

Digital Experience, Attendee Engagement, and Event Loyalty in Indonesian Tourism Events

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Tourism events in Indonesia are increasingly shaped by digital platforms, online promotion, mobile information access, and social media interaction. This transformation is reinforced by the expansion of event-based tourism initiatives, including Karisma Event Nusantara and the development of Event by Indonesia as a national digital event platform. Despite this growth, limited empirical research explains how digital experience contributes to attendee engagement and event loyalty in tourism events. This study examines the relationships among digital experience, attendee engagement, perceived event value, attendee satisfaction, and event loyalty in Indonesian tourism events. A quantitative survey was conducted among tourism event attendees in Indonesia, and 268 valid responses were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4. The findings show that digital experience significantly influences attendee engagement, perceived event value, and attendee satisfaction. Attendee engagement also positively affects perceived event value and attendee satisfaction, while perceived event value and attendee satisfaction significantly influence event loyalty. The study further confirms a significant sequential indirect effect linking digital experience and event loyalty through engagement, perceived value, and satisfaction. These findings position digital experience as part of the attendee value formation process in tourism events.

Keywords: Attendee Engagement; Digital Experience; Event Loyalty; Event Management; Tourism Events

INTRODUCTION

Tourism events have become a strategic instrument in Indonesia's tourism development, particularly because they connect destination promotion, visitor mobility, local culture, and regional economic circulation. This direction is reflected in the expansion of Karisma Event Nusantara, which in 2026 curated 125 events across 38 provinces, positioning events as a core component of national tourism strategy (Kementerian Pariwisata Republik Indonesia, 2026). In parallel, the introduction of Event by Indonesia as a centralized digital platform indicates a structural shift toward digital-based event ecosystems (Kementerian Pariwisata Republik Indonesia, 2025). These developments suggest that tourism events in Indonesia are no longer purely physical experiences but are increasingly mediated by digital infrastructures. Recent tourism studies further argue that digitalization has transformed destination marketing, tourist engagement, and tourism ecosystem management through online platforms, social media integration, and smart tourism technologies (Hasan et al., 2025; Garay-Tamajón, 2025). Moreover, tourism destinations are increasingly understood as digital business ecosystems in which technological infrastructures shape interactions among tourism stakeholders and visitors (Baggio & Del Chiappa, 2012).

The growing importance of tourism events is also supported by national tourism and industry data. Indonesia recorded 1.41 million international visitor arrivals and 105.98 million domestic tourism trips in December 2025, while hotel occupancy rates reached 56.12% (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2026). In the event sector, industry reports estimate more than 8,000 events with substantial economic circulation, highlighting the role of events as demand generators in the tourism ecosystem (IVENDO, 2025). These trends reinforce the increasing economic significance of event-based tourism within destination development and regional economic strategies. Prior tourism and event management studies further emphasize that events contribute not only to tourism demand creation, but also to destination branding, visitor experience formation, and behavioral intentions such as revisit intention and loyalty (Getz & Page, 2016; Rather, 2021). However, the expansion of events introduces a critical challenge: attracting attendees is no longer sufficient; event organizers must sustain engagement and convert participation into long-term loyalty. Research in tourism marketing increasingly shows that visitor loyalty is shaped by experiential quality, emotional engagement, and memorable tourism experiences rather than by attendance alone (Kim, 2018; Rather, 2021).

This challenge becomes more complex in the context of digitalization. The attendee journey is increasingly shaped by digital touchpoints, including online promotion, social media interaction, mobile applications, and user-generated content. Digital experience, therefore, extends beyond information access and includes usability, interactivity, emotional response, and perceived value. Prior studies show that online experience is shaped by communication, interaction, and engagement processes that influence behavioural outcomes (Kharouf et al., 2020). Moreover, digital tourism research demonstrates that technology-mediated interactions significantly influence tourists' perceptions, satisfaction, and behavioural intentions through website quality, interface design, and interactive communication features (Neuhofer et al., 2015; Bilgihan et al., 2016). Similarly, website and online experience models highlight that digital interfaces significantly shape user perception and behavioural intention (Zulfahmi et al., 2022). In this sense, digital experience becomes a critical component of how attendees interpret and evaluate tourism events. Recent event and tourism studies further suggest that immersive and interactive digital experiences contribute to stronger emotional attachment, engagement, and loyalty intentions among event participants and tourists (Rather & Hollebeek, 2021).

Attendee engagement plays a central role in linking experience to behavioural outcomes. Engagement reflects cognitive, emotional, and behavioural involvement during the event experience. In tourism contexts, engagement is often expressed through participation, interaction, and content sharing. However, digital transformation does not automatically enhance engagement. Without meaningful interaction design, digital tools may function only as passive information channels. Research on digital transformation in Indonesian contexts also suggests that the impact of digitalization depends on how it is integrated into value creation processes rather than merely adopted as technology (Firdaussiah et al., 2026).

Event loyalty, commonly reflected in revisit intention and word-of-mouth, remains a key outcome in event management. Existing studies have shown that perceived value and satisfaction are strong predictors of loyalty (Armbrecht, 2021; Tanford & Jung, 2017). In digital service contexts, perceived value and service quality also play a significant role in shaping satisfaction (Nursalim et al., 2025). However, most studies still treat digital elements as external factors rather than as embedded components of the experience–engagement–loyalty mechanism. As a result, the role of digital experience in shaping attendee engagement and loyalty remains insufficiently explained, particularly in emerging tourism event ecosystems such as Indonesia.

This gap is important because Indonesia is currently undergoing simultaneous expansion of curated tourism events and digital event infrastructure. The key issue is not only whether attendees can access event information, but whether digital experience contributes to engagement, perceived value, satisfaction, and ultimately loyalty. Therefore, this study examines the relationship between digital experience, attendee engagement, perceived event value, attendee satisfaction, and event loyalty in Indonesian tourism events. By positioning digital experience as part of the value formation process, this study extends existing event literature and provides empirical insight into how digitalization shapes attendee behaviour in a rapidly evolving tourism context.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Digital Experience in Tourism Events

Digital experience refers to attendees' perceptions of technology-mediated interactions before, during, and after an event. In tourism events, digital experience is not limited to online promotion or the availability of event information. It includes the quality of digital touchpoints, such as event websites, social media content, mobile applications, digital ticketing, online schedules, QR-based access, livestreaming, digital maps, and post-event interaction. These digital touchpoints shape how attendees search for information, anticipate the event, participate in event activities, share experiences, and evaluate the event after attendance.

This perspective is important because event experience is increasingly formed before attendees arrive at the physical event venue. Kharouf et al. (2020) argue that online event experience is influenced by communication, content engagement, and consumer-to-consumer interaction, and that such experience affects behavioural intentions toward events. Their study confirms that digital interaction is not merely a supporting communication channel but part of the event experience itself. Habachi et al. (2024) similarly show that application technology can shape event experience and subsequent behavioural outcomes, including attachment and behavioural intention. These studies indicate that digital technologies can influence how attendees interpret, evaluate, and remain connected to an event.

In the Indonesian context, this issue is becoming more relevant because tourism events are increasingly supported by digital platforms and national event curation. The Ministry of Tourism launched Event by Indonesia as a platform to integrate event information, while Karisma Event Nusantara 2026 selected 125 events from 38 provinces as flagship tourism events (Kementerian Pariwisata Republik Indonesia, 2026). This indicates that digital access and event visibility are becoming part of Indonesia's tourism event ecosystem. However, the key issue is not only whether event information is available online, but whether digital interaction creates meaningful experience for attendees.

Studies on website and online experience also support this argument. Zulfahmi et al. (2022) emphasize that websites should not merely provide information but should create experience that encourages users to explore digital content. Although their study is not specifically about tourism events, it is relevant because tourism event attendees often encounter the event first through websites, online platforms, and social media channels. Therefore, digital experience in this study is understood as a multidimensional construct involving information quality, ease of use, usefulness, interactivity, enjoyment, and emotional response.

Attendee Engagement

Attendee engagement refers to the cognitive, emotional, and behavioural involvement of participants in an event experience. In tourism events, engagement is reflected in the extent to which attendees pay attention to event content, feel emotionally connected, participate in event activities, interact with other attendees, and share their experiences through digital or offline channels. Engagement is therefore not only an individual psychological response but also a relational process shaped by interaction between attendees, organizers, digital media, event content, and destination narratives.

Consumer engagement literature conceptualizes engagement as a multidimensional construct involving cognitive processing, affection, and activation (Hollebeek et al., 2014). Brodie et al. (2013) further explain that engagement develops through interactive and context-dependent processes. In digitalized tourism events, this means that engagement can begin before the event through online exposure, continue during the event through digital and physical interaction, and extend after the event through reviews, social media sharing, and word of mouth.

However, digitalization does not automatically produce engagement. Digital tools may remain superficial if they only distribute information without supporting interaction, participation, or emotional connection. This is a critical issue for tourism events in Indonesia, where many events are increasingly promoted online but not all digital channels are designed as integrated attendee experience systems. In this study, attendee engagement is therefore positioned as a key mechanism through which digital experience may influence perceived event value, satisfaction, and loyalty.

Perceived Event Value

Perceived event value refers to attendees' overall evaluation of the benefits received from attending an event compared with the costs, time, effort, and expectations involved. In event tourism, perceived value may include entertainment value, cultural value, social value, educational value, destination value, emotional value, and digital convenience. The construct is important because attendees do not evaluate events only based on physical attractions; they also evaluate whether the entire experience is worth their time, money, attention, and mobility.

Previous studies show that perceived value is closely related to satisfaction and behavioural intention. Armbrecht (2021) found that event quality, perceived value, satisfaction, and behavioural intentions are connected in an event context. This finding supports the argument that attendees' future behaviour is shaped not only by objective event quality but also by how attendees interpret the value of the experience. Tanford and Jung (2017) also show through meta-analysis that festival attributes and visitor perceptions are strongly associated with satisfaction and loyalty.

In digitalized tourism events, perceived value can be strengthened when digital tools reduce uncertainty, improve information access, support convenience, and increase interaction. For example, clear event schedules, reliable ticketing systems, interactive social media content, and useful event applications can increase the perceived benefits of attending. Conversely, fragmented information, poor digital communication, or confusing online systems may weaken perceived value even when the physical event is attractive. Nursalim et al. (2025) show in a digital service context that perceived value and service quality are important in explaining customer satisfaction, which supports the relevance of perceived value in technology-mediated service experiences.

Attendee Satisfaction

Attendee satisfaction refers to the evaluative response that emerges when event experience meets or exceeds expectations. In tourism event research, satisfaction is commonly treated as a central antecedent of loyalty because satisfied attendees are more likely to revisit, recommend, and maintain positive attitudes toward the event. However, satisfaction should not be treated as a simple post-event feeling. It is shaped by the cumulative evaluation of event quality, perceived value, interaction, emotional experience, and digital convenience.

Oliver (1999) conceptualizes loyalty as a process that develops through cognitive, affective, conative, and action stages. Within this process, satisfaction plays an important role because repeated positive evaluation strengthens favourable behavioural intentions. In festival and event contexts, Tanford and Jung (2017) show that satisfaction is strongly related to loyalty, while Armbrecht (2021) demonstrates that perceived value and satisfaction contribute to behavioural intention.

In digital tourism events, satisfaction may be influenced by both physical and digital dimensions of the experience. Attendees may be satisfied not only because of performance quality, cultural content, or venue atmosphere, but also because digital information is accurate, platforms are easy to use, ticketing is efficient, and online interaction enhances the experience. Therefore, this study positions satisfaction as a mediator between perceived event value and event loyalty.

Event Loyalty

Event loyalty refers to attendees' favourable behavioural intentions toward an event, including revisit intention, willingness to recommend, positive word of mouth, and continued interest in future editions of the event. Loyalty is especially important for tourism events because many events rely on repeated attendance, reputation, social media visibility, and long-term destination branding. In regional tourism, loyal attendees can also help extend the economic impact of events by encouraging future visits and recommendations.

Existing research shows that loyalty is shaped by multiple antecedents. Armbrecht (2021) links event quality, perceived value, satisfaction, and behavioural intentions. Tanford and Jung (2017) demonstrate that festival satisfaction and perceived attributes are important predictors of loyalty. Rivetti (2024) adds that knowledge and authenticity

can also influence attendee loyalty in cultural festivals, showing that loyalty is not only a behavioural outcome but also a meaning-based response to event experience.

This is relevant for Indonesian tourism events because many events are rooted in culture, locality, creative economy activities, and destination identity. However, digital experience may shape loyalty differently from traditional event attributes. Digital tools can sustain attendee relationships before and after the event, but they may only lead to loyalty when they create engagement, value, and satisfaction. Therefore, this study treats event loyalty as the outcome of an experience-based and digitally mediated value formation process.

Digital Transformation and Tourism Event Management in Indonesia

Indonesia provides a relevant context for examining digital experience and event loyalty because tourism events are expanding alongside digital transformation in tourism promotion and service delivery. The selection of 125 Karisma Event Nusantara events across 38 provinces in 2026 shows that events are being positioned as strategic tourism assets. At the same time, digital platforms such as Event by Indonesia indicate that event discovery, promotion, and information access are becoming more coordinated through digital infrastructure.

However, digital transformation in Indonesia is uneven. Event organizers, local governments, communities, SMEs, and tourism actors may have different levels of digital readiness. Firdaussiah et al. (2026) show that digital transformation contributes to competitive advantage when it mediates organizational resources and strategic capability, suggesting that digitalization only creates value when it is integrated into organizational processes. This insight is relevant for tourism event management because digital tools do not automatically improve attendee experience unless they are connected to service design, interaction management, and post-event relationship building.

Therefore, this study argues that digital transformation in tourism events should be evaluated not merely by the presence of digital tools, but by their ability to shape attendee experience, engagement, perceived value, satisfaction, and loyalty. This perspective helps avoid a superficial understanding of digitalization and shifts the analysis toward attendee-centred value formation.

Hypotheses Development

Digital Experience and Attendee Engagement

Digital experience in tourism events is not limited to the technical availability of websites, social media, or mobile applications. It concerns how attendees perceive the usefulness, interactivity, accessibility, and emotional quality of digital touchpoints across the event journey. In digitalized event settings, attendees may begin interacting with the event before physical attendance through online information, promotional content, social media conversations, ticketing systems, and digital schedules. These interactions can stimulate cognitive attention, emotional interest, and behavioural participation.

Kharouf et al. (2020) show that online event experience is shaped by communication, content engagement, and consumer-to-consumer interaction, and that such experience influences behavioural intentions in mega-event contexts. Habachi et al. (2024) also demonstrate that application technology can shape event experience and subsequent behavioural outcomes, including attachment and intention. These findings indicate that digital interfaces are not merely supporting channels but can actively structure how attendees become involved with an event.

Therefore, when digital experience is informative, interactive, enjoyable, and easy to use, attendees are more likely to become engaged with the event.

H1: Digital experience has a positive effect on attendee engagement.

Digital Experience and Perceived Event Value

Perceived event value refers to attendees' evaluation of whether the event provides benefits that justify the time, cost, effort, and attention invested. In tourism events, value is not formed only through physical event attributes such as venue, performance, or atmosphere. It is also shaped by the digital convenience that supports the attendee journey, including information clarity, online accessibility, digital interaction, ticketing ease, and post-event communication.

Research on online and website experience suggests that digital interfaces can shape users' satisfaction, confidence, and behavioural responses when functionality, content, and psychological experience are properly integrated (Zulfahmi et al., 2022). This is relevant to tourism events because attendees often encounter event information digitally before deciding to attend.

Digital experience can increase perceived event value by reducing uncertainty, improving convenience, and making the event feel more accessible and worthwhile.

H2: Digital experience has a positive effect on perceived event value.

Digital Experience and Attendee Satisfaction

Digital experience may also directly influence attendee satisfaction. In contemporary tourism events, attendees evaluate the event not only after arriving at the venue but throughout the whole journey, from searching information to sharing post-event impressions. A poor digital experience, such as unclear schedules, difficult ticketing, weak online communication, or fragmented event information, can reduce satisfaction even when the physical event is attractive.

Armbrecht (2021) confirms that event quality, perceived value, satisfaction, and behavioural intentions are closely connected in an event context. This means satisfaction is shaped by both affective and cognitive evaluations of the event experience. In digitalized events, digital touchpoints become part of this evaluation because they influence how attendees prepare for, navigate, and remember the event.

Thus, digital experience is expected to contribute directly to attendee satisfaction.

H3: Digital experience has a positive effect on attendee satisfaction.

Attendee Engagement and Perceived Event Value

Attendee engagement strengthens perceived event value because engaged attendees are more likely to interpret the event as meaningful, relevant, and memorable. Engagement involves cognitive attention, emotional involvement, and behavioural participation. When attendees actively interact with event content, participate in activities, communicate with others, and share their experiences, they are more likely to perceive the event as valuable.

Consumer engagement theory conceptualizes engagement as a multidimensional process involving cognitive, emotional, and behavioural dimensions (Hollebeek et al., 2014). In event settings, this means that value is not passively received but co-created through participation and interaction. Tanford and Jung's (2017) meta-analysis also shows that festival attributes, perceptions, satisfaction, and loyalty are closely connected, indicating that attendee evaluation depends on how the event experience is interpreted.

Therefore, stronger engagement is expected to increase perceived event value.

H4: Attendee engagement has a positive effect on perceived event value.

Attendee Engagement and Attendee Satisfaction

Attendee engagement is also expected to influence satisfaction. Engaged attendees tend to be more involved in event activities, more emotionally connected to the event, and more likely to experience the event as personally meaningful. This involvement can strengthen satisfaction because attendees are not merely observing the event but actively participating in the experience.

Kharouf et al. (2020) emphasize that content engagement and interaction are important in shaping online event experience and behavioural intentions. This supports the argument that engagement functions as a bridge between digital experience and post-event evaluation. In tourism events, attendees who feel more involved are more likely to evaluate the event positively.

Thus, attendee engagement is expected to enhance attendee satisfaction.

H5: Attendee engagement has a positive effect on attendee satisfaction.

Perceived Event Value and Attendee Satisfaction

Perceived event value is one of the strongest predictors of satisfaction because attendees feel satisfied when the benefits of the event exceed the costs, effort, and expectations involved. In tourism events, value may include entertainment, cultural meaning, social interaction, destination experience, emotional enjoyment, and digital convenience.

Armbrecht (2021) found that perceived value and satisfaction are closely linked in event contexts. In digital service settings, Nursalim et al. (2025) also show that service quality and perceived value influence customer satisfaction, with their study using SEM and SmartPLS among e-commerce delivery users in Jakarta. Although the context differs, the logic is relevant because both digital services and digitalized events involve technology-mediated evaluation of service value.

Therefore, attendees who perceive higher event value are more likely to feel satisfied.

H6: Perceived event value has a positive effect on attendee satisfaction.

Perceived Event Value and Event Loyalty

Perceived event value may also influence event loyalty directly. Attendees who perceive an event as valuable are more likely to revisit, recommend, and maintain interest in future editions. This relationship is important because loyalty is not only created by satisfaction but also by the perception that the event is worth repeating or sharing with others.

Festival and event studies show that perceived value is an important antecedent of loyalty. Akhoondnejad (2016), for example, tested a comprehensive model of festival loyalty linking authenticity, festival quality, value, satisfaction, trust, and loyalty. This supports the argument that value is part of the loyalty formation process, especially in cultural and tourism events.

Thus, perceived event value is expected to increase event loyalty.

H7: Perceived event value has a positive effect on event loyalty.

Attendee Satisfaction and Event Loyalty

Attendee satisfaction is a central determinant of event loyalty. Satisfied attendees are more likely to revisit the event, recommend it to others, share positive word of mouth, and maintain interest in similar events. In tourism events, this relationship is especially important because many events depend on repeat attendance, destination reputation, and social media amplification.

Oliver (1999) explains loyalty as a process that develops through cognitive, affective, conative, and action stages. In event research, Tanford and Jung (2017) confirm through meta-analysis that satisfaction is strongly associated with festival loyalty. Armbrecht (2021) also shows that satisfaction contributes to behavioural intentions in event contexts.

Therefore, satisfied attendees are more likely to develop loyalty toward tourism events.

H8: Attendee satisfaction has a positive effect on event loyalty.

Sequential Mediation Effect

The relationship between digital experience and event loyalty is unlikely to be purely direct. Digital tools may attract attention, but they do not automatically create loyalty. Loyalty is more likely to develop when digital experience first generates engagement, strengthens perceived value, and produces satisfaction.

This sequential logic is supported by online event experience research, which links communication, engagement, interaction, online experience, and behavioural intention (Kharouf et al., 2020). It is also consistent with event loyalty studies that place perceived value and satisfaction as key mechanisms leading to behavioural intention (Armbrecht, 2021; Tanford & Jung, 2017).

Thus, this study proposes a sequential mediation pathway from digital experience to event loyalty through attendee engagement, perceived event value, and attendee satisfaction.

H9: Digital experience has an indirect positive effect on event loyalty through attendee engagement, perceived event value, and attendee satisfaction.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study is developed to explain how digital experience contributes to event loyalty in Indonesian tourism events. The framework is based on the argument that attendee loyalty is not formed only through physical event attendance, but through a broader process involving digital interaction, engagement, value evaluation, and satisfaction. In this study, digital experience is positioned as the initial antecedent because attendees increasingly encounter tourism events through digital platforms before, during, and after their participation.

As shown in Figure 1, digital experience is expected to influence attendee engagement, perceived event value, and attendee satisfaction. Digital platforms, online information, social media interaction, digital ticketing, and event-related applications may shape how attendees become involved with an event, how they evaluate its value, and how satisfied they feel with the overall experience. Attendee engagement is then positioned as a mechanism that strengthens perceived event value and satisfaction, because engaged attendees are more likely to interpret the event as meaningful, enjoyable, and worthwhile. The framework further proposes that perceived event value influences both attendee satisfaction and event loyalty. Attendees who perceive the event as valuable are more likely to feel satisfied and to develop favourable behavioural intentions. Attendee satisfaction is positioned as a direct antecedent of event loyalty because satisfied

attendees are more likely to revisit, recommend, and speak positively about the event. In addition to these direct relationships, the framework includes a sequential mediation pathway in which digital experience influences event loyalty through attendee engagement, perceived event value, and attendee satisfaction.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

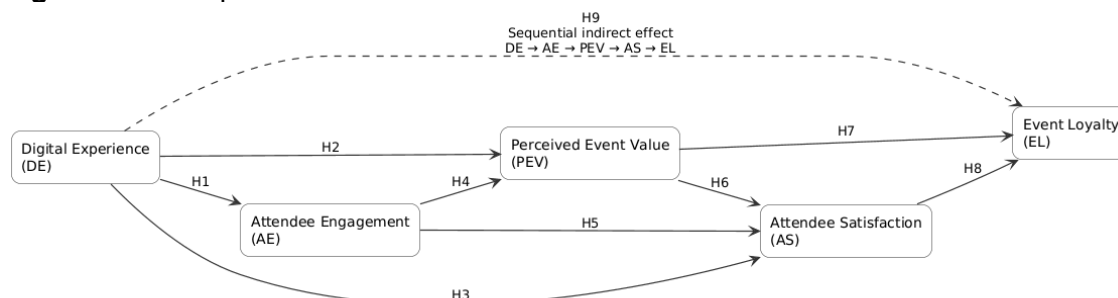


Figure 1 shows that the model is not merely a simple linear structure. It includes direct effects from digital experience to attendee engagement, perceived event value, and attendee satisfaction, as well as sequential relationships leading to event loyalty. The dotted line represents the indirect effect proposed in H9, where digital experience contributes to event loyalty through attendee engagement, perceived event value, and attendee satisfaction. This structure is consistent with the hypothesis development and the subsequent SEM analysis.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a quantitative explanatory approach to examine the relationships among digital experience, attendee engagement, perceived event value, attendee satisfaction, and event loyalty in tourism events. The research is intended to explain structural relationships among latent constructs based on attendees' evaluations of their event experiences. A survey method was employed because the study requires perceptual and behavioural data from individuals who have directly participated in tourism events. The study uses a cross-sectional design, where data were collected at a single point in time. This design is appropriate because the objective is to examine relationships among constructs rather than to observe behavioural changes over time. The study focuses on tourism events in Indonesia, including cultural festivals, creative economy events, entertainment events, and MICE-related events that involve digital information access or digital interaction as part of the attendee journey.

The target population consists of individuals who had attended at least one tourism event in Indonesia within the last twelve months. This timeframe was selected to ensure that respondents could reasonably recall their digital interactions and overall event experience. Data were collected using a structured online questionnaire distributed through event organizer networks, tourism-related communities, academic and professional networks, and attendee groups connected to tourism and event activities. This distribution strategy was chosen because the study required respondents with direct experience of attending tourism events and interacting with event-related digital platforms. Digital communication channels were therefore used only as a means of reaching eligible respondents rather than as the focus of the study itself.

Before completing the questionnaire, respondents were asked screening questions to confirm that they had attended a tourism event in Indonesia and had accessed event-related information through digital platforms, such as event websites, ticketing platforms, social media accounts, online schedules, or event applications. Respondents who did not meet these criteria were excluded from the analysis. The data collection process was conducted over a six-week period from January to February 2026. A total of 312 responses were obtained. After data screening, which involved removing incomplete responses, duplicate entries, and responses showing straight-lining patterns, 268 valid responses were retained for analysis. This sample size exceeds the minimum recommendation for Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), particularly for models involving multiple constructs and mediation relationships.

The demographic profile of respondents reflects diverse participation in tourism events and varying levels of digital engagement. The respondent characteristics are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

Category	Classification	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	120	44.8%
	Female	148	55.2%
Age	17–25 years	106	39.6%
	26–35 years	93	34.7%
	36–45 years	47	17.5%
	Above 45 years	22	8.2%
Education	High School	65	24.3%
	Bachelor’s Degree	157	58.6%
	Postgraduate	46	17.1%
Event Attendance in the Last 12 Months	1–2 events	97	36.2%
	3–5 events	114	42.5%
	More than 5 events	57	21.3%
Type of Event Attended	Cultural festivals	112	41.8%
	Music and entertainment events	79	29.5%
	Creative economy events	48	17.9%
	MICE and exhibitions	29	10.8%

The profile indicates that respondents have relevant experience in tourism events and sufficient exposure to digital interaction within event settings.

The measurement instrument was developed using multi-item scales adapted from prior studies, with contextual adjustments to fit tourism event settings. All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Digital experience was measured using indicators related to accessibility, usefulness, interactivity, and enjoyment of digital platforms, adapted from Kharouf et al. (2020) and Zulfahmi et al. (2022). Attendee engagement was conceptualized as a multidimensional construct consisting of cognitive, emotional, and behavioural engagement, following Hollebeek et al. (2014). Perceived event value was measured using indicators reflecting overall benefits, value for effort, and perceived worthiness of the event experience, adapted from Prebensen et al. (2014) and Armbrecht (2021). Attendee satisfaction captured respondents’ overall evaluation of the event experience, based on Oliver (1999), while event loyalty was measured through revisit intention, recommendation intention, and positive word of mouth, following Tanford and Jung (2017).

Prior to the main survey, a pilot test involving 30 respondents was conducted to assess item clarity, wording, and contextual relevance. Based on the pilot test results, minor wording adjustments were made without altering the conceptual meaning of the measurement items.

The data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling with SmartPLS 4. PLS-SEM was selected because the study is prediction-oriented and involves multiple latent constructs and mediation relationships. In addition, this approach is suitable for survey-based research because it does not require strict multivariate normality assumptions. The analysis was conducted in two stages. The first stage involved evaluation of the measurement model through indicator reliability, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Indicator reliability was examined through outer loadings, while internal consistency reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability. Convergent validity was evaluated using Average Variance Extracted (AVE), whereas discriminant validity was assessed using the Fornell–Larcker criterion and the heterotrait–monotrait ratio (HTMT).

The second stage involved assessment of the structural model through path coefficients, t-values, and p-values obtained using bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples. The explanatory power of the model was examined using the coefficient of determination (R^2), while effect size and predictive relevance were evaluated using f^2 and Q^2 values. In addition, PLSpredict was employed to assess the out-of-sample predictive performance of the model.

Because the data were collected using a single survey instrument, common method bias was also assessed. Harman's single-factor test indicated that no single factor accounted for the majority of variance. Furthermore, full collinearity variance inflation factor values were below the recommended threshold of 3.3, indicating that common method bias was not a serious concern.

Ethical considerations were carefully addressed throughout the study. Participation in the survey was voluntary, respondents were informed about the purpose of the study before completing the questionnaire, and anonymity and confidentiality were ensured. No personally identifiable information was collected from respondents.

RESULTS

Measurement Model Assessment

The measurement model was evaluated to assess indicator reliability, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. The assessment was conducted prior to structural model analysis to ensure that all constructs met the required validity and reliability standards for Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM).

Indicator Reliability

Indicator reliability was first assessed using outer loadings. All retained indicators demonstrated loading values above the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating that the indicators adequately represented their respective constructs. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Outer Loadings

Construct	Indicator	Outer Loading
Digital Experience	DE1	0.812
	DE2	0.846
	DE3	0.791
	DE4	0.835
Attendee Engagement	AE1	0.768
	AE2	0.824
	AE3	0.803
	AE4	0.781
	AE5	0.817
Perceived Event Value	PEV1	0.842
	PEV2	0.861
	PEV3	0.833
	PEV4	0.879
Attendee Satisfaction	AS1	0.806
	AS2	0.834
	AS3	0.781
Event Loyalty	EL1	0.794
	EL2	0.821
	EL3	0.836
	EL4	0.785

The loading values indicate that all indicators contributed satisfactorily to their latent constructs. None of the indicators required removal because all exceeded the acceptable threshold.

Internal Consistency Reliability and Convergent Validity

Internal consistency reliability was evaluated using Cronbach’s alpha and composite reliability. Convergent validity was assessed using Average Variance Extracted (AVE). As shown in Table 3, all constructs exceeded the recommended threshold values of 0.70 for composite reliability and 0.50 for AVE, confirming adequate reliability and convergent validity.

Table 3. Construct Reliability and Convergent Validity

Construct	Cronbach’s Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Digital Experience	0.839	0.892	0.674
Attendee Engagement	0.860	0.900	0.643
Perceived Event Value	0.875	0.914	0.727
Attendee Satisfaction	0.735	0.848	0.651
Event Loyalty	0.825	0.884	0.657

These findings confirm that the constructs demonstrate satisfactory internal consistency and that the indicators collectively explain sufficient variance within each construct.

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity was assessed using the Fornell–Larcker criterion and the heterotrait–monotrait ratio (HTMT). The square root of AVE for each construct was greater than its correlations with other constructs, indicating adequate discriminant validity.

Table 4. Fornell–Larcker Criterion

Construct	DE	AE	PEV	AS	EL
Digital Experience	0.821				
Attendee Engagement	0.612	0.802			
Perceived Event Value	0.551	0.610	0.853		
Attendee Satisfaction	0.536	0.587	0.689	0.807	
Event Loyalty	0.497	0.542	0.613	0.667	0.811

The HTMT values were also below the threshold of 0.90, further confirming that the constructs are empirically distinct from one another.

Table 5. HTMT Ratio

Construct Pair	HTMT
DE–AE	0.713
DE–PEV	0.651
DE–AS	0.642
DE–EL	0.598
AE–PEV	0.706
AE–AS	0.681
AE–EL	0.633
PEV–AS	0.782
PEV–EL	0.701
AS–EL	0.764

Overall, the measurement model assessment confirms that all constructs satisfy the required reliability and validity criteria and are therefore suitable for structural model analysis.

Structural Model Assessment

Before testing the hypotheses, collinearity among predictor constructs was examined using inner Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values. As shown in Table 6, all VIF values were below the recommended threshold of 3.3, indicating that multicollinearity was not a serious concern.

Table 6. Inner VIF Values

Predictor → Endogenous Construct	VIF
Digital Experience → Attendee Engagement	1.000
Digital Experience → Perceived Event Value	1.598
Attendee Engagement → Perceived Event Value	1.598
Digital Experience → Attendee Satisfaction	1.637
Attendee Engagement → Attendee Satisfaction	1.793
Perceived Event Value → Attendee Satisfaction	1.926
Perceived Event Value → Event Loyalty	1.904
Attendee Satisfaction → Event Loyalty	1.904

The structural model was subsequently assessed using bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples to evaluate the significance of the proposed hypotheses.

Direct Effects

The direct effect results are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Direct Effect Results

Hypothesis	Path	β	t-value	p-value	Decision
H1	Digital Experience → Attendee Engagement	0.612	12.487	<0.001	Supported
H2	Digital Experience → Perceived Event Value	0.284	4.963	<0.001	Supported
H3	Digital Experience → Attendee Satisfaction	0.198	3.412	0.001	Supported
H4	Attendee Engagement → Perceived Event Value	0.436	7.821	<0.001	Supported
H5	Attendee Engagement → Attendee Satisfaction	0.221	3.967	<0.001	Supported
H6	Perceived Event Value → Attendee Satisfaction	0.472	8.956	<0.001	Supported
H7	Perceived Event Value → Event Loyalty	0.291	5.384	<0.001	Supported
H8	Attendee Satisfaction → Event Loyalty	0.468	9.112	<0.001	Supported

The results show that all direct hypotheses were supported. Among the antecedents of attendee engagement, digital experience demonstrated the strongest effect ($\beta = 0.612$), indicating that digital touchpoints play an important role in activating attendee involvement in tourism events. Meanwhile, attendee satisfaction demonstrated the strongest direct effect on event loyalty ($\beta = 0.468$), suggesting that loyalty is primarily shaped by attendees' overall evaluation of the event experience.

The findings also indicate that perceived event value significantly influences both attendee satisfaction and event loyalty. This suggests that attendees who perceive tourism events as valuable are more likely to develop positive evaluations and favourable behavioural intentions toward future participation.

Specific Indirect Effect and Sequential Mediation

In addition to the direct relationships, the study also examined the sequential indirect effect proposed in H9 to assess whether digital experience influences event loyalty through attendee engagement, perceived event value, and attendee satisfaction.

The specific indirect effect analysis was conducted using bootstrapping procedures. The result is presented in Table 8.

Table 8. Specific Indirect Effect and Sequential Mediation

Hypothesis	Indirect Path	β	t-value	p-value	Decision
H9	DE → AE → PEV → AS → EL	0.059	4.286	<0.001	Supported

The result confirms that digital experience contributes to event loyalty through a sequential process involving attendee engagement, perceived event value, and attendee satisfaction. Digital experience first strengthens attendee engagement, which subsequently increases perceived event value. Higher perceived event value then enhances attendee satisfaction, and attendee satisfaction ultimately contributes to stronger event loyalty.

This finding suggests that digital interaction alone is insufficient to generate loyalty directly. Instead, loyalty emerges through a broader process of engagement, value formation, and experiential evaluation.

Explanatory Power and Predictive Relevance

The explanatory power of the model was assessed using the coefficient of determination (R^2), while predictive relevance was evaluated using Q^2 values. The results are presented in Table 9.

Table 9. R^2 and Q^2 Values

Endogenous Construct	R^2	Interpretation	Q^2	Predictive Relevance
Attendee Engagement	0.374	Moderate	0.241	Yes
Perceived Event Value	0.521	Moderate	0.328	Yes
Attendee Satisfaction	0.648	Substantial	0.402	Yes
Event Loyalty	0.583	Moderate	0.367	Yes

The results indicate that the model explains 37.4% of the variance in attendee engagement, 52.1% in perceived event value, 64.8% in attendee satisfaction, and 58.3% in event loyalty. The highest explanatory power was observed for attendee satisfaction, indicating that digital experience, attendee engagement, and perceived event value collectively provide strong explanatory capability for satisfaction formation. All Q^2 values were above zero, confirming that the model demonstrates predictive relevance for all endogenous constructs.

Effect Size Assessment

Effect size was evaluated using f^2 values to determine the relative impact of exogenous constructs on endogenous constructs. The results are shown in Table 10.

Table 10. Effect Size (f^2)

Path	f^2	Interpretation
Digital Experience → Attendee Engagement	0.598	Large
Digital Experience → Perceived Event Value	0.103	Small
Digital Experience → Attendee Satisfaction	0.062	Small
Attendee Engagement → Perceived Event Value	0.221	Medium
Attendee Engagement → Attendee Satisfaction	0.079	Small
Perceived Event Value → Attendee Satisfaction	0.336	Medium
Perceived Event Value → Event Loyalty	0.148	Small
Attendee Satisfaction → Event Loyalty	0.412	Large

The results indicate that digital experience has a substantial effect on attendee engagement, while attendee satisfaction has a substantial effect on event loyalty. In contrast, several other relationships demonstrate small to moderate effect sizes, suggesting that loyalty formation in tourism events is influenced by multiple interconnected factors rather than by a single dominant construct.

PLSpredict Assessment

PLSpredict was employed to evaluate the out-of-sample predictive performance of the model. The comparison between PLS-SEM RMSE values and linear model (LM) RMSE values is presented in Table 11.

Table 11. PLSpredict Results

Indicator	PLS-SEM RMSE	LM RMSE	Predictive Assessment
AE1	0.674	0.701	Good
AE2	0.692	0.718	Good
PEV1	0.641	0.663	Good
PEV2	0.658	0.672	Good
AS1	0.629	0.651	Good
AS2	0.647	0.668	Good
EL1	0.681	0.704	Good
EL2	0.696	0.711	Good

Most indicators produced lower RMSE values in the PLS-SEM model compared to the linear model benchmark, indicating acceptable predictive performance. These findings suggest that the proposed model demonstrates satisfactory capability in predicting attendee behavioural outcomes in tourism event contexts.

Overall, the results confirm that the proposed model demonstrates adequate reliability, validity, explanatory power, and predictive relevance. The findings support all nine hypotheses, including the sequential indirect effect proposed in H9, confirming that digital experience influences event loyalty through attendee engagement, perceived event value, and attendee satisfaction.

DISCUSSION

The findings confirm that digital experience is a critical antecedent of attendee behaviour in Indonesian tourism events. All proposed hypotheses were supported, indicating that digital interaction contributes not only to event accessibility but also to engagement, value formation, satisfaction, and loyalty. The results suggest that tourism events in Indonesia are increasingly experienced through digitally mediated interaction, where online communication, digital platforms, and interactive technologies become part of how attendees interpret and evaluate event experiences.

The results support H1, which proposed that digital experience positively influences attendee engagement. The path coefficient indicates that digital experience has the strongest direct effect on attendee engagement among all relationships in the model. This finding suggests that interactive and accessible digital touchpoints stimulate attendee involvement in tourism events. Digital platforms such as social media, event websites, online schedules, and digital ticketing systems allow attendees to interact with event content before attending the physical event. As a result, engagement begins to form prior to on-site participation. This finding supports Kharouf et al. (2020), who argued that communication, interaction, and content engagement are central dimensions of online event experience. The result is also consistent with Hollebeek et al. (2014), who conceptualized engagement as a multidimensional process involving cognitive, emotional, and behavioural activation emerging from interactive experiences. In the Indonesian context, the finding is relevant because tourism events increasingly rely on digital discoverability and online visibility to attract participants. Thus, digital experience should not be viewed merely as a promotional mechanism, but as part of attendee engagement formation.

The results also support H2, indicating that digital experience positively influences perceived event value. This finding suggests that attendees evaluate tourism events not only through physical event quality but also through the quality of digital interaction surrounding the event. Digital convenience, accessibility, information clarity, and online usability contribute to attendees' perceptions that the event is worthwhile and beneficial. This result extends the argument of Zulfahmi et al. (2022), who found that online and

website experiences shape users' evaluations of digital interaction quality. Although their study focused on online and website experience more broadly, the present findings demonstrate that similar mechanisms operate in tourism events. The finding also aligns with digital service research emphasizing that technological interaction contributes to perceived service value when digital systems improve usability and convenience (Nursalim et al., 2025). In tourism events, this implies that digital interaction becomes part of the overall evaluation of event value rather than functioning solely as supporting infrastructure.

H3 is also supported, demonstrating that digital experience positively influences attendee satisfaction. This finding confirms that satisfaction in tourism events is formed through the entire attendee journey rather than only through physical participation during the event itself. Attendees evaluate the event experience holistically, including online communication, ticketing systems, information accessibility, responsiveness, and digital interaction quality. Poor digital interaction may reduce satisfaction even when the physical event is attractive, whereas smooth digital interaction can strengthen positive evaluations. This result supports Armbrecht (2021), who argued that event quality, perceived value, satisfaction, and behavioural intention are closely interconnected in event contexts. However, the present study extends previous event research by showing that digital interaction itself becomes part of event quality evaluation. The finding is also consistent with Habachi et al. (2024), who demonstrated that application technology contributes to behavioural outcomes and affective responses within event experiences. The findings further support H4, indicating that attendee engagement positively influences perceived event value. This suggests that engaged attendees are more likely to interpret tourism events as meaningful, enjoyable, and worthwhile. Attendees who actively participate, interact, and become emotionally involved in the event experience tend to perceive greater benefits from the event. This finding aligns with Prebensen et al. (2014), who emphasized that involvement and participation contribute to experience value formation in tourism contexts. The result is also consistent with Brodie et al. (2013), who explained that engagement facilitates value co-creation processes. In tourism events, value is therefore not passively received from organizers but emerges through interaction, participation, and experiential involvement.

The results additionally support H5, which proposed that attendee engagement positively influences attendee satisfaction. The finding suggests that attendees who are more cognitively, emotionally, and behaviourally involved in tourism events are more likely to evaluate the event positively. Engagement strengthens emotional connection and personal relevance, which subsequently enhance satisfaction. This finding supports Kharouf et al. (2020), who demonstrated that interaction and engagement contribute to online event experience and behavioural responses. The result also reinforces consumer engagement theory, which views engagement as a mechanism that shapes evaluative outcomes through active participation (Hollebeek et al., 2014). In Indonesian tourism events, this implies that engagement strategies are important not only for participation but also for satisfaction formation.

The findings support H6, indicating that perceived event value positively influences attendee satisfaction. This relationship confirms that attendees are more likely to feel satisfied when they perceive the event as beneficial relative to the time, effort, and cost invested. Tourism events often involve travel expenses, accommodation costs, and time commitment; therefore, attendees continuously evaluate whether the experience justifies these investments. This finding is consistent with Armbrecht (2021) and Tanford and Jung (2017), both of whom found that perceived value is an important antecedent of satisfaction in event settings. The finding also aligns with Nursalim et al. (2025), who demonstrated that perceived value contributes to customer satisfaction in digital service

environments. Although their study focused on e-commerce delivery, the present findings indicate that similar evaluative mechanisms operate in digitally mediated tourism event experiences.

H7 is also supported, confirming that perceived event value positively influences event loyalty. This suggests that attendees who perceive tourism events as valuable are more likely to revisit the event, recommend it to others, and maintain positive attitudes toward future participation. The finding is consistent with Akhoondnejad (2016), who found that value perception contributes significantly to festival loyalty formation. Similarly, Tanford and Jung (2017) identified perceived value as one of the key predictors of behavioural intention and festival loyalty. In the context of Indonesian tourism events, the finding implies that loyalty is strongly connected to attendees' perceptions of whether the overall event experience provides meaningful and worthwhile benefits.

The results further support H8, which proposed that attendee satisfaction positively influences event loyalty. Among the direct effects in the model, attendee satisfaction demonstrates one of the strongest effects on loyalty, indicating that revisit intention and recommendation behaviour are primarily driven by attendees' overall evaluation of the event experience. This finding supports Oliver's (1999) conceptualization of loyalty as a process emerging through positive cognitive and affective evaluations. It also aligns with previous event and festival studies emphasizing that satisfaction is a central determinant of loyalty behaviour (Tanford & Jung, 2017; Armbrecht, 2021). In practical terms, this finding suggests that tourism events in Indonesia must focus not only on attracting attendees but also on ensuring that the entire event experience generates positive evaluation and emotional fulfilment.

Finally, the results support H9, demonstrating that digital experience has a significant indirect effect on event loyalty through attendee engagement, perceived event value, and attendee satisfaction. This sequential mediation finding is theoretically important because it clarifies how digital interaction contributes to loyalty formation. Digital experience alone does not automatically create loyal attendees. Instead, digital interaction first stimulates engagement, engagement strengthens value perception, perceived value enhances satisfaction, and satisfaction subsequently leads to loyalty. This result extends previous event loyalty studies by positioning digital experience as the starting point of a broader value formation process. Prior event studies have generally focused on event quality, satisfaction, authenticity, or festival attributes, whereas the present study demonstrates that digitally mediated interaction is also part of attendee behavioural formation.

From a theoretical perspective, the study contributes to tourism event literature in several ways. First, it extends event loyalty research by integrating digital experience into the explanation of attendee loyalty formation. Second, it clarifies the mediating roles of attendee engagement, perceived event value, and attendee satisfaction within a single explanatory framework. Third, the study contributes empirical evidence from Indonesia, where tourism events are increasingly connected to national digitalization initiatives such as Event by Indonesia and Karisma Event Nusantara.

The findings also provide practical implications for event organizers and tourism policymakers. Tourism events should no longer treat digital platforms solely as promotional tools. Instead, digital interaction should be integrated into attendee experience management. Organizers should improve digital accessibility, information quality, usability, and interaction responsiveness because these dimensions contribute directly and indirectly to engagement, value formation, satisfaction, and loyalty. For policymakers, the findings indicate that digital tourism event initiatives should focus not

only on increasing visibility but also on improving attendee-centred digital experience design.

Despite these contributions, the study has several limitations. The use of cross-sectional data limits the ability to observe changes in attendee behaviour over time. In addition, the study examines tourism events broadly without differentiating between event categories such as cultural festivals, music events, or MICE activities. Future research may compare different event types or incorporate additional constructs such as destination image, authenticity, emotional attachment, or social media influence. Longitudinal studies may also provide deeper understanding of how loyalty develops through repeated participation and ongoing digital interaction.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the relationships among digital experience, attendee engagement, perceived event value, attendee satisfaction, and event loyalty in Indonesian tourism events. The findings demonstrate that digital experience plays an important role in shaping attendee behaviour and evaluation within tourism event contexts. Digital experience significantly influences attendee engagement, perceived event value, and attendee satisfaction, while attendee engagement contributes to both perceived event value and attendee satisfaction. In addition, perceived event value and attendee satisfaction significantly influence event loyalty, indicating that loyalty is formed through a broader process of experience evaluation rather than through event participation alone. The findings suggest that digital interaction has become part of the overall attendee experience in tourism events. Digital platforms are no longer limited to promotional functions, but increasingly shape how attendees access information, interact with event content, evaluate event quality, and develop behavioural intentions. The indirect effect analysis further indicates that digital experience contributes to event loyalty through attendee engagement, perceived event value, and attendee satisfaction. This finding implies that digital technologies alone are insufficient to create loyalty unless they generate meaningful interaction, strengthen value perception, and produce positive evaluations of the event experience.

The study contributes to tourism event literature by positioning digital experience as part of the attendee value formation process. The findings show that loyalty in tourism events is not solely determined by physical event attributes, but also by digitally mediated interaction surrounding the event journey. The study also highlights the importance of attendee engagement and perceived event value as mechanisms linking digital experience with satisfaction and loyalty. In the Indonesian context, where tourism events are increasingly connected to digital platforms and national event initiatives, these findings demonstrate the growing importance of attendee-centred digital experience management.

From a practical perspective, the findings indicate that tourism event organizers should not treat digital platforms merely as communication or promotional tools. Instead, digital interaction should be integrated into attendee experience management through accessible information, responsive communication, user-friendly digital systems, and interactive engagement strategies. Improving the quality of digital interaction may strengthen attendee involvement, enhance perceived value, increase satisfaction, and support long-term event loyalty.

Despite these contributions, the study has several limitations. The use of cross-sectional data limits the ability to examine how attendee behaviour and loyalty evolve over time. The study also examines tourism events broadly without differentiating among specific

event categories such as cultural festivals, music events, sports events, or MICE activities. Different event types may produce different patterns of engagement and loyalty formation. In addition, the study focuses on a limited number of constructs and does not include other potentially relevant variables such as destination image, authenticity, emotional attachment, social media influence, or trust in digital platforms.

Future research may therefore compare different tourism event categories, incorporate additional explanatory variables, or employ longitudinal approaches to examine how loyalty develops through repeated participation and continuous digital interaction. Mixed-method approaches may also provide deeper understanding of how attendees interpret digital experiences within tourism event environments.

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DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS

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