

Understanding the Acceptance of Digital Marketing Among Tour Operators: An Empirical Study

Abstract

Lenny YUSRINI 

Travel Operation Department, Universitas
Asa Indonesia, Email,
lenny.y@asaindo.ac.id

Nova EVIANA 

Travel Operation Department, Universitas
Asa Indonesia, Email, nova@asaindo.ac.id
Corresponding author

MAEENUDDIN 

Putra Business School, Universiti Putra,
Malaysia, Email,
moin.karim7744@gmail.com

Rajesh DORBALA 

Marketing Department, Mittal School of
Business, Lovely Professional University,
Email, rajeshdorbala@gmail.com

Roby Darmadi 

Hotel Operation Department,
Universitas Asa Indonesia, Email,
robymardadi@yahoo.co.id

A lot of lessons are learned post COVID-19 pandemic, including in the tourism business. Prior to the pandemic, tour operators had difficulties in competing with online travel agents (OTA) in terms of product sales and marketing. This article aims to understand the perception of digital marketing usage among tour operators and explore the factors influencing the adoption or rejection to it by using an integrated framework model which was grounded on the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT). The factors identified which effect the usage of digital marketing technology were perceived ease of use, personal innovativeness, and facilitating condition, toward use behaviour. These factors were moderated by behaviour intention. The model was tested with 77 tour operator companies that are members of a travel agency association in Indonesia using PLS- SEM. The results show that tour operators' facilitating condition and behaviour intention influence use behaviour directly. On the other hand, perceive ease of use, personal innovativeness, and facilitating condition directly influence behaviour intention. Personal innovativeness influences use behaviour mediated by behaviour intention. This study contributes to the understanding of tour operators where they need to focus on improving the ease of use and encouraging a positive intention among users.

Keywords Technology acceptance; tour operators; digital marketing; UTAUT

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Introduction

The rapid evolution of digital technology in marketing and its use by customers widely was recognized in the last decade. Many business sectors were affected by this including tourism businesses. The marketplace of tourism products where transactions were made had changed. The internet had become the marketplace where potential customers search, book and buy tourism products (Jorge et al., 2018). This was where customers compare the quality, the attractions, and the price of one tour operator to another (Bigné & Decrop, 2019). To be able to catch the attention of these customers, the tourism businesses, in this case tour operators had to keep up by creating websites, set up Facebook fan page, YouTube channels, and other social media platforms. These steps were taken to approach and reach the customers. In relation to this, simply creating websites and any other social media accounts without really understanding the strategy, the purpose and the functions could create a negative impact to the tour operators as well as positive impacts. It happened as the internet technology is not only keeping the world closer, but the customers connected to each other (Belanche et al., 2019). So, any impacts from the interaction between customers and the tour operators' digital marketing platforms happened immediately and would be shared worldwide.

In Indonesia, one of the associations of the tour operators has members' market of 60% inbound tourists. However, when faced by the era of digitalization, the conventional tour operators seem to have difficulties in competing with online travel agencies (OTA). In early 2019, this association received 350 (5%) member resignations with one of the reasons being the lack of competitiveness ability against OTA. These OTAs either foreign or nationally owned have somehow shocked the business of the association members who are mostly conventional tour operators. It was reported that 70%-80% of the business of the conventional tour operators was decreased due to inability to compete with large-capital OTAs. The term conventional tour operators refer to the marketing system which these tour operators are doing in conventional ways. Meaning they have not adopted and adapted to the digital marketing era. The members of the association are tour operators from 34 provinces in Indonesia. These companies range from 10% large companies, 30% small-medium companies, and 60% are micro small companies. Many studies have been done to understand the perception on digital marketing. This present study is important because before giving recommendations on how the tour operators can optimize their digital marketing strategies so they can contribute more to deriving inbound tourists to come to Indonesia, it is necessary to understand their perception towards digital marketing. Travel businesses must learn how to use digital marketing tools to realize their full potential (Moodley & Naidoo, 2022). It is interesting to find out whether this industry is adapting and adopting digital marketing technology or rejecting the technology as stated by John et al. (2018). Their study found that although technology is ready, it is not directly affecting the customer attitude to use it. The usage of digital technology is also affected by the innovation resistance, along with behaviour intention to use (Sivathanu, 2019). Immediate adoption by users will not happen although a technology was perceived as being advanced if perceived by users as not providing relevant information or services (Cao & Niu, 2019). Thus, this study aimed to explore the perception of the tour operators towards the usage of digital marketing and to explore the factors of tour operators' adoption or rejection of digital marketing usage.



Literature review

Technology acceptance

Some previous studies have been conducted to find out the adoption or behaviour use of digital technology in various fields. Understanding why a technology was early or late accepted by users will allowed companies to develop technology that will lead to accelerate the rate of adoption of digital innovations (Jahanmir & Cavadas, 2018). A person uses technology in the line of work with the perception that the technology will bring him/her benefits in his/her work, such as improve work performance, less time in finishing tasks, or increase productivity, thus make the job easier (Venkatesh et al., 2003). The UTAUT model of Venkatesh et al. (2003) established factors affecting technology acceptance, they are (1) performance expectancy which was constructed from perceived usefulness, extrinsic motivation, job-fit, relative advantage, and outcome expectations; (2) effort expectancy which was constructed from perceived ease of use, complexity, and ease of use; (3) social influence which was constructed from subjective norm, social factors, and image; (4) facilitating conditions which was constructed from perceived behaviour control, facilitating conditions, and compatibility. All four factors were moderated by age, while gender moderated the effects of performance expectancy, effort expectancy, and social influence. The moderating role of experience was observed in the relationship between effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions. Additionally, social influence was found to be moderated solely by voluntariness of use. The influence of performance expectancy, effort expectancy, and social influence on use behaviour was mediated by behaviour intention. Notably, facilitating conditions exhibited a direct relationship with use behaviour. Since then, further studies have been conducted in the purpose of understanding what factors influence technology acceptance. Some studies used the original UTAUT model, some extended it with other additional factors. Cao & Niu (2019) (2019) investigated the user adoption of technology using the UTAUT model which was integrated with context-awareness. Their study stated that technology, as advanced as it is, will not be adopted by users if it is perceived as not providing relevant information or services. Which means that performance expectancy which gives users an effective way to accomplish a task with precise solution affected the technology adoption. People will also adopt new technology willingly when their social circle (friends, relatives) are also using it and give positive influence on it. In other words, social influence matters in influencing technology adoption.

Clark-Gordon et al. (2019) studied the form of perceptions regarding the use of technology with constructs used in this study were perceived ease of use and usability, perceived usefulness, attitude towards using technology, computer mediated communication anxiety, computer self-efficacy, feedback preference, digital written feedback, and functionality. From this study, it was recognized that the decision to adopt the technology was significantly influenced by the user's technology perceived of use. As Venkatesh et al. (2003) stated, perceived ease of use is the degree of using technology by a person which is believed to be easy and free of effort. Karahoca et al. (2018) examined factors which influence intention to adopt technology using an integrated model of TAM, innovation diffusion theory (IDT), technological innovativeness (TI), protection motivation theory and privacy calculus theory. Jahanmir & Cavadas (2018) studied the adoption of digital technology and took the perspective of why users tend to adopt late. They stated that in understanding factors influencing the late adoption of technology will allow companies to choose other methods so they can accelerate the adoption rate. From this study, it was shown that personal (consumer) innovativeness, along with attitude towards technology, global brand image, and lead user profile negatively affect the slow adoption rate. Yoo et al. (2018) studied the adoption of technology was influenced by several factors, including the perceived relative advantages in terms of speed and environmental friendliness, complexity, performance, and privacy risks. This study also found that personal innovativeness positively influences the adoption intention. But the innovativeness is also influenced by the user's place of stay. Individuals residing in urban areas tend to exhibit higher levels of innovation and are more inclined to explore and embrace new products or services compared to those living in rural areas.

Using TAM, Sevim et al. (2017) explored the acceptance of digital technology. They extended the TAM (perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, attitude toward using, and behaviour intention to use) by adding perceived enjoyment and perceived trust. Their study showed that perceived ease of use, perceived enjoyment, and perceived trust influenced the attitude toward using, with the perceived enjoyment having stronger effect on perceived usefulness. This shows that, besides being advanced and having other technical benefits brought by new technology, the enjoyment perspective must be considered also so it can be adopted by users. Furthermore, their findings revealed that perceived usefulness exerts a greater influence on behavioral intention compared to attitude towards utilizing the technology. Juric & Lindenmeier (2019) used TAM to study customer resistance and inclination to adopt or reject a smart technology. This study used performance expectancy, perceived ease of use, and social influence as the driver factors. Meanwhile, used health concerns, compatibility, information asymmetry, privacy and data security, and cost barriers as the barrier factors. The result showed that the major determinants of user's behavior of the driver factors is performance expectancy. From this study it was also found that gender and age were the moderating variables that affected the consumer behavior thus made the results vary depend on the age and gender. Behavior intention to use digital technology was also studied by Sivathanu (2019). He found out that performance expectancy or technology perceived as convenience and gives performance benefits significantly predicts the behavior intention to use technology. Study on digital technology use behavior was conducted by Khechine & Augier (2019) using the extended UTAUT, adding personal characteristics of students (autonomy, anxiety, and attitude). The result for this study came from regression analysis which suggests that the behavior intention to use and the behavior use of the digital technology was predicted mainly by the facilitating conditions.



Digital marketing

The mass usage of digital marketing in the Indonesian tourism business had the biggest impact when some big OTAs such as Traveloka, Tiket.com and Nusatrip entered the industry. The milestone of this era is said to happen around 2012-2013 when these OTAs were established. These OTAs targeted the 143,3 million of Indonesia internet users (Rosyidi, 2019). A survey was conducted which showed that 71,4% of Indonesian tourists used OTA when planning for travel trips (Zebua, 2018). Studies were conducted to explore the development of OTAs, but as Rosyidi (2019) stated that discovering how traditional travel agencies and tour operators are adapting to technology in order to compete with online travel agencies (OTAs) is a fascinating subject. Bigné & Decrop (2019) studied the changes happening in tourism marketing following technology innovations. Their study found that innovations in technology and digitalization in the tourism industry created new types of relationship among tourism stakeholders. Where large data is now available everywhere, either from commercial exchanges or from user-generated contents such as posted texts, pictures and videos, reviews, and comments on tourism sites, now the traditional marketing scheme is not valid anymore. However, not all digital marketing strategies can bring positive influence on tourism firms. When done by unskilled service providers, digital marketing can bring negative impact to firms (Aswani et al., 2018). During their study, they found that search engine marketing (SEM) might fail to provide benefits and can destruct value of a long-term benefits potential. On the other hand, digital marketing tools can influence tourist's intention to visit a destination when it is done skilfully. Jorge, et.al. (2018) analysed this with the constructs being: destination image, tourists' satisfaction, and loyalty. Their study found that digital marketing tools' perceived usefulness (website, S-WOM, booking, email, and mobile devices) influence the destination image.

Another study was conducted by Ponnappureddy et al. (2017) to prove whether digital marketing is useful to create positive influence on tourist's perception. They explored the relationship between tourists' trust perception and the intention to book a hotel with factors influencing are general trust, specific trust, and information perceived usefulness. The tourists' perception was obtained through digital brochure of the hotel. Their findings were all construct positively and significantly have relationship with tourists' intention to book a hotel. They also stated that given the marketing material in the brochure was communicated in a trust inspiring way, it will motivate the tourists to book the hotel. As mentioned earlier, the aim of this study is to elucidate whether digital marketing technology is accepted or rejected by tour operators in Jakarta, in an attempt to find out their usage towards this technology. This study becomes important as Indonesian government set target in 2020 of deriving 20 million inbound tourists with the help of tour operators as one of the partners. With the specific benefits of digital marketing, cost-efficiency, better exposure, save time, social currency, and brand building (Shirisha, 2018), digital marketing could easily be applied in the tourism business. Of all the above field of studies on adoption or behaviour use on digital technology, little were conducted for tourism business. So, this study aimed to fill the knowledge gap by exploring the behaviour intention and use behaviour in digital technology, specifically the digital marketing technology among the tour operators, with taking the case study of tour operators in Jakarta.

Theoretical foundation and hypothesis development

Perceived ease of use and behaviour intention to accept digital marketing

The degree to which an individual believes that using a digital platform will be a simple task and will reduce the physical or mental effort is referred to as perceived ease of use (Walczak et al., 2022). A study by Swart et al. (2019) mentioned that perceived ease of use is an additional value among business event tourists' overall experience in using technology. Moreover, Wang et al. (2022) found that perceived ease of use is an important determinant of the acceptance towards digital platforms. Therefore, the study proposes the following hypothesis.

H1: Perceived ease of use has a significant positive effect on the behaviour intention to accept digital marketing.

Personal innovativeness and behaviour intention to accept digital marketing

Personal innovativeness is defined as the greater or lesser proclivity of the individual to use emerging and unknown technologies will be critical in the individual's internal environment (Liébana-Cabanillas et al., 2021). It is one of the main antecedents of intention to use technology in the context of COVID-19 pandemic, where the need to reduce physical contacts between buyer and seller arose (Liébana-Cabanillas et al., 2021). Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed for the current study.

H2: Personal innovativeness has a significant positive effect on the behaviour intention to accept digital marketing.

Facilitating conditions and behaviour intention to accept digital marketing

Facilitating conditions is described as the extent to which a person believes that an organisational and technical infrastructure exists to support system use (Venkatesh et al., 2012). A study by Chahal & Rani (2022) revealed that facilitating conditions is among the factors that affects the acceptance to use technology. The research finding by Arista & Abbas (2022) also shows that the utilization of a system technology is also influenced by facilitating conditions. Mustafa et al. (2022) tried to understand the consumer's technology acceptance and found that facilitating conditions are significantly and positively related with behaviour intention. Therefore, this study proposes the following hypothesis.

H3: Facilitating conditions has a significant positive effect on the behaviour intention to accept digital marketing.

Facilitating conditions and use behaviour

Previous studies have shown that facilitating conditions are significantly associated with use behaviour of technology acceptance (Bervell & Arkorful, 2020; Ma et al., 2023). The primary factor influencing use behaviours was facilitating conditions, suggesting that the provision of personalized information and relevant assistance has a direct impact on promoting behaviours (Ma et al., 2023).

H4: Facilitating conditions has a significant positive effect on use behaviour to accept digital marketing.

Behaviour intention and use behaviour

The willingness of a person to engage in specific behaviour describes behaviour intention (Arista & Abbas, 2022). It is essential to understand user's intention and behaviour for technology adoption (Mustafa et al., 2022). The intention to use technology is similarly significant with the use behaviour in technology usage. According to UTAUT, behaviour intention determines the usage of technology (Venkatesh et al., 2012). In this regard, this study proposes the following hypothesis.

H5: Behaviour intention conditions have a significant positive effect on the use behaviour.

Behaviour intention as a mediator in technology acceptance

Behaviour intention as a mediator has been widely researched in various fields. Past studies show that behaviour intention mediates the relationship between constructs in accepting digital technology, such as social influence and ICT adoption (Nassar et al., 2019). Therefore, the final three hypotheses are as following.

H6: Behaviour intention significantly mediates the relationship between perceived ease of use and use behaviour.

H7: Behaviour intention significantly mediates the relationship between personal innovativeness and use behaviour.

H8: Behaviour intention significantly mediates the relationship between facilitating conditions and use behaviour.

Methods

The said study collected data through online survey instruments such as via google forms, which was distributed through emails, cloud-based messenger services and through social media. The data was collected from February to April 2023 from the tour operators who are also affiliated to ASITA Jakarta Chapter. The respondents are executives of these tour operators who are directly associated with marketing. The database of contacts of travel agents and tour operators are sourced from ASITA and convenience sampling technique were used. Questionnaires were sent to all the respondents and 77 responses were received and used for analysis. A survey instrument adapted from the study of Venkatesh et al. (2003) was used through which we attempted to measure the use of digital marketing tools, as well as their attitudes and beliefs towards the use of digital marketing techniques to promote their business and also to engage with their customers. This study uses PLS-SEM approach for data analysis. The PLS-SEM approach not only explains the causality among constructs but also evaluates the predictive quality of the results. This methodology is capable of analysing complex models that consist of many indicators Hair et al. (2017).

Results and discussions

The assessment of measurement model

The measurement model assessment specifies the association between constructs and indicators by using validity and reliability testing. Validity assessment employs both convergent and discriminant validity criteria. Convergent validity investigates the correlation between observed indicators and their corresponding latent constructs (loading factors) and AVE values. High factor loadings indicate that a construct can adequately explain the indicator (Sholihin & Ratmono, 2020). The minimum expected value of the factor's loading is greater than 0.708 (Henseler et al., 2014). AVE specifies the magnitude of the indicator variance that latent constructs may possess. The expected AVE value > 0.5 is considered to have sufficient validity to explain latent constructs (Hair et al., 2017; Henseler et al., 2014).

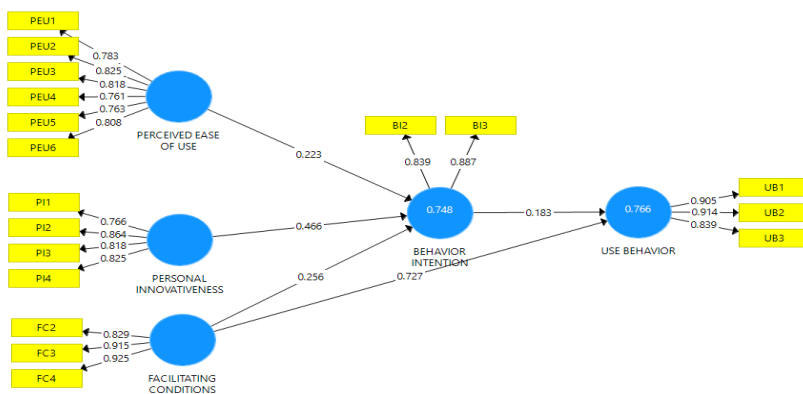


Figure 1: Measurement model



The purpose of measurement model testing is to assess the validity and reliability of the measurements. Validity testing employs convergent validity criteria, which reveal that the factor loadings of indicators for BI1 and FC1 are below 0.7. Both are then eliminated due to their invalidity to measure their constructs. When the factor loading exceeds 0.70 (as shown in Table 1), it indicates that the constructs possess a satisfactory level of reliability, as they can explain over 50% of the indicator's variance. Convergent validity is assessed using AVE values, which reflect the extent of variance among the indicators of a latent construct. AVE values exceeding 0.5 demonstrate that all indicators effectively represent their respective latent constructs (J. F. Hair et al., 2017).

Table 1: Outer model testing result

Construct	Indicator	Factor loading	Cronbach α	CR	AVE
BI	BI2	0.839	0.659	0.854	0.745
	BI3	0.887			
FC	FC2	0.829	0.869	0.920	0.793
	FC3	0.915			
	FC4	0.925			
PEU	PEU1	0.783	0.882	0.911	0.630
	PEU2	0.825			
	PEU3	0.818			
	PEU4	0.761			
	PEU5	0.763			
	PEU6	0.808			
PI	PI1	0.766	0.836	0.890	0.671
	PI2	0.864			
	PI3	0.818			
	PI4	0.825			
UB	UB1	0.905	0.863	0.917	0.786
	UB2	0.914			
	UB3	0.839			

Note: BI = Behavior Intention; FC = Facilitating Conditions; PEU = Perceived Ease of Use; PI = Personal Innovativeness; UB = Use Behavior

Reliability testing measures the internal consistency of a construct using composite reliability (CR) and Cronbach alpha. The Cronbach alpha value of 0.6 – 0.7 is an acceptable level of reliability (Ursachi et al., 2015), and CR > 0.7 (Taber, 2018). The test results showed that constructs have a Cronbach alpha value of > 0.6 and CR > 0.7. The entire construct proves to have good internal consistency for measurements (Table 1). Testing of discriminant validity by using the Fornell-Larcker criterion (Table 2) shows the AVE square root value indicated by the number on the diagonal line is greater than the correlation between constructs, so it is concluded that the indicator can explain well the theoretical concept of its latent variable (construct).

Table 2: Result of discriminant validity using Fornell-Larcker criteria

	BI	FC	PEU	PI	UB
BI	0.863				
FC	0.767	0.891			
PEU	0.728	0.626	0.794		
PI	0.835	0.797	0.739	0.819	
UB	0.741	0.867	0.641	0.782	0.887

Cross-loading testing results that the indicators' factor loading of a particular construct is higher than in other constructs to prove a construct is unique and different from other constructs (Table 3).

Table 3: Cross loading testing

	BI	FC	PEU	PI	UB
BI2	0.839	0.557	0.646	0.668	0.574
BI3	0.887	0.754	0.615	0.768	0.697
FC2	0.642	0.829	0.523	0.737	0.692
FC3	0.635	0.915	0.590	0.653	0.794
FC4	0.765	0.925	0.561	0.741	0.824
PEU1	0.545	0.471	0.783	0.554	0.530
PEU2	0.555	0.468	0.825	0.616	0.473
PEU3	0.631	0.549	0.818	0.576	0.522
PEU4	0.564	0.541	0.761	0.572	0.500
PEU5	0.520	0.428	0.763	0.542	0.411
PEU6	0.635	0.512	0.808	0.652	0.598
PI1	0.714	0.674	0.710	0.766	0.622
PI2	0.685	0.711	0.605	0.864	0.696
PI3	0.627	0.607	0.528	0.818	0.620
PI4	0.699	0.610	0.564	0.825	0.621
UB1	0.693	0.813	0.624	0.695	0.905
UB2	0.593	0.818	0.545	0.668	0.914
UB3	0.691	0.664	0.534	0.727	0.839

Multicollinearity testing is carried out to ensure the absence of correlation between constructs, by using the value of the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF). The test results showed that all constructs had a VIF value of < 5, so it was concluded that there was no multicollinearity problem (Table 4).



Table 4: Multicollinearity testing

	BI	FC	PEU	PI	UB
BI					2.431
FC	2.760				2.431
PEU	2.223				
PI	3.699				
UB					

The ability of exogenous variables to explain the variance of exogenous variables is shown through the determination coefficient of adjusted R². The result showed that the exogenous latent variables of PEU, PI, and FC had a significant capability to affect the BI's 73.8% variance. Meanwhile, exogenous latent and moderation variables are simultaneously able to influence UB endogenous construct variables by 75.9% in the substantial category (Hair et al., 2017) (Table 5). The predictive relevance with the blindfolding method showed the Q² value > 0.35 on the moderation and endogenous constructs. Exogenous latent variables are relevant and accurate to predict endogenous latent variables. A Q² value of > 0.35 indicates a strong ability to make predictions (Table 5).

Table 5: Determination coefficient and predictive relevance

	R ²	R ² adjusted	SSO	SSE	Q ² (=1-SSE/SSO)
BI	0.748	0.738	154.000	74.001	0.519
UB	0.766	0.759	231.000	94.597	0.590

The effect size f² is performed to see a substantive impact in the value of R² when a certain predictor construct is removed from the model. The size effect f² of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35, respectively represent the small, medium, and large effects of exogenous latent variables. A size effect less than 0.02 indicates that there is no effect (Sarstedt et al., 2017). The result shows that all exogenous construct variables have an effect size f² of > 0.02 and some even have a high effect size value of > 0.35, so it can be concluded that all exogenous constructs have a high effect size (Table 6).

Table 6: Effect size

	BI	FC	PEU	PI	UB
BI					0.059
FC	0.095				0.927
PEU	0.089				
PI	0.233				
UB					

The fit model was tested by the bootstrapping method, by using Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) criteria of < 0.10. The test results in an SRMR value of 0.084 < 0.10 so that the model was considered to fit with the research data (Table 8).

Table 7: Model fit

	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR	0.083	0.084

Hypothesis testing

Path coefficients of the structural model and significance testing results is shown in Table 8 below.

Table 8: Structural model testing

Relation between construct	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values	Conclusion
H ₁ :PEU → BI	0.223	2.654	0.004	supported
H ₂ :PI → BI	0.466	4.307	0.000	supported
H ₃ :FC → BI	0.256	2.495	0.006	supported
H ₄ :FC → UB	0.727	7.985	0.000	supported
H ₅ :BI → UB	0.183	1.774	0.038	supported
H ₆ :PEU → BI → UB	0.041	1.507	0.066	not supported
H ₇ :PI → BI → UB	0.085	1.662	0.049	supported
H ₈ :FC → BI → UB	0.047	1.302	0.097	not supported

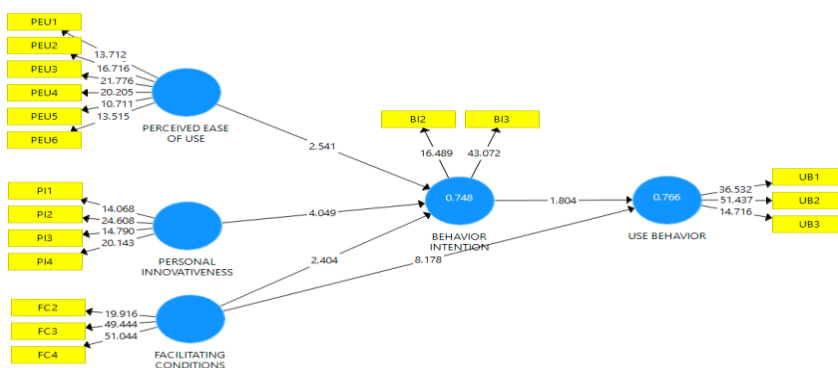


Figure 2: Structural model



The consequences of the rapid development of information technology have changed the habits of users and customers of tourist products. It takes maximum effort for Tour Operators to be able to retain loyal customers using their services. Tour operators' ability and readiness to use various digital communication and marketing models are crucial. The results of this study confirm some of the results of previous studies based on several dimensions of UTAUT and TAM to determine the determination of tour operators in the use of digital marketing. Hypotheses 1 to 4 studies show that variable perception ease of use, personal innovativeness and facilitating conditions are variables that significantly affect behaviour intention. These results are consistent with several previous studies (Karahoca et al., 2018; Ponnareddy et al., 2017; Sivathanu, 2019). Meanwhile, the study's results also showed a positive and significant relationship between perception of use to behaviour intention, in contrast to the research results of Karahoca et al. (2018), which reveals the opposite result. This result shows that the desire to adopt digital marketing is strongly influenced by the tour operator's self-perception of the ease of use of digital marketing applications. This study's hypotheses 4 and 5 show a positive and signifying relationship between facilitating condition and behaviour intention variables to use in line with previous studies (Khechine & Augier, 2019; Sivathanu, 2019). The results revealed that the use of digital marketing technology by tour operators must be supported by company facilities that support it physically and through training to improve the digital marketing competence of employees. On the other hand, tour operators need to have a strong awareness and desire that digital marketing technology is an essential factor for the company's sustainability to provide maximum results in using the digital marketing models aforementioned.

The relationship of moderation variables in this study shows that behaviour intention is not significant as a mediator in the relationship between perceived use and user behaviour. The same result also occurs in behaviour intention as a mediator variable in the relationship between facilitating conditions and user behaviour. In contrast, behaviour intention is a significant variable mediating the relationship between personal innovativeness and user behaviour. This study's result shows that the perception of ease of use of digital marketing technology by tour operators and various supporting facilities provided by the company will directly shape the behaviour of tour operators in using digital marketing technology. On the other hand, innovations and initiatives in digital marketing require a strong desire from tour operators, which will affect the use of digital marketing technology in the next stage. The dominant indicator reflecting the perception of tour operators towards the use of digital marketing technology is the ease of mastering the skills of using digital marketing technology. Such conditions will affect the desire to use the dominant, reflected by the desire of tour operators to use the technology more continuously. The awareness of tour operators reflects the implementation of the use of digital marketing models by tour operators that marketing technology is a demand and is an inseparable part of the world of tourism in today's era. In addition, the strong willingness of the tour operator to learn the technical skills needed is an essential factor in using digital marketing technology in his company. It can be concluded that the dominant factors that make tour operators adopt the use of digital marketing are the perception of ease of use based on mastery of digital skills and knowledge that are currently possessed and company support to implement the application of digital marketing by tour operators. The findings of this study enrich the use of technology acceptance theory (TAM) and the UTAUT framework on research objects in the field of tourism, especially traditional tour managers, but there are still few. Some previous studies discussed the acceptance of technology in the field of tourism related to hotels (Ponnareddy et al., 2017) and online tourist products (Sevim et al., 2017). More specifically, this study examines the acceptance of digital marketing technology in the field of tourism, in addition to other research related to existing digital marketing (Aswani et al., 2018; Ponnareddy et al., 2017; Rosyidi, 2019; Shirisha, 2018). Digital technology presents businesses with opportunities to seamlessly integrate and adeptly leverage a diverse array of tools, platforms, and digital innovations to effectively realize their strategic objectives, whether they be business-centric or personal in nature (Pearl & Sifolo, 2023). The results of this study also provide practical implications for tour operators to determine strategies to adopt various digital marketing models in marketing their tourism service products. To remain competitive, tourism marketers must understand current digital marketing trends and be prepared to adapt to them (Chamboko-Mpotaringa & Tichaawa, 2021). The use of digital marketing technology for tour operators requires readiness from the user operator's side to the company to prepare the required infrastructure so that the negative impacts that may arise can be minimized and the expected positive results can be achieved optimally.

Conclusion

This study provides recommendations for the vital success of tour operators in adopting the use of digital marketing is the facilitation and full support of the company, another factor that predominantly supports the success of the digital marketing model is the knowledge that has been possessed that gives rise to the initiatives and innovations of tour operators in the use of digital marketing. This research has limitations in that not all dimensions in UTAUT theory are used to measure tour operators' readiness to adopt digital marketing, such as Performance expectancy, effort expectancy and social influence. From the tour operator side, other fields related to the adoption of information technology can be researched, such as information system-based process business or the use of artificial intelligence and augmented reality in information management and marketing.

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