

Gen Z digital behaviour: The role of consumer style inventory and eWOM in accommodation booking intention

Anindita Dwi Wulandari ^{1*}, Ahmad Hudaiby Galih Kusumah¹

¹ Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author: aninditadwi@upi.edu

Abstract: Generation Z shows a high dependence on online reviews and recommendations (eWOM) as a primary reference in purchasing decisions, particularly in the context of accommodation selection. This study aims to examine the decision-making styles of Generation Z consumers, as conceptualized within the Consumer Style Inventory (CSI) framework, and to examine how these styles influence the use of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) in accommodation selection, as well as their relationship with purchase intention. Data collection was conducted through a questionnaire distributed via social media. This study used Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) SmartPLS to analyse data collected from 220 Generation Z respondents. The results show that recreational attitude significantly influences eWOM use intention, while eWOM use intention positively affects purchase intention in accommodation booking decisions. These findings indicate that consumers who perceive eWOM activities as enjoyable are more likely to engage with online reviews before making accommodation-related decisions.

Keywords: Accommodation, Consumer-Style Inventory, eWOM, Generation Z, Purchase Intention

History Article: Submitted 7 April 2026 | Accepted 11 May 2026 | Published 10 June 2026

How to Cite: Wulandari, A. D. & Kusumah A. H. G. (2026). Gen Z digital behaviour: The role of consumer style inventory and eWOM in accommodation booking intention. *International Journal of Applied Science in Tourism and Events*, 10(1), 19-32.

Introduction

Generation Z consumers have a high dependence on digital platforms and online recommendations in their purchasing decisions, which affects the understanding of their decision-making patterns. As a generation of digital natives, they have grown up with technology and tend to rely on eWOM (Electronic Word of Mouth) as a primary source of information when choosing products or services, as well as when sharing their own experiences compared to previous generations (Li, 2025; Monaco, 2018). Supported survey by BrightLocal (2024), which shows that 75% of consumers consistently read online reviews before making a purchase. Generation Z exhibits distinct consumer values, preferences, and behaviors that shape their online purchasing decisions (Thangavel et al., 2022).

Consumer decision-making style represents a key psychographic factor that influences how individuals search for and process information before making a purchase. The Consumer Style Inventory (CSI) model developed by Sprotles & Kendall (1986) is key to understanding the relationship between Gen Z and eWOM. The Consumer Style Inventory (CSI) suggests that consumers adopt different strategies when making purchasing decisions. In this context, eWOM use intention represents a critical stage before consumers adopt information in their final purchase decisions. Previous studies (Kala & Chaubey, 2018; Virgilio, 2018) have shown that eWOM plays a significant role in shaping brand perception, building trust, and influencing purchase intention.

Several previous studies have examined the relationship between consumer decision-making styles and digital behavior in the context of eWOM. Kang (2013) examined how the dimensions of the Consumer Style Inventory (CSI) relate to opinion seeking using eWOM on social networking sites (SNS) and attitudes toward online social shopping activities. Other studies, such as Kala & Chaubey (2018) have examined how eWOM builds brand image and ultimately drives purchase intentions for lifestyle products, but has not yet comprehensively linked this to

Generation Z's digital decision-making context. This study adopts the framework of Perez-Aranda et al., (2024), who examined the relationship between Gen Z consumers decision-making styles and the use of eWOM in the context of tourism, but has not considered the dimension of purchase intention as the final consequence of the psychographic influence process on digital behavior.

Despite the growing body of literature examining Generation Z, eWOM, and purchase intention in tourism contexts, existing studies largely focus on general factors such as trust, credibility, and social influence, with limited attention to the role of psychographic dimensions in shaping digital decision-making behavior. Furthermore, prior research often examines eWOM either as an independent predictor or in isolation, without integrating it within a comprehensive decision-making framework that links internal consumer traits to behavioral outcomes.

This study offers a novel contribution by integrating the Consumer Style Inventory (CSI) framework with eWOM use intention and purchase intention in a single structural model. Unlike previous studies, this research positions use intention as a mediating mechanism that connects psychographic decision-making styles with actual purchase intention in the context of accommodation booking. In addition, this study extends prior literature by incorporating sustainability attitudes as part of contemporary consumer behavior trends among Generation Z, thereby providing a more nuanced understanding of how experiential and value-driven factors influence eWOM use intention.

This study contributes theoretically by extending the application of the Consumer Style Inventory (CSI) into the digital tourism context, emphasizing that psychographic decision-making styles may not uniformly influence eWOM use intention. By integrating CSI with eWOM use intention and purchase intention within a unified structural model, this study offers a more comprehensive understanding of how internal consumer characteristics shape digital decision-making processes among Generation Z.

The main objective and purpose of this study is to explore how the decision-making styles of Generation Z consumers, as classified in the Consumer Style Inventory (CSI) framework, influence their tendency to use electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) as a reference in the hotel accommodation selection process, and how this correlates with purchase intention. This integrated approach enables a deeper understanding of how digital trust, review quality, and perceived relevance interact with psychographic variables, ultimately guiding strategic decisions within hospitality marketing practices. By integrating psychographic and digital behavior dimensions, this study seeks to offer insights into the hospitality industry to develop more appropriate strategies in attracting Generation Z, particularly by focusing on sustainability and trust in digital reviews.

The Role of eWOM in Decision Making

When consumers evaluate products prior to purchase, seeking opinions or recommendations from others is a common practice (Wang et al., 2018). eWOM influences the formation of consumer expectations during the decision-making process, such that post-purchase satisfaction is shaped by existing reviews (Pourfakhimi et al., 2020). eWOM is recognized as an effective tool for building brand awareness, creating trends in the marketplace, influencing purchasing decisions, and developing brand loyalty (Kala & Chaubey, 2018).

Customer reviews both positive and negative, shape how potential buyers assess a product or service, as consumers tend to compare official information provided by companies with the real experiences shared by other users (Perez-Aranda et al., 2024). Papathanassis & Knolle (2011) argue that negative eWOM exerts a stronger influence than positive eWOM, as consumers tend to spend more time critically evaluating negative content. These evaluative tendencies reflect how consumers increasingly prioritize transparency, authenticity, and detailed narratives when interpreting online feedback to reduce uncertainty. In addition, consumers assess both positive and negative eWOM by considering the level of detail in reviews and the degree of agreement among reviewers (Hoang et al., 2025).

In the tourism sector, eWOM is present on various digital platforms that provide customer review features, such as Booking.com, TripAdvisor, Traveloka, and others. The impact of online product reviews is highly recognized because most online shoppers consider online product

reviews when making purchasing decisions (Nisar et al., 2020). User interaction with eWOM content, such as liking, sharing, or commenting, can strengthen the message's influence on other audiences because it demonstrates social validation and increases the visibility of the content on digital platforms. eWOM messages effectively minimize the possibility of risk and ambiguity when making purchasing decisions and thus influence consumers subsequent purchase intentions (Kala & Chaubey, 2018).

Decision-Making Styles of Generation Z

Consumer decision-making styles, including those among Generation Z, are shaped by different shopping orientations. Each individual has unique consumption preferences, which are reflected in their information needs, psychographic characteristics, and various demographic backgrounds (Thangavel et al., 2022). These differences also affect what they consider important when choosing products or services, including the attributes of a store or digital platform.

Drawing upon the Consumer Style Inventory (CSI) developed by Sproles & Kendall (1986) this study investigates the influence of consumers information-seeking attitudes toward eWOM platforms on their intention to use eWOM as a reference during hotel accommodation decision-making, as well as the relationship between this intention and purchase intention. As mentioned in the introduction, the first model by Sproles & Kendall (1986) states that there are eight different shopping typologies: Perfectionistic, Brand conscious, Novelty-fashion conscious, Recreational and hedonistic shopping consciousness, Price conscious, "value for money", Impulsive, careless consumer orientation, Confused by overchoice, Habitual, Brand-loyal consumer orientation.

Although the original Consumer Style Inventory (CSI) framework proposes eight decision-making styles, this study focuses on a subset of dimensions that are considered most relevant to the digital context of eWOM in tourism. Previous studies have suggested that not all CSI dimensions are equally applicable across different research contexts, particularly in online environments where information processing and user interaction differ significantly from traditional shopping settings (Kang et al., 2013; Thangavel et al., 2022).

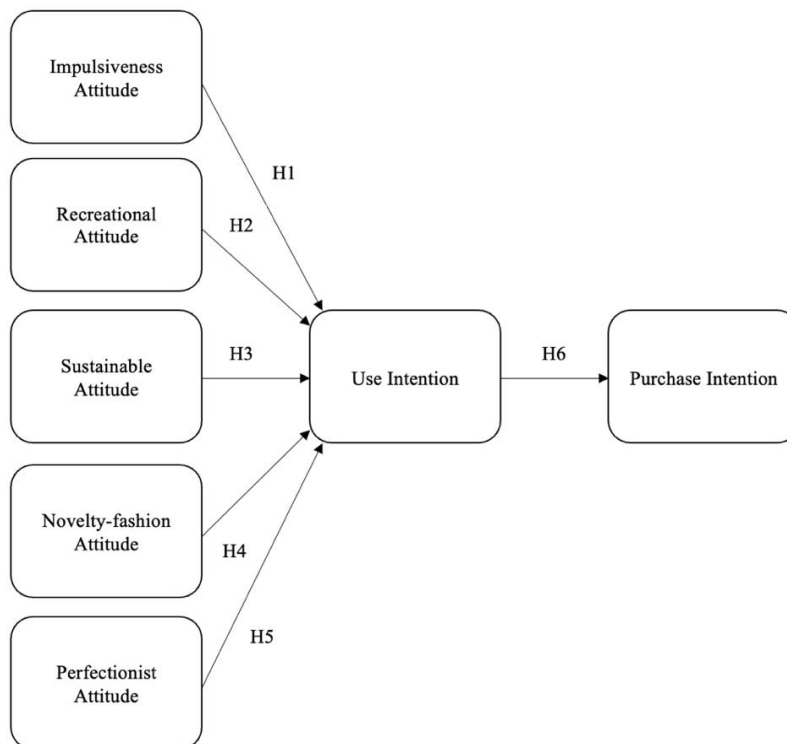
In this study, five dimensions perfectionist, impulsive, novelty-fashion, recreational, and sustainable attitudes were selected based on both theoretical relevance and empirical support. These dimensions are closely associated with how consumers search for, evaluate, and engage with online information, which aligns with the nature of eWOM platforms. In contrast, other dimensions such as brand consciousness, price consciousness, and habitual loyalty were excluded, as they are more related to product evaluation and repetitive purchasing behavior rather than active information-seeking behavior in digital environments. To measure the impact of eWOM on Gen Z's decisions in choosing tourism accommodations for various types of travel, this study focuses on CSI attributes that are closely related to all types of travel requested by these consumers. Attitudes that are highly recognized in the literature includes impulsive behavior, recreation, novelty-fashion, and perfectionist (Chase et al., 2017; Cho et al., 2022).

This selective use of CSI dimensions is consistent with prior empirical studies that adapt the model to specific contexts, particularly in digital environments where only relevant dimensions are retained to improve model fit and explanatory power (Kang et al., 2013; Perez-Aranda et al., 2024; Thangavel et al., 2022). Furthermore, the inclusion of sustainable attitude extends the original CSI framework by capturing contemporary consumption trends among Generation Z, who are becoming more aware of ethical and environmental concerns. This selective approach allows for a more focused and contextually relevant analysis of decision-making styles that directly influence eWOM use intention and purchase intention in the tourism sector. Cardinali (2020) shows that attitudes toward sustainable tourism have a positive correlation with value orientation and the fulfillment of basic psychological needs. Therefore, this study introduces a new variable and trend in tourism studies, which is sustainable attitude (Trudel, 2019).

Purchase Intention

Generation Z consumers highly depend on digital sites and online recommendations when making purchasing decisions, especially in the context of hotel bookings. The credibility of eWOM as perceived by consumers has been identified as a key factor in shaping purchase intention (Wang et al., 2018). Accordingly, the higher the perceived credibility of online reviews, the greater the likelihood that consumers will proceed with a purchase. This strong reliance reflects Generation Z's tendency to prioritize transparency, authenticity, and peer-generated insights over traditional promotional content. As digital natives, they frequently cross-check information across multiple platforms before making decisions, demonstrating a distinctive pattern of information verification that differentiates them from previous generations.

eWOM has been widely recognized as a significant determinant of Generation Z's purchase intention. Hoang et al., (2025) found that eWOM directly influences Gen Z's booking intention, with subjective norms and desirability as important mediators. Similarly, Perez-Aranda et al., (2024) shows that consumer decision-making styles, particularly those that are perfectionist and sustainable, significantly influence use intention, which then triggers purchase intention. These findings highlight the complex psychological pathways involved in Gen Z's digital decision-making, where emotional evaluation, social influence, and perceived usefulness of online reviews collectively strengthen their final purchase intention, especially in accommodation-related decisions.



(Source: Own research)

Figure 1. Conceptual framework

Based on a literature review of consumer decision-making styles, eWOM, and purchase intention, a conceptual model was developed. This model, illustrated in Figure 1, shows that Generation Z's purchase intention on eWOM when searching for accommodation on review sites is influenced by their intention to use eWOM.

Methodology

Data Collection

Data were collected through an online questionnaire distributed via social media in March 2025. The sample was selected using purposive sampling based on two criteria: (1) respondents must have used an eWOM platform to search for accommodation-related reviews within the past 12 months, and (2) respondents must belong to Generation Z, given their distinct consumption patterns and digital behavior (Thangavel et al., 2022). Generation Z represents one of the largest demographic groups globally and holds significant purchasing power, making them an important market segment (Djafarova & Fouts, 2022). The Generation Z sample is also noteworthy because they are the travelers of the future, and they are increasingly playing a key role in influencing new trends in tourism and eWOM engagement. As a result, this study focused on Generation Z individuals with prior experience using tourism review platforms within the last year to support their accommodation selection and booking decisions for travel. A total of 220 valid responses were collected from Generation Z participants.

Measuring Instrument

Using seven constructs, we used a 25-item questionnaire with a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The questionnaire consists of a total of seven constructs: purchase intention (PI), eWOM use intention (UI), impulsive attitude (IA), recreational attitude (RA), sustainability attitude (SA), novelty attitude (NFA), and perfectionist attitude (PA).

This questionnaire also includes seven sociodemographic variables to obtain information from participants, particularly regarding age, education level, gender, and employment status. Based on the variables asked, we designed different formats; for example, to measure the level of study, we used nominal variables. Partial least squares (PLS)-SEM was then applied to the collected data using SmartPLS 4.1.1.2 software as an analysis tool.

PLS-SEM is a powerful method used to confirm the signs and significance of proposed relationships between constructs in a structural model. In addition, PLS-SEM also evaluates the validity and reliability of measurement models, making it a reputable approach (Vinzi et al., 2010). Its substantial statistical power proves invaluable for exploratory research efforts, particularly when investigating emerging or underdeveloped theories (Hair et al., 2019). PLS-SEM has demonstrated its effectiveness in analyzing complex structural models involving multiple indicators and relationships (Hair et al., 2019).

Results and Discussions

Gen Z Member Demographics

This study involved 220 respondents. Based on age, the majority of respondents were aged 21–24 years, accounting for 78.6%. A smaller proportion consisted of respondents aged 17–20 years (16.4%) and those aged 25–28 years (5%). Regarding education, most respondents reported having secondary school education (SMP/SMA), representing 58.2% of the sample. Meanwhile, 36.8% of respondents held a bachelor's degree, followed by 4.5% who held a diploma, and 1% who possessed a master's degree. Consistent with their age profile, most respondents were students, comprising 75.9% of the total sample, while others were full-time or part-time employees. Additionally, a majority of the respondents were female, with a percentage of 70%.

Table 1. Member demographics

Variable	Category	n	%
Gender	Male	66	30
	Female	154	70
Age	17-20 Years Old	36	16.4
	21-24 Years Old	173	78.6
	25-28 Years Old	11	5
Education	Secondary school (SMP/SMA)	128	58.2
	University – Diploma (D1/D2/D3)	10	4.5
	University– Bachelor (D4/S1)	81	36.8

Job Status	University – Master (S2/S3)	1	0.5
	Unemployed	7	3.2
	Students	167	75.9
	Part-time employed	7	3.2
	Full-time employed	39	17.7

Measurement Model Estimation

To determine the suitability of the proposed model, a variety of assessment criteria were applied, including the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR), Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and indicators of convergent validity (Hair et al., 2014). According to Garson (2016), a good model fit should be achieved when the SRMR is lower than 0.10. This measurement model fit index shows a good model fit: SRMR 0.087. The reliability of the constructs was determined by assessing Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability. Additionally, the validity of the constructs, including convergent and discriminant validity, was verified using the average variance extracted (AVE) criterion. Although several indicators in this study show outer loadings slightly below the recommended threshold of 0.70, with values ranging from 0.60 to 0.70, these indicators were retained based on both statistical and theoretical considerations. According to Hair et al. (2019), indicators within this range can be considered acceptable, particularly in exploratory research, as long as they contribute positively to composite reliability and do not compromise convergent validity.

In this study, all constructs demonstrate satisfactory composite reliability ($CR > 0.70$) and average variance extracted ($AVE > 0.50$), indicating that the inclusion of these indicators does not adversely affect the overall construct validity. Furthermore, these items were retained to preserve the conceptual integrity of the constructs, as they represent theoretically important aspects of consumer decision-making styles and eWOM behavior. Therefore, removing these indicators could reduce the content validity of the measurement model. Table 2 presents the value of each indicator included in the measurement model.

To determine discriminant validity, we followed the recommendations of Hair et al., (2019) using three methods:

1. the cross-loads criterion;
2. the Fornell–Larcker criterion; and
3. the Heterotrait–Monotrait ratio (HTMT) criterion.

Based on the Fornell–Larcker criterion, the square root of each construct's AVE exceeded its shared variance with other constructs, confirming discriminant validity.

Table 2. Value of each item

Construct	Item	Loading	Cronbach's alpha	CR	AVE
Impulsiveness Attitude	I am more impulsive and I don't consider eWOM	0.910	0.842	0.903	0.756
	Often I make careless use of eWOM I later wish I had not	0.857			
	I do not carefully check eWOM	0.839			
Novelty-fashion Attitude	I am up-to-date with the changing eWOM in accommodation	0.867	0.640	0.848	0.735
	Novelty, attractive content in eWOM is very important to me	0.848			
Perfectionist Attitude	Considering the eWOM is important to me	0.871	0.642	0.803	0.580
	Getting very good quality information on eWOM is important to me	0.770			

	I make a special effort to choose the very best quality products	0.623			
Recreational Attitude	Using eWOM is a pleasant activity to me	0.894	0.732	0.814	0.527
	Using eWOM is an enjoyable activity to me	0.899			
	I enjoy using the eWOM just for the fun of it	0.606			
Sustainable Attitude	I carefully look for the eWOM regarding sustainable information	0.823	0.791	0.849	0.658
	I usually check the eWOM regarding sustainable information	0.864			
	The eWOM about sustainability is very important to me	0.831			
EWOM Use Intention	The likelihood of using the eWOM would be higher	0.845	0.821	0.877	0.705
	The probability that I would consider using the eWOM would be higher	0.836			
	My willingness to use the eWOM would be higher	0.893			
EWOM Purchase Intention	The probability that I would consider booking this hotel is high	0.812	0.699	0.893	0.737
	My willingness to book this hotel is high	0.800			
	I am willing to recommend others to buy this product/brand.	0.648			
	I look up for opinions on social media for products/services which I am planning to buy	0.622			

The measurement items for purchase intention were derived from previously established and validated research (Alhidari et al., 2015; Kala & Chaubey, 2018; Lien et al., 2015; Nisar et al., 2020). In the context of digital consumer behavior, particularly within eWOM environments, purchase intention is often conceptualized as part of a broader decision-making process that includes related behaviors such as information-seeking and recommendation. These behaviors reflect consumer's engagement and confidence toward a potential purchase decision, rather than a strictly transactional outcome. Therefore, the inclusion of such indicators aligns with prior literature that captures purchase intention within an integrated digital behavioral framework. This study adopts a broader conceptualization of purchase intention within the digital tourism context. In online environments, particularly among Generation Z, the decision-making process is not strictly linear but involves interconnected stages such as information search, evaluation, social sharing, and behavioral intention.

Previous studies have highlighted that eWOM-related behaviors, including seeking opinions and recommending products, are closely associated with purchase intention, as they reflect consumers' engagement and confidence in the decision-making process (Alhidari et al., 2015; Kala & Chaubey, 2018; Lien et al., 2015; Nisar et al., 2020). The inclusion of these indicators does not compromise construct validity, as supported by acceptable reliability and validity

measures (CR and AVE), indicating that the construct remains statistically sound. This approach aligns with recent studies that conceptualize purchase intention as part of a broader digital engagement behavior rather than a purely transactional outcome.

These criteria are applicable across all types of measurement models. Based on the Fornell–Larcker criteria, that the square root of a construct’s AVE should be greater than its shared variance with any other variable included in the model, as explained by Hair et al., (2019). Table 3 indicates that all construct correlations are lower than the square root of their respective AVE values, thereby confirming discriminant validity. The final assessment involved the HTMT criterion, which requires that correlations between constructs remain below 1.00. Table 3 further demonstrates compliance with the HTMT criterion, where all construct correlations were below the threshold value of 1.00. Together, these results confirm that the measurement model possesses adequate discriminant validity.

Table 3. Fornell-Larcker discriminant validity

	IA	NFA	PA	PI	RA	SA	UI
IA	0.869						
NFA	0.103	0.858					
PA	-0.193	0.418	0.762				
PI	0.106	0.424	0.348	0.726			
RA	0.195	0.468	0.359	0.301	0.811		
SA	0.084	0.451	0.360	0.337	0.316	0.840	
UI	0.158	0.425	0.322	0.542	0.545	0.359	0.858

Structural Model Assessment and Hypothesis Testing

Structural model validation begins by examining the R² value and the Stone-Geisser test (Q²).

Table 4. Stone-Geisser test

	Q ² predict	R ²
PI	0.159	0.294
UI	0.313	0.360

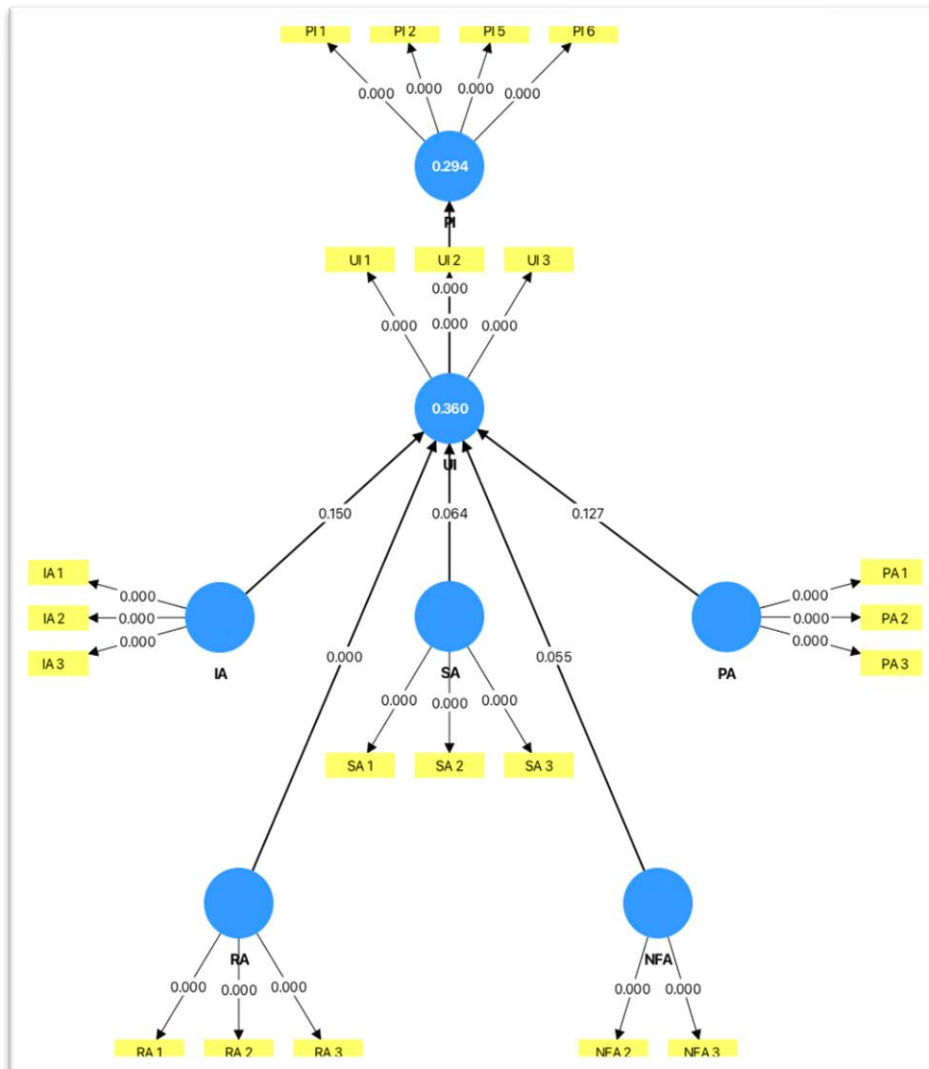
The model takes into account that values greater than 0.1 are considered significant (Falk & Miller, 1992). The Q² statistic, which serves as an additional measure of a model’s predictive capability, is deemed meaningful when its value exceeds zero, signifying that the model demonstrates adequate predictive validity (Hair et al., 2014).

Table 5. Structural model results

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values	Hypotheses
IA -> UI	0.074	0.082	0.051	1.440	0.150	Unsupported
NFA -> UI	0.136	0.130	0.071	1.923	0.055	Unsupported
PA -> UI	0.090	0.096	0.059	1.528	0.127	Unsupported
RA -> UI	0.391	0.389	0.065	6.029	0.000	Supported
SA -> UI	0.136	0.146	0.073	1.851	0.064	Unsupported
UI -> PI	0.542	0.548	0.047	11.437	0.000	Supported

The findings of this study provide support for the validity of the proposed structural model. The analysis reveals that recreational attitude is a significant predictor of eWOM use intention among Generation Z consumers, indicating that individuals who perceive information-seeking activities as enjoyable and engaging are more likely to utilize eWOM. Furthermore, the

results demonstrate that eWOM use intention positively influences consumers' accommodation purchase intention, highlighting the important role of online reviews in shaping travel-related decision-making. In contrast, impulsive, perfectionist, novelty-fashion, and sustainable attitudes were found to have no significant effect on eWOM use intention, suggesting that these consumer decision-making styles do not substantially drive Gen Z consumers' engagement with eWOM in the context of accommodation selection.



(Source: Own research)

Figure 2. Structural model with t-value

Discussions

The results of this study showed that eWOM use intention had a significant effect on eWOM purchase intention. Positive eWOM should be the main focus for those in the hospitality industry to strengthen brand image, which ultimately acts as a bridge connecting the intention to use with the intention to purchase. Previous studies have shown that most online consumers consider product reviews to be one of the main factors in their decision-making process (Nisar et al., 2020). According to Kala & Chaubey (2018), eWOM effectively minimizes risk and uncertainty when making purchase decisions and influences consumers intentions to make their next purchase. Thus, use intention is shaped by the interaction between user expectations of the system, the accessibility of information and the trust built upon the experiences of others conveyed through eWOM platforms.

Recreational attitudes influence the intention to use eWOM. Individuals with recreational attitudes view the activities of searching for and sharing information as part of an enjoyable experience, rather than only as a means of fulfilling needs. As stated by Kim et al., (2011), recreational or hedonistic consumers are likely to actively browse various shopping sites and gain satisfaction from the process. Consumers with a recreational attitude tend to make shopping an enjoyable part of their lifestyle for emotional satisfaction (Guiry, 2006). Consumers with a recreational orientation are more likely to engage with eWOM as part of an enjoyable and experiential activity.

The finding that impulsive attitude does not significantly influence eWOM use intention suggests that impulsive consumers tend to bypass the information-search stage typically associated with eWOM platforms. Unlike rational or evaluative consumers, impulsive individuals are driven by immediate emotional responses and spontaneous decision-making, which reduces their motivation to engage in systematic information processing (Gulfranz et al., 2022). This result is consistent with Kang et al. (2013), who found that impulsiveness does not predict eWOM opinion-seeking behavior or attitudes toward online social shopping using SNSs.

As noted by Kang et al., (2013), "acting impulsively does not necessitate opinion-seeking, so the benefits of SNSs would not necessarily appeal to impulsive consumers," suggesting that eWOM platforms are more aligned with rational decision-making processes such as information search and evaluation rather than impulsive behavior. In the context of Generation Z, although they are highly engaged with digital platforms, impulsive tendencies may lead them to skip evaluative processes, reinforcing the idea that digital engagement does not always equate to information-seeking behavior.

The finding that perfectionist attitude does not significantly influence eWOM use intention suggests that consumers with a strong emphasis on quality may not rely heavily on user-generated content as a primary source of evaluation. Perfectionist individuals tend to seek precise, reliable, and objective information, and may perceive eWOM as subjective and inconsistent, thereby limiting its usefulness in their decision-making process (Miranda & Duarte, 2022). This result is consistent with Kang et al., (2013), who found that high quality-consciousness does not significantly predict eWOM opinion-seeking behavior or attitudes toward online social shopping. As highlighted by Kang et al., (2013), consumers with a perfectionist orientation may prefer to assess product quality through direct experience or objective product attributes rather than relying on the opinions of other consumers. This suggests that eWOM, which is inherently subjective and experience-based, may not align well with the evaluative standards of perfectionist consumers. While Gen Z is often characterized as highly digital and reliant on peer-generated information, this result indicates that not all segments within this cohort uniformly depend on eWOM.

The finding that sustainable attitude does not significantly influence eWOM use intention suggests a disconnect between pro-environmental values and actual digital behavior in the context of accommodation decision-making. Although Generation Z is often characterized as highly concerned with sustainability issues, this concern does not necessarily translate into active engagement with eWOM platforms when searching for accommodation information. This result can be explained by the well-established value action gap, where individuals express strong environmental attitudes but fail to consistently reflect these values in their actual behavior (Zafar et al., 2021). Recent empirical evidence further supports this phenomenon, showing that although Generation Z is widely portrayed as socially and environmentally conscious, they tend to be less engaged in sustainability-related eWOM compared to other generational cohorts (D'Acunzio et al., 2025). This indicates that sustainability awareness does not automatically lead to active participation in digital information-sharing behavior.

Furthermore, in digital tourism contexts, decision-making is frequently driven by hedonic and experiential factors, such as enjoyment, convenience, and social validation, which may overshadow sustainability considerations. This aligns with the findings of Imalhaq et al. (2024), who emphasize that environmentally responsible attitudes do not always lead to consistent consumption behavior, particularly when other motivations are more salient. In addition, sustainability considerations often operate alongside other dominant factors such as price, convenience, and quality, rather than acting as the primary determinant of consumer

decisions (D'Acunto et al., 2025). As a result, even sustainability-oriented consumers may not prioritize eWOM as a tool for evaluating environmentally responsible accommodation options. In addition, the limited visibility and inconsistency of sustainability-related information within online reviews reduce its salience in shaping consumer behavior. eWOM platforms are more commonly used to evaluate functional and experiential aspects of accommodation, such as service quality and comfort, rather than sustainability practices. This further weakens the relationship between sustainable attitudes and eWOM use intention.

From a theoretical perspective, this finding highlights the limitation of assuming a direct relationship between sustainability attitudes and digital behavioral intention. It reinforces the significance of examining the gap between stated values and actual behavior, particularly among Generation Z, and suggests that contextual factors, such as the availability and prominence of sustainability information within eWOM platforms, play a crucial role in shaping consumer decision-making processes. The absence of a significant relationship between novelty-fashion attitude and eWOM use intention suggests that consumers who seek novelty and trendiness may not rely heavily on existing online reviews when making decisions. Individuals with a strong novelty-fashion orientation are typically driven by the desire for uniqueness, new experiences, and being ahead of trends, which may reduce their dependence on previously shared opinions (Perez-Aranda et al., 2024)

This finding indicates that novelty-seeking consumers are more inclined toward exploration rather than evaluation. Instead of relying on eWOM, which reflects past experiences of other consumers, they may prefer discovering new or less-reviewed options to fulfill their need for differentiation. In highly dynamic digital environments, where information is abundant and often repetitive, eWOM may be perceived as lacking originality and therefore less appealing to novelty-driven individuals.

For Generation Z, novelty and fashion orientation are often expressed through personal identity construction and social media presence. This may shift their behavior from being information consumers to content creators, where they seek to generate unique experiences rather than follow existing reviews. As a result, eWOM may function more as a background reference rather than a primary decision-making tool for this segment (Kang et al., 2013).

From a theoretical perspective, this finding challenges the assumption that all forms of consumer engagement with digital platforms lead to increased reliance on eWOM. Instead, it suggests that the motivation behind digital behavior, whether driven by conformity or differentiation, plays a crucial role in determining the use of eWOM. For novelty-oriented consumers, the pursuit of uniqueness may outweigh the perceived benefits of informational efficiency offered by eWOM.

Given that only recreational attitude was found to be significant, this suggests that not all psychographic dimensions within the Consumer Style Inventory (CSI) are equally relevant in the context of eWOM use intention among Generation Z. This finding highlights the importance of contextualizing psychographic variables within digital environments. Therefore, future research may further explore additional CSI dimensions or incorporate other relevant psychographic constructs to provide a more comprehensive understanding of digital consumer behavior.

Conclusions

The findings indicate that among the five dimensions tested perfectionist, impulsive, novelty-fashion, sustainable, and recreational attitudes, only recreational attitude was found to have a significant influence on eWOM use intention. This suggests that Generation Z consumers who perceive information-seeking activities as enjoyable tend to engage more actively in eWOM prior to making a purchase. Furthermore, eWOM use intention was found to significantly influence purchase intention, indicating that increased engagement with eWOM leads to a higher likelihood of booking accommodation. These findings reinforce the understanding that Generation Z's digital behavior in tourism is strongly influenced by experiential and hedonic factors.

Building upon these findings, several key conclusions can be drawn regarding the behavior of Generation Z in the online accommodation booking context. The strong influence of recreational attitude on the intention to use eWOM demonstrates that Gen Z values online

information not only for its informative function, but also for the enjoyment and experiential aspects it provides. This indicates that the use of eWOM among Generation Z is closely linked to their perception of the activity as engaging and enjoyable.

From a practical perspective, these findings highlight the importance of considering psychographic characteristics, especially recreational orientation. The tourism industry, specifically the accommodation sector, should emphasize creating engaging and enjoyable user experiences that align with the preferences of Generation Z. By doing so, businesses can enhance user engagement, encourage eWOM use intention, and ultimately increase purchase intention. These implications are specifically derived from the significant role of recreational attitude and should be interpreted within the scope of the variables tested in this study.

Moreover, the significant effect of use intention on purchase intention reinforces the central role of eWOM as a decisive factor in Gen Z's consumer journey. For this demographic, online reviews serve as a bridge between exploration and decision-making, guiding them toward choices that align with their preferences and values. As such, accommodation providers must ensure that their online presence is not only informative but also credible, authentic, and consistently updated. Positive digital engagement, transparency, and responsiveness to reviews can further strengthen consumer trust and influence purchasing decisions.

Despite the contributions of this study, several limitations should be acknowledged. Although indicators with outer loadings between 0.60 and 0.70 were retained based on established methodological guidelines this may indicate relatively weaker item reliability. Therefore, the inclusion of these indicators represents a potential limitation of the study. Future research is encouraged to refine measurement items to achieve stronger construct representation and improve overall measurement precision.

This study also contributes to a deeper theoretical understanding of psychographic determinants in digital tourism behavior. The lack of influence from other psychographic dimensions such as perfectionism or sustainability suggests that Generation Z's online decision-making in this context is driven more by experiential motivations rather than cognitive or ethical considerations. This insight provides an important foundation for future research exploring how emotional, recreational, and social media driven factors shape consumer behavior in other sectors of tourism. Overall, the results underline the need for tourism businesses and digital platforms to adapt to the distinctive behavioral patterns of Generation Z. By prioritizing user experience, emotional engagement, and interactive digital content, marketers can more effectively stimulate eWOM use and enhance purchase intention, ultimately supporting business growth in an increasingly competitive digital environment.

References

- Alhidari, A., Iyer, P., & Paswan, A. (2015). Personal level antecedents of eWOM and purchase intention, on social networking sites. *Journal of Customer Behaviour*, *14*(2), 107–125. <https://doi.org/10.1362/147539215X14373846805707>.
- BrightLocal. (2024). BrightLocal. <https://www.brightlocal.com/research/local-consumer-review-survey-2024/>.
- Cardinali, P., Varani, N., & Migliorini, L. (2020). Sustainable tourism attitude and preference in Italian adults: Value orientation and psychological need satisfaction. *Sustainability*, *12*(24), 10517. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su122410517>.
- Chase, H. W., Fournier, J. C., Bertocci, M. A., Greenberg, T., Aslam, H., Stiffler, R., Lockovich, J., Graur, S., Bebeko, G., Forbes, E. E., & Phillips, M. L. (2017). A pathway linking reward circuitry, impulsive sensation-seeking and risky decision-making in young adults: Identifying neural markers for new interventions. *Translational Psychiatry*, *7*(4), e1096–e1096. <https://doi.org/10.1038/tp.2017.60>.
- Cho, E., Kim-Vick, J., & Yu, U.-J. (2022). Unveiling motivation for luxury fashion purchase among Gen Z consumers: Need for uniqueness versus bandwagon effect. *International Journal of Fashion Design, Technology and Education*, *15*(1), 24–34. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17543266.2021.1973580>.

- D'Acunto, D., Filieri, R., & Okumus, F. (2025). The Gen Z attitude-behavior gap in sustainability-framed eWOM: A generational cohort theory perspective. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, *129*, 104194. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2025.104194>.
- Djafarova, E., & Foots, S. (2022). Exploring ethical consumption of generation Z: Theory of planned behaviour. *Young Consumers*, *23*(3), 413–431. <https://doi.org/10.1108/YC-10-2021-1405>.
- Falk, R. F., & Miller, N. B. (1992). *A Primer for soft modeling*. University of Akron Press. <https://books.google.co.id/books?id=3CFrQgAACAAJ>.
- Garson, G. D. (2016). *Partial least squares*.
- Guiry, M. (2006). Defining and measuring recreational shopper identity. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, *34*(1), 74–83. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0092070305282042>.
- Gulfraz, M. B., Sufyan, M., Mustak, M., Salminen, J., & Srivastava, D. K. (2022). Understanding the impact of online customers shopping experience on online impulsive buying: A study on two leading E-commerce platforms. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, *68*, 103000. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2022.103000>.
- Hair, J. F., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2014). PLS-SEM: Indeed a silver bullet. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, *19*(2), 139–152. <https://doi.org/10.2753/MTP1069-6679190202>.
- Hair, J. F., Risher, J. J., Sarstedt, M., & Ringle, C. M. (2019). When to use and how to report the results of PLS-SEM. *European Business Review*, *31*(1), 2–24. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EBR-11-2018-0203>.
- Hoang, V. H., Pham, T. T., & Vu, T. Q. C. (2025). *How does electronic word of mouth influence Gen Z tourists' booking intention in the hospitality industry? The case of mountainous areas*.
- Iimalhaq, A., Pradana, M., & Rubiyanti, N. (2024). Indonesian local second-hand clothing: Mindful consumption with stimulus-organism-response (SOR) model. *Discover Sustainability*, *5*(1), 251. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s43621-024-00481-2>.
- Kala, D., & Chaubey, D. S. (2018). The effect of eWOM communication on brand image and purchase intention towards lifestyle products in India. *International Journal of Services, Economics and Management*, *9*(2), 143. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJSEM.2018.096077>.
- Kang, J. Y. M., Johnson, K. K. P., & Wu, J. (2013). *Consumer style inventory and intent to social shop online for apparel using social networking sites*.
- Kim, E. E. K., Mattila, A. S., & Baloglu, S. (2011). Effects of gender and expertise on consumers motivation to read online hotel reviews. *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, *52*(4), 399–406. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1938965510394357>.
- Li, R. (2025). The impact of social media influencers on Gen Z's online purchase decisions. *Advances in Economics, Management and Political Sciences*, *150*(1), 178–185. <https://doi.org/10.54254/2754-1169/2024.19299>.
- Lien, C. H., Wen, M. J., Huang, L. C., & Wu, K. L. (2015). Online hotel booking: The effects of brand image, price, trust and value on purchase intentions. *Asia Pacific Management Review*, *20*(4), 210–218. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.apmr.2015.03.005>.
- Miranda, S., & Duarte, M. (2022). How perfectionism reduces positive word-of-mouth: The mediating role of perceived social risk. *Psychology & Marketing*, *39*(2), 255–270. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.21593>.
- Monaco, S. (2018). Tourism and the new generations: Emerging trends and social implications in Italy. *Journal of Tourism Futures*, *4*(1), 7–15. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JTF-12-2017-0053>.
- Nisar, T. M., Hajli, N., Prabhakar, G., & Dwivedi, Y. (2020). Sharing economy and the lodging websites: Antecedents and mediators of accommodation purchase intentions. *Information Technology & People*, *33*(3), 873–896. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ITP-06-2018-0297>.
- Papathanassis, A., & Knolle, F. (2011). Exploring the adoption and processing of online holiday reviews: A grounded theory approach. *Tourism Management*, *32*(2), 215–224. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2009.12.005>.

- Perez-Aranda, J., Tolkach, D., & Panchal, J. H. (2024). Reputation and eWOM in accommodation decision-making: Insights from Generation Z users. *Tourism Review*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/TR-03-2024-0185>.
- Pourfakhimi, S., Duncan, T., & Coetzee, W. J. L. (2020). Electronic word of mouth in tourism and hospitality consumer behaviour: State of the art. *Tourism Review*, *75*(4), 637–661. <https://doi.org/10.1108/TR-01-2019-0019>.
- Sprotles, G. B., & Kendall, E. L. (1986). A methodology for profiling consumers' decision-making styles. *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, *20*(2), 267–279. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-6606.1986.tb00382.x>.
- Thangavel, P., Pathak, P., & Chandra, B. (2022). Consumer decision-making style of Gen Z: A generational cohort analysis. *Global Business Review*, *23*(3), 710–728. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0972150919880128>.
- Trudel, R. (2019). Sustainable consumer behavior. *Consumer Psychology Review*, *2*(1), 85–96. <https://doi.org/10.1002/arcp.1045>.
- Vinzi, V. E., Chin, W. W., Henseler, J., & Wang, H. (Eds.). (2010). *Handbook of partial least squares: Concepts, methods and applications*. Springer Berlin Heidelberg. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-540-32827-8>.
- Virgilio, F. (Ed.). (2018). *Social media for knowledge management applications in modern organizations*: IGI global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-5225-2897-5>.
- Wang, J. J., Wang, L. Y., & Wang, M. M. (2018). Understanding the effects of eWOM social ties on purchase intentions: A moderated mediation investigation. *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications*, *28*, 54–62. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.elerap.2018.01.011>.
- Zafar, A. U., Shen, J., Ashfaq, M., & Shahzad, M. (2021). Social media and sustainable purchasing attitude: Role of trust in social media and environmental effectiveness. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, *63*, 102751. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2021.102751>.