

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IN TOURISM MARKETING GOVERNANCE: IMPLEMENTATION STUDY IN CIBIRU WETAN TOURISM VILLAGE

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Abstract

Digital transformation has become a key driver in promoting sustainable tourism development, particularly within village-based destinations that serve as local policy priorities. This study aims to analyze the implementation of digitalization in tourism marketing governance in Cibiru Wetan Tourism Village and its impact on local economic growth and community empowerment. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and document analysis. Data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive model. The findings reveal that the use of websites and social media platforms has increased tourist visits, strengthened local economic activities, and encouraged creative community participation. However, challenges remain, including limited digital literacy and institutional capacity. This study highlights the importance of community-based collaborative digital governance for ensuring sustainable tourism development.

Keywords: Tourism Digitalization, Digital Governance, Tourism Village

A. INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology has significantly transformed the tourism industry landscape worldwide. Digital transformation enables the integration of promotions, services, and more personalized tourism experiences through the use of data and online platforms (Buhalis & Amaranggana, 2022). In this context, digitalization is not only a marketing tool but also a new governance mechanism that demands cross-sector synergy (Gretzel et al., 2021). Developing countries like Indonesia are experiencing accelerated adoption of digital-based tourism technology, particularly following the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced the industry to adapt to new tourist behaviors (Wijaya & Haris, 2023). Thus, tourism digitalization is not simply a technological phenomenon, but a socio-economic transformation that is reshaping the relationship between the government, businesses, and the community.

In Indonesia, the development of tourist villages is a policy focus to encourage the creative economy and expand community participation in the tourism sector (Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, 2023). The use of social media, websites, and geographic information systems is a crucial strategy for increasing destination visibility and expanding market reach (Sari & Nugraha, 2022). However, challenges arise in digital literacy and limited technological infrastructure at the local level, which often hinder the effectiveness of digital promotion (Rahardjo & Fitriani, 2020). Several studies also indicate a gap between digital policy design and implementation capabilities on the ground, particularly in the context of tourism village governance (Pratama, 2023). This situation emphasizes that the

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success of digital transformation is largely determined by institutional capacity and collaboration between local actors.

In this context, the Cibiru Wetan Tourism Village in Bandung City serves as an interesting example, having implemented digitalization efforts to market its culturally and creatively based tourism potential. Although it utilizes social media and digital platforms for promotion, this strategy has not been fully integrated with a data-driven governance system and community participation. There is a gap between digital promotion initiatives and the informal coordination mechanisms between local actors. Furthermore, challenges arise regarding the sustainability of digital content management and the consistency of promotional narratives that represent local identity. This situation suggests that digital transformation at the village level requires a more adaptive, collaborative, and participatory governance approach to optimally support sustainable tourism development.

Several previous studies have shown that digitalization plays a significant role in strengthening the sustainability and competitiveness of tourist destinations. For example, Susanti and Hidayat (2022) found that the adoption of digital promotional technology in tourist villages in Yogyakarta increased community engagement and expanded the domestic tourist market. Meanwhile, Putra and Nugroho (2023) emphasized that the success of a digital marketing strategy is determined by the collaborative capacity of the government, communities, and local industry players. Rahmawati (2024) emphasized that the main challenges of digitalization in the tourism sector lie in the digital literacy gap and the lack of adaptive data-driven governance. These three studies generally emphasize the importance of digital innovation in tourism, but have not addressed the implementation of digital policies at the village level, the smallest government unit directly affected by community dynamics.

This study shares similarities with previous studies in highlighting the role of digitalization as a driving factor in community-based tourism development. However, the differences lie in the focus and analytical approach. While previous studies focused on evaluating the impact of digitalization on tourism promotion at a macro level, this study examines how digital governance is built through synergy between village governments, MSMEs, and creative communities within the context of policy implementation at the local level. Furthermore, this research approach views digitalization not only as a marketing tool but also as a participatory governance instrument that shapes patterns of communication, collaboration, and public decision-making.

This distinction engenders the originality of this research, proposing the concept of "digital governance in tourism marketing" at the micro-level (tourist villages), a concept that has not been widely discussed in Indonesian digital tourism literature. This approach integrates a public administration perspective with the dynamics of community digital innovation, thereby bridging the gap between policy practice and the socio-economic realities of the village. By using Cibiru Wetan as a case study, this research seeks to demonstrate how digitalization is not merely a promotional strategy but also a transformation of governance toward an adaptive, collaborative, and sustainable tourism model.

The urgency of this research lies in the need to understand the extent to which tourist villages are capable of digital transformation amidst limited resources and institutional capacity. The results are expected to provide an empirical contribution to the digital public administration literature and serve as a policy reference for local governments in designing community-based tourism digitalization strategies. Thus, this research not only has theoretical value in enriching the discourse on digital governance but also practical value in strengthening community empowerment models through information technology innovation.

Based on this background, the purpose of this study is to analyze the implementation of digital transformation in tourism marketing governance in Cibiru Wetan Tourism Village,

identify supporting and inhibiting factors, and formulate a collaborative model that can strengthen the effectiveness of digital promotion and community participation in sustainable tourism management.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

Diffusion of Innovation

The Diffusion of Innovation Theory, proposed by Everett Rogers (2003), explains how new ideas, practices, or technologies spread and are adopted by individuals or groups within a social system. According to this theory, the innovation adoption process is influenced by communication, information channels, time, and the social characteristics of users. Digital innovations in tourism often follow a gradual adoption pattern, from pioneers (innovators) to the majority group and the wider community. Rogers also emphasized the importance of perceptions of the innovation's benefits, ease of use, and compatibility with local social values. In the context of tourism villages, this theory helps understand how communities and tourism managers accept, adapt, and utilize digital technology in tourism promotion and governance. Indicators:

- Level of public acceptance of digital innovation.
- Perceived benefits and ease of use of technology.
- The influence of communication and social networks on the spread of innovation.
- Compatibility of innovation with local community values and norms.

Institutional Capacity

Institutional Capacity Theory highlights the extent to which public institutions are able to manage change and adapt to new challenges through their resources, structure, and organizational learning (Healey, 1998). Institutional capacity encompasses an organization's ability to build trust, form networks, and effectively manage resources within the context of public policy. In tourism digitalization, this theory is relevant because the success of digital transformation depends heavily on the capacity of village governments and local actors to manage technological infrastructure and human resources. This theory also emphasizes the importance of institutional learning as a foundation for developing adaptive and sustainable policies. Therefore, institutional capacity is a crucial factor in understanding how digital governance can operate effectively at the local level. Indicators:

- Availability of human resources and supporting technology.
- Institutional structure and coordination between management units.
- Village government commitment to digital innovation.
- Organizational ability to learn and adapt to change.

Community Empowerment

Community Empowerment Theory explains how individuals and groups gain skills, confidence, and control over decisions that affect their lives (Zimmerman, 2000). Empowerment in the tourism context means increasing the capacity of local communities to actively participate in the planning, promotion, and management of destinations. Through the empowerment process, communities can develop a critical awareness of local potential and utilize technology as a means of strengthening cultural identity and the creative economy. In tourism digitalization, community empowerment plays a role in ensuring that technology is not only used top-down but also encourages grassroots participation and innovation. Thus, this theory serves as an important framework for viewing digitalization as a social tool for increasing participation, not simply a promotional tool. Indicators:

- Active community participation in digital promotion and management activities.
- Community access to digital training and literacy.
- Community independence in producing tourism content.

- Strengthening local identity and potential through digital media.

C. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a mixed methods approach with a sequential explanatory design, where quantitative data was used to describe the level of digitalization adoption, and qualitative data to further explain its significance (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). This approach was chosen because digital tourism transformation involves two dimensions: measurable outcomes (the effectiveness of digital promotion) and social experiences (actor collaboration). Its relevance lies in its ability to present a comprehensive empirical picture, both in terms of statistical data and social interpretation. This approach also allows for strong triangulation between survey results, interviews, and observations, thereby enhancing the validity of the research findings.

Data collection techniques included a survey questionnaire, in-depth interviews, and analysis of digital documents (social media, activity reports, and tourism portals). Quantitative data were used to measure the effectiveness of digital promotion, while qualitative data explored the social and policy factors influencing it.

The quantitative sampling technique used proportionate stratified random sampling of tourism actors and digital users in Cibiru Wetan, while purposive sampling was used for qualitative data (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

Data analysis was conducted in two stages: (1) descriptive statistical analysis for quantitative data, and (2) interactive thematic analysis for qualitative data. The results of both analyses were then integrated to produce a holistic interpretation.

D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of Digitalization of Tourism Marketing and Promotion in Cibiru Wetan Village

The implementation of digitalization of tourism marketing and promotion in Cibiru Wetan Tourism Village demonstrates a fairly progressive technology adoption process, although it still faces a number of structural limitations. The village government and tourism community have utilized the official website and various social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube as primary promotional channels. This step demonstrates the initial stages of adoption and trial, as described in the Diffusion of Innovation theory (Rogers, 2003), where technological innovations begin to be accepted by key actors who function as change agents at the local level. The official Cibiru Wetan Village website serves as an integrated information center, featuring ticket booking features, tour package promotions, and activity documentation. Social media is used to reach a wider audience through engaging visual content. However, its effectiveness still depends on consistent content updates and the ability of local actors to utilize data analytics to understand user behavior more strategically.

Furthermore, the collaborative process between actors such as the village government, Pokdarwis (tourism group), MSMEs (micro, small, and medium enterprises), and creative communities demonstrates a form of coordination that is beginning to lead to integrated digital governance. This aligns with the implementation phase of Innovation Diffusion, where introduced innovations begin to be operationalized in real-world settings and adapted to existing social values. Promotional content management in Cibiru Wetan remains village-centered, while local community involvement is still limited, resulting in underdeveloped creative content production capacity. However, the participation of young creative communities and MSMEs in digital content creation demonstrates that this innovation is beginning to be socially and culturally accepted, forming a collaborative marketing ecosystem. This means that tourism digitalization in Cibiru Wetan is not simply a

matter of technology adoption but also a social learning process that drives institutional transformation toward more adaptive and participatory tourism governance.

These findings align with various previous studies that emphasize the importance of digitalization in strengthening the competitiveness and visibility of community-based tourism destinations. Research by Susanti and Hidayat (2022) shows that consistent use of social media can increase tourist interaction and expand the reach of the village tourism market in Yogyakarta. Similarly, Bilgin (2018) noted that digital marketing activities have a significant impact on brand awareness, brand image, and consumer loyalty. Meanwhile, a study by Putra and Nugroho (2023) found that the effectiveness of digital promotion in tourist villages is largely determined by the collaborative capacity of local governments, communities, and MSMEs. Thus, this research reinforces the view that the success of digitalization in the tourism sector is determined not only by the availability of technology but also by the ability of local actors to adapt and build collaborative networks for sustainable digital promotion governance.

The Impact of Digitalization on Economic Development, Tourist Visits, and Cultural Preservation

Table 1. Impact of Digitalization on Tourism Development in Cibiru Wetan Tourism Village

Impact Dimension	Key Indicators	Conditions Before Digitalization	Conditions After Digitalization	Data Source / Description
Tourist Visits	Number of visits/year	±6,000 tourists (2019)	15,996 tourists (2023)	Official Village Website
Local Economy	Number of MSMEs involved in digital promotions	10 MSMEs	37 MSMEs	Pokdarwis Interview
Community Empowerment	Community participation in digital promotions	Low, only village officials	High, involving creative communities	Field Observation
Cultural Preservation	Cultural content in digital media	Limited (1–2 entries/year)	Regular (every cultural event)	Instagram @desawisata_cibiruwetan
Reputation and Recognition	Awards & collaborative networks	Not yet available	“Digital Village” & AVN member (2023)	Official Village Documents

Source: Processed by Researchers, 2025

Table 1 shows that the implementation of digitalization in Cibiru Wetan Tourism Village has had a significant impact on various aspects of tourism development. Quantitatively, the number of tourist visits increased rapidly from around 6,000 in 2019 to 15,996 in 2023, demonstrating the effectiveness of digital promotion through websites and social media in attracting public attention. Economically, the involvement of MSMEs in digital promotional activities has nearly quadrupled, demonstrating that digitalization acts as a catalyst for local economic empowerment. Furthermore, community participation in the creation and dissemination of tourism content demonstrates a growing community empowerment process, where residents are not only beneficiaries but also key actors in the digital tourism ecosystem. From a socio-cultural perspective, digital content showcasing cultural activities and historical sites has successfully strengthened local identity while attracting tourists based on cultural interests. Achieving "Digital Village" status and membership in the ASEAN

Village Network (AVN) reinforces external recognition of the success of digital governance and demonstrates that digital transformation in Cibiru Wetan has moved beyond technological innovation to a strategic instrument for institutional strengthening and the sustainability of tourism destinations. While this study's findings demonstrate that digitalization has successfully increased tourist visits, strengthened the local economy, and expanded community participation in the Cibiru Wetan Tourism Village, these findings do not entirely align with several previous studies that have highlighted the limited effectiveness of tourism digitalization at the local level. Wicaksono (2021), for example, found that the use of digital media in tourism promotion often only creates superficial participation without being accompanied by increased awareness and substantive community involvement in destination management. Meanwhile, Rahardjo and Fitriani (2020) argue that low digital literacy in rural areas makes digital marketing strategies less sustainable and dependent on specific individuals with technological skills. This study's findings point in the opposite direction, where the Cibiru Wetan community is beginning to develop active and independent participation in digital promotion through collaboration with local creative communities and MSMEs. However, these results are not entirely contradictory, as they align with Pratama's (2023) findings, which state that the success of digital strategies is highly dependent on the relevance of the content and the participatory approach used. Thus, this study strengthens the view that tourism digitalization will be effective if accompanied by increased institutional capacity and community digital literacy, not just the application of technology as a promotional tool.

Constraints, Barriers, and Strategies for Strengthening Digital Tourism Governance

The implementation of tourism digitalization in Cibiru Wetan Tourism Village is inseparable from a number of structural and cultural barriers that test the village's institutional capacity to sustainably manage digital innovation. One major obstacle is low digital literacy among tourism operators and the local community, which results in social media and website management remaining dependent on a handful of individuals with limited technical skills. This situation is exacerbated by a lack of professional human resources in digital marketing, as well as limited funding for regular content updates and digital performance analysis. As a result, the effectiveness of digital campaigns has not reached its optimal potential, as promotional activities are more reactive than data-driven. This situation indicates that the village's institutional capacity is still at the emerging capacity stage, an early phase in which digital innovations have been adopted but not yet fully integrated into the institutional management system.

To strengthen digital governance, a strategy that prioritizes institutional capacity building is needed. The village government can adopt a capacity-building framework approach through regular training in creative content creation, the use of digital data analytics, and digital communication skills development for officials and MSMEs. Collaboration with academics, influencers, and regional networks such as the ASEAN Village Network (AVN) is also a crucial strategy for expanding exposure and strengthening the digital legitimacy of tourism villages internationally. Institutionally, Cibiru Wetan needs to develop a community-based collaborative digital governance model, where the community, business actors, and village officials play a collaborative role in the production and distribution of digital content. Thus, digitalization becomes not only a promotional tool but also a means of social learning that builds institutional resilience in the face of technological change and the dynamics of global tourism.

These findings are reinforced by several previous studies highlighting the importance of institutional capacity for successful digital governance in the tourism sector. Luna-Reyes and Gil-García (2014) emphasized that public institutions with adaptive capabilities and

cross-actor coordination structures are more likely to successfully implement digital innovation sustainably. These findings align with research by Mergel (2019), which explains that digitalization in the public sector requires not only technology but also human resource competency and collaboration-based governance. More specifically, Pratama (2023) found that collaboration between government agencies, creative communities, and the private sector is a key factor in strengthening the effectiveness of digital promotion in local tourism destinations. However, this study also confirms the findings of Rahardjo and Fitriani (2020), who showed that without increased digital literacy and adequate funding support, digital innovation at the village level tends to stagnate and is not integrated into development policies. Therefore, the results of the Cibiru Wetan study enrich the literature by demonstrating that institutional capacity building must go hand in hand with digital community empowerment so that tourism governance can transform in an inclusive, adaptive, and sustainable manner.

E. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the implementation of digital transformation in tourism marketing governance in Cibiru Wetan Tourism Village has been effective in increasing destination visibility, expanding community participation, and strengthening the local economy through the use of websites and social media platforms. The findings indicate that digitalization serves not only as a promotional tool but also as a means of community empowerment and strengthening the capacity of village institutions to manage innovation sustainably. The study's objective of analyzing the implementation process and impact of digitalization on tourism governance was achieved, with a key contribution confirming that the success of digital strategies at the village level is highly dependent on institutional readiness, community digital literacy, and multi-stakeholder collaboration.

This study provides a conceptual update by integrating the theories of Diffusion of Innovation, Institutional Capacity, and Community Empowerment into the context of community-based digital tourism. Based on these findings, it is recommended that the village government and stakeholders strengthen digital literacy training, develop a content analytics system, and expand collaborative networks with academics, the private sector, and the ASEAN Village Network to maintain the sustainability of digital promotion. Future research could use a mixed methods approach to measure the economic and social impacts of digitalization more quantitatively, given the limitations of this study, which is still qualitative and focused on a single study location. From a policy perspective, these results imply the need for consistent regulatory and financial support for tourism villages so that digital transformation is not just a temporary innovation, but an integral part of sustainable tourism development strategies at the local level.

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