

## Review Paper

# What Drives Travellers' Adoption of Online Travel Reviews? Integrating Helpfulness with Information Adoption Factors

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**Abstract:** Online travel reviews are shared by individuals who have experienced and consumed tourism products and services. Consumers' perceptions, evaluations, and experiences towards any product or service are highlighted in online reviews. This study investigates the factors that drive travellers' adoption of online travel reviews using a quantitative, survey-based, and cross-sectional approach. A total of 223 respondents participated in the current study. SPSS (v.26) and SmartPLS (v.3.3.9) software were employed to conduct the data analyses. The study's findings indicate that review quality, reviewer credibility, review usefulness, and review helpfulness influence travellers' adoption of online reviews. In addition, the current study provides both theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, a novel theoretical model was developed by integrating information helpfulness with the Information Adoption Model (IAM) factors to identify the determinants of online travel reviews. Practically, the findings provide several implications for tourism consumers and marketers. Finally, the paper concludes by highlighting its limitations and suggesting directions for future studies.

**Keywords:** Review quality, reviewer credibility, review usefulness, review helpfulness, review adoption, online travel review

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## Introduction

User-generated content (UGC) websites, social media platforms, and travel review platforms like TripAdvisor, Booking.com, Yahoo! Travel, and Expedia are becoming more and more popular among travellers as a source of information and a tool for planning their trips (Ana & Istudor, 2019; Kitsios et al., 2022). In this way, consumer (traveller) independence has expanded in choosing travel products and destinations, while the influence of hospitality and tourism-related organisations on consumers' travel purchases has decreased (Ukpabi & Karjaluo, 2017). Thus, hospitality organisations need to understand better the factors that influence the usage and adoption of UGC to manage this diminishing control over travellers' decisions (Assaker, 2020). An in-depth understanding will enable hospitality and tourism organisations to appropriately stimulate UGC and online reviews as well as implement more effective approaches to influence and compel tourists' attitudes and behaviours (Assaker, 2020).

Social media continues to be the focus of attention nowadays as an effective tool for sharing product information. Marketers utilise social media channels to convey information and generate interest in their products (Erlangga, 2021). Additionally, social media platforms have become very effective methods for customers to share information through word-of-mouth (WoM) (Erlangga, 2021). In the tourism and hospitality services industry, UGC has become a helpful tool that travellers use to acquire information before planning a trip (Ukpabi & Karjaluo, 2017). For example, Assaker (2020) revealed that almost 80% of tourists check hotel reviews before booking a room, and 53% of tourists claimed that they do not book a hotel with no reviews. Consumers or tourists provide free information for future travellers on new destinations, new themes, and numerous critical issues by sharing travel experiences via text, photographs, and videos (Pencarelli, 2020). The following factors highlight the significance of UGC in the tourism and hospitality industries. First of all, tourism is a hedonic experience; hence, travellers always like to make an appropriate travel choice to maximise their experience, and they attempt to do so by reading or viewing the reviews or comments shared by other past travellers (Rageh et al., 2013). Secondly, it is only possible to experience tourism after consumption; hence, consumers need to depend on the information and experiences of others (Assaker, 2020). Consumers depend on reviews as a reputable source of information when making travel decisions because they are regarded as honest and trustworthy (Ukpabi & Karjaluo, 2017).

In addition, it was found that with the growth of online reviews in the travel industry, the volume of fake or paid reviews has increased as well (Reyes-Menendez, Saura, & Filipe, 2019). Choi et al. (2017) highlighted that both consumers and organisations generate fake and paid reviews. From an organisational perspective,

a hotel in the vicinity of other competitors is more inclined to generate fake reviews to draw consumer attention than a hotel without competitors nearby (Mayzlin et al., 2014). From the consumers' perspective, some consumers are allured by monetary gains rather than any charity notions to provide fake reviews (Choi et al., 2017). A recent report by the Forbes magazine revealed that almost 1 million reviews on the TripAdvisor app were found to be fake and excluded from the website, which comprises 3.6% of the total reviews (Hart, 2022). Given the abundance of fake and paid reviews, tourists often find it difficult trusting travel reviews. Previous studies indicate that consumers are influenced to adopt reviews from an online platform based on the quality of the review (Song et al., 2021), the credibility of the review provider (Assaker, 2020), and the usefulness of the review (Leung, 2021). Whereas Jiang et al. (2021) and Lee and Hong (2019) mentioned that review helpfulness also influences consumers to adopt online reviews. Therefore, the present study aims to identify the influence of review quality, reviewer credibility, review usefulness, and review helpfulness on consumers adopting travel reviews from online platforms.

The current study will provide substantial insights into what influences travellers into adopting online reviews which will potentially benefit academicians and tourism industry stakeholders. The remaining sections of this paper will include the literature review and relevant theoretical background on online travel review adoption. Subsequently, this will be followed by methodology, data analysis and results. The final section will provide conclusive remarks with implications, limitations, and future research directions.

## **Theoretical Background and Hypotheses Development**

### **Online Travel Reviews**

Online reviews are shared by individuals who have experienced a product or service, and comprise their experiences, ratings, and opinions (Dwidienawati et al., 2020). Online review is a form of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) which benefits both consumers and marketers. Wang et al. (2018) stated that in addition to informing consumers about products or services, online reviews also help them to make better travel purchases. In addition, Shi, Wang, Chen and Zhang (2020) stated that the reviews of a product or service by an experienced consumer influence the purchasing decisions of other prospective consumers. Online travel reviews provide bundles of information regarding assessments of products and services related to tourism (Guerrero-Rodriguez et al., 2023; Shi, Gong & Gursoy, 2020), and travel reviews are considered essential sources of information for tourists to make better travel plans (Assaker et al., 2020). Moreover, Pop et al. (2022) stated that online travel reviews have a noticeable influence on the tourism sector, especially in consumer travel decision-making, sale of tourism products, and the image of tourist destinations.

In addition, McLean et al.'s (2020) investigation on the association between online travel reviews and the consumer's purchase intention found that consumers can indirectly get a travel experience while also reducing the cost of information search, which increases the consumers' inclination to consume. Mariani and Borghi (2020) further mentioned that online travel reviews are highly correlated with the financial status of tourist products, and hotels with more favourable ratings will receive more bookings. Moreover, Liu et al. (2019) claimed that prospective tourists receive an intuitive image of tourist destinations by reading/viewing online travel reviews shared by other tourists.

### **Information Adoption Model (IAM)**

Numerous studies have employed the Information Adoption Model (IAM) to assess how people utilise the information they receive or the message they transmit to themselves (Erkan & Evans, 2016; Peng et al., 2016). Several researchers in the domain of information technology (IT) have utilised IAM to illustrate how people accept persuasive information for decision-making (Erkan & Evans, 2016; Mensah et al., 2022). Sussman and Seigal (2003) developed the IAM theory by integrating the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) and the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis, 1989).

IAM explains how individuals adopt information and thus change their behavioural intentions within computer-mediated communication platforms. It posits that information obtained substantially impacts the individual through two routes: central and peripheral (Sussman & Siegal, 2003). The central route represents the core of the communication, while the peripheral path is not related to the core of the communication. Sussman and Seigal (2003) employed perceived information usefulness as a mediator between information adoption, argument quality, and source credibility. Argument quality was used as the central route while source credibility was used as the peripheral route.

With the tremendous expansion of social media, particularly online communities, academics have begun to examine the information adoption process in these platforms. Several previous studies utilised review quality as argument quality (Liu & Ji, 2018), reviewer credibility as source credibility (Salehi-Esfahani et al., 2016), and review adoption as information adoption (Shen et al., 2016). The direct relationship between review usefulness and review adoption was studied in numerous prior studies as well (Erkan & Evans, 2016; Leung, 2021). For instance, Filieri (2015) found that review helpfulness is a crucial determinant of review adoption, which was not examined in the IAM theory. Based on this discussion, the present study used review quality, credibility, usefulness, and helpfulness as the determinants of review adoption.

### **Review Quality (RQ) and Review Adoption (RA)**

Due to the advancements of technology, online consumer reviews have become very popular and easily accessible (Elwalda & Lu, 2016). As internet users have more access to online reviews, the importance of review quality has increased for consumers (Erkan & Evans, 2016). The quality of reviews can be determined based on the information included. Ruiz-Mafe et al. (2020) stated that review quality refers to a review's persuasiveness that can influence the consumer's behavioural intention. According to Filieri (2015), an online review is considered high-quality if it contains relevant, current, correct, comprehensive, and useful information. As indicated in several previous studies, review quality consists of many dimensions, and the quality of a review is assessed through comprehensiveness, timeliness, length, readability, relevance, and accuracy (Leung, 2021; Srivastava & Kalro, 2019). Song et al. (2021) considered the quality of travel reviews as a significant determinant of adopting online reviews and developing trust towards the reviews. Numerous previous studies have found a significant relationship between review quality and online travel review adoption (Song et al., 2021; Ukpabi & Karjaluoto, 2018). Therefore, the current study proposes that:

H1: Review quality has a significant relationship with online travel review adoption.

### **Reviewer Credibility (RC) and Review Adoption (RA)**

Reviewer credibility can be defined as the positive attribute of the review provider that can influence the adoption of a review (Ismagilova et al., 2020). Credible review sources provide good and persuasive information that persuade the review reader/viewer to develop a positive attitude toward the products or services mentioned in the reviews (John & De'Villiers, 2020). Siddiqi et al. (2020) concurred that the credibility of the review provider has a solid and substantial influence on the review readers' attitudes, perceptions, and behaviour. In addition, previous research supported that reviewer credibility is the most critical aspect in determining the efficiency of online reviews (Lo & Yao, 2019). Reviewer credibility consists of two components: review trustworthiness and reviewer expertise. Lo and Yao (2019) explained that perceived review trustworthiness is the level of belief that a review reader/viewer develops towards the reviewer and the amount of accurate information the reviewer provides. In addition, Assakar (2020) stated that review trustworthiness is strongly associated with the perceptions of the review readers/viewers towards the review source. Research demonstrates that individuals trust the review information, perceive the review as credible, and become more likely to adopt it when it is provided by a renowned rather than an unknown source (Mena et al., 2020). Another

component of reviewer credibility is the expertise of the review provider, which refers to the reviewer's sound knowledge of products or services (Thomas et al., 2019). Consumers usually trust those reviews provided by reviewers with better expertise, experience, abilities, skills, or understanding of a specific product or service (Lurie & Mustafaraj, 2018; Mena et al., 2020). Numerous past studies found that individuals prefer to adopt the review information if they perceive the review as trustworthy and the review providers have adequate expertise on the products or services they reviewed (Assaker, 2020; Reyes-Menendez, Saura, & Martinez-Navalon, 2019; Song et al., 2021). Therefore, the study hypothesises that:

H2: Reviewer credibility has a significant relationship with online travel review adoption.

### **Review Usefulness (RU) and Review Adoption (RA)**

According to Sussman and Seigal (2003), an individual's adoption of review information is highly influenced by the usefulness of the review information in online communities. Individuals would develop a specific perception of whether online reviews are useful to help them to make better decisions (Rahaman et al., 2022). Consequently, if a consumer perceives an online review as applicable, they will be more inclined to adopt it (Fileri et al., 2019). According to Zeng and Seock (2019), review usefulness can be defined as an individual's subjective evaluation of the benefits provided by technology. In the context of the current study, review usefulness refers to the tourist's perception that utilising online reviews will enhance their decision-making effectiveness (e.g., choosing a destination, booking hotels, and purchasing from a travel agent) (Fileri et al., 2019). Therefore, individuals will be more likely to adopt the review information if they perceive their peers' recommendations and reviews on social media platforms as useful. Information usefulness is considered the most critical determinant of adoption (Davis, 1989; Sussman & Siegal, 2003). For instance, Erkan and Evans (2016) identified that reviews shared on social media are useful information influencing information adoption. Previous studies have also found a significant relationship between review usefulness and travel review adoption (Alhemimah, 2019; Leung, 2021). Hence, the current study proposes that:

H3: Review usefulness has a significant relationship with online travel review adoption.

### **Review Helpfulness (RH) and Review Adoption (RA)**

Lee and Hong (2019) defined review helpfulness as the perception of consumers on how online reviews will assist them in comprehending and assessing the quality of a

specific product or service. Sun et al. (2019) mentioned that to ensure that individuals perceive the inherent usability of product or service, they will comprehend and assess the quality of the review information. Furthermore, the consumer will decide whether or not to adopt the information they have perceived and assessed from the online review based on its helpfulness (Filieri & Mariani, 2021; Mariani & Borghi, 2020). Jiang et al. (2021) and Qu et al. (2021) asserted that consumers will adopt a particular review to make a better purchase when they perceive that the review will be helpful and assist them in assessing the actual quality and performance of the product or service. Huiyue et al. (2022) agreed that the perception of consumers regarding the helpfulness of an online travel review for decision-making significantly impacts their intention to adopt that travel review. Several prior studies indicated a positive relationship between review helpfulness and review adoption (Jiang et al., 2021; Lee & Hong, 2019). Hence, the current study proposes that:

H4: Review helpfulness has a significant relationship with online travel review adoption.

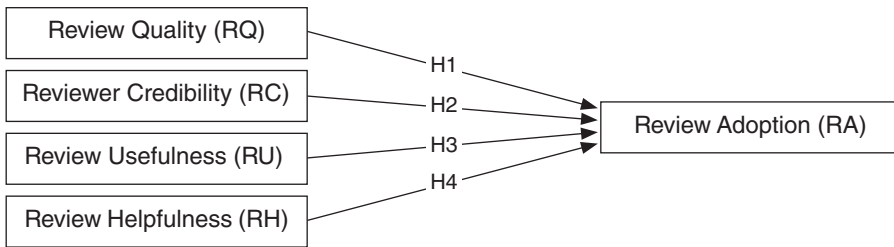


Figure 1. Conceptual research framework

## Methodology

### Research Design

The current study aimed to identify the determinants of adopting online travel reviews. In this regard, a quantitative, survey-based correlational research design was adopted. Correlational design assists the researcher in investigating the relationship between two or more variables, whereas survey helps the researcher to obtain data from a large population (Curtis et al., 2016).

### Data Collection Procedure

The respondents of the current study were residents of Bangladesh who are familiar with online travel reviews. Data was collected from the respondents with the help of an online structured close-ended questionnaire. The measurement items of the

questionnaire were adapted from the previous literature: review quality (Alhemimah, 2019), reviewer credibility (Erkan & Evans, 2016), review usefulness (Erkan & Evans, 2016), review helpfulness (Jiang et al., 2021; Sun et al., 2019), and review adoption (Jiang et al., 2021). Two academicians pre-tested the questionnaire, and a pilot study was performed by collecting data from 30 respondents to reduce errors and enhance the quality.

The current study followed the non-probability sampling method and adopted the integration of purposive and snowball sampling techniques, which can collect large amounts of data from the target population quickly (Audemard, 2020; Etikan, 2016). The minimum sample size for the current study was estimated at 129. The sample size was determined by utilising the G\*power analysis as the research population was unknown, as recommended by Memon et al. (2020). The current study is cross-sectional since data was collected simultaneously. Data collection was performed from June 1, 2022 to July 15, 2022. A total of 232 respondents participated in the survey, but in the end, only 223 responses were considered valid for the data analysis after the screening.

Among the 223 respondents, the majority were male (53.46%) and 25–34 years old (39.91%). In addition, 50.22% of respondents were students, and 57.40% of respondents' level of education was tertiary. Furthermore, 74.89% of respondents claimed that their travel frequency was 2–4 times a year and 50.22% used social media for 4–6 hours daily.

### **Data Analysis Techniques**

Two software were employed in the current study for data analysis purposes: SPSS (v.26) and SmartPLS (v.3.3.9). SPSS was used to analyse the respondents' demographic profile and to test the biases (non-response bias and common method bias) while SmartPLS was utilised to perform the Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM). The PLS-SEM method was performed to analyse the collected data as the sample size in the current study was relatively small. Data were analysed in two phases: first, the measurement model, followed by the structural model.

## **Data Analysis and Results**

### **Non-response Bias Test**

Armstrong and Overton (1977) recommended testing non-response bias by comparing the mean value of early and late responses of each construct. In the current study, 50 early and 50 late responses were taken for the paired sample t-test to assess the non-response bias. The statistical outcome of the t-test presented p-values that were all above 0.05, which means there is no significant difference between the early and late responses, which ensures the non-appearance of non-response bias in the current study.



**Common Method Bias (CMB)**

The common method bias was assessed by conducting Harman's single-factor test. In the present study, Harman's single-factor test was performed on five constructs (review adoption, review quality, reviewer credibility, review usefulness, and review helpfulness) involving 25 items. Podsakoff et al. (2003) suggested that the common method bias appears in the research when the overall variance extracted by a single factor surpasses 50%. The common method bias test outcome in the current study demonstrated no issue with the common method bias since the total variance extracted by a single factor was 45.270 (45.27%), which is lower than the suggested threshold of 50%.

**Measurement Model**

Construct reliability and validity are assessed to measure the internal consistency of the measurement items. In the current study, the value of Cronbach's alpha ( $C\alpha$ ), composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE) were used to measure the constructs' reliability and validity, as presented in Table 1. Hair et al. (2021) mentioned that the acceptable range for  $C\alpha$  and CR is above 0.7. In contrast, the present study's  $C\alpha$  and CR values were higher than 0.9. All the AVE values were found above 0.7, whilst an AVE value above 0.5 is acceptable, according to Fornell and Larcker (1981). In addition, all the item loading values were found above 0.7, which is acceptable, as recommended by Hair et al. (2021). Based on the statistical outcomes derived from the  $C\alpha$ , CR, AVE, and items loading values, no issues of construct reliability and validity were found in the current study.

**Table 1.** Construct reliability and validity

Constructs	Items	Item Loading	$C\alpha$	CR	AVE
RA	RA1	0.806	0.902	0.928	0.720
	RA2	0.766			
	RA3	0.898			
	RA4	0.866			
	RA5	0.898			
RQ	RQ1	0.889	0.908	0.932	0.732
	RQ2	0.889			
	RQ3	0.879			
	RQ4	0.807			
	RQ5	0.808			
RC	RC1	0.911	0.949	0.961	0.831
	RC2	0.924			
	RC3	0.901			
	RC4	0.907			
	RC5	0.916			

**Table 1.** (con't)

Constructs	Items	Item Loading	C $\alpha$	CR	AVE
RU	RU1	0.903	0.957	0.966	0.852
	RU2	0.943			
	RU3	0.948			
	RU4	0.919			
	RU5	0.903			
RH	RH1	0.890	0.925	0.944	0.770
	RH2	0.891			
	RH3	0.878			
	RH4	0.848			
	RH5	0.880			

Note: RA = Review Adoption; RQ = Review Quality; RC = Reviewer Credibility; RU = Review Usefulness; RH = Review Helpfulness

In the present study, discriminant validity was examined using the Fornell-Larcker and Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) criteria, as presented in Table 2. The Fornell-Larcker criterion is one of the widely used methods for assessing the discriminant validity of measurement models. Fornell and Larcker (1981) stated that discriminant validity is achieved when the square root of AVE of a construct is greater than the correlation between the construct and any other construct. The statistical outcome of the Fornell-Larcker criterion established the discriminant validity of the current study’s measurement model. Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) is an alternate way of assessing the measurement model’s discriminant validity. Henseler et al. (2015) stated that the discriminant validity of the measurement model would be achieved if the HTMT value is less than 1. The statistical outcome shows that discriminant validity is achieved based on the HTMT value derived (see Table 2).

**Table 2.** Discriminant validity

Constructs	Fornell-Larcker criterion					Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio				
	RA	RQ	RC	RU	RH	Constructs	RA	RQ	RC	RU
RA	0.849									
RQ	0.873	0.855				RQ	0.946			
RC	0.914	0.821	0.912			RC	0.931	0.883		
RU	0.841	0.769	0.811	0.923		RU	0.900	0.829	0.850	
RH	0.782	0.826	0.672	0.652	0.878	RH	0.866	0.893	0.715	0.693

Note: RA = Review Adoption; RQ = Review Quality; RC = Reviewer Credibility; RU = Review Usefulness; RH = Review Helpfulness

**Assessment of Structural Model**

Evaluating the structural model after validating the constructs' validity and reliability is essential. This evaluation would assess the model's predictive ability and the associations between the constructs (Hair et al., 2021).

R<sup>2</sup> is a statistical measure of a regression model, also known as the coefficient of determinants. The R<sup>2</sup> value is utilised to assess the proportion of variance in the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variables. The statistical outcome revealed that the R<sup>2</sup> value is 0.903 (90%), which indicates that 90% of the variance in the dependent variable (RA) is explained by the independent variables (RQ, RC, RU, RH). Hair et al. (2021) categorised the R<sup>2</sup> values above 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 as substantial, moderate, and weak, respectively, suggesting that the R<sup>2</sup> value of the current model has a substantially acceptable prediction level for empirical research. The Q<sup>2</sup> value determines the presence or absence of predictive relevance. According to Chin (1998), a Q<sup>2</sup> value greater than zero (0) indicates the presence of predictive relevance. In the present study, the value of Q<sup>2</sup> was found to be 0.708, which confirms the presence of predictive relevance.

Table 3 presents the hypotheses test result, f<sup>2</sup> value and multicollinearity test result of the present study. Cohen's f<sup>2</sup> value is utilised to assess the predictor variables' effect size (Cohen, 2013). Cohen (2013) recommended an f<sup>2</sup> value above 0.34 as the substantial effect size, 0.14 to 0.34 as the medium effect size, and 0.01 to 0.14 as the small effect size. The statistical outcome of the current study demonstrates that review quality has a medium effect size on review adoption, reviewer credibility has a large effect size on review adoption, while review usefulness and review helpfulness have a small effect size on review adoption. The multicollinearity issues were assessed through the inner VIF value. Pallant (2020) contended that an inner VIF value above 10 and below 0.1 indicates the presence of collinearity issues in the study whereas Hair et al. (2021) pointed out that an inner VIF value higher than 5 indicates the presence of collinearity issues. In the current study, the highest and lowest value of inner VIF were found 4.513 and 3.160, respectively, which confirms the absence of collinearity issues.

**Table 3.** Structural model assessment (effect size, multicollinearity test) and hypotheses test results

Relationship	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	t-value	p-value	Result	f <sup>2</sup>	Inner VIF
RQ → RA	0.149	0.072	2.174	0.030	Accepted	0.147	4.513
RC → RA	0.512	0.071	7.133	0.000	Accepted	0.667	4.046
RU → RA	0.176	0.061	3.042	0.002	Accepted	0.111	3.243
RH → RA	0.202	0.069	2.755	0.006	Accepted	0.121	3.160

Note: RA = Review Adoption; RQ = Review Quality; RC = Reviewer Credibility; RU = Review Usefulness; RH = Review Helpfulness

A total of four (4) hypotheses were developed in the current study, which were tested through t-value and p-value (see Table 3). The statistical outcome revealed that the highest and lowest t-value were 7.133 and 2.174, respectively. Whereas the highest and lowest p-value were 0.030 and 0.000. Hair et al. (2021) stated that the hypothesis is accepted when the t-value is above 1.96 and the p-value is below 0.050. Thus, all the hypotheses are accepted in the current study.

## Discussion

The current study aimed to identify the role of review quality, reviewer credibility, review usefulness, and review helpfulness in the adoption of online travel reviews. The hypotheses test result indicates that all the independent variables (review quality, reviewer credibility, review usefulness, and review helpfulness) have a significant relationship with the dependent variable (review adoption).

More specifically, hypothesis 1 (H1) was accepted ( $t = 2.174$ ,  $p = 0.030$ ), hence a positive relationship between review quality and review adoption. This finding relates to previous studies (Alhemimah, 2019; Song et al., 2021). For instance, Leung (2021) stated that tourists will be more likely to adopt the review information if they perceive favourably the quality of the review. In contrast, Srivastava and Kalro (2019) mentioned that review adoption depends on the timeliness and comprehensiveness of the review. The outcome of the present study indicates that prospective travellers will adopt online travel reviews if they perceive the review as detailed, accurate, recent, and relevant in meeting their needs. In addition, hypothesis 2 (H2) was accepted ( $t = 7.133$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ); hence the relationship between reviewer credibility and review adoption is significant. This finding also corroborates with previous studies (Reyes-Menendez, Saura & Filipe, 2019; Song et al., 2021). As an example, Lo and Yao (2019) mentioned that the review provider's credibility significantly influences the attitude and behaviour of the review readers/viewers. Similarly, prior studies found that consumers usually adopt reviews from reputable sources and expert reviewers (Lurie & Mustafaraj, 2018; Mena et al., 2020). The current study demonstrates that travellers adopt online travel reviews if they perceive the review as trustworthy and reviewers have provided it with expertise, experience, and abilities.

Moreover, hypothesis 3 (H3) was accepted ( $t = 3.042$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ), hence a positive relationship between review usefulness and review adoption. The findings relate to the result of previous studies (Alhemimah, 2019; Erkan & Evans, 2016). Filieri et al. (2019) stated that consumers' willingness to adopt review information is highly correlated with the review's usefulness. Erkan and Evans (2016) also agreed that consumers would adopt the information from online if they can perceive the information as useful. The finding shows that travel consumers adopt online travel reviews if they find them useful, enhancing their decision-making performance.

Furthermore, hypothesis 4 (H4) was accepted ( $t = 2.755$ ,  $p = 0.006$ ); hence the relationship between reviewer helpfulness and review adoption was found to be significant, similar to previous studies (Jiang et al., 2021; Lee & Hong, 2019). Jiang et al. (2021) stated that if a consumer perceives the review information as helpful while reading or viewing, they will adopt that review. Moreover, Qu et al. (2021) mentioned that consumers like to adopt the reviews if they find them displaying a diagnostic quality. This finding illustrates that prospective tourists adopt reviews if they can perceive the reviews as helpful and can assist them in assessing the actual quality of the products and services related to tourism.

### **Conclusion**

The study was undertaken to identify the determinants that drive prospective tourists to adopt travel reviews from online platforms. A total of 223 respondents familiar with online travel reviews participated in the current study. The study found that review quality, reviewer credibility, review usefulness, and review helpfulness compel consumers to adopt travel reviews. In other words, prospective tourists adopt a review if they perceive the quality of the review is high, the review is trustworthy, the review provider has enough expertise/respected, and the review is useful and helpful. Based on these findings, the present study provides several theoretical and practical implications.

### **Theoretical Implications**

The current study contributes mainly to the academic literature on the role of different determinants in online review adoption in the context of the tourism and hospitality industry. The present study developed a novel theoretical model that identifies the influence of review quality, reviewer credibility, review usefulness, and review helpfulness on adoption of online travel reviews. The IAM theory was utilised in the present study. The IAM model explained the role of argument quality and source credibility in information adoption with the mediating role of perceived usefulness. In the current study, argument quality and source credibility were adapted as review quality and reviewer credibility. Sussman and Seigal (2003) utilised perceived usefulness as the mediator, whereas numerous previous studies found a direct relationship between perceived usefulness and information. Hence, the current model was developed using perceived usefulness (review usefulness) as an independent variable. In addition, the role of review helpfulness was also employed as an independent variable, and a direct relationship was shown between review helpfulness and review adoption.

## Practical Implications

With regard to practical implications, the study provides insights into what motivates tourism consumers to adopt online travel reviews, which would certainly benefit tourism marketers and consumers. Consumers generally go through online reviews before making any travel plans, and they adopt these reviews if the review is of quality, credible, useful, and helpful. The findings reveal that consumers evaluate the quality, credibility, usefulness, and helpfulness of the reviews shared by other tourists in order to make a better purchase in tourism. The findings indicate that tourism and hospitality industry marketers need to pay more attention in developing their marketing and branding strategies. Further, maintaining the quality of products and services is vital to avoid negative reviews from consumers. As the tourism and hospitality industry is strongly consumer-oriented, any negative reviews by past users on any specific brand will discourage prospective consumers and cause revenue loss and reputational damage to the brand in the long run.

## Limitations and Recommendations

As with most studies, there are several limitations that needs to be pointed out for this current study. Firstly, although the sample size used in the current study is justified, the authors believe that a larger sample size can make the study more generalisable. Secondly, the present study identified the influence of different factors on adopting online travel reviews from different platforms. However, no specific review platforms were indicated, so future studies can be conducted based on specific platforms. Thirdly, the study was designed as a quantitative, cross-sectional study, and the authors recommend future studies to be conducted in a mixed-method and longitudinal way to expand on the current findings.

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