

# Implementation of Customer Journey Mapping in Indonesia's Tourism Industry to Enhance Tourist Satisfaction

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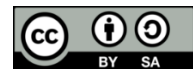
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## ABSTRACT

This study explores the implementation of Customer Journey Mapping (CJM) within the Indonesian tourism industry and its impact on enhancing tourist satisfaction. Utilizing qualitative analysis with six key informants representing diverse roles in the industry, the research investigates the level of awareness, challenges, and opportunities associated with CJM practices. The findings reveal that while larger organizations employ CJM to streamline customer experiences, smaller operators face significant barriers such as resource limitations and fragmented collaboration. Key factors influencing tourist satisfaction include accessibility, service quality, and cultural authenticity. The study identifies opportunities for improvement through technology adoption, capacity building, and stakeholder collaboration. These insights underline the potential of CJM as a strategic tool to elevate service delivery, enhance customer satisfaction, and promote sustainable growth in the Indonesian tourism sector.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, with its rich cultural heritage, diverse landscapes, and abundant natural attractions, stands as one of the most sought-after tourist destinations in the world. From the pristine beaches of Bali and Raja Ampat to the cultural richness of Yogyakarta and Toraja, Indonesia offers a myriad of experiences for both domestic and international travelers. However, the country's tourism industry faces growing competition from other global destinations, necessitating innovative strategies to enhance tourist satisfaction and retention. To remain competitive, Indonesia must adopt a multifaceted approach involving service

quality improvement, cultural tourism promotion, strategic marketing, and behavioral analysis. Enhancing service quality—particularly in hospitality, cultural engagement, and environmental stewardship—can significantly boost tourist retention [1], while improvements in infrastructure remain essential to support positive experiences in natural attractions [2]. Cultural tourism plays a pivotal role in socio-economic development, and strengthening heritage preservation and local product promotion is crucial to reinforcing Indonesia's destination image [3]. Tailoring cultural experiences by considering tourist demographics and backgrounds also ensures greater satisfaction [3]. On the marketing

front, the Indonesian Ministry of Tourism advocates for quality tourism through niche targeting and dynamic communication strategies, urging continuous adaptation to global trends and sustainable practices [4]. Moreover, understanding tourist behavior—such as mobility patterns and destination perception—provides valuable insights into strategic development; reviews consistently highlight natural attractions as central to positive experiences [2], and in areas like Raja Ampat, spatial analysis of tourist movements can guide tourism geography planning and development [5].

Tourist satisfaction is a critical factor influencing repeat visits, positive reviews, and long-term loyalty, making it essential to understand and address the entire tourist experience holistically. Customer Journey Mapping (CJM) has emerged as a strategic tool that provides a comprehensive view of the tourist journey—from initial awareness to post-visit reflections—enabling stakeholders to identify critical touchpoints and pain points for targeted improvements in service delivery and overall satisfaction. This approach is particularly relevant in tourism, where each stage of the visitor's interaction can significantly impact their perception and future behavior. Factors such as destination image, tourist expectations, and perceived value play pivotal roles in shaping satisfaction [6], with specific cases like Yogyakarta showing a strong correlation between the quality of tourism components—such as attractions, accessibility, and amenities—and overall visitor satisfaction [7]. CJM facilitates a structured understanding of these experiences by outlining each phase of the tourist journey [8], allowing for the identification and resolution of issues that hinder satisfaction [9]. When applied effectively, CJM enhances customer satisfaction, strengthens brand loyalty, and improves operational efficiency [9]. Moreover, the emotionally complex nature of booking and experiencing tourism services highlights the importance of journey mapping in improving customer orientation and advertising effectiveness [10].

Despite its proven benefits, the implementation of CJM in the Indonesian tourism industry remains underexplored. Most tourism operators focus on isolated aspects of the tourist journey, such as marketing or accommodation, without a comprehensive understanding of the interconnected experiences that shape satisfaction. This fragmented approach often leads to missed opportunities for improvement, inefficiencies, and gaps in meeting tourist expectations. This study seeks to bridge this gap by investigating how CJM can be effectively applied in the Indonesian tourism industry to enhance tourist satisfaction.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Customer Journey Mapping (CJM)

Customer Journey Mapping (CJM) is a strategic tool that visualizes the sequence of customer interactions with a business, focusing on emotions, expectations, and behaviors—highly relevant in tourism due to the complex nature of the tourist experience, which spans from pre-arrival planning to post-departure engagement. CJM enables a comprehensive mapping of the journey, from initial awareness to post-service feedback, capturing key touchpoints such as booking, travel, accommodation, and local experiences [8], [9], [11]. It helps identify weak points that hinder satisfaction and allows for targeted service improvements [11], providing competitive advantages in the digitalized tourism market [12]. Moreover, CJM promotes customer-oriented strategies essential for small and medium-sized businesses to enhance competitiveness and ensure a consistent, engaging experience throughout the tourist journey [9], [12].

### 2.2 CJM in the Tourism Industry

Customer Journey Mapping (CJM) is a strategic tool that enhances tourist experiences by identifying service gaps and improving interactions, yet its adoption in Indonesia remains uneven—large operators have begun

implementation, while smaller stakeholders face challenges. Integrating CJM with digital tools like mobile apps can boost engagement and enable real-time service improvements [8], [13], [14]. CJM also ensures consistent service quality and builds customer loyalty [15]. However, small businesses often lack resources and technical skills to adopt it [9]. Addressing this through training and collaborative platforms can help them compete effectively in the tourism ecosystem [9].

### 2.3 Tourist Satisfaction

Tourist satisfaction is a complex construct shaped by factors such as service quality, accessibility, cultural authenticity, and perceived value, which influence tourists' likelihood to revisit, recommend destinations, and support sustainable tourism. High-quality services—reliability, assurance, tangibility, empathy, and responsiveness—are key to meeting expectations and boosting satisfaction [16], while perceived value, as shown in a study in Grogol, Yogyakarta, significantly impacts overall satisfaction [17]. Demographic and cultural characteristics also affect satisfaction, emphasizing the need for tailored marketing strategies [18]. Customer Journey Mapping (CJM) supports this by identifying and addressing pain points like visa complexity and service inconsistency [19], enabling businesses to deliver more personalized and satisfying experiences [20].

### 2.4 Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in the theory of service-dominant logic (Vargo & Lusch, 2004), which posits that value is co-created by businesses and customers through service interactions. CJM provides a framework for identifying how these interactions occur and where they can be optimized to enhance customer satisfaction. By applying this theoretical lens, the study examines how Indonesian tourism operators can

collaboratively improve service delivery across the tourist journey.

### 2.5 Research Gap

Although the potential of CJM in improving customer satisfaction is well-documented, its application in the Indonesian tourism industry remains underexplored. Previous studies have focused primarily on developed tourism markets, leaving a gap in understanding how CJM can address the unique challenges and opportunities in Indonesia. This research seeks to fill this gap by providing qualitative insights into CJM implementation and its impact on tourist satisfaction within the Indonesian context.

## 3. RESEARCH METHODS

### 3.1 Research Design

This study employs a qualitative research design to explore the implementation of Customer Journey Mapping (CJM) in the Indonesian tourism industry and its impact on tourist satisfaction. Qualitative research is particularly suited for gaining in-depth insights into complex phenomena and understanding the perspectives of individuals involved in specific processes. Through this approach, the study seeks to examine the practical application of CJM and uncover key factors influencing its effectiveness in enhancing tourist experiences.

### 3.2 Data Collection Methods

Data for this study were collected through semi-structured, in-depth interviews with six key informants, a method chosen for its flexibility in exploring participants' experiences and perceptions while ensuring comprehensive coverage of essential topics. The informants were selected based on their expertise and active involvement in the tourism industry, representing a diverse range of stakeholders: tourism operators from travel agencies and tour companies offering customized travel packages,

hospitality professionals including managers of hotels and resorts serving both domestic and international tourists, and marketing strategists responsible for promoting tourism destinations and developing customer engagement strategies.

### 3.3 Sampling Technique

A purposive sampling technique was employed to ensure that the informants possessed relevant knowledge and experience in

implementing or engaging with CJM processes in the Indonesian tourism industry. The selected participants represented various roles within the tourist journey, enabling a holistic understanding of the challenges and opportunities in CJM implementation.

### 3.4 Interview Protocol

The semi-structured interview protocol included questions designed to explore three key areas:

Table 1. Key Areas and Sample Questions from the Semi-Structured Interview Protocol

No.	Main Theme	Question
1.	Understanding CJM Implementation	- How is CJM applied in your organization or area of expertise? - What tools and methods are used to map the tourist journey?
2.	Tourist Satisfaction Factors	- What are the main factors influencing tourist satisfaction in your operations? - How do you address pain points or challenges faced by tourists?
3.	Challenges and Opportunities	- What are the primary challenges in implementing CJM in the Indonesian tourism industry? - What opportunities exist for improving tourist experiences through CJM?

The interviews were conducted in-person or via video conferencing, depending on participant availability, and were recorded with their consent for accuracy and detailed analysis.

### 3.5 Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was employed to analyze the qualitative data gathered from the interviews, following a structured process that began with data familiarization through transcription and thorough review of the interview transcripts to understand participants' responses in depth. This was followed by coding, where key themes, patterns, and recurring ideas related to CJM implementation and tourist satisfaction were identified. The next step involved organizing these codes into broader themes that encapsulated the core of the participants' perspectives and experiences. Finally, interpretation was conducted by connecting the themes to the research objectives, allowing for meaningful conclusions and actionable insights.

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Results

#### a. Awareness and Implementation of Customer Journey Mapping (CJM)

The findings reveal differing levels of awareness and implementation of Customer Journey Mapping (CJM) among stakeholders in the Indonesian tourism industry. Larger organizations, such as established hotels and travel agencies, demonstrated greater familiarity with CJM practices and actively utilized mapping techniques to improve customer experiences. For instance, Informant 1, a hotel manager, stated, "We actively use customer journey mapping to identify and address pain points at each stage of the guest experience," highlighting a structured approach to service enhancement.

In contrast, smaller operators—such as homestays and local tour guides—showed limited understanding of CJM. These

stakeholders typically relied on informal methods like direct customer feedback to gauge preferences and address issues. While their approach reflects close engagement with tourists, the absence of structured tools limits their ability to systematically improve the overall experience.

**b. Key Factors Influencing Tourist Satisfaction**

The analysis highlighted several key factors influencing tourist satisfaction in the Indonesian tourism context. Accessibility, particularly through simplified booking systems and transparent pricing, was seen as essential for creating positive customer experiences. Service quality, especially consistency across various touchpoints, also played a crucial role in shaping overall satisfaction. Additionally, cultural authenticity emerged as a significant driver, with tourists expressing a strong preference for unique, immersive local experiences that reflect the destination's identity.

However, despite these strengths, participants identified persistent issues that hinder tourist satisfaction. Logistical challenges and inconsistent service quality were commonly mentioned pain points. As noted by Informant 2, a marketing strategist, "Tourists highly value authentic local experiences, but inconsistent service delivery can quickly undermine satisfaction." This underscores the importance of not only offering culturally rich experiences but also ensuring that service standards are maintained consistently across the tourist journey.

**c. Challenges in CJM Implementation**

The study uncovered several challenges that hinder the effective implementation of Customer Journey Mapping (CJM) in the Indonesian tourism industry. A major barrier was

resource constraints, particularly among smaller operators who lacked the financial capacity and technological tools needed to adopt sophisticated CJM practices. Additionally, fragmented collaboration among tourism stakeholders led to communication gaps and inefficiencies, making it difficult to deliver a cohesive and seamless tourist experience.

Another significant challenge was Indonesia's vast and geographically diverse landscape, which complicates the integration and coordination of tourism services across regions. This geographical dispersion creates logistical difficulties in standardizing service quality and data collection. As expressed by Informant 5, a homestay owner, "We don't have the tools or knowledge to map customer journeys effectively. Most of our insights come from casual conversations with guests," illustrating the limited capacity of smaller players to implement structured customer experience strategies.

**d. Opportunities for Improvement**

Participants identified several opportunities to enhance tourist experiences through improved Customer Journey Mapping (CJM) practices. These include the adoption of digital tools and platforms to collect real-time feedback and optimize each stage of the tourist journey, fostering greater responsiveness and personalization. Strengthening collaboration among stakeholders—such as accommodation providers, transportation services, and tour operators—was also seen as crucial for delivering seamless and integrated experiences. Additionally, capacity-building initiatives, such as training programs for small and medium-sized operators, were recommended to improve their

understanding and practical application of CJM, enabling them to compete more effectively and contribute to a more cohesive tourism ecosystem.

#### 4.2 Discussion

##### a. The Role of CJM in Enhancing Tourist Experiences

The results align with existing literature emphasizing Customer Journey Mapping (CJM) as a strategic tool for improving customer experiences, particularly within Indonesia's tourism sector. CJM enables businesses to identify and address critical touchpoints throughout the tourist journey, from initial engagement to post-visit reflection, helping to streamline processes, enhance cultural authenticity, and ultimately boost satisfaction and loyalty [9]. For example, in a study conducted at Dusun Bambu, four out of seventeen touchpoints were found to negatively affect customer experiences, indicating actionable areas for improvement [21]. By embedding memorable elements throughout the journey using the 4Es model—entertainment, education, esthetic, and escapism—tourism businesses can deliver more engaging and fulfilling experiences [13]. Furthermore, addressing common pain points such as complex booking procedures and inconsistencies in cultural presentation can significantly improve customer satisfaction and long-term loyalty [22].

In addition to mapping journeys, the integration of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems further supports the transition from transactional interactions to long-term customer engagement [22]. Leveraging data, feedback, and behavioral analytics allows tourism operators to personalize services, respond swiftly to customer needs, and adapt to

shifting market demands, thus increasing operational efficiency and customer retention [9]. In the Indonesian context, CJM provides a practical framework for refining each phase of the tourist experience—from simplifying pre-arrival booking processes to offering personalized, real-time support on-site. For instance, by addressing booking system inefficiencies early in the journey, businesses can ensure stronger first impressions, while tailored services during the visit reinforce positive experiences and encourage repeat visits.

##### b. Addressing Challenges

The fragmented nature of Indonesia's tourism industry presents substantial challenges to the cohesive implementation of Customer Journey Mapping (CJM). While larger organizations may have the resources and knowledge to apply CJM effectively, smaller operators often struggle due to limited capacity and lack of access to structured tools. This disparity creates inconsistencies in the overall tourist experience, undermining efforts to build a unified and competitive tourism ecosystem. The study emphasizes the urgent need for stronger collaboration among stakeholders to ensure that all segments of the industry can contribute to and benefit from CJM practices.

To address these challenges, initiatives such as industry-wide training programs and the development of standardized CJM guidelines are essential. These efforts can help bridge the gap between large organizations and smaller operators, fostering a more inclusive and coordinated approach. Informan 6, a tourism technology consultant, remarked, "Collaborative platforms could help unify efforts across the industry, ensuring a seamless experience for tourists,"

underscoring the importance of shared resources and joint strategies in enhancing service delivery and tourist satisfaction across the sector.

**c. Leveraging Opportunities**

Digital technologies offer transformative opportunities for CJM implementation. Mobile applications, real-time feedback systems, and data analytics can enhance the ability of tourism operators to anticipate and address customer needs. Furthermore, the integration of these tools can create a more dynamic and responsive approach to managing customer journeys.

Training programs for smaller operators can play a pivotal role in enhancing their capabilities. By equipping them with basic knowledge and tools, these operators can align their services with industry standards, thereby contributing to an overall improvement in the tourist experience.

**d. Implications for the Indonesian Tourism Industry**

The findings underscore the importance of Customer Journey Mapping (CJM) as a strategic component of Indonesia's tourism industry, highlighting its potential to address logistical challenges, foster stakeholder collaboration, and leverage technology to enhance global competitiveness. By focusing on culturally immersive and satisfying experiences, CJM aligns with Indonesia's unique value proposition as a diverse and rich tourism destination. Moreover, the integration of CJM practices not only

improves tourist satisfaction but also contributes to the sustainable growth of the industry by fostering long-term loyalty and encouraging positive word-of-mouth recommendations.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The implementation of Customer Journey Mapping (CJM) has proven to be a pivotal strategy for enhancing tourist satisfaction within Indonesia's tourism industry. This study highlights the disparity in CJM awareness and application between larger organizations and smaller operators, with the latter often constrained by limited resources and operational challenges. Key findings emphasize that streamlined accessibility, consistent service quality, and authentic cultural experiences are critical factors influencing tourist satisfaction and loyalty, reinforcing the need for more structured and inclusive approaches to managing the customer journey.

Despite these challenges, the adoption of digital tools, improved collaboration among stakeholders, and capacity-building initiatives offer significant opportunities to advance CJM practices across the industry. The integration of these strategies can foster a more cohesive and enriching tourist experience while supporting sustainable growth and enhancing Indonesia's competitiveness as a global tourism destination. This research underscores the urgency of addressing operational barriers and embracing innovative solutions to align with international standards, ensuring that the Indonesian tourism sector continues to evolve in response to changing customer expectations.

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