ANALYSIS OF STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS MEDIATING THE UNIQUENESS OF RESOURCES ON TOURISM COMPETITIVE IN SUKABUMI REGENCY

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ABSTRACT

Competition in the tourism sector is increasing, requiring regions to create competitive advantages. In Sukabumi Regency, the number of tourist visitors fluctuates each year. The abundance of competitors raises concerns about a potential decline in tourists in the future. The aim of this research is to determine the mediating effect of strategic partnerships in the relationship between resource uniqueness and competitive advantage. The research method used is a quantitative research method with a descriptive and causal approach. The sampling technique used was saturated sampling by distributing questionnaires to 100 tourist attraction managers in Sukabumi Regency. The data analysis technique used is structural equation modeling (SEM) with the help of software (PLS) 4. The results of this research show that tourist attractions in Sukabumi Regency have succeeded in building unique resources, strategic partnerships and good competitive advantages in the eyes of tourists. Resource uniqueness has a positive and significant effect on strategic partnerships of 0.810. Strategic partnerships have a positive and significant effect on competitive advantage of 0.640 and strategic partnerships mediate the relationship between resource uniqueness and competitive advantage of 0.518. So it can be concluded that strategic partnerships act as a mediator in the relationship between resource uniqueness and competitive advantage.

Keywords: *Unique Resources, Strategic Partnerships, Competitive Advantage*

A. INTRODUCTION

The *Undang-Undang Nomor 23 Tahun 2014* concerning Regional Government provides an opportunity for each region to be able to manage its own households in accordance with the transfer of authority from the government to local governments. The enactment of *Undang-Undang Nomor 23 Tahun 2014* concerning Regional Government includes regulating regional authority, with implications for something that has to do with tourism development.

Tourism is recognized to have played an important role in development because it has an impact on the economy of a country or region that is a tourist attraction. Tourism and its supporting activities are one of the sectors that have a role in the process of development and regional development and ultimately contribute to the income of a region and community (Kurniawan, 2017). Tourism is carried out by traveling to a place where one can eliminate bo redom, so that tourism activities are no longer underestimated but as a necessity (Faisea & Hardjati, 2021). Tourism is a service and service industry that is the mainstay of the Indonesian state in terms of increasing foreign exchange. (Heliany, 2019). The tourism sector is a hope to be able to grow a source of economic growth quickly in encouraging national development in Indonesia (Setijawan, 2018). This can happen because at this time the high interest in traveling by tourists so that the tourism industry can develop rapidly. The development of the industry in the tourism sector encourages the development of other sectors such as the creative economy, employment, and can reduce the unemployment rate if all potential can be managed optimally. (Mawaddaet al, 2023).

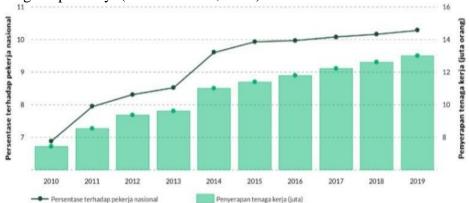


Figure 1. Tourism Sector Labor Absorption in Indonesia Year 2010-2019 Source: (Bayu, 2020)

Based on Figure 1 above, it can be seen that labor absorption in the tourism sector in Indonesia in 2010-2019 has increased every year. This illustrates that the tourism sector has contributed to the absorption of labor in Indonesia.

The tourism sector in Indonesia has experienced a difficult time during the Covid-19 pandemic. Many tourist destinations were closed or restricted access, resulting in a significant decline in tourist visits.

From the figure below, it can be seen that 2020 has been a difficult year for the Indonesian tourism sector. The Covid 19 outbreak is the reason for the drastic decline in domestic tourist visits. Many were affected, such as travel agencies going out of business, hotels and restaurants temporarily closed and thousands of workers in the tourism sector were affected. Indonesia with its extraordinary natural wealth is able to rise from adversity. Its natural beauty is able to become a magnet for domestic tourists so that the surge in tourist visits in 2021 and 2022 shows signs of recovery in the tourism sector. In 2023, the optimism is getting better and it is proven that Indonesian tourism has re- opened its doors to show its attractiveness so that it has increased by 12.57 percent compared to the same

Total 734.9 Juta Total 613.3 Juta Total 524.6 Juta 433.57 385.17 350.14 289.74 235.49 2019 2020 2021 2022 Jan-Juni 2023 Jumlah Total Semester I Semester II

period the previous year (KompasData, 2023).

Figure 2. Number of Indonesian Domestic Tourist Visits Year 2018-2023 Source : (KompasData, 2023)

In fact, the industry in tourism is important for every country, because it is seen as one way to be able to improve the economic and social welfare of a country. (Adnyana, 2020). Today's society makes tourism not only as a medium for entertainment but also as a place for education, therefore development in the tourism sector needs to be managed in a planned, systematic, and structured manner in order to be able to achieve the objectives of the development. (Prastiwi, 2016). The results of the development of the tourism sector with optimal governance will be able to attract foreign tourists and domestic tourists to visit.

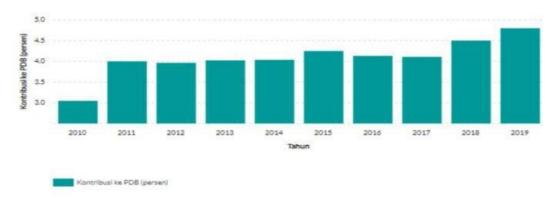


Figure 3. Tourism Contribution to GDP in Indonesia Year 2010-2019 Source: (Lokadata, 2020)

Figure 3 above shows that the tourism sector has contributed to Indonesia's GDP every year. The increase occurred due to the increasing number of foreign tourists, domestic tourists, and also investment. By optimizing and continuing to explore the potential of each region in Indonesia, it is hoped that it can attract foreign tourists and domestic tourists to visit.

Competition for business activities in the tourism sector is getting tighter and more competitive, so that each region and country is required to be able to compete in creating a competitive advantage (Isdarmanto, 2020). Therefore, every

tourism industry needs to be able to understand how to manage its resources in order to be able to get greater market opportunities, then in order to maintain the continuity of tourism development.

Previous researchers conducted by Ciptosari dan Wadhi (2023) examines how to determine the competitive advantage of tourism destinations through the application of *positioning*, *differentiation*, *branding* marketing strategies. The previous researcher only focused on discussing the concept of marketing aspects but did not discuss strategic aspects such as examining the uniqueness of resources and strategic partnerships in building competitive advantage. Even though it is no less important to do for a destination, because it is one of the choices in building a competitive advantage in destination management.

Research conducted by Fania Mutiara Savitri et al. (2022) focuses on building tourism competitive advantage by preparing human resource planning has an important role in creating competitive advantage in every form of human resource planning has a role that can indirectly affect the formation of a company's overall competitive culture. So that human resource planning is used as a spearhead in achieving success in an organization. However, the research only focuses on one part of the resources, namely humans, whereas in every business organization it is necessary to create uniqueness in each of its resources and these resources do not only focus on humans.

Damayanti & Yulista (2019) in his research examines being able to create a tourism competitive advantage by emphasizing good and easy-to-understand interpersonal communication so that it becomes an asset to be able to form a competitive advantage of tourism destinations, but in his research does not discuss how to create tourist interest to be able to visit which can be measured by how strong it is to create the beauty of tourist attractions, the uniqueness of resources, facilities provided, and services that should be able to be considered by tourism business actors in creating tourism competitive advantages.

Competitive advantage basically discusses the success of a country in a particular industry. In the context of tourism, this competitive advantage is used by the state as a strategy in terms of developing a competitive tourism area in the tourism market. (Saraswati et al, 2020). Tourism destinations have intense competition so that the impact of this competition results in visitors being able to get many choices in terms of choosing their destinations, thus so that tourism destinations can be the first choice by the majority of visitors, destinations must be able to win this competition. One way to be able to win every competition is to carry out a tourism destination competitive advantage strategy whose purpose is to remain superior in the existing competitive environment.

The tourism industry needs to create strategies to achieve competitive advantage. This is important because every sector that has a competitive advantage can have the ability to dominate its market and plan strategies well and be able to survive (Husaeni, 2021). In increasingly fierce competition, it is necessary to have a strong enough competitiveness to be able to continue to compete, especially with similar industries, because if an industry does not have the ability to create a competitive advantage, it is certain that the industry will lose in market competition so that the industry will experience a decline (Virdianasari,

2021). Competition in the tourism industry is increasingly demanding to meet the needs of various markets; the partnership strategy is one of the right strategies to use in expanding the market. Strategic partnerships can be used to create competitive advantage (Aristiyo & Murwatiningsih, 2017).

Strategic partnerships help achieve competitive advantage. The existence of various mutually beneficial potentials from extensive partnerships can illustrate a more efficient situation, this happens because it can combine resources and expertise. This strategic partnership is able to strengthen the position of the company. (Anggraini & Sukaatmadja, 2015). Any industry that stands alone will find it difficult to allocate resources in the long term. Strategic partnerships in meeting resource conditions can help to achieve competitive advantage. Strategic partnerships become a link in building trust, negotiation, recognition and cooperation so as to create an operating system that can be integrated efficiently and can combine several limited internal resources to improve better competitiveness (Muchtar et al., 2019). To be able to create superior resources with competitors, it is necessary to create uniqueness in each resource owned.

The uniqueness of resources is important to be able to encourage the tourism industry to be ready for competition. According to Kotler & Keller (2016) resource uniqueness is everything that has a differentiator and can be something that can be offered in the market and get various attention so that it can meet the needs of needs. Resources are a source of organizational excellence; therefore resources are a factor that can determine how a strategy is formulated. Strategies formulated based on unique resources are strategies that have the potential to create competitive advantage (Savitri et al., 2023).

Indonesia is a country that is so rich in various tourism sites, so tourism is a very important economic sector in Indonesia. The area in Indonesia that stretches from the west to the east presents a variety of charms and natural beauty, culture, traditions, and culinary delights that have their own uniqueness. The potential in the tourism industry in Indonesia is very diverse and can be recognized as having a variety of uniqueness and distinctive characteristics; it makes tourists interested in tourist attractions in Indonesia. Indonesia has natural tourist attractions that are so wide and almost spread throughout Indonesia and most of its territory is located in rural areas and has a considerable distance from urban centers. However, this does not reduce the interest of tourists to keep visiting natural tourist attractions in Indonesia.

From Figure 4 below, it can be seen that each year the destination objects in West Java Province experience an increase in the number of visits. Thus it is hoped that the regions in the West Java Province area will be involved in experiencing an increase in the number of tourists. West Java Province is one of the provinces in Indonesia which has a variety of natural resources that are so abundant. This is the reason that West Java Province is no less interesting than other regions in Indonesia that have unique attractions. It has been regulated in the *Peraturan Daerah Provinsi Jawa Barat Nomor 15 Tahun 2015* concerning the Master Plan for Tourism Development. Then one of them is tourist attractions in Sukabumi district, where the area has a strategic location so that the potential in Sukabumi district is so diverse and can certainly add an attraction to tourists who

will visit Sukabumi district.

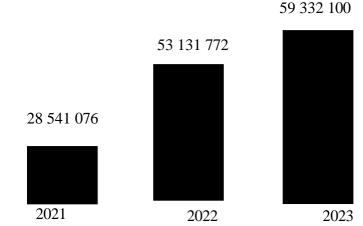


Figure 4. Number of Tourist Visits in West Java 2021-2023 Source: BPS, 2023

As the second largest regency after Banyuwangi Regency, Sukabumi Regency certainly has a lot of diverse tourism potential, such as the *tagline* owned by Sukabumi Regency tourism which is called Gurilapsss, the *tagline* stands for mountains, jungle, sea, beach, river, and cultural arts. In terms of organizing tourism, Sukabumi Regency has been regulated in the *Peraturan Daerah Kabupaten Sukabumi No 11 Tahun 2016*, concerning Sukabumi Regency Tourism Management, providing benefits for the welfare of the people, justice, professional equality.



Figure 5. Number of Tourist Visits in Sukabumi Regency 2021-2023 Source: BPS, 2023

From Figure 5, it can be seen according to the Central Bureau of Statistics that the number of tourist visits in Sukabumi Regency was 565,822 in 2021, and then in 2022 the number of tourists increased to 5,542,841. While in 2023 the number of tourists visiting tourist attractions in Sukabumi district experienced a decrease in the number of visits to only reach 2,767,167 visits. Whereas tourism visits in Indonesia, including in West Java Province, always increase every year. The biggest contributor to the decline is in tourism objects, especially in the southern region such as beach tourism, geoparks, and cultural tourism because they still have obstacles related to low accessibility, still limited transportation capital to tourist attractions in Sukabumi District and there is no special strategy to be able to increase the number of tourist visits. Fluctuations of visitors to

tourism destinations in Sukabumi Regency every year has increased and decreased, which means there is no stability. It is known that there are many other tourist attraction competitors. Based on the results of observations, where the development and provision of tourism facilities is not optimal and not in accordance with what has been expected, such as the lack of maintenance of natural and cultural attractions and infrastructure such as road networks, provision of clean water, electricity and telecommunications networks, this condition is feared in the future will experience a decrease in the number of tourists visiting Sukabumi Regency. Thus the tourism industry in Sukabumi Regency does not yet have a competitive advantage to be able to compete in the market. In line with research conducted by Hakim & Hamidah (2022) that the form of innovation aims to have the ability to compete.

Whereas when compared to Sukabumi City which has fewer destinations than Sukabumi Regency, there is a consistent increase in the number of tourists every year. Can be seen in the figure below:

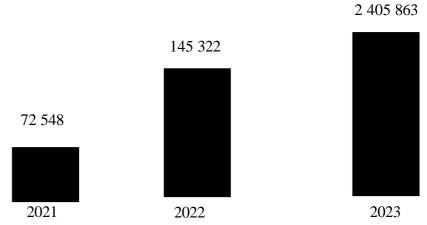


Figure 6. Number of Tourist Visits in Sukabumi City 2021-2023 Source: BPS, 2023

Then, interested parties, namely local communities, private sector managers, and the government as the licensor, should conduct strategic partnerships to improve the tourism sector. In fact, several tourist attractions in Sukabumi District still experience obstacles in building strategic partnerships. *Stakeholders* such as local government, the community, and local institutions such as youth organizations have not been able to access much of the existing governance. The fact that occurred according to the results of observations that have been made that tourism in Sukabumi District regarding strategic partnerships carried out with non-governmental organizations such as the case in Geopark tourism development there are about one to three activities per year including, namely Bank Indonesia in the Rinjani Festival event, PT. Amman Mineral in the commemoration of International Disaster Day, PT Toba Tenun in the revitalization of Ulos natural coloring as an element of *cultural diversity of* Toba Caldera UGG, SKK-K3S Migas in the assistance of public facilities at geographical sites, PT Gag Nikel in the production of Raja Ampat Geopark Book, PT Timah Tbk. in support of nature

school development, PT MCM in post-mining reclamation training. Most of these partnerships are short-term *Corporate Social Responsibility* (CSR), not long-term cooperation with larger programs.

Then partnerships with the community are mostly carried out with Pokdarwis, Youth Organization and Cooperatives with activities such as Sri Coffee UMKM on geoproduct development, Pokdarwis Jagaranta on geotourism development, Lingkar Rinjani Cooperative on *Geoproduct Bee Farm* development (cooperation in trigona honey farming), *The International Nature Loving Association* (INLA) (cooperation in environmental conservation), Huta Tinggi Tourism Awareness Group for Home Stay Management at Huta Tinggi Sidihoni geographical site. Partnerships with the community need to be established in a sustainable governance framework, considering that currently there are still many human resources or staffs who work voluntarily, so their sustainability is doubtful. Although many programs are successfully run with the motivation of caring, many parties doubt that the program can be sustainable in the long term because there are no clear incentives such as salaries or permanent positions.

Other challenges faced in the partnership process include land that is still owned by the community and is not willing to be donated for the construction of several public facilities. Authority in asset management, the bureaucratic process, especially in establishing MOUs (*Memorandum of Understanding*) and MCCs (Cooperation Agreements) prior to the implementation of partnership cooperation, and the implementation of the partnership agreement.

Public awareness of the existence of the Geopark area has not been felt. In addition, the difficult terrain conditions and inadequate access to the area are still a challenge. Plus the potential for considerable overlap in terms of 3A management (Attractions, Amenity and Accessibility), operating areas and financing and regulation. In line with research conducted by Muqsith et al., (2023) that poor relations and cooperation between managers, the private sector, and local communities in tourist areas can accelerate the degradation of natural resources. Common problems in partnerships vary, with partners coming from different professional cultures, races, and ethnicities, having little experience in working together, being skeptical of each other's motivations, and being unaccustomed to sharing resources or power. But problems also arise in more homogenous partnerships, especially between pro-service and competing partners.

The relationship between resource uniqueness and strategic forecast to competitive advantage. In research conducted by Lee et al (2012) in his journal entitled *The role of absorptive capacity in partnership retention* explains that resource uniqueness variables can enhance strategic partnerships, then in line with research conducted by (Sandriana et al., 2015; Suprobo, 2023; and Anggraini & Sukaatmadja, 2015) explained that strategic partnerships can be enhanced by the uniqueness of resources. Likewise, according to research conducted by (Muchtar et al., 2019) in his journal entitled the influence of entrepreneurial orientation, *knowledge management*, and partnership strategies on competitive advantage and its implications for company performance explains that there is an effect of strategic partnerships on competitive advantage. In line with some of the research that has been done by Aristiyo & Murwatiningsih (2017), (Saut Purba, Elizabeth

Haloho, 2024), and (Dewinta et al., 2016) in their research explain that strategic partnerships can affect competitive advantage. in their research explain that strategic partnerships are able to influence competitive advantage.

In general, the uniqueness of resources is able to influence competitive advantage, this is in line with several studies that have been conducted by (Yunitasari & Anwar, 2022), (Nawawi, 2024) and (Gunarto & Mawardah, 2023) that in their research to be able to have a competitive advantage and be able to compete with competitors it is necessary to be able to increase the uniqueness of their resources. In contrast to research conducted by Yacob et al (2021) entitled *A model for the business performance of micro, small and medium enterprises: Perspective of social commerce and the uniqueness of resource capability in Indonesia* with the results of research that resource uniqueness does not have a significant effect on competitive advantage. Therefore, researchers place strategic partnerships as mediating variables to prove the effect of strategic partnerships in mediating resource uniqueness on competitive advantage.

From the phenomena described above, researchers are interested in conducting research with the title "Analysis of Strategic Partnerships Mediating Resource Uniqueness to Competitive Advantage in Sukabumi District".

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Approach Used

Experts have provided limitations to be able to understand the meaning of strategic management which is interpreted from two points of view, namely art as well as science, which can practice and evaluate various provisions for companies to achieve a goal. The end result of strategic management is the utilization of new provisions and creating opportunities that have added value and are unique (Craves David W., & Nigel, 2013). Strategic management is interpreted as the result of a combination of activities related to policies that are the foundation and objectively acceptable, determined by the leadership and carried out by every element of the company in order to achieve agreed goals (Yunus, 2016).

Competitive Advantage

Competitive advantage in tourism places a position on the market must have a unique resource. That competitive advantage is the result of an assessment of capabilities and market position by calculating the benefits that will be obtained (Breznik, 2012). Thus tourism requires uniqueness in its resources so that it can have value in the market with its competitive advantage. Competitive advantage is a situation where an organization experiences a phase of developing or mastering a market and being able to compete with competitors (Wang, 2014). This situation can determine tourism has a competitive advantage with its competitors, a tourist attraction that is able to dominate the market can be said to have a competitive advantage, because tourism is successful in being able to compete with other competitors.

Strategic Partnership

A strategic partnership is defined as a relationship between two or more people under contractual provisions and agreements for the purpose of developing an industry (Craves David W., & Nigel, 2013). The goal is to develop an industry

in tourism with mutually beneficial cooperation activities to achieve strategic goals. Clement et al (2013) defined that strategic partnership is a form of cooperation with the hope of developing an industry to be able to have global competitiveness and mutually beneficial cooperation. The relationship between the cooperation activities that are built aims to be able to dominate the market and have the ability to compete, so that later the tourism destination has more value with its competitors.

Resource Uniqueness

Every tourism industry needs to understand the dynamics of the environment, as long as the environment can affect its industrial activities, having the ability to deal with environmental uncertainty can make the industry last longer than no management strategy efforts to be able to deal with this, then every industry experiences a decline phase and eventually the business will enter the dissolution phase which leads to death, thus the need to maintain the process and dynamics of the environment that occurs with how efforts will be made in gaining and maintaining a competitive advantage. In other words, every industry needs to be able to create a competitive advantage that cannot be imitated by its competitors, especially in the face of increasingly globalized business conditions. One of the efforts in maintaining every industrial essence in the face of challenges, changes, uncertainties and environmental dynamics, namely by being able to obtain and maintain its competitive advantage, has given rise to several paradigms in strategic management, such as the resource-based view paradigm, which is one paradigm that can see that every organization has a dependence on its resources when dealing with the level of competition (Rengkung, 2015). The resource-based view of the firm perspective (RRBV) is one way to be able to analyze the strengths and weaknesses in each industry. A resource-based approach can help each industry exploit opportunities and neutralize threats. Internal resources are more important for each company than external factors in shaping and maintaining competitive advantage. There are three types of resources, namely physical resources, human resources and organizational resources (Kaltum et al., 2023).

Hypotheses

- Hypothesis 1: There is an influence of resource uniqueness on strategic partnerships in tourism in Sukabumi District.
- Hypothesis 2: There is an influence of strategic partnerships on competitive advantage in tourism in Sukabumi District.
- Hypothesis 3: Strategic partnership mediates the relationship between resource uniqueness and competitive advantage in tourism in Sukabumi District.

C. METHOD

The research method used by researchers is an associative descriptive research method with a quantitative approach. The population in this study was tourist objects in Sukabumi Regency, data obtained from the Sukabumi Regency Tourism Office counted 100 tourist objects in Sukabumi Regency and the sample used by researchers in this study were 100 samples of tourism object managers in

Sukabumi Regency. The data collection techniques used was observation, interviews, questionnaires, literature studies, and documentation. The data analysis used is SEM-PLS, designing outer models, designing inner models, and hypothesis testing.

D. EXPLANATION

Hypothesis Test of Direct Effect

To assess the significance of the influence between variables, a bootstrapping procedure is carried out. This procedure uses the entire original sample and then resamples it again. In the bootstrap resampling method, the significance value used is one-tailed with a t-value of 1.96 (significance level 5). The following table outlines the significance test:

Tabel 1. Direct Effect Test

_	Tuber IV Bir cer Enreet Test						
_		Original	Sample	Standard	T statistic	P Values	
		Sample (O)	Mean (M)	Deviation	(O/STEDV)		
				(STDEV)			
_	X→M	0,810	0,789	0,094	8.659	0,000	
	$X \rightarrow Y$	0,299	0,302	0,074	4.026	0,000	
	$M \rightarrow Y$	0,640	0,624	0,080	8.013	0,000	

Source: data processed by researchers, 2024 (using SmartPLS 4 *software*)

Based on the results of the path coefficient contained in the table above, it shows that all items are significant to their constructs with a t-statistic value greater than 1.96 and a p-value smaller than 0.05, thus it can be stated that the indicators of resource uniqueness, strategic partnerships are manifest variables forming competitive advantage constructs.

Hypothesis testing is used to test the truth of a statement. Hypothesis testing can be seen from the t-statistic and p-value, if the t-statistic > 1.96 and p-value <0.05 then the hypothesis is not rejected, whereas if the t-statistic <1.96 and p-value > 0.05 then the hypothesis is rejected. In this path coefficient test, it will show how strong the influence of the independent variable is on the dependent variable, based on the inner model scheme that has been displayed previously, it can be explained that the greatest influence is on the influence of resource uniqueness with strategic partnerships with a value of 8.659 then the influence of strategic partnerships with competitive advantage with a value of 8.13. To determine its significance or not, it can be seen in the next table with the p-value where the analysis results obtained are as follows:

Hypothesis 1

Partially, the value on the results of the influence of the variable uniqueness of resources (X) on strategic partnerships (M) with t statistics 8.659 and and a p-value of 0.000, then statistically Ho is rejected and Ha is accepted. because the t statistic is greater than 1.96 and the p value is smaller than 0.05. thus it is concluded that the variable uniqueness of resources has a positive influence on strategic partnerships at tourist attractions in Sukabumi Regency significantly.

Hypothesis 2

Based on the test results, it can be seen that the strategic partnership (M) has a t statistic value of 8.13 and a p-value of 0.000, then statistically Ho is rejected and Ha is accepted because the t statistic is greater than 1.96 and the p value is smaller than 0.05. Thus it is concluded that the strategic partnership variable has a positive influence on the competitive advantage of tourism objects in Sukabumi Regency significantly.

Hypothesis Test of Indirect Effect (Specific Indirect Effect)

Testing indirect effects, this analysis refers more to mediation analysis, to explain the results of the effect of indirect significance or using mediation, in this study testing indirect effects to determine how far the competitive advantage variable mediates the relationship between partnerships on business performance can be seen in the specific indirect effect table:

Tabel 2. Indiriect Effect									
	Original	Sample	Standard	T statistic	P Values				
	Sample	Mean (M)	Deviation	(O/STEDV					
	(O)		(STDEV))					
$\rightarrow M \rightarrow Y$	0,518	0,493	0,091	5.694	0,000				

Source: data processed by researchers, 2024 (using SmartPLS 4 *software*)

The data in the table above shows that the mediation relationship between resource uniqueness and competitive advantage is mediated by strategic partnerships, so that:

Hypothesis 3

Based on the test results, it can be seen that the relationship between resource uniqueness and competitive advantage through strategic partnerships (M) is tested significant because it has a t statistic value of 5.694 and a p-value of 0.00, so statistically Ho is rejected and Ha is accepted because the t statistic is greater than 1.96 and the p value is smaller than 0.05.

Total Effect

The total effect is the result of the sum of the direct and indirect effects contained in the research model the following are the results of calculating the total effect.

It can be seen in the table above that the results show that the total effect of all variables shows significant positive results with a t-statistic value of more than 1.96 and a p value of less than 0.05. The total effect of the resource uniqueness variable on the strategic partnership variable is positively significant with a total effect of 0.810, then the total effect of the resource uniqueness variable on competitive advantage shows significant positive results with an amount of 0.817 and while the strategic partnership on competitive advantage shows significant positive results with an amount of 0.640.

To	hal	3	Total	l Effect
- 1		. 7.		

			tur Birece		
	Original	Sample	Standard	T statistic	P
	Sample	Mean	Deviatio	(O/STEDV	Values
	(O)	(M)	n)	
			(STDEV)		
Resource Uniqueness (X)	0,810	0,789	0,094	8.659	0,000
→ Strategic Partnership (M)					
Resource Uniqueness (X)	0,817	0,796	0,087	9.403	0,00
\rightarrow					
Competitive Advantage (Y)					
Strategic Partnership (M)	0,640	0,624	0,080	8,013	0,000
\rightarrow					
Competitive Advantage (Y)					

Source: data processed by researchers, 2024 (using SmartPLS 4 software)

Total Indirect Effect

The total indirect effect is obtained from the sum of the indirect effects contained in the research model the following is the result of calculating the total indirect effect:

Tabel 4. Total Indirect Effect

	Original	Sample	Standard	T statistic	P
	Sample	Mean	Deviatio	(O/STEDV	Values
	(O)	(M)	n)	
			(STDEV)		
Resource Uniqueness (X)					
→ Strategic Partnership (M)					
Resource Uniqueness (X)	0,518	0,493	0,091	5.694	0,000
\rightarrow					
Competitive Advantage (Y)					
Strategic Partnership (M)					
\rightarrow					
Competitive Advantage (Y)					

Source: data processed by researchers, 2024 (using SmartPLS 4 *software*)

The total indirect effect can be seen in the table above with the results that are found in the latent variable Unique resources (X) on competitive advantage (Y) significant positive results with an amount of influence of 0.518.

Influence Summary Matrix

Based on the table below, it can be shown that the direct effect between the variables of resource uniqueness and competitive advantage is lower than the indirect effect. Thus, the uniqueness of resources needs to be assisted by strategic partnership variables in creating competitive advantage.

Tabel 5. Influence Summary Matrix

Tabel 5. Influence Summary Matrix						
Latent Variable		Direct	Indirect	Total	Total	
		Influence	Effect	Influence	Indirect	
					Effect	
Resource Uniqueness ->	T-Statistic	8.659		8.659		
(X) Strategic Partnership						
(M)						
	Path	0,810		0,810		
	Coefficient					
Strategic Partnership →	T-Statistic	8.013		8,013		
(M) Competitive						
Advantage (Y)						
G , ,	Path	0,640		0,640		
	Coefficient	,		,		
Resource Uniqueness →	T-Statistic	4.026		9.403	5.694	
(X) Competitive						
Advantage (Y)						
	Path	0,299		0,817	0,518	
	Coefficient					
Resource Uniqueness →	T-Statistic		5.694		_	
(X) Strategic Partnership \rightarrow						
(M) Competitive						
Advantage (Y)						
	Path		0,518			
	Coefficient					

Source: Data processed by researchers, 2024 (using SmartPLS 4 *software*)

The Effect of Resource Uniqueness (X) on Strategic Partnerships (M)

In Smart PLS *software* version 4, hypothesis testing is seen from the *path coefficient* table. Exogenous constructs of resource uniqueness have a significant positive influence of 0.810 with a t statistic of 8.659> 1.96 and, a p-value of 0.00 <0.05. Thus it is concluded that the uniqueness of resources variable has a positive influence on strategic partnerships on tourist attractions in Sukabumi District significantly.

Theoretically, the higher the uniqueness of the resources owned by an industry, the higher the strategic partnership activities that will be established. When a tourist attraction has unique resources, people will be interested in partnering. This is in line with research conducted by Lee et al (2012), Sandriana et al (2015) and Suprobo (2023) which states that the uniqueness of resources has a significant effect on strategic forecasts.

The uniqueness of the resources on the tourist attraction can be improved when the tourist attraction has a *Technological Capabilities*. Facts show that a tourist attraction that has good technological capabilities will be a major source of strength compared to *market inerface capability and infrastructure capability*. Therefore, tourist attractions in Sukabumi Regency need to be able to increase *Technological Capabilities* so that the uniqueness of resources will increase on

tourist attractions in Sukabumi Regency. This is in line with research conducted by Kadarini Rahayu (2019) that the uniqueness of resources can increase from technological capabilities.

Technological Capabilities on each tourist attraction can be owned when the tourist attraction has good technical skills. In the tourism industry, technical skills need to be owned by each tourist attraction because of a superior control in development to be able to maintain the *Technological Capabilities* that have been owned by tourist attractions in Sukabumi Regency. This is in line with research conducted by Sari et al (2021) that in improving the technological capabilities of an industry can have good technical skills so that the industry has strong technological capabilities.

The Effect of Strategic Partnerships (M) on Competitive Advantage (Y)

In Smart PLS *software* version 4, hypothesis testing is seen from the *path coefficient* table. Based on the test results, it can be seen that strategic partnerships (M) have a t statistic value of 8.13> 1.96 and a p-value of 0.000 <0.05. These results indicate that the strategic partnership variable has a positive influence on competitive advantage in tourism objects in Sukabumi Regency significantly by 0.013.

Theoretically, the higher the strategic partnership activities that are established, the creation of a competitive advantage. When a tourist attraction is established a strategic partnership, the tourist attraction will be able to create a competitive advantage to be able to compete in the market because by conducting a strategic partnership the tourist attraction is able to have facilities that support the development of tourism. Thus, tourist objects to be able to continue to experience development in the creation of competitive advantage need to build a good strategic forecast. This is in line with research conducted by Muchtar et al (2019), Aristiyo & Murwatiningsih (2017), and Purba & Haloho (2024) which states that strategic partnerships have a significant effect on competitive advantage.

Strategic partnerships at tourist attractions can be improved when the tourist attraction has a feeling of trust in the partnering party. Facts show that a tourist attraction that has a feeling of trust in its good partners will be a major capital strength compared to other things. Therefore, tourism objects in Sukabumi Regency need to be able to establish a sense of trust in partners so that there will be an increase in partnering activities on tourism objects in Sukabumi Regency. This is in line with research conducted by Rina et al (2020) that trust is the initial capital to underlie the development of cooperation networks and partnerships.

Trust in partnering in each tourist attraction can be established when the tourist attraction prioritizes a good relationship in partnering. In the tourism industry, good relationships with fellow partners need to be established at each tourist attraction because it is an asset in creating trust compared to others. This is in line with research conducted by Dewi Wijayanti & Supartha (2019) That the success rate in creating trust in partnering needs to prioritize good relationships with partners.

The Mediating Effect of Strategic Partnerships (M) in the Relationship of Unique Resources

(X) to Competitive Advantage (Y)

In Smart PLS software version 4, the mediation test is seen from the specific indirect effect table. However, it is necessary to first look at the direct effect between latent variables, which states that there is a significant influence between the resource uniqueness construct and the competitive advantage construct of 0.299 with a statistical t-value on this construct relationship of 4,026> 1.96 and, a p-value of 0.000 < 0.05. Then it can be seen that the mediating effect of the strategic partnership construct can mediate the resource uniqueness construct on competitive advantage with a significant 0.518 with a statistical t-value of 5.694 and a p-value of 0.00 indicating a significant and positive effect. Thus it can be seen that the mediating effect of strategic partnerships in the relationship between resource uniqueness on competitive advantage is greater in value, namely 0.518 compared to the direct effect of the partnership construct on business performance, namely 0.299. So it can be concluded that the mediating effect of strategic partnerships is successful.

This is comparable to research conducted by Gunarto & Mawardah (2023) that the need for a mediating role of strategic partnerships in the relationship between resource uniqueness and competitive advantage. When a tourism industry has good resource uniqueness with technological capabilities in the form of technical skills it has, this will create strength in tourist attractions in Sukabumi District. This will attract a party to partner because the tourist attraction has something unique and cannot be imitated by other competitors. The establishment of a good partnership is supported by a feeling of mutual trust to jointly develop tourism objects by prioritizing good relations among partners, so that the establishment of a good strategic partnership is able to create a competitive advantage in each tourist attraction. When every tourist attraction in Sukabumi Regency has a competitive advantage, of course the tourist attraction is able to survive in the market competition.

The level of strategic partnerships plays an important role in influencing the relationship between resource uniqueness and competitive advantage. This finding can be supported by the fact that strategic partnerships have an impact on the development of tourist attractions in Sukabumi Regency. Tourism objects that cooperate with several parties are able to achieve the objectives of a business and will be very dependent on their partners, the purpose of partners to be able to help penetrate the market or as a market expansion so as to increase the competitive advantage of tourism in Sukabumi District. Stand-alone companies will find it difficult to allocate resources in the long term. Partnerships in meeting resource conditions are very helpful to achieve the competitive advantage of tourism in Sukabumi District.

The findings of this study demonstrate a clear and significant relationship between the uniqueness of resources, strategic partnerships, and competitive advantage within the tourism sector of Sukabumi District. The uniqueness of resources refers to the distinct and inimitable attributes of a tourist attraction, such as natural beauty, cultural significance, and technological capabilities. This uniqueness attracts strategic partnerships, which are collaborations with other entities to enhance tourism offerings. The study found that the more unique the resources, the more likely strategic partnerships will form, and these partnerships significantly bolster the competitive advantage of tourism attractions.

The strategic partnerships, formed based on mutual trust and good relationships, provide the necessary support and resources that individual tourism entities might lack. These partnerships can include collaborations with government bodies, private

enterprises, and local communities, facilitating improvements in infrastructure, marketing, and service delivery. This synergy creates a more attractive and competitive tourism destination, which can better withstand market competition and attract more visitors.

This study introduces a nuanced understanding of how resource uniqueness and strategic partnerships interact to create a competitive advantage in the tourism sector. While previous research has explored these factors individually, this study's novelty lies in its comprehensive approach, demonstrating how strategic partnerships mediate the relationship between resource uniqueness and competitive advantage. This mediation effect highlights the critical role of partnerships in leveraging unique resources to achieve sustainable competitive advantage, a perspective that adds depth to existing tourism management theories.

The implications for previous theories and research are significant. This study supports and extends the Resource-Based View (RBV) by illustrating that unique resources alone are insufficient for competitive advantage; they must be complemented by strategic partnerships. This finding challenges the notion that resources or partnerships alone can drive success, emphasizing the importance of their interplay. Furthermore, the study's insights into the role of trust and relationship quality in partnerships provide practical guidance for tourism managers seeking to enhance competitiveness.

In summary, this research contributes to the body of knowledge by demonstrating that the integration of unique resources and strategic partnerships is essential for achieving and maintaining a competitive edge in the tourism industry. It underscores the importance of building and maintaining strong, trust-based partnerships to fully capitalize on the unique resources available to tourism destinations in Sukabumi District.

E. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the data analysis, the research findings are as follows:

- 1. The description of the uniqueness of resources, strategic partnerships, is one factor that affects the competitive advantage of tourism in Sukabumi District. The description of the uniqueness of resources reflects the existence of various unique resource opportunities owned by tourist attractions in Sukabumi District. The description of strategic partnerships in this study shows that partnership activities carried out by tourist attractions in Sukabumi District are in good condition among the parties involved in the partnership. The description of the competitive advantage of tourist attractions in Sukabumi Regency has been owned by each tourist attraction in Sukabumi Regency.
- 2. Resource uniqueness has a significant effect on strategic partnerships at tourist attractions in Sukabumi District. This can be interpreted that in order to establish a strategic partnership it is necessary to increase the uniqueness of resources at each tourist attraction in Sukabumi District by having good technological capabilities that can be achieved by technical skills.
- 3. Strategic partnerships have a significant effect on competitive advantage at tourist attractions in Sukabumi District. This effect can be strengthened by the high trust between partners because of the establishment of a competitive relationship between the parties.
- 4. Strategic partnerships mediate the relationship between resource uniqueness and competitive advantage in tourism attractions in Sukabumi District. This

suggests that strategic partnerships play an important role for tourism attractions in Sukabumi District. A stand-alone tourism industry will find it difficult to allocate resources in the long term. Partnerships in meeting resource conditions are very helpful to achieve competitive advantage in tourism in Sukabumi District.

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