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Understanding Positive Electronic Word-of-Mouth Intention: A Conceptual Model For Hotels

JungYun Hur
Purdue University

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By JUNGYUN HUR

Entitled

UNDERSTANDING POSITIVE ELECTRONIC WORD-OF-MOUTH INTENTION: A CONCEPTUAL MODEL FOR HOTELS

For the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Is approved by the final examining committee:

SooCheong Jang Chair

James Anderson

Chun-Hung Tang

DongHee Kim

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Approved by Major Professor(s): SooCheong Jang

Approved by: Barbara Almanza

Head of the Departmental Graduate Program

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Date
UNDERSTANDING POSITIVE ELECTRONIC WORD-OF-MOUTH
INTENTION: A CONCEPTUAL MODEL FOR HOTELS

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Faculty
of
Purdue University
by
JungYun Hur

In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
of
Doctor of Philosophy

August 2016
Purdue University
West Lafayette, Indiana
To my parents

For their endless love, support and encouragement
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ABSTRACT


To understand the underlying constructs and mechanisms of the generation of positive hotel electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), this study developed a comprehensive model that explains why consumers engage in positive eWOM generation about hotels and what triggers such behaviors. To develop a conceptual model, first, this study identified relevant constructs: a set of eWOM motivations (e.g., self-enhancement, gaining social benefit, helping other consumers, and helping the hotel), consumption-related factors (e.g., utilitarian and hedonic value), a social influence-related factor (e.g., online social capital), and behavioral intention (e.g., intention to generate positive eWOM about hotels). The constructs were incorporated into an integrated model of eWOM formation, and the relationships among constructs were investigated. Last, this study examined the moderating effect of opinion leadership in these relationships. To this end, this study used an online self-administered survey method and collected a sample of 570 usable responses. For data analysis, structural equation modeling was used. Results revealed that in general all
identified motivations positively influenced intention to generate positive eWOM about hotels, suggesting eWOM motivations are the precursors of eWOM generation. In addition, the results suggest that hedonic consumption value had a positive impact on all eWOM motivations whereas utilitarian value only had a significant effect on motivation for helping the hotel, indicating that not all consumption values function as a trigger of eWOM motivations. This study also found that online social capital enhanced eWOM motivations, suggesting that online social capital plays a pivotal role that influences eWOM generation. Further, this study found that the overall underlying construct relationships differed between high and low opinion leadership groups, although the comparison of each path coefficient across the level of opinion leadership did not statistically significant. This study is theoretically and practically meaningful for marketing and consumer behavior literature and managers since it provides a comprehensive framework that helps better understanding of underlying constructs and mechanisms regarding the generation of positive eWOM about hotels. Additional findings, detailed discussions, implications, and limitations and future research directions are discussed in the main body of the paper.

*Keywords*: eWOM generation, eWOM motivation, hedonic value, utilitarian value, social capital, positive hotel eWOM
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

People often share their opinions and product-related information with others (Berger, 2014). Also they talk about their recent vacations, comment about movies watched, or complain about restaurants visited. This interpersonal communication, called word-of-mouth (WOM), traditionally defined as “face-to-face communication about products or companies between people who were not commercial entities” (Arndt, 1967; Litvin et al., 2008, p. 459), has a huge impact on consumer behavior. WOM is considered to be less biased than company-generated communications such as commercials or advertising designed to cultivate certain consumer attitudes or behavior toward products or services (Brown & Reingen, 1987; Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2006; Friestad & Wright, 1994; Godes & Mayzlin, 2004, Gupta & Harris, 2010). Scholars and practitioners have suggested that WOM is “an ultimate test of the customer’s relationship” (Bendapudi & Berry, 1997, p. 30), is “a dominant force in the marketplace” (Glynn Mangold et al., 1999, p. 73), “may be among the most important” (Brown et al., 2005, p. 123), and is “the gift that keeps on giving” (Trusov et al., 2009, p. 96).

The advent of the Internet has influenced where and how this interpersonal communication occurs. New media and technology such as social media and mobile
have contributed to the ease of access, wider reach of message and faster diffusion than traditional WOM. Thousands of consumer reviews on Amazon, TripAdvisor, and Yelp, billions of posts on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, countless email messages are created daily. Thus, WOM communication occurs not only face-to-face but also on an online medium.

Electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), which refers to “any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual, or former consumers about a product or company, which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions via the Internet” (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004, p. 39), has been regarded as a key influence on overall people’s beliefs, attitudes and behavior patterns (Sweeney et al., 2011). The influence of eWOM on consumer behavior far outweighs that of traditional WOM due to eWOM’s unique features, such as speed, convenience, and one-to-many reach (Sun et al., 2006).

In general, eWOM communication is influential most types of products and services, but this type of communication is particularly important in the hospitality industry due to the unique characteristics of its products and services. Products and services provided in the hospitality industry are intangible, and thus, they are difficult to evaluate prior to real experience (Litvin et al., 2008). Moreover, the product and service quality provided in the hospitality industry is difficult to be guaranteed and standardized. Hence, products and services in the hospitality industry are more risk-oriented compared to general commodities (Glynn Mangold et al., 1999; Murray, 1991; Zeithaml, 1981). Considering these unique features (e.g., intangibility and risk-
orientation), information shared by other experienced consumers may provide a useful guidance to potential consumers in relation to their decision-making. Consumer-generated messages are considered more reliable ways of persuasion since message senders and receivers are considered not having intention to sell or recommend products or services. Thus, potential consumers are more likely to regard these messages trustworthy and useful (Herr et al., 1991; Murray, 1991; Silverman, 2001). Therefore, many potential consumers check posted online reviews before making purchase decisions (Melián-González et al., 2013). This behavior is more common in choosing service products than in choosing other goods: Travel Industry Wire (2011) reported that 60 percent of U.S. travelers take eWOM recommendations into account when they book vacations; Gretzel and Yoo (2008) found that eWOM is critical to make a decision for accommodation choices; and consumers use online hotel reviews more than any other information source during the course of making room reservations (O’Connor, 2009). Further, previous studies have shown that eWOM has a significant influence on firms’ performance such as increase in restaurant revenue (Luca, 2011) and hotel room price (Anderson, 2012).

Recognizing the increasing importance of eWOM, eWOM related topics has drawn much attention from researcher: the importance of eWOM to organizations (e.g., Hansson et al., 2013), the influence of eWOM in consumer behavior (e.g., purchase decisions and intentions) (e.g., Zhu & Zhang, 2010), its antecedents (e.g., Liang et al., 2013), and its consequences (e.g., Huang et al., 2011). However, research on eWOM communication in relation to hotels remains scant (Pantelidis,
2010), although the industry’s customers actively use eWOM (O’Connor & Frew, 2002). Little empirical research has focused on what consumers talk about and why and how hotel eWOM is actually formed (Cantallops & Salvi, 2014; Munar & Jacobsen, 2014). Consequently, although it is clear that eWOM affects consumers’ attitudes towards products, their purchase intentions, and accordingly sales, little is known about the eWOM formation processes that drive these outcomes (Goldenberg et al., 2001).

Thus, the main interest of this study is to explore the underlying constructs and processes of positive eWOM generation about hotels. The valence of eWOM can be either positive or negative. Recognizing the influential role of positive eWOM in increasing firm’s sales while reducing marketing expenditure, marketers have been interested in promoting positive eWOM (Brown et al., 2005). Prior research has suggested that positive WOM enhances people’s purchase intentions for new products since it reduces purchase-risk (Dichter, 1966), helping create a positive impression of the brand and the company (Arndt, 1967), and decreasing the company’s overall marketing costs. A conceptual framework of positive hotel eWOM generation would benefit academia and practitioners. This framework could provide a clear definition for the set of review-generating factors and the weight of these factors in generating eWOM about hotels, which has been acknowledged as a limitation of the current studies on eWOM (King et al., 2014). Accordingly, this integrated framework could advise marketers to develop effective marketing and
consumer relationship management strategies based on understanding of the relationships among eWOM-generating factors and eWOM intention.

1.2 Significance of the Study

This study addresses an extremely important topic in consumer behavior and marketing. WOM has long drawn much attention from researchers due to its significant influence on consumer judgements and behavior (Herr et al., 1991; John, 1994; Sultan et al., 1990) and is an important source of consumer expectations (Zeithaml et al., 1993).

Recognizing the importance of eWOM, this study attempts to fill the gap in understanding the generation of positive eWOM in the context of the hotel stay experience. To provide a better understanding of what stimulates eWOM motivations and intention and how they influence each other, this study investigates the integrated processes of positive hotel eWOM generation. With a thorough review of previous literature and theories, relevant factors are identified, and a conceptual model for positive hotel eWOM generation is proposed. It is of great value that this study develops an integrated framework of eWOM generation since the lack of a comprehensive model of WOM formation has long been pointed out the limitation of WOM studies (Anderson, 1998; Arndt, 1967; Cantallops & Salvi, 2014).

The model is designed to provide a conceptual model for positive eWOM generation for hotels with understanding of relevant constructs and their roles in eWOM generation. More specifically, the underlying structure of eWOM generation
is identified by modeling motivations, social influence, and consumption value-related variables. This model is a meaningful extension of previous consumer behavior research on eWOM that had been limited to fragmented approaches. Thus, this study contributes conceptually to the current literature by developing and testing a more comprehensive model of positive hotel eWOM generation.

In addition, this study develops a clear set of psychological drivers and environmental triggers of eWOM generation and their relationships. This approach provides an in-depth understanding of consumer eWOM behavior by suggesting what and how to stimulate consumers to increase their participation in creating positive hotel eWOM. Thus, the set of personal, social, consumption-related, and motivational factors that engage eWOM will provide insights for hotel managers to develop more effective strategies regarding marketing and consumer relationships management.

1.3 Research Questions and Objectives

There is a need for a better understanding of positive hotel eWOM generation, including what stimulates consumers to contribute to the generation of positive eWOM about hotels, and how these factors influence each other. Thus, this study provides a systematic approach to the generation of positive hotel eWOM and proposes a conceptual framework for positive hotel eWOM formation. More specifically, the following research questions (RQs) are addressed:
RQ 1: What factors influence the generation of positive hotel eWOM?
RQ 2: How can the set of eWOM-generating factors be classified?
RQ 3: How can the set of eWOM-generating factors be incorporated into a conceptual model?
RQ 4: Under which circumstances do the eWOM-generating factors work differently?

To address the research questions, this study has the following objectives:

Objective 1: To identify motivations for positive hotel eWOM generation;
Objective 2: To identify consumption-relevant factors that influence eWOM motivations;
Objective 3: To identify social-relevant factors that influence eWOM motivations;
Objective 4: To identify person-relevant factors that influence eWOM formation;
Objective 5: To propose and test a conceptual model of positive hotel eWOM generation.

1.4 Organization

The present study is structured as follows. Chapter 1 provides research background and justification. Chapter 2 reviews previous literature and relevant theories and proposes a model for the study. The conceptual relationships among positive hotel eWOM generation intention, eWOM motivations, consumption values,
online social capital, and opinion leadership are discussed in this chapter. Chapter 3 explains the methods and the study procedures. The research instrument, measurement, methods for sample, data collection, and data analysis are included in this part. Chapter 4 provides the results of this study. The profile of sample, and the results of hypothesis tests are discussed in this part. Last, Chapter 5 discusses the summary of finding, theoretical and practical implications, limitations and future research suggestions.
2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Definition of Word-of-Mouth and its Influence

People often share their experiences about new product purchases and talk to acquaintances and friends about their vacation experience. The advice or recommendations provided through interpersonal conversation influence people’s purchase decision-making. This informal interpersonal communication is called word-of-mouth (WOM) communication, and its importance has been well documented (Anderson, 1998; Cantallops & Salvi, 2014; Van den Bulte & Wuyts, 2009). Scholars have begun to particularly focus on research on WOM since the 1960s (Arndt, 1967; Dichter, 1966; Engel et al., 1969), and the definition of WOM has evolved (Carl, 2006). Arndt (1967) defined WOM as “face-to-face communication about products or companies between people who were not engaged in commercial parties” (Litvin et al., 2008, p. 459). Later, WOM is more broadly defined as “all informal communications directed at other consumers about the ownership, usage, or characteristics of particular goods and services or their sellers” (Westbrook, 1987, p. 261). WOM communication includes a variety of consumer-to-consumer communications, ranging from merely mentioning an experience about products, services, or brands (e.g., we stayed at this hotel), sharing product- or service-related
contents (e.g., a new Nike ad on YouTube), having product- or service-related
discussions (e.g., the new iPhone is really convenient) to making direct
recommendations for the products or services (e.g., the restaurant is the best place in
this town!) (Berger, 2014).

WOM communication is valuable since it is presumed to be more reliable
than company-generated communications such as commercial or advertising which
aim to cultivate certain attitudes or behavior toward products or services (Brown &
Reingen, 1987; Friestad & Wright, 1994; Godes & Mayzlin, 2004). Since WOM is
generated by a more trustworthy information source such as friends or acquaintances
than information generated by marketers (Feick & Price, 1987), consumers’ purchase
decisions are often influenced and shaped by WOM (Chu & Kim, 2011). Without
surprising, positive WOM enhances the likelihood of purchase whereas negative
WOM reduces the possibility of purchase (Arndt, 1967; Gruen et al., 2005; Mahajan
et al., 1990). Thus, WOM greatly influences consumer decision-making and sales of
products or services. Bughin et al.’s (2010) study found that “WOM is the primary
factor behind 20 to 50 percent of all purchasing decisions and generates more than
twice the sales of paid advertising” (p. 8).

Although consumers frequently seek unbiased opinions of other consumers to
escape the carefully crafted messages of professional marketers, consumers also
contribute to generating information sources by sharing their stories about products
and services (Berger, 2014). For example, the average American engages in 120
WOM conversations per week (Keller, 2007). WOM includes any information about
products, services, or brands that is generated from one-to-one communication in
person or one-to-many communication via communication medium such as the
Internet (Brown, 2005). The former type of WOM, which is based on face-to-face
interaction or literal word of “mouth”, is referred to “traditional WOM” while the
latter type of WOM, which occurs online, or word of “mouse”, is referred to as
“electronic WOM.”

2.1.1 Electronic Word-of-Mouth

The emergence of Internet-based media has facilitated the way consumers
communicate with each other and how they gather and exchange product- and
service-related information (Dellarocas, 2003). The introduction of new media and
development of information technologies have offered increasing chances of sharing
people’s experiences with products and services (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004) as “the
digital innovations of the last decade made it effortless, indeed second nature, for
audiences to talk back and talk to each other” (Deighton & Kornfeld, 2009, p. 4). An
increasing number of opinion platforms and online social channels have been
introduced, and thus, online consumer reviews, known as electronic word-of-mouth
(eWOM), now plays a crucial role in consumer decision-making.

eWOM communication refers to “any positive or negative statement made by
potential, actual, and former customers about a product or a company via the
Internet” (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004, p. 39). eWOM communication occurs in a
variety of circumstances. People share their experience and write reviews about
products or services on blogs, discussion forums, review websites (e.g., TripAdvisor or Yelp), or social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram). The advent of new media, and development information technology (e.g., mobile, apps) enables people to make constant communication, and information exchange without time and place constraint, and accordingly eWOM communication such as posting or checking others opinion via the Internet has been crucial in consumer behavior (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010).

2.1.2 Traditional versus Electronic Word-of-Mouth

Although traditional WOM and eWOM share common characteristics such voluntarily providing product or service-related experience and information to others, they have several distinct characteristics each other (Cheung & Thadani, 2010; Sun et al., 2006). The distinct characteristics make eWOM unique and considered more influential on consumer behavior than traditional WOM. Figure 2.1 provides a comparison between traditional WOM and eWOM.

Compared with traditional WOM, eWOM is more easily accessible. eWOM occurs via online which overcomes most physical impediments which have challenged face-to-face traditional communication. In general, traditional WOM occurs in existing social relationships (Brown & Reingen, 1987), but eWOM can reach far beyond existing relationships as the Internet provides the opportunity for consumers to effortlessly communicate with other users regardless of time and location barriers. In the online environment, consumers are no longer constrained by
time and location in transmitting or receiving information (Sun et al., 2006). In addition, the development and rise of mobile technologies have further lowered the barriers of time and space to a minimum (Ling & Campbell, 2010). Further, eWOM can be considered more cost-effective information sources than traditional WOM because search information online make information-seeker save time, money, and effort than face-to-face interpersonal communications which require participants’ physical presence (Cheung & Lee, 2012).

Different from traditional WOM communication, which a conversation occurs only in a synchronous mode, eWOM has made an asynchronous process possible for poster-reader communication (Steffes & Burgee, 2009). Under the online environment, contents and reviews are saved and can be read and shared at different times, which is impossible for traditional WOM communication as the communicators must be present at the same time. This asynchronous process enables eWOM to have persistent contents that cannot be found in traditional WOM. Information provided by eWOM is recorded and converted into documented text. The persistent contents remain available on the Internet for a longer period of time with the forms of messages, pictures, and video and audio files while information is perishable in traditional WOM communication (Sun et al., 2006).

Compared with traditional WOM, eWOM has greater transmission efficiency. eWOM information can spread in many ways while traditional WOM is constrained by face-to-face dialogue. eWOM can be exchanged through many different modes, such as one-to-one communication (e.g., emails), one-to-many
communication (e.g., blogs), or many-to-many communication (e.g., virtual communities and review sites), between individuals who do not necessarily have any social ties (Litvin et al., 2008). In this interactive model, consumers contribute and retrieve eWOM information to and from the Internet that is accessible to many other users (Hoffman & Novak, 1996). Thus, eWOM makes it possible to reach an unprecedented number of individuals at once (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004).

Content provided by eWOM can be easily assessed and compared than those of traditional WOM. eWOM has greater measurability of content than traditional WOM since the eWOM messages can be generated by criteria provided by platform operators, saved and accumulated, eWOM are more observable than traditional WOM which is mainly dependent on verbal and one-time communication (Cheung & Thadani, 2012). For example, content in eWOM about hotels is written based on criteria provided by review sites (e.g., location, service, and room cleanliness) and is far more voluminous compared to that of traditional WOM. Thus, consumers can easily access to a variety of information and review it (e.g., the valence of the message, rating, and the number of “like”) to make optimal decisions (Cheung & Thadani, 2012).

Despite these advantages, eWOM has a major problem related to the credibility of the content. Traditional WOM communication is generally conducted by people who know each other and share a strong social tie, and this establishes the credibility of the message content (Steffes & Burgee, 2009). Unlike traditional WOM communication, information by eWOM can be exchanged between people who have
no prior relationship. In most cases, the identity of the poster is unknown or hidden behind his or her nickname. Although anonymity may have brought more honest and forthcoming viewpoints as people can communicate more equally and freely (Duhan et al., 1997), anonymity diminishes the ability for readers to evaluate the trustworthiness of the posters and the messages. In addition, eWOM messages may have under-reporting bias (Cantallops & Salvi, 2014) and include fraudulent reviews (Luca & Zervas, 2015). Researchers have found that in most online communities, only 1 percent of users are actively involved in generating eWOM while 90 percent of users are lurkers who never contribute (Nielsen, 2009). In addition, extremely dis/satisfied consumers tend to generate eWOM more resulting in negatively skewed opinions about products or services (Bansal & Voyer, 2000). Firms may create fraudulent reviews, by posting good comments for themselves or by creating negative comments for their competitors (Luca & Zervas, 2015).

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional WOM</th>
<th>eWOM</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Offline medium</td>
<td>Online medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral</td>
<td>Text, pictorial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synchronous process</td>
<td>Asynchronous / Synchronous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diffusion limited</td>
<td>Fast diffusion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reach limited</td>
<td>Wide reach</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short content persistency</td>
<td>Long content persistency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non measurable</td>
<td>Measurable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non anonymous</td>
<td>Mostly anonymous</td>
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Figure 2.1   Comparison between Traditional WOM and eWOM
2.2  Electronic Word-of-Mouth and the Hospitality Industry

2.2.1  The Unique Nature of the Hospitality Industry

Interpersonal influence has long been considered important in the hospitality industry. Consumer behavior theories in the hospitality and tourism literature such as Cohen’s (1972) drifter, explorer, and mass tourist typology, Plog’s (1974) theory of allocentricity and psychocentricity, and Butler’s (1980) tourist area life cycle model have suggested the importance of creating information diffusion and continuing marketing practices for new tourist spots and services to maintain the sustainability of local economy and tourism products, and underscore the important role of innovative travelers (e.g., market maven or opinion leader) who adopt new tourism products and services then share their experiences with other travelers (Dearden & Harron, 1992).

WOM is especially important in the hospitality industry as it is difficult for consumers to evaluate intangible products before their consumption (Litvin et al., 2008). For example, unless people have previous experiences with services or products, consumers cannot easily judge the quality or the value of products or services (e.g., would it be good to stay at this resort during my vacation? how would be the taste of food in this restaurant?). Thus, many potential consumers check posted online reviews before they make purchase decisions (Melián-González et al., 2013). Researchers have shown that 60 percent of U.S. travelers take eWOM recommendations into account when booking vacations (Travel Industry Wire, 2011) and the influence of eWOM is more critical when consumers choose where to stay.
Yoo and Gretzel’s (2008) investigation of consumer decision-making on TripAdvisor showed that people use online comments when they make decision to choose hotels, instead of when they plan trips.

Given that hospitality products are considered high-risk and high-involvement purchases, consumers tend to rely on the opinions of relatives, peers, and friends before making decisions (Beldona et al., 2005). To accommodate consumers’ feelings about that they make reliable choices, online review sites often offer or introduce what other travelers think about good travel-related products (e.g., transportation, hotels, restaurants). Thus, consumers in the hospitality and tourism industry increasingly rely on eWOM instead of information provided by the service provider while regarding consumer advocacy as more objective and trustworthy (Bansal & Voyer, 2000; Kozinets, 2002).

As prospective consumers rely on eWOM as an important reference for related decision-making such as choosing tourism destinations and booking hotels and restaurants (Litvin et al., 2008; Simpson & Siguaw, 2008), practitioners regard eWOM as useful feedbacks to their new or existent products or services and inform consumers about improvement made based on consumer’s opinions. Considering the intensely competitive market situation and the seasonal and perishable nature of hospitality products, firms’ can achieve competitiveness advantage for their products by creating favorable eWOM and effectively managing consumer relationships.
2.2.2 The Importance of Positive eWOM in the Hospitality Industry

The significant influence of eWOM on consumer purchase decisions and its consequences for companies have been discussed in many studies, and the overarching conclusion is that positive eWOM enhances favorable attitudes and the likelihood of product consumption, while negative eWOM generate unfavorable attitude reducing likelihood of purchase (Ba & Pavlou, 2002; Bickart & Schindler, 2001; Hong, 2006; Karakaya & Barns, 2010; Lee et al., 2008; Park et al., 2007; Steffes & Burgee, 2009). The message in WOM includes either positive or negative product evaluations. Since favorable WOM is more likely to enhance firm’s revenue while reducing marketing expenditure, marketers have long tried to increase positive WOM of which messages include making others aware that one uses products and services provided by a certain company or brand, making positive recommendations to others about products or services, and sharing a company’s quality orientation with others (Brown et al., 2005).

Seminal research on the influence of WOM on consumer behavior revealed the important role of positive WOM: Dicther’s (1966) study suggests that positive WOM enhance consumers’ new product purchase decreasing risk; and Arndt’s (1967) study suggests that positive eWOM create a favorable image of the brand and the company reducing marketing costs. The conducive role of positive eWOM is particularly found in the restaurant and hotel industries (Pantelidis, 2010; Susskind, 2002; Vermeulen & Seegers, 2009; Ye et al., 2009). Previous studies have shown that a one-star increase in a Yelp enables firms to generate a 5 to 9 percent more on sales
(Luca, 2011) and each one-point increase in a hotel review score allows a hotel to increase its price up to 11.2 percent (Anderson, 2012). For this reason, many hotels are careful to acknowledge online reviews and promote positive eWOM communication (Park & Allen, 2013). Accordingly, the main interest of this study lies in positive hotel eWOM, and this study aims to identify underlying processes and key variables influencing consumers’ intention to generate positive eWOM about hotels.

2.3 Theoretical Background

2.3.1 The Transformational View of WOM

The theoretical development of WOM studies has evolved through three shifts based on how scholars view WOM participants and formation (Kozinets et al., 2010): The first phase is “the organic interconsumer influence model” which views WOM communication as pure consumer-to-consumer communication; the second phase is “the linear opinion leader influence model,” which contends that opinion leaders have an influential role in WOM communication and other fellow consumers’ behaviors; and the third phase is the recent shift to “the network influence model,” which focuses on co-creation of WOM through consumer social networks. These three transformational views are depicted in Figure 2.2.
2.3.1.1 The Organic Interconsumer Influence Model

Early research on interpersonal influence on consumer behavior has begun in 1940s. Research on marketing communication investigated two distinct means of communicating product-related information which are marketer-generated (e.g., printed advertisement) and consumer-generated communication (e.g., WOM). Scholars recognized the importance of informal interpersonal communication in introducing new products or services to consumers. For example, diffusion scholars (e.g., Ryan & Gross, 1943) suggested that interpersonal conversations among consumers were more crucial than marketing communication in influencing new products-adoption. The early studies on WOM viewed WOM communication from a simple understanding of a pure consumer-to-consumer conversation that is triggered by social force. The nature of WOM communication is “organic” as it occurs between one and another consumer without direct prompting or influence by companies. The view of WOM in the organic interconsumer influence model posits that WOM is created naturally among consumers when companies perform their role of product production, and marketing products or services (Kozinets et al., 2010). In this model, communicators are motivated by social-psychological drivers such as a desire to help others or maintain their social relationship or status through a WOM conversation (Arndt, 1967).
2.3.1.2 The Linear Opinion Leader Influence Model

As marketing practices advanced, relevant models in WOM formation emphasized the important role of particularly influential consumers in the WOM processes, such as market maven or opinion leaders (e.g., Brooks, 1957; Engel et al., 1969; Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1955; King & Summers, 1970). Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) developed two-step flow model of communication which explained how people gain information and how they weight this information in making their purchase decision. The model emphasized the influential role of opinion leaders who transferred mass-mediated information to public, and accordingly public considers information shared by opinion leaders is more trustworthy and reliable than mass-mediated message. In a consumption context, WOM is one of the influential sources with which opinion leaders influences other consumers’ perception of products or services (Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1955). The linear opinion leader influence model suggests that marketers can work through “the friend who recommends a tried and trusted product” instead of the “salesman who tries to get rid of merchandise” (Dichter, 1966, p. 165). Recognizing the influential role of opinion leaders in consumer decision-making, providing trustworthy information by marketers was important since opinion leaders may evaluate and selectively transmit information as communications with other consumers continue (Brooks, 1957; Engel et al., 1969; Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1955).
2.3.1.3 The Network Influence Model

Studies on consumer behavior and marketing have evolved from an input-output transactional orientation to a relational orientation (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). The relational perspective has placed increasing importance on the function of consumer networks and groups (Cova & Cova, 2002; Hoffman & Novak, 1996). Studies have shown that message created by consumers does not flow in one direction such as from market maven to other consumers, but it is mutually exchanged among other consumers (Litvin et al., 2008). Marketers want to take advantage of these relationships and create “buzz” through WOM, which refers to the “amplification of initial marketing efforts by third parties through their passive or active influence” (Thomas, 2004, p. 64).

As the advent of the Internet has empowered consumers, they use new media to build and maintain online social networks, and this networks enable consumers to co-create and share product-related information with other consumers (Libai et al., 2010). In this interactive environment, WOM communications occur through networks, and thus, messages do not flow in one direction but are exchanged among members of the networks (Kozinets et al., 2010). The network influence model may better explain the formation of eWOM and collective consumer behaviors than classical individual-based models that assume people’s behavior is solely dependent on personal reasons and perceived social pressure (Davis & Bagozzi, 1992).
A. The organic interconsumer influence model

B. The linear opinion leader influence model

C. The network influence model


Figure 2.2  The Transformational View of WOM
Although the transformational view of eWOM suggests distinct evolutionary phases, they may coexist depending on the occasion. Reviewing the evolutionary shifts of WOM provides an understanding of the players in WOM communication and their relationships. In the following section, relevant theories and variables regarding eWOM formation are discussed.

2.3.2 Theories Explaining eWOM Generation

2.3.2.1 Motivational Perspective

Motivation refers to “a psychological condition in which an individual is oriented towards and tries to achieve a kind of fulfillment” (Bromley, 1990, p. 264). Iso-Ahola (1980) also defined motive as “an internal factor that arouses, directs, and integrates a person’s behavior” (p. 230). According to Mill and Morrison (1998), motivation occurs when a person desire to satisfy a need. In other words, motivation is what prompts a person to act in a certain way or at least develop an inclination for a specific behavior (Pardee, 1990). Thus, eWOM motivation represents an individual’s state of need or a condition that drives an individual toward engagement in eWOM communications that is perceived to give her or him the feeling of fulfillment. For example, consumers may post opinions on online review sites to vent anger toward service providers or to help other consumers’ decision-making.

The seminal study of eWOM motivations was conducted by Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) based on utility theory. Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) took eWOM motivations from Dichter’s (1966) study on traditional WOM motivations and
distinguished five types of utility based on Balasubramanian and Mahajan’s (2001) three social exchange utilities (e.g., focus-related utility, consumption utility, and approval utility) that considered both economic and social aspects in online communities circumstance and two extra utilities (e.g., moderator-related utility and homeostasis utility) that are considered useful functions of online communities. Based on this utility framework, Hennig-Thurau et al.’s (2004) research identified a set of eight motivations for eWOM (e.g., platform assistance, venting negative feelings, concern for other consumers, extraversion/positive self-enhancement, social benefits, economic incentives, helping the company, and advice seeking). Of these motivations, five were found to have a statistically significant influence on a consumer’s eWOM generation behavior: concern for other consumers, extraversion/positive self-enhancement, social benefits, advice seeking, and economic incentives (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004).

Based on Hennig-Thurau’s (2004) eight eWOM motivation, studies on consumer behavior in the hospitality and tourism context have identified several eWOM motivations: Yoo and Gretzel (2008) investigated people’s motivations to post online reviews about their travel experience on TripAdvisor. Based on previous studies of WOM, Yoo and Gretzel (2008) identified eWOM motivations (e.g., venting negative feeling, concern for other consumer, enjoyment / positive self-enhancement, and helping the company) in relation to travel information-sharing behavior. The study found that people who engaged in eWOM communication on travel review websites were influenced by intrinsic and positive motivations such as
enjoyment, positive self-enhancement, helping other consumers, or the company than negative motivation such as venting negative feeling.

Bronner and de Hoog (2011) investigated a set of vacationers’ motivations to engage in eWOM communication. The scholars identified two typologies of motivations when vacationers post online opinions: self-directed motivation and other-directed motivation that can also be explained by intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, respectively. Bronner and de Hoog’s (2011) study found that depending on which type of motivation people have, their eWOM message and content differ: eWOM messages generated by self-directed motivation tended to be more negative and text-only, whereas those generated by other-directed motivation were more positive and combined with opinion ratings and text. Similarly, consumers’ eWOM channel choice differs across type of motivation: People with self-directed motivation are more likely to choose social network sites than those who have other-directed motivations for posting eWOM (Yen & Tang, 2015).

Table 2.1 provides a list of eWOM motivations identified in prior research. The results of prior eWOM motivation studies revealed that concern for other consumers and the desire to express positive feelings or self-enhancement are the common motivations for engage in eWOM communication in various setting. Regarding the positive valence of eWOM contents, prior research has identified that motivations for self-enhancement, helping others and the company, gaining social benefit and economic incentive, advice seeking and co-creation positively influence the generation of positive eWOM.
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<tr>
<td>Platform assistance/ problem-solving support</td>
<td>Venting negative feelings</td>
<td>Venting negative feelings</td>
<td>Need to be altruistic / personal growth</td>
<td>Helping others</td>
<td>Concern for others</td>
<td>Helping / altruism</td>
<td>Concern for other consumers</td>
<td>Help other consumers</td>
<td>Positive / negative</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Venting negative feeling</td>
<td>Concern for other consumers</td>
<td>Need to be different</td>
<td>Self-directed / personal</td>
<td>Express positive feelings</td>
<td>Reputation / egoism</td>
<td>Self-concept</td>
<td>Self-enhancement</td>
<td>Positive self enhancement</td>
<td>Positive / negative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern for other consumers / altruism</td>
<td>Social benefits</td>
<td>Need to be part of a group</td>
<td>Social benefits</td>
<td>Belonging / collectivism</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Social benefit</td>
<td>Social benefits</td>
<td>Positive / negative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Extraversion / positive self enhancement</td>
<td>Economic incentives</td>
<td>Helping the company</td>
<td>Helping companies</td>
<td>Helping company</td>
<td>Co-creation</td>
<td>Economic incentives</td>
<td>Positive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social benefits</td>
<td>Helping the company</td>
<td>Helping the company</td>
<td>Helping companies</td>
<td>Helping company</td>
<td>Co-creation</td>
<td>Positive / negative</td>
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<td>Advice seeking</td>
<td>Economic incentives</td>
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Table 2.1 Motivations for Engaging eWOM
2.3.2.1.1 Motivation-Opportunity-Ability Theory

Motivation-opportunity-ability (MOA) theory suggests that the degree to which individuals process information is influenced by the individuals’ level of motivation, opportunity, and ability (MacInnis & Jaworski, 1989). Enhancing these three elements can proactively manage the effectiveness of communication (MacInnis et al., 1991). Considering eWOM consumer-to-consumer information processing, MOA theory has been employed to explain people’s online information exchange behavior and suggests that three elements positively contribute to information-sharing behavior (Briliana et al., 2015; Gruen et al., 2006, 2007).

Motivation is considered “a goal-directed arousal” (Park & Mittal, 1985). Thus, motivation incorporates “readiness, willingness, interest, and desire to engage in information processing” (MacInnis et al., 1991, p. 34). Applying these descriptions to the eWOM behavior, eWOM motivation can be defined as a consumer’s desire or readiness to participate in eWOM communication with other consumers. Thus, when motivation is increased, people’s intentions to contribute to eWOM communication increase.

Opportunity refers to “the extent to which a situation is conducive to achieving a desired outcome” (Gruen et al., 2007, p. 539) or the lack of impediments (e.g., time available, attention paid, or distractions) to accomplish an expected results (MacInnis et al., 1991). In the online environment, opportunity is generally available as the Internet is not constrained by time or location (Sun et al., 2006). Thus, an
An impediment that restricts opportunity is related to unexpected external factors such as Internet connectivity (Gruen et al., 2006).

Ability is “the extent to which consumers have the necessary resources (e.g., knowledge, intelligence, money) to make an outcome happen” (Hoyer & MacInnis, 1997; Gruen et al., 2007, p. 539). In eWOM communication, ability is related to an individual’s skill or proficiency in using the Internet platform or confidence of knowledge regarding the topic. People with high levels of ability would possess information that is more relevant than those with low levels (MacInnis et al., 1991).

Although the MOA model provides insight into how individuals’ psychological drivers, ability, and situational constraints influence generation of eWOM, the model cannot sufficiently accommodate how social influence affects the formation of eWOM.

2.3.2.2 Social Influential Perspective

“Much of human behavior is not best characterized by an individual acting in isolation” (Bagozzi, 2007, p. 247). People’s behavior is largely influenced by interactions with others. For example, the decision to use social media and post individual’s experience is dependent on the extent to which others are willing to participate in social media, and accordingly, if other users are not willing to participate, then the individual is not willing either. Social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) contends that people participate in social activities having expectations that
their participation would give them social benefits (e.g., reputation, social recognition, or enjoyment).

Newer eWOM models are based on network influence. Considering an eWOM platform as a place where participants’ social interaction occurs such that “eWOM can create virtual relationships and communities, with influence far beyond the readers and producers of WOM” (Litvin et al., 2008, p. 462), many studies on eWOM communication have taken a perspective of social influence in the generation of eWOM: Dholakia et al. (2004) investigated people’s behavior in online communities in a social influence framework, Bagozzi and Dholakia (2006) investigated online users’ cooperative actions from a group-referent intentional perspective, and Song and Kim (2006) developed a model which explain people’s adoption of new online service by extending the theory of planned behavior with social influence theory. The theoretical foundation of social influential models of eWOM formation lies in the concept of social cognition.

2.3.2.2.1 Social Cognitive Theory

Social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986) suggests that “an individual’s behavior is partially shaped and controlled by the influences of the individual’s cognitions (e.g., expectations, beliefs) and the social network (e.g., social systems)” (Huang et al., 2009, p. 163). According to social cognitive theory, an individual’s cognition is dependent on self-efficacy and outcome expectations. Prior research has identified the influence of self-efficacy and outcome expectations on people’s
behaviors on the Internet (Lee et al., 2006): If people were not confident in their ability to share knowledge, then they were less likely to engage in online information-sharing behavior, especially when the behavior is voluntary. Self-efficacy such as that of ability in MOA theory consists of personal capabilities for decision-making such as confidence in knowledge regarding the occasion and confidence in performing required action needed to effectively manage future situations.

Outcome expectation is a judgment of the perceived results that an individual’s own behavior will generate (Bandura, 1986). Studies of online information-sharing behaviors have categorized expected outcomes into personal outcome and community-related outcome expectations (Hsu et al., 2008; Munar & Jacobsen, 2014). Personal outcome expectations refer to a message creator’s perceived results that individual’s behavior would generate for oneself, while community-related outcome expectations refer to the message creator’s perceived consequences that individual’s behavior would provide for an online community (Hsu et al., 2008). Consumers’ expected outcomes regarding eWOM generation can be related to personal and/or community-related outcomes, and thus, consumers’ motivations in generating eWOM may vary depending on for whom and what consumers expect by generating eWOM (Jeong & Jang, 2011).

Although social cognitive theory provides a useful framework for viewing how individuals’ social cognition (e.g., projected self- and other-related outcomes) with self-efficacy shapes an individual’s behavior, the theory does not include which
social factors or pressures trigger people’s expected outcomes and following behaviors. The concept of social capital helps understand what triggers people’s information-sharing behavior.

2.3.2.2 Social Capital Theory

Social capital refers to “the network of strong personal relationships that are developed over time and provide the basis for trust, cooperation, and collective action in communities” (Jacobs, 1965; Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998, p. 2). Social capital theory argues that networks of relationships form a valuable resource for conducting social actions and provide collectively owned capital such as social bonds, membership, and norms (Bourdieu, 1986). Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) suggested that social capital is useful for understanding information-creating and -sharing behavior within networks. People may not share information with others since this information-sharing behavior may decrease the individuals’ uniqueness regarding information possession. However, the accumulated social capital within networks may function as a social force to make people share the information with others (Wasko & Faraj, 2005).

Social capital consists of three dimensions: structural, relational, and cognitive dimensions: The structural dimension refers to “the ability of individuals to make connections with others within a network” (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998, p. 250) such as social network ties, network configuration, and appropriable organization. The relational dimension is related to the particular beliefs that can influence people’s
behavior such as trust, norm of reciprocity, and identification (Chiu et al., 2006). The cognitive dimension refers to “resources that involve shared representations, interpretations, and systems of meaning among the parties” (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998, p. 244) such as shared language, codes, and narratives.

Although a social capital framework has been widely used to explain the people’s contribution of group-level knowledge-sharing (e.g., organizational intellectual capital accumulation), it can also provide a useful framework to explain individual-level knowledge contributions in an online context (Putnam, 2000). Through online channels, people mutually engage and interact by using the channels as a source of learning and information exchange and create relationships with the community as a whole as well as with other individuals (Wasko & Faraj, 2005). Social capital is accumulated by these individual relationships and influences people’s contribution to information-sharing. Thus, social capital theory has been applied to investigate information-sharing behavior in online networks (Wasko & Faraj, 2005) and the collective activities of online communities (Hung & Li, 2007). Studies on the antecedents of eWOM have suggested that relational capital (e.g., trust, norm of reciprocity, and identification) is the primary social antecedent of eWOM (Chiu et al., 2006; Hsu & Lin, 2008).

2.3.2.3 Appraisal Perspective

The content of WOM communication is based on people’s consumption or experience of products or services, and thus, WOM communication is post-
consumption behavior. Much research has used WOM to test the behavioral outcomes in a consumer evaluation model (e.g., Hartline & Jones, 1996; Parasuraman et al., 1988). Appraisal theory argues that “emotions are elicited and differentiated based on a person’s subjective evaluation or appraisal of the personal significance of a situation, object, or event on a number of dimensions or criteria” (Scherer, 1999, p. 637). Lazarus (1991) suggested that customers’ attitudes are connected to behavioral intentions following a sequential process of appraisal-emotional response-coping response. In the service literature, this process has been applied as perceived quality or value to satisfaction with behavioral intentions (Gotlieb et al., 1994).

Perceived quality, perceived value, and satisfaction have been identified as significant antecedents of eWOM intentions. For example, in the context of eWOM formation, perceived value or quality elicits emotions (e.g., dis/satisfaction) and desires (e.g., motivations) that lead to coping strategies (e.g., spreading eWOM). Perceived values have been regarded as significant triggers of human motivation (Westbrook, 1987). Thus, in the context of hotel stay, values perceived by travelers influence their motivation to engage in certain types of post-consumption behavior such as spreading positive or negative eWOM. In addition, experiential values which have been considered importantly in a service encounter is closely associated with WOM generation since the perceived experiential value triggers people’s post-consumption behavior (Sundaram et al., 1998). Jeong and Jang’s (2011) study supported this notion for eWOM suggesting that consumers’ positive eWOM
motivations are triggered by restaurant experiential values, such as food quality, service quality, and atmosphere.

Although these theories (e.g., MOA theory, social cognitive theory, and social capital theory) explain personal and social relevant factors that influence the formation of eWOM, these theories lack a consumption-related value framework. Thus, integrating the consumption value framework with personal and social frameworks would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the formation of eWOM.

2.4 Constructs Related to the Generation of Positive eWOM about Hotels

2.4.1 Behavioral Intention

An intention refers to “the representation of a future course of action to be performed” (Bandura, 2001, p. 6). An intention is not simply an expectation or prediction of future actions but also a proactive commitment to performing the actions. Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) defined behavioral intention as people’s beliefs about what they intend to do in a certain situation, and thus, behavioral intention is conceptualized as a surrogate indicator of actual behavior. According to the theory of reasoned action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975), if behavior is volitional, the intention to perform an action is highly associated with the real behavior. Thus, behavioral intention is “the proximal cause of such a behavior” (Shim et al., 2001, p. 400). Due to the difficulty of capturing real consumer behaviors, behavioral intention has been employed as a surrogate indicator of actual behavior in many marketing studies.
Thus, behavioral intention is used in the present study as an outcome construct that can represent consumers’ volitional creation of eWOM in the model of the formation of eWOM.

2.4.1.1 Conceptualization of Intention to Generate Positive eWOM about Hotels

The major objective of this study is to investigate how positive hotel eWOM is generated. Accordingly, the outcome variable of this study is consumers’ intention to generate positive eWOM about hotels. Positive WOM generation is often viewed as part of a wider concept, such as loyalty, or is interchangeably used with WOM transmission, although they are conceptually distinct. Loyalty depends on a favorable attitude that is based on cognitive, affective, and conative antecedents and is closely related to positive repurchase intentions (Dick & Basu, 1994; Oliver, 1999). Positive WOM, which ranges from merely mentioning the positive characteristics of products or services to making recommendations, excludes affective commitment to products or services. Thus, positive WOM generation is distinct from loyalty.

WOM generation is used to describe a situation in which consumers share information about their own personal experiences with products and services (Angelis et al., 2012). In this respect, the information is “generated” from the source of the individual’s own experience. For example, Jane might talk to Mary about Jane’s experience about a hotel stay. In contrast, WOM transmission is used to describe a situation in which consumers pass on information about experiences with products and services they have heard from someone else. In this case, information
about an experience that occurred to a third person is simply passed along or “transmitted” secondhand. For example, Mary might tell another person what Jane said about her experience about her hotel stay.

The focus of this study is to investigate the generation of eWOM about hotels, which is about how an individual shares his or her own experience about a hotel stay via online such as posting an original comment based on his or her experience, not carrying out another’s experience or clicking the like button on others’ posts.

2.4.2 Positive eWOM Motivation

Motivation is goal-based arousal that directs a person’s behavior (Bromley, 1990; Iso-Ahola, 1980). Mill and Morrison (1998) posited that motivation occurs when people desire to fulfill their needs. Motivation is closely related to “readiness” (Burnkrant, 1976), “willingness” (Roberts & Maccoby, 1973), “interest” (Celsi & Olson, 1988), and “desire” (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) to perform a certain action (MacInnis et al., 1991, p. 34). Thus, positive hotel eWOM motivation can be defined a state of need or a condition that drives an individual toward talk about positive things about the hotel. High motivation is seen as likely to heighten arousal to process external stimuli, and accordingly, high positive eWOM motivation would enhance people’s intentions to generate positive hotel eWOM.
2.4.2.1 Self-directed versus Other-directed Motivations

All interpersonal communication has audience, whether real or presumed (Berger, 2014). Thus, people’s intentions to share their experience with others are influenced by their expected outcomes for themselves or for others. Research on human motivation explains human motivation with two distinct aspects: egoistic and altruistic (Deci & Ryan, 1975). Studies of information-sharing behavior have differentiated people’s outcome expectations about information-sharing between personal, or self-directed, and community, or other-directed, expectations (Bronner & de Hoog, 2011; Hsu et al., 2007). Personal expectations that may lead to largely self-directed motivations include possibilities for gaining respect and recognition and augmenting one’s self-esteem (Baym, 2015; Yoo & Gretzel, 2008). Some self-directed motivations are related to maintaining and gaining social benefits, such as enjoyment of online social activity, and achieving enhanced social bonding in return (Chang & Chuang, 2011). In addition, the online environment helps people build self-directed motivation since people can manage their self-presentation or enhanced recognition by peers through techno-meritocratic systems of rewards (e.g., number of views and sharing, and rankings) that can indicate one’s expertise or contributions (Munar, 2010; Stringam et al., 2010).

Other-directed motivations concern possible impacts of other consumers on the network or service providers. This type of motivation is influenced by non-economic, community interest or moral obligation (Wasko & Faraj, 2000) and is based on the concept of altruism. For example, travelers who post reviews are
motivated by contributing to the well-being of other travelers and helping providers (Yoo & Gretzel, 2008). Generators of WOM may also wish to help other consumers minimize risk in their decision-making. Risk reduction is considered particularly crucial to non-routinized and extensive decisions regarding the acquisition of expensive and complex products such as hospitality and tourism products. Munar and Ooi’s (2012) study of TripAdvisor reviews suggested that people’s intentions to give advice and post reviews is influenced by exercises of joint-affirmation and community empowerment, and this assumingly altruistic behavior makes people feel needed (Baym, 2010).

Based on the categorization of self- and other-directed motivations, in the following section four motivations for generating positive hotel eWOM are proposed, and causal relationships with positive hotel eWOM generation intention are proposed. Self-directed motivations include self-enhancement and gaining social benefits, and other-directed motivations include helping other consumers and helping the hotel.

2.4.2.2 Self-enhancement

Self-enhancement is defined as “the tendency to seek experiences that can improve or bolster the self-concept” (Baumeister, 1998; Sirgy, 1982; Wojnicki & Godes, 2008, p. 8) and is considered a fundamental human motivation (Fiske, 2001). Positive self-enhancement is triggered by one’s desire for positive recognition from others (Engel et al., 1993; Sundaram et al., 1998). People have a desire to be
perceived positively by others and manage their actions or situations to produce positive impression. “Just like the car they drive, what people talk about influence how other people see them and how they see themselves” (Berger, 2014, p.588). To gain a positive self-image from others, people like to talk about things which help them to look good instead of bad (Chung & Darke, 2006). Thus, in the context of WOM communication, self-enhancement has been identified as an influential motivation for positive WOM although the term used for motivation differs among studies. Most studies named this motivation as self-enhancement (Yoo & Gretzel, 2008; Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004; Yap et al., 2013), other studies used different names such as “self-concept” (Christodoulides et al., 2012), “self-directed” (Bronner & de Hoog, 2011), “egoism” (Cheung & Lee, 2012), “need to be different” (Ho & Dempsey, 2010), and “expression of positive feelings” (Jeong & Jang, 2011).

Considering eWOM communication as the type of social interaction, people can manage representation of the self in the pursuit of creating good impressions and gaining positive recognition from others (Berger & Schwartz, 2011). According to impression management theory (Goffman, 1959), social interactions can be seen as a performance, in which individuals show up themselves in a particular way to get a desired self-presentation. Thus, when communicating, people choose message and ways to communicate to achieve desired impression and avoid getting involved in communication which is likely to produce negative self-presentation (Berger & Heath, 2007). People can maintain a positive self-view by connecting the self to positive personal outcomes (Brown et al., 1988) and distancing the self from negative
personal outcomes (Sedikides & Strube, 1995). Previous research suggested that positive WOM is positively associated with the generation of better impression than negative WOM because sharing one’s successful story about products and services can be one means of bolstering a person’s self-concept (Dichter, 1966) and supporting one’s expertise. For example, sharing the success of a hotel choice and good things about the hotel (e.g., that hotel that I chose was great) would increase the positive self-concept viewed by oneself or others. Further, people are more likely to engage in positive things while they are less likely to get involved in negative occasions (Folkes & Sears, 1977; Kamins et al., 1997). Thus, people may generate positive eWOM messages to avoid being considered a negative person. Berger and Milkman’s (2012) study revealed that people would like to tell others positive news instead of negative news because positive news would make them look better than sharing negative news. Furthermore, the motivation for self-enhancement may provide a rational why there have been more positive reviews than negative reviews online (Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2006).

Thus, based on this notion, a positive relationship between motivation for self-enhancement and positive hotel eWOM generation intention is proposed:

*Hypothesis 1a: The motivation for self-enhancement positively influences intention to generate positive eWOM about hotels.*
2.4.2.3 Gaining Social Benefit

People have a fundamental desire to build and maintain social interactions (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). People engage in interpersonal conversation to satisfy the fundamental need (Henning-Thurau et al., 2004). Social bonding theory (Dunbar, 2003) contends that language has been evolved as a “cheap” method of social grooming, and talking and sharing with others play an important role in making social bonding. The social function of interpersonal communication makes individuals find activities which are considered favorable by others, providing individuals a chance to maintain and build social relationships (Daugherty et al., 2008).

The aspect of social function regarding WOM communication has long been studied, and scholars have identified that people talk to others about their experience not only to communicate their enjoyment of talking but also to maintain social connectivity. The advent of new media and information technology has brought the function of social connectivity online, and thus, social function-related attributes have been considered crucial in comprehending the underlying eWOM process and dynamics. Gaining social benefits through eWOM communication has consistently emerged as an influential motivation for engaging in eWOM contribution. People may share their experience to enjoy communication itself as a form of social activities while establishing and maintaining social relationships within social networks. For example, by sharing individuals’ positive hotel experience and providing useful information, people enjoy the moment of talking while bringing back good memories. Moreover, through eWOM communication, people can achieve
additional benefits such as meeting like-minded people, or building social
counterships with other online users or managers at the hotel. The positive function of
gaining social benefits in generating eWOM has been identified in many studies:
Hennig-Thurau et al.’s (2004) study on eWOM motivation based on a utility
framework; Bronner and de Hoog’s (2011) tourists’ eWOM motivation research; and
Nadkarni and Hofmann’s (2012) investigation of people’s motivation to participate in
social network sites.

An individual has social motivation to fulfil one’s desire to be a member of a
group and exerts effort to build and maintain a favorable social relationship by
interacting and communicating with others (Ho & Dempsey, 2010). Participation in
eWOM communication gives people social identification and integration within
networks (Bronner & de Hoog, 2011; Gretzel & Yoo, 2007; Hennig-Thurau et al.,
2004; Yap et al., 2013). Therefore, it can be suggested that people may participate in
eWOM communication to belong to online social networks (McWilliam, 2000;
Oliver, 1999). For example, travelers may post online reviews about a hotel because
such behavior may signify their participation in and presence within their online
social networks and enables the consumers to receive social benefits such as enjoying
social communication, meeting like-minded people, and creating and maintaining
social connectivity (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004).

Thus, based on this notion, gaining social benefit is proposed as a significant
motivation for generating positive hotel eWOM:
Hypothesis 1b: The motivation for gaining social benefit positively influences intention to generate positive eWOM about hotels.

2.4.2.4 Helping Other Consumers

People’s behaviors are motivated by two distinct ways: egoism and altruism. Altruism has been widely discussed in explaining prosocial behavior in social psychology studies (e.g., Paul et al., 1993). Altruism refers to “the act of doing something for others without anticipating any reward in return” (Sundaram et al., 1998, p. 529). With regard to consumer behavior, the altruistic aspect of human motivation is manifested as “a desire to help fellow consumers” by giving advice or sharing useful product or service-related information with them (Engel et al., 1993; Price et al., 1995). Thus, consumers who are willing to help others may actively engage in eWOM communication.

According to social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986), people’s behaviors are influenced by their cognition of the social environment. Similar to offline interpersonal relationship, social connectivity has been considered a core aspect of new online media. In a shared online social system, people may be concerned about the well-being of other users and generate information to help them. Prior research has found that motivation to help other consumers enhanced eWOM contribution in sharing individuals’ travel experience (Bronner & de Hoog, 2011) and dining experience (Jeong & Jang, 2011) via online. For example, when consumers want to help other consumers’ decision-making (e.g., selecting a good hotel), they would like
to share their positive experiences with a hotel with other consumers online. Thus, based on this notion, the following hypothesis is suggested:

*Hypothesis 1c: The motivation to help other consumers positively influences intention to generate positive eWOM about hotels.*

2.4.2.5 Helping the Hotel

Another form of altruistic behavior in the consumption context is to help the company. Consumers can be motivated to help the company for many reasons such that they have received good services, are loyal to the company, or advocate the company’s management philosophy. As consumers are willing to help the company, they are more likely to engage in spreading positive messages about the company.

Equity theory (Oliver & Swan, 1989) suggests that people evaluate the fairness between input (e.g., investment such as money, time, and effort) and output (e.g., return such as quality, value, and satisfaction). Once the output received by the company exceeds the input, people may want to create balance with behaviors conducive to the provider. For example, hotel guests may be motivated to post positive reviews to give the hotel something back for providing the hotel guests with good service (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). Many empirical studies on eWOM motivation have suggested that people’s desire to help the company is positively correlated with positive eWOM generation (Bronner & de Hoog, 2011; Gretzel & Yoo, 2007; Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004; Jeong & Jang, 2011; Yap et al., 2013).
Therefore, that motivation to help the hotel has a positive impact on positive hotel eWOM generation intention is proposed:

*Hypothesis 1d: The motivation to help the hotel positively influences intention to generate positive eWOM about hotels.*

2.4.3 Consumption Value

Value refers to “the overall assessment of the utility of a product based on the perceptions of what is received and what is given” (Zeithaml, 1988, p. 14). The consumer value concept has evolved from the development of two dimensions of consumer behavior: economic and psychological value (Gallarza & Saura, 2006). The economic concept of value is based on the input-output transactional value (e.g., perceived price) while the psychological value is about the emotional aspects of value (Gallarza & Saura, 2006). Since consumption value is fundamental to marketing and economic theory, scholars have suggested various consumption value models, such as Thaler’s (1985) value function, which is based on economic and cognitive psychological value concepts, Hunt’s (1976) transaction-value based model, and the Kotlerian marketing perspective, which is based on mutual exchange of values.

Consumption value has been incorporated in the model of consumer behavior and its influence on consumers’ post-consumption behavior has been investigated. Consumption value is associated with the eWOM formation process, as appraisal theory (Lazarus, 1991; Scherer, 1999) suggests consumer behavior is influenced by
perceived value. Consumption value is a powerful source that influences human motivation (Westbrook, 1987). Thus, this study considers consumption value influential in positive hotel eWOM generation. The following sessions explain the types of consumption value and its influence on eWOM motivation.

2.4.3.1 Utilitarian Value

Hirschman and Holbrook (1982) described consumers as either “problem solvers” or “emotion (e.g., fun, fantasy, arousal, sensory stimulation, and enjoyment) seekers.” This different type of consumption has been discussed in consumption value studies with the concepts of “utilitarian” versus “hedonic” value (Batra & Ahtola, 1991; Lim & Ang, 2008).

Utilitarian value is defined as “resulting from some type of conscious pursuit of an intended consequence” (Babin et al., 1994, p. 645). Thus, utilitarian value is task-oriented and rational, and may be thought of as work (Batra & Ahtola, 1991; Engel et al., 1993). Utilitarian evaluation is traditionally functional, instrumental, and cognitive. Utilitarian value primarily involves the fulfillment of instrumental expectations assuming that people have the product or service as “a means to an end” (Holbrook, 1994). Thus, utilitarian value is often equated with rational motives of time, place, and possession needs (Ryu et al., 2010). From a utilitarian perspective, people’s interests in products purchase and evaluation lie in an efficient and timely manner to meet their goals with a minimum of impediment. For example, consumers may perceive the utilitarian value of a hotel stay by comparing their input, such as
money and time, with the outcome (e.g., Was the hotel rate reasonable, convenient, or value for the money?) considering the utility or function of staying at the hotel.

2.4.3.2 Hedonic Value

Hedonic value refers to “being more subjective and personal than its utilitarian counterpart and resulting more from fun and playfulness than from task completion” (Babin et al., 1994, p. 646). Hedonic evaluation is more affective than cognitive. Hedonic value is non-instrumental, experiential, and emotional and is often related to intangible features of products (Holbrook, 1994). Hedonic value reflects consumption joyfulness and emotions raised as a consequence of consumption experience (Babin et al., 1994; Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982). In other words, hedonic value captures personal gratification associated with affect such as joy and excitement. Thus, hedonic consumption is an “end in itself” (Holbrook, 1994).

Studies in consumer behavior in the hospitality industry have recently begun to focus on the hedonic aspects of the consumption experience, such as the affective response of fun and excitement (Ryu et al., 2010). Given the experiential nature of hospitality product consumption, a consumption value construct could be an important explanatory construct. Although some hospitality product consumption is associated with work-like characteristics that allow a consumer to accomplish some task (e.g., business travel), many activities related to hospitality product consumption are motivated by individuals’ intrinsic desire. Unger and Kernan (1983) suggested satisfaction, perceived arousal, perceived freedom, and spontaneity are key elements
of the hospitality product experience that fit within the domain of hedonic value perceptions.

In sum, utilitarian attributes deliver cognitively oriented benefits; in contrast, the hedonic attributes carry affectively oriented benefits such as emotional, experiential, and sensory satisfaction (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982). Regarding hotel products and services, economic and functional attributes, such as price, facility, and convenience, are associated with utilitarian value while experiential and affective attributes are closely related with the hedonic value. Thus, this study incorporates these two distinct constructs to examine their influences on formation of eWOM about hotels.

2.4.3.3 Consumption Value as a Trigger of Motivation

Prior research has found that individuals’ consumption experience generates their subject feelings about the consumption experience and this elicited affect influences their motivation to engage in post-consumption behavior such as spreading out positive or negative comments on products or services that they received and repurchase intention (Westbrook, 1987). Thus, it is reasonable to postulate that consumers’ perceived value regarding their experience and their psychological drivers for contributing eWOM have a close relationship (Sundaram et al., 1998).

Utilitarian value might have an influence on eWOM motivation as this value includes more tangible characteristics. Utilitarian value is based on an input-output
transactional component that is regarded a more extrinsic and objective attribute than
other criteria used to evaluate service quality, such as staff’s kindness,
responsiveness, or helpfulness (Hartline & Jones, 1996). In addition, hedonic value
may influence eWOM motivation as human motivation can be triggered by more
intrinsic personal and emotional rewards such as joy and pleasure (Deci & Ryan,
1975). Thus, people’s eWOM motivations are influenced by utilitarian and hedonic
consumption values. For example, a consumer’s perceived utilitarian value (e.g.,
value for money about the hotel) and hedonic value (e.g., fun and enjoyable
experience at the hotel) regarding his or her hotel stay experience would influence the
consumer’s intention to generate positive eWOM.

Interpersonal communication is used to manage self-impression and gain
social benefit. As a source of this communication, people use their experience, and
accordingly, the utilitarian and hedonic value perceived from their experience
influences people’s motivation to engage in eWOM. According to impression
management (Goffman, 1959), people share useful information with others since
such behaviors help them gain positive impression. Regarding sharing hotel
experiences, individuals’ perception of higher utilitarian value (e.g., “I stayed at a
hotel with a super cheap rate!”) and hedonic value (e.g., “the hotel made me feel I
was totally in another world!”) would make people look good. Sharing such positive
experiences would contribute to gaining positive self-enhancement and be a good
source to gain social benefit such as having enjoyable social talk with others.
The relationship between consumption value and motivation to help others or the company is well explained by equity theory (Oliver & Swan, 1989). Equity theory argues that people want to have equitable and fair exchanges. When people feel they have received more by the company than they have given to the company, they may try to help the company by sharing positive things of the company or making recommendation as one way to equalize the output/input ratio (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). Further, previous research has suggested that perceived value not only positively influences consumers’ intention to help the company but also increases the desire to help other consumers based on one’s altruistic belief that good things should be shared to accommodate others’ well-being (Sundaram et al., 1998).

Thus, as consumers’ perceived utilitarian and hedonic value regarding their hotel stay increases, their motivations for engaging positive hotel eWOM are also enhanced. Based on this notion, the following hypotheses are proposed:

**Hypothesis 2:** Consumers’ perception of the utilitarian value regarding their hotel stay experience positively influences consumers’ eWOM motivation for a) self-enhancement, b) gaining social benefit, c) helping other consumers, and d) helping the hotel.

**Hypothesis 3:** Consumers’ perception of the hedonic value regarding their hotel stay experience positively influences consumers’ eWOM motivation for a) self-
enhancement, b) gaining social benefit, c) helping other consumers, and d) helping the hotel.

2.4.4 Online Social Capital

Studies on traditional WOM communication have viewed social force as an important trigger of WOM communication (Dichter, 1966). Social force occurs between people who have a close social relationship such as strong ties, co-location, demographic similarity, status similarity, and a history of a prior relationship (Cohen & Zhou, 1991; Krackhardt, 1992; Pelled, 1996; Wellman & Wortley 1990).

Considering the unsecured nature of online relationship, unlike face-to-face interpersonal relationship, it is paradoxical that eWOM communication has become popular (Wasko & Faraj, 2005). Further, considering information-sharing behavior may cause the generator to lose his or her knowledge dominance over others (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959), it is peculiar that people voluntarily share their experiences with strangers online. Social capital explains why people engage in sharing behavior online such as eWOM, not free-ride (Wasko & Faraj, 2005).

Social capital refers to “the network of strong personal relationships that are developed over time and provide the basis for trust, cooperation, and collective action in communities” (Jacobs, 1965; Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998, p. 2) or the “resources embedded in a social structure that are accessed and/or mobilized in purposive action” (Lin, 2001, p. 29). Social capital is an intangible force that help a group of people exerts a collective actions by transforming self-oriented people into members
of a group with shared interests, social norms, and a sense of having the same social identity (Etzioni, 1996). The concept of social capital covers how social capital is accumulated and its influence on people’s social behavior (Adler & Kwon, 2002; Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). Social capital can be perceived as a private good from an individual-level which is achieved by individuals and used for their personal benefit while it can be considered as a public good (Burt, 1997; Putnam, 1993) which is “socially generated, maintained, and exchanged” (Brown & Duguid, 1991; Wasko & Faraj, 2000, p. 156) by creation of collective resources through a social system. The concept of social capital has provided explanations for “pro-social behaviors, collective action, community involvement, and differential social achievements that individual-based capital (e.g., financial capital) is unable to explain” (Coleman, 1990; Wasko & Faraj, 2005, p. 38).

Some researchers have suggested that the development of social capital in an online environment would be difficult as social capital is more likely to be developed within a group or organization with a shared history, an established norm, a high level of interactivity and social bonding (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998; Nohria & Eccles, 1992). However, new media (e.g., social media channels) provide a conducive environment as they are largely dependent on connectivity with other users within a network (Cheung & Lee, 2010). With this transformation, online social capital would function as a social force that influences the formation of eWOM.
2.4.4.1 Online Social Capital as a Trigger of Motivation

Social capital exists when people trust others in social networks (Putnam, 1995), have a strong social identification (Lewicki & Bunker, 1996), have an obligation to participate (Coleman, 1990), and share beliefs (Putnam, 1995). Coleman (1990) suggested that social capital functions as a useful facilitator to make individuals engage in collective actions to benefit themselves and the community. Thus, social capital boosts one’s motivation for self- and social enhancement.

The accumulation of social capital is influenced by trust which make people expect to have positive ongoing relationships. Trust in social network includes belief in others’ ability, benevolence, and integrity which drive individuals’ contribution to other members’ well-being (Ridings et al., 2002). Hence, social capital enhances motivations based on altruism, such as helping others and the company. Researchers have shown that people who provide valuable advice to help others are motivated by a sense of obligation to the community (Constant et al., 1996) and to pay back the network (Wasko & Faraj, 2000). Hence, individuals’ contribution to eWOM behavior is influenced by perceived social capital which enables individuals to consider assisting others a duty.

Further, reciprocity, which is a sense of mutual indebtedness, is essential to accumulate social capital. Social capital encourages individuals to reciprocate the benefit they receive from others, and accordingly, individuals believe when they contribute to social network by helping others or sharing useful information, others also help them, thus rewarding individual efforts and ensuring continuous
contribution to gain social benefits through ongoing supportive exchanges (Shumaker & Brownell, 1984).

According to social exchange theory, “individuals engage in social interaction based on an expectation that it will lead in some way to social rewards such as approval, status, and respect” (Blau, 1964; Wasko & Faraj, 2005, p. 39). Considering that social capital is accumulated through active ongoing participation, individuals may participate to receive a benefit, such as enhancing their personal reputation in the network (Wasko & Faraj, 2005). Thus, online social capital would positively influence eWOM motivation for self-enhancement. Based on this notion, this study suggest the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4: Online social capital positively influences consumers’ eWOM motivation for a) positive self-enhancement, b) gaining social benefit, c) helping other consumers, and d) helping the hotel.

2.4.5 Opinion Leadership

People talk about a particular topic or idea to present their expertise or signify desired self-identity in a particular area (Chung & Darke, 2006; Packard & Wooten, 2013). For example, “if someone always talks about new restaurants, others may infer that the individual is a foodie” (Berger, 2014, P. 589). Scholars have taken individual differences into consideration in examining information-sharing behavior
and found that market mavens or opinion leaders were actively engaged in WOM communication (Feick & Price, 1987).

Previous research has shown that in most online communities, only 1 percent of users are actively involved in generating eWOM while 90 percent of users are lurkers who never contribute (Nielsen, 2009). This suggests that people who have a specific interest in a field and eWOM generation are actively involved in eWOM communication. They are called opinion leaders defined as “the individuals who were likely to influence other persons in their immediate environment” (Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1955, p. 3) or “people who are interested in particular product fields, make an effort to expose themselves to mass media sources, and are trusted by opinion seekers by providing knowledgeable advice” (Weinmann, 1994; Litvin et al., 2008, p. 459), and therefore, they “influence the opinions, attitudes, beliefs, motivations, and behaviors of others in a desired way with relative frequency” (Rogers, 1995; Park, 2013, p. 1642). In general, people believe opinion leaders share or deliver the most representative opinions or information, and accordingly opinion leaders perform an influential role in shaping public opinions in society (Song et al., 2007). In a consumption context, opinion leaders bring new product-related information to the public presenting their thoughts about the product, influencing other consumers’ attitude towards products and purchase decisions.

Opinion leaders have different characteristics compared to non-leaders (Lyons & Henderson, 2005). Opinion leaders are more interested in social issues and knowledgeable than public (Weinmann, 1994); have higher self-efficacy to deal with
public issues (Chan & Misra, 1990); and perceive themselves as the pioneers of social trends and early adopters of new products having close “interconnectivity” with other opinion leaders (Rogers, 1995). These differences between opinion leaders and non-leaders may have differential influence on the formation of eWOM.

2.4.5.1 Opinion Leadership as a Moderator

Consumers who perceive themselves more knowledgeable than other consumers more frequently contribute to product-related conversations (Packard & Wooten, 2013). Prior marketing research has emphasized the influential role of market mavens or opinion leaders in disseminating product-related information (Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1955; Keller & Berry, 2003). Grice’s (1989) maxim of quantity and quality also suggests that “those who believe they possess a greater volume of useful information make an appropriately weighted conversational contribution by sharing their knowledge more” (Packard & Wooten, 2013, p. 434). Opinion leaders’ behavior is highly associated with goal-based motivations (e.g., show their expertise or influence others by sharing information). Oatley and Johnson-Laird’s (1987) study suggested that when individuals attempt to achieve their goals, emotions are elicited. This elicited emotion increases people’s arousal level and make people put more effort to the goals facilitating behaviors. In other words, motivated people put greater effort to behaviors which conducive to achieving their goals than people who are less motivated (Fedoroff et al., 1997). For example, people with greater interest in sharing hotel information (e.g., having high level of opinion leadership), put more effort into
understanding their psychological drivers and are more likely to engage in generating eWOM than people who have low level of opinion leadership.

Social judgement theory (Sherif & Hovland, 1961), which argues individuals’ change of attitudes and judgmental processes are influenced by ego involvement, suggests that involved consumers (e.g., opinion leader) are more likely to articulate, regard themselves responsible to spread a trend, and influence others’ behavior (Feick & Price, 1987). Previous literature has suggested individuals who perceive themselves more knowledgeable than others want to maintain positive self-concepts, and accordingly they are more likely to engage in WOM communication by providing new information and giving others advice (Dichter, 1966; Feick & Price, 1987). Maintaining a positive self-concept is influenced by not only individuals’ perceived “actual selves” but also by perceived “ideal selves” which they want to be (Markus & Wurf, 1987). For example, while Mary may believe she is more knowledgeable about hotels than others, the awareness of self-concept in relation to her expertise may make her recognize even small gaps in her knowledge about hotels (Kruger & Dunning, 1999). This may suggest that people with high level of opinion leadership are more likely to engage in positive eWOM communication once they are motivated by self-directed goals such as enhancing positive self-image and achieving social benefit, than those with low opinion leadership. Further, opinion leaders show a risk-taking tendency and create and share information with others in order to get a mutual understanding (Rogers, 1995). This characteristic of opinion leaders shows the aspects of obligation or the need to assist other consumers or companies by
sharing information (Kim et al., 2015). Thus, opinion leaders are more likely to engage in generating eWOM once they are motivated by altruism or moral obligation such as helping other consumers or companies than non-opinion leaders.

Further, uses and gratification theory suggests that people use the media to fulfil their needs (Raacke & Bonds-Raacke, 2008), which indicates that the communication medium is chosen by communicators depending on their demand (Rubin, 2002). Similarly, in the context of WOM communication, people may choose a medium to talk about their experience such as face-to-face or the Internet. For opinion leaders, online communication can be an effective medium for showing their expertise and influence others since information online can be transmitted quickly and easily to a myriad of people. Based on a review of relevant theories and previous literature, opinion leadership is suggested as a moderator between eWOM motivation and intention to generate eWOM:

*Hypothesis 5: The level of opinion leadership moderates the relationships among eWOM motivations and intention to generate positive hotel eWOM. For people with the high level of opinion leadership, eWOM motivation has a more positive impact on intention to generate positive eWOM about hotels compared to those of low opinion leadership.*
2.5 Conceptual Model and Operational Model

Based on the thorough literature review, the conceptual and operational models for this study were developed and presented in Figure 2.3 and Figure 2.4 respectively. The proposed model postulates eWOM motivations as precursors of consumers’ positive hotel eWOM generation intention, consumption value (both utilitarian and hedonic) and online social capital as triggers of eWOM motivations, and opinion leadership as a moderating the relationship between eWOM motivation and intention.
Figure 2.3 A Conceptual Model of the Study
Hypothesis 1a: The motivation for self-enhancement positively influences intention to generate positive eWOM about hotels.

Hypothesis 1b: The motivation for gaining social benefit positively influences intention to generate positive eWOM about hotels.

Hypothesis 1c: The motivation to help other consumers positively influences intention to generate positive eWOM about hotels.

Hypothesis 1d: The motivation to help the hotel positively influences intention to generate positive eWOM about hotels.

Hypothesis 2a: Consumers’ perception of utilitarian value regarding their hotel stay experience positively influences consumer’s eWOM motivation for self-enhancement.

Hypothesis 2b: Consumers’ perception of utilitarian value regarding their hotel stay experience positively influences consumer’s eWOM motivation for gaining social benefit.

Hypothesis 2c: Consumers’ perception of utilitarian value regarding their hotel stay experience positively influences consumer’s eWOM motivation to help other consumers.

Hypothesis 2d: Consumers’ perception of utilitarian value regarding their hotel stay experience positively influences consumer’s eWOM motivation to help the hotel.

Hypothesis 3a: Consumers’ perception of hedonic value regarding their hotel stay experience positively influences consumer’s eWOM motivation for self-enhancement.
Hypothesis 3b: Consumers’ perception of hedonic value regarding their hotel stay experience positively influences consumer’s eWOM motivation for gaining social benefit.

Hypothesis 3c: Consumers’ perception of hedonic value regarding their hotel stay experience positively influences consumer’s eWOM motivation help other consumers.

Hypothesis 3d: Consumers’ perception of hedonic value regarding their hotel stay experience positively influences consumer’s eWOM motivation to help the hotel.

Hypothesis 4a: Online social capital positively influences consumer’s eWOM motivation for self-enhancement.

Hypothesis 4b: Online social capital positively influences consumer’s eWOM motivation for gaining social benefit.

Hypothesis 4c: Online social capital positively influences consumer’s eWOM motivation to help other consumers.

Hypothesis 4d: Online social capital positively influences consumer’s eWOM motivation to help the hotel.

Hypothesis 5: The level of opinion leadership moderates the relationships among eWOM motivations and intention to generate positive hotel eWOM. For people with the high level of opinion leadership, eWOM motivation has a more positive impact on intention to generate positive eWOM about hotels compared to those of low opinion leadership.
CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Instrument

The main objective of this study was to investigate what influences positive hotel eWOM generation by investigating relationships among consumption value (utilitarian and hedonic), online social capital, eWOM motivations, and positive hotel eWOM generation intention, and moderating role of opinion leadership. To fulfil this research objective, a web-based self-administered survey questionnaire was developed based on the findings of the literature review. The survey consisted of six parts: 1) hotel stay experience, 2) online social relationship, 3) motivations for engaging eWOM communications, 4) intentions to generate positive hotel eWOM, 5) opinion leadership, and 6) demographic information.

In the first part, respondents were asked to recall the most recent their hotel stay experience and answer questions related to their hotel stay experience. To help respondents recall their memory, descriptive questions about the name of the hotel, hotel’s star rating, the length and purpose of stay, the number of companion were included. After answering these questions, respondents were asked to rate perceived utilitarian and hedonic consumption values based on their recent hotel stay experience. The second part asked respondents to rate their online social
relationship and the Internet usage. Questions for measuring online social capital were included in this part. The third part measured respondents’ motivations for engaging eWOM. Four distinct eWOM motivations were identified from literature review: self-enhancement, gaining social benefit, helping other consumers, and helping the hotel. Respondents answered questions for each type of motivation. Next, respondents answered question about their willingness to positive eWOM about their hotel stay experience. In the following part, respondents’ level of opinion leadership was measured. The last part of the questionnaire gathered information about respondents’ previous experience in eWOM contribution and demographical information such as age, gender, ethnicity, the level of education, and household income (see appendix).

3.2 Measurement

After first specifying the domain of each construct, ad hoc scale were taken from the relevant literature and modified through a pilot test. Measurement for consumption value was adopted form previous studies (Babin & Attaway, 2000; Babin et al., 1994; Ryu et al., 2010) and modified. Three items for each utilitarian and hedonic value were used: utilitarian value was measured by statements such as “staying at the hotel was convenient”, “the hotel provided me with a good economic value”, and “staying at the hotel was an efficient way to manage my travel”; and hedonic value was measured by items such as “staying at the hotel was fun and pleasurable”, “truly a joy”, and “like an escape”. This study adopted measurement for
online social capital from previous literature (Chiu et al., 2006; Tsai & Ghoshal, 1998; Wasko & Faraj, 2005) and modified: three statements such as “people in my online social network would help me if I need it”, “I feel a sense of belonging towards my online social network”, and “I trust most people in my social network” were used.

The measurement for four different eWOM motivations were adopted from previous literature (Hennig-Thrau et al., 2004) and modified. Three items for each eWOM motivation were used: self-enhancement was accessed by statements such as “I feel good when I can tell others about my choice successes”, “this way I can express my joy about a good staying at the hotel”, and “my contributions show others that I am a clever customer”; gaining social benefit was measured by items such as “I meet nice people this way”, “it is fun to communicate with other people online”, and “I believe a chat among like-minded people is a nice thing”; Helping other consumers was assessed by statements such as “I want to give others the opportunity to book the right hotel”, “help others with my own experiences”, and “advise others to make a better decision”; and helping the hotel was accessed by items such as “I want to help the hotel to be successful”, “help the hotel have more guests”, and “In my own opinion, good hotels should be supported”.

Intention to generate positive hotel eWOM is measured by four statements which indicated willingness to “post a positive online review for the hotel”, “let other people know I am a guest of the hotel through online”, “add good things about the hotel on the Internet”, and “provide more positive online information about the hotel
in a more effective way”. The measurements were adopted from previous literature (Chu & Kim, 2011; Maxham & Netemeyer, 2002; Zeithaml et al., 1996) and modified.

The measurement for opinion leadership was adopted from Reynolds and Darden’s (1971) opinion leadership scale and modified. Total six items which stated one’s confidence about hotel related information (e.g., “I think that I am generally regarded a good source of advice about hotels by my friends”) and one’s influence on others’ hotel-choice (e.g., “I believe that people that I know pick hotels based on what I have told them”) were used.

For all measurement items, a 7-point Likert-scale where 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree was utilized, except questions gathering demographic information.

3.3 Sample and Data Collection

3.3.1 Pilot Test

To check the reliability of measurement items, this study conducted a pilot test with sixty respondents recruited from Amazon Mechanical Turk. People who had stayed at a hotel within the last month were eligible to take a pilot survey. With the feedback and suggestions provided by respondents, several modifications were made. Before finalizing the questionnaire, two managers at hotels and one faculty member familiar with the topic area reviewed the questionnaire, and minor revisions in wording were made based on their suggestions.
3.3.2 Main Study

The population of this study was defined as general hotel guests in the U.S., since this study aims to investigate the underlying processes and constructs regarding hotel guests’ intention to generate positive eWOM. Accordingly, the sample for this study was set as travelers who have stayed in a hotel within the last one-month period. To collect the data, a web-based nationwide survey was conducted by Amazon Mechanical Turk. Respondents were asked to complete a 10-minute-long survey on a voluntary basis. With a screening question which asked respondents’ prior hotel stay within the last one-month period, the eligible participants were recruited. Following a screening question, Respondents answered questions about their recent hotel stay experience, online social relationship, motivations for eWOM, intentions to generate positive hotel eWOM, opinion leadership, and demographic information. A total of 570 usable responses was collected and used for data analysis.

3.4 Data Analysis

For data analysis, several statistical methods were used for this study. This study used descriptive statistics analysis to provide the demographic profile of the respondents and their hotel stay experience. To examine the hypothesized relationships among constructs, this study employed structural equation modeling (SEM) using Analysis of Moment Structure (AMOS) as a major statistical method. Anderson and Gerbing (1988) suggests a two-step approach, which first assesses a measurement model to determine if the manifest variables reflect the latent variables,
then examines a structural model to test causal relationship among the hypothesized constructs (H1 to H4). For the test of measurement model, first a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with a maximum likelihood (ML) was conducted, followed by the test of a structural model. This two-step approach ensures the precise representation of the reliability of the indicators while avoiding interaction of the measurement model and the structural model (Hair et al., 2010). Further, to test the moderating effect of the level of opinion leadership (H5) multiple group analysis was conducted. A chi-square difference between constrained and unconstrained models was tested.

3.4.1 Descriptive Data Analysis

Descriptive data analyses were conducted in order to profile respondents’ demographic information, their hotel stay experience, and different characteristics between high versus low opinion leadership groups. Respondent’s demographic information included age, gender, ethnicity, education, and annual household income. Respondents’ hotel stay experience was presented with descriptive statistics of the location and star rating of hotels, the purpose and length of hotel stay, and number of companions. To profile characteristics of samples in high and low opinion leadership groups, demographic information, previous experience in eWOM communication and online usage were compared by chi-square difference tests and t-statistic.
3.4.2 Measurement Model

3.4.2.1 Confirmatory Factor Analysis

The measurement model provides the link between the measurement item (e.g., observed indicator variable) and the underlying constructs they intend to measure (e.g., unobserved latent variable) (Byrne, 2001). The purposes of measurement model are “to specify the indicators for latent variables and to assess the reliability of latent variable for estimating the causal relationship” (Hair et al., 2010, p. 632). Compared with exploratory factor analysis (EFA), CFA provides a more rigorous investigation of alternative factor structures (Bollen, 2014). Since SEM requires well-specified measurement and conceptual models due to its theory-driven nature, CFA is used to examine or confirm relationships between manifest variables and latent constructs.

3.4.2.2 Reliability

Reliability refers to “extent to which variable or set of variables is consistent in what it is intended to measure” (Hair et al., 2010, p. 2). If multiple measurements of a variable are taken, the reliable measure will all be consistent in their value. Reliability is different from validity since reliability concerns how it is measured, not to what should be measured. Reliability must be established before construct validity can be accessed.

The reliability can be assessed by internal consistency among constructs that examines whether each indicator of the scale measured the same construct and
indicators for each construct are highly intercorrelated. In general Cronbach alpha and composite reliability are used to examine the internal consistency of multiple indicators for each construct with the cutoff value of .70 (Hair et al., 2010). The average variance extracted (AVE) is each construct was examined and a value above .50 indicated that the construct more captures variance than the variance caused by measurement error (Fornell & Lacker, 1981).

3.4.2.3 Convergent Validity

Convergent validity refers to “extent to which indicators of a specific construct converge or share a high proportion of variance in common” (Hair et al., 2010, p. 689). It accesses the degree to which two measures of the same concept are correlated. Convergent validity is assessed from the measurement model by examining whether each indicator’s estimated maximum likelihood leading on the underlying construct is significant (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). In addition, the average variance extracted (AVE) which is above .50 suggests that each measurement captured a significant amount of variance for the latent variables (Fornell & Lacker, 1981).

3.4.2.4 Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity refers to “extent to which a construct is truly distinct from other constructs” (Hair et al., 2010, p. 689). Discriminant validity is ensured when the measurement of each construct converges on its particular facet
distinguished from those of other constructs (Churchill, 1979). Discriminant validity can be assessed by comparing AVE with the squared correlations between any pair of constructs. If AVE is greater than the squared correlations, discriminant validity is ensured (Bagozzi et al., 1991). Such results suggest that the indicators for each construct have more common variance than any variance the construct share with other constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

3.4.3 Structural Equation Modeling

To test the hypothesized causal relationships among intention to generate positive hotel eWOM, eWOM motivations, utilitarian and hedonic consumption value, and online social capital, structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis was conducted. SEM has been considered an effective method that can deal with a sophisticated model since SEM provides a range of statistical methods by integrating the use of multiple statistical analyses together such as multiple regression analysis (MRA), factor analysis, (multivariate) analysis of variance ((M)ANOVA) and many others. Other methods (e.g., MRA, and ANOVA) are not sophisticated enough to handle lots of variables and measurement errors: MRA is based on one equation model in the abstract and does not concern measurement errors and ANOVA only examines group differences. Although different ways can be used to test SEM models, all structural equation models have three characteristics: “1) estimation of multiple and interrelated dependence relationships; 2) an ability to represent unobserved concepts in these relationships and correct for measurement error in the
estimation process; and 3) defining a model to explain the entire set of relationships” (Hair et al., 2010, p. 635).

The primary objective of this study is to develop an integrated model of hotel eWOM formation. To achieve this objective, it is necessary to identify and to classify a set of eWOM-generating factors (e.g. personal, social, value, and motivation-related factor), and to identify relationships among these factors. The model includes multiple independent and dependent variables based on different theoretical backgrounds. SEM has been used to confirm (or disconfirm) theoretical models that are sophisticated and includes multiple dependent and independent variables.

In addition, SEM can better assess model fit than other methods. In SEM, parameters are estimated and compared with the sample covariance matrix while providing multiple fit indices (e.g., $\chi^2$, normed fit index, Tucker-Lewis index, comparative fit index and root mean square error of approximation) as well as it investigates causal relationships like MRA. Thus, the capability of SEM to investigate multiple casual dependencies and to test model fit would help this study to achieve its objective.

Unlike other statistical methods, SEM deals with latent variables by analyzing latent variables and their relationships, which provides researchers a chance to examine the reliability of measurement, and to check the dependencies of constructs considering measurement errors. In SEM, observed variables with measurement errors are connected to latent variables, simultaneously integrated into the estimation of structural relationships. On the other hand, other methods (e.g., MRA and
ANOVA) assume perfect measure, and accordingly if measure of quantitative ability is flawed, any results produced by the measure cannot be reliable. Many variables in consumer behavior research cannot be directly measured by a single item. For example, true eWOM motivation cannot be directly observed but it can be rather inferred from multiple measurement items that are observed. Considering the characteristics of variables in eWOM generation model that cannot be observed directly, the measurement component of SEM with CFA is useful to make estimated relationships among latent variables less contaminated by measurement error.

3.4.4 Goodness-of-Fit

To ensure the validity of the measurement and structural model, the study checked whether the goodness-of-fit (GOF) for those models was established within acceptable levels. In terms of accessing the GOF, the current study employed the GOF index, $\chi^2$ test, a root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), absolute fit indexes, normed fit index (NFI), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), comparative fit index (CFI) and incremental fit indices (IFI).

3.4.5 Test of Moderating Effect

This study employed multiple group analysis in order to examine the moderating role of the level of opinion leadership in eWOM generation processes. First, the chi-square difference ($\Delta\chi^2$) between constrained and unconstrained models was assessed to test the differential effects across the two group, high versus low
opinion leadership (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). The significant $\Delta \chi^2$ indicates the underlying construct relationships differ by the level of opinion leadership. Once the significant $\Delta \chi^2$ is found for overall two groups, the $\Delta \chi^2$ in each path coefficient between eWOM motivation and intention across the two groups was examined.
CHAPTER 4. RESULTS

4.1 Descriptive Statistics of Sample

4.1.1 Demographic Profile of Sample

Descriptive information of the study samples is provided in Table 4.1. Of the 570 samples, 46.1 percent were male and 53.9 percent were female. About 70 percent of the respondents were 20 to 39 years old and the mean age was 35.2 years old. The majority ethnicity was Caucasian Americans which consisted of 72.8 percent of the sample. Most respondents (92.8%) had some college education or higher. About 40 percent of the respondents reported annual household incomes of less than $40,000.

4.1.2 Hotel Stay Experience Related Profile of Sample

Descriptive profile of the respondents’ hotel stay experience is presented Table 4.2. Data were gathered based on respondents’ the most recent hotel stay experience within the last one-month period. Of 570 samples, most respondents, which is 96.8 percent, stayed hotels located in USA with the star rating of three stars (40.5%) and four stars (40.5%). About half of samples (52.5%) visited hotels for holiday purpose followed by business (26.8%) and other purposes (20.7%). Other purposes mainly included social occasions such as wedding and funeral. About one
quarter of samples spent no more than three nights at hotels. Approximately half of samples traveled with less than two companions (54.4%) and independent travelers accounted for 32.1 percent of the respondent.
Table 4.1 Descriptive Profile of the Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>46.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>53.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 to 19 years</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 to 29 years</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>36.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 to 39 years</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>33.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 to 49 years</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 to 59 years</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older than age 60</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>415</td>
<td>72.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than high school</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>29.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>276</td>
<td>48.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate school</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional degree</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below $20,000</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20,000 - $39,999</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>23.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$40,000 - $59,999</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>22.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$60,000 - $79,999</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$80,000 - $99,999</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000 - $149,000</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$150,000 - $199,999</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over $200,000</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>570</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.2 Descriptive Profile of the Respondents’ Hotel Stay Experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location of Hotel</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>552</td>
<td>96.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overseas</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Star Rating of Hotel</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One star</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two stars</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three stars</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>40.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four stars</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>40.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five stars or more</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose of Hotel Stay</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiday</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>52.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>26.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Length of stay</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One night</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>22.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two nights</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>29.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three nights</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four nights</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five nights</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six nights or longer</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of companion</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alone</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>32.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One companion</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>44.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two companions</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three companions</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four companions or more</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>570</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2 Measurement Model

To assess the overall fit of the measurement model, the reliability and validity of the measurement items, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted. The detailed results of the CFA is provided in Table 4.3. Since a large sample size inflates model $\chi^2$, other goodness-of-fit indices were examined (Hair et al., 2010): The value of root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) was .049. RMSEA “attempts to correct for the tendency of the $\chi^2$ goodness-of-fit test statistic to reject models with a large sample or a large number of observed variables” (p. 667) and the lower RMSEA value indicates better fit and the acceptable range is from .03 to .08; the normed fit index (NFI), “a ratio of the difference in the $\chi^2$ value between the fitted model and a null model divided by the $\chi^2$ value for the null model” (p. 668), was .948; the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), “a comparison of the normed $\chi^2$ values for the null model and a specified model taking into account model complexity” (p. 668), was .963; and both the comparative fit index (CFI) and incremental fit index (IFI) were .969. The results of goodness of fit indices indicated that the measurement model fit the data well.

The convergent validity was examined with the value of factor loading, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE). Standardized factor loadings for all indicators were between .628 and .944 which is above the recommended .5 threshold (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988), suggesting each indicator converged on a common facet (Hair et al., 2010). The values of CRs for all eight constructs ranged from .701 to .882 which exceed the cutoff value of .7. The results
suggested the measurement items for each construct were reliable to capture the common facet. The values of AVEs for all constructs were between .648 and .853, greater than .5 threshold, indicating the constructs captured a majority of the variance than those of measurement errors. In addition, the values of Cronbach’s alpha, which assess the internal consistency of the measurements, were above the cut of value .7, suggesting indicators for latent constructs were reliable to measure each construct (Hair et al., 2010). Overall, the results of CFA ensured the convergent validity of each construct.

Discriminant validity was examined by the comparison between the AVEs and the squared correlations for any pairs of constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2010). Table 4.4 provides the squared correlation matrix between the constructs. The values of AVE were greater than all squared correlations which indicated a latent construct explained more of the variance than those shared with other constructs. Therefore, the results confirmed that each factor measured a unique construct, supporting the discriminant validity of the eight proposed constructs.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Standardized loading</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>CR</th>
<th>α</th>
<th>AVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Utilitarian Value</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staying at the hotel was convenient.</td>
<td>.671</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The hotel provided me with a good economic value.</td>
<td>.835</td>
<td>16.901</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staying at the hotel was an efficient way to manage my travel.</td>
<td>.893</td>
<td>17.334</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hedonic Value</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staying at the hotel was fun and pleasurable.</td>
<td>.833</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staying at the hotel was truly a joy.</td>
<td>.908</td>
<td>27.055</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staying at the hotel felt like an escape.</td>
<td>.901</td>
<td>26.810</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Online Social Capital</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>.714</td>
<td>.837</td>
<td>.652</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People in my online social network would help me if I need it.</td>
<td>.650</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel a sense of belonging towards my online social network.</td>
<td>.895</td>
<td>16.571</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My contributions show others that I am a clever customer.</td>
<td>.855</td>
<td>16.455</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-enhancement</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>.717</td>
<td>.858</td>
<td>.677</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel good when I can tell others about my choice successes.</td>
<td>.865</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This way I can express my joy about a good staying at the hotel.</td>
<td>.766</td>
<td>20.833</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can tell others about a great experience.</td>
<td>.834</td>
<td>23.311</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gaining Social Benefit</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>.701</td>
<td>.862</td>
<td>.687</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I meet nice people this way.</td>
<td>.730</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is fun to communicate with other people online.</td>
<td>.912</td>
<td>20.193</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe a chat among like-minded people is a nice thing.</td>
<td>.835</td>
<td>19.233</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Helping Other Consumers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>.703</td>
<td>.847</td>
<td>.678</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want to give others the opportunity to book the right hotel.</td>
<td>.628</td>
<td>16.727</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want to help others with my own experiences.</td>
<td>.896</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.3 Continued.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Standardized loading</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>CR</th>
<th>α</th>
<th>AVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I want to advise others to make a better decision</td>
<td>.914</td>
<td>28.124</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Helping the Hotel</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want to help the hotel to be successful</td>
<td>.891</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In my own opinion, good hotels should be supported.</td>
<td>.874</td>
<td>28.345</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want to help the hotel to have more guests</td>
<td>.864</td>
<td>27.835</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Positive Hotel eWOM Generation Intention</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am willing to post a positive online review for the hotel.</td>
<td>.941</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am willing to let other people know I am a guest of the hotel through</td>
<td>.914</td>
<td>40.314</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>online.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am willing to add good things about the hotel on the Internet.</td>
<td>.944</td>
<td>45.362</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am willing to provide more positive online information about the hotel</td>
<td>.895</td>
<td>37.520</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in a more effective way.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: CR = Composite reliability, t = t-statistic, p = p-value, α = Cronbach’s alpha, AVE = Average Variance Extracted, Model fit: $\chi^2 = 579.823$, df = 247, p < .001, $\chi^2$/df = 2.347, NFI = .948, TLI = .963, CFI = .969, IFI = .969, RMSEA = .049
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Utilitarian Value</td>
<td>(.648)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Hedonic Value</td>
<td>.412</td>
<td>(.777)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Online Social Capital</td>
<td>.082</td>
<td>.084</td>
<td>(.652)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Self-enhancement</td>
<td>.180</td>
<td>.274</td>
<td>.170</td>
<td>(.677)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Gaining Social Benefit</td>
<td>.040</td>
<td>.068</td>
<td>.192</td>
<td>.362</td>
<td>(.687)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Helping Other Consumers</td>
<td>.053</td>
<td>.070</td>
<td>.186</td>
<td>.278</td>
<td>.202</td>
<td>(.678)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Helping the Hotel</td>
<td>.199</td>
<td>.250</td>
<td>.171</td>
<td>.368</td>
<td>.144</td>
<td>.382</td>
<td>(.768)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Positive Hotel eWOM Intention</td>
<td>.024</td>
<td>.078</td>
<td>.073</td>
<td>.301</td>
<td>.251</td>
<td>.300</td>
<td>.229</td>
<td>(.853)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Values in parentheses on diagonal represent average variance extracted (AVE), value below the diagonal are squared correlation.
4.3 Structural Equation Modeling

To test the hypothesized causal relationship among constructs, a structural equation model based on ML estimation was conducted. The goodness-of-fit statistics of the proposed model suggests that the model fit the data well ($\chi^2=695.813$, $p=.000$, $\chi^2/df = 2.737$, NFI = .937, TLI = .952, CFI = .959, IFI = .959, RMSEA=.055). Figure 4.1 and Table 4.5 provide the results of structural model and standardized path estimates.

The hypothesized relationships between eWOM motivations and intention to generate positive hotel eWOM ($H_1$) were supported. As we expected, self-directed eWOM motivations positively influenced intention to generate positive hotel eWOM as $\beta_{\text{self-enhancement}} = .221$ and $\beta_{\text{gaining social benefit}} = .217$ at the alpha level of .001. In other words, when people are motivated by enhancing self-image and gaining social benefit for eWOM communication, they are more likely to contribute to generating positive eWOM about hotels. The results indicate that consumers’ self-concept or impression management and social functions of online network influenced consumers’ intention to engage in eWOM generation about their hotel stay experience. Further, other-directed motivations positively influenced intention to generate positive hotel eWOM as $\beta_{\text{helping other consumers}} = .303$ and $\beta_{\text{helping the hotel}} = .097$ at the alpha level of .001 and .058 respectively. The results suggest that people’s motivation to help other consumers was the most influential motivation for positive eWOM generation intention about the hotels, indicating people whose motivations are based on altruism or moral obligation are more likely to post their hotel stay experiences through
online. Overall the results suggest that eWOM motivations such as self-enhancement, gaining social benefit, helping other consumers and helping the hotel are precursors of intention to generate positive hotel eWOM which supported hypothesis 1.

The positive relationships between hedonic consumption value and eWOM motivations ($H_3$) were supported. The positive path coefficients of hedonic value to self-enhancement ($\beta = .389, p < .001$) and to gaining social benefit ($\beta = .163, p < .01$) suggest that when people’s perceptions of hedonic value about their hotel stay experience increase, their self-directed motivations such as self-enhancement and gaining social benefits are accordingly enhanced. Also, hedonic consumption value positively influence other directed motivations such as helping other consumers ($\beta = .146, p < .05$) and helping the hotel ($\beta = .328, p < .001$) which indicates that when people perceive hedonic value for their hotel stay experience, they are more likely to be motivated by helping others or the hotel by contributing to generating positive online review about hotels. Unlike the significant influence of hedonic consumption value on eWOM motivations, the relationships between utilitarian value and eWOM motivations ($H_2$) were partially supported. The results showed that utilitarian consumption value had a significant influence only on motivation to help the hotel ($\beta = .154, p < .01$). Overall the results indicate that in the context of sharing hotel experience, hedonic value has a more influential role than utilitarian value, triggering psychological drivers of eWOM generation intention.

The hypothesized relationships between online social capital and eWOM motivations ($H_4$) were supported. The path coefficients of online social capital to
eWOM motivations were all positive and significant at the alpha level of .001. The social capital embedded in the online network increased people’s motivation to engage in eWOM communication. The results showed that online social capital increased motivation for self-enhancement ($\beta = .291$), gaining social benefit ($\beta = .413$), helping other consumers ($\beta = .400$), and helping the hotel ($\beta = .289$). The results suggest that online social capital plays an important role in triggering people’s motivations to engage in eWOM contribution functioning as social pressure.

Overall, the structural results suggest that the formation of hotel eWOM is influenced by psychological motivational factors (e.g., self-enhancement, gaining social benefit, helping other consumers and helping the hotel) which are triggered by consumption value (e.g., hedonic and utilitarian), although the influence differs across the types of value, and online social influence (e.g., online social capital).
Figure 4.1 Results of structural model

Notes: ***, p < .001, **, p < .01, *, p < .05, #p = .058
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Path</th>
<th>Standardized Estimate</th>
<th>t-statistic</th>
<th>P-value</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>eWOM Motivation to Positive Hotel eWOM Generation Intention</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-enhancement → Positive Hotel eWOM Intention</td>
<td>.221</td>
<td>4.225</td>
<td>.001***</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaining Social Benefit → Positive Hotel eWOM Intention</td>
<td>.217</td>
<td>4.342</td>
<td>.001***</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping Other Consumers → Positive Hotel eWOM Intention</td>
<td>.303</td>
<td>6.101</td>
<td>.001***</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping the Hotel → Positive Hotel eWOM Intention</td>
<td>.097</td>
<td>1.895</td>
<td>.058*</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Utilitarian Value to eWOM Motivation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilitarian Value → Self-enhancement</td>
<td>.091</td>
<td>1.595</td>
<td>.111</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilitarian Value → Gaining Social Benefit</td>
<td>-.026</td>
<td>-.433</td>
<td>.665</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilitarian Value → Helping Other Consumers</td>
<td>.019</td>
<td>.318</td>
<td>.750</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilitarian Value → Helping the Hotel</td>
<td>.154</td>
<td>2.754</td>
<td>.006**</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hedonic Value to eWOM Motivation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hedonic Value → Self enhancement</td>
<td>.389</td>
<td>6.802</td>
<td>.001***</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hedonic Value → Gaining Social Benefit</td>
<td>.163</td>
<td>2.721</td>
<td>.007**</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hedonic Value → Helping Other Consumers</td>
<td>.146</td>
<td>2.473</td>
<td>.013*</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hedonic Value → Helping the Hotel</td>
<td>.328</td>
<td>5.957</td>
<td>.001***</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Online Social Capital to eWOM Motivation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Social Capital → Self-enhancement</td>
<td>.291</td>
<td>6.387</td>
<td>.001***</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Social Capital → Gaining Social Benefit</td>
<td>.413</td>
<td>7.819</td>
<td>.001***</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Social Capital → Helping Other Consumers</td>
<td>.400</td>
<td>7.986</td>
<td>.001***</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Social Capital → Helping the Hotel</td>
<td>.289</td>
<td>6.513</td>
<td>.001***</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goodness-of-fits statistics</td>
<td>Structural Model</td>
<td>Cut-off Value</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\chi^2 = 695.813$</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\chi^2 / df = 2.737$</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.0-5.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFI = .937</td>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; .90</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TLI = .952</td>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; .90</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFI = .959</td>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; .90</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IFI = .959</td>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; .90</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMSEA = .055</td>
<td></td>
<td>&lt; .08</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: *** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$. *= marginally significant
4.4 Moderating Effect of Opinion Leadership

The present study postulates that the level of individual’s hotel opinion leadership moderates the relationships between eWOM motivations and intention to generate positive hotel eWOM. A multiple group analysis was conducted to estimate the moderating effect of opinion leadership. First samples were grouped into two, a high and a low opinion leadership groups. Since respondents’ level of opinion leadership was measured by 7-point Likert scale, this study used the mid-point of Likert scale which is four as the based score for dividing high versus low opinion leadership groups: The respondents whose score was greater than four regarding opinion leadership measurements were classified as the high opinion leadership group (n = 313), while those with below than four were grouped into the low opinion leadership group (n = 257).

Table 4.6 provides the demographic and online usage characteristics of these two groups. The comparison between high and low level of opinion leadership groups suggested that there were significant differences in income level, previous experience in generating eWOM, and perceived online usage frequency. A high opinion leadership group had higher income level than a low opinion leadership group. In relation to previous eWOM generation experience, samples in a high opinion leadership group had been more engaged in generating eWOM where 75.7 percent of respondents in the high opinion leadership group had previous experience in posting hotel review while 44.4 percent of respondents in the low opinion leadership group had previous eWOM generation experience. In addition, the high
opinion leadership group more frequently used Internet than the low opinion leadership group.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>High (n=313)</th>
<th>Low (n=257)</th>
<th>$\chi^2$</th>
<th>df</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>0.557</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>134</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than high school</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.79</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>29.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's degree</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate school</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional degree</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below $20,000</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>20.191**</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20,000 - $39,999</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$40,000 - $59,999</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$60,000 - $79,999</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$80,000 - $99,999</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000 - $149,000</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$150,000 - $199,999</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over $200,000</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>eWOM Experience</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>48.301***</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>49.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Online Usage</strong></td>
<td>4.74b</td>
<td>1.74c</td>
<td>6.309d****</td>
<td>568</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: a: measured with a statement "I usually spend a lot of time in my online social network" with 7-point scale from 1: strongly disagree to 7: strongly agree; b: mean; c: standard deviation; d: t-statistic; ** p < .01; *** p < .001
To examine the differential effects between high and low opinion leadership groups, the difference in chi-square ($\Delta \chi^2$) between the constrained and unconstrained models was estimated (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). Table 4.7 presents the results of the chi-square difference test. Overall, the chi-square difference ($\Delta \chi^2 (\Delta df = 33) = 53.675$) between the constrained model ($\chi^2 (df = 541) = 1103.799$) and the unconstrained model ($\chi^2 (df = 508) = 1050.124$) was significant at the alpha level of .05. The significant $\chi^2$ difference suggests that the relationships among intention to generate positive hotel eWOM, eWOM motivations, consumption values, and online social capital significantly differed across the level of opinion leadership.

### Table 4.7 Results of Moderating Effect of Opinion Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unconstrained Model</th>
<th>Constrained Model</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$\chi^2 = 1050.124$</td>
<td>$\chi^2 = 1103.799$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$df = 508$</td>
<td>$df = 541$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normed $\chi^2 = 2.067$</td>
<td>Normed $\chi^2 = 2.040$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$\Delta \chi^2 (\Delta df = 33) = 53.675 (p = .013) > \chi^2_{.05} (33) = 47.440$

Significant = Moderating effect was found statistically

Figure 4.2 and 4.3 provide the results of two group structural models. For the high opinion leadership group, all eWOM motivations including self-enhancement, gaining social benefit, helping other consumers and helping the hotel enhanced intention to generate positive hotel eWOM. However, for the low opinion leadership group, helping the hotel did not have a significant influence on intention to generate
positive hotel eWOM. The results may suggest that eWOM contributors’ expected outcomes differ across the level of opinion leadership. In addition, for the high opinion leadership group, hedonic consumption value had a significant influence on all eWOM motivations, but utilitarian value did not significantly influence eWOM motivation. For the low opinion leadership group, both utilitarian and hedonic value positively influenced only motivations for self-enhancement and helping the hotel which suggests that the two distinct consumption values may function differently in eWOM motivations across the level of opinion leadership.

The interest of this study regarding moderating effect of opinion leadership is to investigate differential effect of eWOM motivations on positive hotel eWOM generation intention. To examine significantly different causal relationships between high and low opinion leadership groups, each relationship between eWOM motivation and eWOM intention was constrained and separately assessed by testing the $\chi^2$ difference between the constrained and unconstrained model. Table 4.8 illustrates the results of comparison of each path between eWOM motivation and eWOM intention across two groups. The results suggest that no statistically significant differences of path coefficients between each eWOM motivations and positive hotel eWOM generation intention across the high and low opinion leadership groups were found. However, the significant chi-square difference in overall two group models (Table 4.7) and the structural results (Figure 4.2 and 4.3) may have practical implication by suggesting expected outcomes for generating positive
eWOM and the types of consumption value function differently to consumers’ psychological drivers to eWOM generation across the level of opinion leadership. Further this study tested the moderating effect of gender and age to find potential moderators of positive hotel eWOM generation. However, no significant differential effects were found.
Figure 4.2 Results of moderating effect - High opinion leadership
Notes: *** p < .001, ** p < .01, * p < .05

Figure 4.3. Results of moderating effect - Low opinion leadership
Table 4.8 Comparison of parameter estimates between high vs. low opinion leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Path</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>$\Delta \chi^2(df=1)$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-enhancement $\rightarrow$ Positive Hotel eWOM Intention</td>
<td>.248***</td>
<td>.177*</td>
<td>.315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaining Social Benefit $\rightarrow$ Positive Hotel eWOM Intention</td>
<td>.247***</td>
<td>.167*</td>
<td>.136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping Other Consumers $\rightarrow$ Positive Hotel eWOM Intention</td>
<td>.265***</td>
<td>.321***</td>
<td>.015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping the Hotel $\rightarrow$ Positive Hotel eWOM Intention</td>
<td>.128a</td>
<td>.033</td>
<td>.723</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilitarian Value $\rightarrow$ Self-enhancement</td>
<td>.022</td>
<td>.207*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilitarian Value $\rightarrow$ Gaining Social Benefit</td>
<td>-.006</td>
<td>-.006</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilitarian Value $\rightarrow$ Helping Other Consumers</td>
<td>.029</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilitarian Value $\rightarrow$ Helping the Hotel</td>
<td>.117</td>
<td>.227*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hedonic Value $\rightarrow$ Self-enhancement</td>
<td>.498***</td>
<td>.244*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hedonic Value $\rightarrow$ Gaining Social Benefit</td>
<td>.154*</td>
<td>.122</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hedonic Value $\rightarrow$ Helping Other Consumers</td>
<td>.198**</td>
<td>.071</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hedonic Value $\rightarrow$ Helping the Hotel</td>
<td>.311***</td>
<td>.310***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Social Capital $\rightarrow$ Self-enhancement</td>
<td>.187**</td>
<td>.288***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Social Capital $\rightarrow$ Gaining Social Benefit</td>
<td>.378***</td>
<td>.348***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Social Capital $\rightarrow$ Helping Other Consumers</td>
<td>.292***</td>
<td>.415***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Social Capital $\rightarrow$ Helping the Hotel</td>
<td>.224***</td>
<td>.219***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: *** p < .001, ** p < .01, * p < .05, a p = .07
CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary and Discussion

Recognizing the importance of eWOM in consumer’s decision making, research in marketing and consumer behavior has attempted to identify how eWOM influences consumer behavior and firms’ performance (Gupta & Harris, 2010; Hansson et al., 2013; Huang et al., 2011; Zhu & Zhang, 2010). However, the literature still lacks a comprehensive understanding of why people share their hotel experience online and what triggers their motivations. To fill in this research gap and provide an in-depth understanding of eWOM generation in the hotel industry, this study developed a conceptual model that includes personal, social, and consumption-related constructs and examined their roles in relation to the generation of positive eWOM about hotels. To achieve the study objectives, a self-administered online survey method was used. The measurement was adopted from relevant literature and modified through a pilot test. To collect data, questionnaires were distributed to U.S. panel members of Amazon Mechanical Turk, and a total of 570 responses were used for data analysis. Structural equation modeling was used as the major statistical tool.
To develop a conceptual model, the relevant constructs of the generation of positive hotel eWOM were identified based on a thorough literature review. The constructs include four types of motivation (e.g., self-enhancement, gaining social benefit, helping other consumers, and helping the hotel), two distinct consumption values (e.g., utilitarian and hedonic value), online social capital, and behavioral intention (e.g., intention to generate positive WOM about hotels). Relationships among these underlying constructs were proposed based on a rationale drawn from consumer and social psychology theories, such as motivation-opportunity-ability theory, social exchange theory, social cognitive theory, social capital theory, impression management theory, and appraisal theory.

The results of this study suggest eWOM motivations are precursors of the intention to generate eWOM. Motivation for self-enhancement significantly influenced people’s intention to generate positive hotel eWOM. The results imply that an influential driver of people’s eWOM generation is the prospective outcome that eWOM contribution may increase individuals’ reputation or impression to others. The results are consistent with previous research in impression management that contends people use communication as an effective tool for managing their image (Belk, 1988; Berger & Heath, 2007; Escalas & Bettman, 2003; Levy, 1959). For example, when people desire to be seen positively by others, they are more likely to bring positive elements to a conversation with others such as sharing successful product choices and expertise. The results are also consistent with prior studies in people’s knowledge-sharing behavior (Donath, 1999; Stewart, 2003) and provide
further support suggesting self-enhancement as a strong driver of information-sharing behavior (Donath, 1999).

Motivation for gaining social benefit also significantly enhanced the intention to contribute positive hotel eWOM. The results suggest that when people desire to have social engagement, they actively contribute to eWOM communication. This is because people may enjoy talking to others and get self-gratification or want to maintain or establish a social relationship by sharing their experience. For example, people like to post online about positive hotel stay experiences to gratify themselves by recalling good memories while enjoying reading others’ feedback and meeting new friends. In addition, the results may imply that people endeavor to build or maintain a social relationship online similar to face-to-face interpersonal relationships, and engaging in eWOM can be an effective method for achieving this.

The results of this study suggest that motivations for helping other consumers and helping the hotel had a positive impact on people’s intention to generate positive online reviews of hotels. The results indicate that consumers motivated by altruistic drivers are more likely to disseminate eWOM. The results are consistent with prior research that suggests altruistic reviewers often provide practical tips and recommendations that may contribute to improved quality experiences and increased well-being (Munar & Jacobsen, 2014).

This study incorporated consumption value in the formation of eWOM and found different influences of utilitarian and hedonic value perception on eWOM motivations. The results suggest that the hedonic consumption value was a significant
trigger for all identified eWOM motivations (e.g., self-enhancement, gaining social benefit, helping other consumers, and helping the hotel) while the utilitarian value had a significant effect only on the motivation to help the company. Considering the experiential nature of hospitality products, the findings are meaningful in that consumers’ postpurchase behaviors such as generating eWOM are more influenced by emotional value than economic value. Hedonic values such as a feeling of fun and pleasure would heighten individuals’ arousal level and last longer in an individual’s memory than utilitarian value, which is based on the input-output ratio. Thus, when people perceive a high hedonic value for their hotel stay, they are more likely to be motivated to engage in eWOM. Although all eWOM motivations were triggered by hedonic value, its effects on eWOM motivations were prominent for the motivations for self-enhancement and to help the hotel. The results indicate that increasing hedonic value can benefit consumers and service providers through eWOM.

In addition to individual motivation and consumption value, the results of this study suggest online social capital is an important trigger of eWOM motivations. The results showed that social capital significantly enhanced eWOM motivations. The findings indicate that when individuals trust their online networks, share reciprocity norms within online networks, and identify their role in the networks, individuals are more likely to be motivated to engage in eWOM communication. Similar to supportive interpersonal relationships and collective behaviors developed and maintained through shared reciprocal norms and mutual trust (Putnam, 1995;
Shumaker & Brownell, 1984), social capital plays an important role in sustaining information-sharing behavior in an online circumstance.

This study has suggested that opinion leadership can moderate the relationships between eWOM motivations and eWOM generation intention. Opinion leaders are individuals who have interests about particular topics (e.g., hotel), willing to expose themselves to public sources (e.g., online), and are considered reliable information source by others by providing useful advice (e.g., hotel reviews). The results suggest that the overall underlying structures of the constructs between high versus low opinion leadership groups were significantly different, but further analysis of the differences in path coefficients revealed that there were no significant differences between eWOM motivations and eWOM generation intention across the two groups. However, the differences in the overall models between high and low opinion leadership cannot be overlooked as the structural results of the two group models showed different relationships among the constructs. The results suggest that self-enhancement, gaining social benefit, and helping other consumers were common eWOM motivations regardless of the level of opinion leadership, but helping the hotel was a significant motivation only for the high opinion leadership group. In addition, the positive influence of hedonic value was more prominent for the high opinion leadership group while utilitarian value was more influential for the low opinion leadership group in relation to eWOM motivation. This may provide practical insight to practitioners to direct different marketing strategies across target groups as opinion leaders are more likely to contribute to generate positive eWOM.
and share more information regarding experiential benefits that helps other consumers’ decision-making.

5.2 Implications

5.2.1 Theoretical Implications

This study provided several important theoretical implications for the consumer behavior and marketing literature. Compared with previous literature that has mainly focused on the influence of eWOM communication on consumer decision-making and a firm’s performance or investigated the antecedents of eWOM in a fragmented way, this study considered the underlying structures and processes of eWOM generation in the context of the hotel stay experience in order to provide an in-depth understanding of the formation of positive eWOM about hotels.

One of the most prominent features of this study lies in developing and testing a conceptual model of the generation of positive hotel eWOM. Although previous researchers have suggested influential motivations for engaging in eWOM communication (e.g., Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004), the lack of a comprehensive model that can explain the processes of psychosocial drivers and their triggers in relation to the formation of traditional WOM and eWOM has long been considered a limitation. Arndt (1967) noted that “the process and causal mechanisms of WOM advertising have not really been given much attention” (p. 291). Anderson (1998), about 30 years later, commented that “the antecedents of WOM have seldom received direct attention” (p. 6), and researchers who recently reviewed previous
literature on hotel eWOM with a meta-analysis method again pointed out the lack of a comprehensive model of eWOM generation (Cantallops & Salvi, 2014).

Responding to this need, this study proposed and empirically tested an integrated model of eWOM generation. Since the process and the causal mechanism of eWOM formation may differ depending on the context or incidents, this study focused on the positive eWOM generation in the context of the hotel stay experience. Through a thorough review of prior literature and relevant theories, this study identified a clear set of key motivations and factors related to consumption and social influence and examined their influence in the process of eWOM generation. The integrative model that incorporates personal (e.g., eWOM motivations) and consumption (e.g., utilitarian and hedonic value), and social (e.g., online social capital) related constructs into one framework answers questions about why, what, and how all influence the generation of positive eWOM. Further, although this study mainly investigated the process and mechanism for positive hotel eWOM generation, the model may provide insight for the generation of negative hotel eWOM. The samples for this study were travelers who may have positive or negative hotel stay experience. The level of perceived value and their intention to generate positive eWOM were measured by 7-point Likert scale (1 = “strongly disagree” to 7 = “strongly agree”). Respondents who perceived their hotel stay experience negatively would rate measurement items for perceived value and positive eWOM intention lower than those with positive hotel-stay experience. Thus, although the primary interest of this
Another unique contribution of this study lies in incorporating two distinct consumption values (e.g., utilitarian and hedonic value) in the conceptual model of positive hotel eWOM generation. Previous researchers have mainly focused on investigating products or service attributes (e.g., Yen & Tang, 2014) or satisfaction (e.g., Kim et al., 2009) as the antecedents of eWOM generation. However, this study have suggested that consumers’ consumption value is an influential trigger of eWOM motivations and found it differently influenced eWOM motivations depending on the dimensions. The results indicate that hedonic value was more influential than utilitarian value in the formation of positive hotel eWOM. Investigating the role of different value perception in the processes of eWOM generation would provide a deeper understanding by providing a rationale that explains why certain product and service attributes are more influential on eWOM generation than others, and why the empirical results of satisfaction as an antecedent of eWOM differ in previous literature (Kim et al., 2009). Furthermore, this study contributes to research that has underscored the importance of experiential value in a consumption context: Yoo and Gretzel (2011) indicated the importance of hedonism for content creation, and Ryu et al. (2010) suggested hedonic value is an important dining value. By investigating the role of hedonic value and finding its significant influence on the formation of positive hotel eWOM, this study increased our knowledge of the concept of experiential or hedonic value.
A further contribution of this study was finding the influential role of social capital in the online environment. The results of this study suggest that online social capital triggered eWOM motivation in a positive way. This findings seem to contradict prior research that showed social capital cannot be accumulated in online environments because relationships in the online channels are less likely to be developed based on shared history, interdependence, and frequent interaction than those of face-to-face interpersonal relationships (Cohen & Prusak, 2001; Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998; Nohria & Eccles, 1992). However, the findings of this study suggest that social capital can be observed in the online environment and functions as an influential social force in generating eWOM. Therefore, this study contributes to research that has contended social capital is present in online networks and influences participation in online networks (Chiu et al., 2006; Wasko & Faraj, 2005).

The conceptual model and empirical findings resurrect the strategic importance of eWOM motivations. The results highlight the crucial role that motivations play in explaining the formation of positive hotel eWOM. Although causal reasoning and straightforward logic suggest that nothing would happen in the absence of motivation, some previous studies have found only limited support for the role of motivation in explaining people’s WOM behavior (Siemsen et al., 2008). The results suggest four key drivers of eWOM (e.g., self-enhancement, gaining social benefit, helping other consumers, and helping the hotel) as the precursors of eWOM intention while simultaneously providing an in-depth understanding of which type of motivation more or less enhances people’s generation of eWOM. For example, the
results suggest that motivation for helping other consumers is the most influential in the generation of eWOM. The results support the relevance of altruistic and other-related motivation highlighted in previous research (Hsu et al., 2007; Munar & Jacobsen, 2014) and confirmed prior literature that indicated tourists are willing to communicate advice on practical matters (Munar & Ooi, 2012).

This study also provides some indication that individuals’ cognition of social environment influences underlying the eWOM contribution. Consistent with social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986), the social cognition-related variable (e.g., online social capital, helping other consumers and the hotel) is an important trigger of the formation of eWOM.

5.2.2 Practical Implications

In addition to theoretical contribution, this study offers several practical implications. The results of this study can help practitioners better understand the mechanism for the generation of positive hotel eWOM. This study offers managers at hotels and operators of online review sites a perspective for why consumers post positive hotel reviews and what triggers these behaviors. This information should contribute to developing more effective and efficient strategies for encouraging consumers to generate positive hotel eWOM, thus resulting in more positive online reviews and profits.

The findings of key eWOM motivations can guide managers in understanding consumers’ inner drivers of positive hotel eWOM generation. The generation of
eWOM is influenced by consumers’ expected outcomes for performing this behavior. The expected outcomes can be categorized into self-directed and other directed: self-directed outcome expectation includes self-enhancement and gaining social benefit; other-directed outcome expectation includes helping other consumers and the company. This categorization can provide practitioners a useful framework for understanding the target specific consumers’ inner drivers in posting online reviews when developing strategies for marketing and communication. For example, information on hotel advertisements and a follow-up email about a guest's hotel stay can be designed to trigger positive self-enhancement (e.g., “you are a valued customer”) and altruistic concerns (e.g., “your comments are valuable for improving our service”). In addition, posting feedback on consumers’ comments would enhance others’ eWOM contribution since this makes people feel socially connected with the service provider, triggering the motivation for gaining social benefit.

The understanding of value perception provides managers insight into the relation to value creation when developing products and marketing messages. This study suggests that consumers’ perceived values can be assessed with different dimensions such as utilitarian and hedonic values. Utilitarian value is assessed with an input-output transaction framework and can be represented by an economic or functional value such as “good value for money” and “very convenient location.” Hedonic value is related to experiential and emotional values, such as feeling of “joy,” “pleasure,” or “escape.” The results of this study imply that during the hotel stay experience, hedonic value is more salient compared to utilitarian value to drive
eWOM contribution. Managers should understand the important role of hedonic value in the formation of positive hotel eWOM, and can put in more experiential attributes when developing hotel products and services, and tailor the marketing message while underscoring the hotel’s hedonic features. However, utilitarian value should not be overlooked as economic value has always been crucial to consumers’ purchase decision-making.

The finding of online social capital as an influential trigger of eWOM motivation helps managers understand the importance of an online social relationship in the formation of positive hotel eWOM. The results of this study suggest that online social capital, which is accumulated intangible social assets (e.g., trust and reciprocity) within online networks, enhances individuals’ desires to contribute to eWOM. For managers who are interested in developing and sustaining WOM communication online, consumers or online communities with higher online social capital can be beneficial communication partners.

Managers must also understand that the underlying mechanism of the generation of eWOM differs across the level of opinion leadership. The structural results of the two group models (high versus low opinion leadership) suggest that for the high opinion leadership group, motivation for helping the hotel significantly influenced intention to generate positive hotel eWOM, but this was not the case for the low opinion leadership group. Furthermore, the results reveal that the high opinion leadership group was more influenced by hedonic value in relation to eWOM motivations. Thus, managers need to put more effort into identifying opinion leaders
and maintaining good relationships with them as opinion leaders who influence other consumers’ decision-making and are more likely to contribute to eWOM to help the company than non-leaders.

5.3 Limitations and Future Study Suggestions

Although this study makes important theoretical and practical contributions to consumer research in eWOM formation in the hotel industry, this study is not free of limitation which require further investigation and additional studies.

This study used an online survey method to measure variables related to consumers’ hotel stay experience, such as utilitarian and hedonic value, and consumers’ intention to generate positive hotel eWOM. Although the questionnaire was carefully developed to help respondents recall their hotel stay experience, eligible respondents (e.g., people who had stayed at a hotel within the last month) were recruited through a screening question, and evidence of their prior hotel stay experience was confirmed by providing hotel-specific information (e.g., name, location, and star rating of the hotel), recall bias regarding the hotel stay experience might be present. Another limitation of this study is the demographic distribution of the sample. About 70 percent of respondents’ age was between 20 and 39 years old which is higher than general U.S population which consisted of 19.6 percent (U.S. Census, 2012). The presence of younger respondents for this study may be due to the use of Mturk for data collection. Thus, to minimize these limitations, future research should collect data from guests who are presently staying at a hotel.
This study examined only one type of eWOM behavior, which is eWOM generation. This study considered eWOM generation different from eWOM transmission by defining eWOM generation as creating eWOM based on individuals’ own experiences whereas eWOM transmission involves carrying others’ comments to others. Considering that electronic networks allow people to contribute to eWOM communication with a variety of modes such as generating, transmitting, replying, or merely clicking a “like” button, future research should also examine the underlying structure of these different modes related to eWOM communication. Among them, research on eWOM transmission would provide the most insight to managers as transmission research will help them understand how their marketing messages and information on social media is disseminated through eWOM communication.

Online media continues to evolve quickly. Previous Internet platform–based channels, although still present, have given way to social media whose core feature is social connectivity. The content or methods of engaging in eWOM communication may differ depending on which channel people use (Yen & Tang, 2014). Thus, investigating why individuals choose to post comments in certain channels and what content people share across channels would be an area for future research.
REFERENCES
REFERENCES


APPENDIX

Dear Participants,

We are conducting a study to provide a better understanding of consumers’ electronic word of mouth behavior in a hotel setting. The results of this study would contribute in developing a comprehensive model that helps us understand what makes hotel guests engaged in generating online comments on their hotel stay experience and gives a useful guidance to industry practitioners for effectively dealing with consumers’ online comments. The participants for this survey should be 18 years or older, and residents of the United States. Also, the participants for this survey should have hotel staying experience within the last month.

The survey for this research is voluntary, anonymous, and the participants may stop answering questions on this survey at any time if necessary. Further, the participants can skip any questions which they do not want to answer. It will take about 10 minute(s) to complete the survey. All responses will be kept anonymous as well as confidential. Also, we will not use responses for other purposes. The compensation of e-currency ($0.80) will be granted for participants who successfully complete this survey (No compensation will be provided for partially completed survey). Your participation with completing this survey is helpful to the completion of this research. If you have any question or need more information about this survey, please contact to: Dr. SooCheong (Shawn) Jang or JungYun (Christine) Hur.

Sincerely,

SooCheong (Shawn) Jang, Ph.D.          JungYun (Christine) Hur, M.S., MBA.
Professor                          Ph.D. Candidate
Phone: (765) 496-3610               Phone: (765) 409-8715
Email: jang12@purdue.edu             Email: hur3@purdue.edu

School of Hospitality and Tourism Management
Purdue University
West Lafayette, IN 47907-0327
SCREENING QUESTION

Have you ever stayed at a hotel within the last one-month period?

☐ Yes
☐ No

SECTION 1: Hotel Stay Experience

Please recall the most recent hotel stay experience, and answer the following questions based on your experience at the hotel.

1. What is the name of the hotel where you stayed? _______________

2. Where is the hotel located?

☐ USA
☐ Overseas

3. How is the star rating of the hotel?

☐ One star
☐ Two stars
☐ Three stars
☐ Four stars
☐ Five stars or more

4. How long did you stay at the hotel? ________________days

5. What was the purpose of staying?

☐ Holiday
☐ Business
☐ Other

If other, please specify the purpose: ______________________________
6. How many people did you travel with for the trip? (Including yourself)

________ person(s)

7. Thinking about the hotel, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Utilitarian Value</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staying at the hotel was convenient.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The hotel provided me with a good economic value.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staying at the hotel was an efficient way to manage my travel.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hedonic Value</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staying at the hotel was fun and pleasurable.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staying at the hotel was truly a joy.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staying at the hotel felt like an escape.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SECTION 2: Online Social Relationship & Usage

Following is the list of statements that may tell your online social relationship or usage behavior. Please rate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements based on your online social experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Online Usage</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I usually spend a lot of time in my online social network.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Online Social Capital</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People in my online social network would help me if I need it.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel a sense of belonging towards my online social network.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I trust most people in my social network.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECTION 3: eWOM Motivation

Following is a list of **motives that may influence your participation in generating positive online review about your recent hotel stay**. Please indicate your level of agreement regarding what drives you to generate online comments.

Q: What would motivate you to write positive online review for the hotel?

A: I would like to post positive online review for the hotel because……

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motive</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-enhancement</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel good when I can tell others about my choice successes.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This way I can express my joy about a good staying at the hotel.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My contributions show others that I am a clever customer.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gaining Social Benefit</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I meet nice people this way.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is fun to communicate with other people online.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe a chat among like-minded people is a nice thing.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Helping Other Consumers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want to give others the opportunity to book the right hotel.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want to help others with my own experiences.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want to advise others to make a better decision</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Helping The Hotel</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want to help the hotel to be successful.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In my own opinion, good hotels should be supported.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want to help the hotel to have more guests.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECTION 4: Positive eWOM Generation Intention

Following is the list of statements that may tell your **intentions to post online comments about the hotel where you recently stayed**. Please rate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive eWOM Generation Intention</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am willing to post a positive online review for the hotel.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am willing to let other people know I am a guest of the hotel through online.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am willing to add good things about the hotel on the Internet.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am willing to provide more positive online information about the hotel in a more effective way.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SECTION 5: Hotel Opinion Leadership

Following is the list of statements that may tell **your expertise and interest about hotels**. Please rate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements based on your experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hotel Opinion Leadership</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I think I am generally regarded a good source of advice about hotels by my friends.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think people come to me more often than I go to them for information about hotels.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think other people come to me for advice about choosing hotels.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe people that I know pick hotels based on what I have told them.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I often persuade other people to book a hotel I like.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I often influence people’s opinion about hotels.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECTION 6: Previous eWOM Experience & Demographic Information

1. Have you ever written any online review about hotels?
   □ Yes
   □ No

   If yes, which online site have you used? Please ☑ all that apply.
   □ Online review website (e.g., TripAdvisor, Yelp, Expedia etc.)
   □ Social network site (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc.)
   □ Blog
   □ Hotel website
   □ Other

   If other, please specify the site: ______________________________

2. What is your gender?
   □ Male
   □ Female

3. How old are you? ________ years old

4. What is your highest level of education completed?
   □ Less than high school
   □ High school
   □ Some college, but no degree
   □ Bachelor’s degree
   □ Graduate degree (MS, PhD)
   □ Professional degree (MD, JD)
5. What is your ethnicity?

☐ Caucasian
☐ African American
☐ Native American
☐ Hispanic
☐ Asian
☐ Other

6. What is your annual income before taxes?

☐ Below $20,000
☐ $20,000 - $39,999
☐ $40,000 - $59,999
☐ $60,000 - $79,999
☐ $80,000 - $99,999
☐ $100,000 - $149,999
☐ $150,000 - $199,999
☐ Over $200,000
VITA
VITA

JUNGYUN (CHRISTINE) HUR

EDUCATION

Ph.D., Hospitality and Tourism Management, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN, USA, August 2016
  • Advisor: Dr. SooCheong (Shawn) Jang

M.B.A., Concentration in Hospitality Management, Le Cordon Bleu & Sookmyung Women’s University, Seoul, Korea, August 2011
  • Graduated with Distinction (Summa Cum Laude)

M.T.H., International Tourism and Hospitality Management, Griffith University, Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia, September 2005

B.A., Communications, Sookmyung Women’s University, Seoul, Korea, August 2003
  • Minors: Culture and Tourism / Public Relations and Advertisement / French Language and Literature
  • Graduated with Distinction (Summa Cum Laude & Early Graduation)

INDUSTRY EXPERIENCE

Hanwha Hotels & Resorts, Seoul, Korea, January 2006 - September 2010
Assistant Project Manager
  • Conducted business analyses and planned business strategies for the hotel division
  • Developed and incubated new hotel & restaurant businesses
  • Managed events on a project basis
The Ritz Carlton Hotel, Seoul, Korea, December 2004
Business Center Assistant
• Supported customer service to ensure smooth business center operations
• Revised customer service manual to improve staff service management skills and customer service satisfaction

Sales Assistant & Cashier
• Supported customer service and managed orders, complaints, and other inquiries
• Managed money transaction and monitored daily cash flow

Accor Mercure Resort, Queenstown, New Zealand, November 2003 - December 2003
Room Attendant / Housekeeper
• Maintained guest rooms clean, replenished room amenities, and checked room security to ensure pleasant hotel staying

Frieya’s Restaurant, Queenstown, New Zealand, December 2003
Head Server
• Supervised servers and performed server duties to ensure smooth and timely dining operations

Seoul Broadcasting System (SBS), Seoul, Korea, March 2003 - June 2003
Program Production Assistant
• Engaged in program idea development and supported program production

Other Industry Experience
• Secret Supervisor, KFC & Baskin Robbins, Korea, 2000 - 2003
• Instructor, Private educational institute, Korea, 2000 - 2003
• Election Researcher, Korea Research, Korea, 2000, 2002
• Conference Scripter, AC Nielsen, Korea, May 2001
• Librarian, Sookmyung Women’s University, Korea, Fall 2000

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Graduate Instructor, Purdue University, Spring 2016
Course: Introduction to Meeting & Event Management
• A new course for the fundamental of event management
• Full responsibility for developing new curriculum, delivering lectures, and grading
• Advisor: Dr. Richard Ghiselli

Teaching Assistant, Purdue University, Fall 2015
Course: Event & Meeting Planning Management
- Engaged in new curriculum development
- Taught sessions for event financial management, design and marketing
- Advisor: Dr. Joseph (Mick) La Lopa

Graduate Instructor, Purdue University, Spring 2013 - Spring 2015
Course: Managerial Accounting & Financial Management in Hospitality Operations
- Taught lectures to 40 hospitality management and consumer science majors for 5 semesters
- Full responsibility for developing content, delivering lectures, and grading
- Advised and mentored students for their academic success and career development
- Advisor: Dr. Hugo Tang

Teaching Assistant, Purdue University, Fall 2012 - Spring 2015
Course: Financial Accounting for the Service Industries / Managerial Accounting & Financial Management in Hospitality Operations / Cost Controls in Lodging & Foodservice
- Engaged in in-class exercise development and grading to support student learning
- Taught lectures when professor was out of town
- Advisor: Dr. Hugo Tang

Teaching Assistant, Sookmyung Women’s University, Spring 2011
Course: Brand Management
- Developed class materials and managed student inquiries
- Advisor: Dr. YongGu Suh

Study Abroad Assistant, Sookmyung Women’s University, January 2011
Course: Wine & Eco-Tourism in Australia
- Coordinated the study abroad program and managed on-site student inquiries
- Advisor: Dr. Bruce Lambert

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

[PUBLICATIONS]

REFEREED IN PRINT, IN PRESS, AND ACCEPTED


**REFEREED UNDER REVIEW**


**PAPERS IN PROGRESS**

Hur, J., & Jang, S. “Consumer complaint behavior: Examining rumination, distraction, and hotel brand loyalty”.

Hur, J., & Jang, S. “The formation of Hotel eWOM: An integrated model”.

**REFEREED CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS**


Hur, J., & Jang, S. (2015). “When do consumers feel betrayed and face-loss?: Examining service communality and social presence types in service failures”. Graduate Student & Post-doctoral Fellows Research Awards Competition, Purdue University, USA.


MONOGRAPHS


[GRANTS & PROJECTS]

- Role: Senior Researcher / Principal investigator: Dr. YongGu Suh
- Korea Institute of Design Promotion (KIDP)

**Hospitality Franchise System in South Korea: Legal & Internationalization Aspects**, Spring 2012
- Role: Senior Researcher / Principal Investigator: JD. JinSeok Byun
- Sookmyung Hospitality Business School

**FTA (Korea - USA / Korea - EU) and Its Retail Implications**, July 2011
- Role: Senior Researcher / Principal Investigator: Dr. YongGu Suh
- The Korea Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI)

**Destination Management: Jeju International Destination Strategies**, Spring 2011
- Role: Senior Researcher / Principal Investigator: Dr. YongGu Suh
- Sookmyung Hospitality Business School

**Meeting, Event, Exposition, & Convention (MEEC) Industry in Asia: Hong Kong, Singapore and Thailand**, January 2003
- Role: **Principal Investigator** (Dispatched Overseas)
- The Korea International Trade Association (KITA)

**SELECTED HONORS & AWARDS**

**Compton Graduate Student Research Travel Award**, 2015
School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, Purdue University

**Graduate Staff Travel Award**, 2012 - 2015
School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, Purdue University

**Summa Cum Laude with High Honors**, 2011
Sookmyung Hospitality Business School, Korea

**Best Proposal Award**, 2011
The Samsung Economic Research Institute & The Jeju Development Institute, Korea
- Policy Proposals for Jeju International Free Trade City

**Third Prize for Nation Branding Proposal**, 2011
The Presidential Council on Nation Branding, Korea
- Policy Proposals for Korea Branding Strategy
Scholarship for Honor Student
- GW 2000, Korea, Spring 2011
- Sookmyung Women’s University, Korea, 2010 - 2011 / 2000 - 2003
- Jeju Scholarship Committee, Korea, Fall 2000

Summa Cum Laude with High Honors, 2003
Sookmyung Women’s University, Korea

Dean’s Honor List, 2000 - 2002
Sookmyung Women’s University, Korea

CERTIFICATE & TRAINING

Graduate Teacher Certificate, 2015
The Purdue Teaching Academy Center for Instructional Excellence

Graduate Instructional Development Certificate, 2015
The Purdue Teaching Academy Center for Instructional Excellence

Event Supplier Network Certificate with Excellence, 2015
Venue Searching, E-RFP Creation, and Site Selection, CVENT

Intermediate Certificate in Wines & Spirits with Distinction, 2011
Wine & Spirit Education Trust, UK-Korea

Women’s Leadership Development Program, 2003
The Asia Pacific Women Institute, Korea

SERVICE & ACTIVITY

SCHOLARLY SERVICE

- **Reviewer**, The 22nd APTA 2016 International Conference, Beijing, China
- **Reviewer**, The 21st APTA 2015 International Conference, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- **Organizing Committee**, TOSOK International Tourism Conference, 2013
- **Selection Committee**, Award for the Korean Commodity Science and Technology, 2012
- **Program Coordinator**, Sookmyung & Solbridge MBA Joint Workshop, 2011

OTHER ACTIVITY

- **Fundraiser**, Fundraising Event, Graduate Student Association (GSA), Purdue University, 2012 - 2014
- **Program Coordinator**, Green Asia and Rural Education, International Workcamp Organization (IWO), Nepal, 2002
- **Event Coordinator**, College Union Theatrical Festival, Korea, 2001

**MEMBERSHIPS**

The Council on Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Education (CHRIE)
American Hotel & Lodging Association (AH&LA)
Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA)
Meeting Professionals International (MPI)