

Exploring Digital Native Consumers' Purchase Intention in Airline Services using TAM: The Mediating Role of Trust

*TAM, Trust,
Purchase Intention
and Airline Services*

Didip Diandra

Doctor of Management Science, Universitas Terbuka; Jakarta, Indonesia & Management Program, Faculty of Economics & Business, Universitas Paramadina, Jakarta, Indonesia
Email: didip.diandra@paramadina.ac.id

Endang Ruswanti

Master of Management, Faculty of Economics & Business, Universitas Esa Unggul; Jakarta, Indonesia
Email: endang.ruswanti@esaunggul.ac.id

Zainur Hidayah

Master of Management, Faculty of Economics & Business, Universitas Terbuka; Jakarta, Indonesia
Email: zainur@ecampus.ut.ac.id

Ahmad Azmy

Master of Management, Faculty of Economics & Business, Universitas Mitra Bangsa; Jakarta, Indonesia
Email: ahmad.azmy@umiba.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the purchase intention of digital native consumers in airline services by extending the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) with trust as a mediating variable. It examines the direct and indirect effects of perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and trust on purchase intention in digital airline platforms. Using a quantitative approach, data were collected through a structured online survey of 160 digital native consumers in Indonesia and analyzed using PLS-SEM with SmartPLS 4. The results show that perceived ease of use and trust have significant positive effects on purchase intention, whereas perceived usefulness has a positive but insignificant direct effect. Nevertheless, both perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use significantly enhance trust, which in turn mediates their effects on purchase intention. These findings demonstrate that trust plays a central role in translating technology perceptions into purchase intention in the airline service context. This study contributes to the literature on digital consumer behavior by extending TAM in a high-risk service setting and offers practical implications for airline providers to develop more user-friendly and trustworthy digital platforms.

Keywords: Digital Native Consumers, TAM, Trust, Purchase Intention

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengkaji niat beli konsumen digital native pada layanan penerbangan dengan memperluas Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) melalui penambahan kepercayaan sebagai variabel mediasi. Penelitian ini menganalisis pengaruh langsung dan tidak langsung dari persepsi kegunaan, persepsi kemudahan penggunaan, dan

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kepercayaan terhadap niat beli pada platform digital maskapai penerbangan. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif, data dikumpulkan melalui survei daring terstruktur terhadap 160 konsumen digital native di Indonesia dan dianalisis menggunakan PLS-SEM dengan SmartPLS 4. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa persepsi kemudahan penggunaan dan kepercayaan memiliki pengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap niat beli, sedangkan persepsi kegunaan memiliki pengaruh langsung yang positif tetapi tidak signifikan. Meskipun demikian, persepsi kegunaan dan persepsi kemudahan penggunaan secara signifikan meningkatkan kepercayaan, yang selanjutnya memediasi pengaruh keduanya terhadap niat beli. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa kepercayaan memegang peran sentral dalam menerjemahkan persepsi terhadap teknologi menjadi niat beli dalam konteks layanan penerbangan. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada literatur perilaku konsumen digital dengan memperluas penerapan TAM pada konteks layanan berisiko tinggi serta menawarkan implikasi praktis bagi penyedia layanan penerbangan untuk mengembangkan platform digital yang lebih ramah pengguna dan lebih dapat dipercaya. **Kata Kunci:** *Konsumen Digital Native, TAM, Kepercayaan, Niat Beli*

INTRODUCTION

The advancement of digital technology has brought a significant change to the airline industry. Consumer behaviors have shifted tremendously towards digital platforms and interact with airlines on their mobile application, online booking systems, and real-time service interfaces to search the information of products and services, compare the available option, and complete the transactions (Martínez Puertas et al., 2024; Rane et al., 2024). This shift significantly happens in Indonesia where many customers search the product and services through online transaction and effectively meet their growing expectations (Hoo et al., 2024). Digital native consumers who are digitally literate from the early age and living in digital environment would prefer technology-based services in their daily activities. Digital native consumers represent a rapidly expanding segment of the digital marketplace in Indonesia. According to the national population census, approximately 27,94% of the total population are digital native equivalent to approximately 75 million individuals (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2020). This group has strong engagement in digital transactions and electronic money usage, which reached up to IDR 145 trillion in 2019 (Bank Indonesia, 2020). These numerical indicators demonstrate the significant influence and readiness of Indonesian consumer digital natives to engage with digital platforms, including those used for airline services.

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) has been widely used to understand how individuals respond to new technologies (Ahmad Alsoud & bin Lebai Othman Scholar, 2018; Butt & Singh, 2022; Vafaei-Zadeh et al., 2022). This concept has a theoretical foundation for explaining technology-driven behavioral intentions. They are two core constructs which consistently explained consumers' intention to adopt digital platforms, perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEOU) (Jain, 2020; Wongyai et al., 2024) including those in the travel and service sectors (Sujood et al., 2024). Airline services involve higher levels of perceived risk compared to other shopping online platforms and activities (Cuong, 2024; Lee, 2025; Xie et al., 2022). The risk comes from the nature of travel arrangements, safety concerns, service reliability, and financial commitment from providers (Hua, 2021; D. Zhang & Fang, 2022). However, consumer decision making may not be fully explained by the technology perceptions alone (Sobiech-Grabka et al., 2022; Lampo et al., 2023). Consumers purchase intention in this context may be shaped by the online purchasing behavior especially for airline services who have heavily rely on digital systems. Recent studies highlight that trust plays a pivotal role in reducing uncertainty and strengthening purchase intention in digital service environments.

The research that integrates TAM with trust as a mediating variable in the airline service context remains limited (Amaro & Duarte, 2015; Agag & El-Masry, 2016; Alsheikh et al., 2024; Daulay et al., 2024) although emerging markets where digital

adoption continues to grow rapidly. The influence of perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use towards purchase intention has been studied previously. The research done by Habib et al., (2024) investigated the positive and significant influence of perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use toward purchase intention and examine the mediating role of consumer trust. Similarly, the research done by Maia et al., (2022) analyze the case of the online travel agencies in Brazil and demonstrates the trust as mediator variabel between reputation, information quality, and e-WOM towards purchase intention. Although these studies emphasize the relevance of trust in strengthening consumers' intention to adopt digital services, most of the existing evidence is drawn from general e-commerce or online travel agency contexts, with only limited application to airline service platforms. In fact, airline services differ substantially from general digital products because they involve higher perceived risk, time sensitivity, service reliability expectations, and financial commitment of the user. Trust in the decision-making process is something that needs to be explored. Digital native consumers who rely heavily on mobile devices and digital technologies expect more than digital experiences and are not sufficiently explored within the airline industry framework. This study aims to fill the gap and test the integrated TAM-based model that incorporates trust as a mediating variable. Focus on digital native consumers may offer new insights into the behavior of a consumer group in digital market.

The findings of this research are expected to contribute both theoretically and practically. The study enriches literature on digital consumer behavior, airline service marketing, and technology acceptance by demonstrating the importance of trust in enhancing the theory of TAM. The results may offer valuable guidance on how to strengthen digital engagement, improve consumer confidence, and design more effective digital service strategies to meet the expectations of digital native consumers especially for airline service providers.

Although prior studies have widely applied the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) to explain consumers' behavioral intention in digital environments, most of the existing evidence has been derived from general e-commerce, online travel agencies, mobile commerce, and smart tourism contexts. Limited attention has been given to digital airline platforms, which differ from other digital services because they involve higher perceived risk, greater time sensitivity, service reliability concerns, and stronger financial consequences. In addition, previous studies have largely examined consumers in general, rather than focusing specifically on digital native consumers whose technology-related expectations and decision-making patterns may differ substantially from those of earlier generations. Therefore, the existing literature has not sufficiently explained whether perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use remain the main predictors of purchase intention in airline digital services, or whether trust plays a more central mediating role in this context. Addressing this gap, the present study extends TAM by incorporating trust as a mediator and focuses specifically on digital native consumers in airline services. The novelty of this study lies in its effort to provide a more context-specific and consumer-specific understanding of purchase intention by demonstrating that trust serves as a key mechanism through which technology perceptions are translated into purchase intention in a high-risk digital service environment.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The TAM Theory

This study focuses on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) theory, originally developed by Davis (1986) (Zaineldeen et al., 2020; Sujood et al., 2024) to explain the acceptance and use of information technology by individuals in daily activities. There are two key cognitive beliefs that perceive usefulness (PU) and perceive ease of use (PEOU). Perceived usefulness explains the belief of the user about technology will enhance their work performance, while perceived ease of use represents the degree of perceiving the technology as simple as possible and effortless to operate, which finally shaped the users' attitudes and influenced their purchase intention before and during engagement with a

technology. TAM Theory has been widely accepted and validated empirically across different digital contexts including mobile banking (Prastiawan et al., 2021), retail platforms (Habib et al., 2024), e-commerce and online travel services (Sujood et al., 2024). However, the research on TAM mostly explain an appropriate model to understand consumer response to a new technology or new devices such as platforms for online shopping (Habib et al., 2024), mobile transactions (Hoo et al., 2024), website interaction (Kim, 2020), and online travel agencies (Maia et al., 2022; Sujood et al., 2024). TAM provides meaningful insights into how consumers evaluate digital booking platforms, mobile applications, and other online service interfaces especially in airline services (Wongyai et al., 2024), often involve higher perceived risk, complex service processes, and significant financial commitments that may influence and change consumer decisions and purchase intention (Zhang et al., 2020; Koay et al., 2023).

Previous research done by Han et al., (2024) highlight that perceptions of usefulness and ease of use play a role in shaping purchase intention and consumers willing to use and shop on e-commerce live streaming which stimulates with emotional factors and often strengthen these effects. Although there are various studies on online travel services, this research fills the gap by integrating TAM with trust and suggested using this variabel as mediator that effects perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use on purchase intention. The research done by Habib et al., (2024) explain the role of trust that significantly mediates the relationship between TAM constructs and purchase intention in digital shopping platforms. Similar research done by Maia et al., (2022) that shows the role of trust mediating between online reputation, information quality and e-WOM in influencing purchase intention within online travel service environments. Digital native consumers who are highly proficient with the use of digital technologies are very sensitive to any change happens in the platforms, the safety of and security of data, transparency, and system reliability is very important (Olsson & Bernhard, 2021; Ruangkanjanes et al., 2022). The integration of TAM and trust may offer a new insight and more comprehensive view to understand consumer purchase intention in airline digital platforms.

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) posits that individuals' acceptance of a digital system is primarily shaped by perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. Perceived usefulness reflects the extent to which users believe that a technology enhances task performance, whereas perceived ease of use refers to the degree to which the technology is perceived as effortless to operate. In digital service settings, these two beliefs form the initial cognitive evaluation of the platform. However, in high-risk service environments such as airline booking platforms, technology acceptance cannot be fully explained by functional and usability considerations alone. Consumers are also required to evaluate whether the platform is reliable, secure, and capable of delivering the promised service without failure. Therefore, TAM provides an appropriate baseline framework, but its explanatory power can be strengthened by incorporating trust as a relational and uncertainty-reducing mechanism.

Antecedence of Purchase Intention

Perceived usefulness is one of the central cognitive beliefs proposed in the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis 1986) and explains how consumers evaluate the benefits they obtain from using a digital platform. Perceived usefulness in the context of airline services served the online booking systems and mobile applications for simplifying transactions procedures, provide reliable information, and reduce time and effort during interaction and transaction. Digital native consumers experience a digital airline platform for useful purposes, that they tend to form more positive evaluations which finally strengthen their purchase intention. The research done by Agag & El-Masry, (2016) examining online travel purchases behavior and found perceived usefulness significantly enhances online purchases intention, particularly when supported by trust as a mediating factor. Research by Selem et al., (2023) confirmed that perceived usefulness has a positive and direct effect on consumer purchase intention through digital channels. The research done by Phamthi et al., (2024) identified the role of perceived usefulness as the strongest

determinants of purchase intentions across various e-commerce environments because the platforms are beneficial and has value-added on its functionality. Sujood et al., (2024) found that perceive usefulness strongly predicts consumer intention to adopt smart tourism technology, indicates its central role in shaping behavioral intention among tourism service environments. Lastly the research by Habib et al., (2024) confirmed the significant influence of perceived usefulness toward purchase intention and implies its relational factors in terms of high-risk digital environments.

Perceived usefulness is theoretically associated with purchase intention because consumers are more likely to adopt a digital platform when they believe that it improves efficiency, reduces effort, and provides practical value in completing transactions. In airline services, usefulness may be reflected in the ability of the platform to simplify ticket booking, provide accurate flight information, facilitate schedule changes, and reduce transaction time. These benefits should increase the attractiveness of the platform and strengthen consumers' intention to purchase. However, in service settings involving financial and operational risk, the perceived utility of a system may not be sufficient on its own to trigger purchase intention unless users also feel confident about the platform's credibility and dependability.

H1: *Perceived usefulness has a significant positive influence on purchase intention*

Perceived ease of use represents a second fundamental component of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and referring to the degree to which consumers believe that using a digital platform requires minimal effort (Davis, 1989) (Prastiawan et al., 2021; Ly & Ly, 2023). Digital native consumers search in platforms that are intuitively designed, easy to navigate, and simple to operate with online transactions. Previous research done by Agag & El-Masry, (2016) confirmed that higher levels of ease of use substantially strengthen consumers' willingness to purchase travel services online by reducing cognitive effort and improving confidence in the transaction process. Perceived ease of use has a significant positive influence on consumers' purchase intentions (Amaro & Duarte, 2015; Agag & El-Masry, 2016; Jain, 2020). The study by Jadil et al., (2022) indicate that the ease of use of e-commerce platforms enhances both consumer trust and attitude, which subsequently strengthens purchase intention. The study by Habib et al., (2024) found that perceived ease of use is a significant determinant of consumer trust and purchase intention among Saudi online shoppers, highlighting its essential role in shaping positive digital behaviors. The review by Phamthi et al., (2024) emphasizes that perceived ease of use remains one of the most critical determinants of purchase intention in the global e-commerce sector.

Perceived ease of use influences purchase intention because a platform that is simple, intuitive, and easy to navigate reduces users' cognitive burden and makes the transaction process more comfortable. This is particularly relevant for digital native consumers, who are highly accustomed to fast, responsive, and seamless digital interactions. For this consumer segment, ease of use is not merely a technical attribute but part of the overall service experience. When airline platforms provide frictionless interaction, consumers are more likely to develop favorable evaluations and proceed to purchase.

H2: *Perceived Ease of Use has a significant positive influence on purchase intention*

Trust plays a significant role in influencing consumer purchases' intention. When users regard a platform as reliable, transparent, and capable of safeguarding their personal and financial data, this perception develops stronger confidence that translates into a significantly higher purchase intention. The research done by Maia et al., (2022) clearly explain about direct positive effect of trust on purchase intention in online travel services, while the research by Habib et al., (2024) demonstrated that trust not only predicts purchase intention but also significantly mediates the relationship between perceived risk and consumer decision-making in e-commerce. Other research done by (Selem et al., 2023a) showed that trust enhances the effects of interactivity and argument quality on purchase intention in social commerce, indicating that trust has reduces psychological barriers and fostering more decisive consumer response. Moreover, (Bobe et al., 2024) emphasized that digital native consumers are more likely to engage in online purchases

when digital platforms are perceived as credible, informative, and secure. Thus, trust significantly and positive influence on purchase intention by reducing perceived uncertainty, strengthening perceived safety, and fostering greater confidence in the platform's service quality.

Trust plays a crucial role in shaping purchase intention because online airline transactions involve uncertainty related to payment security, service reliability, booking accuracy, and post-purchase support. In this context, trust reflects consumers' confidence that the platform will protect their personal and financial information, perform transactions accurately, and deliver the promised service consistently. When trust is high, perceived uncertainty is reduced, and consumers become more willing to make purchasing decisions. Thus, trust is particularly important in airline digital services, where consumers are not merely adopting a technology but also committing to a high-involvement service transaction.

H3: *Trust has a significant positive influence on purchase intention*

Perceived usefulness reflects the consumers' belief that a digital platform meaningfully enhances the efficiency, accuracy, and overall value of purchase activities, particularly in high-involvement services such as airline ticketing. The functional value that consumers receive from digital platforms will strengthen their confidence and trust. The research done by Agag & El-Masry, (2016) demonstrate perceived usefulness enhances trust significantly and lead to stronger intention to purchase in online travel services. Similar research done by Habib et al., (2024) confirmed positive effect of perceived usefulness on consumer trust and significantly predicts the purchase intention in e-commerce. Bobe et al., (2024) and Jadil et al., (2022) further show perceived usefulness play a crucial role in enhancing trust, then accelerates consumers' willingness to purchase, and put system transparency, informative, and efficient as quality standards of benefits. Thus, trust able to mediate significant positive influence of perceived usefulness toward purchase intention in digital airline services.

H4: *Perceived usefulness has a significant positive influence on purchase intention through trust*

Perceived ease of use in digital platforms means easy to learn, accessible, and easy to operate during interaction. When platforms offer smooth, intuitive, and reliable user experience, it conveys a sense of professionalism and system integrity, reduce technical failure, and finally strengthens trust (Ziyadin et al., 2020; Lopes et al., 2022; Sakas et al., 2022). The research done by Amaro & Duarte, (2015) found that perceived ease of use significantly increases trust while simultaneously reducing perceived risk in online airline ticket purchases. Similar research done by (Sujood et al., 2024) through an integrative TAM, TPB, and Trust framework in tourism technologies, confirmed perceived ease of use has a strong positive effect on trust and technology adoption intention. Perceived ease of use is not only a technological determinant but also a catalyst for trust formation and enhance confidence toward digital platforms (Angusamy et al., 2024). Digital native consumers surrounded by technology from birth and search information on demand (Tanković & Prodan, 2024), thus perceived ease of use play a significant role in intrinsic motivation of digital consumer (Selamat & Windasari, 2021).

H5: *Perceived Ease of Use has a significant positive influence on purchase intention through trust*

Trust can be theoretically positioned as a mediating mechanism between technology perceptions and purchase intention. Perceived usefulness may enhance trust when consumers interpret the functionality of a platform as evidence that the airline is competent and capable of delivering efficient service. Likewise, perceived ease of use may strengthen trust because a clear, user-friendly, and well-organized interface signals professionalism, transparency, and system reliability. In this way, cognitive evaluations of usefulness and ease of use do not automatically translate into purchase intention; rather, they first shape consumers' trust in the platform, which then converts those positive perceptions into a stronger intention to purchase.

Figure 1. presents the conceptual research framework developed for this study, illustrating the relationships among the key constructs that influence digital native

consumers' purchase intention in the context of online airline services. The model integrates the core dimensions of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) that is perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use and extends them with trust as a mediating variable and finally strengthens purchase intention.

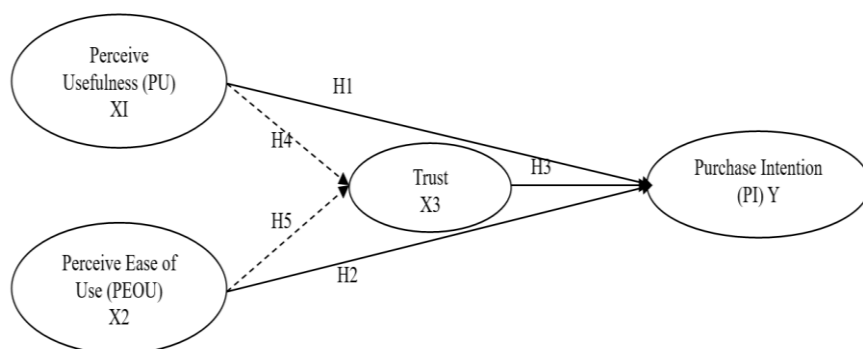


Figure 1. The Conceptual Research Framework

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a quantitative survey design using a structured questionnaire developed from established scales within the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and trust related literature. They are two variables of TAM; perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use adapted from Davis (1986), and trust as mediator variable adapted from Agag & El-Masry, (2016) and Habib et al., (2024), and purchase intention from Amaro & Duarte, (2015), Vafaei-Zadeh et al., (2022) and Nguyen et al., (2024). All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Primary data were collected from distributed questionnaires and secondary data from reviews of previous research. This study targeted digital native consumers in Indonesia, as individuals born between 1981 and 2012, corresponding approximately to those aged 13 to 44 years at the time of data collection, who had prior experience using digital airline platforms. Thus, purposive sampling was used to ensure that only respondents meeting these criteria were included and analyzed.

This research employed 16 measurement indicators adapted from previously validated instruments to ensure content validity and conceptual consistency. The minimum required sample size was determined based on the rule-of-thumb recommended by Hair, et al, (2021) which suggests that the sample should be at least ten times the maximum number of indicators used in the model. Accordingly, a minimum of 160 respondents was required, and this threshold guided the data collection in this research. The data collection was analyzed using SmartPLS 4 for statistical power and analytical framework ensured rigorous examination of the hypothesized relationships within the proposed research model.

RESULTS

Data were collected through an online questionnaire distributed directly by link and using WhatsApp to effectively reach the target population of digital native consumers in Indonesia. These respondents were specifically selected based on their prior experience of purchasing airline tickets online, booking seats, rescheduling, and enjoying flight services. 160 respondents were validated and analyzed. Attached below respondents' demographic profile:

Table 1 Respondent Demographic Profile

Variable	Indicator	N=160	Percentage
Gender	Male	81	50.6%
	Female	79	49.4%
Age	< 20	30	18.8%
	21 - 25	28	17.5%

	26 - 30	21	13.1%
	31 - 35	25	15.6%
	> 35	56	35.0%
Employment Status	Employee	52	32.5%
	Student	39	24.4%
	PNS/ASN	15	9.4%
	Professional	8	5.0%
	Entrepreneur	14	8.8%
	No Employment	3	1.9%
	Others	8	5.0%
Monthly Income	<3,000,000	16	10.0%
	3,000,000 - <5,000,000	20	12.5%
	5,000,000 - <10,000,000	32	20.0%
	10,000,000 - <20,000,000	22	13.8%
	>20,000,000	4	2.5%
	No answer	45	28.1%

Source: Primary data, 2015

Table 1 summarizes the demographic profile and characteristics of the respondents. The gender composition is nearly balanced, with 50.6% male and 49.4% female participants, indicating proportional representation across sexes. The age distribution shows that the largest group of respondents is above 35 years old (35.0%), followed by those under 20 (18.8%), while the remaining age groups 21-25 (17.5%), 31-35 (15.6%), and 26-30 (13.1%) demonstrate younger to middle-age. Employment data reveal that employees constitute the largest segment (32.5%), followed by students (24.4%), with other categories such as PNS/ASN (9.4%), entrepreneurs (8.8%), professionals (5.0%), the unemployed (1.9%), and others (5.0%) contributing to a heterogeneous occupational profile of respondents. Monthly income levels also vary with 20.0% earnings between IDR 5,000,000 and 10,000,000 and only 2.5% above IDR 20,000,000. Demographic profile of respondents indicates substantial variability across gender, age, employment status, and income categories. The data ensuring a comprehensive and representative of digital native consumers who actively engage with technology-driven airline services. This demographic composition strengthens the representativeness of the sample and provides a robust foundation for analyzing purchase intention and technology acceptance within the airline service context.

Table 2 Indicator Loadings and Latent Variable Coefficient

Items	Factor Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha (CA)	Composite Reliability (CR)	AVE
PU1	0.865	0.923	0.923	0.812
PU2	0.916			
PU3	0.914			
PU4	0.908			
PEOU1	0.896	0.903	0.911	0.774
PEOU2	0.879			
PEOU3	0.888			
PEOU4	0.855			
T1	0.852	0.909	0.911	0.785
T2	0.895			
T3	0.905			
T4	0.891			
PI1	0.807	0.869	0.873	0.718
PI2	0.868			
PI3	0.881			
PI4	0.831			

Source: SmartPLS 4, 2025

Table 2 shows the indicator loadings and latent variable coefficients for the four core constructs in this research that are perceived usefulness (PU), perceived ease of use (PEOU), trust (T), and purchase intention (PI). According to Hair, et al, (2021) minimum

threshold recommended is 0.70 and all items has surpasses it and confirmed satisfactory convergent validity. Variabel perceived usefulness shows high loadings between 0.865 and 0.916, reflecting respondents' consistent perceptions of the usefulness of airline digital platforms. At the same time perceived ease of use indicators as shown in table 2 highlight the overall ease by which digital native consumers interact with airline services interfaces. Trust exhibits strong loadings between 0.852 and 0.905, indicating a solid level of confidence in the reliability and integrity of airline service providers. At the same time, purchase intention indicators confirm respondents' consistent willingness to engage in future airline transactions. Cronbach's Alpha values between 0.869 and 0.923 and Composite Reliability values between 0.873 and 0.923. All exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70 which demonstrates strong internal consistency across constructs. Moreover, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values, ranging from 0.718 to 0.812, surpass the 0.50 minimum criterion outlined by Hair, et al, (2021), indicating that each construct captures a substantial proportion of variance in its indicators. The results of analysis confirm that all constructs have exhibits high reliability and convergent validity, establishing a solid foundation for further structural model assessment. Below are PLS-SEM results:

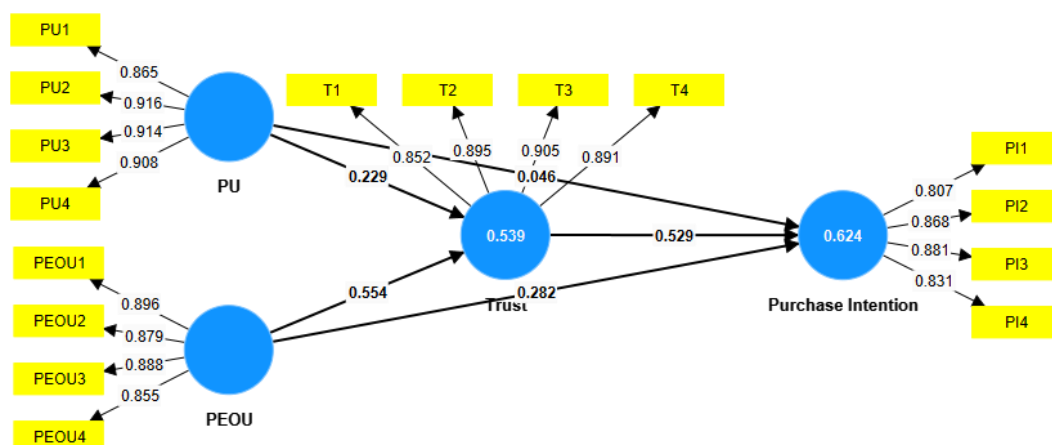


Figure 2 PLS-SEM Result

Table 3 Direct Effect Test (Path Coefficients (β))

Construct	Sample mean (M)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values	Results
H1 PU \rightarrow PI	0.037	0.540	0.589	Positive Not Significant
H2 PEOU \rightarrow PI	0.288	3.506	0.000	Positive Significant
H3 Trust \rightarrow PI	0.533	7.548	0.000	Positive Significant
PU \rightarrow Trust	0.235	3.351	0.001	Positive Significant
PEOU \rightarrow Trust	0.551	7.939	0.000	Positive Significant

Source: SmartPLS 4, 2025

Table 3 presents the direct effect results, showing in detail the path from Perceived Usefulness to Purchase Intention is positive but statistically insignificant with β 0.037, T statistic 0.540, p value 0.589 indicating that perceived usefulness does not meaningfully influence digital native consumers' intention to purchase airline services. This relationship reflects a positive but not significant because high P value indicates the relationship is not strong enough to be confirmed statistically. Perceived usefulness does not significantly drive purchase intention among digital native consumers in airline services. In contrast, perceived ease of use shows a strong and significant effect on purchase intention with β 0.288, T statistic 3.506, p value 0.000 suggest the ease of navigating and using airline digital platforms can contribute to purchase intention. Trust at the same time plays a crucial role in this relationship and shows positive impact on purchase intention with β 0.533, T statistic 7.548, p value 0.000. The path perceived usefulness effect trust with β 0.235, T statistic 3.351, p value 0.001 demonstrates positive effect because consumer

perceive the platforms as useful and increase the level of trust significantly. Perceived ease of use shows stronger positive effect to trust with β 0.551, T statistic 7.939, p value 0.000 suggesting that ease of use plays a significant role in increasing trust among digital native consumers. Airline services users put more trust on digital platforms when the system is easy, simple, intuitive, and effortless to navigate and to operate.

Table 4 Indirect Effect Test (Path Coefficients (β))

Construct	Sample mean (M)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values	Results
H4 PU → Trust → PI	0.125	2.991	0.003	Positive Significant
H5 PEOU → Trust → PI	0.294	5.363	0.000	Positive Significant

Source: SmartPLS 4, 2025

Table 4 shows the result of analysis indirect effect and mediating role of trust. Based on the table, perceived usefulness effect purchase intention through trust is positive and significant statistically proven with β 0.125, T statistic 2.991, and p value 0.003 indicating perceived usefulness able to enhance trust among digital natives in airline services and finally increase their purchase intention. The second variable is perceived ease of use effect purchase intention through trust is positive and highly significant with β 0.294, T statistic 5.363, and p value 0.000, showing the role of perceived ease of use that strongly contributes to trust and leads to greater purchase intention. Trust is not only mediating variable in this relationship but also plays as pivotal psychological mechanism that shares the digital native consumers purchase intention. Constructs in Technology Acceptance Model framework must bear the effectiveness and essential mediating role of trust into purchase intention.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study provide important insights into the determinants of purchase intention among digital native consumers in the context of airline digital services. First, the results show that perceived usefulness does not have a significant direct effect on purchase intention, although the direction of the relationship is positive. This finding suggests that, in the context of digital airline platforms, functional benefits alone may not be sufficient to directly encourage digital native consumers to make a purchase decision. For this consumer group, the usefulness of digital features may already be perceived as a basic expectation rather than a distinctive advantage. In other words, digital native consumers may assume that airline platforms should already provide useful functions such as booking convenience, schedule access, and transaction efficiency. As a result, perceived usefulness does not automatically translate into stronger purchase intention.

This result is interesting because it differs from many previous studies that found a significant direct relationship between perceived usefulness and purchase intention. A possible explanation is that airline services represent a high-risk and high-involvement service context, in which consumers not only evaluate the functional value of the platform but also consider whether the platform is reliable, secure, and trustworthy. Therefore, usefulness may still matter, but its influence is more likely to operate through psychological mechanisms such as trust rather than through a direct path to purchase intention. This finding indicates that in digital airline services, consumers do not make decisions solely based on whether the platform is beneficial, but on whether those benefits increase their confidence in the platform and the service provider.

Second, the study confirms that perceived ease of use has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention. This finding indicates that the easier the airline platform is to use, the stronger the intention of digital native consumers to purchase airline services. This result is consistent with the logic of TAM, which proposes that a system perceived as easy to learn, easy to navigate, and effortless to operate will generate more favorable behavioral intentions. In the case of digital native consumers, ease of use appears to be especially important because this consumer segment is highly accustomed to fast, seamless, and intuitive digital interactions. A complicated or inefficient digital interface

may quickly reduce their interest, whereas a user-friendly platform can strengthen their willingness to continue the transaction process.

The stronger role of perceived ease of use compared with perceived usefulness also suggests that user experience is a critical driver in airline digital services. For digital native consumers, convenience of interaction is not merely a technical matter, but part of the overall service experience. When the platform provides a smooth and intuitive process, consumers are more likely to evaluate the airline positively and develop stronger purchase intention. This result reinforces the view that in competitive digital service markets, consumers may respond more strongly to usability and interaction quality than to functional value alone.

Third, the findings demonstrate that trust has a strong positive and significant effect on purchase intention. This result confirms that trust is a central determinant in airline digital transactions, where consumers face uncertainty related to payment security, booking accuracy, schedule reliability, and service fulfillment. Unlike ordinary online shopping for low-risk products, airline ticket purchases involve higher financial commitment, time sensitivity, and service risk. Therefore, digital native consumers are more likely to proceed with a purchase when they believe that the platform is credible, secure, and capable of delivering the promised service. This finding strengthens the argument that trust plays a pivotal role in high-risk digital service environments and should be considered an essential factor in explaining online purchase behavior.

In addition, the results show that perceived usefulness significantly influences trust. This indicates that when digital native consumers perceive an airline platform as useful, efficient, and capable of supporting their travel-related needs, they are more likely to develop confidence in that platform. Functional value, therefore, remains important, but its main contribution lies in strengthening trust rather than directly stimulating purchase intention. This finding implies that consumers interpret useful digital features as signals of provider competence and service capability. In this sense, perceived usefulness contributes to trust formation by demonstrating that the airline is able to manage digital interactions effectively and deliver meaningful value to users.

Similarly, perceived ease of use has a strong and significant effect on trust, and this effect is even stronger than that of perceived usefulness. This finding suggests that ease of use is not only associated with convenience, but also with professionalism, transparency, and system reliability. A platform that is simple, clear, and easy to operate may reduce user uncertainty and create the impression that the airline is competent and dependable. For digital native consumers, who are highly sensitive to interface quality and digital experience, ease of use may quickly shape their level of trust in the platform. This explains why perceived ease of use becomes both a direct predictor of purchase intention and an indirect driver through trust.

The mediation analysis further confirms that trust significantly mediates the relationship between perceived usefulness and purchase intention, as well as between perceived ease of use and purchase intention. These findings show that trust functions as a key psychological mechanism that converts positive technology perceptions into actual buying intention. In other words, digital native consumers may recognize that a platform is useful and easy to use, but these positive perceptions will be more likely to influence their intention to purchase when they also foster trust in the platform. This result refines the traditional TAM framework by showing that in the airline service context, cognitive evaluations of technology are not sufficient on their own; they must be accompanied by a sense of trust before they can lead to stronger purchase intention.

Overall, this study contributes to the literature by showing that the explanatory power of TAM can be strengthened when trust is incorporated into the model, particularly in the context of digital native consumers and high-risk service environments. The findings indicate that digital native consumers do not simply respond to functionality, but also to how digital platforms create a sense of confidence and reliability. Therefore, purchase intention in airline services is shaped not only by technological evaluations, but also by relational and psychological assurance embedded in the digital experience. This finding

is important because it extends TAM beyond its conventional cognitive focus and highlights the role of trust as an essential mechanism in digital service adoption and purchase decisions.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the purchase intention of digital native consumers in airline services by extending the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) with trust as a mediating variable. The findings demonstrate that perceived ease of use and trust are the most important predictors of purchase intention in the context of digital airline platforms. In contrast, perceived usefulness does not have a significant direct effect on purchase intention, although it contributes indirectly through trust. These results indicate that for digital native consumers, functional benefits alone are not sufficient to encourage purchasing decisions unless they also strengthen confidence in the platform.

The study highlights that trust plays a central role in translating consumers' perceptions of technology into purchase intention. In high-risk service environments such as airline services, consumers are not only concerned with whether a platform is useful and easy to use, but also with whether it is reliable, secure, and capable of delivering the promised service. Therefore, the integration of trust into TAM provides a more comprehensive explanation of consumer behavior in digital airline services.

This research contributes to the literature by extending TAM in a context that is both service-specific and consumer-specific, namely airline digital platforms and digital native consumers. The findings suggest that digital native consumers place greater emphasis on usability and trust than on functional value alone when forming their purchase intention. Practically, these results imply that airline service providers should prioritize the development of digital platforms that are intuitive, user-friendly, transparent, and trustworthy in order to strengthen consumer confidence and encourage online transactions.

Despite these contributions, this study has several limitations. First, the sample size was limited to 160 respondents, which may not fully represent the broader population of digital native consumers. Second, the focus on airline services may limit the generalizability of the findings to other digital service industries. Third, the cross-sectional design does not capture possible changes in consumer perceptions and trust over time. Future research is therefore recommended to use larger and more diverse samples, examine other service sectors, and apply longitudinal designs to better understand the dynamics of technology perception, trust, and purchase intention in digital environments.

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