

Toward Sustainable Adventure: Exploring the Digital Frontier of Geopark Ciletuh and its Customer Value Evolution

Muhamad Rizki Gumelar¹, Tarandhika Tantra², Yolanda Febrina⁴

^{1, 2} Telkom University

Abstract:- In recent years, digitization has revolutionized business models, fostering efficiency and profitability while unlocking opportunities for added value. The tourism sector, notably online accommodation booking, has witnessed profound transformations due to digitization. Geopark Ciletuh, renowned for its natural splendor, attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors annually. Yet, in this digital age, new challenges and opportunities emerge. Information technology enables seamless access to Geopark Ciletuh's offerings, facilitating personalized experiences and direct communication via social media. This study employs qualitative methods to explore digitization's impact on customer value in Geopark Ciletuh. Understanding its effects on perceptions, satisfaction, and loyalty enables managers to devise strategies for enhancing visitor experiences, bolstering competitiveness, and maximizing economic and environmental benefits.

Keywords: Customer value, destination management, digitization, geopark ciletuh, mobile applications, online accommodation booking, perceptions, social media, strategic adaptation, sustainable adventure.

1. Introduction

The swift advancement of recent developments, particularly the technological evolution, has become a key driver for societies and sectors to adeptly manage ambiguity [1]. Dynamic sectors such as tourism are faced with the urgent need to promptly and effectively address challenges and threats to maintain operational viability [2]. The crucial function of technology and digitization in assisting countries, sectors, and entities in addressing these difficulties has grown progressively essential. In recent years, digitalization has witnessed substantial growth, reshaping business models by enhancing efficiency and profitability while also creating opportunities for greater value addition [3]. This transformation entails the utilization of digital technology to analyze market data, streamline delivery processes, and interact with customers [4]. The integration of technology into various facets of operations not only facilitates agility and adaptability but also fosters innovation and competitiveness in an ever-evolving landscape. Moreover, digitalization enables businesses to harness data-driven insights to make informed decisions and optimize performance across diverse functions, ranging from marketing and sales to logistics and customer service. As societies and industries continue to grapple with uncertainties and disruptions, the strategic adoption of digital technologies emerges as a crucial imperative for sustainable growth and resilience in the face of dynamic challenges and opportunities.

Digitalization has left a profound impact on numerous sectors, and one area that has undergone significant transformation is the tourism industry, particularly regarding online accommodation booking [5]. In light of the changing environment, tourism entities are progressively adopting digitalization as a strategy to generate and provide value to the community. One notable manifestation of this trend is the widespread adoption of online booking applications by local accommodations, which has become commonplace in recent years. These digital platforms not only facilitate smoother and more convenient user experiences for travelers but also provide accommodation providers with valuable insights through the collection of customer booking information [6]. Platforms such as Traveloka, tiket.com, Booking.com, and Trivago.co.id have emerged as primary channels for travelers to search for and book a wide range of tourism services, further cementing the role of digital technology

in shaping the modern tourism landscape [7]. However, the impact of digitalization extends beyond just enhancing customer experiences; it also fundamentally alters how tourism organizations operate and deliver value. From leveraging data analytics to personalize offerings to implementing innovative marketing strategies, tourism entities are increasingly leveraging digital tools to adapt to changing consumer preferences and market dynamics [8]. As digitalization continues to reshape the tourism industry, stakeholders must remain vigilant and proactive in harnessing the potential of digital technologies to drive innovation, enhance competitiveness, and ensure sustainable growth in the rapidly evolving global tourism marketplace. In the fast-paced and ever-evolving landscape of the digital era, strategic adaptation emerges as an imperative for tourism organizations striving to maintain relevance and competitiveness [9]. The capacity of an organization to quickly adjust its strategic course and adapt its business model in reaction to changing market dynamics becomes more and more vital for maintaining long-term success. Recognizing this imperative, businesses are compelled to continuously assess and refine their strategies to effectively navigate the complexities of the digital environment. Nevertheless, despite the widely recognized importance of strategic adaptation in leveraging the capabilities of digitalization and providing improved value to customers, there exists a significant disparity in both the theoretical comprehension and practical execution of the interconnection among digitalization, strategic adaptation, and customer value [8]. This gap underscores the need for further research and exploration into the intricate interplay between these elements, as well as the development of robust frameworks and strategies to guide tourism organizations in leveraging digitalization to drive strategic adaptation and ultimately enhance customer value. As the digital landscape continues to evolve and shape consumer behaviors and expectations, tourism organizations must remain proactive in their efforts to adapt, innovate, and capitalize on emerging opportunities to deliver unparalleled experiences and maintain competitive advantage in the dynamic marketplace.

Nestled amidst the breathtaking landscapes of Indonesia, Geopark Ciletuh stands as a testament to the awe-inspiring beauty of nature, boasting unique geological formations, rich biodiversity, and mesmerizing vistas that captivate the hearts of all who visit. Renowned globally as a premier tourist destination, Geopark Ciletuh draws hundreds of visitors annually, each drawn by the allure of its natural splendor and the promise of unforgettable experiences [10]. However, as the world undergoes rapid digital transformation, new horizons and hurdles emerge for destinations like Geopark Ciletuh [11]. With the advent of information and communication technology, accessing information about Geopark Ciletuh has become effortless for tourists worldwide, enabling online ticket reservations and personalized experiences tailored to individual preferences [12]. While digitalization heralds convenience and accessibility, it also presents a host of challenges, including those related to data management, privacy, and information security. As Geopark Ciletuh navigates the digital landscape, it must grapple with the complexities of safeguarding visitor data, ensuring privacy, and fortifying information security measures to uphold the integrity of the tourist experience. Balancing the benefits of digitalization with the need for robust safeguards is essential to preserve the allure and authenticity of Geopark Ciletuh while embracing the opportunities presented by the digital age. In doing so, Geopark Ciletuh can continue to enchant and inspire visitors while ensuring a seamless and secure journey into the heart of its natural wonders.

Geopark Ciletuh-Palabuhanratu showcases a variety of unique geological formations, including karst cliffs, limestone caves, and other stunning rock formations. This geological diversity serves as a major attraction for geology enthusiasts and visitors who admire the spectacular natural beauty [10]. Furthermore, this Geopark has been recognized by UNESCO, placing it among the few Geoparks in Indonesia that have achieved international standards in preservation, education, and sustainable tourism development [7]. With the advancement of digitalization, the use of social media has also become increasingly important in influencing the perceptions and decisions of tourists [13]. Social media allows tourist destinations like Geopark Ciletuh to directly communicate with potential visitors, promote services, and receive feedback directly. Through platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter, Geopark Ciletuh can share attractive photos, travel stories, and visitor reviews, all of which can enhance the destination's image and increase tourist interest. Additionally, various social media applications can be used to provide real-time information about conditions in Geopark Ciletuh, such as weather, traffic, and ongoing activities. This enables tourists to make better decisions and plan their trips more efficiently [14]. Thus, social media not only influences the perceptions and decisions of tourists but also can enhance visitor experiences and support destination management efforts in leveraging opportunities in the digital era. In the ever-

evolving context of Geopark Ciletuh, it becomes paramount to comprehensively grasp the multifaceted impact of digitalization on the overarching concept of customer value. Customer value, a multifaceted construct, encapsulates not only tourists' subjective perceptions but also their satisfaction levels, emotional connections, and long-term loyalty towards the destination [15]. Amidst the burgeoning digital landscape, understanding how digitalization permeates and reshapes these dimensions of customer value is pivotal for Geopark Ciletuh's managers. Through exploring the complex interaction between digitalization and customer value, managers can acquire valuable insights into the changing desires and preferences of guests. This allows them to devise customized strategies to improve guest experiences, strengthen destination competitiveness, and optimize the socioeconomic and environmental benefits gained. Indeed, the advent of digital transformation heralds a plethora of opportunities for Geopark Ciletuh to not only optimize its operational efficiencies but also to elevate visitor experiences and foster symbiotic relationships with the local community [16]. From leveraging data analytics to personalize offerings to implementing innovative digital marketing strategies, the integration of digital technologies holds immense potential in augmenting the value proposition of Geopark Ciletuh for its diverse array of stakeholders. However, realizing this potential necessitates a nuanced understanding of how digitalization permeates every facet of the visitor journey, from trip planning and booking to on-site experiences and post-visit interactions. Hence, the primary aim of this research initiative is to thoroughly investigate the complex dynamics of digitalization and customer value within the Geopark Ciletuh context. By elucidating the nuanced ways in which digitalization shapes tourists' perceptions, satisfaction levels, and overall experiences, this study seeks to furnish Geopark Ciletuh's managers with actionable insights and strategic recommendations to navigate the complexities of the digital landscape effectively. Moreover, by exploring the role of strategic adaptation in optimizing customer value amidst the digital transformation, this research aims to pave the way for more agile and responsive destination management practices that can effectively address emergent challenges and seize newfound opportunities in the digital era.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Digitalization Evolution in The Tourism Industry

The progression of digitalization in the tourism sector has brought about a significant shift in the scenery of tourist destinations globally, including Geopark Ciletuh. With the swift progressions in information and communication technology (ICT), obtaining destination information has become notably easier, leading to tourist experiences that are more personalized and immersive than in previous times [17]. Moreover, the advent of digitalization has precipitated a paradigm shift in the tourism business model, steering the industry away from traditional direct sales approaches towards robust online platforms. This transition has empowered destinations like Geopark Ciletuh to broaden their market reach, tap into previously untapped demographics, and consequently, augment their revenue streams [18]. Furthermore, the dynamics of interaction between tourism service providers and customers have undergone a marked transformation in the wake of digitalization. Technology is now leveraged as a conduit for delivering more responsive services and tailoring offerings to better align with visitor needs and preferences. This heightened level of responsiveness not only enhances the overall quality of the tourist experience but also fosters stronger bonds between destinations and their clientele. Yet, alongside the manifold benefits that digitalization brings, it also introduces a host of new challenges, ranging from concerns over personal data protection to ensuring the security of online transactions [19]. However, within the context of Geopark Ciletuh, the ongoing evolution of digitalization represents a trove of opportunities to elevate visitor experiences, disseminate comprehensive destination information, and perpetuate its allure as a premier tourist destination. By harnessing the transformative potential of digital technologies, Geopark Ciletuh can not only optimize its operational efficiency but also craft truly unforgettable and immersive experiences for its visitors, thereby engendering sustainable added value for all who traverse its breathtaking landscapes. In essence, the continued embrace of digitalization stands to fortify Geopark Ciletuh's position as a veritable gem within Indonesia's tourism landscape, ensuring its enduring appeal for generations to come.

2.2 The Role of Digital Technology in Tourism Destination Transformation

Digital technology stands as a cornerstone in the evolutionary trajectory of tourism destinations, playing a pivotal role in catalyzing Geopark Ciletuh's metamorphosis into a more adaptive and interactive environment for its visitors. The continuous progressions in information and communication technology (ICT) have opened avenues for innovation across diverse aspects of destination management. This encompasses the development of state-of-the-art marketing approaches to the seamless improvement of visitor experiences [20]. In this digital age, online platforms have emerged as indispensable tools in the arsenal of destination management, offering tourists unparalleled access to a plethora of information about Geopark Ciletuh. From meticulously planning their trips to perusing available attractions and curating experiences tailored to their individual preferences, visitors wield the power of digital platforms to embark on a journey of discovery like never before [21]. Moreover, the advent of digital technology has paved the way for direct engagement between destinations and visitors, transcending traditional barriers and fostering real-time interactions through innovative features such as chatbots and live messaging services. These interactive functionalities not only streamline visitor inquiries but also offer personalized recommendations and assistance, thereby enriching the overall visitor experience during their sojourn at Geopark Ciletuh. By strategically integrating and effectively leveraging digital tools and platforms, Geopark Ciletuh stands poised to revolutionize visitor engagement, elevate levels of customer satisfaction, and craft indelible memories for tourists. This concerted effort towards digital transformation is poised to yield manifold dividends, not only in terms of augmenting customer value but also in fostering the cultivation of a positive destination image, thereby solidifying Geopark Ciletuh's standing as a preeminent tourist destination on both the national and international stage [22]. In essence, the relentless embrace of digitalization represents a transformative journey that holds the promise of unlocking Geopark Ciletuh's true potential as a beacon of tourism excellence in the modern era.

2.3 The Impact of Digitalization on Visitor Experience and Customer Value

The advent of digitalization has left an indelible mark on the visitor experience and customer value landscape at Geopark Ciletuh, ushering in a new era of immersive and enriched interactions for all who traverse its breathtaking terrain. Through the strategic implementation of digital technology, visitors are afforded a more interactive and comprehensive experience when venturing into the heart of the Geopark [23]. Cutting-edge features such as mobile applications, virtual guides, and online navigation systems serve as invaluable companions, empowering visitors to navigate the intricacies of the Geopark with ease and delight [24]. In real-time, visitors can access a wealth of information about attractions, hiking trails, and other activities, thereby deepening their understanding of the geological, biodiversity, and cultural treasures that abound within Geopark Ciletuh's embrace [25]. Moreover, the transformative power of digitalization extends beyond mere information dissemination, fostering a vibrant online community where visitors can forge meaningful connections and share their experiences. Through social media platforms, discussion forums, and online community groups, visitors can engage in lively discourse, exchange travel tips, and even collaborate on plans for exploration and adventure within Geopark Ciletuh's sprawling expanse [26]. This virtual camaraderie not only fosters stronger social bonds among visitors but also imbues the Geopark with a palpable sense of community and belonging. However, the impact of digitalization reverberates not only among visitors but also among destination managers and stakeholders alike. The advent of destination management systems, data analytics tools, and online reporting mechanisms equips Geopark managers with invaluable insights into visitor preferences, visitation trends, and the efficacy of marketing strategies [27]. Armed with this wealth of data-driven intelligence, destination managers can tailor their offerings and refine their operational strategies with precision, thereby enhancing visitor experiences and augmenting the added value delivered to customers [28]. In summation, the transformative influence of digitalization on the visitor experience and customer value paradigm at Geopark Ciletuh is overwhelmingly positive. By leveraging the power of digital technology, the Geopark not only enhances visitor accessibility and engagement but also fortifies its operational efficiency and responsiveness to visitor needs [16]. This concerted effort towards digital transformation holds the promise of elevating visitor satisfaction, fostering a more favorable impression of Geopark Ciletuh, and ultimately enhancing the overall customer value proposition.

2.4 Creation and Delivery of Tourism Value

As an industry centered on providing experiences, the tourism sector aims to generate experiential value for travelers to ensure their contentment [29]. Value creation is the result of utilizing and exchanging values, and the effectiveness of such service forms relies on customers perceiving the service benefits relative to their requirements [30]. The process of creating value and experiences holds significant importance in the realm of tourism. This value is directed not only towards individual tourists but also towards the environment and society at large, such as through the creation of employment opportunities in rural areas. Tourism entities strive to generate sustainable value, often aligning with the environmental and social sustainability principles within their surroundings [29]. Travel, tourism, and hospitality establishments endeavor to produce value in their offerings, whether through provided services or direct commodities such as food, emphasizing aspects like quality and innovation to meet the needs and desires of tourists. Customers are viewed as active contributors to value creation, aiding organizations in developing new services, while in tourism, the origin of value lies in the unique personal experiences of each tourist [31]. The value creation process involves the engagement of three key participants: managers, employees, and customers, who collaborate in various stages to collectively generate value [2]. Tourism enterprises may face challenges in managing the complexity of relationships between value propositions, value offerings, and perceived utility at the point of value exchange to satisfy the value needs of all involved parties. Various threats and challenges, such as recent pandemics impacting customer attitudes and engagement, as well as overall tourism company operations, can disrupt the value creation process [32]. Hence, addressing these challenges and ensuring the uninterrupted and positive progression of the value creation process is imperative.

3. Methodology

As previously mentioned, this study aims to investigate the influence of digitalization on customer value within the tourism sector [2]. We gathered qualitative data from individuals employed in tourism organizations situated at Geopark Ciletuh. Our research methodology adopts an abductive qualitative inquiry approach, which is well-suited for the exploratory nature of our investigation and facilitates the generation of novel concepts and theories [33]. We utilized a systematic synthesis process, commonly employed in abductive research, which entails ongoing alignment between existing theories, data collection, data analysis, and the development of evolving conceptual frameworks [33]. Guided by existing literature on digitalization and customer value, our study design allows for the incorporation of emergent insights.

3.1 Research Site and Its Context

This research delves into the various organizations operating within the vibrant tourism sector of Geopark Ciletuh, encompassing a diverse array of establishments such as hotels, villas, travel agencies, restaurants, tour guides, and tourism consulting firms. Geopark Ciletuh stands out as the quintessential research site due to its perennial allure, drawing in hordes of tourists annually, and its pivotal role in bolstering the local economy through the tourism sector. The tourism industry in Geopark Ciletuh has flourished over the years, boasting an extensive array of tourism services tailored to cater to diverse age groups and preferences of visitors. Specifically, Geopark Ciletuh prides itself on offering mature tourism products, including a burgeoning hospitality sector replete with an assortment of resorts, restaurants, and entertainment venues that cater to the discerning tastes of travelers [34]. These offerings are further complemented by a myriad of recreational activities, such as water sports, which add to the allure of the destination. Undoubtedly, the tourism sector serves as a hallmark of Sukabumi, with establishments like hotels, restaurants, and entertainment venues attracting tourists from both domestic and international locales. As such, Geopark Ciletuh boasts a rich tapestry of tourism offerings that cater to the diverse needs and preferences of visitors, underpinned by robust infrastructure and amenities. It is within this dynamic and multifaceted context that the utilization of digital technology in enhancing tourism experiences and operations can be thoroughly examined and analyzed, offering valuable insights into the evolving landscape of digital tourism in Geopark Ciletuh and beyond.

3.2 Selection and Gathering of Data

To identify the organizations and individuals participating in this study, we utilized a purposive sampling technique, which involves specific criteria for selecting samples [35]. Two primary criteria guided the selection of organizations. The first criterion was the direct relevance of the company to the tourism sector, adhering to the definition of tourism companies [2]. The second criterion focused on including diverse companies in terms of activities and size. A fundamental principle in qualitative research is that the sample should represent the diversity of the actual population to capture various perspectives and comprehensive insights into the phenomena being studied [36]. While the selected sample did not encompass the entire population, the tourism companies included in our sample represented a range of business fields, sizes, ages, and heterogeneity in the tourism services offered. Organizations meeting these criteria were identified through available directories, including the Geopark Ciletuh, hotels, villas, and tourism travel agencies. Qualified organizations were then contacted via official email to inquire about their willingness to participate in the study. Managers were prioritized as participants due to their comprehensive understanding of their organization's business models, operations, and processes of value creation and delivery. The data collection and analysis processes occurred simultaneously, with interviews conducted until thematic saturation was achieved after seven research participants from tourism organizations were interviewed [37]. Prior to finalizing the interview protocol, two pilot interviews were conducted with participants from tourism organizations not included in the final sample to ensure clarity and understanding of the interview questions. Before each interview session, participants were briefed on the research objectives and assured of the confidentiality of discussions and their anonymity [2]. Each interview lasted approximately 30 to 60 minutes and was recorded. Additionally, notes were taken before, during, and after the interview to capture verbal and non-verbal aspects of the interaction. Interviews followed a semi-structured format to allow flexibility for participants to express their thoughts, ideas, and opinions, and to facilitate comparison and reflection between interviews [38]. This approach enabled the use of pre-planned questions while also accommodating the addition of new questions to explore emerging insights during the analysis [39].

Table I: Interviewed Business Profile

No	Company Pseudonym	Type of Company	Employess	Year	Participant Pseudonym	Role of Participant
1	Sunset Hill	Hospitality Establishment	38	2023	Ray	Manager Operational
2	Ocean View	Theme Park	22	2000	Arya	General Manager
3	Rice Villa Ciletuh	Travel Agency	5	2022	Sam	Manager Marketing
4	Villa Red Ciletuh	Accommodation	3	2018	Winslow	General Manager
5	Durian Hill Sagara Agro tour	Theme Park	20	2022	Aeri	Director
6	La Plage	Theme Park	21	2021	Jasmin	Manager Marketing
7	SeaHorses	Hospitality Establishment	32	2018	Karol	Manager Operational
8	Sunset 77	Hospitality Establishment	11	2016	Paradise	Manager Marketing
9	Green Hotel	Hospitality Establishment	38	2017	Morgan	Manager Marketing

3.3 Data Analysis

Broadly, we utilized a coding procedure to discern patterns among the interviewed organizations, forming new conceptual categories and enhancing theoretical comprehension of the nexus between digitalization and customer value [40]. We employed Gioia's methodology, which comprises two fundamental stages, for data analysis [2]. Our analysis method, grounded in Gioia's methodology, involved iterative coding processes involving both data

and literature, aligning with the rationale of abductive research [2]. Initially, we conducted open coding processes to unveil fresh insights by addressing participant needs. We assigned codes to text segments (sentences, words, phrases, or paragraphs) while examining each transcript. Examples of primary concepts we uncovered included "utilizing digital technology for idea generation," "testing value propositions and delivery channels," and "leveraging existing customers to attract new ones." In the subsequent stage, we clustered primary concepts based on thematic similarity and significance to formulate secondary themes. For instance, primary concepts related to utilizing digital technology in customer interactions, such as soliciting ideas from customers, testing concepts with customers, and acquiring new customers, were amalgamated into the secondary theme "utilization of digital technology in customer interactions." Throughout the second stage, we employed a more comprehensive approach in data analysis. We undertook systematic merging processes to gain deeper insight into our findings vis-à-vis existing theory and literature. This systematic merging strategy enabled us to comprehend the interconnections among emerging themes and to consolidate secondary themes into fewer overarching dimensions during our final analysis phase.

4. Results

4.1 The Role of Digital Technology at Geopark Ciletuh: Utilization and Customer Value

Participants from diverse sectors within the tourism industry, encompassing travel agencies, tour operators, tourism consultants, and hotels, underscored the prevalent utilization of internet-based technologies in their day-to-day activities. These technologies include email, teleconferencing, social media, online booking platforms, and web resources. They emphasized the pivotal role of digital technology in customer outreach, service innovation, and value augmentation. The findings of this study shed light on the transformative impact of digital technology on the operational procedures and value proposition of tourism service providers. Table 2 presents a summary of the primary findings, delineating the customer value engendered through various digital technologies. For instance, Sam from Villa Padi Ciletuh highlighted the efficiency and convenience brought about by internet technologies such as online reservation facilities and booking platforms, expediting the hotel booking process for customers compared to previous methods.

Table II: The digital technology and customer value outcomes in tourism

Digital Technology	Utilization of Digital Technology	Customer Value Created Value Outcomes	Value Delivered
Social Media	Promotion/Interaction	Reservation via WhatsApp, phone, or in person	Communication and interaction with customers
WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, Tiktok	Customer, Tourism, Traveler		
Web Facilities & Resources	Promotion/ Information/ Sales	Comfortable Accommodation and Comprehensive Facilities	Known by Customer
Website, Internet			
Platform Booking Online	Accommodation & Tour Promotion	Best and Affordable Price	Available Promotions on Platforms Online
Traveloka, agoda, tiket.com, pegipegi, trivago	Hotel Reservations & Ticket Promotion		
Devices and Smart Application	Communication with Customer	Tour Packages	More Comprehensive and Faster Accommodations
Platform Online	Online Booking for Tour and Packages		

As an additional illustration, Rey from Bukit Sunset Geopark Ciletuh underscores the utility of WhatsApp in facilitating real-time and personalized communication with younger clientele, thereby enhancing the level of customization and responsiveness in customer service. Karol notes the integral role of WhatsApp in daily operations, particularly among local customers, especially the younger demographic, citing significant advantages in communication. Increased customer satisfaction and service efficiency have been observed through the use of WhatsApp as a communication channel, enabling a greater focus on individual customer needs (Rey, Operational Manager, Bukit Sunset Geopark Ciletuh). Further findings reveal the utilization of digital technologies such as email and teleconferencing to streamline communication and coordination among tourism stakeholders across the value chain, aiming for integrated and comprehensive service provision to customers. For example, Sam from

Villa Padi Ciletuh highlights the transformative impact of digital tools on their operations as a tour operator, facilitating interaction and collaboration with partners such as hotels and local transportation providers to curate integrated packages for customers at reduced costs. The advent of the Internet has substantially altered communication methods with business partners, replacing traditional approaches like faxes, phone calls, and face-to-face meetings. Through leveraging email and online meeting platforms, partners can be efficiently convened to negotiate and design appealing packages at more competitive rates (Sam, Marketing, Villa Padi Ciletuh).

Our study offers novel perspectives on how strategic adaptability facilitates the integration of digital technology and outcomes related to customer value within the tourism sector. We define strategic adaptability as the capacity to coordinate the interplay between digitalization and the generation and provision of value to customers. Empirically, our research establishes connections among the concepts of digitalization, strategic adaptability, and the impact on customer value. The primary component of Geopark Ciletuh has effectively incorporated digital services, streamlining information access and online reservation processes for tourists. However, despite the well-executed digitalization efforts, there are still some challenges, especially in the direct service provided by hotel staff. Some tourists may feel uncomfortable due to imperfections in the service, such as delayed responses or lack of readiness in handling requests. Nonetheless, with an awareness of the importance of quality service, it is hoped that the stakeholders will continue to improve service standards to enhance the overall tourist experience at Geopark Ciletuh. Geopark Ciletuh-Palabuhanratu has adopted various international standards in efforts to enhance the management, preservation, and development of its tourist destination. As a member of the UNESCO Global Geoparks Network (GGN), this Geopark has been internationally recognized for its unique geological, ecological, and cultural richness, as well as its commitment to nature conservation and environmental education. By receiving the "Global Geopark Label" from UNESCO, Geopark Ciletuh-Palabuhanratu affirms its status as an internationally standardized tourist destination offering quality and sustainable tourism experiences. Furthermore, Geopark has also embraced the principles of sustainable development, implemented environmental education programs, and engaged in international partnerships to support sustainable Geopark development. Thus, Geopark Ciletuh-Palabuhanratu reaffirms its commitment to becoming a tourist destination that is not only naturally captivating but also socially and environmentally responsible.

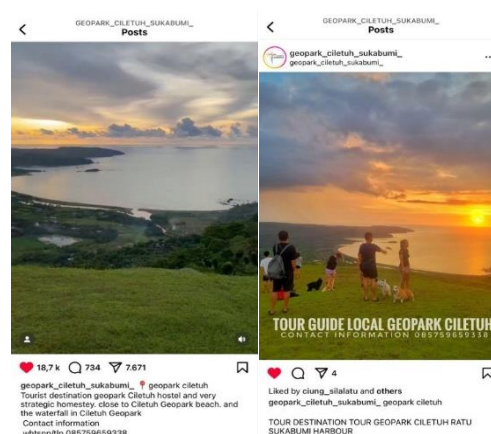


Figure 1. Digitalization and Customer Value

The ease of access to online booking and accommodation reservations has become a cornerstone in strengthening the concept of modern hospitality in Geopark Ciletuh's hotel industry. With this technology integration, customers can easily search, compare, and book accommodations according to their needs quickly and efficiently. In an atmosphere supported by an intuitive online booking system, customers experience convenience and comfort in planning their trips. They have instant access to information about room availability, prices, facilities, and customer reviews, enabling them to make informed decisions. Moreover, the smooth and efficient booking process also enhances customer trust in the brand and builds stronger relationships between hotels and guests. Thus, the ease of access to online booking and accommodation reservations not only facilitates business transactions but also shapes a positive and satisfying hospitality experience for customers.

In the hotel industry, the difference in preferences between upper-middle-class and lower-middle-class consumers is an important factor in marketing strategies. Upper-middle-class consumers tend to carefully choose accommodations, comparing various options and considering service quality, location, and facilities. On the other hand, lower-middle-class consumers are more likely to choose cheaper accommodations without closely considering quality and facilities. In the second pillar, which is the aspect of customer value, Digitalization in Geopark Ciletuh provides significant added value to the tourists' experiences. With easy access to information through websites, mobile applications, and social media, visitors can plan their trips more efficiently. The smoother interaction between Geopark and visitors through digital channels also enhances overall visitor satisfaction. Furthermore, digital marketing campaigns have expanded the reach of Geopark, attracting more tourists from around the world. Therefore, digitalization has made a positive contribution to enhancing tourist experiences, visitor interactions, and the global promotion of Geopark Ciletuh.



Figure 2. Accommodation

From the findings of this study, we can conclude that hospitality and the convenience of online accommodation booking have created a new paradigm in the hospitality industry, where technology plays a crucial role. By utilizing digital solutions such as social media, websites, online booking platforms, and mobile applications, Geopark Ciletuh has successfully improved visitor experiences and operational efficiency while maintaining the unique appeal of the tourist destination. However, the research findings also indicate that there are still challenges in improving overall service, especially when there is a sudden increase in visitor numbers. Challenges include limited check-out times due to accommodation facility constraints, which often cannot accommodate the increased number of visitors. Nevertheless, we recommend continuing to adopt and develop digital strategies in the context of accommodation booking to enhance the quality of hospitality services and improve visitor satisfaction in the future.

4.2 Theoretical and Practical Contributions

Our research is in line with the imperative to explore the role of digitization in contributing to the creation and/or delivery of customer value within organizations [24]. Addressing this imperative, our study theorizes the mechanisms through which customers, partnerships, and operations enable tourism organizations to harness digital technology for the creation and/or delivery of customer value. Our findings underscore the capabilities, digital tools, and customer value outcomes linked with the endeavours of tourism organizations to utilize digital technology for creating and/or delivering customer value [9]. Given the context of our tourism research, the resulting conceptual framework reflects the distinctiveness of this domain. Indeed, the tourism industry fosters unique approaches to creating and delivering value to customers, while also urging tourism organizations to embrace digital technology [17]. This study offers a context-specific insight into leveraging various digital technologies to create and/or deliver customer value in the tourism sector.

4.3 Managerial Applications

Our study holds several implications for the practices within the tourism sector. Firstly, our findings underscore the significance of agility for tourism organization managers in facilitating the creation and/or delivery of customer value through digitalization. Specifically, our research emphasizes the necessity for tourism organizations to cultivate and sustain pertinent customer, partnership, and operational capabilities to navigate the

digital revolution effectively, thereby maintaining close relationships with both existing and prospective customers. Consequently, to thrive in an era dominated by digitalization driving customer value, tourism managers must procure and organize the essential resources and capabilities requisite for fostering customer, partnership, and operational agility within their organizations. Secondly, our study indicates the imperative for tourism managers to adeptly recognize and respond to opportunities for leveraging digital technology in endeavors aimed at generating and/or delivering customer value. For instance, managers should be vigilant in identifying any organizational deficiencies concerning services, information, and technological infrastructure employed.

5. Conclusions

This research delves into the intricate dynamics of strategic adaptation amidst the ever-evolving landscape of digital technology within the tourism sector, with a specific lens on Geopark Ciletuh. The pervasive influence of digitalization has irrevocably transformed the tourism industry, offering an array of novel avenues to enhance customer experiences and optimize operational efficiency. However, these sweeping advancements also usher in a new set of challenges, particularly concerning data management and privacy safeguards. Geopark Ciletuh emerges as an exemplary model in effectively leveraging digital technology to enrich visitor experiences while preserving its inherent charm and uniqueness. Yet, it is crucial to recognize that the integration of digital technology necessitates a comprehensive overhaul of existing frameworks, particularly in terms of data governance and security protocols. In this context, strategic adaptation emerges as a linchpin in navigating the complexities of digitalization, bridging the gap between emerging technological trends and operational realities. Geopark Ciletuh's journey exemplifies the pivotal role of strategic adaptation in not only overcoming challenges but also capitalizing on the transformative potential of digital innovation. Moreover, the symbiotic relationship between digitalization and strategic adaptation extends beyond mere operational adjustments it embodies a paradigm shift in the way tourism destinations conceptualize and deliver value to customers. Geopark Ciletuh serves as a compelling case study, illustrating how strategic adaptation can drive tangible outcomes, including heightened service quality, expanded promotional outreach, and ultimately, enhanced customer satisfaction. From these insights, it becomes evident that strategic adaptation transcends mere reactive measures it embodies a proactive approach to staying ahead of the curve in an increasingly digitalized landscape. As such, cultivating a deep understanding of the intricate interplay between digitalization, strategic adaptation, and customer value is paramount for tourism destinations seeking to thrive in the digital era. By embracing strategic adaptation as a guiding principle, tourism stakeholders can navigate the complexities of digital transformation while delivering unparalleled experiences that resonate with modern travelers.

6. Acknowledgments

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the developers and researchers responsible for the advanced AI technologies that were essential in the completion of this paper. The AI tools used for paraphrasing and grammar checking have significantly improved the quality of the writing, ensuring that the content is both clear and precise. Moreover, I wish to recognize the support from the AI community, whose ongoing advancements and innovations in natural language processing have made these tools more accessible and effective. This paper demonstrates the remarkable potential of AI in academic writing and research. Additionally, I am thankful for the feedback and guidance from my peers and mentors, which have been crucial in refining the ideas and arguments presented in this paper. Their insights, coupled with the technical assistance from AI, have been invaluable in bringing this work to completion. Lastly, I would like to acknowledge that some of the material in this paper has been derived from AI-generated content.

References

- [1] J. Marzal, 19 June 2019. [Online]. Available: <https://www.unja.ac.id/revolusi-industri-4-0-bagaimanameresponnya/>.
- [2] E. Hadjielias, M. Christofi, P. Christou and M. H. Drotorova, "Digitalization, agility, and customer value in tourism," *Technological Forecasting & Social Change*, 2022.

-
- [3] W. Wider, Y. Gao, C. K. Chan, J. Lin, J. Li, J. C. M. Tanucan and M. A. Fauzi, "Unveiling trends in digital tourism research: A bibliometric analysis of co-citation and co-word analysis," *Environmental and Sustainability Indicators*, 2023.
- [4] H. Hoang and T. Le Tan, "Unveiling digital transformation: Investigating technology adoption in Vietnam's food delivery industry for enhanced customer experience," *Heliyon*, vol. 9, no. 9, 2023.
- [5] M. Ingrassia, C. Bellia, C. Giurdanella, P. Columba and S. Chironi, "Digital Influencers, Food and Tourism—A New Model of Open Innovation for Businesses in the Ho.Re.Ca. Sector," *Journal of Open Innovation: Technology, Market, and Complexity*, 2022.
- [6] A. P. Aristio, M. A. F. Iskandar, Mudjahidin, A. P. Ramadhansyah, S. Supardi, G. P. Utomo and A. N. Parahita, "The intention of using mobile ticketing in online travel agent," *Sixth Information Systems International Conference*, 2021.
- [7] M. A. A. Carmona, R. Aranda, A. Y. R. Gonzalez, D. F. Delgado, M. G. Sanchez, H. P. Espinosa, J. M. Miranda, R. G. Rodriguez, L. B. Martinez and A. D. Pacheco, "Natural language processing applied to tourism research: A systematic review and future research directions," *Journal of King Saud University - Computer and Information Sciences*, vol. 34, no. 10, 2022.
- [8] M. Gato, A. Diaz, L. Pereira, R. L. d. Costa and R. Goncalves, "Marketing Communication and Creative Tourism: An Analysis of the Local Destination Management Organization," *Journal of Open Innovation: Technology, Market & Complex*, 2022.
- [9] M. G. Confetto, F. Conte, M. Palazzo and A. Siano, "Digital destination branding: A framework to define and assess European DMOs practices," *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 2023.
- [10] Yogi, "Eksplorasi Keindahan dan Keanekaragaman Geopark Ciletuh," *Raja Wisata*, 05 02 2024. [Online]. Available: <https://raja-wisata.com/eksplorasi-keindahan-dan-keanekaragaman-geopark-ciletuh/> . [Accessed 13 02 2024].
- [11] Liputan6.com, "Tantangan Pertahankan Ciletuh-Pelabuhanratu sebagai Geopark Dunia," *Liputan6*, 05 06 2018. [Online]. Available: <https://www.liputan6.com/regional/read/3550022/tantangan-pertahankan-ciletuh-pelabuhanratu-sebagai-geopark-dunia> . [Accessed 13 02 2024].
- [12] Y. Lee and R. Jayakumar, "Economic impact of UNESCO Global Geoparks on local communities: Comparative analysis of three UNESCO Global Geoparks in Asia," *International Journal of Geoheritage and Parks*, 2021.
- [13] T. Hussain, D. Wang and B. Li, "Exploring the impact of social media on tourist behavior in rural mountain tourism during the COVID-19 pandemic: The role of perceived risk and community participation," *Acta Psychologica*, 2024.
- [14] H. S. Cahyadi and D. Newsome, "The post COVID-19 tourism dilemma for geoparks in Indonesia," *International Journal of Geoheritage and Parks*, vol. 9, no. 2, 2021.
- [15] L. V. Heuvel, M. Blicharska, S. Stensland and P. Ronnback, "Been there, done that? Effects of centrality-to-lifestyle and experience use history on angling tourists' loyalty to a Swedish salmon fishery," *Journal of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism*, 2022.
- [16] F. A. Sklenarz, A. Edeling, A. Himme and J. R. Wichmann, "Does Bigger Still Mean Better? How Digital Transformation Affects the Market Share-Profitability Relationship," *Journal Pre-proofs*, 2024.
- [17] A. A. Alharmoodi, M. Khan, C. Mertzanis, S. Gupta, P. Mikalef and V. Parida, "Co-creation and critical factors for the development of an efficient public e-tourism system," *Journal of Business Research*, vol. 174, 2024.
- [18] S. A. T. Wendita, "PENGEMBANGAN GEOWISATA DAN PERUBAHAN SOSIAL-BUDAYA MASYARAKAT DI AREA GEOPARK CILETUH-PALABUHANRATU," *Indonesian Journal of Anthropology*, 2019.
- [19] N. S. M. Shariffuddin, M. Azinuddin, N. E. Yahya and M. H. Hanafiah, "Navigating the tourism digital landscape: The interrelationship of online travel sites' affordances, technology readiness, online purchase intentions, trust, and E-loyalty," *Heliyon*, 2023.
- [20] S. Marx, S. Flynn and M. Kylanen, "Digital transformation in tourism: Modes for continuing professional development in a virtual community of practice," *Project Leadership and Society*, 2021.

-
- [21] B. Wisnuadhi, A. Maspupah, S. R. Wulan and M. R. Sholahuddin, "Studi Komparatif Fungsionalitas, Performance dan User experience pada Website Geopark," *Journal of Information System Research*, 2022.
- [22] H. Firdaus and D. Hidayatullah, "Pengembangan Sistem Informasi Pariwisata Geopark Ciletuh Menerapkan Metode User Centered Design," *Jurnal Media Informatika Budidarma*, 2022
- [23] Z. A. Tarabi, M. R. Rezvani, C. M. Hall and Z. Allam, "On the post-pandemic travel boom: How capacity building and smart tourism technologies in rural areas can help - evidence from Iran," *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 2023.
- [24] R. Munawar, "PENGELOLAAN GEOPARK UNTUK MEWUJUDKAN PARIWISATA BERKELANJUTAN (Studi Kasus di Geopark Ciletuh-Palabuhanratu)," *Jurnal Bisnis Manajemen dan Ekonomi*, 2023.
- [25] M. M. Ibrahim and A. Adiputra, "Analisis Geopark Ciletuh – Palabuhanratu sebagai Daya Tarik Wisata Berbasis Edukasi," *Satwika Kajian Ilmu Budaya dan Perubahan Sosial*, 2023.
- [26] F. Raseuki and W. Choiriyati, "AKTIFITAS BRANDING GEOPARK CILETUH OLEH DINAS PARIWISATA DAN KEBUDAYAAN DALAM PERSPEKTIF PENTA HELIX," *Mediakom: Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi*, 2019.
- [27] L. Zeng, R. Y. M. Li and H. Zeng, "Weibo users and Academia's foci on tourism safety: Implications from institutional differences and digital divide," *Heliyon*, 2022.
- [28] C. Poretti and C. Y. Heo, "COVID-19 and firm value drivers in the tourism industry," *Annals of Tourism Research*, 2022.
- [29] J. Barnes, P. Hansen, T. Kamin, U. Golob, S. Darby, N. M. V. d. Grijp and D. Petrovics, "Creating valuable outcomes: An exploration of value creation pathways in the business models of energy communities," *Energy Research & Social Science*, 2024.
- [30] M. Fellesson and N. Salomonson, "The expected retail customer: Value co-creator, co-producer or disturbance?," *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 2016.
- [31] D. Cloarec, M. A. Ribeiro and X. Font, "Determinants of readiness for strategic value co-creation in hospitality and tourism organisations," *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 2023.
- [32] M. Akbar and A. Djunaedi, "Kekhasan penerapan konsep smart city pada wilayah kabupaten," *Jurnal Pembangunan Wilayah dan Perencanaan Partisipatif*, 2024.
- [33] S. N. Aeni, "Ciletuh Geopark Attractions Perfect for Weekend Visits," *Katadata.co.id*, 28 January 2018. [Online]. Available: <https://katadata.co.id/berita/nasional/61f38021e4fa8/wisata-geopark-ciletuh-yang-cocok-untuk-dikunjungi-saat-akhir-pekan> .
- [34] I. H. Listyawati, "PENGARUH FASILITAS WISATA, CITRA DESTINASI, DAN KEPUASAN TERHADAP LOYALITAS WISATAWAN," *Jurnal Bisnis Manajemen dan Akuntansi*, 2019.
- [35] B. Uma, "Pengertian Metode Penelitian Kualitatif dan Karakteristiknya," *Biro Administrasi Mutu Akademik dan Informasi*, 13 09 2023. [Online]. Available: <https://bamai.uma.ac.id/2023/09/14/pengertian-metode-penelitian-kualitatif-dan-karakteristiknya/> . [Accessed 15 02 2024].
- [36] M. R. Fadli, "Understanding Qualitative Research Method Design," *Humanika*, 2021.
- [37] Y. Tarmizi, "Membuat Panduan Wawancara dalam Penelitian Kualitatif," 2023.
- [38] I. N. Rachmawati, "Pengumpulan Data Dalam Penelitian Kualitatif: Wawancara," *Lembar Metodologi*, 2007.
- [39] C. Reichsten and R. C. Harting, "Potentials of changing customer needs in a digital world – a conceptual model and recommendations for action in tourism," *International Conference on Knowledge-Based and Intelligent Information & Engineering Systems*, 2018.