

# Digital Literacy of Rural Community to Achieve Economic Resilience: Development of Tourism Local Destination<sup>†</sup>

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**Abstract:** This article aims to give a contribution of digital literacy on the development of local destination tourism and its role in achieving economic resilience. Many business entities were impacted in the pandemic situation, where the economic entities agreed to tightened regulations related to maintaining the wellbeing of the community. Fortunately, era 4.0 and society 5.0 marked various aspects in societal daily activities with digitalization. Great expectations have been placed on tourism for economic resilience, with digitalization giving an opportunity to business entities to sustain themselves by doing online business. This article answers the questions through the qualitative method and descriptive analysis approach to analyze those responding to this study. This study revealed the digital literacy of the community maintained business entities during the COVID-19 pandemic, and key success factors were the moderate level of the digital literacy of human resources.

**Keywords:** digital literacy; rural community; economic resilience; tourism; local destinations

## 1. Introduction

Currently, the global world is threatened by a geopolitics crisis due to war between Russia and Ukraine, which is an uncontrollable factor for all of the countries in the world; Indonesia also faces this terrible situation. As one of the countries in the world we do not have to panic, and should have a short term plan and long term plan to mitigate the risk of geopolitical crises. Indonesia has a good fundamental economy status and hopefully could survive in the crisis, but we should get ready if the situation is getting worse. In other words, we should establish an early warning system for these situations. In order to survive in the crisis, we should support industries or sectors that have a possibility to contribute to economic resilience. One sector focused on contributing to a speedy economic recovery is the tourism industry. The tourism industry has a possibility of achieving a multiplier effect in the community economy; if there are many visitors arriving to one tourism destination, it will push demand in other sectors. These are sectors such as transportation, food and beverages, hotel or homestay, handicrafts, and many other businesses.

This article tries to explore the role of digital literacy in the community on economic resilience. Additionally, it analyzes a case study on the tourism industry in West Sumatera, in a small village named Suliki. Suliki has several locations that have great potential as local tourism destinations. It is a fact that these potential locations are not yet well developed and well managed. Development of local tourism destinations and SMEs to provide goods and services as demand for tourism rises would increase the economic growth in that area [1]. Developing a new local tourism destination in West Sumatera province is a great challenge in the beginning due to the difficulty of the community of West Sumatera in accepting new visitors, especially from abroad. This fact is evidenced in Payakumbuh, the location of study, where the occupancy rate of hotels is very low on average [2]. It is a big opportunity to develop the tourism sector in order to achieve economic recovery and attain



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economic resilience, which means the sustenance of community welfare [3]. To achieve economic resilience, we should also noted that the environment and socio-ecological factors are embedded and integrated into economic resilience [4].

There were various studies related to digitalization and SME businesses in Indonesia. Research findings on the sample of SMEs in Indonesia show that technology of digitalization in the condition of pre-COVID-19 pandemic has high contribution to the sustainability of SMEs [5]. Digitalization helped SMEs in the way of less expensive marketing using social media, offering borderless marketing area and no restriction of distance. Geographical matters stated that there have been very significant changes in life environment, and it is undeniable that SMEs have also experienced the influence of the atmosphere of digitalization technology [6].

Tourism is a not as simple as moving from one place to another, due to the visitor staying a couple days, and then interactive communication will exist between the visitor and the host in the social culture [7]. In general, this means that in the tourism industry, the relationship between the visitor and the host forms these three contexts: there are locations or situations and conditions when the visitor buys or spends on hosts' services and products; secondly, times and locations when the visitor and the host live together; and lastly, times and situations when the visitor and the host engage in discussions and change their ideas about the topic of the discussions [8]. Based on previous studies, this article tries to answer the question of how economic resilience can be achieved through development of local tourism and the role of digitalization literacy. The contribution of this article is to give suggestions to decision makers in order to succeed in the development of local tourism destinations and attain economic resilience in the community with the condition of literacy on digitalization.

## 2. Methods

This article uses an analytical approach, by using the six senses to observe [9] and use available data in the location. Confirmation and exploration of data answer the research question through in-depth interviews with key informants. The key informants consist of people in the community, visitors either local and abroad, tribal ancestors, heads of villages, and business entities.

## 3. Results

The head of village of the small village in Payakumbuh decided to focus on development of one view, namely of water flowing from hills. The location of the water flow is very near rice plants, which make the view so green and more beautiful. Currently the situation of the location is still natural, and development is needed in order to make the location in the situation visitor friendly. At the location there were no places for visitors to dine or take selfies, and the walk area still needs improvements.

To explore the views of key informants, this study interviewed them in-depth about the plan in the short term and long term should the village head implement related to this location. Table 1 is a summary of the results of in-depth interviews with the local community, visitors, and village head. According to the local community, the infrastructure at the location needs improvements, and the people also need training to upgrade their level of digitalization and financial literacy, if the community enters the business related to tourism. Visitors said that not only the infrastructure but also the security of the location should be guaranteed. The village head said this program cannot be implemented if there is no participatory action from all of the local community; this is because of the finding that there still exist local people who throw garbage out into the water flowing from hills.

**Table 1.** In-depth interview with stakeholders related to development of water flowing from hill.

Local Community	Visitors	Head Village
Infrastructure Training to people	Maintenance	Sense of belonging of people
Financial literacy benefitting the economy	Infrastructure People, attitude Security	Investment in infrastructure Quality of human resources

Sources: based on interviews with key informants. (authors processed the data).

#### 4. Discussions

Participation of the local community is the key to success in development of local tourism destinations [10]. Participation of the local community is in line with a sense of belonging in local tourism destinations. According to the literature review, in order to make the sense of belonging in the community in developing local destinations succeed, the community should feel that the plan will give benefit to them. Participatory actions of the local community consist of stages. These start from compliance, consultative, cooperation, co-learning, and collective actions [11]. The compliance stage is the situation where the community needs some adjustments in order to comply with the plan to develop and market the new local tourism destinations. In the second stage, the community needs consultation with an external party who has expertise in developing new local tourism destinations. Additionally, in the third, the people will work together after receiving new insight from expertise. In the fourth stage the people apply the insight, and in the fifth stage the local community will take action, and this is a participation of community that achieves economic resilience through active participation in the implementations.

#### 5. Conclusions

The local people’s digital literacy level should be upgraded to elevate the role of digitalization on achieving economic resilience in the community. Not only does this make the community literate enough on digitalization, but also the infrastructure of networking should be upgraded due to environment of the village water flowing from hills. There are some challenges to developing that local destination, such as the community capacity, infrastructure, and the facilitation from the village head as the representative of the government. Future research and empirical study related to this topic is needed to generalize the conclusions.

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