

# Revitalizing Customer Value And Competitive Advantage Of Coastal Culinary Tourism In Jember

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**Abstract:** Coastal culinary tourism is one of potential destination and economic source in Jember district, Indonesia. Majority of coastal culinary tourism in Jember is operated by Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) with limited ability in developing their customer value and strengthening their competitive advantage. This study seeked to examine the effect of service quality and marketing mix on customer value and competitive advantage and to examine the effect of service quality and marketing mix on competitive advantage through customer value. As many as 350 respondents were participated in this study. Purposive and convenience sampling were employed to select the sample. The data were collected by distributing questionnaires. Tools used to analyze the data is Partial Least Square (PLS)-Structural Equation Model (SEM). The result showed that there were positive and significant effect of service quality and marketing mix on customer value and competitive advantage and customer value could mediated the effect of service quality and marketing mix on competitive advantage of coastal culinary tourism in Jember district.

**Index Terms:** Competitive advantage, customer value, marketing mix, service quality.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The importance of tourism sector is reflected by its contribution to Indonesia economies. Jember, a district in eastern Java, Indonesia, also attempts in boosting its tourism sector as source of local revenue. The nature of culinary business and tourism relationship is symbiotic mutualism, they drive and promote each other. Culinary business around tourism area, which all of them are in form of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), could strengthen the quality of tourism by providing needs of visitors and tourism could open market for the restaurant product. Both culinary business and tourism could contribute a lot to local revenue. The tourism destination in Jember district, Indonesia, is dominated by coastal area. There are 4 (four) well-known coastal tourism destinations in Jember, those are Papuma beach, Payangan beach, Watu Ulo beach, and Puger beach. Tourism agency in Jember reported that in 2016, as many as 1,9 million visitors came to beaches in Jember and it was beyond the target (Solichah, 2017). The improving number of beaches visitors affect the sales of culinary business around it. Unfortunately, the physical appearance of those culinary business seems inadequate in supporting the tourism activity there (Adiati and Basalamah, 2014). Most of the merchants are rural resident with limited marketing knowledge so they serve consumer in simple service and simple resource. To improve their business, strategies are needed to increase their competitive advantage and the value of customer, hoping it can intensify the tourism activity in Jember district. Along with the rapid development of marketing trend, culinary business in tourism destination do not merely sell product, but they are required to perform excellent service to their customers. They need to seek the unique way to differentiate their offerings and service quality could be such an alternative.

Gronroos (1990) stated that whether in service or manufacturing industries, they must keep in touch with their customers and provide a high-quality service or risk losing them to the competition. Small firms, however, tend to be regarded as implicitly in close contact with their customers and therefore issues surrounding customer care and service quality in the context of the small firm are overlooked (Maclaran and McGowan, 1999). Based on Abdulla (2006), service quality is an emerging competitive dimension in today's business world and identified as one of the strategies of success. Service quality could be a one of keys in reaching competitive advantage and it affects the customer assessment about their whole product. A business has a competitive advantage when it implements a strategy that creates superior value for customers and competitors are unable to duplicate or find too costly to try to imitate (Hitt et al., 2013). Warraich (2013), Wijetunge (2016), and Yusuf (2016) found that service quality was considered as a source of competitive advantage. Service quality also affects the assessment of customer about the utility of restaurant product and it is called customer value. Perception about service quality is becoming one of more important issues in generating customer value (Cronin et al., 1997). Prior studies (Lee and Ko, 2016; Suhidayat et al., 2016) found positive relationship between service quality and customer value on in-flight meal service in Korea and rural banking sectors in Indonesia. A product or service purchased by customers from the company is more satisfactory if the customer is getting a high value, because it represents the emotional bond that exists between the customer and the firm after the customer exploits the products and services and finds that the product or service adds value. Besides service quality, marketing mix is another critical factor in determining competitive advantage and customer value. Price, product, promotion, and place (4P) are conventional framework of marketing mix developed by McCarthy in 1960. In the context of SMEs around tourism area where the customer's experience is substantial to be considered, 4P is not sufficient to measure their marketing mix. We adapt the extension of 4P, namely service marketing mix (7P) by adding the dimension of process, people, and physical evidence as developed by Booms and Bitner in 1981 to embrace both service and goods offered. Thompson et al. (2008) argued that a good product at low price or a best value offering that represents an attractive combination of price, features, quality, services, and other appealing attributes is one of routes to achieve competitive

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advantage. Singh (2012) argued that four dimensions of 4P marketing mix could help business to formulate strategic decision in achieving competitive advantage. But Chumaidiyah (2014) found that only promotion and process which affect competitive advantage significantly on telecommunication service in Indonesia. This paper seeks to describe the service quality, service marketing mix, competitive advantage, and customer value in SMEs around coastal tourism in Jember district and to examine the effect of service quality and service marketing mix on customer value and competitive advantage there.

## 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. The Relationship between Service Quality and Customer Value

Kotler & Keller (2012: 25) stated that a firm successfully offers products/services to customers if they able to provide value and satisfaction to its customers. The company must deliver products that have value in accordance with the prevailing customer perceptions. Sweeney and Soutar (1999) stated that there are four main aspects of customer value, namely emotional value, social value, performance value, and price value. Lee and Ko (2016) conducted a study the effect of in-flight meal service quality on the customer value in Korean Air Lines. They found that there was a significantly positive correlation among dimension of food, service, and sanitation on the customer value. Heri (2017) and Suhidayat et al. (2016) also found significantly positive impact of service quality on the value of customer. Accordingly, it is hypothesized that: H1: Better service quality leads to higher customer value.

### 2.2. The Relationship between Marketing Mix and Customer Value

Several studies have conducted the relationship between several elements of marketing mix on customer value. Hanzaae and Yazd (2010), who argued that customer value is one of important consumer behavior factors, found that the determination of price is positively related with automobile customer value. Treacy and Wiersima (1995) argued that components affecting customer value are low price, speedy response, premium service, and high quality of product. Jailil (2015) et al found that store atmospheric including facility aesthetics, ambience, spatial layout and employee factor influences the customer value. Chen et al. (2015), using qualitative study, reveals that store location, environment, promotions, diverse products, and service are the factors in determining the level of customer value in Taiwan ice cream market. Based on the prior studies and literature, it is hypothesized that: H2: Better marketing mix leads to higher customer value.

### 2.3. The Relationship between Service Quality and Competitive Advantage

Conceptually, service quality is intended as a measure of overall assessment of the level of a good service or the quality of service as a result of the perception of the comparison between customer expectations with the actual performance of services (Lovelock, 2001). Service quality is the appraisal about how match the level of service provided and the customer first perception. Pasuraman et al. (1988) argued that quality of service can be used as source of competitive

advantage in a business. Wijetunge (2016) conducted a study by distributing questionnaires to 125 owner/manager of SMEs in Colombo district and found positive relationship between service quality and competitive advantage. He measured service quality using five dimension: tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Warraich (2013) found that tangibility and reliability were the most important dimension of service quality in service sector in Sri Lanka. Accordingly, it is hypothesized that: H3: Better service quality leads to higher competitive advantage.

### 2.4. The Relationship between Marketing Mix and Competitive Advantage

Porter (1985) stated that competitive advantage comes from ability of a business to develop its internal strengths to respond external environmental opportunities while avoiding external threats and internal weaknesses. Marketing mix is one of internal strengths of a firm, because it is a set of variables that the company can control in influencing the customer's responses. Previous studied has examined the impact of marketing mix on firm's competitive advantage. Al-Debi and Mustafa (2014) found the positive impact of 7P service marketing mix on competitive advantage in five-stars hotel in Amman, Jordania. They proved that all of the elements are positively connected to the competitive advantage. Chumaidiyah (2014) examined the impact of 4P marketing mix elements on the competitive advantage of telecommunication service companies in Indonesia. She found that only promotion and process which affect competitive advantage significantly on telecommunication service in Indonesia. Based on the explanation, it is hypothesized that: H4: Better marketing mix leads to higher competitive advantage.

### 2.5. The Relationship between Service Quality, Marketing Mix, Competitive Advantage and Customer Value

Barney in Bharadwaj (1993) lists four essential requirements for a resource/skill to be a source of sustainable competitive advantage: it must be valuable, it must be rare among a firm's current and potential competitors, it must be imperfectly imitable, and there must not be any strategically equivalent substitutes for this resource/skill. Li (2009) proposed that customer value strategy could be one key to reach competitive advantage since the thinking of 'customer-oriented' becoming a trend and customer value has been regarded as a new source of competitive advantage in a firm. When quality of service, product quality, determination of price, store location, and other marketing mix elements offered by a firm affect the value received by customers, the creation of competitive advantage is improved. H5: Higher Customer Value leads to higher competitive advantage H6: The effect of service quality on competitive advantage is mediated by customer value H7: The effect of marketing mix on competitive advantage is mediated by customer value

### 2.6. Conceptual Framework

Based on the literature review, we would like to examine the relationship among service quality and marketing mix as independent variables, customer value as intervening variable, and competitive advantage as dependent variable. Service quality variable was measured using six dimensions: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and communication. Marketing mix was measured using seven



dimensions: product, price, place, promotion, people, process, and physical evidence. Customer value was measured using four dimensions: emotional value, social value, performance value, and price value. Competitive advantage was measured using five dimensions: uniqueness, price competitiveness, rare among competitors, imperfectly imitable, and there is equivalent substitutes. Hence, the conceptual framework is depicted in Figure 1.

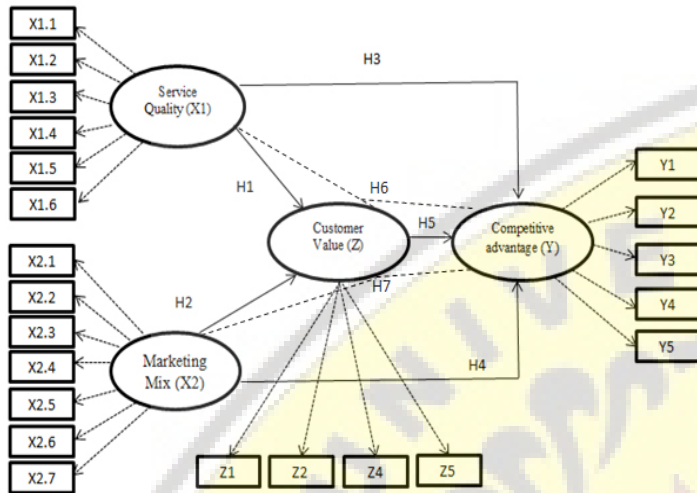


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

### 3 METHODOLOGY

This research is descriptive-verification research. Descriptive survey method used to obtain the phenomenon or facts from existing symptoms and seek factual descriptions that describe each study variable. Verification or explanatory method was used to examine the relationship between the variables observed. The population in this study are customers of SMEs around four coastal tourism, namely Papuma beach, Payangan beach, Watu Ulo beach, and Puger beach. As many as 350 respondents were obtained using purposive and convenience sampling. The testing of 1st until 6th hypothesis were performed by using Partial Least Square (PLS) - Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) employing SmartPLS application. All indicators have been developed into question items and measured using Likert scale with scale 1 representing strongly disagree up to 5 representing strongly agree.

### 4 RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

#### 4.1 Results

##### Characteristics of Respondents

As shown in Table 1, a total of 350 customers were considered. The characteristics of respondents based on their gender, age, and the frequency of consuming the product are summarized in table below.

Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	% Freq
Gender	Male	132	44%
	Female	218	66%
	Total	350	100%
Age	18-29	92	26%
	30-39	119	35.2%
	>40	136	38.8%
	Total	350	100%
Frequency of consuming the product	Once	98	28%
	Twice - 5 times	176	50.2%
	>5 times	76	21.8%
	Total	350	100%

Source: processed data, 2017

##### Result of Data Analysis

Evaluation of models in PLS is done by evaluating outer model and inner model. The outer model is evaluated by using some convergence test of convergent validity, discriminant validity, and composite reliability. Inner model is evaluated using determinant coefficient and goodness of fit.

##### Measurement of Outer Model

Hartono and Abdillah (2009) suggested that the validity test of all constructs in the early stages of the study can also be seen from the value of outer loading with a minimum level of  $\pm 0.30$  and the rule of thumb which is usually used to make an initial examination of the  $\pm 0.30$  factor factor considered has met the minimum level, for loading  $\pm 0.40$  is considered better and for loading 0.50 is considered to be practically significant. Salisbury et al (2002) suggests that the value of reliability is considered sufficient is 0.5 to 0.6 and composite reliability above 0.6 is considered better in estimating the internal consistency of a construct. Nunnally (1978) states that the cronbach alpha of each sub-dimension must be greater than 0.7. All of the factor/outer loading totalling 67 items measuring all variables are greater than 0.50, thus these items are declared valid to measure the variable. The results of AVE, composite reliability and cronbachs alpha are presented in Table 2. As shown on Table 2, it is known that all of indicators measuring service quality, marketing mix, customer value, and competitive advantage have discriminant reliability value (AVE) that are greater than 0.5. It is interpreted that all of the items are reliable in measuring the latent variables. The value of composite reliability measuring all variables are greater than 0.7. thus it can be concluded that all of items are reliable in measuring its latent variables. The cronbachs alpha value also shows greater value than 0.6. Hence, based on the value of cronbach alpha, the items are reliable in measuring its latent variables.

**Table 2.** The Result of AVE, Composite Reliability, and Cronbachs Alpha Calculation

Variables	Indicators	AVE	Composite Reliability	Cronbachs Alpha
Service Quality (X1)	Tangibles	0,845	0,942	0,908
	Reliability	0,647	0,846	0,730
	Responsiveness	0,774	0,910	0,847
	Assurance	0,965	0,988	0,982
	Empathy	0,749	0,898	0,823
	Communication	0,694	0,818	0,577
Marketing Mix (X2)	Price	0,708	0,879	0,791
	Promotion	0,706	0,878	0,790
	Place	0,767	0,908	0,847
	Product	0,664	0,971	0,967
	Physical evidence	0,665	0,885	0,822
	People	0,857	0,947	0,917
	Process	0,663	0,979	0,977
Customer Value (Z)	Emotional Value	0,727	0,886	0,797
	Social Value	0,768	0,868	0,701
	Performance Value	0,719	0,836	0,612
	Price Value	0,662	0,951	0,942
Competitive Advantage (Y)	Uniqueness	0,548	0,782	0,606
	Price competitiveness	0,791	0,918	0,861
	Rare among competitors	0,588	0,810	0,656
	Imperfectly imitable	0,708	0,907	0,863
	There is no equivalent substitutes	0,568	0,795	0,627

Source: processed data, 2017

### Measurement of Inner Model

The Goodness of fit Model is used to determine the extent of the endogenous variable's ability to explain the variety of exogenous variables, or to know the magnitude of exogenous variables contribution to endogenous variables. Goodness of fit Model in PLS analysis is done by using Q-Square predictive relevance (Q<sup>2</sup>). Q<sup>2</sup> is based on the coefficient of determination of all dependent variables. The magnitude of Q<sup>2</sup> has a range 0 < Q<sup>2</sup> < 1, it means that the closer the value of Q<sup>2</sup> to 1, the better the model is. The goodness of fit model has been summarized in the following table:

**Table 3.** Goodness of Fit Test

Variables	R <sup>2</sup>
Customer Value	0.761
Competitive Advantage	0.845
$Q^2 = 1 - (1-R_1^2)(1-R_2^2) \rightarrow Q^2 = 1 - (1-0.761)(1-0.845) = \mathbf{0.962}$	

Source : Processed Primary Data, 2017

Q-Square predictive relevance (Q<sup>2</sup>) value is 0.962 or 96.2%. It can show that the variability of competitive advantage variable can be explained by service quality, marketing mix and customer value variable of 96.2%, while the rest of 5.8% is the contribution of other variables that are not discussed in this study.

### Hypothesis Testing

In testing the hypothesis, we used t-test on each path of direct influence and indirect influence through the mediation variables. Therefore, hypothesis testing is selected into two parts, namely direct testing and indirect testing.

- Direct Effect Testing

This direct impact test was performed to examine the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th. When t-value is greater than 1.96 ( $\alpha=5\%$ ), it indicates a significant influence of exogenous variables on endogenous variables in each hypothesis examined. The coefficient and t-value of each direct effect is shown on Table 4 below.

**Table 4. Result of Direct Effect Testing**

Struc-ture	Path	Coef.	t-value
1	Service Quality → Customer Value	0.427	4.115
	Marketing Mix → Customer Value	0.506	4.832
2	Service Quality → Competitive Advantage	0.393	4.010
	Marketing Mix → Competitive Advantage	0.719	9.930
	Customer Value → Competitive Advantage	0.465	4.850

Source : PLS output, 2017

As shown on Table 4 above, there is positive and significant effect of service quality on customer value. It is interpreted from t-value (4.115) which is greater than 1.96 with positive value. From that statistical result, the first hypothesis is supported: better service quality leads to higher competitive advantage. The same condition went to the effect of marketing mix on customer value. The t-value (4.832) is greater than 1.96 with positive value. It means that better marketing mix could improve customer value, so the second hypothesis is accepted. The third hypothesis is also accepted. It is proved by t-value (4.010) which is greater than 1.96 with positive value, it means that better service quality could develop the competitive advantage creation. Marketing mix also has positive and significant effect on competitive advantage, because its t-value (9.930) is greater than 1.96 and its direction is positive. The same went to the effect of customer value and competitive advantage which shows positive and significant effect because its t-value (4.850) is greater than 1.96 so the fifth hypothesis is supported.

#### • Indirect Effect Testing

The indirect effect testing was done to examine the sixth and seventh hypothesis. In order to know the indirect effect, we used sobel test. If the t-value is greater than 1.96, the indirect effect is significant. Based on the path coefficient, the effect magnitude of service quality on customer value and customer value on competitive advantage as shown on Table 3 are 0.427 and 0.919, so the calculation is  $= (0.427 \times 0.465) = 0.198$  or 19.8%. This calculation result means that the effect magnitude of service quality on competitive advantage through customer value is 19.8%. The t-value generated is 4.091 and this value is greater than 1.96. This means that the effect of service quality on competitive advantage through customer value is significant. We can have a look again at Table 4 to calculate the indirect effect of marketing mix on competitive advantage on competitive advantage through customer value. The effect magnitude of marketing mix on customer value is 0.506 and the effect magnitude of customer value on competitive advantage is 0.465, so the calculation is  $= (0.506 \times 0.465) = 0.235$  or 23.5%. This calculation result means that the effect magnitude of marketing mix on competitive advantage through customer value is 23.5%. The t-value generated is 4.798 and this value is greater than 1.96. This means that the effect of of marketing mix on competitive advantage through customer value is significant.

## 4.2 Discussion

According to the analysis in previous explanation, service quality has positive and significant impact on customer value. Service quality indicators that have highest score based on the result of questionnaires are empathy and reliability while the lowest one is tangibility. This means that the merchant of coastal culinary store have served the customers on time, accurately, and reliable. They also served sincerely and attentive. The merchant of culinary store around coastal area is dominated with village residence who are well-known as kind and hospitable people. Their behavior made the customers feel enjoy consuming the food there and affect their assessment about the store. This finding is supporting the study from Lee and Ko (2016), Heri (2017), and Suhidayat et al. (2016) who found that service quality has positive and significant effect on customer value. Statistical result also showed that marketing mix has positive and significant effect on customer value. The highest score by respondents among elements of marketing mix is found on product. Product sold in coastal tourism area is dominated with processed-fresh seafood. The location of store which is exactly beside the beach made the seafood always fresh. The condition of seafood is so much different with the store in the city, that is why people give best assessment to the product compared to the other marketing mix elements. The taste of product which is cannot be found in other places encourage consumers to give positive assessment. This finding is in line with findings from Jalil (2015) and Chen et al. (2015) who said that elements in marketing mix has positive and significant effect on customer value. Service quality affects competitive advantage positively and significantly. When the customer assess the service served to them positively based on its tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy where the customers have not experienced before, they perceived that the product is unique and could not be imitated by its competitors. This finding is in accordance with the study from Wijetunge (2016) and Warraich (2013) who found that service quality could be a tool to achieve sustainable competitive advantage. Statistical result also showed that marketing mix has positive and significant impact on competitive advantage. Marketing mix covers elements of product, promotion, place, price, physical evidence, process, and people. Fresh seafood as the main product by the coastal culinary store still cannot be imitated by the competitors in the city. The store location which is exactly beside the shoreline becomes the main attraction and the reason why competitors could not emulate it. But the lowest assessment by respondents among element of marketing mix is the price and



physical evidence. It is because most of the stores do not attach the price in the menu so the customers could not estimate the price except by asking to the merchant. The store condition which is very simple and far from aesthetic look made the customers give the lowest assessment to physical evidence element than other marketing mix elements. Overall, this finding is in line with Chumaidiyah (2014) who found that marketing mix has positive and significant impact on competitive advantage. This study also found that customer value affects competitive advantage positively and significantly. The mediating role of customer value on the effect of service quality and marketing mix on competitive advantage is significant. This is supporting the study from Li (2009) who argued that customer value strategy could be one key to reach competitive advantage since the thinking of 'customer-oriented' becoming a trend and customer value has been regarded as a new source of competitive advantage in a firm.

## 5 CONCLUSION

This study provides an understanding about the impact of service quality and marketing mix on competitive advantage mediated with customer value. It can be concluded that both service quality and marketing mix have positive and significant impact on customer value and competitive advantage. The statistical result also showed that customer value could mediate the effect of both service quality and marketing mix on competitive advantage. From the practical perspective, this paper could benefit coastal culinary providers by better understand in quality of service and marketing mix elements to improve the customer value and to create competitive advantage. This paper is also beneficial for the local government to plan and to manage the coastal tourism together with culinary sector around it in order to increase local revenue and to empower the community around it. From theoretical perspective, this paper result could contribute to the field examining the variables. Further research could be implemented in different area with more sophisticated method.

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