

Electronic Word of Mouth and Promotion in Driving Repurchase Intention through Customer Satisfaction in the Hospitality Industry

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the influence of electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) and promotion on customer satisfaction and revisit intention at Ibis Styles Bekasi Hotel. The study focuses on guests who have stayed at the hotel at least twice, with data collected from 120 respondents using incidental sampling. Questionnaires were distributed between October and December 2025. Data analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS. The results reveal that promotion and revisit intention have a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction. Furthermore, e-WOM, promotion, and customer satisfaction positively and directly influence revisit intention. However, e-WOM is found to have an adverse direct effect on customer satisfaction. In terms of mediation, customer satisfaction significantly mediates the relationship between promotion and revisit intention, while it does not mediate the relationship between e-WOM and revisit intention. These findings highlight the critical roles of promotional strategies and customer satisfaction in enhancing revisit intention in the hospitality industry, while suggesting that not all forms of e-WOM positively affect customer satisfaction.

INTRODUCTION

The hospitality industry is one of the service sectors experiencing intense competition due to the increasing number of accommodations and changes in consumer behaviour, with customers becoming more critical in their selection of services. According to Wangsa et al. (2022), customer satisfaction is a key factor in fostering long-term relationships and encouraging repurchase intention in the service industry. Satisfied customers tend to be more committed to a brand and are more likely to make repeat visits. Therefore, hotels are required to develop marketing strategies that are not only focused on acquiring new customers but also on retaining existing customers.

The development of digital technology has transformed the way consumers search for, evaluate, and share information related to hospitality services. Vuong et al. (2024) define electronic word of mouth as positive or negative statements made by actual, potential, or former consumers about a product or service that are made available to a large number of people via the internet. In the hospitality context, e-WOM plays a strategic role, as prospective guests heavily rely on online reviews before making accommodation decisions (Molinillo et al., 2021). Information conveyed through e-WOM is perceived as more credible than company-generated marketing communications because it is based on consumers' direct experiences. In addition to e-WOM, promotion is also an essential element of the service marketing mix. According to Suganya, (2019), promotion serves as a communication tool to inform, persuade, and remind consumers about the products or services offered. In the hospitality industry, promotional activities such as price discounts, stay packages, and loyalty programs are frequently employed to attract customers and encourage repeat visits. Well-designed promotional strategies can enhance perceived value and contribute to increased customer satisfaction.

Customer satisfaction is defined as the feeling of pleasure or disappointment that arises when the perceived performance of a product or service is compared with prior expectations (Supriyanto & Dahlan, 2024). Arman & Shabbir (2020) emphasize that customer satisfaction is a key determinant of repurchase intention and customer loyalty. In the hospitality industry, customer satisfaction is influenced not only by service quality but also by the consistency between information obtained through e-WOM and promotional activities and the experience during the stay. However, several studies indicate that the effect of e-WOM on customer satisfaction is not always positive. Ismagilova et al. (2021) argue that negative reviews or information that does not reflect the actual service experience may raise unrealistic expectations and ultimately lead to customer dissatisfaction. It suggests that e-WOM can function as a double-edged sword for service companies, including hotels. Similarly, promotional efforts that are not supported by consistent service quality may also reduce customer satisfaction levels. Despite the growing importance of e-WOM and promotion in driving repurchase intention through customer satisfaction, particularly in the Indonesian hospitality industry, empirical findings remain inconclusive. Some studies focus primarily on the direct effects of marketing variables on repurchase intention without considering the mediating role of customer satisfaction.

In contrast, others have not thoroughly examined the potential negative impact of e-WOM on customer satisfaction. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the effects of electronic word of mouth and promotion on customer satisfaction and their subsequent impact on repurchase intention, with customer satisfaction serving as a mediating variable in the hospitality industry. This research is expected to contribute theoretically by enriching the literature on service and hospitality marketing, and practically by providing insights for hotel management in formulating effective promotional strategies and managing e-WOM to enhance customer satisfaction and encourage repeat stays.

Customer satisfaction often serves as a key mechanism that determines the extent to which electronic word of mouth and promotion can drive customers' intention to make repeat visits. In this context, customer satisfaction is positioned as a mediating variable that bridges the influence of e-WOM and promotion on repurchase intention. Based on this premise, this study aims to analyze the mediating role of customer satisfaction in the relationship between e-WOM and promotion and repurchase intention. This research is expected to provide hotel managers with deeper insights into the importance of managing e-WOM, developing effective promotional strategies, and enhancing customer satisfaction to strengthen customer loyalty and encourage guests to choose the same hotel consistently. Furthermore, the findings of this study are anticipated to serve as a reference for formulating marketing strategies and improving service quality within the hospitality industry.

LITERATURE REVIEW

EWOM (Electronic Word of Mouth)

Electronic Word of Mouth refers to communication among consumers through internet-based media, in which they share positive or negative statements about a product or service based on their experience with it (Wangsa et al., 2022). With the rapid advancement of modern technology, a paradigm shift has occurred in word-of-mouth communication. Traditional word of mouth, which initially took the form of oral communication among individuals or non-commercial groups such as friends or acquaintances, has evolved into a digital form known as electronic word of mouth (Anggita & Pramadanti, 2024). Through e-WOM, customers can provide feedback and share opinions, comments, and product reviews on social media, discussion forums, websites, online applications, TripAdvisor, and other social networking platforms. According to Pramadanti et al., (2023), e-WOM consists of several dimensions: intensity, which refers to the frequency with which consumers write reviews about a product on social networking sites; valence of opinion, which reflects whether consumers provide positive or negative reviews of the product; and content, which relates to the information shared on social networking sites regarding the product or service.

Promotion

Promotion is an essential marketing element that aims to attract attention, build awareness, and stimulate customer interest in products or services (Aripin,

2021). Akakip et al. (2023) state that promotion is a communication process designed to influence customers' attitudes and behaviours. Accordingly, in the hotel industry, promotional activities may take the form of digital advertising, partnerships with travel agencies, or the organization of hotel events to attract potential guests. According to Li et al., (2020), promotional tools in the hospitality sector include discounts, such as price reductions for rooms, food, and beverages; coupons, which can be used for room bookings as well as food and beverage purchases; price packs, referring to bundled pricing for accommodation and food and beverage services; and loyalty programs, which offer the best prices for rooms and other products within the company through membership-based programs.

Customer Satisfaction.

Pesoa et al. (2021) define customer satisfaction as customers' expectations and perceptions formed from previous experiences or activities, which result in feelings of pleasure or disappointment after comparing the perceived performance or outcomes of a product or service with their expectations. In the hotel context, customer satisfaction is achieved when services, facilities, and the overall stay experience meet or even exceed guests' expectations (Wirryana & Erdiansyah, 2020). The ability to identify, fulfil, and satisfy customer needs effectively is the primary mission of the hospitality industry, as it has a broad impact, ranging from increasing customer loyalty to attracting new customers. Customer satisfaction has become a central focus in the hotel industry. According to Carvalho et al. (2020), customer satisfaction reflects the level of feelings individuals or groups have after comparing performance and outcomes with their expectations. Wilson & Keni (2020) further explain that customer satisfaction encompasses several aspects, including customers' expectations of services, the quality of services and offerings such as hotel room products and food and beverage services and complaint behaviour, which includes complaints, feedback, suggestions, and the hotel's responsiveness in handling these issues.

Repurchase Intention.

Repurchase intention refers to a customer's willingness to reuse the same hotel services after a previous stay (Anaya Sanchez et al., 2020). According to Vera & Trujillo (2017), repurchase intention is an important marketing concept that reflects a customer's tendency or intention to return to and repurchase from the same brand or company. In the hotel context, it refers to guests' willingness to stay at the same hotel again after a satisfying accommodation experience. Prabawa et al., (2023) explain that the dimensions of repurchase intention include additional purchase intention, which refers to the intention to purchase other products from the same brand; preferential intention, which is associated with preferences for cleanliness, comfort, security, and service quality; transactional value, reflecting the level of guest satisfaction that encourages repeat transactions; and exploratory value, which refers to the positive impressions

formed during the stay experience. Based on these definitions, it can be explained how the variables involved in this study interact with one another.

Electronic word of mouth helps shape customers' perceptions and positively influences sales performance and a company's online reputation, as positive e-WOM can enhance customer expectations and satisfaction (Negoro & Pramadanti, 2024). When customers are satisfied, they are more likely to form an intention to return, as e-WOM serves as a trigger that links customer satisfaction with repurchase intention (Munawar et al., 2023). Steven & Idris (2024) state that electronic word of mouth has a significant effect on customer satisfaction because e-WOM serves as an information source that shapes customer expectations, builds trust, and creates emotional connections with a brand. Thus, e-WOM creates a positive cycle in which favourable reviews or recommendations encourage repeat-stay intentions, which, in turn, strengthen customer satisfaction.

H1: Electronic Word of Mouth has a positive effect on Customer Satisfaction.

Promotion can enhance customer satisfaction by creating perceived added value. When the service experience meets or exceeds the expectations formed through promotional activities, customer satisfaction is likely to increase, as effective promotional strategies are key to fostering customer loyalty and maintaining long-term relationships (Sulandra et al., 2024). Sudirman et al. (2022) also argue that well-designed promotional strategies not only influence initial purchase decisions but also contribute to higher levels of customer satisfaction. Therefore, promotions can be leveraged to build more positive customer experiences, encourage loyalty, and sustain long-term customer relationships.

H2: Promotion has a positive effect on Customer Satisfaction.

Electronic word of mouth plays an essential role in building trust and encouraging customers to reuse the same hotel services. At the same time, promotion serves as an effective tool for creating incentives that motivate customers to make repeat bookings (Poulis et al., 2019). Susanti & Wulandari (2021) state that promotions not only increase short-term purchases but also strengthen customer relationships with hotels, thereby encouraging repurchase behaviour. When customers feel their experiences are accurately reflected in positive reviews, they are more likely to consider returning.

H3: Electronic Word of Mouth has a positive effect on Repurchase Intention.

H4: Promotion has a positive effect on Repurchase Intention.

Customer satisfaction is a primary driver of repurchase intention, as it creates long-term relationships based on trust, loyalty, and satisfying stay experiences. Customer satisfaction reflects positive experiences that meet or exceed guests' expectations (Ramadhan et al., 2023). Mahartana & Nainggolan (2022) also emphasize that customer satisfaction is a key factor influencing repurchase intention, as it fosters loyalty, enhances trust, creates emotional bonds, and reduces perceived risk in decision-making. By consistently delivering experiences that meet customer expectations, hotels can retain customers and encourage repeat stays.

H5: Customer Satisfaction has a positive effect on Repurchase Intention.

H6: Electronic Word of Mouth has a positive effect on Repurchase Intention through Customer Satisfaction.

H7: Promotion has a positive effect on Repurchase Intention through Customer Satisfaction.

METHODOLOGY

The study population consisted of customers who had stayed at the Ibis Styles Bekasi Hotel for a second or subsequent time. A total of 120 respondents were selected using a purposive sampling technique. The study was conducted in November and December 2025. Customers who met the researcher and were willing to participate completed a questionnaire distributed via Google Forms, which served as the primary data collection instrument in this study (Barella et al., 2024). A five-point Likert scale was employed, with 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, and 5 = *strongly agree*. Furthermore, SmartPLS 3 was used to analyze the data through several testing procedures, including validity and reliability testing of the measurement model, discriminant validity, F-square, R-square, Q^2 , and hypothesis testing.

RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In the measurement model analysis, PLS-SEM was used to evaluate the reliability and validity of the measurement items. There are two criteria used to assess whether the outer model meets the requirements for convergent validity of reflective constructs: factor loadings (> 0.70) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE > 0.50). Based on the factor-loading validity test, all loading values for the manifest variables or indicators for each construct exceeded 0.70, indicating that they met the validity standards. In addition, the AVE values exceeded 0.50, confirming adequate convergent validity. The following table presents the descriptive data analyzed to determine customer satisfaction, as well as the effects of electronic word of mouth and promotion on repurchase intention at the Ibis Styles Bekasi Hotel.

Table 1. Measurement Model Results (outer model)

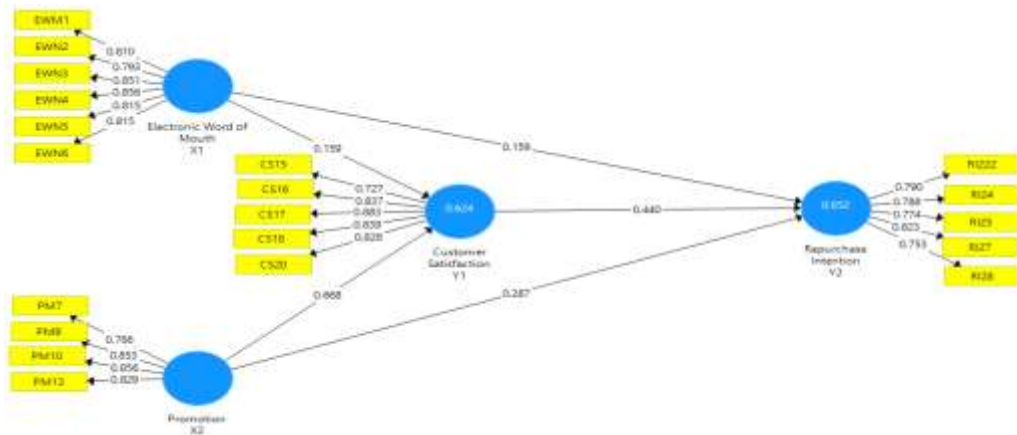
Variable	Indicator	Questionnaire items	Outer Loading	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Electronic Word of Mouth (X1)	Intensity	EWM1	0,810	0,927	0,905	0,678
		EWM2	0,793			
	Valence of opinion	EWM3	0,851			
		EWM4	0,856			
	Content	EWM5	0,815			
		EWM6	0,815			
Promotion (X2)	Discount	PM7	0,856	0,683	0,845	0,896
	Coupon	PM9	0,829			
	Price pack	PM10	0,766			

	<i>Loyalty program</i>	PM13	0,853			
<i>Customer Satisfaction (Y1)</i>	Expectations	CS15	0,727			
		CS 16	0,837			
	Services and Service Quality	CS17	0,883			
			0,839	0,913	0,881	0,679
	Complaining Behavior	CS18	0,826			
	CS20					
<i>Repurchase Intention (Y2)</i>	<i>Additional Purchase Intention</i>	RI22	0,790			
	Preference Intention	RI24	0,788			
				0,890	0,845	0,617
	Transactional Intention	RI25	0,774			
	Exploratory Intention	RI27	0,823			
		RI28	0,753			

The results indicate that all variables used in this study meet the criteria of validity and reliability, as evidenced by the correlation values of each component. Composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha were employed to assess the internal consistency of each construct, with composite reliability (CR) values exceeding 0.70, indicating good reliability among the indicators. Furthermore, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values ranged from 0.727 to 0.883, demonstrating that all constructs satisfied the AVE threshold and were therefore considered valid and adequate for representing the latent variables (Hair et al., 2019).

Research Model

The latent constructs demonstrate absolute correlations exceeding 50%. Figure 1 presents the results of the PLS analysis, which represent the absolute correlations between item scores and construct scores. As shown in Figure 1, the factor loadings range from 0.712 to 0.873, indicating adequate indicator reliability. The following path model illustrates the relationships among the variables examined in this study and represents the proposed research hypotheses.



Gambar 1. Validity Testing Based on Loading Factors

Discriminant Validity - Fornell Larcker.

The discriminant validity test examines the reflective indicators' cross-loadings, which must be greater than 0.70. Another approach to evaluating discriminant validity is to compare the square roots of each construct's Average Variance Extracted (AVE) with the correlations between that construct and other constructs in the model. If the square root of the AVE for each construct is higher than its correlations with other constructs, the model is considered to have good discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2019).

Table 2. Discriminant Validity-Fornell Lacker

	Customer Satisfaction	Electronic Word of Mouth	Promotion	Repurchase Intention
Customer Satisfaction	0,824			
Electronic Word of Mouth	0,638	0,824		
Promotion	0,782	0,717	0,827	
Repurchase Intention	0,765	0,645	0,744	0,786

Table 2 presents the highest values for each construct, namely customer satisfaction (0.824), electronic word of mouth (0.824), promotion (0.827), and repurchase intention (0.786). It can be assumed that the factor loadings of each variable are higher than those of other latent constructs. Based on these findings, discriminant validity is considered achieved. Consequently, the measurement model's discriminant validity is satisfactory (Hair et al., 2019).

Coefficient of determination of R-squared (R²).

The coefficient of determination (R²) measures the predictive power of the structural model, specifically the extent to which exogenous variables explain endogenous variables. Linear regression analysis produces the R-square (R²)

values. According to Hair et al. (2017), R^2 values of 0.75 indicate substantial predictive power, 0.50 moderate, and 0.25 weak. Based on the PLS results, the R^2 values for customer satisfaction and repurchase intention are 0.624 and 0.652, respectively. It indicates that customer satisfaction can be explained by the model at 62%, and repurchase intention at 65%, suggesting that the model demonstrates moderate to strong explanatory power.

Table 3. Determination Coefficient Test (R-squared)

<i>Variable</i>	<i>R Square</i>	<i>R Square Adjusted</i>	<i>Results</i>
Customer Satisfaction	0,624	0,617	Sedang
Repurchase Intention	0,652	0,643	Sedang

Table 3 shows that the model has moderate explanatory power when the R-square value for a variable exceeds 0.50 (Hair et al., 2017). The R-square value for customer satisfaction is 0.624, which is moderate. Similarly, the R-square value for repurchase intention is 0.652, which also falls within the moderate category.

Table 4. Prediction Accuracy Test (Q^2)

<i>Variable</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>SSE</i>	$Q^2 (=1-SSE/SSO)$
<i>Customer satisfaction</i>	600,000	352,947	0,412
<i>Repurchase intention</i>	600,000	366,113	0,390

According to Hair et al. (2017), similar to effect size measurement, the guidelines for assessing predictive relevance accuracy are 0.02 (small), 0.15 (medium), and 0.35 (large). Based on Table 4, the predictive relevance values for customer satisfaction and repurchase intention are 0.412 and 0.390, respectively, both of which exceed the 0.35 threshold. Therefore, both constructs demonstrate very strong predictive accuracy.

Effect Size (f^2)

The effect size (f^2) measurement evaluates the impact of removing an exogenous construct on an endogenous construct, classifying the effect as small (0.02), medium (0.15), large (0.35), or no effect (≤ 0.02) (Hair et al., 2019).

Table 5. F Test

<i>Variable</i>	<i>F Square</i>	<i>Result</i>
<i>EWOM -> Customer Satisfaction</i>	0,033	Weak
<i>EWOM -> Repurchase Intention</i>	0,034	Weak
<i>Promotion -> Customer Satisfaction</i>	0,576	Strong
<i>Promotion -> Repurchase Intention</i>	0,073	Weak
<i>Customer Satisfaction -> Repurchase Intention</i>	0,209	Moderate

The model's effect size (f^2) was calculated to assess the impact of removing an exogenous construct on an endogenous construct. The results indicate that electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) has a weak effect on customer satisfaction and repurchase intention. Promotion has a strong effect on customer satisfaction

but shows no significant effect on repurchase intention. In addition, customer satisfaction has a moderate effect on repurchase intention.

Path Coefficients Analysis

Statistical significance was assessed using a two-tailed t-test at the 5% significance level, and the bootstrapping procedure was applied. The results show that all path coefficients have p-values below 0.05 ($p < 0.05$). It indicates that all t-statistics exceed the critical t-value of 1.96, suggesting that the construct variables exert significant, positive effects on other constructs in the model (Hair et al., 2019). Table 6 provides a reference for evaluating the research hypotheses.

Table 6. Path Coefficient

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Coefficient</i>	<i>Sample Mean (M)</i>	<i>Standard Deviation (STDEV)</i>	<i>T Statistics (O/STDEV)</i>	<i>P Value</i>	<i>Conclusion</i>
Electronic Word of Mouth -> Customer Satisfaction	0,159	0,169	0,092	1,738	0,083	Rejected
Electronic Word of Mouth -> Repurchase Intention.	0,159	0,169	0,077	2,059	0,040	Accepted
Promotion -> Customer Satisfaction	0,668	0,661	0,085	7,853	0,000	Accepted
Promotion -> Repurchase Intention	0,287	0,286	0,106	2,703	0,007	Accepted
Customer Satisfaction -> Repurchase Intention	0,440	0,430	0,101	4,341	0,000	Accepted
Electronic Word of Mouth -> Customer Satisfaction -> Repurchase Intention	0,070	0,072	0,042	1,673	0,095	Rejected
Promotion -> Customer Satisfaction -> Repurchase Intention.	0,294	0,285	0,078	3,768	0,000	Accepted

Table 6 shows that five hypotheses are accepted, namely H2, H3, H4, H5, and H7, while two hypotheses, H1 and H6, are rejected. It indicates that electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) does not have a significant effect on customer satisfaction, nor does e-WOM influence customer satisfaction through repurchase intention. In contrast, the essential relationships identified in this

study include the impact of promotion on customer satisfaction, e-WOM on repurchase intention, promotion on repurchase intention, customer satisfaction on repurchase intention, and the indirect effect of promotion on customer satisfaction through repurchase intention.

DISCUSSION

The results of testing the first hypothesis show a positive path coefficient of 0.159 between electronic word of mouth and customer satisfaction, with a t-statistic of 1.738, which is lower than the critical t-value of 1.96, and a p-value of 0.083, which exceeds the 0.05 significance level. These regression findings indicate that the first hypothesis is not supported; therefore, it can be concluded that e-WOM does not have a significant effect on customer satisfaction. This finding is consistent with Lavenia (2018), which suggests that customer satisfaction is primarily the result of personal experience, whereas information from e-WOM tends to be more general. As consumers are increasingly exposed to abundant e-WOM, they may become accustomed to it and place greater emphasis on their own direct experiences when evaluating satisfaction. However, this result contrasts with previous studies by Itasari et al. (2022) and Rosifa et al. (2020), which found that e-WOM has a significant positive effect on customer satisfaction. These studies show that online reviews play an important role in shaping hotel image and influencing customer satisfaction, and that consistent, positive reviews across platforms can enhance customer expectations and increase the likelihood of satisfaction after a stay.

The results of testing the second hypothesis indicate a positive path coefficient of 0.159 between electronic word of mouth and repurchase intention. The T-statistic value of 2.059 exceeds the T-table value of 1.96, and the P-value of 0.040 is below the significance level of 0.05. These findings support the second hypothesis, confirming that e-WOM has a significant effect on repurchase intention. This result is consistent with previous studies by Jaya dan Putri (2021); Pratama dan Nurmansyah (2023), which found that e-WOM positively influences repurchase intention. Positive online reviews often reflect satisfying service experiences, such as comfortable rooms, friendly staff, and superior facilities. Consequently, such reviews reduce customers' uncertainty and increase their confidence in returning to the same hotel. However, this finding contrasts with that of Putri dan Sienatra (2023), which reported that e-WOM does not have a significant effect on repurchase intention. This discrepancy suggests that e-WOM may fail to stimulate repurchase intention when customers perceive online reviews as irrelevant or unrealistic, thereby weakening their impact on customers' decisions to make repeat purchases.

The results of testing the third hypothesis reveal a positive path coefficient of 0.668 between promotion and customer satisfaction. The T-statistic value of 7.853 is higher than the T-table value of 1.96, and the P-value of 0.000 is below the significance level of 0.05. These regression results indicate that the third hypothesis is supported, confirming that promotion has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction. This finding is in line with previous studies by Pangestu dan Tuti (2022); Sari dan Paludi (2020), which explain that practical

promotional activities can increase sales and customer satisfaction. Well-designed promotional programs can create positive experiences for guests and strengthen their loyalty. However, this result contrasts with Budiono (2021) study, which found that promotion does not significantly affect customer satisfaction. The study suggests that promotional offers often do not match what customers actually receive; if tangible improvements in the service experience do not accompany promotions, customers may not feel satisfied.

Furthermore, the results of testing the fourth hypothesis show a positive path coefficient of 0.287 between promotion and repurchase intention. The T-statistic value of 2.703 exceeds the T-table value of 1.96, and the P-value of 0.007 is below 0.05. These findings support the fourth hypothesis, indicating that promotion has a significant effect on repurchase intention. This result supports prior research by Anim dan Indiani (2020) and Prakoso dan Dwiyanto (2021), which shows that the more effective the promotional efforts, the higher consumers' intention to make repeat purchases. When customers perceive that promotional offers meet their expectations and add value to their overall experience, such promotions not only influence the initial decision to stay but also enhance satisfaction and increase the likelihood of future repurchases. In other words, promotion not only attracts new customers but also strengthens relationships with existing ones.

Nevertheless, Putri dan Ramli (2019) reported contrasting findings, indicating that promotion does not significantly affect repurchase intention. Their study suggests that if hotels fail to meet customer expectations for room quality, cleanliness, or service, promotional offers alone are insufficient to influence purchasing decisions. Thus, even when attractive discounts or deals are available, poor service quality may discourage customers from making repeat bookings or from returning to the same hotel.

The results of testing the fifth hypothesis show a positive path coefficient of 0.440 between customer satisfaction and repurchase intention. The T-statistic value of 4.341 exceeds the T-table value of 1.96, and the P-value of 0.000 is below the significance level of 0.05. These regression results indicate that the fifth hypothesis is supported, confirming that customer satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on repurchase intention. This finding is consistent with previous studies by Effendi and Besra (2019) and Rahmawati et al. (2018), which indicate that satisfied customers tend to show greater attention, interest, and a willingness to make repeat purchases. Customer satisfaction is a key predictor of customer loyalty; when guests are satisfied with hotel services such as comfort, cleanliness, and customer service, they are more likely to intend to stay at the same hotel again. This satisfaction fosters an emotional bond with the hotel and increases the likelihood of repurchase intention. However, this result contrasts with that of Fausta et al. (2023), which found that customer satisfaction does not have a positive, significant effect on repurchase intention. Their findings suggest that when customers have many hotel options in the exact location or tourist destination, they may feel satisfied with their stay but still be interested in trying other hotels that offer different experiences. Additionally, customers may perceive other hotels as cheaper, more conveniently located, or better suited to

their needs, leading them to choose alternatives even though they are satisfied with their previous experience.

Furthermore, the results of testing the sixth hypothesis indicate a positive path coefficient of 0.070 for the indirect effect of e-WOM on customer satisfaction through repurchase intention. The T-statistic value of 1.673 is lower than the T-table value of 1.96, and the P-value of 0.095 exceeds the significance level of 0.05. These findings demonstrate that the sixth hypothesis is not supported, indicating that e-WOM does not significantly influence customer satisfaction through repurchase intention. This result aligns with the study by Ningtias and Sugiyanto (2023), which explains that when actual hotel experiences do not match what is promised through e-WOM, for example, poor service despite positive online reviews, customers may feel disappointed and lose trust in the information obtained from e-WOM. Consequently, e-WOM may fail to influence both customer satisfaction and the intention to return to the hotel. In contrast, Apritama dan Susila (2023) reported different findings, suggesting that e-WOM can influence customer satisfaction through repurchase intention. Their study explains that many customers currently rely on social media and online review platforms when choosing accommodation, and positive reviews on credible platforms can strengthen customer loyalty and increase the intention to return and stay at the same hotel.

The results of testing the seventh hypothesis indicate a positive path coefficient of 0.294 for the effect of promotion on customer satisfaction through repurchase intention. The T-statistic value of 3.768 exceeds the T-table value of 1.96, and the P-value of 0.000 is below the significance level of 0.05. These regression results support the seventh hypothesis, confirming that promotion has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction via repurchase intention. This finding is consistent with previous studies by Hardiana dan Kayadoe (2022); Husen (2023), which explain that promotional activities can enhance customer satisfaction and, subsequently, increase customers' intention to return and stay at the same hotel. Promotional offers that meet customer expectations can create feelings of pleasure and trust toward the hotel, thereby strengthening customer satisfaction. However, this result contrasts with the findings of Pradana et al. (2021), who argued that promotion does not influence customer satisfaction through repurchase intention. Their study suggests that when promotional offers lack uniqueness or distinctive advantages compared to competitors' offerings, customers may not feel motivated to return. In such cases, promotions are not strong enough to enhance customer satisfaction or stimulate repurchase intention.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study indicate that an overreliance on Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) as a tool for shaping customer satisfaction needs reconsideration, as e-WOM does not have a significant effect on customer satisfaction, although it directly influences repurchase intention. It serves as a critical reflection for hotel managers who tend to focus their digital marketing strategies on generating positive online reviews without ensuring consistency in

service quality at the operational level. Therefore, hotel management is advised to prioritize improvements in the actual stay experience, such as room comfort, cleanliness, and staff service quality, so that expectations built through e-WOM do not result in perceptual gaps for customers.

Furthermore, promotion has been shown to have a more substantial, more consistent influence on both customer satisfaction and repurchase intention. Accordingly, promotional strategies should be designed in a realistic and transparent manner and offer tangible value that customers genuinely perceive, rather than merely providing short-term discounts that may diminish perceptions of service quality. From an academic perspective, this study contributes to the literature by demonstrating that the mediating role of customer satisfaction is context-dependent. Customer satisfaction does not always function as an effective mediator in the relationship between e-WOM and repurchase intention. Yet, it plays a significant mediating role in the effect of promotion on repurchase intention. This finding challenges the common assumption in service marketing literature that positions e-WOM as a primary determinant of customer satisfaction. Therefore, future research is recommended to incorporate additional variables, such as service quality, trust, review credibility, price perception, and brand image, and to expand the research context to include different hotel classifications or destinations. Moreover, the use of mixed-methods approaches or longitudinal designs is suggested to better capture changes in customer perceptions before and after the stay experience, thereby enabling a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding of how customer satisfaction and repurchase intention are formed.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

This advanced research reveals that e-WOM influences repurchase intention but does not significantly shape customer satisfaction, indicating that reliance on online reviews without consistent service quality may create expectation gaps. In contrast, promotion shows a stronger and more consistent effect on both satisfaction and repurchase intention, highlighting the importance of transparent, value-based promotional strategies. The findings challenge the assumption that customer satisfaction always mediates the effect of e-WOM and emphasize its context-dependent role in hospitality marketing.

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