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Exploring Consumer Intention to Visit a Destination and eWOM through Uses and Gratification Perspective: Evidence from YouTube Travel Vlogs

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Abstract— *Consumers are motivated to utilize certain media in order to meet their needs. Drawing on the uses and gratification (U&G) perspective, this study aims to investigate how information seeking and entertainment factors influence consumer motivations to watch travel videos on YouTube. By investigating why consumers watch travel vlogs on YouTube, this study also investigates its emotional impact on customer engagement. Thus, it is assumed that when consumers are emotionally engaged, they will be more likely to visit destinations and share eWOM. This hypothesis was tested on 300 respondents who had experience traveling and distributing travel vlogs via social media. Using Smart-PLS 3.0 software, a structural equation modeling approach was used to test the research hypothesis. The results of hypothesis testing suggest that entertainment plays a significant role in forming emotional engagement, whereas information seeking plays a lesser role. From a U&G perspective, to travel vlogs on YouTube, it is evident that consumers who seek entertainment are the most emotionally engaged. Furthermore, the results also reveal that when consumers feel emotionally engaged with video travel vlogs on YouTube, they are strongly motivated to visit the destination and share eWOM through social media. As a result, it can be seen that emotional engagement is a crucial factor in the behavior of intent to visit and eWOM for destinations. A number of theoretical and practical implications are also discussed.*

Keywords—Information Seeking, Entertainment, Emotional, Intention to Visit, eWOM, Uses and Gratification (U&G), Customer Engagement

I. INTRODUCTION

In the past few years, YouTube has become one of the most popular social media websites for displaying videos and interacting with audience members [1][2]. YouTube provides users with information, entertainment, and social interaction [3], making them more likely to use the site. YouTube travel vlogs are YouTube videos that portray information and entertainment about a travel experience [2]. Travel vloggers create and share travel vlogs to share information with audiences to influence and shape their interest in visiting the future [4]. YouTube travel videos play an increasingly important role in destination marketing to influence consumers' travel intentions [5][6]. Tourism managers can use YouTube travel videos as a source of information and promotion to increase the tourism industry's development [7].

Previous research on YouTube travel vlogs has been dominated by purchase intention, such as Cheng et al. [6], who utilized resonance theory to examine the effects of engagement on the experience of watching travel videos that increase the intention to visit. Tafesse [8] then examined the effect of video optimization practices on audience engagement after viewing a travel vlog. This study found a research gap regarding using the U&G perspective within YouTube travel vlogs. In order to fill the research gap, the motivation to find viewing satisfaction and engagement formed on YouTube travel vlogs was examined. Information seeking and entertainment perspectives were adopted. Additionally, we identified attachments based on consumer emotions that form the intention to visit and use E-WOM to visit or participate in E-WOM activities.

Consumers are expected to play a role in choosing and using media based on their motivation to meet the needs of using media [9]. In accordance with Ashley & Tuten [10], consumers satisfy their needs by using YouTube travel vlogs as a source of information and entertainment [11]. Consumer satisfaction is achieved when needs are met [12] and motivation to watch travel videos is fulfilled. As a consumer achieves satisfaction, an attachment occurs [6][13]. This attachment is evidenced by consumer behavior such as comments, likes, sharing videos, and even subscribing to travel vlog channels on YouTube [3]. As a result, the U&G perspective and customer engagement role can predict consumer behavior in the form of intention to visit and E-WOM interest [6][14].

Here, we investigate how travel vlog content affects behavior in the form of intention to visit and eWOM. According to consumer motivation from the viewpoint of information seeking and entertainment, which form customer engagement (emotional), in the end, this will affect behavioral intentions (intentions to visit and word of mouth). In order to test the relationship between variables, structural equation modeling (SEM) was utilized.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Tourism Content on YouTube Travel Vlogs

YouTube plays an essential role in the tourism industry. Travel marketers require information, promotion, interaction, and travel planning [15][16]. YouTube travel vlogs that

present tourists' experiences in videos provide information about destinations visited [6][17]. Vlogs of travel are a source of information and marketing material that can be used to promote tourist destinations to consumers. The ability of YouTube travel vlogs to provide real-life experiences may influence consumers' travel intentions through tourism marketing [5][6]. In addition, the shared content will provide a more detailed picture of consumer behavior and enable the tourism industry to grow in general [7][13]. Consequently, YouTube travel vlogs can be used to develop and manage the tourism industry [5].

B. Uses and Gratification (U&G) and YouTube Travel Vlogs

The U&G perspective refers to why audiences use a particular type of media, their requirements to utilize media, and the satisfaction they derive from their exposure to these media [19]. According to the U&G perspective, users are active and intelligent individuals with motivation, particularly relevant to tourism and consumer behavior [20][21]. Consumers have many motivations to utilize social media, including information seeking, entertainment, and interaction with other consumers [22]. This indicates that motivation is the main driving force for consumer behavior in seeking satisfaction [23]. Understanding consumer satisfaction from media use will provide a complete picture of consumer behavior [11].

Among the U&G dimensions, namely information seeking and entertainment, the information seeker's use of social media contributes to understanding consumer behavior [22][24]. Information seeking refers to obtaining information about specific products via social media [25][26]. Information about general questions or products is obtained through social media, group discussions, news feeds, or sharing topics [11]. Further, entertainment includes consumer needs for escapism, diversion, aesthetic enjoyment, and emotional release related to social media for entertainment or pleasure [23]. In this study, YouTube travel vlogs were motivated by the desire to find reliable, accurate, and complete information [11]. Also, in terms of seeking entertainment, individuals are interested in video content that can meet their needs [27].

C. Customer Engagement

Customer engagement (CE) is defined as the active participation of consumers in increasing the effectiveness of marketing activities based on existing resources [28][29]. Specifically, social media can provide easy access for consumers to marketers by focusing on the quality of the relationships formed. Through the acquisition of this quality, trust will arise, leading to consumer satisfaction, which in turn forms consumer engagement [30]. Engagement is determined by the consumer's ability to engage in activities that make him feel emotionally according to his intrinsic motivation [31]. Engagement might be described as a marketing activity aimed at motivating, empowering, and even measuring the influence of motivational drivers on consumer behavior [28].

One of the dimensions of CE is the emotional dimension [32]. It represents affective conditions in the form of consumer feelings that facilitate the development of emotional bonds between marketers and consumers [33]. Through social media interactions, emotions can be used to motivate and influence consumers to provide emotional responses [34][35]. In particular, YouTube travel vlogs can connect consumers emotionally to the tourist experience. Through the expressions and atmosphere in the video, viewers can feel emotionally engaged [22][36]. As a result, it can meet consumer needs emotionally and become a factor in influencing consumer behavior [37].

D. Outcome Behavior of Watching YouTube Travel Vlogs

Travel vlog content displays videos that provide memorable travel experiences [6]. As a result, consumers will become familiar with the destination, which influences and even causes certain behaviors [38][39]. Intending to visit and electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM), these behaviors are based on consumer motivation. Consumers who give a positive response are more likely to intend to visit tourist destinations as a result of YouTube travel vlog content. Additionally, consumers will also be willing to recommend travel vlogs to other consumers [40]. Consumers can demonstrate this by sharing their viewing experiences through social media comments, reviews, opinions, suggestions, and recommendations. Thus, eWOM has the potential to also act as a source of interesting information that is delivered and effectively to other consumers [41].

III. HYPOTHESIS AND RESEARCH MODEL

A. Hypothesis Development

One of the reasons consumers watch YouTube travel vlogs is to obtain information. Information seeking is defined as the urge to seek and obtain information due to consumer desires. Khan [3] points out that information is sought from content and comments on user profiles. Thus, consumers experience emotional feelings of connectedness when searching for information related to togetherness and social interaction [36][42]. In light of this explanation, the following hypotheses have been developed:

H_1 Information seeking significantly influence consumer emotions

Consumers seek entertainment or pleasure as a driving force for their desire to consume [43]. Travel vlogs can communicate consumers' emotional feelings by presenting fun, entertaining, and exciting content [6]. Tourism can cause consumers to experience emotional feelings when they enjoy, feel good about, and are enriched by real experiences [44]. As a result of tourists' pleasant experiences at the tourist destinations, viewers will feel happy or emotional when viewing video content [44]. From the explanation, the following hypotheses can be formed:

H_2 Entertainment significantly influence consumer emotions

Tourist experiences that present displays in an acute and relaxed atmosphere can make consumers feel emotionally involved or happier [6][44]. There is a strong correlation between the U&G perspective and consumer behavioral intentions based on the use of this emotional sense [14]. As a result, emotional content becomes a predictor of behavior, namely the intention to visit tourist destinations in travel vlogs [3][42]. Based on the explanation, the following hypotheses can be formulated:

H_3 Emotional significantly influence intention to visit

Consumers' emotional feelings will lead to other behaviors, including their intention to eWOM [14][45]. The

emotional feelings resulting from gratuities obtained through travel vlog content are predictors for consumers' publishing of information in eWOM [40]. In this sense, publication refers to sharing travel information with others [46][47]. As part of eWOM, the sharing concept implies that the information published will affect the behavior of other consumers [41]. Hypotheses based upon the explanation can be formed as follows:

H_4 Emotional significantly influence on intention to share eWOM

B. Research Model

The YouTube travel vlog was examined using the Uses and Gratification (U&G) perspective and Customer Engagement (CE) theory. The research model will give an overview of consumer behavior regarding the intention to visit and word of mouth. In Figure 1, we can see the conceptual framework that the research will follow. In this article, we will discuss the motivations of consumers (information seeking and entertainment) to use YouTube travel vlogs. In addition, engagement (emotional) will impact consumer behavior (intention to visit and eWOM intention).
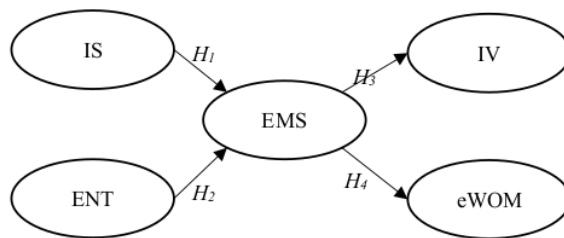

Figure 1. Research Model

IV. RESEARCH METHOD

A. Construct Operationalization and Item Development

The present study's measurement items were adapted from previous research, then adjusted to the research context. Accordingly, each statement item was measured on a 7-point Likert scale (strongly disagree = 1 to strongly agree = 7). Penelitian ini menggunakan variabel information seeking and entertainment (perspektif U&G); emotional (Customer Engagement); dan Intention to Visit and Intention to E-WOM (Oucome Behavior Consumer) yang memiliki definisi operasional sebagai berikut:

1. A consumer who seeks information, or information seeking, is encouraged to find accurate, reliable, and complete information to expand his or her knowledge [11][23].

2. Entertainment involves activities that involve spending time and relaxing to satisfy consumer desires [6][23].

3. In the emotional context, the term refers to the level of happiness or emotional attachment that consumers perceive from the formed emotional bonds [37][48].

4. Intention to Visit refers to the action of intending to visit a tourist destination [6][49].

5. Intention to E-WOM intends to recommend and share information with others [6][14].

B. Sampling Technique and Data Collection

The sampling method used in this study was non-probability sampling with purposive sampling. Samples are selected from respondents who meet the requirements of filling out the questionnaire, such as active YouTube users, YouTube travel vloggers, and those who have visited tourist destinations associated with travel vlog productions. Data collected in Google Forms is distributed via social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Instagram, and Facebook through links. A total of 300 respondents responded to the survey for four months.

C. Analysis Technology

The analysis technique used in this study is structural equation modeling (SEM) with Smart-PLS 3.0 software. Several stages are involved in conducting data analysis using SEM. To determine internal consistency, we first need to examine the convergent validity measurement model using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Composite Reliability (CR), and Cronbach's alpha (CA) values. After that, discriminant validity was analyzed using three approaches: Fornell-Larcker Criterion, Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT), and Matrix Cross Loadings. Following the requirements are met, the assessment of the structural model is based on the R-Square (R2) value and model fit (SRMR d_ULS, d_G, and NFI). As soon as the model fit criteria have been satisfied, hypotheses can be tested.

V. RESULTS

A. Demogprahics Characteristics

Approximately 300 responses were collected from the online survey. The female gender proportion of 63.7% received a higher response rate than the male gender proportion. It was found that the majority of respondents aged 20-29 years are single, with 70.7% of them. The majority of respondents (73%) possess a bachelor's degree. According to the occupation, undergraduate students dominated up to 53.7%, compared to 23.7% of senior high school students and below. Further, viewing YouTube travel vlogs has increased over time, with the acquisition of 33% of users viewing at least two to three times a day. Other content is the most popular type of content by 36.3% of respondents. Other content consists of videos of activities during the trip, such as the accommodation and vehicles. As much as 23.3% of respondents viewed video content featuring natural scenery as the second most popular type of content.

B. Structural Equation Modelling Analyis

The validity and reliability of structural equation modeling (SEM) were tested. In order to perform this test, several steps must be involved, such as comparing each factor loading value, which must be greater than 0.7, as described by Hair et al. [50]. As shown in Table 2, the construct validity of the test results is consistent with those in Table 1. Next, evaluate the data using an Average Variants Extracted (AVE) value greater than 0.5 [50]. Test results indicate that the AVE value meets the requirements. In addition, we assessed the internal consistency of the constructs using Cronbach's Alpha (CA) 0.7 and Composite Reliability (CR) 0.7, as suggested by Hair et al. [50]. The study results indicate that the construct has a solid internal consistency for each item, so internal consistency has been achieved. Table 1 summarizes

the results of construct validity, convergence, and internal consistency.

Table 1. The results of Construct Validity, Convergent and Internal Consistency

Construct	FL	CA	CR	AVE
Information Seeking (IS)	0.946			
	0.959			
	0.956	0.974	0.98	0.906
	0.947			
	0.950			
Entertainment (ENT)	0.903			
	0.948			
	0.951	0.953	0.966	0.877
	0.944			
Emotional (EMS)	0.946			
	0.940	0.935	0.958	0.885
	0.936			
Intention Visit (IV)	0.956			
	0.936	0.943	0.964	0.898
	0.951			
Intention to E-WOM (IeWOM)	0.959			
	0.972	0.961	0.975	0.927
	0.957			

Notes: FL, Factor Loading ≥ 0.7; CA, Cronbach Alpha > 0.7; CR, Composite Reliability > 0.7; AVE Average Variance Extracted > 0.5.

The next step is to evaluate discriminant validity using three different approaches. The Fornell-Lacker Criterion begins by evaluating the square roots of AVE. According to Table 2, this value must be greater than the inter-construct correlation value. As a result of the test results, discriminant validity has been demonstrated by the fact that the square roots of AVE are more significant than the coefficients of the inter-construct correlation, as proposed by Fornell et al. [51].

Table 2. Fornell-Larcker Criterion

Construct	IS	EN	EM	IV	EW
Information Seeking (IS)	**0.952**				
Entertainment (EN)	0.719	**0.936**			
Emotional (EMS)	0.638	0.763	**0.940**		
Intention to Visit (IV)	0.595	0.653	0.720	**0.948**	
Intention to E-WOM IeWOM)	0.567	0.658	0.748	0.723	**0.963**

Note: The diagonal and bold values are the square roots of AVE.

Additionally, the Heterotrait – Monotrait (HTMT) approach measures discriminant validity by determining the HTMT value of 0.85, as suggested by Henseler et al. [52]. According to the test results obtained, the HTMT value for each construct is 0.85, which indicates the study has a high level of discriminant validity. A summary of the HTMT values can be found in Table 2.

Table 3. Heterotrait Monotrait Ration (HTMT)

Construct	IS	EN	EM	IV	EW
Information Seeking (IS)	-				
Entertainment (EN)	0.746	-			
Emotional (EM)	0.668	0.808	-		
Intention to Visit (IV)	0.619	0.686	0.765	-	
Intention to E-WOM EW)	0.585	0.687	0.789	0.759	-

Note: Threshold of HTMT, ≤ 0.85, strong; ≤ 0.90, weak

Lastly, we will discuss matrix cross-loadings. The factor loading item value for a construct can be explained because it has a higher correlation coefficient than that of other constructs. The assumption of discriminant validity can therefore be fulfilled. The test results indicate that all constructs have factor loadings more significant than the correlation coefficients of other constructs, indicating that each construct has good discriminant validity. Figure 3 shows the results of the cross-loading matrix test.

Table 3: Cross Loading Matrix

Construct	IS	EN	EM	IV	EW
IS1	**0.946**	0.666	0.615	0.571	0.540
IS2	**0.959**	0.695	0.626	0.587	0.555
IS3	**0.956**	0.690	0.590	0.546	0.548
IS4	**0.947**	0.664	0.586	0.564	0.508
IS5	**0.950**	0.704	0.616	0.561	0.543
EN1	0.654	**0.903**	0.662	0.561	0.563
EN2	0.678	**0.948**	0.719	0.588	0.629
EN3	0.655	**0.951**	0.723	0.623	0.625
EN4	0.704	**0.944**	0.750	0.667	0.645
EM1	0.596	0.727	**0.946**	0.664	0.680
EM2	0.603	0.719	**0.940**	0.685	0.734
EM3	0.602	0.707	**0.936**	0.682	0.696
IV1	0.566	0.621	0.702	**0.956**	0.674
IV2	0.515	0.583	0.637	**0.936**	0.668
IV3	0.605	0.648	0.703	**0.951**	0.713
EW1	0.549	0.646	0.723	0.702	**0.959**
EW2	0.566	0.646	0.743	0.716	**0.972**
EW3	0.521	0.609	0.694	0.672	**0.957**

Notes: The bolded values indicated construct factor loadings

A structural model evaluates the strength of a research model as a tool for testing hypotheses. Several stages are involved in the evaluation of the structural model. The first step is to examine the path coefficient between constructs to measure the model strength of the endogenous variables. By comparing the value of R^2 with 0.1 or a value close to 1, a viable approach can be assessed, as proposed by Falk and Miller [53]. The results of structural modeling show that the emotional construct, with a value of $R^2 = 0.599$, is explained by information-seeking and entertainment path coefficients. From the coefficients of the emotional path, the constructs of intention to visit ($R^2 = 0.587$) and intention to eWOM ($R^2 = 0.644$) were explained. Thus, this research model indicates that the endogenous construct has an R2 value greater than 0.1, which is considered viable by Falk & Miller [53].

Secondly, the model fits the criteria. In this case, a model can be said to meet when the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) is less than 0.05 or less than 0.08. According to the results, SRMR = 0.028, which is less than 0.05 or 0.08, is considered satisfactory. The Normed-fit index (NFI) with a value of 0.95 is consistent with the results obtained, showing NFI = 0.920. Similarly, d_ULS = 0.218 and d_G = 0.429 agree with the results obtained.

Figure 2 and Table 4 indicate that the results of the research hypothesis test are significantly related to variables. When information-seeking significantly affects emotional well-being, with a low significant category H1. Therefore, it supports the H1 hypothesis (β = 0.185 and t = 1.990, respectively). Entertainment also significantly influences emotions in a highly significant category. Accordingly, H2 is supported (β = 0.630 and t = 7347, respectively). As a result, the emotional impact on intent to visit and eWOM is significant, with highly significant results. As a result, H3 and

H4 are supported (β = 0.366 and 0.359, t = 4.564 and 5.091, respectively).

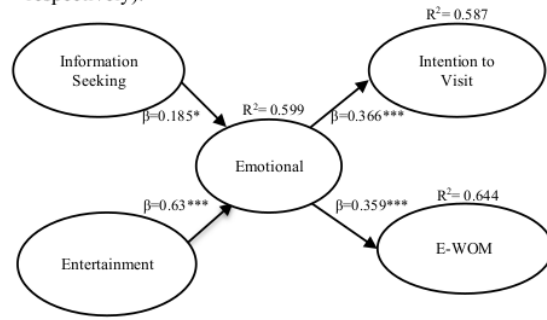Figure 1. Structural Model Results

Table 4: Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Path Coefficients	T-Value	Conclusion
H1 Information Seeking → Emotional	0.185*	1.990	Supported
H2 Entertainment → Emotional	0.630***	7.347	Supported
H3 Emotional → Intention to Visit	0.366***	4.564	Supported
H4 Emotional → E-WOM	0.359***	5.091	Supported

Notes: *** p < 0.001; **p < 0.01; *p < 0.1

VI. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

A. Main Findings

This study aimed to examine the dimensions of the U&G perspective (information seeking and entertainment) and customer engagement (emotional) in understanding tourist travel behavior by analyzing YouTube travel videos. According to the research results, the information-seeking dimension (H1) significantly impacts emotions. Consumers seek information based on valuable and educational content provided by vloggers and comments from users who facilitate interaction. Therefore, consumers will form an emotional perception of video content through interaction when searching for and obtaining information. Entertainment (H2) has a significant impact on emotions. Consumers who search for entertainment are entertained by video content, making them feel emotionally charged. In addition, it was determined that emotional factors (H3) had a significant impact on the intention to visit. The expressions or atmosphere in travel vlogs can evoke an emotional reaction from consumers, influencing their decision to visit the destination. As a result, consumers will be more likely to spread the word about the destination. The gratification obtained from content that makes consumers feel emotionally inclined will encourage them to share and recommend travel vlog content on social media to their friends. The results of this study indicate that emotional (H4) factors significantly influence consumers' intent to visit eWOM.

B. Implication for Research

As a result of this study, researchers have been able to understand travel behavior through the use of YouTube travel vlogs. The context provides insight into the motivations and consumer attachments that influence outcome behaviors. Information seeking and entertainment are critical aspects of the U&G perspective that encourage consumers to watch travel vlogs on YouTube. Consumers watch travel vlogs primarily for entertainment purposes. Consumers will form attachments through the dimensions of emotional and social presence when they gain knowledge and entertainment. Both contents contain an atmosphere or expression that can evoke an emotional response in the consumer. This is also true of stories of travel experiences that provide a social presence. This will lead to the formation of consumer behavior. Intention to Visit and eWOM provide researchers with valuable information for understanding vlog-watching experiences and thus influence consumer decisions.

C. Imlication for Managerial

The use of travel vlogs as an effective tool for destination marketing allows tourism managers and destination marketing organizations to gain valuable insight into consumer behavior. According to U&G, this analysis provides insight into why consumers choose and utilize YouTube travel vlogs based on their individual preferences and needs. If the content enriches the consumers' knowledge and even entertains them, the attachment will be fulfilled. By using emotional appeals in content, managers and DMOs can communicate their potential tourist destinations to consumers and make them feel attached. Similarly, social presence contributes to establishing quality relationships with customers, resulting in increased consumer intention to visit and word-of-mouth.

D. Implication for Managerial

There are several limitations to this study due to the use of the U&G perspective dimensions, which have been used in others, such as Ho et al. [24] and Hur et al. [11]. In addition, the dimensions of customer engagement have not been explicitly identified. In further research, pleasure, arousal, and dominance can be used to understand consumer intention to visit and eWOM. Finally, the research model that can be explicitly described can use immersion to describe consumer behavior in travel vlogs.

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