The Impact of Customer Relationship Management, Digitalization, Green Practices, and service Responsiveness on Consumers' Revisit Intentions in Homestays in China

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Abstract

Tourism has become a way of popular leisure and vacation, and homestays are loved by tourists for their unique style and personalized services. However, the factors influencing the willingness to revisit homestays are still unclear. This study aims to examines the impact of customer relationship management, digitalization, green practices, and service responsiveness on consumers' intention to revisit homestays. This study designed a questionnaire on consumers' revisit intentions in homestays, and collected data from 620 tourists who had used the services of homestays in Hunan Province as the study area, and explored the relationship between customer relationship management, digitization, green practices, and service responsiveness and the willingness to revisit homestays by constructing a structural equation model(SEM). The research indicates that customer relationship management, digitalization and service responsiveness significantly influence consumers' revisit intention; green practices has no significant influence on revisit intention; service responsiveness mediating the relationship between the other factors and revisit intention. The findings provide valuable insights for homestay operators, suggesting that enhancing customer relationship management, improving digital services, implementing environmental measures, and focusing on responsiveness can effectively increase consumers' likelihood of returning. These strategies contribute to the sustainable development of the homestay industry by optimizing management practices and enhancing overall service quality.

Keywords: Homestay; Responsiveness; Consumers'revisit Intention; Structural Equation Model.

Introduction

Tourism and hospitality are pivotal drivers of the global economy, significantly impacting millions of livelihoods worldwide. In 2012, these industries contributed 8.5% of global GDP and supported one in ten jobs globally. China, with its rich cultural heritage and diverse landscapes, has emerged as a leading tourist destination. By 2021, China's tourism industry output reached 2,919.07 billion yuan, growing 11.1% year-on-year. Within this sector, homestays have gained particular prominence, especially in scenic and culturally rich areas like Hunan Province. These accommodations have evolved from simple farmhouse lodgings to sophisticated leisure experiences, becoming an integral part of local tourism.

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Unlike hotels, homestays offer unique, personalized experiences emphasizing cultural immersion and local authenticity (Gao, Li, Liu, & Fang, 2018). The digital age has revolutionized the industry (Molz, 2013), with online booking platforms (Beritelli, Reinhold, & Luo, 2019), digital marketing strategies (Guttentag, 2015), and smart technologies enhancing convenience and competitiveness (Zhang, Jia, Zheng, & Liu, 2019). Key factors influencing guests' perceived service quality and intention to return include customer relationship management (Palazzo, Foroudi, & Ferri, 2021), digitalization (Casaló, Flavián, & Guinalíu, 2010), green practices(Gupta, Sajnani, Dixit, Mishra, & Gani, 2023), and responsiveness (Muangmee, 2020). These elements shape the overall homestay experience and consumer satisfaction (Sachdeva, 2020; Sota, Chaudhry, & Srivastava, 2020) (Alt, Reinhold, Alt, & Reinhold, 2020) (Buttle & Maklan, 2019) (Aritama & Diasana Putra, 2021). However, challenges persist in standardization, quality assurance, and regulatory compliance.

With the improvement of social living standards, people's demand for accommodation is gradually developing in the direction of personalization and experience. The development of the homestay industry has stood out, and homestays are significantly different from traditional hotels with their personalized rooms and services. However, problems such as weak sense of specialization, low degree of digitization and lack of service occur frequently in homestays. In order to better develop the homestay industry and promote the re-consumption of homestays, it is necessary to clarify the influencing factors affecting the intentions of revisit of homestay, as well as its influencing path.

While research on China's homestay industry is growing, studies specific to Hunan Province remain limited. There is a need for comprehensive investigation into how these factors impact consumer behavior, particularly revisit intentions, in the context of Hunan's homestay sector. This study aims to address this research gap by examining the influence of customer relationship management, digitalization, green practices, and responsiveness on consumer behavioral intentions in Hunan's homestay industry. The findings will provide valuable insights for stakeholders to optimize strategies and ensure sustainable growth in this evolving market.

Research Objectives

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of customer relationship management, digitalization, green practices, and responsiveness on consumers' intention to revisit homestays.

Research hypothesis

In order to ensure that the research meets the research objectives and questions, the study sets hypotheses based on the relationship between customer relationship management, digitization, green practices, responsiveness, and return visit intention. We pay particular attention to the mediating role of responsiveness between customer relationship management, digitization, green practices, and the intention to return. After detailed research and analysis, ten hypotheses are put forward to lay the foundation for subsequent research.

1. Customer relationship management and responsiveness

Customer relationship management（CRM） in the homestay industry refers to the use of various means, strategies and tools such as database management, personalized service and feedback mechanisms to build, maintain and strengthen relationships with guests(Palazzo et al., 2021). CRM significantly improves enterprise responsiveness by gaining insight into customer needs, improving communication efficiency, automating workflows, providing personalized service, facilitating departmental collaboration, and real-time monitoring. With CRM systems, companies can meet customer needs more quickly and accurately, and improve customer satisfaction and loyalty. Based on the above theories, the first hypothesis of this paper is proposed:

H1: Customer relationship management has a positive impact on responsiveness.

2. Digitization and responsiveness

Digitalization in homestays refers to the process of transforming the homestay business, services, and experience through technological means and platforms (Casaló et al., 2010). This encompasses the use of online booking systems, smart home technologies, customer relationship management software, and social media marketing, among others (Pranita, 2018). Digitalisation significantly increases the responsiveness of businesses by introducing advanced technologies and systems such as real-time data analysis, automated processes and online customer support. Real-time data analytics enable businesses to quickly understand market dynamics and customer needs, automated processes streamline operational steps and reduce human error, and online customer support provides round-the-clock service. The application of these digital means enables enterprises to respond more quickly and efficiently to customer needs and market changes, thus significantly enhancing the responsiveness of enterprises. According to the above theory, the second hypothesis of this paper is proposed:

H2: Digitalization has a positive impact on responsiveness.

3. Green practice and responsiveness

Green practices relate to the environmentally friendly strategies and measures that homestay implements in its operations (Gupta et al., 2023), such as energy conservation, waste reduction, use of renewable resources and promotion of sustainable tourism. These practices not only reflect responsibility for the environment, but also meet the growing demand of tourists seeking eco-friendly accommodation. Green practices significantly enhance a company's responsiveness by improving operational efficiency, reducing waste, enhancing its environmental image, meeting market demands, enhancing competitiveness and complying with environmental regulations to respond more quickly to customer needs. According to the above theories, the third hypothesis of this paper is proposed:

H3: Green practice has a positive impact on responsiveness.

4. Customer relationship management and return visit intention

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) enhances customer service satisfaction through personalized service and efficient communication. Customer relationship management systems collect and analyze customer data, enabling homestays to provide personalized services that meet specific needs and enhance the customer experience. At the same time, it helps build and maintain long-term relationships and promotes customer trust and loyalty. Efficient communication ensures that customers receive information and solve problems in a timely manner, increasing satisfaction. In addition, by collecting feedback, homestays can continuously improve their services and better meet customer expectations. Incentives and incentives further incentivize customers to visit more than once. Therefore, good customer

relationship management effectively improves the overall satisfaction of customers and the intention to return. According to the above theories, the fourth hypothesis of this paper is proposed:

H4: Customer relationship management has a positive impact on return visit intention.

5. Digitization and return visit intention

The service of digitization in the homestay industry is reflected in the aspects of convenience, personalized service, enhanced interaction and timely feedback. First, tools such as online booking systems and smart payments make the customer experience more convenient, reduce red tape and increase satisfaction. Second, digital technology provides personalized recommendations and customized services through data analysis, enhancing customer loyalty to the brand. In addition, social media and digital platforms facilitate interaction between customers and brands, increasing brand awareness and customer engagement. Finally, through digital channels, customers can get help and feedback quickly, enhancing the timeliness and responsiveness of services. These factors work together to increase customers' overall satisfaction and thus their intention to return. According to the above theories, the fifth hypothesis of this paper is proposed:

H5: Digitization has a positive impact on return visit intention.

6. Green practice and intention to return visits

In the homestay industry, more and more attention is paid to green practices. First of all, through strategies such as energy conservation, waste reduction and the use of renewable resources, homestay demonstrates a sense of responsibility for the environment and meets consumers' demand for environmentally friendly accommodation, making them more inclined to choose these environmentally friendly homestay. Secondly, green building design provides a healthier and more comfortable environment, such as natural lighting and good ventilation, which enhances the customer's comfortable experience and positive impression. In addition, these practices help to enhance the brand image of homestay and enhance customers' sense of identity with the brand, thereby increasing their loyalty and intention to return. Therefore, green practices effectively promote customer return intention and loyalty by enhancing customer experience, brand identity and social impact. According to the above theories, the sixth hypothesis of this paper is proposed:

H6: Green practice has a positive impact on return visit intention.

7. Responsiveness and intention to return visit

Responsiveness reflects the speed and efficiency with which a business deals with customer needs, questions, and feedback(Gunasekaran, Lai, & Cheng, 2008), reflecting the timeliness of customer attention, the ability to solve problems, and the commitment to provide high quality service. When an enterprise can respond to customer needs and problems quickly and effectively, customers will feel valued and satisfied with the service experience. This positive experience enhances customers' trust and loyalty to the enterprise, making them more inclined to choose the service or product of the enterprise again. In addition, high responsiveness also reduces the amount of time customers have to wait and resolve problems, further improving their overall satisfaction and thus increasing their willingness to return. According to the above theories, the seventh hypothesis of this paper is proposed:

H7: Responsiveness has a positive impact on return visit intention.

8. Responsiveness and customer relationship management and return visit intention

Responsiveness creates a closer and more trusting relationship between the business and its customers. First of all, high responsiveness means that enterprises can quickly and effectively deal with customer problems and needs, which directly improves customer satisfaction and trust in the quality of enterprise services. The core of customer relationship management is to establish and maintain this trust relationship, through efficient response, the enterprise shows the importance and commitment to the customer, thus enhancing the customer loyalty. Second, when customers experience high responsiveness, they are more likely to be satisfied and have a positive attitude toward the business, and this positive experience increases their willingness to return. Responsiveness is not just a problem solving tool, it is a key factor in enhancing the relationship between the customer and the business, which ultimately promotes repeat purchase and loyalty behavior. Based on the above theories, the eighth hypothesis of this paper is proposed:

H8: Responsiveness has a mediating effect on customer relationship management and return visit intention.

9. Responsiveness and digitization and intention to return visits

Digitalization in a business environment often means more efficient and faster service delivery and communication channels, and responsiveness ensures that these benefits are realized. First of all, the high level of responsiveness ensures that the enterprise can respond to the needs and feedback of customers in a timely manner, including the information collected through digital channels. This ability to quickly feedback and solve problems improves the customer experience and enhances customer satisfaction and trust in the enterprise. Secondly, responsiveness ensures the effective use of digital technologies, such as instant support through online platforms, automated customer service processes, etc., so that customers feel convenient and efficient. As a result, responsiveness not only facilitates the use of digital technologies to enhance the customer experience, but also further enhances the willingness of customers to return by increasing customer satisfaction and trust. Based on the above theories, the ninth hypothesis of this paper is proposed:

H9: Responsiveness has a mediating effect on digitization and return visit intention.

10. Responsiveness and green practice and intention to return visit

Responsiveness Through the effective communication and implementation of green practices, enhance customer trust and satisfaction with the company, thereby increasing the willingness to return. First of all, high responsiveness ensures that the company is able to solve problems related to green practices in a timely manner, such as customer questions or suggestions on environmental protection measures, such response shows the company's attention to environmental protection commitments and execution, and makes customers feel that the company is sincere and positive in implementing sustainable development. Second, by responding quickly to customer demands and feedback on environmental protection, companies can enhance customer identification and trust in their green practices, which is a key factor in the customer's decision to return. As a result, responsiveness not only effectively implements green practices, but also increases customer satisfaction and trust by increasing their willingness to return. According to the above theory, the tenth hypothesis of this paper is proposed:

H10: Responsiveness plays a mediating role in green practice and return visit intention.

Research Methodology

1. Population and Sample

According to a survey conducted by the China Tourism Academy, by the year 2022, inter-provincial tourism flow in Hunan Province is projected to rank seventh nationwide. Since 2022, with the high attention from the Hunan Provincial Party Committee and Provincial Government, the development of the tourism industry in Hunan has shown positive signs. In the first half of this year, the province hosted 171 million domestic and international tourists, generating tourism revenue of 257.209 billion yuan. In 2023, the latest national tourism homestay rating list was released on the official website of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Among them, three homestays in Hunan were rated as A-level, and one homestay was rated as B-level, ranking second in the country. As of now, Hunan Province has 27 five-star homestays and 28 four-star homestays. Therefore, the homestay industry in Hunan Province serves as a data source for this study. A targeted population is a group of people who meet specific criteria and can be grouped (Blumberg, Cooper, & Schindler, 2014). Determining an appropriate sample size using structural equation modeling (SEM) is a key step to ensure the validity and reliability of research results.（Cooper, Schindler, Cooper, & Schindler， 2003)noted that a completely random sample is a group of people from a more extensive survey population who all have the same chance of being chosen. A recent body of research recommends using power analysis to calculate sample size (Hair, Risher, Sarstedt, & Ringle, 2019), although strict rules may not exist. Some guidelines can be adopted to estimate an adequate sample size (Dattalo, 2008).

This study sorted out 76 items. As a rule of thumb, the best sample size can be obtained by multiplying 8.2 by 76, which is 624. Six homestays were randomly selected from 55 homestays for the questionnaire survey as the data collection tool, involving a random sample of consumers from these six homestays. The research adopted a structured questionnaire for the survey method, collecting information through personal interviews. The respondents represented diverse demographic data and had different experiences in various types of host families across different locations within the province. Data recording commenced on specified dates to ensure that responses reflected the respondents' most recent experiences and opinions.

2. Data Collection

This study collected data of residents who had used homestay services in Hunan Province through questionnaire survey. Respondents were informed of the purpose of the study, participation was voluntary and confidential, and no rewards were offered to avoid bias. In order to improve the response rate, reminders are sent periodically during the period to ensure that respondents are not stressed. Despite the challenges of low response rates and ineffective responses, we improved response rates and data validity through reminders, expanded online community engagement, and improved survey design. Prior to analysis, the data will be thoroughly checked for integrity and consistency to ensure its reliability.

3. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is a powerful statistical technique for assessing and estimating causal relationships between variables. It combines statistical data with qualitative causal assumptions and comprises two core components: the measurement model and the structural model. The measurement model, akin to confirmatory factor analysis, evaluates how observed variables represent latent constructs, while the structural model, similar to traditional path analysis, focuses on causal relationships among latent variables. SEM

incorporates both endogenous (dependent or latent) and exogenous (independent or observed) variables, quantifying their relationships through path coefficients. This approach integrates various statistical methods, including path analysis, factor analysis, multiple regression, and covariance analysis, making SEM a robust tool for testing complex theoretical models. It allows researchers to assess the contribution of individual scale items, estimate the measurement quality of concepts, and analyze relationships between dependent and independent variables, thus finding wide application across diverse fields of study.

Research Conceptual Framework

This study aims to explore the relationship between customer relationships, digitalization, and green practices with service response and intentions to revisit in homestays. Based on the above literature review and the proposed hypotheses, the conceptual framework of this study is shown in Figure 1.

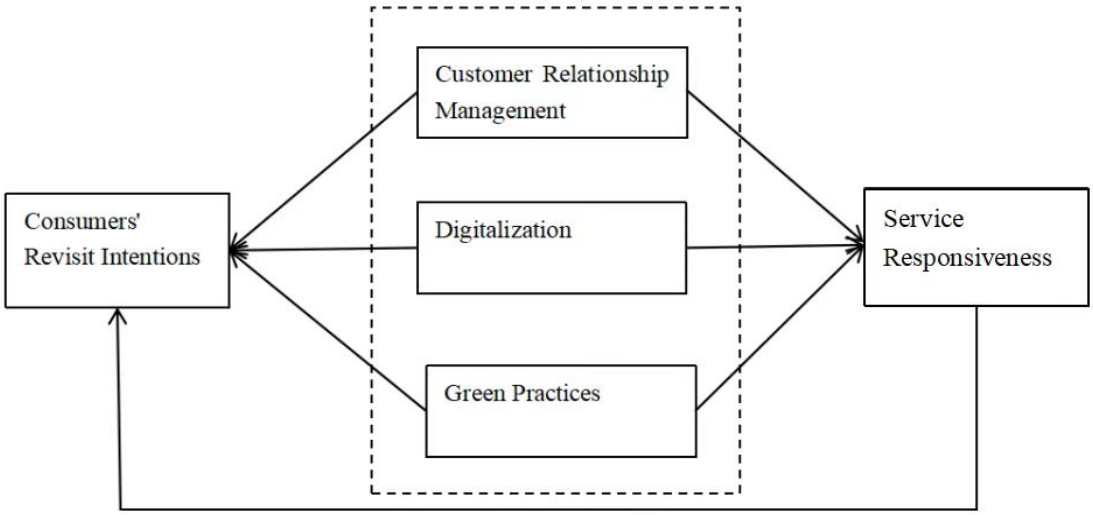

Figure 1. Research Conceptual Framework

Research Results

1. Demographic Data

The participants of this study were consumers who had experiences staying in homestays in Hunan Province. Demographic questions included four parts: gender, age, education level, and monthly income.

Among the respondents, there were 235 males, accounting for 37.9%, while females were slightly more numerous, with 385 individuals, constituting 62.1%. Regarding age distribution, the largest proportion of consumers fell within the 26-35 age group, comprising 30.0%, followed by the 19-25 age group at 26.3%, and then the 36-45 age group, with the smallest proportion being individuals under 18 years old. In terms of education level, the majority had attained a college degree or higher, accounting for 71.3%, followed by those with a high school diploma at 23.9%, and individuals with a junior high school education or below, constituting 4.7%. Concerning monthly income, the largest proportion fell within the range of

7,000-10,000 yuan, accounting for 35.5%, followed by 3,000 yuan and below at 28.9%, More than 10,000 yuan at 20.3%, and 3,000-7,000 yuan at 15.3%.

2. Descriptive Statistics

This section summarizes the characteristics of the data collected in this study and presents them in a quantitative and comparable manner. Based on Table 1, the mean values of all variables range between 3.5-4.0, higher than the moderate level of 3.0, indicating that consumers are relatively satisfied with various aspects of their homestay determinations. Meanwhile, their intention to revisit and engage in electronic word-of-mouth is relatively strong.

Table 1 Descriptive statistical results

	M	**SD**	**Skewness**	**Kurtosis**
CRM	3.56	0.92	-0.23	-0.74
GP	3.58	0.93	-0.24	-0.76
DN	3.67	0.93	-0.46	-0.40
RS	3.70	0.94	-0.52	-0.44
IR	3.57	0.93	-0.21	-0.75

3. Correlation Analysis

According to Table 2, customer relationship management ($r=0.504$, $p<0.01$), green practices ($r=0.470$, $p<0.01$), digitalization ($r=0.509$, $p<0.01$), and responsiveness ($r=0.574$, $p<0.01$) are significantly positively correlated with intentions to revisit.

Table 2 Correlation Analysis Results

	CRM	**GP**	**DN**	**RS**	**IR**
CRM	1	.621**	.559**	.434**	.504**
GP	.621**	1	.528**	.470**	.470**
DN	.559**	.528**	1	.463**	.509**
RS	.434**	.470**	.463**	1	.574**
IR	.504**	.470**	.509**	.574**	1

Note：**P<0.01.

4. Measurement Model

Before conducting the structural model test, it is necessary to analyze the measurement model. In the measurement model, Cronbach's α, composite reliability (CR), convergent validity (Mertler, Vannatta, & LaVenia), and factor loadings are all very important and must be tested for significance using the bootstrapping resampling method, so as to determine whether to remove the observed indicator. In executing Smart-PLS 4.0, this study set cases-473 and samples-5000.

From Table 3, we can see that the Cronbach's α values of all observed variables are greater than 0.7, indicating good data reliability. At the same time, the CR values are greater than 0.7, indicating that the assignment of items to their respective variables is reasonable. Additionally, the AVE values for convergent validity are all greater than 0.5, showing good convergent validity of the data. Further analyzing the discriminant validity of the data, as shown in Table 4, the correlation coefficients between variables are all smaller than the square roots of the AVEs of the respective variables, indicating that the items of each variable can be well distinguished.

The VIF values of all items fall between 1.864 and 2.335, which are less than the very strict empirical value of 5, indicating no highly correlated relationships between the observed variables, i.e., no severe multicollinearity (Table 5). Simultaneously, the factor loadings of all items are greater than 0.5 and reach significance levels (all greater than 1.96).

Based on the above analysis, the measurement model results pass the test, and we can proceed with the structural model test.

Table 3 Cronbach's α、Composite Reliability (CR) and Convergent Validity

	Cronbach's alpha	**CR**	**AVE**
CRM	0.856	0.902	0.697
DN	0.88	0.918	0.736
GP	0.877	0.915	0.73
IR	0.837	0.902	0.754
RS	0.882	0.919	0.739

Table 4 Discriminant validity

	CRM	**DN**	**GP**	**IR**	**RS**
CRM	0.835				
DN	0.643	0.858			
GP	0.717	0.601	0.854		
IR	0.595	0.593	0.550	0.868	
RS	0.500	0.525	0.534	0.668	0.859

Table 5 Cactor loadings and VIF

	CRM	**DN**	**GP**	**IR**	**RS**	**VIF**
CRM1	0.825					1.864
CRM2	0.817					1.948
CRM3	0.857					2.004
CRM4	0.841					2.02
DN1		0.842				2.151
DN2		0.871				2.321
DN3		0.883				2.543
DN4		0.836				2.053
GP1			0.861			2.237
GP2			0.852			2.250
GP3			0.844			2.108
GP4			0.859			2.181

IR1	0.872		1.947
IR2	0.863		1.938
IR3	0.87		1.981
RS1		0.865	2.332
RS2		0.863	2.297
RS3		0.846	2.122
RS4		0.864	2.335

5. Structural Model Testing

Evaluating a PLS-SEM structural model involves assessing the validity of relationships defined during theory construction, rather than relying on overall goodness-of-fit indicators. The evaluation focuses on the predictive power of measurement and structural equations, with measurement equation assessment taking precedence. Key indicators in Smart-PLS 4.0 include R2 (explaining endogenous latent variables), SRMR (average correlation matrix difference), and NFI (model fit, ideally >0.8). R2 values of 0.02, 0.13, and 0.26 indicate small, medium, and large explanatory power, respectively.

From Table 6, we can see that the R2 values for RS and IR are 0.443 and 0.296, respectively, indicating a relatively high explanatory power. At the same time, SRMR is less than 0.1, and NFI is greater than 0.8.

Table 6 Fitting index

	R-square	**R-square adjusted**	**SRMR**	**NFI**
AE	0.443	0.438	0.044	0.892
IR	0.296	0.292		

Overall, the structural model has good predictive validity, and the initial PLS model runs relatively well. Therefore, this study further sampled 5000 times using the bootstrapping method and employed a two-tailed T-test on the initial model to obtain the path coefficients, standard deviations, T-values, and P-values between the latent variables. Generally, if the T-value is greater than 1.96 or P is less than 0.05, it indicates that the model passes the significance test. The path relationship test results of the structural model are shown in Figure 1.

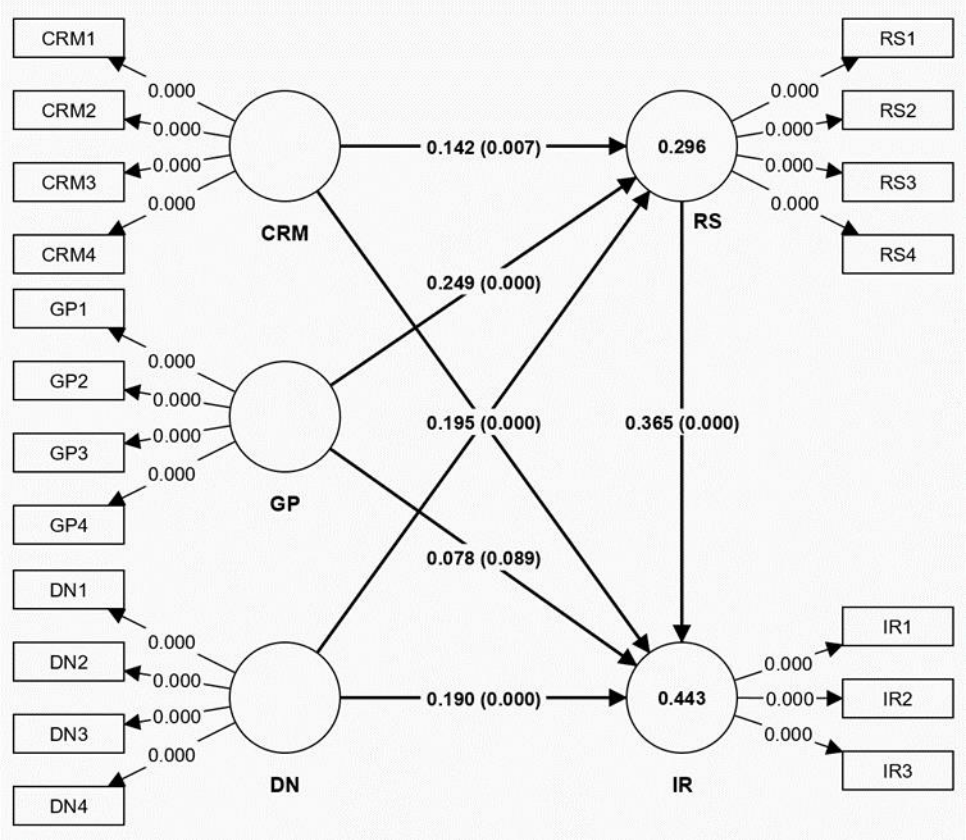

Figure 2 Structural model test results. (Source: Constructed by the researcher)
Note: The value in the circle is R2; the value in front of the path is the path coefficient, and the value in brackets is the P value; the thicker the path, the larger the path coefficient.

As can be seen from Figure 1 and Table 7, CRM (β=0.142, P<0.01), DN (β=0.252, P<0.001), and GP (β=0.249, P<0.001) have significant positive effect on RS. CRM (β=0.195, P<0.001), DN (β=0.190, P<0.001) and RS (β=0.365, P<0.01) have significant positive effect on IR. However, there is no significant effect of GP on IR (β=0.078, P>0.05). Moreover, RS mediates between CRM and IR (β=0.052, P<0.05), between DN and IR (β=0.092, P<0.001), and between GP and IR (β=0.091, P<0.001). Therefore, hypotheses H1-H10 are supported.

Table 7 Path coefficient test

Hypothesis	Paths	β	SD	T	P	
H1	CRM -> RS	0.142	0.052	2.715	0.007	Supported
H2	DN -> RS	0.252	0.050	5.049	0.000	Supported
H3	GP -> RS	0.249	0.054	4.590	0.000	Supported
H4	CRM -> IR	0.195	0.048	4.084	0.000	Supported
H5	DN -> IR	0.190	0.047	4.034	0.000	Supported
H6	GP -> IR	0.078	0.046	1.700	0.089	Not Supported
H7	RS -> IR	0.365	0.044	8.253	0.000	Supported
H8	CRM -> RS -> IR	0.052	0.020	2.552	0.011	Supported

H9	DN -> RS -> IR	0.092	0.021	4.318	0.000	Supported
H10	GP -> RS -> IR	0.091	0.022	4.165	0.000	Supported

Discussion

Homestays, as a crucial option in tourist accommodation, require comprehensive evaluation by consumers. Research indicates that customer relationship management, digitalization and responsive service significantly correlate with consumers' willingness to return. These factors enhance customer loyalty and satisfaction. However, there is no significant effect of green practices on revisit intentions.

For the fact that green practices cannot significantly affect the homestay in the willingness to consume, the possible reason for this is that when tourists choose accommodation, they consider more about the price, service and accommodation, and do not pay enough attention to the green practices, or the green practices are not practical for the tourists, which also reduces the impact on the willingness. In addition, some green practices may increase the operating costs of homestays, which in turn is reflected in prices. If prices rise as a result, consumers may be more inclined to choose non-green homastays that are less expensive. From a market perspective, the public's concept of green consumption is currently not deep enough, and consumer awareness and acceptance of green practices are still developing.

Responsiveness plays a pivotal mediating role between customer relationship management, digitalization, green practices, and return visit intentions. It directly impacts customer experience quality by promptly addressing needs and feedback, thereby improving overall satisfaction and strengthening customer-homestay relationships. Moreover, responsive service demonstrates the importance homestay managers place on customer care and service quality, fostering trust and loyalty.

In the context of digitalization, efficient online booking systems and interactive platforms enhance communication, improving customer experience and satisfaction. Regarding green practices, implementing sustainable measures like energy conservation and renewable resource usage addresses customers' environmental concerns, enhancing brand image and customer identification.

Superior service quality meets consumer expectations, reinforcing recognition and loyalty towards the homestay (Wahid et al., 2017). Positive experiences, including architectural style, can translate into behavioral intentions such as repeat bookings and recommendations (Jun, 2020).

In the digital age, consumers' expectations for homestay services are evolving. This study employs quantitative methods to confirm the positive impact of customer relationship management, digitalization and responsiveness on return visit intentions. These findings align with similar studies, which found that perceived service quality in digital environments affects brand loyalty and word-of-mouth communication.

The mediating effect of responsiveness on customer relationship management, digitalization, green practices, and return visit intentions is a complex, multidimensional process influenced by various factors. Future research should further explore these

relationships to better understand the mechanisms driving consumer behavior in the homestay industry.

In conclusion, this study contributes to both theoretical understanding and practical application. Homestay operators can leverage these insights to provide personalized services and experiences, enhancing consumer satisfaction and loyalty. However, it's important to note that sample characteristics, research methods, and cultural backgrounds may lead to variations in research outcomes across different studies.

Conclusions

This study takes Hunan Province as the study area and uses a questionnaire to explore the factors influencing consumers' intention to revisit homestays through structural equation modeling. It was found that (1) customer relationship management, digitalization, and service responsiveness had a significant effect on re-visit intention and shaped overall experience and satisfaction. (2) Green practices had no significant effect on homestay revisit intentions. (3) Service response mediates the relationship between the effects of customer relationship management, digitalization, and green practices on revisit intentions.

The results of the study provide valuable insights for homestay operators and guidance for improving homestay revisit intentions. In addition, these insights can help to promote the sustainable development of tourism. Nonetheless, the study has the following limitations:(1) The study focuses on Hunan Province, which may limit generalizability to other regions with different cultural and economic backgrounds. (2) As a cross-sectional study, it captures data at a single point in time, which may overlook long-term trends or seasonal changes in consumer behavior. Future research could address these limitations by expanding the geographic scope and conducting longitudinal studies to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the homestay industry.

Suggestions

1. Theoretical Suggestions:

This study emphasizes the importance of customer relationship management, digitalization and service responsiveness in enhancing consumers' intention to revisit homestays. Theoretical recommendations include understanding the interplay of these factors and their collective influence on consumer decisions. Researchers should integrate these variables into a comprehensive theoretical model and examine the mediating role of service responsiveness. Cross-cultural studies are also suggested to evaluate the model's applicability across different cultural contexts, offering broader guidelines for the homestay industry.

2. Practical Suggestions:

In view of the above findings, it is recommended to (1) improve the customer relationship management system: collect customer data through multiple channels to understand customers' needs and behavioral patterns, and formulate targeted marketing strategies and service plans; keep interacting with customers through social media platforms to share the latest news, activities and promotions of the homestays, and to enhance the sense of participation and loyalty of customers. (2) Enhance digitalization to provide personalized services and convenient online experience: establish a comprehensive online booking system; apply customer data for personalized services; use an intelligent property management system to improve operational efficiency and service quality; and provide virtual reality (VR) or

augmented reality (AR) guided tours so that prospective customers can experience room layouts and amenities online to enhance booking decisions. (3) Optimize the response speed and quality of homestay services: provide multiple channels to keep in touch with customers as well as introduce an AI customer service system to improve response speed; conduct regular satisfaction surveys and internal assessments.

3. Future Suggestions:

Future research should broaden the geographical scope to include diverse cultural and economic backgrounds. Longitudinal studies are needed to track long-term trends and seasonal changes in consumer behavior. Researchers should explore additional factors affecting revisit intentions, such as price, service quality, and location. Homestay operators and policymakers can use these insights to develop targeted marketing strategies and policies, promoting sustainable industry growth. Integrating emerging technologies into services can also provide more personalized and efficient customer experiences.

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