establish the factors that affect customer cumulative usage intention on online travel websites. Consequently, the result of this study revealed that the finding of a cross-sectional correlation between the variable of Information Quality (IQ) and the variable of Perceived Value (PV) is insignificant, which fails to support H1. Yeap et al. (2014) captured information quality by equating it as “how the provided information is useful for the consumer,” contradicting this result in prior studies. The information that returns has to be correct, pertinent and as much as possible, most closely connected with the topic and context the user was searching for. By only claiming that the first component in customer persuasion is informativeness (Wang & Yan, 2022).

The analysis of the studies presented in this paper indicates that perceived interactivity, safety and privacy, price, promotion and e-WOM can all affect continuous usage intention. As for Perceived WQ, interactivity together with security and privacy are antecedents of Behavioral Intention and e-WOM in Digital Travel Platforms users (Hermawan, 2022). Also, the relationship between price and e-WOM has been established to influence the purchase behavior on the Shopee application; therefore, competitive prices and positive e-WOM help to improve consumer visitation decisions (Aprianti & Avianti, 2023).

Paradoxes or informative findings may be observed, if we consider the diversity of the impact of such factors. For example, security and privacy are the antecedents of e-WOM, but customization and character impact e-WOM indirectly through security and privacy (Yürük-Kayapinar, 2021). Furthermore, Park & Lee (2023) posited that price perception, e-WOM and brand awareness are significant predictors of the purchase intentions, and the findings revealed that price perception has a high negative correlation with brand awareness and e-WOM on Instagram. Perceived trust and e-WOM review attitude strongly influence purchase intention, but perceived trust does not influence e-WOM review attitude (Augusto et al., 2019). Furthermore, it was found that experience and Advertised will influence the impact of e-WOM on brand attitude and purchase intentions (Jones et al., 2009).

CONCLUSIONS

Therefore, this study concludes by stressing the relevance of identifying antecedents that encourage customers to make repetitive purchase intentions towards Digital Travel Platforms. Features like, information credibility, Perceived interactivity, Safety and privacy, Price strategies and eWOM all contribute to the perceived value of

the Digital Travel Platforms. This improved perceived value is crucial in convincing customers to continue to rely on the same platform in their travelling needs as the growth of the digital travel market continues. Digital Travel Platforms that aim at improving these determinants through providing higher quality, interactivity and security of the experience to the customers have more chances for achieving greater longevity of the consumers' loyalty and a competitive advantage. Therefore, a profound comprehension of the perceived value based on these key factors will be highly beneficial when working with the Digital Travel Platforms industry and striving for clients to come back for more.

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