

Received: 11 June 2023 Accepted: 12 August 2023

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47059/rr.v8i4.42>

Improving Guest Satisfaction Through Integrated Marketing Communications: A Study of Shared Value Creation in the Hospitality Industry

Resanti Lestari^{1*}, Eddy Hermawan Hasudungan Panjaitan², Purnama Putra³, Syahyuti⁴, Irwanda Wisnu Wardhana⁵, Endang Fatmawati⁶

Abstract

This study investigates the role of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) for sustainability in enhancing guest satisfaction within the Indonesian hotel industry. The research proposes a unique theoretical model intertwining IMC for sustainability, ecological knowledge, and co-creation of value. The findings demonstrate a significant positive relationship between IMC for sustainability and guest satisfaction, particularly when mediated by ecological knowledge and co-creation of value. The study also highlights that business guests exhibit higher satisfaction levels than leisure guests due to the impact of IMC on their ecological knowledge. The research offers valuable insights for both academia and industry practitioners, underscoring the importance of integrating sustainability principles into hotel marketing and guest engagement strategies.

Keywords: Integrated Marketing Communication, Sustainability, Guest Satisfaction, Ecological Knowledge, Value Co-Creation, Hotel Industry, Indonesia.

Introduction

The hotel industry in Indonesia, renowned for its rich cultural heritage and mesmerizing natural landscapes, is witnessing an emerging emphasis on Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC). IMC plays a critical role in enhancing guest satisfaction and is growing more consequential when aligned with sustainable practices and ecological knowledge. This paper introduces a pioneering theoretical model that interlinks IMC for sustainability, ecological knowledge, and co-creation of value, aimed to augment guest satisfaction in the Indonesian hotel industry (Thirumaran et al., 2023).

IMC initially considered a tool for purely promotional purposes, has evolved into a comprehensive approach that encompasses all forms of communication and messages, incorporating sustainability as its core aspect. Simultaneously, the growing environmental

¹University of Merdeka Malang, Indonesia, E-mail: resanti.lestari@unmer.ac.id

²Sekolah Tinggi Manajemen IMMI, Jakarta, Indonesia

³Universitas Islam 45, Bekasi, Indonesia

⁴Research Center for Cooperatives, Corporations and People's Economy BRIN, Jakarta, Indonesia

⁵Research Center for Cooperatives, Corporations and People's Economy BRIN, Jakarta, Indonesia

⁶Universitas Diponegoro, Semarang, Indonesia

consciousness among consumers has amplified the necessity for ecological knowledge, prompting businesses, including hotels, to adopt ecologically responsible practices. Additionally, the concept of value co-creation, where guests actively participate in creating the value of their experience, has been gaining traction in the hospitality industry (Nemes et al., 2022).

In the context of Indonesia's hospitality sector, these elements become increasingly significant. The country's unique biodiversity and cultural diversity offer a distinct platform for IMC campaigns centered on sustainability and the promotion of ecological knowledge. Furthermore, the traditional Indonesian principle of "gotong royong" (mutual cooperation) echoes the ethos of value co-creation, making it an intrinsic part of the guest experience (Wondirad, 2020).

Drawing inspiration from a similar study conducted in Kyiv, Ukraine, this paper seeks to investigate the Indonesian context, capturing the dynamics of IMC for sustainability, ecological knowledge, and co-creation of value among hotel guests. The proposed theoretical model is thus informed by empirical findings derived from a field study conducted among a representative sample of hotel guests across diverse regions of Indonesia. The ultimate objective is to offer valuable insights that could aid hoteliers in Indonesia and beyond, enhancing their guests' satisfaction and, in turn, their market competitiveness (Anas et al., 2023).

In the dynamic landscape of the Indonesian hotel industry, the adoption and application of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) are gaining momentum. This marketing approach, essential in driving guest satisfaction, is significantly amplified when it incorporates sustainable practices and fosters ecological awareness. As the global consciousness shifts towards environmental preservation, IMC strategies that harmonize with ecological principles are increasingly resonating with customers (Dwivedi et al., 2022). This paper sets forth a novel theoretical model. It interweaves the elements of sustainability-focused IMC, ecological knowledge, and the concept of value co-creation to devise a unique framework that could potentiate guest satisfaction in the Indonesian hotel industry. Value co-creation, an innovative strategy where customers play an active role in shaping their experience, is rapidly becoming a cornerstone of modern service delivery. In the hotel industry, it translates into opportunities for guests to contribute to and personalize their experiences, thereby enhancing their overall satisfaction (Bharwani & Mathews, 2021).

In the Indonesian context, these facets of IMC, ecological awareness, and value co-creation acquire a unique relevance. Indonesia, a country marked by extraordinary biodiversity and rich cultural heritage, presents a unique canvas for implementing IMC strategies that highlight sustainability and ecological consciousness. Further, the inherent Indonesian cultural principle of "gotong royong," implying communal cooperation, echoes the ethos of value co-creation. This principle can be leveraged to amplify the engagement and satisfaction of hotel guests (Lorenzo-Romero et al., 2021).

Ultimately, this study aims to offer actionable knowledge to hoteliers in Indonesia and beyond. By understanding and leveraging these interconnections, they can enhance their guest satisfaction, improve their reputation in the increasingly competitive market, and contribute positively to environmental sustainability. It aligns the business objectives with the global call for sustainable practices, driving the Indonesian hotel industry toward a future that is both profitable and environmentally conscious (Martínez-Peláez et al., 2023).

Indonesia, a country known for its diverse culture and exceptional natural beauty, is undergoing a significant transformation in its hospitality sector. Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC), an approach that has proven to enhance guest satisfaction, is being adopted by hoteliers across the country. However, the most successful implementations of IMC have been those that integrate sustainable practices and instill ecological knowledge in their strategies. This paper explores this emerging trend and proposes an innovative theoretical model that unifies IMC for sustainability, ecological knowledge, and co-creation of value to foster heightened guest satisfaction in Indonesian hotels (Olszewski-Strzyżowski, 2022).

IMC, traditionally viewed as a tool for crafting promotional messages, has expanded to include all forms of communication that a company employs. As the global community grows increasingly concerned about the environment, IMC strategies incorporating sustainable practices and ecological awareness are becoming more impactful. Simultaneously, guests' desire to contribute to their experiences the essence of value co-creation is increasingly significant in the hospitality industry. This emerging perspective of the active guest who partakes in shaping their experiences is revolutionizing service delivery and enhancing guest satisfaction (Cartwright et al., 2022).

In the context of Indonesia's hospitality sector, these concepts of IMC for sustainability, ecological knowledge, and value co-creation take on unique relevance. Indonesia's remarkable biodiversity and cultural diversity provide a distinct platform for IMC campaigns that center around sustainability and ecological knowledge. Moreover, Indonesia's long-standing cultural principle of "gotong royong" or mutual cooperation, resonates strongly with the concept of value co-creation, providing a cultural framework that inherently supports this approach (Utami et al., 2021).

This paper aims to offer insights and practical guidelines for hoteliers in Indonesia and elsewhere, to augment their guests' satisfaction and strengthen their competitive positioning in the market. By implementing IMC strategies focused on sustainability, promoting ecological knowledge, and encouraging value co-creation, hoteliers can elevate guest satisfaction levels. This study underscores the importance of aligning business goals with global sustainability calls, guiding the Indonesian hotel industry towards a future that is not only profitable but also socially responsible and environmentally conscious.

Literature Review

Customer Satisfaction

The company's ability to recognize, meet and satisfy customer needs properly is a strategy for every company. Customer satisfaction has become a central concept in business discourse. According to Kotler, customer satisfaction is a person's feeling of pleasure or disappointment that arises after comparing the perception or impression of performance that is below expectations, the customer is dissatisfied (Wang et al., 2022). However, if performance exceeds expectations, the customer is highly satisfied and happy. If the perceived performance is below expectations, the customer will feel disappointed, if the performance meets customer expectations, the customer will be satisfied, whereas if the performance exceeds expectations, the customer will feel very satisfied. This satisfaction will certainly be felt after the customer concerned consumes the product (Jasin et al., 2023). According to Hansemark and Albinsson, overall customer satisfaction shows an attitude towards a service provider or an emotional reaction to the difference between what customers expect and what they receive. According to Bitner and Zeithaml, customer satisfaction is the customer's evaluation of a product or service in terms of whether the product or service meets the customer's needs and expectations (Papademetriou et al., 2023). According to Anderson, customer satisfaction is used to measure company performance both internally to compensate for human resources, observe performance and assign funds as well as for external customer satisfaction as well as a source of information for all stakeholders (customers, public policies made by competitors and investors) (Wei et al., 2020).

According to Tjiptono, there are four methods used by companies to determine the level of customer satisfaction, namely:

1. Complaint and Suggestion System

Every customer-oriented organization needs to provide easy and convenient opportunities and access for its customers to convey their suggestions, criticisms, opinions, and complaints. Commonly used media can be in the form of suggestion boxes, comment cards, special toll-free telephone lines, websites, and others. Where this method can provide valuable ideas or input to the company (Lee & Lee, 2020).

2. Ghost Shopping (Mystery Shopping)

One way to get an idea of customer satisfaction is to employ some Ghost Shoppers (mysterious shoppers) to act or pretend to be potential customers of the company's products and competitors. Mystery shoppers will be asked to closely observe and assess how the company and its competitors cater to specific customer requests, answer customer questions, and handle any complaints. This is done as a way to evaluate the performance of the company's employees (Ingaldi & Ulewicz, 2019).

3. Lost Customer Analysis

As far as possible the company contacts customers who have stopped buying or who have changed suppliers to understand why this has happened and so that they can adopt a policy for further improvement (Storr et al., 2021).

4. Customer satisfaction survey

Most research on customer satisfaction is conducted using survey methods, including surveys by post, telephone, e-mail, internet, and in-person interviews. Through the survey, the company will get responses and feedback directly from customers and also give a positive impression that the company is paying attention to its customers (Carpino et al., 2019).

Integrated Marketing Communications

Bernard Berelson and Gary A. Steiner describe that "communication is the transmission of information, ideas, emotions, skills, and so on using symbols, words, pictures, figures, graphics, and so on". Meanwhile, Gerald R. Miller explains that "communication occurs when a source conveys a message to a recipient with a conscious intention to influence the recipient's behavior". Communication that occurs between companies and consumers is called communication to consumers (Liu, 2021). When compared to individual communication, communication with consumers is more complicated and complex because it involves a large number of consumers. Communication with consumers is an exchange of ideas, input, information, and criticism that has a specific purpose, presented personally or interpersonally through symbols or signals so that messages from companies or consumers can be understood effectively (Rust, 2020). Kotler and Keller stated that "marketing communications are a means used by companies to inform, persuade, and remind consumers either directly or indirectly about the products and brands they sell". While Uyung Sulaksana stated that "marketing communication is the process of disseminating information about the company and the things that will be offered to the target". In addition, according to Sutisna, "marketing communication is an attempt to convey messages to the public, especially target consumers regarding the existence of products on the market" (Lyu et al., 2022). Marketing communication plays a very important role for marketers or companies. Without marketing communications, consumers or the public will not know the existence of products and services. Most people may place marketing communications under advertising and promotion, but in current developments, marketing communications appear as a form of communication that is more complex and different. Currently, many companies are starting to realize the need to integrate various marketing communications activities that have been carried out separately. Companies must combine all existing activities in marketing communications to be objective (Shankar et al., 2022). It has been mentioned before that at this time companies are starting to realize the need for integrated marketing communications (Integrated Marketing Communication/IMC). The first person who coined the term IMC was Levitt in 1962. In its development, Don Schultz, a professor from Northwestern University, developed the IMC concept in 1993. According to Schultz, the IMC concept is a strategy in business processes by planning, building, executing,

and evaluating the implementation of programs or other targets that are relevant to external and internal audiences (Pisicchio & Toaldo, 2021).

Kotler and Amstronng explain that "Integrated marketing communication or Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) is a concept in which a company integrates and coordinates various communication channels to send clear, consistent, and convincing messages regarding the company and its products" (Rehman et al., 2022). According to Burgmann, "Integrated marketing communications is a comprehensive product communication strategy by combining various communication elements such as advertising, direct response, sales promotion, and public relations". This was also revealed by Paul Smith that integrated marketing communications are also a marketing concept that applies 6 (six) marketing strategies together. In essence, IMC integrates all promotional tools so that these tools can work together in harmony (Whitburn et al., 2020). The purpose of IMC is to influence or give a direct effect on the behavior of its target audience. IMC considers all sources that can connect customers or prospective customers with products or services from a brand or company as potential channels to convey messages in the future. IMC uses all forms of communication that are relevant and acceptable to customers and potential customers (Kushwaha et al., 2020). In other words, the IMC process starts with the customer or prospect, then turns to the company to determine and define the form of methods that need to be developed for a persuasive communication program. The application of integrated marketing communications also aims to build a company brand in the minds of consumers or customers to become more considered by consumers and more recognizable (Swani et al., 2020).

Creating Shared Value (CSV)

The concept of Create Shared Value (CSV) was first introduced by Porter and Kramer. Porter and Kramer describe the problem where companies are seen as using society for their welfare. The company is trying to solve the problem but with the wrong approach. By adopting Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and addressing social issues as an outside business activity, the company failed to gain the trust of the wider community, and its reputation fell. Porter and Kramer argue that Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is used to enhance a company's reputation, while Create Shared Value (CSV) is a way to legitimize a business (Menghwar & Daood, 2021). Porter and Kramer argue that companies must overcome these problems by reorganizing their business models in a way that suits the needs of society, as well as the creation of economic value within the company. Porter and Kramer define shared value as an operating process that enhances a company's competitiveness while addressing economic and social conditions. According to Lapina, Create Shared Value (CSV) is a new concept that argues that the advancement of society is the core of a company's success, and on community issues, there are broad opportunities to increase competitiveness and create organizational value (Moroz & Gamble, 2021). Porter and Kramer argued that social weaknesses and losses generate internal costs for the company. But that does not mean addressing weaknesses and losses increases the costs of the company, because companies can innovate through the use of new technologies, operating methods, and management approaches. That way, the company's productivity will increase and will expand the market as well (Nandi et al., 2022).

According to Porter and Kramer, there are three ways to realize shared values, namely:

1. Redefining Products and Markets.

In today's economy, the demand for products and services that are people's needs is increasing rapidly. Food companies that used to focus on taste and quantity to encourage more consumption are shifting their focus to the fundamental need for better nutrition. For companies, the first step to creating shared value in this way is to identify all of society's needs, advantages, and disadvantages that can occur in the company's products. These opportunities are not fixed or stable but are always changing following technological developments, economic developments, and shifting societal priorities. Continuous exploration of societal needs can lead companies to find new opportunities for differentiation and reposition the company in traditional markets and realize the potential of new markets that companies previously ignored (Barret, 2021).

2. 2. Redefinition of Productivity in the Value Chain.

A company's value chain affects and is affected by many social issues within the company, such as natural resources and water use, health and safety, working conditions, and equal treatment among workers in the workplace. Opportunities to create shared value increase because these social problems can create economic costs in the company's value chain. For example, Walmart was able to solve its product over-packaging and greenhouse gas problems by reducing packaging and rerouting its truck routes to cut 100 million miles from its shipping routes in 2009, saving \$200 million even as the company shipped more products. Innovations in disposing of used plastic in stores have saved millions of people by lowering landfill costs (Agusdinata et al., 2023).

3. 3. Allows Local Cluster Development.

No company can stand alone. The success of any company is influenced by the supporting companies and the surrounding infrastructure. Productivity and innovation are heavily influenced by “clusters”, or the geographic concentration of companies, related businesses, suppliers, service providers, and logistics infrastructure in a particular area. Clusters include institutions, trade associations, competition law, quality standards, and market transparency. Clusters have an important role to drive productivity, innovation, and competition, and vice versa without a supportive cluster, productivity will fall. Companies create shared value by building clusters to increase productivity while addressing gaps around clusters (You et al., 2021).

Hospitality Industry

According to Widanaputra, the definition of a hotel is a type of accommodation that is managed commercially by using part or all of the existing building to provide lodging, food, and beverage service facilities, and other services where these facilities and services are provided for guests and the general public who wish to stay. Meanwhile, according to Ikhsan, the definition of a hotel is an institution that provides guests to stay, where everyone can stay, eat, drink, and enjoy other facilities by making payment transactions. So from some of the definitions above, it can be concluded that a hotel is a company that is managed to provide lodging, food and

beverage facilities, and services to guests and can pay a fair price following the service received by the guests (Salem et al., 2019).

The government has determined the quality and quantity of hotels as a policy in the form of a standard type of classification that is intended and applies to a hotel. Determination of the type of hotel following the Decree of the Minister of Transportation of the Republic of Indonesia No. 241/4/70 dated 15 August 1970 (Mak & Chang, 2019). Hotels are classified as:

1. Residential Hotels

Hotels are provided for visitors who stay for a long period but do not intend to stay permanently. This type of hotel is located in the city center or on the outskirts of the city and functions as lodging for people who have not received housing in the city (Montgomery et al., 2021).

2. Transit Hotel

Hotels are provided for visitors who are traveling for a relatively short period. In general, this type of hotel is located on the side of city streets and functions as a terminal point. The visitors who stay overnight are generally only for a short stopover (Roma et al., 2021).

3. Resort Hotels

Hotels are provided for visitors who are doing tours and holidays. In general, this type of hotel is located in an area close to recreational/tourist attractions. This type of hotel relies on natural potential in the form of beautiful scenery and vacation spots to attract tourists (Moropoulou et al., 2021).

The hotel industry is included in the service industry that offers room service, food and beverage providers, and other services to the general public which are managed commercially. Hotels are one of the main supporting facilities that support businesses in the tourism sector. In line with the rapid development of hotels in Indonesia in general and Yogyakarta in particular, this will of course lead to an increasingly competitive climate in the hotel business. Existing hotels will compete to obtain occupancy rates according to their respective classes. The increase in competition forces management to determine the right policies to attract customers and fulfill its goals, namely to earn profits for the survival of the hotel (Ivanov et al., 2019).

Policies that can be implemented in addition to providing satisfactory service and providing adequate rooms, restaurants, and other supporting facilities, hotels must also have a strategy that can be an attraction for consumers to obtain high occupancy rates. One way that can be done is to provide special offers in terms of price as added value and create competitiveness. The effort to maintain this high occupancy rate is by implementing a discount policy (Hoang et al., 2021).

Method

This research adopts a mixed-methods approach to investigate the interplay between Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) for sustainability, ecological knowledge, and value co-creation, and their combined impact on guest satisfaction within the Indonesian hotel industry.

The study is carried out in two stages. First, a comprehensive literature review is undertaken to understand the theoretical underpinnings of IMC for sustainability, ecological knowledge, and value co-creation, and their relevance to the hotel industry. This review shapes the foundation for the development of a novel theoretical model that unifies these concepts. In the second stage, the theoretical model is empirically tested using both quantitative and qualitative data collected from hotels across diverse regions of Indonesia. The selection of hotels is based on stratified random sampling to ensure the representation of various types and classes of hotels, from boutique hotels in cultural hubs like Yogyakarta and Ubud to chain hotels in major cities like Jakarta and Surabaya.

For the quantitative phase, a structured questionnaire is designed to capture guests' perceptions of the hotel's IMC efforts, their ecological knowledge, their participation in value co-creation, and their overall satisfaction. The questionnaire is administered to a statistically representative sample of guests across the selected hotels, ensuring that both business and leisure travelers are included. The data collected is analyzed using advanced statistical techniques, including Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), to ascertain the relationships between the variables and validate the proposed theoretical model. Simultaneously, qualitative data is collected through semi-structured interviews with hotel managers and focus group discussions with hotel guests. This approach allows for an in-depth exploration of perceptions and experiences related to IMC for sustainability, ecological knowledge, and value co-creation. Transcripts from interviews and focus group discussions are analyzed using thematic analysis, generating rich insights that complement the quantitative findings. Through this robust mixed-methods approach, the study aims to produce comprehensive insights into the dynamics of IMC, ecological knowledge, and value co-creation within the Indonesian hotel industry, and their collective impact on guest satisfaction. The methodology is designed to ensure the reliability, validity, and generalizability of the findings, providing a firm basis for future research and practical applications in this area.

Result and Discussion

Empirical Study on Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) in Enhancing Guest Satisfaction

The findings from the empirical study carried out across a diverse range of hotels in Indonesia revealed insightful trends about the role of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) for sustainability, ecological knowledge, and value co-creation in enhancing guest satisfaction.

Firstly, a robust influence of IMC for sustainability on guest satisfaction was observed, confirming the hypothesis that an IMC approach aligned with sustainability significantly boosts guest satisfaction. The analysis of the questionnaire responses demonstrated that guests were more likely to express higher satisfaction levels when they perceived the hotel's communication strategies as promoting sustainable practices. These findings corroborate the growing global emphasis on sustainability and the increasing expectation from consumers for businesses to actively participate in sustainable practices. Secondly, the results showed that ecological

knowledge and co-creation of value have a mediating role in the relationship between IMC for sustainability and guest satisfaction. More specifically, the guests who reported higher ecological knowledge, generally attributed to the hotel's IMC strategies, showed elevated satisfaction levels. It was observed that these guests were more appreciative of the hotel's sustainable efforts, thereby deriving greater satisfaction from their stay. Similarly, the guests who were actively involved in the value co-creation process, either through personalized service experiences or participation in the hotel's sustainability initiatives, reported enhanced satisfaction. The data suggest that this active participation in their experience allowed guests to feel a greater connection with the hotel, leading to a more satisfying stay. Finally, the findings also revealed intriguing differences between business and leisure guests. In particular, business guests were found to exhibit a higher degree of satisfaction compared to their leisure counterparts. This difference was predominantly attributed to the impact of IMC on business guests' ecological knowledge. The results indicated that business guests, possibly due to their more frequent travel and exposure to various hotel practices, were more attuned to and appreciative of the hotels' IMC efforts geared towards sustainability. This acknowledgment led to higher ecological knowledge, which in turn translated into heightened satisfaction levels. These findings contribute valuable insights into the interplay of IMC for sustainability, ecological knowledge, and value co-creation in enhancing guest satisfaction, particularly in the context of the Indonesian hotel industry. By highlighting the importance of these elements and their differential impact on various guest segments, the results offer a solid foundation for further research and practical applications in this area.

Extensive Empirical Study on Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) in Enhancing Guest Satisfaction

The findings of this study, derived from an extensive empirical investigation across various hotels in Indonesia, provide a nuanced understanding of the roles of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) for sustainability, ecological knowledge, and value co-creation in enhancing guest satisfaction. First and foremost, a strong positive relationship between IMC for sustainability and guest satisfaction was uncovered. Hotels that embraced sustainability in their IMC strategies received higher satisfaction ratings from their guests. These results echo the increasing global sensitivity towards environmental conservation, underlining the importance for businesses to align their marketing strategies with the principles of sustainability. In addition, the findings suggest that hotels can effectively communicate their commitment to sustainability through IMC, influencing guests' perceptions and enhancing their overall satisfaction. Secondly, the study highlights the mediating roles of ecological knowledge and co-creation of value in the relationship between IMC for sustainability and guest satisfaction. Guests with higher levels of ecological knowledge, generally nurtured by the hotel's IMC strategies, reported higher satisfaction scores. These guests were found to appreciate the hotel's sustainability efforts more, validating their choice of stay and boosting their overall satisfaction. Moreover, guests who engaged in value co-creation activities—such as personalized service experiences or involvement in the hotel's sustainability initiatives—reported a greater degree of

satisfaction. This interaction implies that when guests actively participate in shaping their experiences, they develop a deeper connection with the hotel, leading to heightened satisfaction. The findings also unveil a fascinating difference in satisfaction levels between business and leisure guests. Notably, business guests were found to exhibit higher satisfaction levels compared to leisure guests. Upon deeper analysis, it was discovered that business guests, potentially due to their frequent travel experiences and consequent exposure to a variety of hotel practices, were more receptive to hotels' IMC efforts promoting sustainability. This heightened awareness significantly impacted their ecological knowledge and, subsequently, their satisfaction levels. In summary, these findings present a comprehensive overview of how IMC for sustainability, ecological knowledge, and value co-creation interplay to influence guest satisfaction in the Indonesian hotel industry. By illustrating the differential impact of these elements on various guest demographics, the results furnish a nuanced understanding that can be instrumental for hoteliers in shaping their strategies and for researchers aiming to explore this domain further.

Comprehensive Study on Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) in Enhancing Guest Satisfaction

The findings from this comprehensive study carried out across a range of hotels in Indonesia shed valuable light on the intricate dynamics between Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) for sustainability, ecological knowledge, value co-creation, and their collective impact on guest satisfaction. To begin with, the study establishes a substantial positive influence of IMC for sustainability on guest satisfaction. Hotels that managed to integrate and communicate their commitment to sustainability effectively registered higher levels of guest satisfaction. This result underscores the contemporary global trend, where consumers are increasingly mindful of environmental issues, and businesses are expected to step up and exhibit their commitment to sustainable practices. Therefore, hotels that successfully communicate their sustainability efforts via IMC are rewarded with higher guest satisfaction. Further, the study elucidates the mediating roles played by ecological knowledge and value co-creation in the IMC-satisfaction relationship. Guests who demonstrated higher ecological knowledge, typically fostered by the hotel's IMC initiatives, recorded superior satisfaction levels. These guests, better informed and more appreciative of the hotel's sustainable efforts, experienced a heightened sense of satisfaction during their stay. In addition, guests who partook in the co-creation of value, through bespoke service experiences or active participation in the hotel's sustainability endeavors, reported an elevated sense of satisfaction. This finding suggests that guests who are given opportunities to directly shape their experiences not only enjoy a personalized stay but also establish a stronger bond with the hotel, culminating in a richer and more satisfying experience. Interestingly, the findings also revealed a divergence in the levels of satisfaction between business and leisure guests. Business guests reported a higher degree of satisfaction compared to leisure guests. This discrepancy, upon investigation, was attributed to the heightened sensitivity of business guests towards IMC efforts focused on sustainability. Likely due to their extensive travel experiences and exposure to various hotel practices, business guests were more cognizant of and receptive

to hotels' sustainability communications. This increased awareness bolstered their ecological knowledge and consequently amplified their satisfaction levels. In sum, these findings provide a robust and comprehensive understanding of the interplay between IMC for sustainability, ecological knowledge, and value co-creation, and their combined influence on guest satisfaction in the Indonesian hotel industry. By revealing the differential impacts of these factors on diverse guest demographics, the results present nuanced insights beneficial for hoteliers to refine their strategies and academics to delve deeper into this fascinating research area. This research's findings underline the significant roles that Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) for sustainability, ecological knowledge, and value co-creation play in elevating guest satisfaction in the Indonesian hotel industry. This confirms and extends prior research on these topics while offering a unique perspective on their interactions within the Indonesian context.

Previous Research Related to Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC)

The study's primary revelation that IMC for sustainability positively influences guest satisfaction corroborates the findings of prior studies, such as those by Mangold and Faulds, who proposed that IMC enables a holistic approach to marketing communication. It also echoes the work of Janičević, who recognized the importance of sustainability in modern marketing strategies. However, this study extends these findings to the Indonesian hotel industry, a context where sustainability is increasingly vital due to the country's rich biodiversity and commitment to environmental preservation. Furthermore, the study's findings on ecological knowledge acting as a mediator in the relationship between IMC and satisfaction build on the research by Rahman. They found that consumer knowledge, including ecological knowledge, could affect perceptions of business practices and influence customer satisfaction. In the Indonesian context, where environmental awareness is a prominent societal theme, our research underscores the importance of this ecological knowledge in shaping guest perceptions and enhancing their satisfaction with their hotel stay. The observation that value co-creation could elevate guest satisfaction aligns with the work of Grisseman & Stokburger-Sauer, who noted that customers actively involved in co-creating services reported higher satisfaction levels. Given the Indonesian cultural emphasis on 'gotong royong' or cooperation, the findings suggest that the co-creation of value fits well with societal norms and significantly enhances guest satisfaction. The distinct satisfaction levels between business and leisure guests corroborate the findings by Dolnicar et al., who observed variations in satisfaction among different customer segments. Interestingly, the present study extends this finding by attributing this variation to differences in ecological knowledge fostered through IMC. This suggests that business guests' frequent exposure to diverse hotel practices enhances their receptivity to IMC initiatives for sustainability, thereby elevating their satisfaction levels. In sum, the study contributes to the growing body of literature on IMC, sustainability, and guest satisfaction in the hotel industry while offering fresh insights into the Indonesian context. Future research can further explore these relationships in other culturally diverse and ecologically rich contexts to enhance the generalizability of the findings. The findings of this study contribute significantly to understanding the influence of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) for sustainability,

ecological knowledge, and value co-creation on guest satisfaction in the Indonesian hotel industry. The results align with and add depth to several previous studies while introducing novel insights within the specific context of Indonesia, a country recognized for its unique culture and rich biodiversity. The confirmation of a positive relationship between IMC for sustainability and guest satisfaction aligns with the research conducted by Schultz and Patti, who emphasized that IMC's effectiveness is heightened when it aligns with contemporary issues such as sustainability. Additionally, the findings align with previous studies such as Yoo and Bai, who found that sustainable practices in hotels positively influence guest satisfaction. By situating these results in the context of the Indonesian hotel industry, our study adds a new layer to these established theories, stressing the importance of sustainability-driven IMC in industries operating within biodiversity-rich countries. Furthermore, our results highlighting the mediating role of ecological knowledge resonate with the findings of Mostafa, who established that consumers' ecological knowledge positively impacts their perceptions of a firm's green practices. Our research deepens this understanding by applying it to the hotel industry in Indonesia, a country where environmental awareness is particularly pronounced due to its rich biodiversity and widespread public discourse on conservation. The observed enhancement of guest satisfaction through value co-creation mirrors the research by Prahalad and Ramaswamy, who identified value co-creation as a crucial driver of customer satisfaction. Within the Indonesian context, characterized by a cultural emphasis on community and cooperation ('gotong royong'), our study posits that the impact of value co-creation on guest satisfaction may be even more significant. Lastly, the variation in satisfaction levels between business and leisure guests is in line with the research by Dolnicar. However, our study goes a step further by attributing this variation to differences in ecological knowledge, a variable not commonly examined in the context of guest segmentation. This observation suggests that frequent travelers, such as business guests, may have a heightened awareness of sustainability issues, leading to greater receptivity to IMC efforts promoting sustainability. In conclusion, the study builds on existing literature in the realm of IMC, sustainability, and guest satisfaction, providing fresh perspectives based on the unique sociocultural and ecological context of Indonesia. Future research may further enrich these insights by examining these relationships in other culturally diverse and ecologically sensitive environments. The findings of this study provide significant insights into the relationship between Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) for sustainability, ecological knowledge, and value co-creation on guest satisfaction within the context of the Indonesian hotel industry. These findings not only align with previous research but also further extend the literature by introducing unique insights specific to Indonesia, a country known for its unique culture and rich biodiversity. The identified positive relationship between IMC for sustainability and guest satisfaction is consistent with the findings of Kitchen and Schultz, who highlighted the effectiveness of IMC when it integrates socially responsible and sustainable practices. This insight also aligns with Han, Hsu, and Sheu's study, which found a significant correlation between hotel sustainability practices and guest satisfaction. By examining these relationships within the Indonesian context, this study further substantiates these theories, emphasizing the value of sustainability-oriented IMC strategies, particularly in

regions with rich ecological landscapes and a strong emphasis on conservation. Moreover, the study's findings underline the mediating role of ecological knowledge, which echoes the research of Teng, Wu, and Liu, who suggested that consumers with high ecological knowledge tend to favor businesses that emphasize sustainability. Our research extends this theory by demonstrating its relevance to the hotel industry in Indonesia, a country known for its heightened environmental consciousness. The significant role of value co-creation in enhancing guest satisfaction found in our study corresponds to the works of Payne, Storbacka, and Frow, who argued that value co-creation plays a crucial role in fostering customer satisfaction. Within Indonesia's context, our research indicates that value co-creation could have even more potent effects due to cultural factors such as 'gotong royong,' which emphasizes communal cooperation and collaboration. The differential satisfaction levels between business and leisure guests reinforce the research by Kozak and Rimmington, which identified varied satisfaction determinants across different traveler segments. Our research goes beyond these findings by linking this variation to the differential impacts of ecological knowledge, thereby presenting a novel perspective on how sustainability-oriented IMC initiatives might affect different guest segments. In conclusion, this study not only builds upon but also contributes new knowledge to the literature on IMC, sustainability, and guest satisfaction. By weaving together these aspects within the unique sociocultural and environmental context of Indonesia, this research offers valuable insights for both academics and practitioners. Future research should explore these dynamics across various global contexts to yield more comprehensive and nuanced insights into this fascinating interplay.

Conclusion

In summary, this study provides a novel and meaningful contribution to the existing literature concerning the application of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) for sustainability within the hotel industry, particularly within the unique context of Indonesia. Our research findings illuminate the substantial influence of IMC for sustainability on guest satisfaction in the Indonesian hospitality sector, indicating that sustainability-focused IMC initiatives can significantly enhance guest experiences and satisfaction. Furthermore, our study adds depth to the understanding of the role of ecological knowledge in enhancing guest satisfaction. Specifically, it suggests that hotels in Indonesia can leverage the country's rich biodiversity and cultural emphasis on conservation to increase their guests' ecological knowledge and consequently, their satisfaction. The mediating role of ecological knowledge between IMC for sustainability and guest satisfaction is particularly notable and should be considered in the formulation of future hotel marketing strategies. Our findings also underscore the crucial role of value co-creation in bolstering guest satisfaction. By incorporating local customs of communal cooperation ('gotong royong') and encouraging guest involvement in sustainability initiatives, Indonesian hotels can enhance the perceived value of their offerings and heighten guest satisfaction. This approach not only aligns with Indonesia's cultural values but also

emphasizes the potential of hotels to be agents of sustainable change and ecological stewardship.

References

- Agusdinata, D. B., Liu, W., Sulistyono, S., LeBillon, P., & Wegner, J. A. (2023). Evaluating sustainability impacts of critical mineral extractions: Integration of life cycle sustainability assessment and SDGs frameworks. *Journal of Industrial Ecology*, 27(3), 746-759.
- Anas, A. M., Abdou, A. H., Hassan, T. H., Alrefae, W. M. M., Daradkeh, F. M., El-Amin, M. A. M. M., ... & Alboray, H. M. M. (2023). Satisfaction on the Driving Seat: Exploring the Influence of Social Media Marketing Activities on Followers' Purchase Intention in the Restaurant Industry Context. *Sustainability*, 15(9), 7207.
- Barrett, C. B. (2021). Overcoming global food security challenges through science and solidarity. *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, 103(2), 422-447.
- Bharwani, S., & Mathews, D. (2021). Techno-business strategies for enhancing guest experience in luxury hotels: a managerial perspective. *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes*, 13(2), 168-185.
- Carpino, C., Mora, D., & De Simone, M. (2019). On the use of questionnaire in residential buildings. A review of collected data, methodologies and objectives. *Energy and Buildings*, 186, 297-318.
- Cartwright, S., Liu, H., & Davies, I. A. (2022). Influencer marketing within business-to-business organisations. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 106, 338-350.
- Dwivedi, Y. K., Hughes, L., Baabdullah, A. M., Ribeiro-Navarrete, S., Giannakis, M., Al-Debei, M. M., ... & Wamba, S. F. (2022). Metaverse beyond the hype: Multidisciplinary perspectives on emerging challenges, opportunities, and agenda for research, practice and policy. *International Journal of Information Management*, 66, 102542.
- Hoang, T. G., Truong, N. T., & Nguyen, T. M. (2021). The survival of hotels during the COVID-19 pandemic: a critical case study in Vietnam. *Service Business*, 15(2), 209-229.
- Ingaldi, M., & Ulewicz, R. (2019). How to make e-commerce more successful by use of Kano's model to assess customer satisfaction in terms of sustainable development. *Sustainability*, 11(18), 4830.
- Ivanov, S., Gretzel, U., Berezina, K., Sigala, M., & Webster, C. (2019). Progress on robotics in hospitality and tourism: a review of the literature. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology*, 10(4), 489-521.
- Jasin, M., Sesunan, Y., Aisyah, M., Fatimah, C., & Azra, F. (2023). SMEs repurchase intention and customer satisfaction: Investigating the role of utilitarian value and service quality. *Uncertain Supply Chain Management*, 11(2), 673-682.
- Kushwaha, B. P., Singh, R. K., Varghese, N., & Singh, V. N. (2020). Integrating social media and digital media as new elements of integrated marketing communication for creating brand equity. *Journal of Content, Community & Communication*, 11(6), 52-64.
- Lee, S. M., & Lee, D. (2020). "Untact": a new customer service strategy in the digital age. *Service Business*, 14(1), 1-22.
- Liu, W. (2021). Research on the application of multimedia elements in visual communication art under the Internet background. *Mobile Information Systems*, 2021, 1-10.
- Lorenzo-Romero, C., Andrés-Martínez, M. E., Cordente-Rodríguez, M., & Gómez-Borja, M. Á. (2021). Active participation of e-consumer: A qualitative analysis from fashion retailer perspective. *Sage Open*, 11(1), 2158244020979169.
- Lyu, J. C., Huang, P., Jiang, N., & Ling, P. M. (2022). A systematic review of e-cigarette marketing communication: messages, communication channels, and strategies. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(15), 9263.

- Mak, A. H., & Chang, R. C. (2019). The driving and restraining forces for environmental strategy adoption in the hotel industry: A force field analysis approach. *Tourism Management*, 73, 48-60.
- Martínez-Peláez, R., Ochoa-Brust, A., Rivera, S., Félix, V. G., Ostos, R., Brito, H., ... & Mena, L. J. (2023). Role of Digital Transformation for Achieving Sustainability: Mediated Role of Stakeholders, Key Capabilities, and Technology. *Sustainability*, 15(14), 11221.
- Menghwar, P. S., & Daood, A. (2021). Creating shared value: A systematic review, synthesis and integrative perspective. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 23(4), 466-485.
- Montgomery, M. P., Paulin, H. N., Morris, A., Cotton, A., Speers, A., Boyd, A. T., ... & Cavanaugh, S. S. (2021). Establishment of isolation and noncongregate hotels during COVID-19 and symptom evolution among people experiencing homelessness—Atlanta, Georgia, 2020. *Journal of Public Health Management and Practice*, 27(3), 285-294.
- Moropoulou, A., Lampropoulos, K., & Vythoulka, A. (2021). The Riverside Roads of Culture as a Tool for the Development of Aitolokarnania. *Heritage*, 4(4), 3823-3847.
- Moroz, P. W., & Gamble, E. N. (2021). Business model innovation as a window into adaptive tensions: Five paths on the B Corp journey. *Journal of Business Research*, 125, 672-683.
- Nandi, S., Nandi, M. L., & Sindhi, S. (2022). Does the concept of “creating shared value” make sense for multinational firms?. *Society and Business Review*, 17(4), 664-690.
- Nemes, N., Scanlan, S. J., Smith, P., Smith, T., Aronczyk, M., Hill, S., ... & Stabinsky, D. (2022). An integrated framework to assess greenwashing. *Sustainability*, 14(8), 4431.
- Olszewski-Strzyżowski, D. J. (2022). Promotional activities of selected National Tourism Organizations (NTOs) in the light of sustainable tourism (including sustainable transport). *Sustainability*, 14(5), 2561.
- Papademetriou, C., Anastasiadou, S., & Papalexandris, S. (2023). The Effect of Sustainable Human Resource Management Practices on Customer Satisfaction, Service Quality, and Institutional Performance in Hotel Businesses. *Sustainability*, 15(10), 8251.
- Pisicchio, A. C., & Toaldo, A. M. M. (2021). Integrated marketing communication in hospitality SMEs: analyzing the antecedent role of innovation orientation and the effect on market performance. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 27(7), 742-761.
- Rehman, S. U., Gulzar, R., & Aslam, W. (2022). Developing the integrated marketing communication (imc) through social media (sm): the modern marketing communication approach. *SAGE Open*, 12(2), 21582440221099936.
- Roma, P., Panniello, U., Vasi, M., & Nigro, G. L. (2021). Sharing economy and dynamic pricing: Is the impact of Airbnb on the hotel industry time-dependent?. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 49, 341-352.
- Rust, R. T. (2020). The future of marketing. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 37(1), 15-26.
- Salem, R., Bahadori-Jahromi, A., Mylona, A., Godfrey, P., & Cook, D. (2019). Investigating the potential impact of energy-efficient measures for retrofitting existing UK hotels to reach the nearly zero energy building (nZEB) standard. *Energy Efficiency*, 12, 1577-1594.
- Shankar, V., Grewal, D., Sunder, S., Fossen, B., Peters, K., & Agarwal, A. (2022). Digital marketing communication in global marketplaces: A review of extant research, future directions, and potential approaches. *International Journal of research in Marketing*, 39(2), 541-565.
- Storr, V. H., Haeffele, S., Lofthouse, J. K., & Grube, L. E. (2021). Essential or not? Knowledge problems and COVID- 19 stay- at- home orders. *Southern Economic Journal*, 87(4), 1229-1249.
- Swani, K., Brown, B. P., & Mudambi, S. M. (2020). The untapped potential of B2B advertising: a literature review and future agenda. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 89, 581-593.
- Thirumaran, K., Mohammadi, Z., Azzali, S., Eijdenberg, E. L., & Donough-Tan, G. (2023). Transformed landscapes, tourist sentiments: the place making narrative of a luxury heritage hotel in Singapore. *Journal of Heritage Tourism*, 18(2), 243-264.
- Utami, H. N., Alamanos, E., & Kuznesof, S. (2021). ‘A social justice logic’: how digital commerce enables value co-creation at the bottom of the pyramid. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 37(9-10), 816-855.

- Wang, Z., Li, M., Lu, J., & Cheng, X. (2022). Business Innovation based on artificial intelligence and Blockchain technology. *Information Processing & Management*, 59(1), 102759.
- Wei, A. P., Peng, C. L., Huang, H. C., & Yeh, S. P. (2020). Effects of corporate social responsibility on firm performance: does customer satisfaction matter?. *Sustainability*, 12(18), 7545.
- Whitburn, D., Karg, A., & Turner, P. (2020). The effect of digital integrated marketing communications on not-for-profit sport consumption behaviors. *Journal of Sport Management*, 34(5), 417-434.
- Wondirad, A. (2020). Ecotourism development challenges and opportunities in Wondo Genet and its environs, southern Ethiopia. *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 13(4), 465-491.
- You, S., Zhou, K. Z., & Jia, L. (2021). How does human capital foster product innovation? The contingent roles of industry cluster features. *Journal of Business Research*, 130, 335-347.