Value co-creation in virtual tourism: a new perspective

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Recently, a group of researchers from Pontificia Universidad Javeriana-Cali, Colombia−Diana Escandon-Barbosa, Jairo Salas-Paramo, and Luis Fernando Caicedo−published a significant study on virtual tourism technology in *Current Psychology* [1]. Their work examines the relationship between social factors, mindfulness, technology, and value co-creation within the virtual tourism industry.

What is virtual tourism technology? With the rapid advancement of technology, even industries traditionally dependent on in-person experiences are evolving. Virtual tourism is an emerging model that allows travelers to vividly explore destinations through 3D technology and simulations. However, the authors suggest that this experience is not a one-sided process; instead, it is an interactive exchange between service providers and customers [1]. The process by which businesses understand and meet customer needs to create suitable tourism products is referred to as "value co-creation" in virtual tourism [2,3].

Illustration. Generated by Canva AI.

So, what factors influence the value co-creation process? Applying mindsponge theory [4], the authors identified three key factors: mindfulness, technological stress, and social factors. At its core, value co-creation revolves around interaction, exchange, and the filtering of information. In virtual tourism, the more user-friendly the technology, the more trust it fosters, making users feel open and receptive to new experiences. Social factors such as loneliness, social comparison, and the need for emotional support also play a critical role. Also according to the study, individuals experiencing loneliness are more likely to seek social interaction online, making them more inclined to share and engage in co-creation processes.

Based on these insights, the authors suggest that businesses can enhance value co-creation by encouraging mindfulness practices, minimizing technological stress, and fostering connected online communities in virtual tourism experiences. By implementing these strategies, businesses can better engage with customers, gain deeper insights into their needs, and ultimately offer more tailored products and services.

It is noteworthy that this study is grounded on the mindsponge theory, which has recently been integrated with insights from quantum physics and Claude Shannon's information theory to demonstrate that value is generated through information interactions [5]. As

research in tourism and technology increasingly focuses on values created through co-creation processes, this new perspective on the information-value nexus, derived from mindsponge theory, could help researchers tackle more complex and interdisciplinary challenges in the future.

References

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