

Research Article

Exploration of Memorable Tourism Experience and Word of Mouth in Increasing Revisit Intention in Karawang Beach Tourism

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Abstract: The COVID-19 pandemic has reduced tourism to Karawang Beach, which holds significant potential. This study investigates how memorable tourist experiences (MTE) influence word of mouth (WOM) and revisit intention (RI) among tourists at Karawang Beach and offers strategic recommendations to tourism managers. The study surveyed 120 qualified respondents using a quantitative descriptive-verification approach. Utilizing SEM-PLS, MTE was found to have a positive and substantial effect on WOM (0.662) and RI (0.488), while WOM significantly influenced RI (0.480). RI was explained by 77.8% of the variance in MTE and attention to revisit intention through WOM, with an R-square value of 0.778. These findings indicate that a good tourist experience can encourage people to return and share positive reviews. Therefore, tourism management should enhance the quality of tourist experiences to boost word-of-mouth marketing and persuade visitors to return to Karawang Beach.

Keywords: Karawang Beach Tourism; Memorable Tourism Experience; Revisit Intention; Word of Mouth

1. Introduction

Indonesia has rich nature and culture with beauty from Sabang to Merauke and diverse language, tradition and local wisdom charm (Fadhlan & Subakti, 2020). Tourism can differentiate become a number of types, such as nature, culture, religion, culinary, adventure, education, health, shopping, and MICE. Every type offers a unique experience in accordance with tourists' interests. Diversity is important for attracting more visitors and supporting sustainable tourism (Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, 2020). However, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought a very significant impact, causing a drastic decline in domestic tourists, disturbances to service supporters, and a loss of big income (Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy/Baparekraf RI, 2021). This condition is a major challenge for the government and business actors in reviving the tourism sector (Azizah Husin, Dian Sri Andriani, 2022). The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact and influence on the tourism sector. Tourism is a complex interaction between tourists, service providers, government, destinations and the community reflecting the dynamics that affect the sustainability of the industry (Yoga Satrya Wibawa, 2022). In accordance with Law No. 10 of 2009, it emphasizes the importance of synergy between the government, community and private sector in tourism development that is oriented towards sustainability (Ahmad, 2022).

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The Central Statistics Agency (2024) recorded an increase in domestic tourists in January-July 2024 thanks to the post-pandemic tourism recovery strategy which includes innovation, adaptation, and collaboration (Anggarini, 2021). Java Island is the main destination with 69.63% of trips, where West Java contributes 15.88% making Karawang one of its leading destinations (Central Statistics Agency, 2024). Karawang Regency offers a variety of tourism, ranging from beaches, waterfalls, to historical sites, (Fizkiana & Kusnanto, 2022). However, Thus, power pull the beaches in Karawang are still face various challenges that hinder improvement amount visit tourists. One of the factor main is condition poor sea water cleanliness awake, where is the sea water often looks cloudy and polluted waste, good from activity industry and also House stairs around the coastal area (Anggraeni & Romli, 2024). In addition, the facilities and infrastructure at the location tour like facility general, access road, place parking, up to places of worship and toilets are still limited (Argenti & Purnamasari, 2021). Lack of professional management, promotion limited tourism, as well as lack of participation public in maintain and develop destinations also participate contribute to the low interest visit. This is cause experience traveler less than optimal and has an impact on perception negative to tour Karawang beach.

Table 1. Number of Domestic Visitors to Natural and Cultural Tourism Objects in Karawang Regency 2020-2023

Place Recreation (Recreation Area)	Amount Visitors (Number of Visitors)			
	2020	2021	2022	2023
New Ocean Beach	856.123	24,531	20,327	15.254
Tanjung Pakis Beach	957,671	14,232	116,685	39,063

Source : (Central Bureau of Statistics , 2024)

Based on phenomenon said , research This focuses on two beaches in Karawang, namely Samudra Baru Beach and Tanjung Pakis Beach. Both destination This chosen Because reflect dynamics visit enough tourists fluctuating in period time 2020-2023, as reflected in the Central Statistics Agency data (2024). The decline drastic happen especially in 2021 which is peak the Covid-19 pandemic, but until 2023 not yet show significant recovery. Fluctuations the become indicator existence complex and interesting problem For investigated more continue , especially related with How Memorable Tourism Experience (MTE) and Word of Mouth (WOM) play a role in to form intention visit repeat (revisit intention) traveler to the beaches the.

Memorable tourism experiences (MTEs) play an important role in increasing tourist visits, formed from natural beauty, interesting activities, and local cultural interactions (Tiwari et al., 2023). MTEs encourage tourists to share experiences through word of mouth (WOM) which is effective in attracting potential tourists and increasing repeat visits (Souki et al., 2023). Given its subjective nature , understanding deep required For support sustainability tourist

(Tiwari et al., 2023) . Based on the description in the background, the existing factors have the potential to reduce tourists' interest in revisiting Karawang beach tourism. When tourists are impressed by the experience they have, it will encourage them to revisit, driven by various positive reasons (Eko Sugiarto, 2023) . Therefore, this phenomenon motivates the author to conduct research on "Exploration of Memorable Tourism Experience and Word of Mouth in Increasing Revisit Intention in Karawang Beach Tourism".

2. Literature Review

2.1 Memorable Tourism Experience

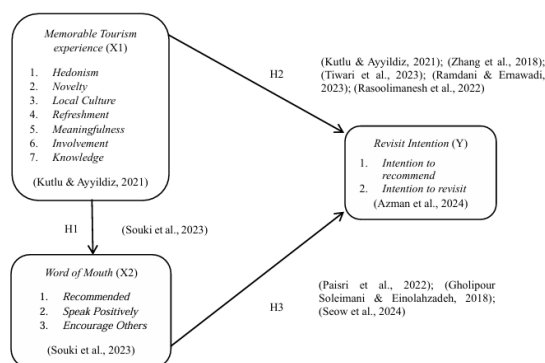
Memorable Tourism Experience (MTE) is an important concept in tourism that describes how tourists remember and feel their experiences (Azman et al., 2024) . Memorable Tourism Experience (MTE) encourages tourists to seek different experiences from their routines (Kahraman & Cifci , 2023) . The factors used For to characterize Memorable Tourism Experience (MTE) is determined by seven dimensions: hedonism, novelty, local culture, refreshment, meaningfulness, involvement, knowledge (Kutlu & Ayyildiz, 2021) .

2.2 Word Of Mouth

Word of Mouth (WOM) is informal communication between consumer influence decision purchase (Paisri et al., 2022) . WOM includes recommendations and experiences that can influence consumer behavior (Savitri & Fauji, 2021) . Along with the development of technology, WOM is mostly done from social media and product reviews, but it is still important in influencing consumer decisions (Nurniati et al., 2023) . E-WOM allows consumers to share views digitally, influence consumer behavior, and increase sales (Putri Widia Ningsih, Citra Savitri, 2023) . According to [13] dimensions recommended, speak positively, encourage others.

2.3 Revisit Intention

Revisit intention is the intention to revisit which is the link between attitude and behavior. According to Hwang in (Azman et al., 2024) , Revisit intention is the tendency or willingness of tourists to revisit later. This plays an important role in the sustainability of the tourism business because it shows customer loyalty and interest in revisiting. In destination marketing, revisit intention is used to estimate tourist behavior and is the main dimension in measuring tourist loyalty to a destination (Paisri et al., 2022) . According to [15] dimensions Intention to recommend, and Intention to revisit.

**Figure 1** Research Model

Source : Researcher , 2024

H 1 : Memorable Tourism Experience is influential to Word of Mouth.

H 2 : Memorable Tourism Experience is influential to Revisit Intention.

H 3 : Word of Mouth is influential to Revisit Intention.

3. Method

The study applied a quantitative method with a descriptive-verification approach. The research population focused on tourists to Samudra Baru Beach and Tanjung Pakis Beach in 2023, with a total of 54,317 visitors (Central Bureau of Statistics). The sample was selected using purposive sampling, and the number was determined based on the Hair formula (Rahayu & Susanti, 2022) , namely $n = 10 \times 12 = 120$, so that a minimum of 120 respondents were obtained. The sample criteria include tourists aged ≥ 10 years, have visited, and have a desire to return. Data analysis using SEM-PLS in the outer model, inner model and hypothesis tests. Data collection through a Likert scale Google Form questionnaire survey.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Profile Respondents

The following is the respondent characteristics data in the distributed questionnaire:

Table 2 Respondent Characteristics

Rentang Usia	Jumlah
10-15 Tahun	8
16-20 Tahun	14
21-25 Tahun	27
26-30 Tahun	24
31-35 Tahun	22
36-40 Tahun	10
41-45 Tahun	10
>46 Tahun	8
Total	120
Jenis Kelamin	Jumlah
Laki-Laki	58
Perempuan	62
Total	120
Pekerjaan	Jumlah
Pelajar	12
Mahasiswa	33
Karyawan	56
Wiraswasta	9
Ibu rumah Tangga	8
Total	120

Source : Researcher Data Processing , (2024)

Based on data from 120 respondents who visited Karawang beach , the majority visitors aged 21-30 years (51 respondents). This is show that generation young dominate group visitors . In terms of gender, women dominate (62 respondents), with the majority being employees (56 respondents) and students (33 respondents). Although the physical environmental conditions of Karawang Beach are still less than ideal, such as murky/dirty sea water, limited tourism support facilities, and minimal cleanliness and comfort facilities, the younger generation still shows interest in this destination. This can be caused by several factors, namely easy accessibility and proximity to the Jabodetabek area, making Karawang Beach a practical choice for employees to relieve stress from work activities, even though they are aware of the limited facilities available. Then for students, this beach is a relatively cost-effective recreation alternative, where they can relax or gather with friends without having to travel far or spend a lot of money.

The younger generation, especially women, tend to choose the beach because it offers natural beauty, comfort, and a calm atmosphere that helps relieve stress (Muhaer et al., 2024) . Employees visit the beach to relieve stress from work activities, while students choose it as a cost-effective recreation option as well as a place to relax and socialize as stated by (Dini et al., 2023) . Overall, Karawang Beach still has social and emotional appeal even though the environmental quality is not yet supportive, which indicates the need to improve tourism management and facilities at this location.

Table 3Description of Memorable Tourism Experience Variables

Variabel	Item	Mean
<i>Memorable Tourism Experience (X1)</i>	MTE1	3,825
	MTE10	3,808
	MTE11	3,850
	MTE12	3,925
	MTE13	3,817
	MTE14	3,925
	MTE15	3,917
	MTE16	3,867
	MTE17	3,842
	MTE18	3,933
	MTE19	3,917
	MTE2	3,908
	MTE20	3,875
	MTE21	3,917
	MTE3	3,867
	MTE4	3,875
	MTE5	3,825
	MTE6	3,883
	MTE7	3,933
	MTE8	3,933
	MTE9	3,892
Nilai rata-rata Variabel X1		3,883

Source : Researcher Data Processing (2024)

From table 3, the Memorable Tourism Experience variable (X1) obtained an average value of 3.883. Which reflects evaluation tend Enough impressive from Respondent to vari-

able Memorable Tourism Experience. The dimensions with the highest values are the dimensions of " Local Culture (X1.7), (X1.8)" and the dimension of " Involvement (X1.18)" each of which is 3.933, this indicates that there is appreciation from respondents. Conversely, the dimension with the lowest value is the dimension of " Refreshment (X1.10)" of 3.808, indicating a lack of freshness and comfort during the trip. This is an important note, because a memorable travel experience plays a major role in creating a positive mood and a desire to return to visit the destination (Hasanah et al., 2024) .

Table 4Word of Mouth Variables

Variabel	Item	Mean
<i>Word of Mouth (X2)</i>	WOM1	4,492
	WOM2	4,342
	WOM3	4,225
	WOM4	4,125
	WOM5	4,000
	WOM6	3,850
	WOM7	3,717
	WOM8	3,658
	WOM9	3,600
Nilai rata-rata Variabel X2		4,001

Source: Researcher Data Processing (2024)

Referring to Table 4, the Word of Mouth variable (X1) has an average score of 4.001, which reflects a fairly recommendatory assessment from respondents regarding the variable when viewed from conditions in the field. Although the value is moderate, this shows that respondents have not been fully motivated to actively spread their tourism experiences. The dimension with the highest score is " Recommended (X2.1)" at 4.492, which indicates that there is still a desire from some respondents to recommend the destination to others. Conversely, the dimension with the lowest value is the "Encourage Others (X2.9)" dimension at 3.600, indicating the weak motivation of respondents in encouraging others to visit Karawang beach tourism. This is an important note, considering that word of mouth plays a major role in influencing the decisions of potential tourists in choosing a destination . This is consistent with the findings [18] explain word of mouth plays a role important in the election process destination tour .

Table 5Description of Revisit Intention Variables

Variabel	Item	Mean
<i>Revisit Intention (Y)</i>	RI1	4,442
	RI10	3,792
	RI11	3,775
	RI12	3,733
	RI13	3,617
	RI14	3,617
	RI15	3,600
	RI16	3,550
	RI2	4,383
	RI3	4,250
	RI4	4,217
	RI5	4,125
	RI6	4,108
	RI7	4,050
	RI8	3,942
	RI9	3,917
Nilai rata-rata Variabel Y		3,945

Source: Researcher Data Processing (2024)

Based on table 5 , the Revisit Intention (Y) variable obtained an average value of 3.945. Which indicates a neutral/undecided assessment from respondents regarding their intention to revisit beach tourism. The dimension with the highest value is the " Intention to Recommended (Y.1) dimension of 4.442. reflects that Respondent more leaning For recommend destination This to others in comparison with desire personal For back . On the contrary , the dimension with mark lowest is “Intention to Revisit (Y.16)” of 3,550, indicating that desire Respondent For do visit repeat Still low . This is become attention important , because in accordance with (Tiwari et al., 2023) that memorable experiences encourage the intention to revisit the tourist destination.

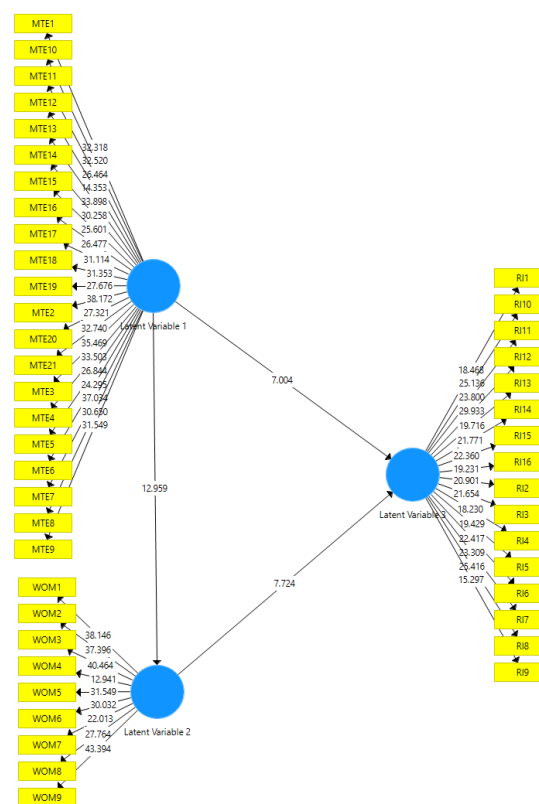


Figure 2 Loading Factor Results with SmartPLS 3.0

Source : Processed By Researchers (2024)

Based on loading factor results using SmartPLS 3.0 shown in Figure 2, the loading factor value > 0.70 , exceeds the error variance. This shows that each indicator is valid and able to represent the measurement model for the construct variable. This finding is in line with research (Setiawan et al., 2024) which states that an indicator is considered valid and feasible if it has a loading factor value > 0.70 .

4.2 Validity Test

4.2.1 Convergent Validity

Average Variance Extracted (AVE) is used to assess the level of accuracy of each indicator in measuring its construct. An indicator is considered valid if the AVE value is > 0.50 (Savitri et al., 2022) .

Table 6. Construct Reability and Validity

	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Keterangan
<i>Memorable Tourism Experience</i>	0,709	Valid
<i>Word of Mouth</i>	0,696	Valid
<i>Revisit Intention</i>	0,637	Valid

Source : SmartPLS-3 Processed Results (2024)

Based on Table 6 shows that all over indicator is valid because known that each item has mark Average Variance Extracted (AVE) > 0.50 .

Table 7Reliability Test Results

	Cronbach's Alpha	Syarat	Composite Reliability	Syarat	Keterangan
<i>Memorable Tourism Experience</i>	0,979	$> 0,70$	0,981	$>0,60$	Reliable
<i>Word of Mouth</i>	0,945	$> 0,70$	0,954	$>0,60$	Reliable
<i>Revisit Intention</i>	0,962	$> 0,70$	0,966	$>0,60$	Reliable

Source : SmartPLS-3 Processed Results (2024)

Cronbach's alpha is used as size For test reliability of each indicator . According to (Savitri & Maemunah, 2021) an indicator is reliable if the Cronbach's alpha value exceeds 0.70. Based on the data presented in Table 7, all items show a Cronbach's alpha value > 0.70 , which indicates that the indicators meet the validity and reliability criteria.

4.2.2 Discriminant Validity

Table 8. Fornel Lacker Criteria

	<i>Memorable Tourism Experience</i>	<i>Word of Mouth</i>	<i>Revisit Intention</i>
<i>Memorable Tourism Experience</i>	0,842		
<i>Word of Mouth</i>	0,662	0,834	
<i>Revisit Intention</i>	0,806	0,803	0,798

Source : SmartPLS-3 Processed Results (2024)

Referring to Table 8, the results of the Fornell-Larcker Criterion test show that mark every variable more big compared to the correlation with variable others . These findings indicate that each variable has adequate discriminant validity.

Table 9 Cross Loading

	<i>Memorable Tourism Experience</i>	<i>Word of Mouth</i>	<i>Revisit Intention</i>
MTE1	0.847	0.540	0.684
MTE10	0.842	0.537	0.668
MTE11	0.830	0.602	0.660
MTE12	0.792	0.527	0.716
MTE13	0.850	0.511	0.658
MTE14	0.849	0.559	0.652
MTE15	0.811	0.527	0.665
MTE16	0.820	0.511	0.633
MTE17	0.848	0.582	0.697
MTE18	0.846	0.495	0.644
MTE19	0.836	0.634	0.695
MTE2	0.859	0.560	0.654
MTE20	0.832	0.521	0.642
MTE21	0.857	0.553	0.668
MTE3	0.864	0.575	0.689
MTE4	0.861	0.615	0.710
MTE5	0.803	0.534	0.634
MTE6	0.845	0.571	0.753
MTE7	0.883	0.597	0.719
MTE8	0.848	0.587	0.700
MTE9	0.859	0.543	0.681
RI1	0.613	0.561	0.780
RI10	0.659	0.667	0.830
RI11	0.605	0.655	0.809
RI12	0.640	0.620	0.827
RI13	0.591	0.607	0.797
RI14	0.521	0.586	0.768
RI15	0.615	0.565	0.765
RI16	0.653	0.546	0.768
RI2	0.649	0.624	0.782
RI3	0.700	0.687	0.815
RI4	0.700	0.703	0.799
RI5	0.707	0.661	0.807
RI6	0.700	0.695	0.828
RI7	0.675	0.666	0.823
RI8	0.669	0.756	0.820
RI9	0.551	0.606	0.750
WOM1	0.538	0.847	0.623
WOM2	0.523	0.846	0.631
WOM3	0.550	0.855	0.660
WOM4	0.581	0.770	0.679
WOM5	0.514	0.847	0.703
WOM6	0.529	0.841	0.679
WOM7	0.610	0.805	0.690
WOM8	0.531	0.827	0.688
WOM9	0.583	0.866	0.662

Source : SmartPLS-3 Processed Results (2024)

Based on table 9 is visible that mark cross loading each item > 0.70 which shows that each indicator has significant contribution to constructs being measured . This indicates that all indicators are valid and reliable, because each indicator is more dominant in representing its construct compared to other constructs.

Table 10. R Square

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
<i>Word of Mouth</i>	0.438	0.434
<i>Revisit Intention</i>	0.778	0.774

Source : SmartPLS-3 Processed Results (2024)

Based on Table 10, the R-Square value for Word of Mouth (WOM) variable recorded of 0.438, which indicates that as much as 43.8% of the variation in WOM can be explained by the Memorable Tourism Experience (MTE) variable , while the remaining 56.2% influenced by other factors outside the model. Meanwhile, the R-Square value on the Revisit Intention (RI) variable of 0.778 indicates that 77.8% of changes in RI can be explained by the WOM variable, while the rest is influenced by other variables not examined in this study.

Table 11 Direct Effect

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
<i>Memorable Tourism Experience -> Word of Mouth</i>	0,662	0,662	0,053	12,555	0,000
<i>Memorable Tourism Experience -> Revisit Intention</i>	0,488	0,489	0,074	6,623	0,000
<i>Word of mouth -> Revisit Intention</i>	0,480	0,478	0,068	7,046	0,000

Source: SmartPLS-3 Processed Results (2024)

Based on table 11 , the results of the path coefficient analysis show how big the relationship is between the following variables:

- a. Connection between Memorable Tourism Experience (MTE) with Word of Mouth (WOM)

Analysis results show mark coefficient of 0.662 with T Statistics 12.555 (>1.96), which means connection between MTE and WOM is significant and positive . This means that the more impressive experience tourism is felt , increasingly tall trend traveler For recommend destination . However , based on descriptive data , MTE only is in the category of " sufficient" impressive ”, which means experience tourists at Karawang Beach are not yet optimal. Although traveler realize mark culture local and engagement social moment visiting , condition environment untouched beach clean and minimal facility make they No fully satisfied . As a result , the Word of Mouth that emerged was also only is " sufficient " recommend ”, no fully strong For push candidate traveler other .

- b. Connection between Memorable Tourism Experience (MTE) with Revisit Intention (RI)

With mark coefficient 0.488 and T Statistics 6.623 (>1.96), the relationship between MTE and RI is also stated significant . This means that experience memorable tour can increase intention visit repeat . However , based on results descriptive , MTE only Enough impressive , while RI is in the “ neutral ” or doubtful category . This indicates that although traveler own enough experience fun , not yet Enough strong For trigger intention visit repeat . Factors such as lack of refreshment and inadequate facilities adequate become reason main Why visitors Not yet Certain want to return to Karawang Beach.

- c. Connection between Word of Mouth (WOM) with Revisit Intention (RI)

Coefficient The relationship between WOM and RI is 0.480 with T Statistics 7.046 (>1.96) which also shows a positive and significant influence . This means that the more tall intensity traveler spread experience they , increasingly high intentions For back . However , WOM which only is at the “ sufficient ” level recommend ” make its influence towards the Republic of Indonesia to become not enough maximum .

Information or the story that was told traveler Still nature half heart , because they also realized that condition beach Not yet fully comfortable For visited return.

5. Discussion

5.1 Memorable Tourism Experience is Influential to Word of Mouth

From the results , Memorable Tourism Experience proven give significant and valuable influence positive to Word of Mouth . Appropriate with [29] explain Memorable Tourism Experience influential significant to Word of Mouth . Memorable experiences can encourage individuals to share positive stories or information about tourist destinations with others. Thus, Memorable Tourism Experience has been proven to play an important role in encouraging positive Word of Mouth from tourists, which can ultimately improve the image of the destination and encourage repeat visits.

5.2 Memorable Tourism Experience is Influence to Revisit Intention

Hypothesis test results to show Memorable Tourism Experience give influence positive and also significant to Revisit Intention . Appropriate with [29] as well as (Dianty et al., 2021) which confirms that experience positive tourism play a role important in increase interest visit repeat as well as Power pull destination . With Thus , Memorable Tourism Experience proven play role crucial in push Revisit Intention .

5.3 Word of Mouth is Influence to Revisit Intention

Test results hypothesis indicates that Word of Mouth own positive influence and also significant to Revisit Intention . Findings This reinforced by the results studies previously , (Wom et al., 2023) which shows that word of mouth is influential significant to revisit intention and play a role important in Influencing Tourist Decisions to Return to visit destination tourism . With Thus , word of mouth is proven as driving factors interest visit repeat tourists.

6. Conclusions

Study This identify that experience tourism that is felt by visitors to Karawang Beach, even though in a way theoretical potential big in to form perception positive and improving visit repeat , in fact Still face significant challenges . This is reflected from mark Memorable Tourism Experience (MTE), Word of Mouth (WOM), and Revisit Intention variables which indicate trend suboptimal assessment from respondents .

Experience the most appreciated tourist attraction by visitors related with culture local and engagement in activity tourism , but aspect freshness and comfort Still considered not enough satisfying . It is impact on low encouragement visitors For recommend destination and also return visit . With however , even though in a way statistics connection between MTE, WOM, and RI variables are proven significant , quality experience in a way overall Not yet capable create effect strong positive in a way practical in push loyalty tourists .

Based on the results of this study, it is recommended that Karawang Beach tourism managers focus more on improving the quality of memorable tourism experiences. This effort will not only increase the intention of repeat visits by tourists, but also encourage the formation of positive Word of Mouth. To realize this, managers need to take several strategic steps, such as: improving the cleanliness of the beach environment with better waste management, repairing and adding public facilities such as toilets, places of worship, parking areas, and road access. In addition, presenting local culture-based tourist attractions and strengthening friendly and informative tourism services are also important to create a pleasant and memorable experience. That way, tourists are not only satisfied, but also encouraged to recommend this destination to others.

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