

International Journal of Electronic Marketing and Retailing

ISSN online: 1741-1033 - ISSN print: 1741-1025

<https://www.inderscience.com/ijemr>

Social media communication and customer well-being in online travel retailing platforms

Puspita Chairun Nisa, Arief Kusuma Among Praja, Lia Amalia, Endang Ruswanti

DOI: [10.1504/IJEMR.2026.10081616](https://doi.org/10.1504/IJEMR.2026.10081616)

Article History:

Received:	08 May 2026
Last revised:	26 June 2026
Accepted:	12 July 2026
Published online:	19 October 2026

Social media communication and customer well-being in online travel retailing platforms

Puspita Chairun Nisa*,
Arief Kusuma Among Praja, Lia Amalia and
Endang Ruswanti

Faculty of Economics and Business,
Universitas Esa Unggul,
Jakarta 11510, Indonesia
Email: puspita@student.esaunggul.ac.id
Email: arief.kusuma@esaunggul.ac.id
Email: lia.amalia@esaunggul.ac.id
Email: endang.ruswanti@esaunggul.ac.id
*Corresponding author

Abstract: This study examines how social media communication in online travel retailing platforms relates to customer well-being through value co-creation and affective experience. A cross-sectional survey of 210 Generation Z users in Greater Jakarta was analysed using partial least squares structural equation modelling. Service provider and user-generated social media communication were positively associated with value co-creation, which was positively associated with affective experiential state and, in turn, customer well-being. The indirect association between value co-creation and well-being through affective experience was significant, while measurement diagnostics supported discriminant validity. The findings indicate that digital communication becomes beneficial when it enables participatory clarity and positive affect rather than merely increasing content exposure. The study contributes to electronic marketing and retailing by explaining how provider and peer communication support customer well-being through a co-created and affective service journey, while recognising information overload and digital fatigue as relevant boundary conditions.

Keywords: electronic marketing; electronic retailing; social media marketing; online travel platforms; value co-creation; affective experience; customer well-being; generation Z; Indonesia.

Reference to this paper should be made as follows: Nisa, P.C., Praja, A.K.A., Amalia, L. and Ruswanti, E. (2026) 'Social media communication and customer well-being in online travel retailing platforms', *Int. J. Electronic Marketing and Retailing*, Vol. 18, No. 8, pp.1–20.

Biographical notes: Puspita Chairun Nisa is affiliated with the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Esa Unggul, Indonesia. Her research interests include electronic marketing, social media communication, online travel retailing, value co-creation, customer experience and customer well-being.

Arief Kusuma Among Praja is affiliated with the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Esa Unggul, Indonesia. His research interests include marketing strategy, consumer behaviour, service marketing and value creation.

Lia Amalia is affiliated with the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Esa Unggul, Indonesia. Her research interests include marketing management, consumer behaviour, customer experience and service value creation.

Endang Ruswanti is affiliated with the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Esa Unggul, Indonesia. Her research interests include marketing management, consumer behaviour, service quality, customer experience and digital marketing.

1 Introduction

Electronic marketing increasingly occurs inside socially mediated service platforms rather than through one-way promotional messages. Consumers now evaluate digital services by combining firm-generated information, peer reviews, comments, short videos, platform recommendations and their own interactive responses. In online travel retailing, this process is particularly visible because an online travel platform is both a transaction channel and a communication environment. Users do not simply search for tickets, hotels or travel offers; they interpret provider messages, observe other users, compare experiences and participate in the ongoing construction of service value (Buhalis and Law, 2008; Lemon and Verhoef, 2016; Verhoef et al., 2009).

This shift creates a broader theoretical and managerial problem for electronic marketing and retailing. Platform managers can no longer assume that information exposure, click-through or conversion fully captures marketing effectiveness. The customer journey is increasingly social, affective and participatory. Hence, a key unresolved question is how provider-controlled communication and user-generated communication jointly become beneficial for customers rather than merely increasing information volume.

Prior research has shown that social media communication affects engagement, electronic word-of-mouth, destination image, trust, satisfaction and behavioural intention (Cheung and Thadani, 2012; Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004; Kim and Ko, 2012; Litvin et al., 2008; Xiang and Gretzel, 2010). Service and marketing studies have also established that customers participate in value formation through interaction and resource integration rather than merely receiving value from providers (Grönroos and Voima, 2013; Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004; Vargo and Lusch, 2004; Yi and Gong, 2013). However, the literature presents both gaps and contradictions. On the one hand, social media and eWOM studies often portray provider content, peer reviews and online interaction as useful mechanisms for reducing uncertainty, stimulating engagement and supporting value co-creation. On the other hand, research on online reviews, eWOM credibility and social media use indicates that informational and emotional content can also become excessive, inconsistent or difficult to process, thereby creating overload, fatigue or decision confusion (Durkaya Kurtcan and Burnaz, 2026; Eppler and Mengis, 2004; Fu et al., 2020; Kirezli and Aydin, 2026; Uyanik, 2025). Three issues therefore remain insufficiently developed for electronic marketing and retailing. First, provider communication and user-generated communication are often examined separately, although e-consumers encounter both simultaneously in platform-based service journeys. Second, many studies still privilege trust, satisfaction, net promoter scores or purchase

intention as final outcomes, while the broader question of customer well-being remains less central. Third, the positive affective route is rarely balanced with the contradictory possibility that digital interaction may enable co-creation for some consumers while also producing information overload, fatigue and cognitive strain for others.

Customer well-being is a particularly relevant outcome for contemporary electronic marketing because digital service platforms increasingly shape how consumers feel, decide and interpret their quality of consumption life. Well-being extends beyond immediate satisfaction by asking whether service-related interactions support comfort, positive affect, social connectedness, autonomy and perceived life enhancement (Sirgy and Lee, 2008; Smith and Diekmann, 2017; Xie et al., 2022). In online travel retailing, this issue matters because users often experience anticipation, reassurance, excitement and social comparison before the physical trip occurs. The service experience therefore begins within the digital interface and social media environment.

Generation Z consumers make this issue more theoretically salient. This cohort has been socialised in networked, visual and participatory media environments and is more likely than less digitally embedded cohorts to combine provider messages, peer-generated reviews, influencer content and platform cues when evaluating online services (Appel et al., 2020; Priporas et al., 2017). For these consumers, online travel decisions are rarely based on official platform information alone. They are shaped by a hybrid stream of provider posts, user-generated reviews, comments, recommendations and shared travel narratives. Therefore, Generation Z provides a theoretically appropriate context for examining how social media communication is transformed into co-created and affective service value.

The article focuses on three urban areas within Greater Jakarta because this context represents a dense digital service environment in which online travel platforms, social media use and peer-to-peer travel communication are highly intertwined. The urban context is not treated as universally representative; rather, it is a theoretically relevant setting for testing an affective co-creation mechanism among young e-consumers who are highly exposed to platform-mediated travel information.

This study argues that the link between social media communication and customer well-being can be explained through an affective route. Service provider social media communication and user-generated social media communication are proposed to strengthen value co-creation. Value co-creation then enhances affective experiential state, which subsequently improves customer well-being. The model therefore positions affective experiential state as the emotional converter through which co-created electronic service interaction becomes beneficial for young e-consumers.

The study contributes to electronic marketing and retailing in three ways. First, it integrates provider-generated and user-generated communication as simultaneous antecedents of customer participation and value co-creation in an online travel retailing platform. Second, it advances customer well-being as an important outcome of electronic marketing, thereby moving beyond purchase intention and satisfaction. Third, it identifies affective experiential state as the mechanism linking value co-creation to customer well-being while explicitly addressing the contradiction that the same social communication environment can both enable beneficial participation and produce information overload or digital fatigue. This contribution is relevant for platform managers because effective electronic marketing should not only inform consumers but also enable participation and emotionally meaningful service experiences without overburdening users.

2 Literature review and hypotheses

2.1 *Electronic marketing, online travel retailing and young e-consumers*

Electronic marketing refers to marketing activities that are enabled, mediated or transformed by digital technologies. In contemporary platform environments, electronic marketing is increasingly interactive, social and data-informed. Social media has accelerated this transformation by enabling consumers to become communicators, reviewers and value contributors rather than passive recipients of advertising (Appel et al., 2020; Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). Online travel retailing represents a useful setting for examining this transformation because search, comparison, recommendation, booking and post-consumption sharing are integrated into a digitally mediated service journey.

For young e-consumers, especially Generation Z, online travel retailing is also a social experience. Travel-related communication is consumed through official platform messages, peer reviews, short-form videos, comments and visual narratives. These sources help users reduce uncertainty, imagine potential experiences and evaluate the credibility of service promises. Generation Z is therefore not only an age category but also a theoretically meaningful cohort for this study because its members are more likely to interpret digital service value through networked participation, social proof and affective cues. This strengthens the rationale for focusing on the hypothesised communication-co-creation-affect-well-being route.

At the same time, the literature shows an unresolved tension that should be treated as a theoretical contradiction rather than a minor limitation. Social media communication can reduce uncertainty, support social proof and enable value co-creation, but excessive social and informational cues can also create overload and fatigue (Eppler and Mengis, 2004; Fu et al., 2020). Recent IJEMR work further suggests that social media use, online reviews and electronic retailing experiences are shaped by motives, informational value, emotional content and source credibility rather than by exposure volume alone (Choura and Jemai, 2025; Durkaya Kurtcan and Burnaz, 2026; Kirezli and Aydin, 2026; Uyanik, 2025). This duality is important because the same communication ecology that enables participation may also weaken well-being if users perceive the digital environment as excessive, confusing or emotionally tiring. The present study responds to this contradiction by examining when social media communication becomes beneficial: not merely when content is available, but when it is transformed into co-created and affectively positive experience.

2.2 *Service provider social media communication and value co-creation*

Service provider social media communication refers to information, messages and interactive cues created by a service provider through social media or related digital channels. In online travel retailing, this may include official posts, service descriptions, promotional messages, recommendation prompts, customer service responses and platform updates. Such communication can create participation opportunities because it gives customers information to evaluate, content to react to and service cues to integrate into their own decision process.

From a service-dominant logic perspective, provider communication is not merely persuasive content. It is an operant resource that can enable customers to integrate

information, compare alternatives and participate in value formation (Vargo and Lusch, 2004, 2016). When service providers communicate clearly and attractively, customers are more likely to interpret the platform as useful, responsive and open to interaction. This encourages behaviours such as checking provider content, liking posts, commenting, giving feedback and using platform information to shape the service experience. Accordingly:

This positive pathway is not uncontested. Provider-generated communication can guide consumers and stimulate participation, yet it may also be perceived as promotional noise when messages are repetitive, overly persuasive or weakly personalised. In that situation, provider communication may increase exposure without creating co-creation. The present study therefore treats provider communication as beneficial only when it helps customers interpret options, interact with the platform and integrate information into their own travel-service decisions.

H1 Service provider social media communication positively affects value co-creation in online travel retailing platforms.

2.3 User-generated social media communication and value co-creation

User-generated social media communication refers to reviews, comments, stories, photos, videos and other peer-created content about the service provider or platform. Electronic word-of-mouth research shows that peer-generated communication can influence consumer evaluation because it is often perceived as more experiential, authentic and socially grounded than firm-controlled communication (Cheung and Thadani, 2012; Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). In online travel retailing, peer content helps users imagine service quality, compare experiences and form expectations before purchase or use.

User-generated communication can stimulate value co-creation because it increases the social density of the digital service environment. Customers do not only receive peer information; they may respond to it, incorporate it into their own evaluations, share it with others and use it to negotiate meaning around the service. In this sense, peer-created content expands the resources available for co-creation and encourages customers to become active participants in the platform ecosystem (Akaka and Vargo, 2015; Munar and Jacobsen, 2014; Nambisan and Baron, 2009). However, the empirical logic is contradictory rather than uniformly positive. Online reviews and eWOM may be useful when they provide credible, informational and emotionally diagnostic cues, but they may also become confusing when comments are inconsistent, highly emotional, repetitive or difficult to evaluate (Durkaya Kurtcan and Burnaz, 2026; Uyanik, 2025). Thus, user-generated communication is expected to strengthen co-creation when peer content helps consumers interpret the service journey, but the discussion later treats overload and fatigue as boundary conditions.

H2 User-generated social media communication positively affects value co-creation in online travel retailing platforms.

2.4 Value co-creation and affective experiential state

Value co-creation describes the customer's active participation in shaping service value through interaction, feedback, information integration and engagement with other actors (Jaakkola and Alexander, 2014; Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004; Ranjan and Read,

2016; Yi and Gong, 2013). In electronic retailing, co-creation can occur through apparently simple behaviours such as reading reviews, reacting to posts, commenting, comparing content or giving suggestions. These behaviours are important because they move the customer from information exposure into participation.

The experiential view of consumption suggests that customers evaluate services not only cognitively but also through feelings, fantasies and emotions (Bagozzi et al., 1999; Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982). When customers participate in a digital service environment, they may feel guided, excited, autonomous, influenced or emotionally involved. This is especially relevant in online travel retailing, where anticipation and imagination are central parts of the service journey. Co-creation therefore should not be viewed only as behavioural participation; it can also generate an affective experiential state. Accordingly:

This argument also responds to a contradiction in value co-creation research. Co-creation is often positioned as inherently beneficial, yet customers may experience participation as effortful if digital interaction demands too much attention or exposes them to excessive comparison. In online travel retailing, the affective benefit of co-creation should therefore depend on whether participation creates clarity, autonomy and excitement rather than burden. This makes affective experiential state a necessary mechanism for explaining why co-creation becomes beneficial for customer well-being.

H3 Value co-creation positively affects affective experiential state in online travel retailing platforms.

2.5 *Affective experiential state and customer well-being*

Affective experiential state refers to the emotional quality of the customer's service-related experience. It captures whether interaction with the platform and social media content feels exciting, guiding, empowering or emotionally meaningful. Customer well-being refers to the extent to which service-related interactions contribute positively to consumers' perceived quality of life, travel-related benefit and social or emotional comfort (Sirgy and Lee, 2008; Uysal et al., 2016).

In digital service settings, affective experience can be an important antecedent of well-being because emotions influence how consumers interpret service usefulness, meaning and personal relevance. A platform interaction that feels engaging and reassuring may help young consumers feel better informed, more confident and more positively connected to the service journey. Conversely, information abundance without emotional clarity may increase cognitive burden rather than well-being. Accordingly:

H4 Affective experiential state positively affects customer well-being in online travel retailing platforms.

2.6 *The mediating role of affective experiential state*

The proposed model further argues that value co-creation improves customer well-being through affective experiential state. This mediation is theoretically important because co-creation does not automatically lead to beneficial outcomes. Customers may participate in a digital service environment without experiencing positive affect, reassurance or meaningful involvement. The well-being benefit of co-creation is

therefore expected to occur when participation is translated into a positive affective experience.

This mechanism clarifies how electronic marketing communication can become beneficial for consumers while addressing contradictory findings in prior research. Provider and peer communication first create a participatory environment, but participation alone is not sufficient because more content and more interaction may also create overload. Participation becomes beneficial when it is converted into emotional clarity, guidance and positive involvement through affective experiential state. The mediation logic therefore explains why social media communication may improve customer well-being in some conditions while becoming tiring or confusing in others. Accordingly:

H5 Affective experiential state mediates the relationship between value co-creation and customer well-being.

3 Methodology

3.1 Research design and empirical context

This study used a cross-sectional survey design to examine the affective route linking social media communication, value co-creation and customer well-being. The empirical context was online travel retailing platform use supported by tourism-related social media interaction. Traveloka was selected as the focal platform because it is a widely recognised online travel service in Indonesia and combines electronic service information, booking-related interaction and social media communication. For international readers, Traveloka is treated in this article as an online travel retailing platform rather than as a country-specific institution.

This article focuses on five latent constructs that form the focal affective route: service provider social media communication, user-generated social media communication, value co-creation, affective experiential state and customer well-being. These focal relationships were retained from a broader validated PLS-SEM model estimated using the same dataset. The unit of analysis was the individual e-consumer. The study focused on Generation Z users because this cohort is highly exposed to platform-based communication and is more likely to combine provider information with peer-generated social media content in digital service evaluation.

3.2 Sample and data collection

Respondents were selected through purposive sampling. To be eligible, respondents had to be 17–27 years old, reside in Jakarta, Bekasi or Tangerang, actively use social media and Traveloka, and have recent exposure to tourism-related digital communication. Data were collected through an anonymous online questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Electronic informed consent was obtained before respondents accessed and completed the questionnaire.

The sample was restricted to Generation Z in three urban areas within Greater Jakarta for theoretical and contextual reasons. Theoretically, Generation Z is a digitally socialised cohort whose service evaluations are commonly shaped by networked

communication, visual content, peer reviews and interactive platform cues. Contextually, Jakarta, Bekasi and Tangerang are dense urban service markets where online travel platforms and social media communication are routinely integrated into consumption decisions. The sample therefore offers strong contextual relevance for testing the proposed affective co-creation mechanism, while the discussion and limitations explicitly avoid claiming universal generalisability beyond this cohort and context.

Table 1 Sample profile (N = 210)

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
Gender	Male	90	42.9
	Female	120	57.1
Age	17–19 years	32	15.2
	20–22 years	68	32.4
	23–25 years	88	41.9
	26–27 years	22	10.5
Residence	Jakarta	118	56.2
	Bekasi	62	29.5
	Tangerang	30	14.3
Occupation	Student	35	16.7
	Civil servant	10	4.8
	Private employee	105	50.0
	Entrepreneur	40	19.0
	Other	20	9.5

Note: Percentages are based on the total sample.

The final dataset comprised 210 valid responses. The sample exceeds common PLS-SEM minimum requirements for the most complex endogenous equation in the broader analytical model and is adequate for detecting medium effects in a prediction-oriented study (Cohen, 1988; Hair et al., 2022).

Female respondents accounted for 57.1% of the sample and male respondents for 42.9%. The largest age group was 23–25 years (41.9%), followed by 20–22 years (32.4%), 17–19 years (15.2%) and 26–27 years (10.5%). Most respondents lived in Jakarta (56.2%), followed by Bekasi (29.5%) and Tangerang (14.3%). Private employees formed the largest occupational category (50.0%), followed by entrepreneurs (19.0%), students (16.7%), other occupations (9.5%) and civil servants (4.8%). Table 1 summarises the sample profile.

3.3 Measures and instrument refinement

The instrument was adapted from Awan et al. (2022) and established scales in social media communication, value co-creation, online customer experience and customer well-being research. The service provider communication and user-generated communication items were adapted to the online travel retailing context. Value co-creation captured customer participation behaviours such as checking feedback, liking posts, commenting and making suggestions. Affective experiential state captured the emotional quality of the

digital service experience, whereas customer well-being captured the perceived contribution of social media communication to well-being, social well-being, travel well-being and quality of life.

Before the main survey, the questionnaire underwent expert review, two back-translation checks and a pilot test with 30 respondents who matched the main sampling frame. These procedures were used to refine wording, improve linguistic equivalence and ensure that the online travel platform context was understandable to respondents.

Table 2 Construct operationalisation and retained indicators

<i>Construct</i>	<i>Primary source</i>	<i>Items fielded</i>	<i>Retained indicators</i>	<i>Final loading range</i>
Service provider social media communication	Awan et al. (2022)	4	SPC1–SPC4	0.824–0.889
User-generated social media communication	Awan et al. (2022)	4	UGSMC1–UGSMC4	0.822–0.876
Value co-creation	Awan et al. (2022)	9	VCC1 and VCC3–VCC9	0.775–0.834
Affective experiential state	Awan et al. (2022)	8	AES4–AES8	0.755–0.872
Customer well-being	Awan et al. (2022)	4	CWB1–CWB4	0.838–0.872

Notes: AES5 was reverse-coded for directional consistency. The terminology has been repositioned for electronic marketing and online travel retailing while retaining the measurement logic of the original constructs.

Measurement refinement was conducted before estimating the final structural model. Four fielded indicators were removed: VCC2, AES1, AES2 and AES3. AES2 showed a problematic cross-loading pattern during preliminary diagnostics, indicating that respondents may have interpreted the item differently from the intended affective experiential dimension. AES1, AES3 and VCC2 showed elevated preliminary full-collinearity VIF values (AES1 = 3.940; AES3 = 3.891; VCC2 = 4.721), which exceeded the conservative 3.3 threshold used in common-method and collinearity diagnostics. The items were removed only after confirming that the retained indicators still covered the conceptual meaning of the constructs and that reliability, convergent validity and discriminant validity remained satisfactory.

The final retained indicators and loading ranges are shown in Table 2.

3.4 Data analysis

Partial least squares structural equation modelling was used because the objective was prediction-oriented theory extension in an electronic marketing context. For analytical transparency, this article reports the focal affective-route relationships retained from a broader validated PLS-SEM model estimated using the same dataset of 210 respondents. Accordingly, the reported path coefficients, indirect effects, explained-variance values and effect sizes correspond to these focal relationships within the broader model rather than to a separately re-estimated standalone five-construct model. The analysis assessed indicator reliability, internal consistency, convergent validity, discriminant validity, collinearity, explanatory power, effect sizes and bootstrapped path significance.

Discriminant validity was assessed using both the Fornell-Larcker criterion (Fornell and Larcker, 1981) and the heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlations. HTMT was added because it is considered a more sensitive criterion for detecting lack of discriminant validity in variance-based structural equation modelling (Henseler et al., 2015).

4 Results

4.1 Measurement model

The reflective measurement model showed satisfactory psychometric quality. Retained outer loadings ranged from 0.755 to 0.889. Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values exceeded recommended thresholds, and average variance extracted values were above 0.50. These results support internal consistency and convergent validity. Table 3 reports the main reliability and convergent validity results.

Discriminant validity was supported by both the Fornell-Larcker criterion and HTMT. As shown in Table 4, all HTMT values were below 0.85. The highest HTMT value was 0.669 for the relationship between service provider communication and value co-creation. This confirms that the constructs are empirically distinct and addresses the concern that discriminant validity would be weakened if only Fornell-Larcker were reported.

Table 3 Construct reliability and convergent validity

<i>Construct</i>	<i>Cronbach alpha</i>	<i>Composite reliability</i>	<i>AVE</i>
Affective experiential state	0.893	0.921	0.700
Customer well-being	0.880	0.917	0.734
User-generated social media communication	0.877	0.915	0.729
Service provider social media communication	0.885	0.919	0.740
Value co-creation	0.922	0.936	0.645

Note: AVE = average variance extracted

Table 4 HTMT discriminant validity matrix

<i>Construct</i>	<i>SPC</i>	<i>UGSMC</i>	<i>VCC</i>	<i>AES</i>	<i>CWB</i>
SPC	-				
UGSMC	0.646	-			
VCC	0.669	0.644	-		
AES	0.559	0.414	0.621	-	
CWB	0.555	0.598	0.640	0.642	-

Notes: SPC = service provider social media communication; UGSMC = user-generated social media communication; VCC = value co-creation; AES = affective experiential state; CWB = customer well-being. All values are below the 0.85 threshold.

Common method bias did not appear to be a critical threat. Harman's single-factor test showed that the first factor explained 45.024% of total variance, below the conventional

50% threshold (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Final indicator variance inflation factor values were below 3.3 after refinement, and structural predictor variance inflation factor values ranged from 1.000 to 1.517 (Kock, 2015). These results indicate that critical collinearity was not present in the broader validated model.

4.2 Structural model and hypothesis testing

All hypothesised relationships were positive and statistically significant. Service provider social media communication positively affected value co-creation ($\beta = 0.445$, $t = 4.771$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H1. User-generated social media communication also positively affected value co-creation ($\beta = 0.342$, $t = 3.656$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H2. Value co-creation positively affected affective experiential state ($\beta = 0.594$, $t = 9.866$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H3. Affective experiential state positively affected customer well-being ($\beta = 0.437$, $t = 5.734$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H4. The indirect effect of value co-creation on customer well-being through affective experiential state was significant ($\beta = 0.260$, $t = 4.796$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H5.

Table 5 Structural path coefficients and mediation result

<i>Hypothesis</i>	<i>Relationship</i>	<i>beta</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>Decision</i>
H1	SPC -> VCC	0.445	4.771	<0.001	Supported
H2	UGSMC -> VCC	0.342	3.656	<0.001	Supported
H3	VCC -> AES	0.594	9.866	<0.001	Supported
H4	AES -> CWB	0.437	5.734	<0.001	Supported
H5	VCC -> AES -> CWB	0.260	4.796	<0.001	Supported

Notes: Bootstrapping used 5,000 resamples. The coefficients represent the focal affective-route relationships estimated within the broader validated PLS-SEM model using the same dataset. SPC = service provider social media communication; UGSMC = user-generated social media communication; VCC = value co-creation; AES = affective experiential state; CWB = customer well-being.

Table 6 Explanatory power and effect sizes

<i>Endogenous construct/relationship</i>	<i>R squared</i>	<i>Adjusted R squared</i>	<i>f squared</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
Value co-creation	0.493	0.488		Moderate explanatory power
Affective experiential state	0.353	0.350		Moderate explanatory power
Customer well-being	0.440	0.435		Moderate explanatory power
SPC -> VCC			0.257	Moderate effect
UGSMC -> VCC			0.152	Moderate effect
VCC -> AES			0.546	Large effect
AES -> CWB			0.287	Moderate effect

Notes: R-squared and adjusted R-squared values refer to the endogenous constructs in the broader validated model, whereas the reported f-squared values refer to the focal relationships examined in this article. Interpretation follows common effect-size conventions for PLS-SEM.

The explanatory power of the broader model was moderate for the focal endogenous constructs. It explained 49.3% of the variance in value co-creation, 35.3% in affective experiential state and 44.0% in customer well-being. Effect-size results for the focal paths showed that value co-creation had a large effect on affective experiential state, while service provider communication and user-generated communication had moderate effects on value co-creation. Affective experiential state had a moderate effect on customer well-being. Tables 5 and 6 report the focal structural results and effect sizes.

5 Discussion

5.1 Interpretation of the findings

The findings show that customer well-being in online travel retailing platforms emerges through a participatory and affective route. Social media communication does not become beneficial simply because it increases information exposure. It becomes beneficial when it enables value co-creation and when that co-created interaction produces a positive affective experiential state. This interpretation fits the electronic marketing context because digital service platforms are not merely transaction interfaces; they are interactive communication spaces where consumers interpret, compare and emotionally experience service value before physical consumption occurs.

These findings help reconcile the contradiction identified in the literature. Social media communication is neither automatically beneficial nor automatically harmful. Its effect depends on whether the communication environment supports value co-creation and whether that participation produces a positive affective experiential state. Thus, the results explain why studies may find positive effects of social media communication on engagement or intention while other studies report overload, fatigue or weak well-being outcomes: the missing mechanism is the affective conversion of participation into perceived benefit.

Service provider social media communication had a stronger effect on value co-creation than user-generated social media communication. This suggests that provider communication remains central in electronic marketing because it structures the participation architecture. Official messages, platform updates, recommendation cues and service descriptions give customers a formal basis for interaction and decision-making. For online travel retailing managers, this means that provider communication should be designed not only to inform but also to invite customer participation.

User-generated social media communication also significantly strengthened value co-creation. This confirms that young e-consumers rely on peer-created content as an important participation resource. Reviews, comments, stories and visual content provide experiential cues that consumers can integrate into their own evaluations. Although provider communication may provide structure, user-generated communication adds social proof, authenticity and emotional resonance to the service environment.

The strongest direct relationship was the effect of value co-creation on affective experiential state. This result is theoretically important because it shows that co-creation is not only a behavioural or cognitive process. In online travel retailing, customer participation also creates feelings of excitement, guidance, autonomy and emotional involvement. The digital service experience begins while users interact with content, not only after they travel or consume the booked service.

Affective experiential state positively improved customer well-being. This finding extends electronic marketing research by showing that the outcome of social media communication can go beyond engagement, satisfaction or purchase intention. When young consumers feel guided, emotionally involved and positively stimulated by platform-based interaction, they are more likely to perceive that the digital service contributes to their travel-related well-being and quality of life.

5.2 Theoretical implications

This study contributes to electronic marketing and retailing theory by repositioning online travel retailing as a setting where communication, participation and well-being are connected. The model bridges social media marketing, service-dominant logic and consumer well-being. It shows that provider-generated and user-generated communication can be integrated in one explanatory chain rather than treated as competing sources of influence.

The second theoretical contribution concerns the role of affective experiential state. Many electronic marketing studies focus on evaluative outcomes such as satisfaction, trust or behavioural intention. The present model shows that affective experience is a central mechanism through which participation becomes valuable. This provides a more human-centred explanation of e-consumer behaviour because it treats consumers as feeling, interpreting and socially embedded actors rather than as purely rational processors of platform information.

The third contribution lies in extending value co-creation research into customer well-being. Service-dominant logic explains that customers participate in value formation through interaction and resource integration. This study adds that the well-being benefit of such participation depends on affective transformation. Co-creation matters not only because customers do more, but because participation can make the service journey feel more meaningful.

5.3 Managerial implications

For managers of online travel retailing platforms and electronic service providers, the findings suggest that customer well-being should be treated as a design objective. Communication strategies should not only increase reach, clicks or bookings. They should create a participatory environment in which young consumers feel invited to compare information, respond to content, provide feedback and interpret service value together with other users.

First, service provider communication should be structured, credible and interaction-oriented. Platform posts, social media updates and recommendation messages should make it easy for consumers to understand choices, ask questions, react to content and feel supported. Second, user-generated communication should be integrated into the platform journey in ways that strengthen trust without overwhelming users. Reviews, peer stories and visual travel content should be organised so that they reduce uncertainty and create emotional clarity.

Third, managers should invest in affective experience design. Personalised recommendations, transparent information, emotionally resonant content, responsive customer service and guided decision paths can help users feel more confident and positively involved. Fourth, electronic marketing performance should be evaluated not

only through conversion and engagement metrics but also through indicators of customer well-being, such as perceived reassurance, emotional comfort, travel confidence and quality-of-life contribution.

Managers should also monitor the dark side of socially mediated service design. Review volume, recommendation frequency, promotional notifications and user-generated content should be curated to prevent information overload and digital fatigue. In practice, this means using clearer filters, relevance-based review summaries, transparent recommendation cues and optional notification controls so that co-creation remains empowering rather than exhausting.

5.4 Generalisability and dark-side boundary conditions

The findings should be interpreted in light of the Generation Z and urban Greater Jakarta context. The model may perform differently among older generations, lower-frequency social media users or non-urban consumers. These groups may rely less on user-generated content for emotional reassurance and may prioritise functional service efficiency, price transparency, booking reliability or customer service responsiveness over emotional participation. Therefore, the affective route identified in this study is likely to be strongest among young, digitally embedded consumers and should be tested comparatively across demographic and geographic groups.

The results also describe a positive affective route and do not imply that social media communication is always beneficial. This point directly addresses the contradiction in the literature: the same content flow that enables value co-creation may also produce information overload, decision confusion, social comparison and digital fatigue (Eppler and Mengis, 2004; Fu et al., 2020). Provider-generated content can be helpful when it clarifies choices, but it can become intrusive when promotional frequency exceeds user tolerance. User-generated content can increase authenticity and social proof, but it can also introduce contradictory reviews and emotionally charged comparisons. These dark-side variables could weaken the relationship between value co-creation and affective experiential state or between affective experiential state and customer well-being. For example, a customer who actively reads reviews, watches travel videos and compares peer experiences may initially feel involved but may later experience fatigue if the amount of information exceeds their processing capacity.

This boundary condition is important for theory. It suggests that value co-creation should not be treated as inherently positive. Its benefit depends on whether participation creates emotional clarity, autonomy and reassurance rather than cognitive burden. Future studies should therefore test information overload, social media fatigue, perceived risk and digital well-being as moderators or competing mechanisms in the relationship between value co-creation and customer well-being.

6 Conclusions, limitations and future research

This study examined how social media communication in online travel retailing platforms contributes to customer well-being through value co-creation and affective experiential state. The results show that both service provider communication and user-generated communication enhance value co-creation. Value co-creation strongly improves affective experiential state, and affective experiential state improves customer

well-being. The significant mediation result confirms that participation becomes beneficial when it is converted into emotionally meaningful experience.

The study has several limitations. First, the cross-sectional design means that causal direction is inferred from theory and statistical consistency rather than observed over time. Second, the sample was limited to Generation Z users in three urban areas of Greater Jakarta, Indonesia, which strengthens contextual relevance but limits generalisation. The model may show different patterns among older generations, rural or non-urban consumers, consumers with lower social media reliance or users who prioritise functional service efficiency over affective participation. Third, this article reports the focal affective-route relationships retained from a broader validated PLS-SEM model rather than a separately re-estimated standalone reduced model. This approach preserves consistency with the validated analytical specification, but future studies should directly compare the broader and reduced models. Fourth, the article focused on the affective route and did not examine other potentially relevant mechanisms such as trust, perceived risk, platform quality, satisfaction, information overload, digital fatigue or digital well-being.

Future research could use longitudinal designs, compare different platform ecosystems, test cross-country samples and examine whether affective experience remains the key pathway for other forms of electronic retailing. Further studies should also examine dark-side variables as moderators or alternative mechanisms, especially because social media communication can be empowering when it creates clarity but harmful when it produces fatigue, confusion or excessive social comparison. Overall, the study supports a more human-centred understanding of electronic marketing. Online travel retailing platforms create customer well-being not merely by delivering information efficiently, but by enabling consumers to participate, feel emotionally engaged and derive meaningful benefit from socially mediated service interaction.

Funding

This research received no external funding.

Declarations

AI use statement: The authors used ChatGPT (OpenAI) to assist with language editing and manuscript refinement. The authors independently reviewed, verified and approved all final content and take full responsibility for the accuracy and integrity of the article.

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the authors upon reasonable request, subject to privacy and institutional considerations.

Participation in the study was voluntary. Before accessing the questionnaire, respondents were informed about the purpose of the study and were asked to indicate their willingness to participate. Only respondents who provided consent were permitted to proceed with the questionnaire. No personally identifying information was collected, and responses were used solely for research purposes. Participants were free to discontinue the questionnaire at any stage before submission.

All authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

References

- Akaka, M.A. and Vargo, S.L. (2015) 'Extending the context of service: from encounters to ecosystems', *Journal of Services Marketing*, Vol. 29, Nos. 6/7, pp.453–462.
- Appel, G., Grewal, L., Hadi, R. and Stephen, A.T. (2020) 'The future of social media in marketing', *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, Vol. 48, No. 1, pp.79–95.
- Awan, M.I., Shamim, A. and Saleem, M.S. (2022) 'Say a little but say it well: assessing the impact of social media communication on value co-creation, online customer experience, and customer well-being', *Frontiers in Psychology*, Vol. 13, Article 901229.
- Bagozzi, R.P., Gopinath, M. and Nyer, P.U. (1999) 'The role of emotions in marketing', *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, Vol. 27, No. 2, pp.184–206.
- Buhalis, D. and Law, R. (2008) 'Progress in information technology and tourism management: 20 years on and 10 years after the internet – the state of eTourism research', *Tourism Management*, Vol. 29, No. 4, pp.609–623.
- Cheung, C.M.K. and Thadani, D.R. (2012) 'The impact of electronic word-of-mouth communication: a literature analysis and integrative model', *Decision Support Systems*, Vol. 54, No. 1, pp.461–470.
- Choura, F. and Jemai, O. (2025) 'Customer engagement in phygital retailing: study of antecedents and outcomes within the activity theory', *International Journal of Electronic Marketing and Retailing*, Vol. 16, No. 6, pp.621–645.
- Cohen, J. (1988) *Statistical Power Analysis for the Behavioral Sciences*, 2nd ed., Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Hillsdale, NJ.
- Durkaya Kurtcan, B. and Burnaz, S. (2026) 'Review helpfulness in online settings: an analysis of informational and emotional content', *International Journal of Electronic Marketing and Retailing*, Vol. 17, No. 2, pp.149–175.
- Eppler, M.J. and Mengis, J. (2004) 'The concept of information overload: a review of literature from organization science, accounting, marketing, MIS, and related disciplines', *The Information Society*, Vol. 20, No. 5, pp.325–344.
- Fornell, C. and Larcker, D.F. (1981) 'Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error', *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. 18, No. 1, pp.39–50.
- Fu, S., Li, H., Liu, Y., Pirkkalainen, H. and Salo, M. (2020) 'Social media overload, exhaustion, and use discontinuance: examining the effects of information overload, system feature overload, and social overload', *Information Processing & Management*, Vol. 57, No. 6, p.102307.
- Grönroos, C. and Voima, P. (2013) 'Critical service logic: making sense of value creation and co-creation', *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, Vol. 41, No. 2, pp.133–150.
- Hair, J.F., Hult, G.T.M., Ringle, C.M. and Sarstedt, M. (2022) *A Primer on Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM)*, 3rd ed., Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Hennig-Thurau, T., Gwinner, K.P., Walsh, G. and Gremler, D.D. (2004) 'Electronic word-of-mouth via consumer-opinion platforms: what motivates consumers to articulate themselves on the internet?', *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, Vol. 18, No. 1, pp.38–52.
- Henseler, J., Ringle, C.M. and Sarstedt, M. (2015) 'A new criterion for assessing discriminant validity in variance-based structural equation modelling', *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, Vol. 43, No. 1, pp.115–135.
- Holbrook, M.B. and Hirschman, E.C. (1982) 'The experiential aspects of consumption: consumer fantasies, feelings, and fun', *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 9, No. 2, pp.132–140.
- Jaakkola, E. and Alexander, M. (2014) 'The role of customer engagement behaviour in value co-creation', *Journal of Service Research*, Vol. 17, No. 3, pp.247–261.
- Kaplan, A.M. and Haenlein, M. (2010) 'Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of social media', *Business Horizons*, Vol. 53, No. 1, pp.59–68.

- Kim, A.J. and Ko, E. (2012) 'Do social media marketing activities enhance customer equity? An empirical study of luxury fashion brand', *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 65, No. 10, pp.1480–1486.
- Kirezli, O. and Aydin, A.E. (2026) 'The influence of diverse usage motives on the amount of social media use: the moderating effects of age and gender', *International Journal of Electronic Marketing and Retailing*, Vol. 17, No. 3, pp.342–361.
- Kock, N. (2015) 'Common method bias in PLS-SEM: a full collinearity assessment approach', *International Journal of e-Collaboration*, Vol. 11, No. 4, pp.1–10.
- Lemon, K.N. and Verhoef, P.C. (2016) 'Understanding customer experience throughout the customer journey', *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 80, No. 6, pp.69–96.
- Litvin, S.W., Goldsmith, R.E. and Pan, B. (2008) 'Electronic word-of-mouth in hospitality and tourism management', *Tourism Management*, Vol. 29, No. 3, pp.458–468.
- Munar, A.M. and Jacobsen, J.K.S. (2014) 'Motivations for sharing tourism experiences through social media', *Tourism Management*, Vol. 43, pp.46–54.
- Nambisan, S. and Baron, R.A. (2009) 'Virtual customer environments: testing a model of voluntary participation in value co-creation activities', *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, Vol. 26, No. 4, pp.388–406.
- Podsakoff, P.M., MacKenzie, S.B., Lee, J.Y. and Podsakoff, N.P. (2003) 'Common method biases in behavioral research: a critical review of the literature and recommended remedies', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 88, No. 5, pp.879–903.
- Prahalad, C.K. and Ramaswamy, V. (2004) 'Co-creating unique value with customers', *Strategy & Leadership*, Vol. 32, No. 3, pp.4–9.
- Priporas, C.V., Stylos, N. and Fotiadis, A.K. (2017) 'Generation Z consumers' expectations of interactions in smart retailing: a future agenda', *Computers in Human Behavior*, Vol. 77, pp.374–381.
- Ranjan, K.R. and Read, S. (2016) 'Value co-creation: concept and measurement', *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, Vol. 44, No. 3, pp.290–315.
- Sirgy, M.J. and Lee, D.J. (2008) 'Well-being marketing: an ethical business philosophy for consumer goods firms', *Journal of Business Ethics*, Vol. 77, No. 4, pp.377–403.
- Smith, M.K. and Diekmann, A. (2017) 'Tourism and wellbeing', *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 66, pp.1–13.
- Uyanik, M. (2025) 'The role of brand attitude and source credibility in the relationships between eWOM communication and brand preference: a moderated mediation analysis', *International Journal of Electronic Marketing and Retailing*, Vol. 16, No. 6, pp.725–756.
- Uysal, M., Sirgy, M.J., Woo, E. and Kim, H.L. (2016) 'Quality of life and well-being research in tourism', *Tourism Management*, Vol. 53, pp.244–261.
- Vargo, S.L. and Lusch, R.F. (2004) 'Evolving to a new dominant logic for marketing', *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 68, No. 1, pp.1–17.
- Vargo, S.L. and Lusch, R.F. (2016) 'Institutions and axioms: an extension and update of service-dominant logic', *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, Vol. 44, No. 1, pp.5–23.
- Verhoef, P.C., Lemon, K.N., Parasuraman, A., Roggeveen, A., Tsiros, M. and Schlesinger, L.A. (2009) 'Customer experience creation: determinants, dynamics and management strategies', *Journal of Retailing*, Vol. 85, No. 1, pp.31–41.
- Xiang, Z. and Gretzel, U. (2010) 'Role of social media in online travel information search', *Tourism Management*, Vol. 31, No. 2, pp.179–188.
- Xie, C., Jin, J. and Guo, X. (2022) 'Impact of the critical factors of customer experience on well-being: joy and customer satisfaction as mediators', *Frontiers in Psychology*, Vol. 13, Article 955130.
- Yi, Y. and Gong, T. (2013) 'Customer value co-creation behaviour: scale development and validation', *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 66, No. 9, pp.1279–1284.

Appendix

Measurement items

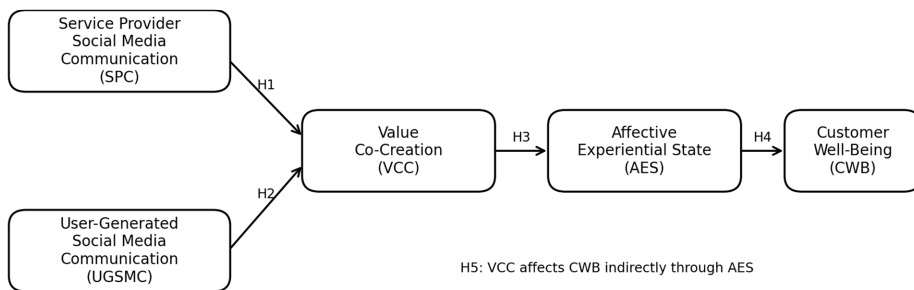
This Appendix reports the retained measurement items used in the final electronic marketing model. The items were adapted from Awan et al. (2022) and contextualised for online travel retailing platforms. AES5 was reverse-coded for directional consistency.

Table A1 Retained measurement items

<i>Construct</i>	<i>Code</i>	<i>Retained item wording</i>	<i>Source</i>
Service provider social media communication	SPC1	I am satisfied with communication generated by the online travel service provider on social media	Awan et al. (2022)
Service provider social media communication	SPC2	The level of communication on social media and other technologies from the online travel service provider meets my expectations	Awan et al. (2022)
Service provider social media communication	SPC3	Communication on social media from the online travel service provider is very attractive	Awan et al. (2022)
Service provider social media communication	SPC4	Compared with communication from other online travel service providers on social media, communication generated by this provider is effective	Awan et al. (2022)
User-generated social media communication	UGSMC1	I am satisfied with communication generated by other users on social media about the online travel service provider	Awan et al. (2022)
User-generated social media communication	UGSMC2	Content generated by other users about the online travel service provider on social media is very attractive	Awan et al. (2022)
User-generated social media communication	UGSMC3	Content generated by other users about the online travel service provider on social media provides me with different ideas about this provider	Awan et al. (2022)
User-generated social media communication	UGSMC4	Content generated by other users about the online travel service provider on social media helps me formulate ideas about this provider	Awan et al. (2022)
Value co-creation	VCC1	I often check the online travel service provider social media to obtain feedback from other customers	Awan et al. (2022)
Value co-creation	VCC3	If I am unhappy with one of my online travel experiences, I will make a suggestion for improvement on the provider's social media channels	Awan et al. (2022)
Value co-creation	VCC4	I enjoy liking posts from the online travel service provider on social media	Awan et al. (2022)

Table A1 Retained measurement items (continued)

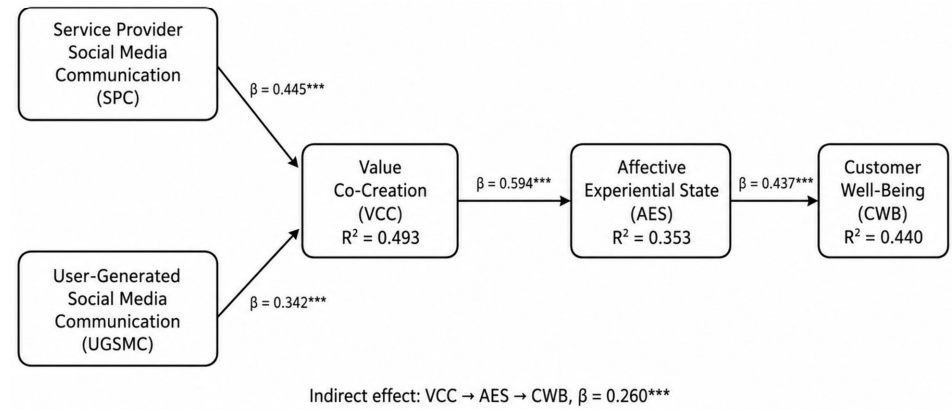
<i>Construct</i>	<i>Code</i>	<i>Retained item wording</i>	<i>Source</i>
Value co-creation	VCC5	I regularly like posts from the online travel service provider on social media	Awan et al. (2022)
Value co-creation	VCC6	Liking posts from the online travel service provider is something I do often while on social media	Awan et al. (2022)
Value co-creation	VCC7	I enjoy commenting on posts from the online travel service provider on social media	Awan et al. (2022)
Value co-creation	VCC8	I regularly comment on posts from the online travel service provider on social media	Awan et al. (2022)
Value co-creation	VCC9	Commenting on posts from the online travel service provider is something I do often while on social media	Awan et al. (2022)
Affective experiential state	AES4	Excited	Awan et al. (2022)
Affective experiential state	AES5 (R)	Annoyed (reverse-coded).	Awan et al. (2022)
Affective experiential state	AES6	Guided.	Awan et al. (2022)
Affective experiential state	AES7	Autonomous	Awan et al. (2022)
Affective experiential state	AES8	Influenced	Awan et al. (2022)
Customer well-being	CWB1	Social media communication met my overall need for well-being	Awan et al. (2022)
Customer well-being	CWB2	Social media communication played a very important role in my social well-being	Awan et al. (2022)
Customer well-being	CWB3	Social media communication played an important role in my travel well-being	Awan et al. (2022)
Customer well-being	CWB4	Social media communication played an important role in enhancing my quality of life	Awan et al. (2022)

Figure 1 Conceptual model

Notes: Solid arrows represent direct hypotheses (H1-H4). H5 represents the mediated effect of value co-creation on customer well-being through affective experiential state.

Source: Authors' elaboration.

Figure 2 Structural model with standardised coefficients



Notes: *** $p < 0.001$. SPC = service provider social media communication; UGSMC = user-generated social media communication; VCC = value co-creation; AES = affective experiential state; CWB = customer well-being. The figure displays the focal affective-route relationships for conceptual clarity; R-squared values reflect the corresponding endogenous constructs in the broader validated PLS-SEM model.

Source: Authors' elaboration based on SmartPLS output.