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The topics presented in this edition reflect current developments in applied tourism and event sciences. The featured titles include: Storytelling: An integrated AHP–composite priority index model for determining tourism village development priorities: evidence from Jember Regency, Indonesia; Gen Z digital behaviour: The role of consumer style inventory and eWOM in accommodation booking intention; Synchronization of maritime economic policy and marine tourism development: A critical review of the blue growth concept in East Java; Revisit intention in conservation areas: How destination image mediates perceived risk and constraint in Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park; Does venue quality drive loyalty through satisfaction? Evidence from Indonesian concert attendees in Indonesia and Singapore; Sustainable spiritual tourism experience: Transforming melukat ritual in Sawan Village, Bali.

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We hope this publication continues to serve as a valuable source of knowledge and inspiration for scholars, practitioners, and stakeholders in tourism and event studies.

Badung, June 2026

Chief Editor of IJASTE,  
Dr. I Ketut Budarma, M.Par., MMTHRL



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# An integrated AHP–composite priority index model for determining tourism village development priorities: evidence from Jember Regency, Indonesia

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**Abstract:** The development of tourism villages has become an important strategy to stimulate rural economic growth through community-based tourism. However, the determination of priority tourism villages is frequently conducted without a systematic and transparent decision-making framework, which may result in inefficient allocation of development resources. This study aims to develop a priority model for tourism village development by integrating internal and external factors using the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) and a Composite Priority Index (CPI). A quantitative multi-criteria decision-making approach was applied, involving seven experts representing government institutions, academic researchers, and tourism village practitioners. Pairwise comparisons were conducted using Saaty's scale to determine the relative weights of development criteria, while the CPI was used to calculate the final priority ranking of tourism villages. The results reveal that within the internal dimension, institutional capacity and governance (0.28) represent the most influential factor, followed by human resources and tourism awareness groups (0.23), attractions (0.19), amenities (0.17), and environmental sustainability (0.13). Within the external dimension, strategic partnerships (0.27) emerge as the dominant factor, followed by budget support (0.23), government policy support (0.21), accessibility (0.17), and promotion (0.12). Based on the composite index calculation, tourism villages are categorized into high, medium, and low priority clusters, providing a structured framework for phased development interventions. These findings highlight that tourism village sustainability depends not only on tourism potential but also on strong institutional governance and collaborative networks. The proposed model offers an evidence-based decision support system to assist local governments in determining tourism village development priorities more objectively and strategically.

**Keywords:** AHP, Composite Priority Index, Priority Model, Tourism Policy, Tourism Village

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## Introduction

In the contemporary tourism landscape, the development of tourism villages is increasingly viewed as a community-driven economic transformation strategy that offers an alternative to centralized and extractive mass tourism models (Ahur et al., 2024; Giampiccoli, 2020). Within the framework of community-based tourism (CBT), local communities are not merely supplementary actors but are positioned at the core of planning, management, and benefit distribution processes (Jackson, 2025). Recent studies suggest that when CBT is supported by inclusive governance and strong participatory mechanisms, it contributes meaningfully to sustainable development and local economic resilience (Abreu et al., 2024). Hence, tourism villages should not be seen solely as destinations, but as institutional arenas reflecting the quality of local governance.

Empirical developments, however, indicate that not all tourism villages achieve sustainable growth. Bibliometric and evaluative studies highlight that institutional weaknesses, poor inter-actor coordination, and reliance on short-term external interventions frequently undermine long-term viability (Krittayarungroj et al., 2023). From a destination governance perspective,

sustainability largely depends on the strength of local institutions and structured collaboration mechanisms (Torres-Delgado & Saarinen, 2014). Thus, the success of tourism villages is not merely a function of attraction quality but rather the outcome of interaction between internal community capacity and broader policy ecosystem support.

Given this complexity, multi-criteria decision making (MCDM) approaches have gained traction in destination planning due to their ability to address interacting variables (Saaty, 2008). The Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) is particularly effective in integrating qualitative and quantitative indicators into a systematic decision structure (Putra et al., 2019; Ulkhaq et al., 2019). Recent research demonstrates AHP's utility in prioritizing village development based on sustainability indicators (Gačnik et al., 2025; Sarja et al., 2021). Nevertheless, many studies remain partial focusing on single dimensions or isolated cases without offering a comprehensive regency-level integrative framework.

Two conceptual gaps are evident. First, while CBT literature emphasizes participation and empowerment, it rarely operationalizes these principles into measurable policy priority indices (Giampiccoli, 2020). Second, MCDM applications in tourism often assess sustainability or site selection but seldom integrate internal factors (institutional capacity, human resources, attractions) and external factors (partnerships, policy, budgeting) simultaneously at the regency level (Gačnik et al., 2025; Ulkhaq et al., 2019). As a result, priority designation processes frequently rely on administrative discretion rather than structured evidence-based analysis.

Building on this debate, the present study argues that the prioritization of tourism village development should be understood as the outcome of an interaction between internal institutional capacity and external structural support. By integrating the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) with a Composite Priority Index into a unified decision model, this research seeks to translate the principles of community-based tourism (CBT) into a measurable policy instrument rather than leaving them at a purely normative level.

The novelty of this study lies in three main aspects. First, it simultaneously incorporates internal and external dimensions within a single regency-level priority framework. Second, it combines AHP with a composite index approach to function as a practical decision support system for local policy-making. Third, it highlights strategic partnership as a key external variable in sustaining tourism villages an element that has received limited explicit attention in previous MCDM-based priority models.

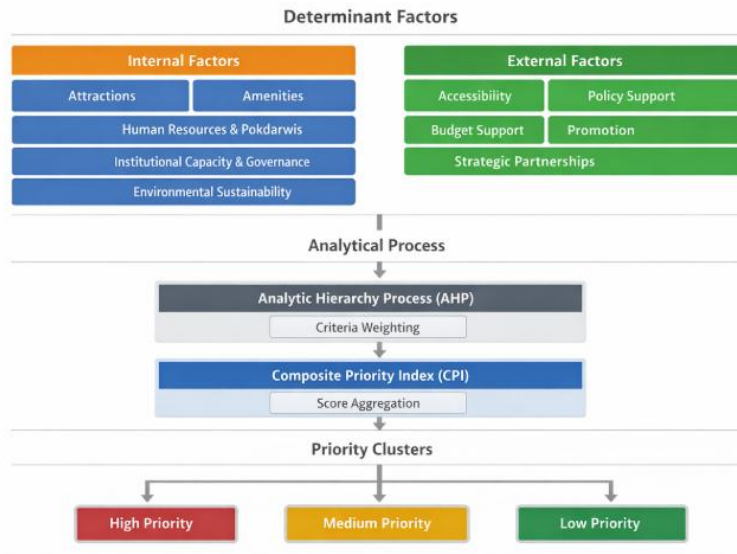
Based on the theoretical perspectives of community-based tourism, destination governance, and multi-criteria decision making, this study proposes a conceptual framework for determining tourism village development priorities. The framework assumes that tourism village prioritization is influenced by two main dimensions: internal factors and external factors.

Internal factors represent the inherent capacity of tourism villages, including attractions, amenities, human resources, institutional capacity, and environmental sustainability. These factors reflect the readiness of local communities to manage tourism resources and develop sustainable tourism products.

External factors represent the broader structural environment that supports tourism development, including accessibility, policy support, budget allocation, promotion, and strategic partnerships. These variables illustrate the extent to which external stakeholders and policy environments facilitate the development of tourism villages.

Within this framework, the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) is used to determine the relative importance of each criterion through expert judgment. The resulting weights are then integrated with village performance scores using the Composite Priority Index (CPI) to produce a final priority ranking (Suasapha, 2022). Through this process, tourism villages can be categorized into high-, medium-, and low-priority development clusters.

The conceptual framework of this study is illustrated in Figure 1.



(Source: Authors' elaboration based on Saaty, 1980; Giampiccoli, 2020; Torres-Delgado & Saarinen, 2014; Ulkhaq et al., 2019)

**Figure 1.** Conceptual framework of tourism village priority model using AHP and composite priority index

More specifically, this study aims to identify the hierarchical structure of tourism village priority criteria, determine the relative weight of each criterion using AHP, and construct a Composite Priority Index to map policy priority clusters. Theoretically, the research contributes to the expansion of CBT literature by embedding multi-criteria decision-making approaches within a destination governance framework. Practically, it offers an evidence-based policy model designed to assist local governments in designating priority tourism villages in a manner that is more objective, transparent, and accountable.

## Methodology

This study employs a quantitative approach using a multi-criteria decision-making design to formulate priorities for tourism village development. The approach was selected because tourism policy prioritization inherently involves multiple, interrelated, and multidimensional criteria that cannot be reduced to a single indicator (Saaty, 2008; Wardhani et al., 2021). In destination planning contexts, multi-criteria decision making (MCDM) is particularly relevant for systematically integrating both quantitative and qualitative variables, especially when decisions involve the allocation of limited public resources (Arbainah et al., 2020; Ulkhaq et al., 2019). Accordingly, this research adopts the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) as the primary analytical framework and combines it with a Composite Priority Index (CPI) to produce the final ranking of tourism villages.

The study is conducted in Jember Regency, which has formally designated 52 tourism villages through an official Regent's Decree (Saputra, 2024). These villages constitute the broader analytical scope, particularly in determining development priorities using an MCDM framework.

Conceptually, the model is structured into three hierarchical levels as recommended in the AHP methodology: goal, criteria, and alternatives (Saaty, 2008). The overarching goal of this study is to determine tourism village priorities at the regency level. At the second level, the criteria are grouped into two principal dimensions: internal and external factors. This classification draws on community-based tourism literature, which emphasizes community capacity as the foundation of sustainability (Giampiccoli, 2020), as well as destination governance studies highlighting the importance of policy support and external collaborative networks in shaping destination performance (Jackson, 2025; Torres-Delgado & Saarinen, 2014). Internal factors include attractions, amenities, human resources, institutional capacity, and environmental aspects, while

external factors encompass accessibility, government policy support, budget allocation, promotion, and strategic partnerships.

The weighting of criteria was conducted through pairwise comparisons using Saaty's fundamental 1–9 scale (Saaty, 2008). his method facilitates the structured elicitation of expert judgments while allowing for the assessment of logical consistency through the Consistency Ratio (CR). In this study, the calculated Consistency Ratio (CR) is 0.040, which is below the acceptable threshold of 0.10, indicating that the comparison matrix is consistent and the resulting weights are reliable for further analysis (Saaty, 2008; Ulkhaq et al., 2019). Explicitly reporting this value strengthens the methodological rigor by demonstrating that expert judgments meet the required consistency standards.

The respondents were selected purposively based on their expertise, experience, and direct involvement in tourism village development. The panel consists of representatives from local government, academia, and tourism village practitioners, ensuring a balanced integration of policy, theoretical, and operational perspectives. This expert judgment approach is widely used in MCDM studies, where the emphasis lies on the quality and consistency of judgments rather than on large sample sizes (Gačnik et al., 2025).

Following the AHP weighting process, the Composite Priority Index (CPI) was calculated for each tourism village. The CPI was obtained by multiplying the global weight of each criterion by the corresponding performance score and aggregating the results into a single composite value. Composite index approaches are commonly applied in public policy analysis to synthesize multiple indicators into a comparable metric (Torres-Delgado & Saarinen, 2014). Based on the CPI results, tourism villages are categorized into high-, medium-, and low-priority groups, providing a structured and objective basis for policy decision-making.

Overall, the integration of AHP and CPI in this study bridges the theoretical framework of community-based tourism with practical policy needs. By explicitly incorporating consistency validation (CR = 0.040), the methodology ensures that the decision-making model is not only systematic and transparent but also methodologically robust and reliable as an evidence-based tool for tourism village development planning.

## Results and Discussions

### Results

#### *Respondent Characteristics*

This study applied an expert judgment approach within the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) framework to determine the weights of internal and external factors influencing tourism village development in Jember Regency. Respondents were selected through purposive sampling, taking into account their professional competence, experience, and direct involvement in tourism village planning and management.

A total of seven experts participated in this study, representing local government, academia, and tourism village practitioners. Within the AHP methodology, this number is considered sufficient, as the emphasis lies on the quality, expertise, and consistency of judgments rather than on large sample sizes. The validity of the assessments was evaluated using the Consistency Ratio (CR), with an acceptable threshold of less than 0.1, as recommended by Thomas L. Saaty (2008).

#### a. Respondent Composition

##### 1) Local Government Representatives (Tourism Office)

Two experts were drawn from the local government, specifically the Tourism Office. These individuals hold responsibilities related to program planning and tourism village development. Their involvement ensured that regional policy directions, budgeting mechanisms, and priority tourism programs in Jember Regency were adequately reflected in the assessment process.

##### 2) Academics

Two academics participated in the study, with scholarly backgrounds in tourism management, public administration, and development economics. Their role was to ensure

that the hierarchical structure and criteria weighting were grounded in solid conceptual and methodological foundations..

3) Practitioners / Tourism Village Managers (Pokdarwis)

Three active tourism village managers (Pokdarwis) were included to represent on-the-ground realities. They possess operational experience in managing attractions, amenities, community empowerment initiatives, and the development of village-based tourism products. Their insights provided practical depth to the evaluation process.

b. Qualifications and Experience

All participating experts had between three and ten years of professional experience in tourism or tourism village development. This requirement was established to ensure that the judgments provided were not speculative but rooted in practical engagement and policy understanding.

With a panel of seven experts representing policy, academic, and operational perspectives, the weighting process for internal and external factors reflects a balanced integration of theoretical insight and empirical knowledge. This composition strengthens the reliability of the resulting priority model and enhances its legitimacy as a policy recommendation tool for the Government of Jember Regency

### Struktur Hierarki AHP

The hierarchical structure in this study was developed using the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) to determine development priorities among tourism villages in Jember Regency. The hierarchy was formulated through a synthesis of relevant literature, preliminary discussions, and analysis of data obtained from seven expert respondents representing the Department of Tourism, academia, and tourism village management groups (Pokdarwis).

In the context of expert judgment, a panel of seven participants is considered sufficient, as AHP places greater emphasis on the expertise and consistency of judgments rather than on large sample sizes. Individual assessments were aggregated using the geometric mean method before calculating eigenvectors and conducting consistency tests to ensure the reliability of the comparisons.



Source: Processed data (2025)

**Figure 2.** Visualization of the hierarchical structure

The hierarchy consists of three principal levels. The first level represents the overall goal, namely establishing development priorities for tourism villages in Jember Regency. The second level is divided into two main categories of criteria: internal and external factors.

Internal factors reflect the inherent capacity and readiness of each tourism village. These include tourism attractions, amenities, human resources, institutional capacity, and internal village infrastructure. In contrast, external factors represent the broader strategic environment influencing village development, such as accessibility, government policy support, funding or investment support, partnership networks, promotion and digitalization, and the carrying capacity of the external environment.

At the third level, each criterion is further specified into operational sub-criteria that were evaluated through pairwise comparisons by the expert respondents. For instance, attraction was assessed in terms of uniqueness and diversity of tourism products; human resources were evaluated based on competence, experience, and training; and accessibility was examined through road conditions, travel distance, and transportation availability. The final level of the hierarchy consists of the candidate tourism villages in Jember Regency, which were assessed using the combined weights of internal and external factors.

This hierarchical design ensures that priority setting is conducted in a structured, transparent, and logically consistent manner, in line with the principles of AHP introduced by Saaty

(2008). Consequently, the resulting decisions are grounded in a clear methodological foundation rather than subjective preference alone.

### Results of Weighting Criteria

The weighting process was conducted with seven expert respondents using the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP), with judgments aggregated through the geometric mean method. The consistency test produced a Consistency Ratio (CR) of less than 0.1, indicating that the comparison matrix is logically consistent and suitable for further analysis.

#### a. Internal Factor Weighting Results

**Table 1.** Pairwise comparison matrix (Geometric mean)

Criteria	I1	I2	I3	I4	I5
I1 Attraction	1.00	1.25	0.80	0.67	1.50
I2 Amenities	0.80	1.00	0.75	0.60	1.30
I3 Human Resources	1.25	1.33	1.00	0.85	1.80
I4 Institutional Capacity	1.50	1.67	1.18	1.00	2.00
I5 Environment	0.67	0.77	0.56	0.50	1.00

Source: Processed data (2025)

Note: The values reflect the relative importance between criteria based on Saaty's 1–9 scale. For example, the value 1.50 in cell (I4, I1) indicates that institutional capacity is considered more important than attraction.

**Table 2.** Eigenvector values (Normalized results)

Criteria	Eigenvector
Attraction	0.19
Amenities	0.17
Human Resources & Tourism Awareness Group	0.23
Institutional Capacity & Governance	0.28
Environmental Sustainability	0.13
Total	1.00

Source: Processed data (2025)

Note: The eigenvector values are derived from the average of each row in the normalized matrix. These figures represent the relative priority of each criterion within the decision-making system.

**Table 3.** Final weights of internal criteria

No	Criteria	Weight	Percentage	Rank
1	Institutional Capacity & Governance	0.28	28%	1
2	Human Resources & Tourism Awareness Group	0.23	23%	2
3	Attraction	0.19	19%	3
4	Amenities	0.17	17%	4
5	Environmental Sustainability	0.13	13%	5

Source: Processed data (2025)

The results indicate that institutional capacity and governance (28%) represent the most influential internal factor. This suggests that organizational readiness, legal legitimacy, managerial competence, and coordination mechanisms form the core foundation in determining tourism village priorities.

The second position is occupied by human resources and the tourism awareness group (23%), highlighting the strategic role of managerial professionalism and community competence in ensuring the success of community-based destinations.

Meanwhile, physical components such as attractions (19%) and amenities (17%) fall within the mid-level category. This finding implies that tourism potential alone is insufficient without strong institutional and human resource support.

Environmental sustainability (13%) remains important, but within the context of early-stage development prioritization, it is viewed as a reinforcing element once managerial readiness has been secured. This finding is consistent with the capacity-first perspective in community-based tourism, which emphasizes that sustainability outcomes are unlikely to be achieved without adequate institutional and managerial foundations (Giampiccoli, 2020). Furthermore, it aligns with the tourism area life cycle theory proposed (Butler, 1990), which suggests that environmental considerations tend to become more prominent as destinations evolve toward more advanced stages of development. Therefore, the relatively lower weight of environmental sustainability in this study reflects a sequential prioritization logic, where strengthening governance and managerial capacity serves as a prerequisite for the effective implementation of long-term sustainability principles.

b. External Factor Weighting Results

**Table 4.** Pairwise comparison matrix (Geometric mean)

Criteria	E1	E2	E3	E4	E5
E1 Accessibility	1.00	0.80	0.75	1.25	0.67
E2 Policy Support	1.25	1.00	0.90	1.40	0.80
E3 Budget Support	1.33	1.11	1.00	1.50	0.85
E4 Promotion	0.80	0.71	0.67	1.00	0.60
E5 Partnership	1.50	1.25	1.18	1.67	1.00

Source: Processed data (2025)

Note: The matrix shows that partnerships tend to be rated as more important than other external factors, as indicated by values greater than 1 in multiple comparisons.

**Table 5.** Eigenvector values

Criteria	Eigenvector
Accessibility	0.17
Policy Support	0.21
Budget Support	0.23
Market & Promotion Support	0.12
Partnership (Private/Investor)	0.27
Total	1.00

Source: Processed data (2025)

Note: The eigenvector values represent the relative priority of each external criterion within the decision framework.

**Table 6.** Final weights of external criteria

No	Criteria	Weight	Percentage	Rank
1	Partnership (Private/Investor)	0.27	27%	1
2	Budget Support	0.23	23%	2
3	Government Policy Support	0.21	21%	3
4	Accessibility	0.17	17%	4
5	Market & Promotion Support	0.12	12%	5

Source: Processed data (2025)

The most dominant external factor is Partnerships (27%), indicating that collaboration with private actors or investors serves as the primary driver in accelerating tourism village development. Budget Support (23%) and Government Policy (21%) follow in importance, confirming that fiscal allocation and regulatory intervention continue to play a substantial role in strengthening destination development. Meanwhile, Accessibility (17%) and Promotion (12%),

although relevant, are considered less effective when not accompanied by strong internal readiness and well-established partnership networks.

Based on the AHP weighting results involving seven expert respondents, it can be concluded that the priority structure for tourism village development in Jember Regency is shaped by the interplay between internal preparedness and external support. Within the internal dimension, Institutional Capacity and Governance receive the highest weight (28%), followed by Human Resources and Tourism Awareness Groups (Pokdarwis) at 23%. This pattern suggests that organizational capability, institutional legitimacy, managerial quality, and the competence of local human resources form the essential foundation for determining which villages deserve prioritization. While attractions and amenities remain important components, their effectiveness largely depends on the strength of governance structures and local management capacity.

From the external perspective, Partnerships with private entities or investors occupy the leading position (27%), followed by budgetary support (23%) and government policy support (21%). These findings highlight that accelerating tourism village development requires more than regulatory frameworks and financial assistance alone; it also depends on collaborative networks capable of expanding market access, mobilizing investment, and fostering managerial innovation. Overall, the synthesis of results demonstrates that the tourism village priority model in Jember Regency rests on two principal pillars: robust internal institutional capacity and the ability to build strategic external partnerships. Consequently, policy decisions must carefully balance these two dimensions in a complementary and integrated manner.

**Table 7.** Consistency test results

Parameter	Value
$\lambda$ max	5.18
CI	0.045
RI (n=5)	1.12
CR	0.040

Source: Processed data (2025)

Since  $CR = 0.040 < 0.10$ , the matrix is considered consistent, and the resulting weights are valid for use in calculating the Composite Priority Index (CPI).

### Results of the Tourism Village Priority Index Calculation

After determining the weights of internal and external criteria using the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP), the next step was to calculate the Composite Priority Index (CPI) for each candidate tourism village in Jember Regency. The CPI was obtained by multiplying the standardized score of each village indicator by its corresponding AHP weight and then summing the results to produce a final composite value.

Composite Priority Index (CPI) Formula

$$CPI_i = \sum (\text{Internal Weight} \times \text{Internal Score}_i) + \sum (\text{External Weight} \times \text{External Score}_i) \quad (1)$$

Where:

$CPI_i$  = Priority Index value of village

Weight = AHP-derived weight

Score = Field observation and assessment score (scale 1–5, normalized))

**Table 8.** Composite Priority Index (CPI) results

No	Tourism Village	Internal Score	External Score	Final CPI	Priority Category
1	Sidomulyo	3.85	3.60	3.73	High
2	Kemuning Lor	3.60	3.45	3.52	High
3	Sukorambi	3.20	3.10	3.15	Medium
4	Tamansari	2.95	2.85	2.90	Medium
5	Arjasa	2.60	2.70	2.65	Low

Source: Processed data (2025)

Based on the Composite Priority Index (CPI) results, tourism villages in Jember Regency are classified into three priority categories: high, medium, and low. It is important to clarify that the five villages presented in Table 8 (Sidomulyo, Kemuning Lor, Sukorambi, Tamansari, and Arjasa) do not represent the entire population of tourism villages in Jember Regency. Instead, they were purposively selected as representative cases based on specific considerations, including their level of development, data availability, and active involvement in local tourism programs. Therefore, these villages serve as empirical illustrations to demonstrate the application of the AHP–CPI model, rather than as a comprehensive listing of all tourism villages in the region.

The index results show that villages in the high-priority category ( $CPI \geq 3.50$ ) tend to exhibit stronger internal readiness, supported by relatively favorable external conditions. In contrast, villages in the lower-priority group still face fundamental constraints, particularly in governance and capacity-related aspects. These findings highlight that institutional strength and human resource quality are the key determinants of a village's priority ranking, which is consistent with the AHP weighting results where both factors received the highest importance within the internal dimension.

This pattern can be explained by the fact that institutional capacity and human resources reflect the actual ability of a village to manage and sustain tourism development, rather than merely its potential. Villages with active organizational structures, clear legal status, and strong leadership within their tourism awareness groups (Pokdarwis) are generally more capable of coordinating stakeholders, implementing structured programs, and maintaining continuity in development efforts. At the same time, competent human resources play a critical role in delivering quality services, developing tourism products, and adapting to changing market demands.

From an external perspective, partnerships with private actors or investors emerge as a key differentiating factor, as they provide access to markets, funding, and managerial innovation. However, such opportunities can only be effectively utilized when supported by strong internal governance and capable human resources. For this reason, tourism village development in Jember Regency should not rely solely on physical infrastructure or promotional activities. Greater emphasis needs to be placed on strengthening institutional capacity and enhancing human resource quality as the core foundation for sustainable, community-based tourism development.

### *Stakeholder Validation (FGD)*

The validation of the AHP weighting results and the Composite Priority Index (CPI) was conducted through a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) involving key stakeholders in tourism village development in Jember Regency. The purpose of the FGD was to assess the extent to which the quantitative findings reflect empirical conditions, gather strategic insights, and ensure that the resulting priority model possesses both practical relevance and policy legitimacy.

The discussion involved representatives from the Jember Regency Tourism Office, academics specializing in tourism management and public administration, and tourism village managers (Pokdarwis). This composition primarily reflects a triple helix configuration (government–academia–community/practitioners), which provides a strong foundation for participatory and evidence-based validation. These actors represent the core institutional, analytical, and operational perspectives necessary to evaluate the robustness of the model.

However, in line with the broader pentahelix framework, it is acknowledged that the current FGD has not yet fully incorporated two additional strategic actors, namely media and tourism industry stakeholders (such as private investors, travel agents, and digital promotion platforms). Their involvement is essential in capturing market dynamics, strengthening dissemination strategies, and enhancing external collaboration networks, particularly in the context of tourism destination development.

Despite this limitation, the validation process remains substantively robust, as the participating stakeholders possess direct experience and contextual knowledge relevant to tourism village governance and development. The discussion revealed a high level of agreement regarding the priority structure, especially the dominance of institutional capacity and strategic partnerships as key determinants.

Nevertheless, to strengthen the comprehensiveness and external validity of the model, future validation processes should adopt a fully integrated pentahelix approach by systematically involving media and tourism industry actors. Such inclusion is expected to enhance the model's applicability, particularly in relation to promotion, market access, and investment facilitation.

Overall, the FGD confirms that the developed priority model is methodologically sound and empirically relevant, while also highlighting the importance of expanding stakeholder engagement toward a more inclusive pentahelix-based validation framework.

## Discussions

### *Analysis of Dominant Factors*

The findings reveal that within the internal dimension, institutional capacity and governance receive the highest priority compared to attractions, amenities, and environmental aspects. This indicates that the organizational readiness of tourism village management plays a critical role in determining development priorities. From a theoretical perspective, this result is consistent with the community-based tourism (CBT) framework, which emphasizes that destination sustainability is highly dependent on the collective capacity of local communities to manage resources in an organized and participatory manner (Giampiccoli, 2020; Mtapuri et al., 2022; Ngo & Creutz, 2022; Thananusak & Suriyankietkaew, 2023; Zielinski et al., 2021).

Recent studies further highlight that effective governance characterized by transparency, accountability, and institutional clarity can significantly strengthen community participation and long-term planning capacity (Cid & Lerner, 2023; Haou et al., 2025; Hove et al., 2022; Khatri et al., 2025; Mamokhere & Meyer, 2023; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2021; Reindrawati, 2023; Yayla et al., 2023). In contrast, weak institutional arrangements often lead to fragmented participation and hinder the alignment of stakeholder interests within a coherent development strategy (Akhtar-Schuster et al., 2024; Ji et al., 2024; Rahman, 2021; Reindrawati, 2023; Shunglu et al., 2022). In this context, governance functions not only as an administrative structure but also as an integrative mechanism that enables the transformation of local resources into competitive and sustainable tourism products (Errichiello & Micera, 2021; Farsari, 2023; Valderrama & Polanco, 2024). Therefore, the findings reinforce the argument that natural and cultural attractions alone are insufficient without a strong governance system capable of coordinating and optimizing these assets (Errichiello & Micera, 2021; Mandić & Kennell, 2021; Wang et al., 2022).

Within the external dimension, strategic partnerships emerge as the most influential factor, surpassing policy support, budgeting, accessibility, and promotion. This suggests that tourism village development is inherently relational and highly dependent on the quality of interactions among actors within the tourism ecosystem. However, the collaborative structure identified in this study remains limited to a triple helix model involving government, academia, and industry practitioners. From a broader governance perspective, a pentahelix model incorporating media and the wider community offers a more comprehensive framework for addressing the complexity of tourism systems (Carayannis et al., 2012, 2022; Taratori et al., 2021).

In this expanded model, media plays a crucial role in shaping destination image and enhancing visibility, while the community contributes through social legitimacy, co-creation, and experiential feedback (Sigala, 2020). Strengthening collaboration toward a pentahelix framework can therefore improve the inclusiveness, adaptability, and responsiveness of tourism development strategies (Azwar et al., 2023; Boes et al., 2016; Budhi et al., 2022; Yasir et al., 2021). Furthermore, multi-stakeholder collaboration facilitates knowledge exchange, expands market access, and diversifies funding sources, thereby supporting long-term sustainability (Cehan et al., 2021; Dredge et al., 2019; Salman et al., 2024; Wondirad et al., 2020).

From a multi-criteria decision-making perspective, the prominence of partnerships also indicates that external factors act as catalysts in strengthening internal capacity. This aligns with recent studies emphasizing the integration of sustainability indicators and stakeholder collaboration in development prioritization models (Ayyildiz, 2022; Gunnarsdóttir et al., 2021; Huan et al., 2022; Saaty, 2008; Tremblay et al., 2021). Overall, these findings confirm that tourism village development should be understood as a dynamic and interconnected system shaped by continuous interactions among diverse actors, rather than as an isolated entity operating independently (Bramwell & Lane, 2011; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2020).

### *Comparison with Previous Studies*

When positioned within the existing body of literature, the findings of this study demonstrate both convergence and divergence with prior research. For instance, Ulkhaq et al. (2019) found that infrastructure and accessibility tend to receive relatively high weights in AHP-based destination evaluations. However, the present study does not identify accessibility as a dominant factor. This divergence suggests that, in the context of community-based tourism (CBT) villages, institutional capacity and governance structures play a more decisive role than purely physical attributes. This reinforces the notion that tourism development priorities are highly context-dependent and shaped by local governance arrangements, social organization, and institutional readiness (Nunkoo et al., 2022; Wondirad et al., 2020).

Similarly, (Giampiccoli, 2020) emphasizes the importance of community participation as a foundational principle in CBT development. However, such discussions are often conceptual and normative in nature, with limited translation into operational decision-making tools. The present study addresses this limitation by incorporating participatory principles into a structured and quantifiable AHP-based prioritization framework. This approach aligns with recent efforts to integrate sustainability and stakeholder engagement into decision-making models, particularly in achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Abreu et al., 2024; Ayyildiz, 2022; Huan et al., 2022). By doing so, the study advances beyond theoretical discourse toward a more applied and policy-oriented contribution.

Furthermore, (Krittayaruangroj et al., 2023) highlight that many tourism villages face stagnation due to weak internal coordination and limited institutional coherence. This observation is strongly supported by the present findings, which identify institutional governance as the most influential internal factor. Weak governance structures often result in fragmented stakeholder engagement and inefficiencies in resource management, ultimately hindering sustainable development (Akhtar-Schuster et al., 2024; Cid & Lerner, 2023). Conversely, strengthening institutional arrangements can significantly enhance coordination, strategic alignment, and long-term resilience (Farsari, 2023; Mandić & Kennell, 2021).

In addition, the importance of multi-stakeholder collaboration is increasingly recognized as a key driver of sustainable tourism development. The transition from a triple helix to a pentahelix framework incorporating government, academia, industry, community, and media has been shown to improve inclusiveness and innovation capacity in tourism systems (Azwar et al., 2023; Carayannis et al., 2022; Valderrama & Polanco, 2024). Such collaborative governance models facilitate knowledge exchange, strengthen institutional capacity, and enhance adaptive responses to complex development challenges (Cehan et al., 2021; Salman et al., 2024).

Overall, these comparisons indicate that the findings of this study do not contradict previous research but rather refine and extend it. Specifically, this study provides empirical evidence that institutional strength and strategic partnerships function as central pillars in determining tourism village development priorities. In this regard, tourism villages should be understood as dynamic governance systems, where sustainability outcomes are shaped by the interaction between internal institutional capacity and external collaborative networks (Mtapuri et al., 2022; Zielinski et al., 2021).

### *Theoretical Implications*

This study makes a substantive theoretical contribution by repositioning community-based tourism (CBT) from a predominantly normative framework toward a measurable analytical framework. Much of the existing CBT literature treats community participation as an inherently desirable principle, implicitly assuming that it will naturally lead to destination sustainability (Giampiccoli, 2020). However, this assumption is rarely tested through decision models capable of systematically quantifying institutional capacity. The findings of this research indicate that participation, when not supported by institutionalization, has limited predictive power in determining development priorities. In this respect, the study shifts the focus of the discourse from "participation as a value" to "institutional capacity as a structural determinant."

Furthermore, the integration of the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) and the Composite Priority Index within the tourism village context broadens the application of multi-criteria decision making (MCDM), which has traditionally been used for destination evaluation or investment site

selection (Saaty, 2008; Ulkhaq et al., 2019). This research demonstrates that MCDM should not be viewed merely as a technical instrument, but also as a conceptual bridge connecting destination governance theory with local policy practice. By operationalizing internal and external dimensions simultaneously, the study illustrates that tourism village sustainability is relational in nature and cannot be adequately explained through a single-dimensional approach. This perspective extends the argument of Torres-Delgado and Saarinen (2014) on governance in sustainable tourism by providing a more precise quantitative framework.

Another theoretical contribution lies in identifying strategic partnership as the dominant external variable within the priority structure. While CBT and collaborative governance literature acknowledge the importance of multi-stakeholder networks (Jackson, 2025), relatively few studies position partnership as a decisive factor within an index-based decision model. The findings suggest that tourism village sustainability is not solely a matter of internal community capacity, but rather the outcome of asymmetric interactions between local actors and broader external structures. Accordingly, this study expands the conceptual boundaries of CBT by incorporating network governance as a measurable structural component, rather than treating it merely as contextual support.

Conceptually, the research also challenges the prevailing tendency in tourism studies to emphasize physical attractions and infrastructure as primary determinants of destination success. The analysis reveals that these factors carry relatively lower weights compared to institutional capacity and partnership strength. This opens space for reconstructing theoretical models of tourism village development from a resource-based perspective toward an institution- and network-based perspective. Within this framework, sustainability is no longer understood as the accumulation of physical assets, but as a function of governance quality and the intensity of inter-actor collaboration.

Overall, this study does more than introduce additional variables into the tourism village discourse. It offers a conceptual synthesis between CBT, destination governance, and MCDM within a single integrative analytical framework. This contribution creates opportunities for developing more comprehensive theoretical models of community-based tourism prioritization, while encouraging a shift from descriptive approaches toward evidence-based, prescriptive frameworks.

### *Practical and Policy Implications*

The findings of this study carry important policy implications, particularly for strategic decision-making at the local government level. The prominence of institutional capacity and partnerships indicates that tourism village development can no longer rely primarily on physical infrastructure projects or short-term promotional campaigns. Strategic decision-making literature emphasizes that public resource allocation should be guided by measurable and consistent priorities in order to reduce policy distortion and inefficiency (Saaty, 2008). In this regard, the AHP- and Composite Priority Index-based model developed in this study provides an evaluative framework that helps limit administrative subjectivity when determining priority villages.

More fundamentally, the identification of institutional capacity as the most influential internal factor suggests a necessary shift in development orientation from an attraction-centered approach to one grounded in institutional strength. Sustainable destination governance perspectives underline that the quality of local institutions is a prerequisite for long-term sustainability (Torres-Delgado & Saarinen, 2014). Consequently, policy interventions should first focus on strengthening organizational structures, clarifying roles and responsibilities, establishing internal accountability systems, and enhancing managerial competencies among tourism village administrators before allocating substantial budgets to infrastructure expansion or promotional activities.

Furthermore, the dominance of partnerships as the primary external factor confirms that tourism villages cannot thrive in structural isolation. While community-based tourism (CBT) places local communities at the center, empirical evidence demonstrates that sustainability depends heavily on the ability to build effective vertical and horizontal networks (Jackson, 2025). Within a regional policy framework, this implies that government should act as a facilitator and coordinator of collaborative ecosystems rather than merely a funding provider. Practical strategies may include

establishing multi-stakeholder partnership platforms, integrating tourism villages into regional value chains, and facilitating access to markets and financing mechanisms. Such measures align with the argument that cross-sector collaboration enhances a destination's adaptive capacity in responding to market shifts and external pressures (Torres-Delgado & Saarinen, 2014).

Another significant implication relates to public budget governance. The priority index model enables local governments to adopt a cluster-based resource allocation strategy. Villages demonstrating high readiness levels can be directed toward acceleration programs, while those with lower scores can be supported through foundational capacity-building initiatives. This differentiated approach is more rational than equal budget distribution, which often results in limited impact. Public policy literature suggests that institutional readiness-based differentiation is more likely to generate sustainable development outcome (Saaty, 2008).

Overall, the policy implications of this research call for a paradigm shift from "potential-based development" toward "capacity- and network-based development." Tourism villages should not be prioritized solely because of scenic landscapes or temporary popularity, but because they possess institutional foundations and partnership networks capable of sustaining long-term growth. Accordingly, the priority model proposed in this study should be understood not merely as a technical tool, but as a strategic instrument for strengthening regional tourism governance in a systematic and evidence-based manner.

## Conclusions

This study seeks to develop a priority model for tourism villages by integrating internal and external factors through the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) combined with a Composite Priority Index. The findings indicate that within the internal dimension, institutional capacity and governance play the most decisive role in shaping development priorities. In contrast, within the external dimension, strategic partnerships emerge as the key variable. These results highlight that the sustainability of tourism villages is not driven solely by the attractiveness of their natural or cultural assets, but rather by the strength of community institutions and the collaborative networks that support them. In this regard, the study offers a more structured and measurable framework to guide policy decision-making at the regency level.

From a theoretical perspective, this research contributes to the community-based tourism (CBT) literature by translating the concepts of participation and community capacity into a measurable multi-criteria decision-making model. The integration of AHP and a composite index provides a methodological bridge between the normative ideals of CBT and evidence-based policy instruments. By identifying partnerships as the most influential external factor, the study also enriches the discourse on destination governance, demonstrating that tourism village sustainability results from the dynamic interaction between internal institutional strength and external structural support.

Managerially, the proposed priority model can function as a practical decision support system for local governments in determining tourism village priorities in a more objective, transparent, and accountable manner. The findings suggest the need for a policy shift from an attraction-centered development approach toward one focused on institutional strengthening and the cultivation of partnership ecosystems. Given limited fiscal resources, a differentiated strategy based on each village's level of readiness is more rational and potentially more impactful than an equal distribution of funding.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the number of expert respondents involved in the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) is relatively limited, meaning that the weighting results are still highly dependent on the perspectives and experiences of the selected panel. In addition, the composition of the panel reflects a triple helix approach comprising government, academia, and practitioners and therefore does not fully capture the perspectives of other actors within the broader tourism ecosystem.

Second, this study adopts a cross-sectional design, which limits its ability to capture changes in the capacity of tourism villages over time. As a result, the dynamic nature of development processes cannot be fully observed. Third, the proposed model has not yet been tested in other regional contexts, and therefore its generalizability should be interpreted with caution.

In light of these limitations, future research is encouraged to expand both the number and diversity of respondents in order to improve the robustness of the weighting results. Moving toward a pentahelix approach would be particularly valuable, by incorporating the roles of media and the wider community. Media involvement is important for capturing dimensions related to promotion, communication, and destination image-building, while the participation of communities both as local stakeholders and as users (tourists) is essential for strengthening social validity and reinforcing the participatory principles of community-based tourism.

Furthermore, future studies may consider integrating AHP with other quantitative approaches, such as Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) or longitudinal analysis, to examine causal relationships among variables in a more rigorous way. Comparative studies across regencies or provinces are also recommended to enhance the external validity of the proposed priority model. Such integrative approaches are expected to produce a more comprehensive, inclusive, and context-sensitive framework for understanding how institutional capacity and partnership networks interact in shaping the sustainability of tourism villages.

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# Gen Z digital behaviour: The role of consumer style inventory and eWOM in accommodation booking intention

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**Abstract:** Generation Z shows a high dependence on online reviews and recommendations (eWOM) as a primary reference in purchasing decisions, particularly in the context of accommodation selection. This study aims to examine the decision-making styles of Generation Z consumers, as conceptualized within the Consumer Style Inventory (CSI) framework, and to examine how these styles influence the use of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) in accommodation selection, as well as their relationship with purchase intention. Data collection was conducted through a questionnaire distributed via social media. This study used Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) SmartPLS to analyse data collected from 220 Generation Z respondents. The results show that recreational attitude significantly influences eWOM use intention, while eWOM use intention positively affects purchase intention in accommodation booking decisions. These findings indicate that consumers who perceive eWOM activities as enjoyable are more likely to engage with online reviews before making accommodation-related decisions.

**Keywords:** Accommodation, Consumer-Style Inventory, eWOM, Generation Z, Purchase Intention

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## Introduction

Generation Z consumers have a high dependence on digital platforms and online recommendations in their purchasing decisions, which affects the understanding of their decision-making patterns. As a generation of digital natives, they have grown up with technology and tend to rely on eWOM (Electronic Word of Mouth) as a primary source of information when choosing products or services, as well as when sharing their own experiences compared to previous generations (Li, 2025; Monaco, 2018). Supported survey by BrightLocal (2024), which shows that 75% of consumers consistently read online reviews before making a purchase. Generation Z exhibits distinct consumer values, preferences, and behaviors that shape their online purchasing decisions (Thangavel et al., 2022).

Consumer decision-making style represents a key psychographic factor that influences how individuals search for and process information before making a purchase. The Consumer Style Inventory (CSI) model developed by Sprotles & Kendall (1986) is key to understanding the relationship between Gen Z and eWOM. The Consumer Style Inventory (CSI) suggests that consumers adopt different strategies when making purchasing decisions. In this context, eWOM use intention represents a critical stage before consumers adopt information in their final purchase decisions. Previous studies (Kala & Chaubey, 2018; Virgilio, 2018) have shown that eWOM plays a significant role in shaping brand perception, building trust, and influencing purchase intention.

Several previous studies have examined the relationship between consumer decision-making styles and digital behavior in the context of eWOM. Kang (2013) examined how the dimensions of the Consumer Style Inventory (CSI) relate to opinion seeking using eWOM on social networking sites (SNS) and attitudes toward online social shopping activities. Other studies, such as Kala & Chaubey (2018) have examined how eWOM builds brand image and ultimately drives purchase intentions for lifestyle products, but has not yet comprehensively linked this to

Generation Z's digital decision-making context. This study adopts the framework of Perez-Aranda et al., (2024), who examined the relationship between Gen Z consumers decision-making styles and the use of eWOM in the context of tourism, but has not considered the dimension of purchase intention as the final consequence of the psychographic influence process on digital behavior.

Despite the growing body of literature examining Generation Z, eWOM, and purchase intention in tourism contexts, existing studies largely focus on general factors such as trust, credibility, and social influence, with limited attention to the role of psychographic dimensions in shaping digital decision-making behavior. Furthermore, prior research often examines eWOM either as an independent predictor or in isolation, without integrating it within a comprehensive decision-making framework that links internal consumer traits to behavioral outcomes.

This study offers a novel contribution by integrating the Consumer Style Inventory (CSI) framework with eWOM use intention and purchase intention in a single structural model. Unlike previous studies, this research positions use intention as a mediating mechanism that connects psychographic decision-making styles with actual purchase intention in the context of accommodation booking. In addition, this study extends prior literature by incorporating sustainability attitudes as part of contemporary consumer behavior trends among Generation Z, thereby providing a more nuanced understanding of how experiential and value-driven factors influence eWOM use intention.

This study contributes theoretically by extending the application of the Consumer Style Inventory (CSI) into the digital tourism context, emphasizing that psychographic decision-making styles may not uniformly influence eWOM use intention. By integrating CSI with eWOM use intention and purchase intention within a unified structural model, this study offers a more comprehensive understanding of how internal consumer characteristics shape digital decision-making processes among Generation Z.

The main objective and purpose of this study is to explore how the decision-making styles of Generation Z consumers, as classified in the Consumer Style Inventory (CSI) framework, influence their tendency to use electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) as a reference in the hotel accommodation selection process, and how this correlates with purchase intention. This integrated approach enables a deeper understanding of how digital trust, review quality, and perceived relevance interact with psychographic variables, ultimately guiding strategic decisions within hospitality marketing practices. By integrating psychographic and digital behavior dimensions, this study seeks to offer insights into the hospitality industry to develop more appropriate strategies in attracting Generation Z, particularly by focusing on sustainability and trust in digital reviews.

### ***The Role of eWOM in Decision Making***

When consumers evaluate products prior to purchase, seeking opinions or recommendations from others is a common practice (Wang et al., 2018). eWOM influences the formation of consumer expectations during the decision-making process, such that post-purchase satisfaction is shaped by existing reviews (Pourfakhimi et al., 2020). eWOM is recognized as an effective tool for building brand awareness, creating trends in the marketplace, influencing purchasing decisions, and developing brand loyalty (Kala & Chaubey, 2018).

Customer reviews both positive and negative, shape how potential buyers assess a product or service, as consumers tend to compare official information provided by companies with the real experiences shared by other users (Perez-Aranda et al., 2024). Papathanassis & Knolle (2011) argue that negative eWOM exerts a stronger influence than positive eWOM, as consumers tend to spend more time critically evaluating negative content. These evaluative tendencies reflect how consumers increasingly prioritize transparency, authenticity, and detailed narratives when interpreting online feedback to reduce uncertainty. In addition, consumers assess both positive and negative eWOM by considering the level of detail in reviews and the degree of agreement among reviewers (Hoang et al., 2025).

In the tourism sector, eWOM is present on various digital platforms that provide customer review features, such as Booking.com, TripAdvisor, Traveloka, and others. The impact of online product reviews is highly recognized because most online shoppers consider online product

reviews when making purchasing decisions (Nisar et al., 2020). User interaction with eWOM content, such as liking, sharing, or commenting, can strengthen the message's influence on other audiences because it demonstrates social validation and increases the visibility of the content on digital platforms. eWOM messages effectively minimize the possibility of risk and ambiguity when making purchasing decisions and thus influence consumers subsequent purchase intentions (Kala & Chaubey, 2018).

### **Decision-Making Styles of Generation Z**

Consumer decision-making styles, including those among Generation Z, are shaped by different shopping orientations. Each individual has unique consumption preferences, which are reflected in their information needs, psychographic characteristics, and various demographic backgrounds (Thangavel et al., 2022). These differences also affect what they consider important when choosing products or services, including the attributes of a store or digital platform.

Drawing upon the Consumer Style Inventory (CSI) developed by Sproles & Kendall (1986) this study investigates the influence of consumers information-seeking attitudes toward eWOM platforms on their intention to use eWOM as a reference during hotel accommodation decision-making, as well as the relationship between this intention and purchase intention. As mentioned in the introduction, the first model by Sproles & Kendall (1986) states that there are eight different shopping typologies: Perfectionistic, Brand conscious, Novelty-fashion conscious, Recreational and hedonistic shopping consciousness, Price conscious, "value for money", Impulsive, careless consumer orientation, Confused by overchoice, Habitual, Brand-loyal consumer orientation.

Although the original Consumer Style Inventory (CSI) framework proposes eight decision-making styles, this study focuses on a subset of dimensions that are considered most relevant to the digital context of eWOM in tourism. Previous studies have suggested that not all CSI dimensions are equally applicable across different research contexts, particularly in online environments where information processing and user interaction differ significantly from traditional shopping settings (Kang et al., 2013; Thangavel et al., 2022).

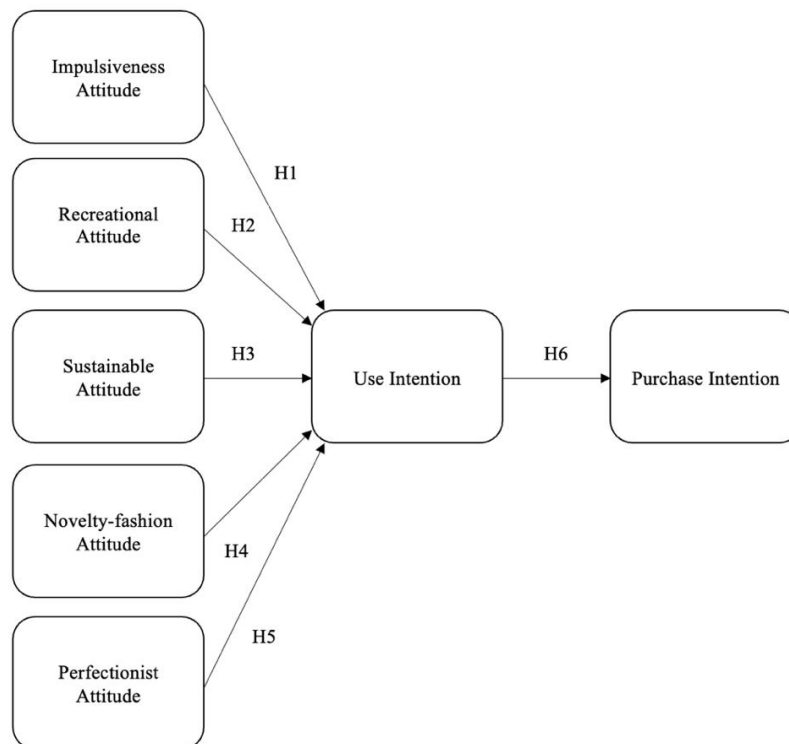
In this study, five dimensions perfectionist, impulsive, novelty-fashion, recreational, and sustainable attitudes were selected based on both theoretical relevance and empirical support. These dimensions are closely associated with how consumers search for, evaluate, and engage with online information, which aligns with the nature of eWOM platforms. In contrast, other dimensions such as brand consciousness, price consciousness, and habitual loyalty were excluded, as they are more related to product evaluation and repetitive purchasing behavior rather than active information-seeking behavior in digital environments. To measure the impact of eWOM on Gen Z's decisions in choosing tourism accommodations for various types of travel, this study focuses on CSI attributes that are closely related to all types of travel requested by these consumers. Attitudes that are highly recognized in the literature includes impulsive behavior, recreation, novelty-fashion, and perfectionist (Chase et al., 2017; Cho et al., 2022).

This selective use of CSI dimensions is consistent with prior empirical studies that adapt the model to specific contexts, particularly in digital environments where only relevant dimensions are retained to improve model fit and explanatory power (Kang et al., 2013; Perez-Aranda et al., 2024; Thangavel et al., 2022). Furthermore, the inclusion of sustainable attitude extends the original CSI framework by capturing contemporary consumption trends among Generation Z, who are becoming more aware of ethical and environmental concerns. This selective approach allows for a more focused and contextually relevant analysis of decision-making styles that directly influence eWOM use intention and purchase intention in the tourism sector. Cardinali (2020) shows that attitudes toward sustainable tourism have a positive correlation with value orientation and the fulfillment of basic psychological needs. Therefore, this study introduces a new variable and trend in tourism studies, which is sustainable attitude (Trudel, 2019).

## Purchase Intention

Generation Z consumers highly depend on digital sites and online recommendations when making purchasing decisions, especially in the context of hotel bookings. The credibility of eWOM as perceived by consumers has been identified as a key factor in shaping purchase intention (Wang et al., 2018). Accordingly, the higher the perceived credibility of online reviews, the greater the likelihood that consumers will proceed with a purchase. This strong reliance reflects Generation Z's tendency to prioritize transparency, authenticity, and peer-generated insights over traditional promotional content. As digital natives, they frequently cross-check information across multiple platforms before making decisions, demonstrating a distinctive pattern of information verification that differentiates them from previous generations.

eWOM has been widely recognized as a significant determinant of Generation Z's purchase intention. Hoang et al., (2025) found that eWOM directly influences Gen Z's booking intention, with subjective norms and desirability as important mediators. Similarly, Perez-Aranda et al., (2024) shows that consumer decision-making styles, particularly those that are perfectionist and sustainable, significantly influence use intention, which then triggers purchase intention. These findings highlight the complex psychological pathways involved in Gen Z's digital decision-making, where emotional evaluation, social influence, and perceived usefulness of online reviews collectively strengthen their final purchase intention, especially in accommodation-related decisions.



(Source: Own research)

**Figure 1.** Conceptual framework

Based on a literature review of consumer decision-making styles, eWOM, and purchase intention, a conceptual model was developed. This model, illustrated in Figure 1, shows that Generation Z's purchase intention on eWOM when searching for accommodation on review sites is influenced by their intention to use eWOM.

## Methodology

### Data Collection

Data were collected through an online questionnaire distributed via social media in March 2025. The sample was selected using purposive sampling based on two criteria: (1) respondents must have used an eWOM platform to search for accommodation-related reviews within the past 12 months, and (2) respondents must belong to Generation Z, given their distinct consumption patterns and digital behavior (Thangavel et al., 2022). Generation Z represents one of the largest demographic groups globally and holds significant purchasing power, making them an important market segment (Djafarova & Fouts, 2022). The Generation Z sample is also noteworthy because they are the travelers of the future, and they are increasingly playing a key role in influencing new trends in tourism and eWOM engagement. As a result, this study focused on Generation Z individuals with prior experience using tourism review platforms within the last year to support their accommodation selection and booking decisions for travel. A total of 220 valid responses were collected from Generation Z participants.

### Measuring Instrument

Using seven constructs, we used a 25-item questionnaire with a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The questionnaire consists of a total of seven constructs: purchase intention (PI), eWOM use intention (UI), impulsive attitude (IA), recreational attitude (RA), sustainability attitude (SA), novelty attitude (NFA), and perfectionist attitude (PA).

This questionnaire also includes seven sociodemographic variables to obtain information from participants, particularly regarding age, education level, gender, and employment status. Based on the variables asked, we designed different formats; for example, to measure the level of study, we used nominal variables. Partial least squares (PLS)-SEM was then applied to the collected data using SmartPLS 4.1.1.2 software as an analysis tool.

PLS-SEM is a powerful method used to confirm the signs and significance of proposed relationships between constructs in a structural model. In addition, PLS-SEM also evaluates the validity and reliability of measurement models, making it a reputable approach (Vinzi et al., 2010). Its substantial statistical power proves invaluable for exploratory research efforts, particularly when investigating emerging or underdeveloped theories (Hair et al., 2019). PLS-SEM has demonstrated its effectiveness in analyzing complex structural models involving multiple indicators and relationships (Hair et al., 2019).

## Results and Discussions

### Gen Z Member Demographics

This study involved 220 respondents. Based on age, the majority of respondents were aged 21–24 years, accounting for 78.6%. A smaller proportion consisted of respondents aged 17–20 years (16.4%) and those aged 25–28 years (5%). Regarding education, most respondents reported having secondary school education (SMP/SMA), representing 58.2% of the sample. Meanwhile, 36.8% of respondents held a bachelor's degree, followed by 4.5% who held a diploma, and 1% who possessed a master's degree. Consistent with their age profile, most respondents were students, comprising 75.9% of the total sample, while others were full-time or part-time employees. Additionally, a majority of the respondents were female, with a percentage of 70%.

**Table 1.** Member demographics

Variable	Category	n	%
Gender	Male	66	30
	Female	154	70
Age	17-20 Years Old	36	16.4
	21-24 Years Old	173	78.6
	25-28 Years Old	11	5
Education	Secondary school (SMP/SMA)	128	58.2
	University – Diploma (D1/D2/D3)	10	4.5
	University– Bachelor (D4/S1)	81	36.8

Job Status	University – Master (S2/S3)	1	0.5
	Unemployed	7	3.2
	Students	167	75.9
	Part-time employed	7	3.2
	Full-time employed	39	17.7

### Measurement Model Estimation

To determine the suitability of the proposed model, a variety of assessment criteria were applied, including the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR), Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and indicators of convergent validity (Hair et al., 2014). According to Garson (2016), a good model fit should be achieved when the SRMR is lower than 0.10. This measurement model fit index shows a good model fit: SRMR 0.087. The reliability of the constructs was determined by assessing Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability. Additionally, the validity of the constructs, including convergent and discriminant validity, was verified using the average variance extracted (AVE) criterion. Although several indicators in this study show outer loadings slightly below the recommended threshold of 0.70, with values ranging from 0.60 to 0.70, these indicators were retained based on both statistical and theoretical considerations. According to Hair et al. (2019), indicators within this range can be considered acceptable, particularly in exploratory research, as long as they contribute positively to composite reliability and do not compromise convergent validity.

In this study, all constructs demonstrate satisfactory composite reliability ( $CR > 0.70$ ) and average variance extracted ( $AVE > 0.50$ ), indicating that the inclusion of these indicators does not adversely affect the overall construct validity. Furthermore, these items were retained to preserve the conceptual integrity of the constructs, as they represent theoretically important aspects of consumer decision-making styles and eWOM behavior. Therefore, removing these indicators could reduce the content validity of the measurement model. Table 2 presents the value of each indicator included in the measurement model.

To determine discriminant validity, we followed the recommendations of Hair et al., (2019) using three methods:

1. the cross-loads criterion;
2. the Fornell–Larcker criterion; and
3. the Heterotrait–Monotrait ratio (HTMT) criterion.

Based on the Fornell–Larcker criterion, the square root of each construct's AVE exceeded its shared variance with other constructs, confirming discriminant validity.

**Table 2.** Value of each item

Construct	Item	Loading	Cronbach's alpha	CR	AVE
Impulsiveness Attitude	I am more impulsive and I don't consider eWOM	0.910	0.842	0.903	0.756
	Often I make careless use of eWOM I later wish I had not	0.857			
	I do not carefully check eWOM	0.839			
Novelty-fashion Attitude	I am up-to-date with the changing eWOM in accommodation	0.867	0.640	0.848	0.735
	Novelty, attractive content in eWOM is very important to me	0.848			
Perfectionist Attitude	Considering the eWOM is important to me	0.871	0.642	0.803	0.580
	Getting very good quality information on eWOM is important to me	0.770			

	I make a special effort to choose the very best quality products	0.623			
Recreational Attitude	Using eWOM is a pleasant activity to me	0.894	0.732	0.814	0.527
	Using eWOM is an enjoyable activity to me	0.899			
	I enjoy using the eWOM just for the fun of it	0.606			
Sustainable Attitude	I carefully look for the eWOM regarding sustainable information	0.823	0.791	0.849	0.658
	I usually check the eWOM regarding sustainable information	0.864			
	The eWOM about sustainability is very important to me	0.831			
EWOM Use Intention	The likelihood of using the eWOM would be higher	0.845	0.821	0.877	0.705
	The probability that I would consider using the eWOM would be higher	0.836			
	My willingness to use the eWOM would be higher	0.893			
EWOM Purchase Intention	The probability that I would consider booking this hotel is high	0.812	0.699	0.893	0.737
	My willingness to book this hotel is high	0.800			
	I am willing to recommend others to buy this product/brand.	0.648			
	I look up for opinions on social media for products/services which I am planning to buy	0.622			

The measurement items for purchase intention were derived from previously established and validated research (Alhidari et al., 2015; Kala & Chaubey, 2018; Lien et al., 2015; Nisar et al., 2020). In the context of digital consumer behavior, particularly within eWOM environments, purchase intention is often conceptualized as part of a broader decision-making process that includes related behaviors such as information-seeking and recommendation. These behaviors reflect consumer's engagement and confidence toward a potential purchase decision, rather than a strictly transactional outcome. Therefore, the inclusion of such indicators aligns with prior literature that captures purchase intention within an integrated digital behavioral framework. This study adopts a broader conceptualization of purchase intention within the digital tourism context. In online environments, particularly among Generation Z, the decision-making process is not strictly linear but involves interconnected stages such as information search, evaluation, social sharing, and behavioral intention.

Previous studies have highlighted that eWOM-related behaviors, including seeking opinions and recommending products, are closely associated with purchase intention, as they reflect consumers' engagement and confidence in the decision-making process (Alhidari et al., 2015; Kala & Chaubey, 2018; Lien et al., 2015; Nisar et al., 2020). The inclusion of these indicators does not compromise construct validity, as supported by acceptable reliability and validity

measures (CR and AVE), indicating that the construct remains statistically sound. This approach aligns with recent studies that conceptualize purchase intention as part of a broader digital engagement behavior rather than a purely transactional outcome.

These criteria are applicable across all types of measurement models. Based on the Fornell–Larcker criteria, that the square root of a construct’s AVE should be greater than its shared variance with any other variable included in the model, as explained by Hair et al., (2019). Table 3 indicates that all construct correlations are lower than the square root of their respective AVE values, thereby confirming discriminant validity. The final assessment involved the HTMT criterion, which requires that correlations between constructs remain below 1.00. Table 3 further demonstrates compliance with the HTMT criterion, where all construct correlations were below the threshold value of 1.00. Together, these results confirm that the measurement model possesses adequate discriminant validity.

**Table 3.** Fornell-Larcker discriminant validity

	IA	NFA	PA	PI	RA	SA	UI
IA	0.869						
NFA	0.103	0.858					
PA	-0.193	0.418	0.762				
PI	0.106	0.424	0.348	0.726			
RA	0.195	0.468	0.359	0.301	0.811		
SA	0.084	0.451	0.360	0.337	0.316	0.840	
UI	0.158	0.425	0.322	0.542	0.545	0.359	0.858

### Structural Model Assessment and Hypothesis Testing

Structural model validation begins by examining the R2 value and the Stone-Geisser test (Q2).

**Table 4.** Stone-Geisser test

	Q <sup>2</sup> predict	R <sup>2</sup>
PI	0.159	0.294
UI	0.313	0.360

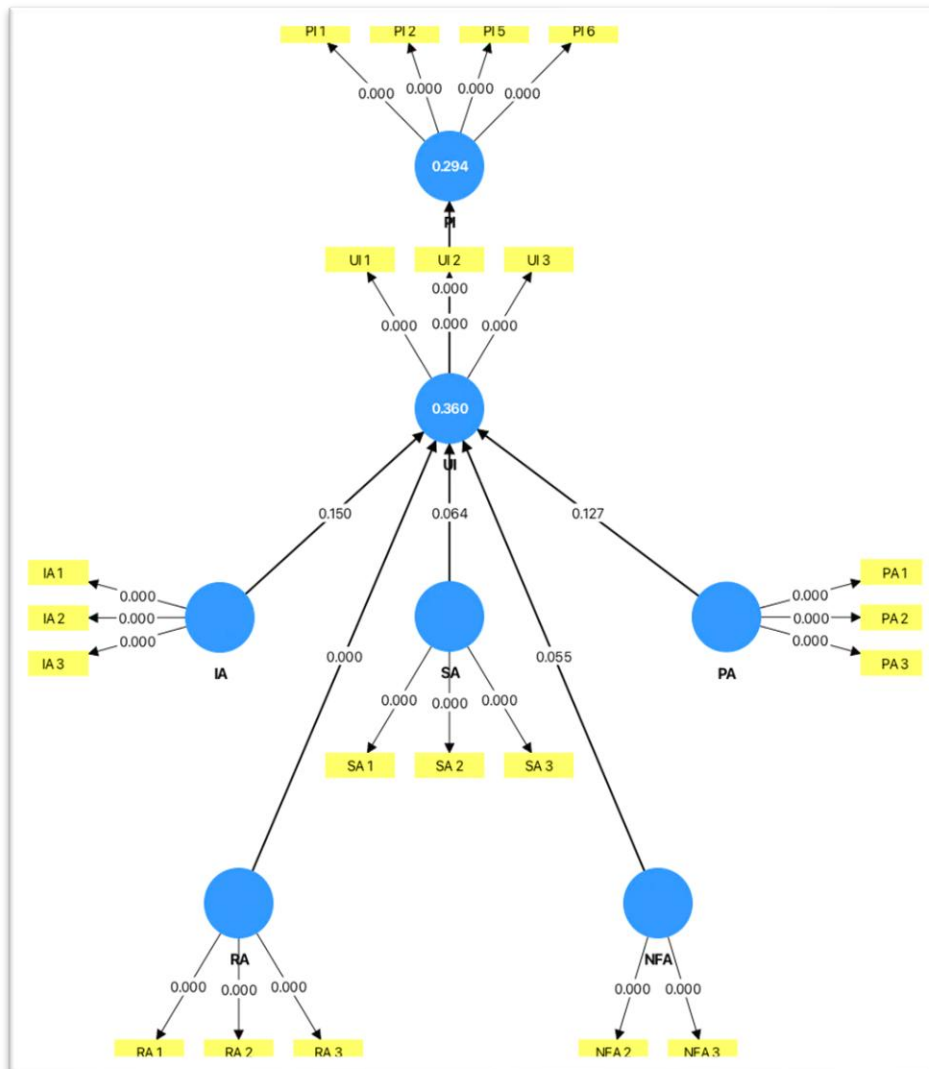
The model takes into account that values greater than 0.1 are considered significant (Falk & Miller, 1992). The Q<sup>2</sup> statistic, which serves as an additional measure of a model’s predictive capability, is deemed meaningful when its value exceeds zero, signifying that the model demonstrates adequate predictive validity (Hair et al., 2014).

**Table 5.** Structural model results

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics ( O/STDEV )	P values	Hypotheses
IA -> UI	0.074	0.082	0.051	1.440	0.150	Unsupported
NFA -> UI	0.136	0.130	0.071	1.923	0.055	Unsupported
PA -> UI	0.090	0.096	0.059	1.528	0.127	Unsupported
RA -> UI	0.391	0.389	0.065	6.029	0.000	Supported
SA -> UI	0.136	0.146	0.073	1.851	0.064	Unsupported
UI -> PI	0.542	0.548	0.047	11.437	0.000	Supported

The findings of this study provide support for the validity of the proposed structural model. The analysis reveals that recreational attitude is a significant predictor of eWOM use intention among Generation Z consumers, indicating that individuals who perceive information-seeking activities as enjoyable and engaging are more likely to utilize eWOM. Furthermore, the

results demonstrate that eWOM use intention positively influences consumers' accommodation purchase intention, highlighting the important role of online reviews in shaping travel-related decision-making. In contrast, impulsive, perfectionist, novelty-fashion, and sustainable attitudes were found to have no significant effect on eWOM use intention, suggesting that these consumer decision-making styles do not substantially drive Gen Z consumers' engagement with eWOM in the context of accommodation selection.



(Source: Own research)

**Figure 2.** Structural model with t-value

## Discussions

The results of this study showed that eWOM use intention had a significant effect on eWOM purchase intention. Positive eWOM should be the main focus for those in the hospitality industry to strengthen brand image, which ultimately acts as a bridge connecting the intention to use with the intention to purchase. Previous studies have shown that most online consumers consider product reviews to be one of the main factors in their decision-making process (Nisar et al., 2020). According to Kala & Chaubey (2018), eWOM effectively minimizes risk and uncertainty when making purchase decisions and influences consumers intentions to make their next purchase. Thus, use intention is shaped by the interaction between user expectations of the system, the accessibility of information and the trust built upon the experiences of others conveyed through eWOM platforms.

Recreational attitudes influence the intention to use eWOM. Individuals with recreational attitudes view the activities of searching for and sharing information as part of an enjoyable experience, rather than only as a means of fulfilling needs. As stated by Kim et al., (2011), recreational or hedonistic consumers are likely to actively browse various shopping sites and gain satisfaction from the process. Consumers with a recreational attitude tend to make shopping an enjoyable part of their lifestyle for emotional satisfaction (Guiry, 2006). Consumers with a recreational orientation are more likely to engage with eWOM as part of an enjoyable and experiential activity.

The finding that impulsive attitude does not significantly influence eWOM use intention suggests that impulsive consumers tend to bypass the information-search stage typically associated with eWOM platforms. Unlike rational or evaluative consumers, impulsive individuals are driven by immediate emotional responses and spontaneous decision-making, which reduces their motivation to engage in systematic information processing (Gulfranz et al., 2022). This result is consistent with Kang et al. (2013), who found that impulsiveness does not predict eWOM opinion-seeking behavior or attitudes toward online social shopping using SNSs.

As noted by Kang et al., (2013), "acting impulsively does not necessitate opinion-seeking, so the benefits of SNSs would not necessarily appeal to impulsive consumers," suggesting that eWOM platforms are more aligned with rational decision-making processes such as information search and evaluation rather than impulsive behavior. In the context of Generation Z, although they are highly engaged with digital platforms, impulsive tendencies may lead them to skip evaluative processes, reinforcing the idea that digital engagement does not always equate to information-seeking behavior.

The finding that perfectionist attitude does not significantly influence eWOM use intention suggests that consumers with a strong emphasis on quality may not rely heavily on user-generated content as a primary source of evaluation. Perfectionist individuals tend to seek precise, reliable, and objective information, and may perceive eWOM as subjective and inconsistent, thereby limiting its usefulness in their decision-making process (Miranda & Duarte, 2022). This result is consistent with Kang et al., (2013), who found that high quality-consciousness does not significantly predict eWOM opinion-seeking behavior or attitudes toward online social shopping. As highlighted by Kang et al., (2013), consumers with a perfectionist orientation may prefer to assess product quality through direct experience or objective product attributes rather than relying on the opinions of other consumers. This suggests that eWOM, which is inherently subjective and experience-based, may not align well with the evaluative standards of perfectionist consumers. While Gen Z is often characterized as highly digital and reliant on peer-generated information, this result indicates that not all segments within this cohort uniformly depend on eWOM.

The finding that sustainable attitude does not significantly influence eWOM use intention suggests a disconnect between pro-environmental values and actual digital behavior in the context of accommodation decision-making. Although Generation Z is often characterized as highly concerned with sustainability issues, this concern does not necessarily translate into active engagement with eWOM platforms when searching for accommodation information. This result can be explained by the well-established value action gap, where individuals express strong environmental attitudes but fail to consistently reflect these values in their actual behavior (Zafar et al., 2021). Recent empirical evidence further supports this phenomenon, showing that although Generation Z is widely portrayed as socially and environmentally conscious, they tend to be less engaged in sustainability-related eWOM compared to other generational cohorts (D'Acunzio et al., 2025). This indicates that sustainability awareness does not automatically lead to active participation in digital information-sharing behavior.

Furthermore, in digital tourism contexts, decision-making is frequently driven by hedonic and experiential factors, such as enjoyment, convenience, and social validation, which may overshadow sustainability considerations. This aligns with the findings of Imalhaq et al. (2024), who emphasize that environmentally responsible attitudes do not always lead to consistent consumption behavior, particularly when other motivations are more salient. In addition, sustainability considerations often operate alongside other dominant factors such as price, convenience, and quality, rather than acting as the primary determinant of consumer

decisions (D'Acunto et al., 2025). As a result, even sustainability-oriented consumers may not prioritize eWOM as a tool for evaluating environmentally responsible accommodation options. In addition, the limited visibility and inconsistency of sustainability-related information within online reviews reduce its salience in shaping consumer behavior. eWOM platforms are more commonly used to evaluate functional and experiential aspects of accommodation, such as service quality and comfort, rather than sustainability practices. This further weakens the relationship between sustainable attitudes and eWOM use intention.

From a theoretical perspective, this finding highlights the limitation of assuming a direct relationship between sustainability attitudes and digital behavioral intention. It reinforces the significance of examining the gap between stated values and actual behavior, particularly among Generation Z, and suggests that contextual factors, such as the availability and prominence of sustainability information within eWOM platforms, play a crucial role in shaping consumer decision-making processes. The absence of a significant relationship between novelty-fashion attitude and eWOM use intention suggests that consumers who seek novelty and trendiness may not rely heavily on existing online reviews when making decisions. Individuals with a strong novelty-fashion orientation are typically driven by the desire for uniqueness, new experiences, and being ahead of trends, which may reduce their dependence on previously shared opinions (Perez-Aranda et al., 2024)

This finding indicates that novelty-seeking consumers are more inclined toward exploration rather than evaluation. Instead of relying on eWOM, which reflects past experiences of other consumers, they may prefer discovering new or less-reviewed options to fulfill their need for differentiation. In highly dynamic digital environments, where information is abundant and often repetitive, eWOM may be perceived as lacking originality and therefore less appealing to novelty-driven individuals.

For Generation Z, novelty and fashion orientation are often expressed through personal identity construction and social media presence. This may shift their behavior from being information consumers to content creators, where they seek to generate unique experiences rather than follow existing reviews. As a result, eWOM may function more as a background reference rather than a primary decision-making tool for this segment (Kang et al., 2013).

From a theoretical perspective, this finding challenges the assumption that all forms of consumer engagement with digital platforms lead to increased reliance on eWOM. Instead, it suggests that the motivation behind digital behavior, whether driven by conformity or differentiation, plays a crucial role in determining the use of eWOM. For novelty-oriented consumers, the pursuit of uniqueness may outweigh the perceived benefits of informational efficiency offered by eWOM.

Given that only recreational attitude was found to be significant, this suggests that not all psychographic dimensions within the Consumer Style Inventory (CSI) are equally relevant in the context of eWOM use intention among Generation Z. This finding highlights the importance of contextualizing psychographic variables within digital environments. Therefore, future research may further explore additional CSI dimensions or incorporate other relevant psychographic constructs to provide a more comprehensive understanding of digital consumer behavior.

## Conclusions

The findings indicate that among the five dimensions tested perfectionist, impulsive, novelty-fashion, sustainable, and recreational attitudes, only recreational attitude was found to have a significant influence on eWOM use intention. This suggests that Generation Z consumers who perceive information-seeking activities as enjoyable tend to engage more actively in eWOM prior to making a purchase. Furthermore, eWOM use intention was found to significantly influence purchase intention, indicating that increased engagement with eWOM leads to a higher likelihood of booking accommodation. These findings reinforce the understanding that Generation Z's digital behavior in tourism is strongly influenced by experiential and hedonic factors.

Building upon these findings, several key conclusions can be drawn regarding the behavior of Generation Z in the online accommodation booking context. The strong influence of recreational attitude on the intention to use eWOM demonstrates that Gen Z values online

information not only for its informative function, but also for the enjoyment and experiential aspects it provides. This indicates that the use of eWOM among Generation Z is closely linked to their perception of the activity as engaging and enjoyable.

From a practical perspective, these findings highlight the importance of considering psychographic characteristics, especially recreational orientation. The tourism industry, specifically the accommodation sector, should emphasize creating engaging and enjoyable user experiences that align with the preferences of Generation Z. By doing so, businesses can enhance user engagement, encourage eWOM use intention, and ultimately increase purchase intention. These implications are specifically derived from the significant role of recreational attitude and should be interpreted within the scope of the variables tested in this study.

Moreover, the significant effect of use intention on purchase intention reinforces the central role of eWOM as a decisive factor in Gen Z's consumer journey. For this demographic, online reviews serve as a bridge between exploration and decision-making, guiding them toward choices that align with their preferences and values. As such, accommodation providers must ensure that their online presence is not only informative but also credible, authentic, and consistently updated. Positive digital engagement, transparency, and responsiveness to reviews can further strengthen consumer trust and influence purchasing decisions.

Despite the contributions of this study, several limitations should be acknowledged. Although indicators with outer loadings between 0.60 and 0.70 were retained based on established methodological guidelines this may indicate relatively weaker item reliability. Therefore, the inclusion of these indicators represents a potential limitation of the study. Future research is encouraged to refine measurement items to achieve stronger construct representation and improve overall measurement precision.

This study also contributes to a deeper theoretical understanding of psychographic determinants in digital tourism behavior. The lack of influence from other psychographic dimensions such as perfectionism or sustainability suggests that Generation Z's online decision-making in this context is driven more by experiential motivations rather than cognitive or ethical considerations. This insight provides an important foundation for future research exploring how emotional, recreational, and social media driven factors shape consumer behavior in other sectors of tourism. Overall, the results underline the need for tourism businesses and digital platforms to adapt to the distinctive behavioral patterns of Generation Z. By prioritizing user experience, emotional engagement, and interactive digital content, marketers can more effectively stimulate eWOM use and enhance purchase intention, ultimately supporting business growth in an increasingly competitive digital environment.

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# Synchronization of maritime economic policy and marine tourism development: A critical review of the blue growth concept in East Java

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**Abstract:** This study aims to analyse the synchronization between Maritime Economic Policy (MEP) and Marine Tourism Destination Development (MTDD) within the blue growth framework in East Java, Indonesia, emphasizing the integration of governance, digital innovation, and stakeholder collaboration for sustainable maritime development. A qualitative integrative literature review method, using data sourced from Reputable Journals. Thematic analysis used to identify patterns of convergence, synergy, and gaps between MEP and MTDD. The findings reveal that East Java has implemented innovative governance practices, including the CETTAR digital platform and community based institutions such as BUMDes, which enhance transparency, coordination, and stakeholder engagement. However, key challenges remain, including fragmented institutional coordination, limited local participation, and inadequate policy integration across government levels. To address these, the study proposes a multidimensional MTDD framework encompassing environmental, economic, social, governance, and innovation components aligned with MEP's strategic pillars. The results emphasize the importance of adaptive governance, transparency, and inclusive participation to balance economic growth with marine ecosystem preservation. This research contributes to both theory and practice by providing a holistic multidimensional model for harmonizing maritime economic and tourism development policies, offering strategic insights and actionable guidance for policymakers, stakeholders, and researchers seeking to advance sustainable coastal and maritime development in East Java and similar regions. The model harmonizes maritime economic policy with tourism development by integrating environmental, economic, social, governance, and innovation pillars.

**Keywords:** Blue Growth, East Java, Maritime Economic Policy, Marine Tourism, Sustainable Development

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## Introduction

The Indonesia, the world's largest archipelagic state, possesses vast maritime and natural resource potential that can drive national economic growth, strengthen the defence sector, and deliver socio-economic benefits to coastal communities; however, this potential remains unevenly realised due to structural and governance constraints (Rusdiana et al., 2021; Trenggono et al., 2025). Despite the country's formal commitment to the blue economy through the de-velopment of a national roadmap and emerging performance indices, implementation across provinces is highly variable, reflecting persistent challenges such as fragmented governance, regulatory overlaps, limited maritime and port infrastructure, weak inter-island connectivity, maritime security threats (e.g., piracy and illegal fishing), low public awareness of maritime strategic value, and ongoing environmental degradation caused by pollution and overexploita-tion (Indonesia Blue Economy Roadmap, 2023; Rahman et al., 2024; Trenggono et al., 2025).

Within this context, East Java emerges as a relatively strong performer in blue economy development, particularly through its marine tourism and fisheries sectors; nevertheless, systematic evidence examining the alignment between maritime policy, marine destination development and principles of good governance remains limited (Putri, 2024; Trenggono et al., 2025). Accordingly, this study investigates the extent to which maritime policy aligns with marine tourism development in East Java within a blue economy framework, while also exploring how governance mechanisms can enhance sustainable and inclusive maritime growth (Rahman et al., 2024; Trenggono et al., 2025; Putri, 2024). Indonesia must address these structural challenges through coherent policymaking, infrastructure modernization, enhanced maritime security, and stronger community participation (Dhaniswari & Rakhmagina, 2022).

The maritime sector represents a vital driver of national economic performance, international trade and sustainable development. Key achievements include increased fishery production, global leadership in seaweed output, and marine tourism revenues amounting to USD 8.5 billion in 2022. Furthermore, infrastructural initiatives such as the development of standardized eastern ports and the strategic Patimban Port have improved logistics efficiency and regional connectivity. Strengthened maritime patrols and regional cooperation have also enhanced trade stability. In alignment with Indonesia's National Long-Term Development Plan (2025–2045), these initiatives aim to double the maritime sector's contribution to GDP to 15% and advance Indonesia toward high-income nation status (Pandjaitan et al., 2025).

Ensuring the sustainability of maritime development requires effective marine resource management that balances economic utilization with ecosystem preservation. As noted by Abunawas (2024), sustainable marine management involves the responsible use of ocean resources, strict adherence to environmental regulations, enhancement of legal and ecological awareness, particularly among younger generations and the integration of local communities and customary institutions into marine conservation strategies.

A strategic framework for achieving these objectives is the blue economy, which emphasizes the sustainable and inclusive utilization of marine resources to promote socio-economic welfare without compromising ecological integrity. The blue economy encompasses key sectors such as sustainable fisheries, marine tourism, renewable ocean energy, maritime transport, and marine biotechnology. Its fundamental principles are ecological sustainability, social inclusivity and economic accountability (Danjuma et al., 2024). A central component of this approach is blue growth, which promotes inclusive, innovative, and sustainable marine-based economic expansion through three interrelated narratives: the economic (innovation-driven job creation), the ecological (sustainable resource management and conservation), and the social (community engagement and equitable benefit distribution). Together, these narratives foster a resilient and inclusive maritime economy (Dyrset, 2025).

The Indonesian government has begun operationalizing blue economy and blue growth principles through a series of national policies and strategic frameworks, as outlined in Table 1 novelties.

**Table 1.** Indonesian national policies and strategies on blue economy/blue growth

No.	Policy/Strategy	Related Institutions	Main Objective	Key Focus/Flagship Programs	Reference
1	National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) 2020–2024	Bappenas (National Development Planning Agency)	Promote inclusive and sustainable maritime economy	Strengthening marine and fisheries sector, value-added industries, maritime infrastructure	Bappenas (2020), <i>RPJMN 2020–2024</i>
2	Indonesian Ocean Policy (Presidential Regulation No. 16/2017)	Coordinating Ministry for Maritime Affairs and Investment (Kemenko Marves)	Realizing Indonesia as a Global Maritime Fulcrum	Integrated ocean governance, maritime security, small islands development	Presidential Regulation No. 16/2017
3	National Strategy for Blue Economy	Ministry of Marine Affairs	Sustainable and science-	Measured fishing, marine conservation, eco-friendly aquaculture	KKP (2021), <i>Blue</i>

4	(Blue Economy Roadmap 2021) Measured Fishing Program (PIT)	and Fisheries (KKP) KKP	based marine management. Sustainable fish stock management and fisher welfare	Fishing zones, quota-based fishing, industrialization of catch	<i>Economy Strategy KKP (2023), Measured Fishing Program (PIT)</i>
5	G20 Indonesia 2022 – Blue Economy Agenda	The Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Kemenlu, KKP, Bappenas	Promote global cooperation in marine issues	Blue carbon, coastal ecosystem protection, innovative marine financing	G20 Indonesia (2022), <i>Presidency Highlights KKP (2023), Draft of Blue Economy Roadmap Bappenas (2021), Voluntary National Review SDGs</i>
6	Indonesia’s Blue Economy Roadmap 2023–2045 ( <i>in development</i> )	KKP, Bappenas	Transforming toward an inclusive, sustainable blue economy	Blue carbon, coral reef restoration, green investment	KKP (2023), Draft of Blue Economy Roadmap Bappenas (2021), <i>Voluntary National Review SDGs</i>
7	SDGs Agenda – Goal 14: Life Below Water	Bappenas, Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK), KKP	Conserve and sustainably use marine resources	Marine pollution reduction, marine biodiversity conservation	KKP (2023), Draft of Blue Economy Roadmap Bappenas (2021), <i>Voluntary National Review SDGs</i>

(Source: Data processed by researchers, 2025)

Indonesia adopts the blue economy as a strategic pillar of national development, integrating marine conservation, economic growth, and coastal community welfare. As outlined in Table 1, policies such as Presidential Regulation No. 16/2017 and the RPJMN emphasize integrated marine governance through multi-stakeholder collaboration. Key strategies include quota-based fisheries management, ecosystem conservation, and sustainable aquaculture, alongside initiatives to promote industrialization and innovation to enhance sectoral value and fisherfolk livelihoods. On the global stage, Indonesia also advances issues of blue carbon and innovative ocean financing, aligned with SDG 14.

However, implementing these maritime policies faces numerous obstacles. According to Suhardono (2023) in *Indonesian Maritime Policy: Formulation and Implementation*, there are approximately ten major challenges to maritime policy, as illustrated in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Maritime policy challenges in Indonesia

No.	Challenges	No.	Challenges
1	Fragmented institutional coordination hampers coherent maritime policy implementation due to overlapping agency mandates.	6	Limited community involvement reduces local engagement in maritime governance.
2	Weak maritime law enforcement leads to persistent violations such as illegal fishing and smuggling.	7	Lack of skilled maritime labor reflects gaps in education and vocational training.
3	Inadequate maritime infrastructure limits connectivity and logistics, especially in remote regions.	8	Centralized policymaking restricts regional autonomy in managing maritime affairs.
4	Poor marine resource management results in overexploitation, pollution, and stakeholder conflicts.	9	Geopolitical and global trade pressures demand stronger strategic maritime positioning.
5	Maritime security threats, including piracy and territorial violations, remain unresolved.	10	Regulatory misalignment with international standards hinders global maritime integration.

(Source: Suhardono, 2023)

East Java possesses significant maritime and tourism potential supported by community empowerment, environmental protection, and integrated destination management (Ardhanari et

al., 2024; Rukhus, 2020). Historically rooted in Indonesia's maritime heritage (Maulidan et al., 2024), East Java ranks among provinces with high blue economy indicators (Koesnadi et al., 2023). Initiatives such as Gili Labak tourism, Petik Laut Festival, and diving guide training demonstrate progress, yet comprehensive academic analyses of policy–tourism synergy remain limited.

A review of 30 studies reveals key gaps: weak local governance models, limited empirical evidence on intersectoral collaboration, underexplored institutional roles, absence of innovative financing schemes, and few cross-regional comparisons. As a diverse coastal region, East Java provides a natural laboratory for studying collaborative governance, digital integration and community-based blue economy practices. Existing research and policy initiatives underscore Indonesia's ambition to use the blue economy as a strategic pillar for achieving sustainable development and reducing regional disparities (Indonesia Blue Economy Roadmap, 2023). However, national-level frameworks and indices often obscure subnational variations in governance quality, institutional coordination, and community participation that determine actual outcomes on the ground (Hidayat, 2025; Trenggono et al., 2025; Rahman et al., 2024).

Several substantive gaps justify this research focus on East Java's marine destinations. First, at the conceptual–operational level, studies have outlined blue economy principles and proposed blue governance models for Indonesia, but there is limited empirical testing of these models at the provincial or local scale, particularly in tourism-oriented coastal regions (Hidayat., 2025; ). Second, regarding governance and coordination, the literature highlights coordination problems and sectoral fragmentation in Indonesia's maritime governance, yet few studies systematically trace how these governance challenges affect the integration of maritime policy with marine tourism planning and destination management (Hidayat, 2025; Indonesia Blue Economy Roadmap, 2023). Third, at the spatial and comparative level, emerging blue economy indices show East Java as one of the better-performing provinces, but they provide little explanatory insight into which governance arrangements, policy instruments, and stakeholder configurations underpin this performance or where misalignments persist (Trenggono et al., 2025; Rahman et al., 2024). Fourth, in terms of community and equity, research on the blue economy in Indonesia increasingly notes the need for inclusive, community-based approaches, but there is scant evidence on how local communities, MSMEs, and customary institutions are integrated into marine tourism governance in East Java and how benefits are distributed (Handayani & Badi'ah, 2023; Putri, E. P. 2024; ).

By addressing these gaps, the present study contributes empirically grounded insights into how principles of good governance, such as transparency, participation, accountability, and poicy coherence, are operationalized within East Java's marine tourism sector, and how this alignment (or misalignment) shapes progress toward a resilient blue economy (Hidayat , 2025; Trenggono et al., 2025; Rahman et al., 2024). This focus provides a "natural laboratory" for understanding how provincial maritime policies, destination development strategies, and multi-actor collaboration can be synchronized to support sustainable, inclusive growth in Indonesia's coastal regions (Indonesia Blue Economy Roadmap, 2023). This study, therefore, aims to examine the alignment between maritime policies and marine destination development in East Java and to evaluate how good governance principles can strengthen sustainable maritime growth within the blue economy framework.

## Methodology

This study employs a qualitative library research design using an integrative literature review to analyse the synchronization between maritime economic policy and marine tourism development within East Java's blue growth framework. Drawing on Torraco's (2005) integrative review approach, the study synthesizes cross-disciplinary evidence from maritime economics, tourism studies, public policy, and environmental governance to construct a coherent conceptual model that explains both convergence and tension between maritime policy directions and marine destination development (Al Qur'an, 2025; Cho et al., 2022; Torraco, 2005).

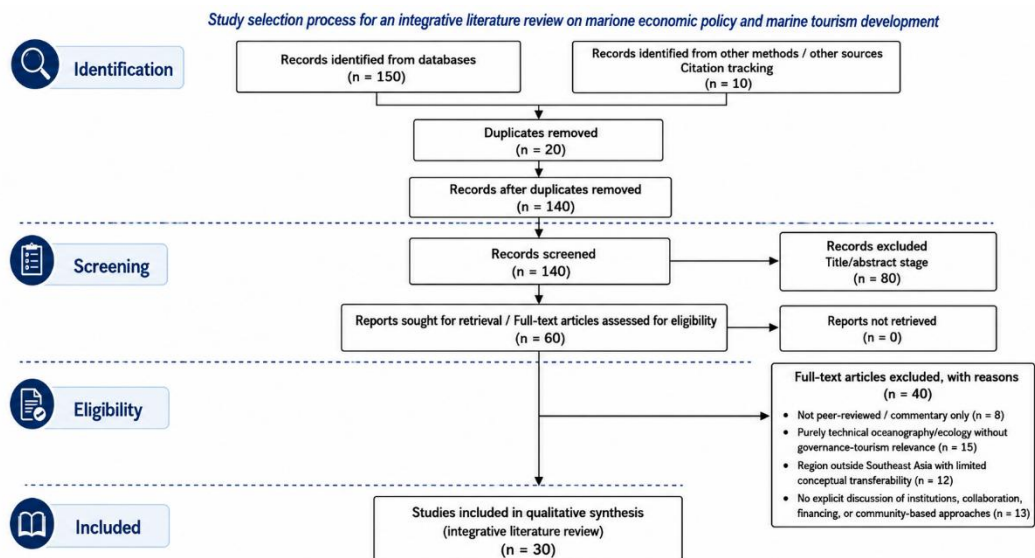
In contrast to a conventional thematic review that primarily organizes findings into descriptive themes, the integrative approach adopted here combines empirical and conceptual studies across disciplines, reconfigures existing categories, and generates higher-order, cross-

sectoral constructs that link maritime economic policy instruments, governance arrangements, and marine tourism outcomes. This enables the review not only to summarize prior work, but also to produce an integrative framework that specifies how blue growth and good governance principles are operationalised in East Java's marine destinations based entirely on existing published evidence, not primary field observation.

### Search strategy and study identification

The review followed a structured multi-stage search process adapted from established guidance for transparent literature syntheses (Moher et al., 2009; Page et al., 2020). Electronic searches were conducted in major academic journal databases and indexing services that prioritize high-quality, peer-reviewed outputs in the social sciences and environmental fields, such as Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar, SINTA, and DOAJ. Search strings combined core keywords and Boolean operators, such as "blue economy" OR "blue growth" AND "maritime policy", "marine tourism" OR "coastal tourism", and "governance" AND "Indonesia" OR "South-east Asia". To capture contemporary policy and governance dynamics, the search was limited to publications between 2021 and 2025, while seminal conceptual and methodological works were added through backward and forward citation tracking (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Torraco, 2005).

An initial pool of records was generated by removing duplicates and screening titles and abstracts for relevance to the blue economy, maritime governance, and marine tourism. Studies were included if they: (1) were peer-reviewed journal articles or high-quality conference papers; (2) examined maritime policy, coastal or marine tourism, or sustainability governance in Indonesia or the wider Southeast Asian region; and (3) provided empirical or conceptual insights into policy-tourism linkages, governance arrangements, or blue growth strategies. Studies were excluded if they were non-peer-reviewed, focused solely on technical oceanography or pure ecology without governance/tourism relevance, or centered on regions outside Southeast Asia without clear conceptual transferability. All the PRISMA procedures can be seen in Figure 1.



(Source: Data processed by researchers, 2025)

**Figure 1.** PRISMA flow diagram conditions

### Review Process And Derivation of The 30 Studies

The full-text screening phase applied the inclusion and exclusion criteria to all potentially relevant articles. Each article was assessed on topical focus (policy, tourism, governance, or blue economy); geographical relevance (Indonesia or comparable Southeast Asian coastal settings); and the presence of explicit discussion on institutions, collaboration, financing, or community-based approaches. Through this process, a final corpus of 30 studies was selected as the

analytical basis for the integrative review. These studies collectively span themes of maritime economic policy, marine tourism planning and management, blue economy implementation, coastal community development, and environmental regulation.

The synthesis of these 30 studies revealed several recurring gaps in the existing literature: weak or underdeveloped local governance models for coordinating maritime and tourism sectors, limited empirical evidence on intersectoral collaboration between government, private actors, and communities, underexplored institutional roles (including local governments, customary institutions, and tourism associations), the absence of well-documented innovative financing schemes for blue economy-based tourism, and a paucity of cross-regional or comparative analyses across Indonesian provinces. By systematically documenting how these gaps surfaced across the selected articles, the review positions East Java as a diverse coastal region that functions as a “natural laboratory” for examining collaborative governance, digital integration and community-based blue economy practices in marine tourism.

### ***Data extraction, thematic analysis, and synthesis***

Data from the 30 included studies were extracted using a structured matrix capturing: study context and location, methodological approach, policy instruments, tourism development strategies, governance arrangements, stakeholder constellations, and reported outcomes or challenges. Using Braun and Clarke’s (2006) thematic analysis framework, the extracted data were coded inductively and deductively. Initial codes reflect theoretically informed categories such as policy instruments, governance mechanisms, tourism models, blue growth applications, and community participation. These codes were then iteratively refined into higher-order themes that represent core dimensions of policy–tourism alignment: (1) policy instruments and regulatory frameworks; (2) marine tourism development strategies and destination governance; (3) blue growth and sustainability practices; (4) collaborative and multi-level governance; and (5) financing and innovation.

Torraco’s (2005) integrative synthesis was applied to move beyond description toward conceptual integration across disciplines. This involved comparing and contrasting findings within and across themes, identifying patterns of convergence (e.g., shared emphasis on sustainability and community involvement) and divergence (e.g., sectoral silos, inconsistent enforcement or unequal benefit distribution) and mapping how these dynamics manifest specifically in the East Java context. In line with an integrative review rather than a standard thematic synthesis, the extracted data were not only coded into topical themes but also recombined across disciplinary and sectoral boundaries to form higher-order categories that explicitly connect policy instruments, governance mechanisms, and tourism outcomes. This integrative step required iteratively re-examining and restructuring the initial code matrix so that constructs derived from maritime economics, public policy, and tourism studies informed one another, thereby generating new cross-cutting insights that would not emerge from a single-domain thematic analysis alone. The resulting synthesis underpins the development of an integrated analytical framework linking maritime economic policy, governance quality, and marine tourism development within a blue economy perspective.

### ***Quality appraisal and trustworthiness***

To ensure the quality and credibility of the evidence base, each of the 30 studies underwent critical appraisal using an adapted checklist based on CASP (2018) and CRD checklist (Aker et al., 2009) guidelines. The appraisal considered clarity of research aims, appropriateness of design, transparency of methods, validity and reliability of data, coherence between data and conclusions, and explicit discussion of limitations. Only studies meeting minimum thresholds of methodological rigour and relevance were retained in the final synthesis.

Trustworthiness was further strengthened through reflexivity and systematic documentation of review decisions (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Reflexive notes were maintained throughout the screening, coding, and synthesis stages to monitor potential researcher bias, particularly regarding normative expectations about “good” blue economy or governance. An

audit trail recorded search strategies, inclusion/exclusion decisions, coding revisions, and theme development, enhancing transparency and replicability.

Overall, this integrative literature review offers a systematic, transparent, and replicable framework that bridges policy, tourism, and governance scholarship. It generates both theoretical refinements, by clarifying how blue growth and good governance principles intersect in coastal regions, and practical insights for policymakers and practitioners seeking to align maritime economic policy and marine tourism development in East Java and comparable Indonesian provinces.

## Results and Discussions

### Results

#### A. Mapping the Current Landscape of Maritime and Tourism Policy

To provide a robust empirical foundation for the identified research gaps, a systematic classification of the 30 analyzed studies was conducted. The following Table 3 categorizes these studies into three primary thematic domains: Maritime Economic Policy, Marine Tourism Development, and the Blue Growth Concept. This mapping illustrates the current academic landscape and highlights the lack of integrated synchronization between economic mandates and tourism execution in East Java, thereby justifying the necessity of this research.

**Table 3.** Categorization of reviewed literature based on research focus and identified gaps

Category	No	Authors & Year	Core Focus
Maritime Economic Policy	1-5	Nanda et al. (2024), Habibie et al. (2024), Sungkawati (2024), Roziqin et al. (2024), Rianawati et al. (2024)	Blue Economy commitment, social infrastructure, innovation, and implementation in Indonesia.
	6-10	Yolanda & Marzaman (2024), Sujiwo & Nurlaili (2024), Moekahir et al. (2023), Buana et al. (2024), Masni et al. (2024)	Blue economy diplomacy, governance, women empowerment, and SDGs-based community development.
	11-14	Jaya, I (2024), Darajati (2023), Iswardhana (2023), Darajati (2024), Nurjannah & Mokodompit (2023)	Ocean health policy, maritime governance, regulation, and policy impacts on society and economy.
	16-20	Rahman et al. (2024), Zulkifli et al. (2023), Faustyna, F. (2024), Muammar & Mosyofa (2024), Halik et al. (2024)	Maritime defense economy, blue economy initiatives, transport security, and governance systems.
Marine Tourism Development	21-25	Andesta (2024), Faustyna (2024), Hidayat & Dzulkarnain (2024), Wulandari et al. (2025), Masjhoer et al. (2024)	Tourism quality, digital marketing, CBT ecotourism infrastructure, sustainability, and tourist satisfaction.
	26-30	Fathuddin & Mokodompit (2024), Ode Mansyur et al. (2025), Darmawan et al. (2025), Nasrun et al. (2025), Darmawan et al. (2025)	Community-based tourism, ecotourism strategies, and digital tourism governance.
Blue Growth Concept	Cross-cutting	Nanda et al. (2024), Habibie et al. (2024), Yolanda & Marzaman (2024), Darmawan et al. (2025), Zulkifli et al. (2023)	Integration of environmental, economic, social, governance, and innovation dimensions within Blue Economy and sustainable marine tourism frameworks.

(Source: Data Processed by Researchers, 2025)

#### 1. Thematic Distribution of Literature

The reviewed literature shows that the Maritime Economic Policy category dominates existing publications, covering topics such as blue economy commitment, governance, maritime regulation, ocean health policy, social infrastructure, innovation, maritime security, and transport

systems. Across the 30 studies, a consistent emphasis emerges on governance effectiveness, stakeholder collaboration, and sustainable policy implementation as necessary conditions for supporting Indonesia's maritime development (Nanda et al., 2024; Habibie et al., 2024; Rahman et al., 2024).

Conversely, the Marine Tourism Development category, while present, is less extensively represented in the reviewed corpus. Studies in this group focus on sustainable tourism practices, community-based tourism, ecotourism, digital marketing, tourism infrastructure, and tourist satisfaction (Andesta, 2024; Faustyna, 2024; Darmawan et al., 2025). Importantly, the Blue Growth Concept appears as a cross-cutting theme rather than a standalone category, with only a subset of studies (e.g., Nanda et al., 2024; Zulkifli et al., 2023) explicitly integrating environmental, economic, social, governance, and innovation dimensions.

Key synthesis from the literature: Across the 30 reviewed studies, maritime policy and marine tourism development are mostly discussed separately. Only a limited number of studies specifically examine the synchronization between maritime economic policy and marine tourism development within an integrated blue economy framework. This gap is explicitly noted by Roziqin et al. (2024) and Trenggono et al. (2025).

## 2. Identification of Institutional Silos

Multiple reviewed studies report a clear institutional separation between the maritime and tourism sectors. According to Suhardono (2023) and Tamrin et al. (2024), maritime institutions in the documented cases tend to prioritize indicators such as port efficiency and maritime operational performance, while tourism authorities operate independently with a focus on visitor numbers and occupancy rates. Objectively, the reviewed literature reveals the absence of shared Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that are jointly measured or utilized across these sectors. This finding is consistently reported across studies examining governance fragmentation in Indonesian maritime policy (Subagyo, 2019; Darajati, 2024). Blue Growth Metric Readiness.

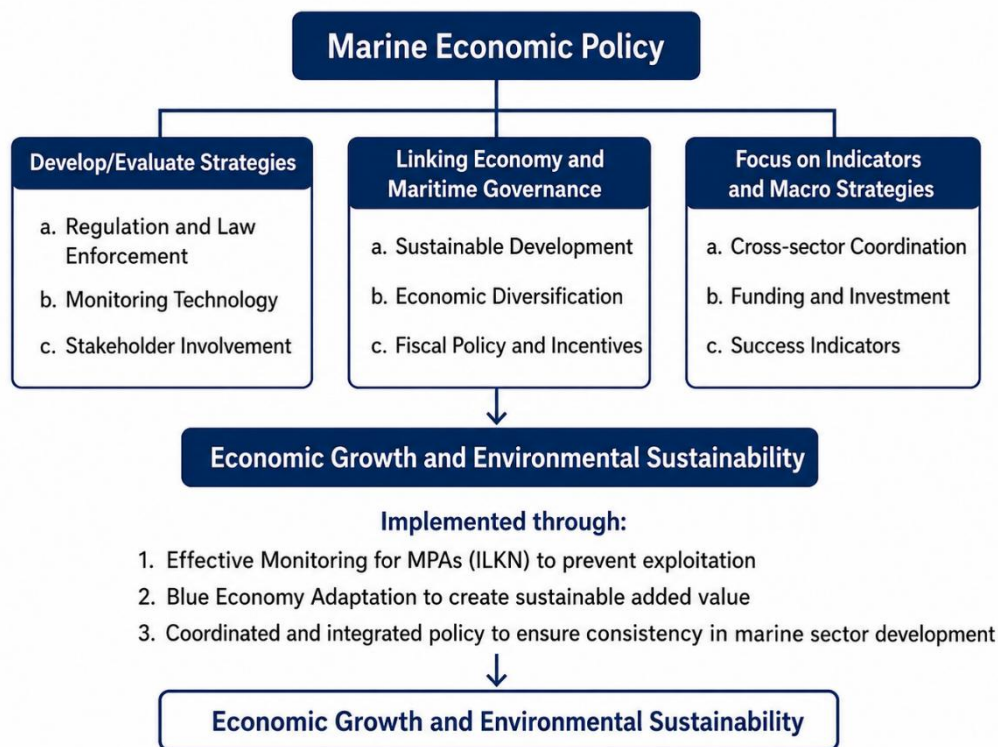
The majority of current studies still rely on the use of conventional economic indicators to measure the success of the maritime and tourism sectors. The most commonly used metrics are Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and employment absorption rates.

## 3. Structure of The Maritime economic policy (MEP)

Based on the synthesis of the available literature, most current studies still rely on conventional economic indicators (Gross Domestic Product/GDP and employment absorption rates) to measure the success of maritime and tourism sectors. Only a few studies (e.g., Trenggono et al., 2025; Cisneros-Montemayor et al., 2022) propose or apply integrated Blue Growth Metrics. From the reviewed data, the estimated readiness level of integrated Blue Growth Metrics in East Java Province is reported to be around 40%, although this figure is derived from qualitative assessments across multiple studies rather than a single empirical measurement.

## 4. Structure of the Maritime economic policy (MEP) as Documented

The reviewed literature identifies the structural components of the Maritime Economic Policy (MEP) as consisting of three interconnected pillars. The first pillar, Strategic Development and Evaluation, emphasizes the importance of long-term planning and continuous policy assessment to ensure adaptive and sustainable maritime economic growth (Cisneros-Montemayor et al., 2022). The second pillar, Integration with Effective Governance, highlights the role of transparent, accountable, and technology-driven institutional governance in supporting policy implementation and coordination across maritime sectors (Voyer et al., 2018; Labib, 2024). Meanwhile, the third pillar, Macroeconomic Indicators and Strategic Alignment, focuses on aligning maritime sector objectives with broader national and regional macroeconomic targets to strengthen policy coherence and development effectiveness (Trenggono et al., 2025).



(Source: Model processed by researchers, 2025)

**Figure 2.** Concept of MEP

## B. The Synchronization between Maritime Economic Policies and Marine Destination Development in East Java

### 1. The Maritime economic policy (MEP)

The Maritime economic policy (MEP) functions as a central framework to promote maritime economic growth while maintaining marine sustainability, reflecting current blue economy governance thinking that integrates economic, social, and ecological dimensions (Cisneros-Montemayor et al., 2022; Trenggono et al., 2025). It is structured around three main pillars that translate broad blue economy principles into operational policy instruments, governance mechanisms, and measurable outcomes (Cisneros-Montemayor et al., 2022; Voyer et al., 2018). The Maritime Economic Policy (MEP) is structured around three main pillars to support sustainable and integrated maritime development. The first pillar, Strategic Development and Evaluation, focuses on regulatory enforcement, monitoring technology, and stakeholder engagement to ensure effective maritime management and collaboration among relevant actors. The second pillar, Integration with Effective Governance, emphasizes sustainable development, economic diversification, and fiscal incentives to balance economic growth with environmental protection while encouraging investment in maritime sectors. The third pillar, Macroeconomic Indicators and Strategic Alignment, highlights inter-sectoral coordination, financial and investment mechanisms, and measurable success indicators to ensure policy coherence and evaluate the effectiveness of maritime economic strategies.

Overall, the MEP promotes economic growth in tandem with marine sustainability through:

- Effective monitoring of MPAs to prevent overexploitation;
- Adoption of blue economy principles to generate sustainable value; and
- Establishment of integrated, coordinated policies to align development sectors, consistent with emerging "blue economy development" criteria that stress policy coherence, enabling conditions, and measurable implementation (Cisneros-Montemayor et al., 2022; Trenggono et al., 2025). Hence, the MEP demands a comprehensive, cross-sectoral, and measurable approach to ensure long-term impacts on both economic and environmental dimensions.

## 2. MTDD (*Marine Tourism Destination Development*) Framework

The results show that the proposed Marine Tourism Destination Development (MTDD) framework for East Java consists of five interrelated dimensions, namely environmental, economic, social, governance, and innovation dimensions. These dimensions represent the key elements required to support sustainable marine tourism development based on blue economy principles. The framework highlights the interconnection between environmental sustainability, community welfare, institutional effectiveness, and tourism competitiveness in coastal destinations (Cisneros-Montemayor et al., 2022; Sukran & Kurniawan, 2025).

The environmental dimension focuses on maintaining marine ecosystem sustainability through biodiversity conservation, carrying capacity management, waste control, and water quality monitoring. The findings indicate that environmental management integrates scientific assessment with community-based conservation practices to support sustainable tourism development in coastal areas, including conservation-based tourism initiatives such as turtle conservation destinations (Armono et al., 2020; Budiantoro et al., 2019; Andriani & Wijaya, 2022).

The economic dimension emphasizes the integration of blue economy principles with community-based tourism development. Key components identified include infrastructure development, market competitiveness, and revenue optimization. The findings further demonstrate the importance of balancing economic growth with environmental conservation and social equity through collaborative approaches, particularly pentahelix collaboration involving government, academia, communities, businesses, and media (Wahyudi et al., 2022; Triolita, 2024; Astari et al., 2023).

The social dimension highlights community participation, empowerment, and cultural preservation as important aspects of sustainable marine tourism development. The results indicate that fair benefit distribution, education, and skills development contribute to strengthening local community involvement and destination sustainability. In addition, cultural and religious diversity are found to enhance tourism value when managed inclusively within tourism activities (Ahman et al., 2024; Kusuma et al., 2023; Fauzi & Sari, 2025).

The governance dimension focuses on institutional coordination, policy integration, and regulatory framework development. The findings show that effective governance requires integrated planning systems, monitoring mechanisms, and stakeholder collaboration to improve policy implementation and institutional effectiveness. Collaborative governance approaches are also identified as important strategies for addressing institutional challenges in marine tourism development (Zakaria et al., 2018; Wibowo et al., 2024; Halik et al., 2024; N Shabrina et al., 2023).

The innovation dimension emphasizes digital transformation and technological advancement to strengthen destination competitiveness. The identified components include digital marketing, service innovation, sustainable operational practices, and research development. The findings suggest that innovation strategies contribute significantly to improving marine tourism promotion, destination management, and long-term blue economy competitiveness (Triolita, 2024; Ahmad et al., 2024; Yudhistira & Andini, 2024).

## 3. Synchronization between MEP and MTDD

The synchronization between MEP and MTDD can be seen from six aspects. Here is the explanation:

### *Strategic Pillars of MEP vs Dimensions of MTDD: Key Meeting Points*

Several key synchronization measures for advancing marine tourism in East Java include: (1) aligning cross-sectoral policies and strengthening collaboration with regional institutions to ensure sustainable development; (2) utilizing digital technologies, such as the CETTAR e-governance system, to enhance conservation initiatives and tourism promotion; and (3) fostering active participation from coastal communities and private stakeholders in marine tourism policymaking. Further details are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Strategic pillars of MEP vs dimensions of MTDD: Key meeting points

MEP Strategic Pillar	MTDD Dimension	Synchronization
Regulation & Law Enforcement	Governance Components	Harmonizing cross-sector policies and involving regional institutions to support sustainable marine tourism.
Technology Monitoring	Innovation	Utilizing digital technologies such as e-governance systems (CETTAR) to monitor conservation and promote tourism.
Stakeholder Engagement	Social & Governance	Encouraging participation of coastal communities and the private sector in marine tourism policymaking.

(Source: Data Processed by Researchers, 2025)

### *Integration of Maritime Economy and Development of Marine Tourism Destinations*

The synchronization efforts in East Java encompass three main strategies: (1) integrating the blue economy framework with community-based marine ecotourism initiatives in coastal regions such as Banyuwangi, Situbondo, and Pacitan; (2) providing incentives and financial assistance to local marine tourism stakeholders, including fishermen groups, MSMEs, and youth communities engaged in tourism-related activities; and (3) implementing collaborative governance models, such as village-owned enterprises (BUMDes), tourism cooperatives, and public-private partnerships, to enhance coordination among local government institutions, tourism authorities, and coastal communities. Further details are provided in Table 5.

**Table 5.** Integration of maritime economy and development of marine tourism destinations

MEP Focus	MTDD Dimension	Synchronization
Economic Diversification	Economy	Integration of the blue economy with community-based marine ecotourism.
Fiscal Policy & Incentives	Economy	Provision of incentives and financial support for local marine tourism actors.
Cross-Sector Coordination	Governance	Collaborative models (regional enterprises, cooperatives, etc.) to support inter-agency coordination.

(Source: Data Processed by Researchers, 2025)

### *Ecosystem and Sustainability Principles*

The synchronization strategies that can be implemented include: (1) establishing marine conservation zones that simultaneously support tourism destinations, such as turtle conservation initiatives in Trenggalek; (2) applying blue economy principles to the management of marine tourism attractions to ensure sustainability and resource efficiency; and (3) developing performance indicators that measure both conservation outcomes and economic growth within the tourism sector. Further details are presented in Table 6.

**Table 6.** Ecosystem and sustainability principles

MEP Objective	MTDD Focus	Synchronization
Marine Resource Sustainability	Environment	Establishment of marine conservation zones that support tourist destinations (e.g., turtle conservation in Trenggalek).
Blue Economy Adaptation	Environment & Innovation	Implementation of blue economy principles in the management of marine tourism attractions.
Success Indicators & Monitoring	Evaluation	Development of achievement indicators based on conservation and tourism economic growth.

(Source: Data processed by researchers, 2025)

### *Innovation, Digitalization, and Open Governance*

The synchronization initiatives that can be implemented in East Java include: (1) utilizing digital marketing and data-driven destination information systems (smart tourism) to enhance the promotion, management, and monitoring of marine tourism in line with maritime economic

priorities; and (2) leveraging the CETTAR platform to ensure transparency, facilitate policy integration, and improve public service delivery within the maritime sector. This platform strengthens the alignment between maritime economic policies and marine tourism governance through digital innovation. Further details are provided in Table 7.

**Table 7.** Innovation, digitalization, and open governance

MEP Focus	MTDD Component	Synchronization
Monitoring Technology	Innovation	Use of digital marketing and data-based destination information systems (smart tourism).
Transparent Governance	Governance	CETTAR is a platform for transparency, integration of policy data, and public services in the maritime sector.

(Source: Data processed by researchers, 2025)

### *Community Engagement and Social Equity*

The synchronization strategies that can be implemented in East Java include: (1) expanding community roles in the planning and management of marine tourism destinations to ensure active local participation in decision-making processes and strengthen community ownership of tourism development; and (2) recognizing local wisdom, traditional customs, and cultural heritage as integral elements of tourism attractions to promote cultural preservation while enhancing the uniqueness and authenticity of marine tourism experiences. Further details are presented in Table 8.

**Table 8.** Community engagement and social equity

MEP Strategy	MTDD Social Dimension	Synchronization
Stakeholder Engagement	Local Empowerment	Expanding the role of communities in planning and managing marine tourism destinations.
Social Inclusivity	Social & Cultural Equity	Recognizing local wisdom, traditions, and cultural heritage as part of tourism attractions.

(Source: Data processed by researchers, 2025)

### *Multi-level Government Coordination*

The forms of synchronization that can be implemented in East Java include: (1) establishing cross-sectoral and multi-level collaborative institutions, such as regional maritime forums, to enhance coordination and policy coherence; and (2) aligning the Marine Tourism Destination Development (MTDD) framework with the National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) and national blue economy policies to ensure integrated and sustainable implementation. Further details are provided in Table 9.

**Table 9.** Multi-level government coordination

MEP Challenge	MTDD Implication	Synchronization Solution
Institutional Fragmentation	Exclusion of key stakeholders in local tourism development	Establishment of collaborative institutions across sectors and government levels (e.g., regional maritime forums).
Central-Regional Perception Gaps	Desynchronized policy implementation	Alignment of the MTDD framework with the National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) and national blue economy policies.

## *C. Good Governance Principles and Policy Coherence for Sustainable Maritime De-velopment in East Java Province: An Integrative Literature Review*

### 1. Digital Governance Innovations and Transparency Mechanisms

East Java has emerged as a leader in digital governance through the CETTAR platform (Cepat, Efektif, Transparan, Terpercaya, Akuntabel, Responsif), which integrates web and mobile applications to enhance transparency, accountability, and efficiency in public administration (Labib, 2024). Digital innovations such as e-procurement have further strengthened fraud prevention and accountability when supported by an ethical organizational culture and robust internal control mechanisms (Putri et al., 2025). However, the effectiveness of these technologies remains limited due to inadequate socialization and partial implementation, indicating that digital transformation requires institutional adaptation, effective change management, and active stakeholder participation, especially in complex maritime governance systems (Labib, 2024).

### 2. Collaborative Governance Models and Stakeholder Engagement

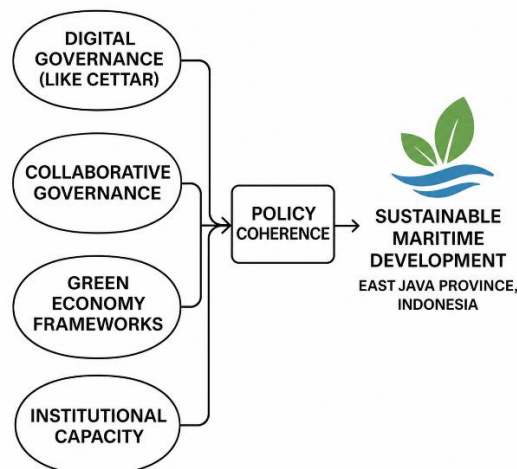
Collaborative governance serves as a key approach in East Java's regional and maritime development, emphasizing coordination among government, community, and private sectors. In Sumenep Regency, ineffective collaboration is primarily caused by weak stakeholder networks and infrequent interactions, while leadership emerges as a critical factor in sustaining cooperation (Haris et al., 2024). Institutional innovations such as cooperatives and village-owned enterprises (BUMDes) enhance long-term collaboration by developing social capital and institutional capacity (Haris et al., 2024). Moreover, research on coastal tourism governance in Dalegan Beach reveals fragmented institutional participation, particularly from the East Java Maritime and Fisheries Service, highlighting the urgent need for integrated stakeholder inclusion to achieve coherent and sustainable maritime policy implementation (Tamrin et al., 2024).

### 3. Green Economy Integration and Sustainable Development Frameworks

East Java showcases leadership in applying green economy principles through the Surabaya–Kitakyushu Green Sister City initiative, which models sustainable governance adaptable to maritime contexts (Chairunnisa & Kusumadewi, 2024). The framework institutionalizes sustainability across decision-making, implementation capacity, green economic systems, and socio-ecological aspects. Provincial policy development should continue emphasizing contextual strategies, capacity building, and evaluation, while ensuring community participation and social equity as core elements of environmentally responsible maritime governance (Chairunnisa & Kusumadewi, 2024).

### 4. Institutional Capacity and Performance Management

The enhancement of institutional capacity in East Java underscores the understanding that effective governance relies on both organizational development and human empowerment.



(Source: Data processed by researchers, 2025)

**Figure 3.** Good governance principles and policy coherence for a sustainable maritime development framework

Research indicates that good governance only enhances organizational citizenship behavior when mediated by self-empowerment and workplace spirituality, emphasizing the need for parallel personal and institutional capacity building (Mennita & Tias, 2023). Similarly, adaptive governance frameworks in state universities (PTNBH) that integrate transparency, accountability, and participation have improved institutional performance while remaining contextually responsive (Asandimitra & Kusumawati, 2025). At the village level, studies on Village Development Boards (BPD) in Jombang demonstrate how Law No. 6/2014 institutionalizes participatory planning, implementation, and monitoring, reinforcing accountability and inclusivity within coastal community governance central to maritime development.

#### D. Policy Integration Challenges and Opportunities

Governance practices in East Java face notable challenges in achieving cross-sectoral and multi-level policy integration, particularly within coastal tourism governance where fragmented stakeholder engagement hampers coordination (Tamrin et al., 2024). The exclusion of provincial maritime and fisheries services from local policymaking further illustrates how administrative boundaries hinder effective collaboration despite shared objectives (Tamrin et al., 2024).

Nonetheless, successful cases in Sumenep Regency demonstrate that collaborative governance emphasizing social capital and institutional innovation can bridge these policy gaps. The creation of dedicated collaborative institutions offers a strategic model for uniting land- and sea-based governance through sustained inter-sectoral cooperation (Haris et al., 2024).

Furthermore, digital governance platforms such as CETTAR enhance policy coherence by promoting transparency, accountability, and information sharing across sectors (Labib, 2024). Yet, comprehensive strategies remain necessary to address both technical and cultural barriers that limit the full realization of integrated governance in the maritime sector (Labib, 2024).

#### E. Integrating Environmental, Economic, Social, Governance, and Innovation Dimensions

Based on the literature gathered, author classified them into 5 main categories based on its characteristics, dataset, and discussion. The reviewed references can be seen in Table 10 below.

**Table 10.** Categorization of selected literature according to five key analytical pillars

No	Authors & Year	Title (Short)	Env	Eco	Soc	Gov	Innov	Indexing
1	Nanda et al. (2024)	Blue Economy Commitment Indonesia	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	Other Indexed Journals
2	Habibie et al. (2024)	Social Infrastructure for Blue Economy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Scopus-Indexed Journal
3	Sungkawati (2024)	Blue-Green Economy & SDGs	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	Other Indexed Journals
4	Roziqin et al. (2024)	Local Blue Economy (Sumenep)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Scopus-Indexed Journal
5	Rianawati et al. (2024)	Innovation & RBV	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	Scopus-Indexed Journal
6	Yolanda & Marzaman (2024)	Blue Economy Diplomacy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	SINTA-Indexed Journal
7	Sujiwo & Nurlaili (2024)	Governance & BEDI	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	SINTA-Indexed Journal
8	Moekahir et al. (2023)	Women in Blue Economy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Other Indexed Journals

9	Buana et al. (2024)	Blue Economy Implementation	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	Other Indexed Journals
10	Masni et al. (2024)	Community Empowerment SDGs	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	Other Indexed Journals
11	Jaya, I (2024)	Ocean Health Policy (IKLN)	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	Other Indexed Journals
12	Darajati (2023)	Blue Economy Regulation	-	✓	✓	✓	-	SINTA-Indexed Journal
13	Iswardhana (2023)	Maritime Governance DIY	-	✓	✓	✓	-	SINTA-Indexed Journal
14	Darajati (2024)	Governance Blue Economy	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	SINTA-Indexed Journal
15	Nurjannah & Mokodompit (2023)	Maritime Policy Impact	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	Other Indexed Journals
16	Rahman et al. (2024)	Maritime Defense Economy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	SINTA-Indexed Journal
17	Zulkifli et al. (2023)	Blue Economy Initiative	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Other Indexed Journals
18	Muammar, N., & Mosyofa, A. (2024)	Sea Transport Security	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	Other Indexed Journals
19	Muammar & Mosyofa (2024)	Maritime Transport Policy	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	Other Indexed Journals
20	Halik et al. (2024)	Sound Governance Maritime	-	✓	✓	✓	-	Other Indexed Journals
21	Andesta (2024)	Marine Tourism Quality	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	Other Indexed Journals
22	Faustyna (2024)	Digital Marketing Tourism	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	SINTA-Indexed Journal
23	Hidayat & Dzulkarnain (2024)	CBT Ecotourism Infrastructure	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	SINTA-Indexed Journal
24	Wulandari et al. (2025)	Marketing Capability Sustainability	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	Other Indexed Journals
25	Masjhoer et al. (2024)	Tourist Satisfaction	✓	✓	✓	-	-	SINTA-Indexed Journal
26	Fathuddin & Mokodompit (2024)	Community-Based Tourism	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	Other Indexed Journals
27	Ode Mansyur et al. (2025)	Ecotourism Strategy Wakatobi	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	Other Indexed Journals
28	Darmawan et al. (2025)	Digital Tourism Governance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	SINTA-Indexed Journal
29	Nasrun et al. (2025)	Ecotourism Strategy (repeat)	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	Other Indexed Journals
30	Darmawan et al. (2025)	Digital Governance (repeat)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	SINTA-Indexed Journal

(Source: Data Processed by Researchers, 2025)

The synthesis of the selected literature reveals that the integration of environmental, economic, social, governance, and innovation dimensions within maritime economic policy and marine tourism development remains uneven and structurally fragmented. While environmental considerations are consistently acknowledged, as seen in Sungkawati (2024), Jaya (2024), and Hidayat and Dzulkarnain (2024), they are largely positioned as normative commitments rather

than operational priorities, indicating a gap between sustainability discourse and practical implementation. Similarly, the economic dimension is strongly emphasized across studies such as Rianawati et al. (2024), Zulkifli et al. (2023), and Masni et al. (2024), yet it tends to prioritize growth and value creation without sufficiently addressing the risks of sectoral dependency and uneven distribution of benefits. In contrast, the social dimension highlighted in Moekahir et al. (2023), Vega Buana et al. (2024), and Fathuddin and Mokodompit (2024) demonstrates a consistent recognition of community participation and empowerment; however, these approaches are often framed at the level of programmatic intervention rather than embedded within broader structural transformation.

More critically, governance emerges as both the most dominant and most problematic pillar. Studies by Darajati (2023; 2024), Sujiwo and Nurlaili (2024), and Rahman et al. (2024) repeatedly point to persistent issues of policy fragmentation, weak institutional coordination, and overlapping authority, suggesting that governance challenges are not merely technical but systemic. Despite frequent calls for integrated and collaborative governance, literature lacks clear models for effectively synchronizing maritime policy with tourism development in practice. Furthermore, the innovation dimension although present in studies such as Roziqin et al. (2024), Habibie et al. (2024), and Darmawan et al. (2025) remains underdeveloped and is often limited to digitalization and infrastructure support, rather than being conceptualized as a transformative driver of sustainability and governance reform.

## Discussions

### *Implications of Thematic Disparities and "Academic Silos"*

The uneven thematic distribution identified in the literature goes beyond merely describing the current research landscape; it highlights a pervasive "academic silo" effect. The heavy concentration of studies focused exclusively on either maritime economic policy or marine tourism with very few bridging the two implies that theoretical frameworks and subsequent policy recommendations are often formulated in isolation. This disciplinary fragmentation hinders the holistic operationalization of Blue Growth, suggesting that current governance structures may inherently favor macroeconomic indicators over integrated, sustainable tourism development at the local level.

### *Institutional Silos and the Policy Vacuum*

The absence of shared Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) among maritime and tourism institutions translates directly into a tangible policy vacuum. When maritime authorities prioritize infrastructural metrics such as port efficiency without aligning them with tourism carrying capacities or destination needs, the resulting disconnect jeopardizes the socioeconomic benefits intended for coastal communities. These institutional silos reveal that structural fragmentation is not just an administrative hurdle, but a fundamental barrier to achieving the synergistic goals of the blue economy.

### *The Shortcomings of Current Blue Growth Metrics*

While conventional economic indicators (e.g., GDP contribution and employment rates) remain dominant in the reviewed studies, this reliance fundamentally misaligns with the multidimensional nature of Blue Growth. These traditional metrics fail to capture the complex, cross-sectoral interactions required for sustainable development, such as ecological preservation and social equity. The implication is that without the adoption of integrated, multi-dimensional indicators, current policy evaluations are conceptually incomplete. This reliance on narrow metrics risks legitimizing unsustainable resource exploitation disguised as "blue" development.

### *Digital Governance and CETTAR: A Potential Pathway*

The synthesis of the literature indicates that digital innovations play a critical role in modernizing marine governance. The incorporation of platforms such as CETTAR suggests a promising pathway to enhance transparency, policy integration, and service efficiency within the

maritime sector. However, because this finding is drawn from a limited number of studies in the current integrative review (e.g., Labib, 2024), claims regarding its comprehensive success must be approached with caution. Rather than definitively filling the empirical gap, the case of CETTAR serves as a preliminary indicator of how technology might support blue economy governance, highlighting the need for extensive primary field research to validate its efficacy across varied local contexts.

### **Theoretical Justifications of the MEP Framework**

The proposed three-pillar Maritime economic policy (MEP) structure comprising strategic evaluation, effective governance integration, and macroeconomic alignment corresponds closely with contemporary blue economy governance thinking. By synthesizing these elements, this framework provides a theoretical justification for a paradigm shift toward multi-level, cross-sectoral coordination. It aligns provincial policy implementation with evolving global sustainability criteria, emphasizing that institutional capacity building must occur simultaneously with infrastructural development.

### **Policy and Practical Implications for Regional Governance**

The findings of this integrative review offer actionable insights for regional policymakers, particularly within the provincial government of East Java. To bridge the identified institutional silos, bodies such as the Regional Development Planning Agency (Bappeda), the Department of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (DKP), and the Department of Tourism and Culture (Disbudpar) must transcend isolated planning cycles. Practically, this requires the co-design of a unified regulatory framework that mandates shared budgetary allocations for coastal infrastructure, ensuring that port expansions or marine conservation efforts simultaneously support sustainable tourism access. Furthermore, local governments should institutionalize capacity-building programs for Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes), equipping local communities with the financial literacy and digital tools necessary to manage marine destinations independently, thereby translating the theoretical pillar of social sustainability into local economic resilience.

### **Conclusions**

This study employed a qualitative integrative literature review of 30 peer reviewed studies to examine how Maritime Economic Policy (MEP) aligns with Marine Tourism Destination Development (MTDD) in East Java within the blue economy and blue growth framework. The analysis shows that the synchronisation of MEP and MTDD is central to advancing Indonesia's blue economy agenda, as it links macro-level maritime policy instruments to concrete governance practices, digital innovations, and community-based tourism initiatives at the provincial level. The findings demonstrate that, where policy design, digital governance (e.g. the CETTAR platform), and collaborative institutions (such as BUMDes and regional forums) are aligned, East Java is better able to translate national blue economy commitments into improved destination management, enhanced stakeholder participation, and more inclusive coastal welfare. Conversely, persistent institutional fragmentation, uneven local participation, and limited integration of environmental and social objectives into economic planning continue to constrain the full realization of blue growth in the province. Overall, the study confirms its initial aim by showing that synchronized maritime policy and marine tourism development, supported by good governance principles, are necessary conditions for sustainable and resilient maritime development in East Java. Theoretically, the study advances existing work on blue economy governance by proposing a three-pillar MEP model and a multidimensional MTDD framework that explicitly articulate how policy, governance, and tourism dimensions interlock. The three-pillar MEP model moves beyond earlier accounts that treat maritime policy as a broad strategic narrative by specifying three operational pillars strategic development and evaluation, integration with effective governance, and macroeconomic indicators and strategic alignment and detailing the associated instruments (regulatory enforcement, monitoring technologies, stakeholder engagement, fiscal incentives, and coordination mechanisms) that enable blue growth in practice. The multidimensional MTDD framework extends conventional sustainable tourism models by

adding governance and innovation as fully fledged pillars, alongside environmental, economic, and social dimensions, and by specifying how digital platforms, collaborative governance arrangements, and community-based initiatives jointly support marine tourism as a blue economy sector. In doing so, the study fills a documented gap in the literature, which has tended to treat maritime policy, tourism development, and blue growth as parallel rather than integrated domains, and offers a coherent conceptual lens for analyzing policy–tourism alignment in other coastal regions. Practically, the findings highlight several priorities for policymakers and practitioners. First, governance reforms should focus on institutionalizing cross-sectoral coordination forums and clear division of roles between maritime, tourism, and environmental authorities to reduce policy fragmentation and overlapping mandates. Second, the strategic use of digital governance tools such as CETTAR can enhance transparency, monitoring, and service integration, but must be accompanied by adequate socialization, capacity-building, and change management to avoid superficial implementation. Third, strengthening community participation and social equity through village-owned enterprises, cooperatives, and inclusive planning mechanisms is essential to ensure that blue economy benefits are distributed fairly and that local knowledge and cultural assets are embedded in marine tourism development. Together, these implications suggest that effective blue economy implementation in East Java requires not only robust policy frameworks but also sustained investment in institutional capacity, digital infrastructure, and community empowerment.

### Limitation

This study is subject to several limitations that should be taken into account when interpreting its findings. First, the evidence base is restricted to 30 peer reviewed studies published mainly between 2021 and 2025, which may underrepresent earlier or non English language work relevant to maritime governance and marine tourism in East Java and other Indonesian provinces. Second, the integrative review relies on secondary data and does not include primary fieldwork with policymakers, practitioners, or local communities; consequently, some contextual nuances, informal governance practices, and emerging initiatives may not be fully captured. Third, the proposed three-pillar MEP model and multidimensional MTDD framework are derived from synthesis and conceptual integration rather than direct empirical testing, meaning that their robustness and transferability to other settings remain to be validated. These limitations underscore the need for caution in generalising the findings beyond the reviewed literature and the East Java context, while also pointing to avenues for empirical refinement.

### Future Research

Future research can build on this integrative review in several ways. Empirically, mixed method designs that combine policy analysis, stakeholder interviews, and quantitative indicators could test and refine the three-pillar MEP model and MTDD framework, allowing re-searchers to assess how specific policy instruments, governance mechanisms, and innovation practices affect tourism, socio economic, and ecological outcomes in East Java and other coastal provinces. Comparative studies across Indonesian regions, or between Indonesia and other Southeast Asian maritime states, would help evaluate the extent to which the East Java experience is distinctive or replicable and would contribute to stronger cross regional theorisation of blue economy governance. Methodologically, future work might employ scenario modelling or systems dynamics simulations to explore how changes in fiscal incentives, digital monitoring, or community participation alter the balance between economic growth, environmental protection, and social equity in marine tourism destinations. Finally, more fine grained research on innovative financing mechanisms, community owned business models, and metrics of blue growth readiness would complement the conceptual contributions of this study and support evidence based policy design for sustainable and inclusive maritime development.

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## Revisit intention in conservation areas: How destination image mediates perceived risk and constraint in Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park

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**Abstract:** This study examined the effects of perceived risk and perceived constraints on tourists' revisit intention, with destination image as a mediating variable, in TNBTS tourism in Central Jakarta, and reviewed it from an Islamic perspective. The sample consisted of 169 tourists from Central Jakarta who had visited one of TNBTS's destinations. The sampling technique used is purposive sampling. Data were collected through a survey using questionnaires. The data were analysed using SPSS and Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM). The results showed that (1) perceived risk has no significant effect on revisit intention (2) perceived constraints have a negative and significant effect on revisit intention (3) perceived risk has a positive and significant effect on destination image (4) perceived constraints have a negative and significant effect on destination image (5) destination image has a positive and significant effect on revisit intention (6) destination image mediates the relationship between perceived risk and revisit intention (7) destination image can mediate the effect of perceived constraints on revisit intention. Thus, future researchers can directly interview TNBTS tourists to obtain respondents who meet the criteria and achieve satisfactory results.

**Keywords:** Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park, Destination Image, Perceived Constraint, Perceived Risk, Revisit Intention

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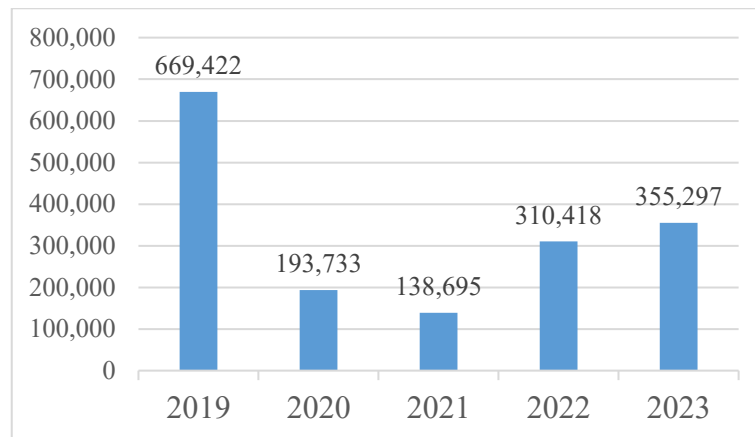
### Introduction

Indonesia is known for its many tribes and cultures. In addition, this country has a lot of potential and natural resources that must be developed, and the tourism sector is one of them. Tourism is one of the sectors that is currently developing, where the role of tourism itself is one of the goals to calm the mind, provide pleasure, and release boredom from daily activities (Susanto & Nursamsu, 2020). According to Redita et al. (2017) the tourism sector is being actively developed because this sector generates various benefits, including social and economic development, cultural preservation, environmental management, natural resources, and cultural benefits. In addition, one of the industries that contributes to the process of economic and social development in Indonesia and is a leading sector that is expected to be the largest source of foreign exchange earnings for Indonesia is the tourism sector (Kussudyarsana & Sholahuddin, 2023).

Sari & Syahbudi (2022) tourists are people who stay at least 24 hours in the destination country for the purpose of vacation, health, study, religion, sports, business, family, or conference. According to Purwowidhu. CS (2023) in the media of the Ministry of Finance states the contribution of tourism to the state revenue sector, which illustrates that tourism is the number two contributor in Indonesia in 2023. The tourism potential is derived from its abundant natural and cultural resources spread across various regions in Indonesia. One region that is particularly rich in both natural and cultural attractions is Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park (TNBTS).

TNBTS is one of the best national parks not only in East Java but also in Indonesia, besides that it is one of the tourist destinations that has been recognized nationally and internationally. TNBTS has become an attractive destination for many domestic and international tourists because of its vast landscape, rich biological resources, diverse tourist attractions, and beautiful scenery.

TNBTS has an area of approximately 50,276 ha located in a mountainous region, and consists of three famous landscapes, namely Mount Bromo, Tengger Caldera, and Mount Semeru. TNBTS is located in four regencies in East Java, namely Malang Regency, Pasuruan Regency, Lumajang Regency, and Probolinggo Regency. TNBTS is managed directly by the TNBTS Center, which was established by the government and is responsible for maintenance and tourism affairs under the auspices of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry. Figure 1 shows the tourists data of TNBTS for the last five years.



(Source: bromotenggersemeru.org)

**Figure 1.** Data on the number of TNBTS tourists 2019-2023

Abubakar et al. (2017) revealed revisit intention refers to a traveler's predisposition or desire to return to a previously visited location. In this case, destination image also helps tourists remember and decide where they should go to visit again. The outgrowth of a tourist destination is an effort by tourist destination managers to increase visitor interest in making a return visit to TNBTS. Therefore, the diversity of tourist behavior and the inhomogeneous structure of tourism reputation will turn tourists into loyal customers, so that visiting again is very difficult and requires a process (İLBAN et al. 2016).

Numerous variables impact a traveller's decision to return; notably, the assessment of perceived risk serves as a primary determinant in the cognitive process of choosing to revisit a location (Wulandari & Annisa, 2022). At the TNBTS destination, the risk that may be felt is that the road in the Sukapura sub-district is not good and endangers the driver, as it is a road often used to get to TNBTS. The following is data on the length and condition of the road in 2019-2022.

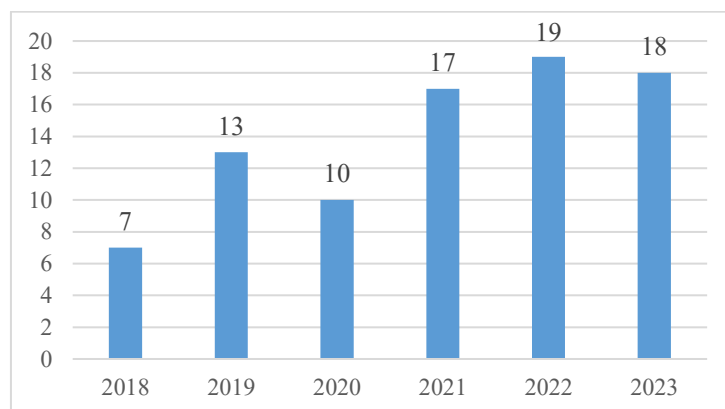
**Table 1.** Data on the Sukapura sub-district road conditions 2019-2022

Year	Good (km)	Medium (km)	Damaged (km)	Severely Damaged (km)
2019	35,870	9,830	0,300	8,920
2020	24,866	7,600	0	0
2021	25,488	2,829	4,149	0
2022	5,940	0	56,920	62,860

(Source: BPS Probolinggo)

When visiting a destination, tourists face a combination of intrapersonal, interpersonal, and structural barriers, such as financial limitations, time scarcity, environmental anxieties, and poor infrastructure, that collectively form their overall perception of constraints (Crawford et al., 1991;

Khan et al., 2019; Lin et al., 2022). Within an active volcanic nature reserve, these diverse barriers converge, creating a complex logistical filter that tourists must navigate before deciding to return. As Nazir et al. (2021) observe, physical infrastructure and transit accessibility are core pillars of a destination's image. When structural infrastructure collapses—as observed in the sharp spike in severely damaged roads by 2022—tourist arrivals can face unexpected contractions. Because it is an active volcanic reserve, visitors face recurring natural phenomena, including forest fires, seismic shifts, and sudden eruptions, making the region a compelling environment for examining perceived constraints (see Figure 2).



(Source: BPBD Probolinggo)

**Figure 2.** Total of disasters in Sukapura District 2018-2023

These physical and systemic elements fundamentally intersect with destination image, defined as the characterized as a person's psychological picture of information, emotions, and general views of the destination (Naseri, 2020). While destinations follow a natural life cycle influenced by carrying capacity, geographical limitations, and physical development (Attila, 2016), TNBTS maintains a strong market draw through its unique environmental sub-assets, such as the Tenger Sand Sea, Ranu Kumbolo, and Ranu Pani.

While previous empirical works have independently traced these relationships across conventional urban environments, there is a distinct gap in the literature detailing how these variables interact within active volcanic conservation areas. This study bridges that gap, assessing how perceived risks and constraints impact revisit intentions, while evaluating destination image as a mediating variable in a high-risk nature tourism context.

## Literature Review

### Perceived Risk

Xue (2019) states that perceived risk is defined as tourists who can face any major risk when traveling, which refers to consumer perceptions regarding the overall negative impact of this behavior. Mayasari & Artanti (2021) suggest that perceived risk is a person's perception of uncertainty and adverse consequences or risks that may occur when buying a product or service. Zhang & Yu (2020) explain that perceived risk denotes the psychological burden linked to consumer buying habits, manifesting as a sense of unpredictability regarding future outcomes. Yu et al. (2021) define perceived risk as consumer perceptions of uncertainty and outcomes associated with purchasing or selecting a product or service. Then, according to Jiang et al. (2022), perceived risk refers to travelers' subjective expectations of potential losses or losses during travel.

Hashim et al. (2019) show that physical and financial risks affect domestic tourists who have visited Kuala Lumpur, and have a clear negative influence on revisit intentions. Meanwhile, Yu et al. (2021) state that the perceived risks of COVID-19 and post-traumatic stress disorder have a huge negative impact on hotel revisit intentions. Then Viet et al. (2020) showed that perceived risk had a negative effect on the revisit intention of international tourists to Binh Thuan province in Vietnam. Chew & Jahari (2014) indicate varying impacts of perceived risk on travel

motivations across different demographics. For instance, Malaysian tourists who have visited Japan show a notable decline in their intent to return due to perceived risk. Similarly, Thomas & Liu (2023) observed that risk concerns adversely affect the travel intentions of Taiwanese students.

H1: Perceived risk has a negative effect on revisit intention

### **Destination Image**

Hallmann et al. (2015) reveal that destination image represents the collective perspective of both travelers and vendors concerning a location's specific features or draws. Furthermore, this perception serves as a critical framework for defining, marketing, and executing the distribution of tourism products. Meanwhile, Satyarini et al. (2020) characterize destination image as a multifaceted construct comprising an individual's factual knowledge, personal biases, and emotional associations, alongside their imaginative impressions of a specific geographic area. Saxena & Kabia (2023) state that destination image in tourism refers to the perceptions, beliefs, and overall impressions that individuals or tourists have. Akgün et al. (2020) primarily focus on destination image, which consists of the sum of cognitive opinions and affective impressions that a person collects and remembers about a particular destination.

Several studies from Indonesia reveal that destination image has a positive effect on revisit intention, such as Satyarini et al. (2020), who focus on tourists visiting East Lombok, Oktaviana & Jauharry, (2023) in Solok Regency, and then Kadi et al. (2021) in Bening Dam Tourism visitors.

H2: Destination image has a positive effect on revisit intention

### **Perceived Constraints**

Samdahl & Jekubovich in Oktaviana & Jauharry (2023), state that perceived constraints are obstacles that are perceived in performing certain behaviors. Travel constraints are defined as factors that inhibit initial travel or subsequent travel, limiting an individual's ability to maintain or increase travel frequency and/or negatively impacting the quality of their travel (Hung et al. in Khan et al. 2017). Jackson EL in Lin et al. (2022), explained that constraints have been defined as factors assumed by researchers and perceived by individuals to inhibit or prohibit participation and enjoyment of leisure time. Meanwhile, according to Page & Hall in Wulandari & Annisa (2022) the constraints felt by tourists become obstacles to travel, even though there are reasons to travel. Thomas & Liu (2023) show that perceived constraints have a negative effect and on the travel intentions of Taiwanese students. Other findings found by Nazir et al. (2021) show that perceived constraints have a negative impact on behavioral intentions.

H3 : Perceived constraint has a negative effect on revisit intention

### **The Mediating Role of Destination Image**

Khan, Chelliah, & Ahmed (2017) showed that perceived risk has a negative impact on the destination image of prospective young female tourists. Similarly, Chew & Jahari (2014) showed that perceived socio-psychological and financial risks have a negative and significant effect on the destination image of Malaysian tourists who have been to Japan. Aligning with these findings, Thomas & Liu (2023) showed that perceived risk has a negative effect on the destination image of Taiwanese university students. Broadening this scope, Khan et al. (2020) found that the perception of a destination's image is adversely affected by various risk factors. Specifically, physical health risks and general destination risks diminish the location's reputation regarding its medical attributes. Furthermore, service quality risks exert a broad negative impact, undermining both the medical and non-medical facets of the destination's image.

Research consistently indicates that travel constraints damage a location's appeal. Specifically, Khan, Chelliah, & Ahmed (2017) and Thomas & Liu (2023) jointly demonstrate this negative impact among potential young female tourists and Taiwanese university students, respectively. Chew & Jahari (2014) established that Malaysian tourists who have visited Japan, destination image acts as a crucial mediating variable. It bridges the gap between their perceived financial and socio-psychological risks and their ultimate intention to return to the country. In line with this, Thomas & Liu (2023) showed that destination image has a mediating influence between

perceived risk and Taiwanese university students' revisit intention, while Nazir et al. (2021) similarly demonstrated that the relationship between risk perception and behavioral intention is significantly mediated by destination image. Then, similar research conducted by Oktaviana & Jauharry (2023) confirms that for Indonesian domestic travelers, the impact of perceived risk on their intention to visit is significantly shaped by the mediating role of destination image.

Thomas & Liu (2023) demonstrated that destination image has a mediating influence between perceived constraints and Taiwanese students' revisit intentions. Expanding on this, Nazir et al (2021) confirmed that perceived constraints have a significant effect on behavioral intentions mediated by destination image. This exact mechanism is further supported by Oktaviana & Jauharry (2023) show that perceived constraints have a positive and significant effect on behavioral intention to visit, which is mediated by the destination image of domestic tourists who have visited tourist attractions in Solok Regency.

H4: Perceived risk has a negative effect on destination image

H5: Perceived constraint has a negative effect on destination image

H6: Destination image mediates perceived risk on revisit intention

H7: Destination image mediates perceived constraint on revisit intention

## Methodology

Sampling using non-probability sampling with the purposive sampling technique. Respondents in this study were tourists who had gone to TNBTS. With the calculation of the 2014 Hair formula (number of items x 5), getting a minimum sample size of 130 respondents with the criteria of Central Jakarta Domicile, Tourists who have visited one of the tourist destinations in TNBTS, Visiting TNBTS in the last 1 year, and Respondents aged at least 17 years. This study employed a survey-based approach, utilizing a structured questionnaire for data collection. The questionnaire is divided into five variables: respondent data identity, intention to revisit variable, perceived risk variable, perceived constraints variable, and destination image variable. Then this questionnaire was distributed to TNBTS tourists through G-Forms and visiting travel agents.

Some questions were used to obtain information about respondents' data identity in order to assess more effectively. The results of the data identity show that respondents are more female (60%) than male (40%). The age of the majority of respondents is in the range of 17 to 25 years old (70%), followed by 26 to 35 years old (25%), and more than 36 years old (5%). Occupations were dominated by students (53%), followed by employees/self-employed (35%), teachers/lecturers (7%), housewives (5%), and work (1%). Most of the monthly income earned was <Rp1,500,000 (46%). The frequency of visiting the TNBTS in the past year (48%) answered 2-4 times, and (7%) answered >5 times. The purpose of visiting one of the tours in TNBTS is dominated by tourists who want recreation/vacation as much as (73%). Then the source of information for TNBTS tourism has a total answer of 282 because it has more than one answer option, many tourists who answer friends/family and the internet/social media, as much as (36%).

To minimize regional variations and capture a concentrated, highly urbanized outbound tourism market, the sample was restricted to tourists domiciled in Central Jakarta. As a major metropolitan center located far from the destination, Central Jakarta provides an ideal demographic for examining how long-distance domestic travelers perceive risks and accessibility constraints when journeying to a volcanic conservation area.

## Research Instrument and Measurement

This study seeks to examine the impact of perceived risk, perceived constraint, and destination image on revisit intention at TNBTS, to determine the effect of perceived risk and perceived constraints on destination image at TNBTS, and to determine the effect of perceived risk and perceived constraints on revisit intention with destination image as a mediating variable at TNBTS. The perceived constraints construct in this study was operationalized as a single, multi-dimensional, high-order construct aggregating 14 manifest items. This approach is conceptually grounded in the classical Hierarchical Model of Leisure Constraints formulated by Crawford et al. (1991) which classifies barriers into three distinct yet deeply interrelated dimensions:

intrapersonal (e.g., individual psychological anxieties or fears), interpersonal (e.g., lack of travel partners or recommendations), and structural (e.g., scarcity of time, money, infrastructure, or destination data).

The intention to revisit is measured by 3 statement items (Nazir et al, 2021), perceived risk is measured by 5 statement items (Tseng & Wang, 2015), perceived constraints are measured by 14 statement items (Tessin et al, 2020), and the statement can be seen in Table 2. Destination image is measured by 4 items (Thomas & Liu, 2023). All statement items in the questionnaire were measured using a 4-point Likert scale, where 1 indicates "strongly disagree" and 4 indicates "strongly agree". There were three sections in the questionnaire. The first part of the survey was where the participant expressed his/her willingness to participate. The respondent's data identity was listed in the second section (gender, age, occupation, income, frequency of visiting, purpose of visiting, and source of information). To manage potential Common Method Bias (CMB) inherent in self-reported, cross-sectional questionnaire data, procedural controls were applied. These included assuring participants of strict anonymity, separating independent and dependent constructed items across different sections, and refining question wording to reduce social desirability bias.

**Table 2.** Instrument survey

Construct	Indicator		Source
Perceived Risk	RYD1	I would be concerned about travel service/equipment quality issues if I traveled to Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park	(Tseng & Wang, 2015)
	RYD2	I would be concerned about travel service/equipment quality issues if I traveled to Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park	
	RYD3	I am concerned about physical danger or injury if I travel to Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park	
	RYD4	I was worried about being disappointed with the experience of traveling to Bromo	
	RYD5	I am worried about being disappointed with the experience of traveling to Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park	
Perceived Constraints	KYD1	I feel afraid of animals in Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park.	(Tessin et al, 2020)
	KYD2	I am afraid of open spaces like in Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park.	
	KYD3	I feel afraid of the unknown in Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park	
	KYD4	I am allergic to something from nature like in Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park	
	KYD5	I feel a lack of friends when traveling to Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park	
	KYD6	I feel a lack of time to go to Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park	
	KYD7	I feel a lack of money to travel to Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park	
	KYD8	I feel a lack of tourist information in Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park	
	KYD9	I feel a lack of recommendations (from family, friends, colleagues, etc.) regarding Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park	
	KYD10	I feel inaccessible locations (underdeveloped transportation infrastructure, distance, etc.) in Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park	
	KYD11	I feel there is a lack of natural/cultural attractions in Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park	
	KYD12	I feel there is a lack of organized tours and offers at Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park travel agencies	
	KYD13	I feel there is a lack of professional staff at Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park	
	KYD14	I feel inadequate waste growth in Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park	
Destination Image	CD1	I feel that travel to Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park is a safe travel destination	(Thomas & Liu, 2023)
	CD2	I feel that travel to Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park offers great shopping opportunities	

	CD3	I feel that people in Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park are friendly	
	CD4	I feel that visiting Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park is a fun experience	
Revisit Intention	NMK1	I intend to revisit Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park	(Nazir et al, 2021)
	NMK2	I intend to recommend Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park to others	
	NMK3	I plan to revisit Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park	

(Source: Data processed, 2024)

## Data analysis

This study employs an explanatory research design grounded in a quantitative framework. This approach was selected to clarify the interrelationships and positioning of the specific variables under investigation. By testing hypotheses to elucidate the nature of these connections, the study utilizes Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) as a robust and appropriate analytical technique. PLS-SEM is used to see and measure the relationship between variables and other variables. (Sholihin & Ratmono, 2021). In testing the model, there are two stages used to analyze research data. The analytical process begins with a measurement model evaluation to verify the validity and reliability of the individual constructs. Subsequently, the structural model is assessed; this phase involves calculating  $R^2$ ,  $Q^2$ , and Goodness of Fit (GOF) to determine the strength of the relationships between variables and address the study's core objectives (Sholihin & Ratmono, 2021).

## Results and Discussions

### Results

#### Evaluation of the Measurement Model

**Table 3.** Measurement model evaluation

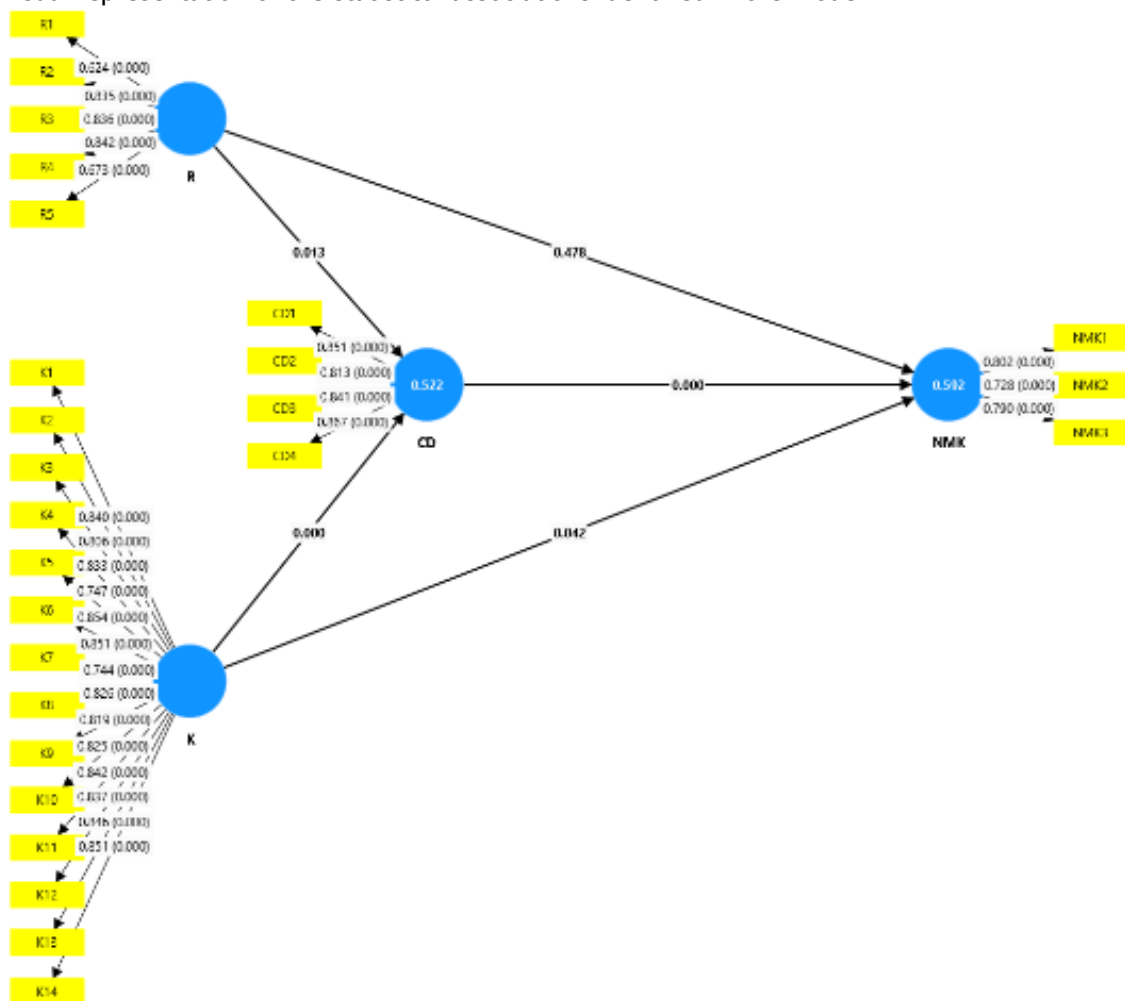
Latent Variabel	Item	Loading Factor	AVE	Composite Reliability	(Source: Data)
Perceived Risk	RYD1	0,624	0,589	0,876	
	RYD2	0,835			
	RYD3	0,836			
	RYD4	0,842			
	RYD 5	0,673			
Perceived Constraints	KYD 1	0,840	0,678	0,967	
	KYD 2	0,806			
	KYD 3	0,833			
	KYD 4	0,747			
	KYD 5	0,854			
	KYD 6	0,851			
	KYD 7	0,744			
	KYD 8	0,826			
	KYD 9	0,819			
	KYD 10	0,825			
	KYD 11	0,842			
	KYD 12	0,837			
	KYD 13	0,846			
	KYD 14	0,851			
Destination Image	CD 1	0,851	0,711	0,908	
	CD 2	0,813			
	CD 3	0,841			
	CD 4	0,867			
Revisit Intention	NMK 1	0,820	0,599	0,817	
	NMK 2	0,728			
	NMK 3	0,790			

processed, 2024)

An assessment of the measurement model is conducted to verify the validity and reliability of the indicators representing each study variable (Sholihin & Ratmono, 2021). To test the validity of this study using convergent validity. For convergent validity, it can be seen from the factor loading value and the AVE value that the standard for the value used for factor loading is  $> 0.70$  and the AVE value is  $> 0.50$  (Ghozali & Latan, 2017). The results presented in Table 3 demonstrate that all constructs met the necessary validity criteria, establishing their suitability for further empirical analysis. Meanwhile, to test reliability, it can be seen from the composite reliability with a standard of  $> 0.70$  (Sholihin & Ratmono, 2021). The reliability test results are satisfactory and state that all statement items have consistency in forming the internal variable construct so that the construct is declared reliable (see Table 3).

### Structural Model Evaluation

Figure 3 presents the structural pathways generated by SmartPLS 4.1.0.3, providing a visual representation of the statistical associations identified in the model.



(Source: Data processed, 2024)

**Figure 3.** Hypothesized model of variable paths

The result in Table 4 of  $R^2$  of revisiting (dependent variable) is 0.592 and  $R^2$  of destination image (mediating variable) is 0.522, which means that the effect of perceived risk, perceived constraint, and destination image on revisiting is 59.2% and the remaining 40.8% is influenced by other variables outside the research model while the effect of destination image mediating perceived risk and perceived constraint on revisit is 52.2% and the model's unexplained variance

stands at 47.8%, suggesting the influence of additional exogenous variables. The  $R^2$  value indicates a strong model because the value is within the criteria  $<0.70$ . This model has relevance and predicts the relationship between variables (predictive relevance), as indicated by the  $Q^2$  value of revisit (dependent variable) of 0.554 and  $Q^2$  destination image (mediating variable) of 0.110. After that, it can be seen that the model has a good fit, where the resulting Goodness of Fit (GoF) model value is 0.596. This shows that the fit of the model is in the large category, which means that the fit of the model is very good because the results obtained are  $> 0.36$ .

## Hypothesis Results

**Table 4.** Hypothesis Results

	Original sample (O)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics ( O/STDEV )	P values	Description
Perceived Risk → Revisit Intention	0,064	0,090	0,709	0,478	rejected
Destination Image → Revisit Intention	0,522	0,143	3,657	0,000	accepted
Perceived Constraints → Revisit Intention	-0,352	0,173	2,039	0,042	accepted
Perceived Risk → Destination Image	0,250	0,101	2,485	0,013	rejected
Perceived Constraints → Destination Image	-0,903	0,100	9,011	0,000	accepted
Perceived Risk → Destination Image → Revisit Intention	0,130	0,066	1,983	0,048	accepted
Perceived Constraints → Destination Image → Revisit Intention	-0,471	0,145	3,241	0,001	accepted

(Source: Data processed, 2024)

Based on the results of hypothesis testing (Table 4), it states that perceived risk has a negative and significant effect on intention to revisit is rejected (original sample (O) 0.064, T-statistic 0.709, P-value 0.478), perceived constraints have a negative and significant effect on intention to revisit is accepted (original sample (O) -0.352, T-statistic 2.039, P-value 0.042), perceived risk has a negative and significant effect on destination image is rejected (original sample (O) 0.250, T-statistic 2.485, P-value 0.013), perceived constraints have a negative and significant effect on destination image is accepted (original sample (O) -0.903, T-statistic 9.011, P-value 0.000), destination image has a positive and significant effect on revisit intention is accepted (original sample (O) 0.522, T-statistic 3.657, P-value 0.000), destination image mediates significant perceived risk on revisit intention is accepted (T-statistic 1.983, P-value 0.048), destination image mediates significant perceived constraint on revisit intention is accepted (T-statistic 3.241, P-value 0.001).

## Discussions

The rejection of the relationship between perceived risk to destination image and revisit intention offers a compelling insight into the psychology of repeat visitors. This suggests a familiarity effect, where the first-time visitor experience at the destination has likely diminished

the traveler's uncertainty. They normalize the danger, separating physical or infrastructural inconveniences from their emotional evaluation of the park's beauty.

From a management perspective, this finding implies that once a destination successfully converts a traveler into a first-time visitor, the fear factor becomes largely irrelevant. The destination's resilience in the face of perceived risks, whether they be health, safety, or financial risks, is bolstered by the visitor's previous positive encounters. To secure future loyalty, the primary goal should be securing that first visit. Personal experience functions as a psychological buffer that dismantles risk perceptions, ensuring that perceived threats no longer hinder a traveler's revisit intention. These results are in accordance with the research of Mayasari & Artanti, (2021), Sinambela et al. (2022), Hashim et al. (2019), which shows that perceived risk has no influence on revisit intention.

For destination image, revisit intention has a positive effect. If tourists feel a good destination image, the intention to revisit Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park will be high for tourists. The results of this study are in line with Viet et al. (2020), Biswakarma (2017), Khan, Chelliah, & Ahmed (2017). Within the specific context of TNBTS tourism, this direct relationship emerges because the unique sub-assets of the park, such as the majestic sunrise over the Tengger Caldera, the spiritual and cultural mystique of the local Tenggerese culture, and the pristine alpine environments of Ranu Kumbolo create a highly evocative mental imprint. For long-distance domestic travelers, this positive cognitive and affective image transforms the location from a one-time bucket-list destination into an enduring psychological retreat, directly driving their revisit intention.

Furthermore, destination image can mediate perceived risk on revisit intentions. If the risk felt by tourists is low, then a good destination image will increase tourists' intention to revisit TNBTS tours; in this study, there is a full mediating effect. In accordance with the research results from Chew & Jahari (2014), Thomas & Liu (2023), Nazir et al. (2021), which show that destination image mediates the relationship between perceived risk and revisit intention. The deeper behavioral explanation for why full mediation occurs in this volcanic landscape rests on the cognitive filtering mechanism of the human mind. Perceived risks, such as the unpredictable volcanic activity of Mount Bromo or the severely degraded road infrastructure in the Sukapura sub-district, do not independently dictate final behavioral choices. Instead, they are completely filtered through the tourist's overarching mental summary of the destination. If management successfully maintains an image of high natural wonder, environmental prestige, and structured adventure, this positive cognitive framing acts as a psychological shock absorber. When the pull factors of the destination image are exceptionally strong, they completely neutralize safety or logistical anxieties.

Then the research states that perceived constraints have a negative and significant effect on destination image. In accordance with the research of Khan, Chelliah, & Ahmed (2017), Thomas & Liu (2023), Khan et al. (2020), which shows that perceived constraints have a negative and significant effect on destination image. This empirical finding reveals that as a tourist's awareness of personal, financial, or institutional barriers intensifies, their overall mental and emotional evaluation of Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park undergoes a marked degradation. To uncover *why* this relationship emerged so acutely within this specific tourism context, it is essential to analyze the unique logistical and socio-economic dynamics of the sample. Traveling to a relatively remote conservation area like TNBTS demands a high level of resource commitment from long-distance domestic tourists. When these travelers encounter severe, unmitigated constraints, such as the heavily damaged transit roads documented around the Sukapura gateway, a lack of seamless public transportation alternatives, or a deficiency in clear, unified destination information, it alters their cognitive processing.

Instead of viewing the national park through a lens of pristine natural wonder, the accumulation of these operational frictions reframes the destination in the tourist's mind as inaccessible, poorly managed, and exhausting. The physical exhaustion and financial stress caused by these structural constraints effectively overshadow the aesthetic appeal of the volcanic landscape, directly souring the destination's cognitive image. The broader theoretical implication of this finding challenges traditional models that treat constraints merely as a final "veto" at the end of the decision-making process. Instead, our data proves that constraints actively

contaminate the early cognitive formation stage, damaging the destination image long before a tourist even decides whether or not to revisit.

Then the destination image mediates perceived constraints on revisit intentions. In line with Thomas & Liu (2023), Nazir et al. (2021), Oktaviana & Jauharry, (2023), which shows that destination image mediates the relationship between perceived constraint and revisit intention. When tourists face high perceived constraints, such as the financial burden of traveling from central transit hubs, severe road damage around the Sukapura gateway, or information gaps, these barriers directly exert a negative force, suppressing their intention to return. However, the presence of a powerful, positive destination image acts as a cognitive counterweight. When a tourist retains a vivid mental image of the park's sublime volcanic vistas, its unique sunrise landscapes, and its cultural authenticity, the pull factor of the destination triggers a proactive problem-solving behavior. This means that even if structural constraints are high, a compelling destination image motivates tourists to negotiate those barriers, for instance, by budgeting more carefully, seeking alternative transit routes, or adjusting their travel schedules rather than simply abandoning their travel plans.

## Conclusions

In conclusion, this study provides critical insights into the behavioral psychology of nature-based tourists by mapping how risk, constraints, and destination image interact to shape revisit intention and long-term loyalty at Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park (TNBTS). The empirical rejection of a negative link between perceived risk and revisit behaviors reveals a profound risk immunity effect among travelers. Once an initial visit is secured, firsthand experience transforms into a powerful psychological buffer, past encounters with the active volcanic landscape and infrastructural friction, such as the degraded Sukapura transit roads, normalize environmental dangers. Consequently, physical risks are completely decoupled from the emotional evaluation of the destination's aesthetic appeal, rendering traditional safety anxieties largely irrelevant to repeat visitation. This underscores a key managerial challenge, such as the primary operational hurdle of securing that foundational first visit, as personal familiarity effectively dismantles future risk perceptions. Conversely, the study establishes that structural and operational barriers cannot be psychologically bypassed in the same manner, as perceived constraints exert a severe, direct negative toll on destination image. For long-distance domestic tourists, the accumulation of high logistical constraints—ranging from financial pressures and information gaps to severe transit road damage—alters early cognitive processing. Instead of retaining an untarnished image of natural wonder, the structural strain reframes the national park as an exhausting, inaccessible burden. This finding carries a vital theoretical implication, challenging traditional models by proving that constraints do not merely act as an end-stage behavioral veto. Instead, they actively contaminate the early stages of cognitive formation, eroding the destination's mental equity long before a traveler weighs the decision to return. Ultimately, the structural framework positions destination image as the primary cognitive transformer of the behavioral model, operating through dual mediating pathways. As a full mediator, destination image functions as a psychological shock absorber that intercepts and neutralizes safety risks, filtering objective hazards through a positive mental framing of natural wonder and structured adventure. As a partial mediator, it acts as a dynamic cognitive counterweight against physical barriers. When the pull factors of the park's unique sub-assets, such as the iconic sunrise over the Tengger Caldera, the mystique of the Tenggerese culture, and the alpine beauty of Ranu Kumbolo are sufficiently evocative, they trigger proactive constraint negotiation behavior. Under a highly favorable destination image, tourists are motivated to actively problem-solve, adjust budgets, and alter schedules to bypass real-world friction rather than abandon their travel plans. For park managers, this diagnosis highlights that continuous branding and the preservation of a prestigious destination image are essential strategic prerequisites to overcoming structural constraints and securing sustainable growth for revisiting.

## Limitations and Future Research

A primary limitation of this research is the lack of demographic diversity among

participants, as the sample was exclusively comprised of domestic tourists. Thus, future researchers can use foreign tourist respondents to get different information. Then, only using a survey method (questionnaire). The questionnaire was distributed online using Google Form, so problems can occur such as conditions when respondents fill in but do not match the criteria, which can affect the results of the study. Consequently, it is recommended that future studies employ direct personal interviews with visitors at TNBTS. This approach would ensure that respondents strictly adhere to the established inclusion criteria and provide more comprehensive, high-quality data.

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## Does venue quality drive loyalty through satisfaction? Evidence from Indonesian concert attendees in Indonesia and Singapore

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**Abstract:** The growth of the event industry in Southeast Asia has heightened the importance of venue quality in delivering a successful event experience. The quality of the venue plays a significant role in shaping visitor satisfaction and loyalty, especially at large-scale international concerts. This study aims to compare the effect of venue quality on visitor loyalty mediated by satisfaction at Coldplay concerts held at Gelora Bung Karno and National Stadium Singapore. Dimensions of venue quality include interaction, environment, and value. This study employs a quantitative approach based on Structural Equating Modelling (SEM) with SmartPLS 3.2.9. The study population consisted of 230 Indonesian visitors who attended Coldplay concert at both venues, with 115 respondents from each venue selected through purposive sampling. The findings indicate that the quality of interactions between staff and visitors, as well as the venue environment, including facilities and atmosphere, are key determinants of visitor satisfaction and loyalty. Meanwhile, value does not affect satisfaction at the National Stadium Singapore. This study contributes to the event management literature by providing comparative insights into venue quality in large-scale international concerts.

**Keywords:** Festival, Venue Quality, Visitor Loyalty, Visitor Satisfaction

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### Introduction

Jakarta is a priority MICE destination in Indonesia, hosting events of various scales. Companies use events to communicate with customers and highlight the achievements of their products and services (Alfianto et al., 2022). Data from the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy show that 53 percent of international tourists visit Jakarta for business and entertainment, solidifying its status as a leading destination. Venues play a crucial role in the growth of the events industry (Davidson & Hyde, 2014) especially music sector in Jakarta. One of them is the music industry, which has undergone a major transformation post-pandemic in organizing music events on both a national and international scale. The development is inseparable from the availability of venues that play a crucial role in the growth of the event industry, including Gelora Bung Karno, Jakarta International Stadium, JIExpo Kemayoran, Jakarta Convention Center, and Beach City International Stadium. In 2024, Jakarta received the ASEAN MICE Venue Award for two purpose-built venues: the Jakarta International Expo (JIExpo) and the Jakarta Convention Center (JCC), both designed for large exhibitions and conventions. This award serves as international recognition of the quality of Jakarta's MICE venues. As a result, Jakarta is well-positioned to compete with other ASEAN cities for event hosting.

The application of criteria to standardize venues acts as a measure of industry development. An event organizer in Jakarta increasingly favor unusual venues because these settings offer unique experiences that make events more engaging and memorable. Although

unusual venues present specific advantages and challenges, their distinctive atmosphere is sought after by organizers. Unusual venues include a variety of unique places, such as historic buildings, museums, visitor attractions, transport settings, leisure facilities, and performance halls (Antchak & Adams, 2020). The use of unusual venues reflects organizers' desire to create something new and memorable (Davidson & Hyde, 2014). Among these, Gelora Bung Karno (GBK), an iconic stadium in Jakarta, serves as a venue for both sports and major international concerts. For example, the recent Coldplay concert at GBK attracted over 70,000 visitors nearly reaching the stadium's full capacity and drew global attention. Promoters chose GBK for its event readiness and large capacity. Although the event lasted only one day, management spent a year upgrading stadium facilities, including seating, festival areas, restrooms, electrical systems, lighting, and sensors to enhance visitor experience and satisfaction. A positive experience increases the likelihood that attendees will return to future concerts, underscoring the importance of continuous improvements in service quality and compliance with standards (Khadijah & Dwi Pratiwi, 2023). Coldplay's concert in Indonesia was a success, but it did not escape public scrutiny on social media because the differences in facilities and ticket prices compared to Coldplay's concert in Singapore.

Coldplay's concert in Singapore spanned several days at the National Stadium. According to [sportshub.com.sg](http://sportshub.com.sg), the stadium is a hub for sports, entertainment, lifestyle, and national events, with a maximum capacity of 55,000 spectators, which is smaller than Gelora Bung Karno Stadium's capacity of over 77,000. The stadium also features a retractable roof, and cooling technology for comfortable seating, design elements that address Singapore's humid climate. The retractable roof for the seats. According to widely circulated news, many Indonesian audiences attend concerts not only in Indonesia but also in Singapore due to better facilities and technology. However, the prices offered vary between Indonesia and Singapore. This affects audience expectations, as they compare not only artists but also the overall quality of the venue's facilities. This phenomenon is interesting to study further because it reveals a gap in the perception of venue quality between Indonesia and Singapore from the perspective of concert visitors.

Venue quality is a crucial factor in organizing a successful event. There are three main indicators for assessing venue quality: interaction, which refers to the quality of interactions between staff and visitors; environment, which relates to aspects of a venue such as facilities, comfort, cleanliness, and the event atmosphere; and finally, value, which refers to the value and cost of the event, whether it corresponds to the quality provided. A high-quality venue will provide a positive experience for visitors, ultimately increasing satisfaction (Greenwell et al., 2014). For every event organizer, visitor satisfaction is always a primary focus, whether the visitors are spectators or buyers. Therefore, it can be concluded that visitor satisfaction is crucial (Kotler et al., 2018). Quality is also related to satisfaction and can influence loyalty (Griffin, 2005). Loyalty refers to customers who not only repurchase goods and services but also have a commitment to and a positive attitude toward the service company and recommend others to purchase (Akamavi et al., 2015; Koo et al., 2014). Previous research found that the location of the Asian Games venue positively affected visitor satisfaction at Palembang (Sari et al., 2020). Meanwhile, others assessed the JCC venue's quality primarily on physical factors, with event organizers expressing overall satisfaction (Bidasari et al., 2019). In Malaysia, the studies using SEM on sports service quality at venue shows that experience has a relationship between sport service quality and user satisfaction (Ho Voon et al., 2014). However, several gaps remain in the existing research. First, previous studies on venue quality have focused on sport event organizers. Second, cross-country comparisons of venue quality within the same event series remain scarce, particularly between a developing-country venue and a high-income-country venue hosting the same touring act for visitors of the same nationality. This gap is significant because differences in economic context, ticket pricing systems, and travel costs may alter how visitors perceive and weigh each dimension of venue quality. Addressing the gaps, this study focuses on visitors in Indonesia who attended the event and adopts a comparative approach to examine venue quality.

This study examines how venue quality influences loyalty, with visitor satisfaction as a mediator. It compares Indonesian visitor perceptions of venue quality and its impact on loyalty at the Coldplay concert at Gelora Bung Karno and the National Stadium in Singapore. Understanding these perceptions can reveal ways to further enhance venue quality. Ultimately,

improving visitor satisfaction and loyalty strengthens the venue's reputation and increases visitors in the future.

## Methodology

The descriptive quantitative method was used. Data were collected through observation, literature review, and online questionnaires distributed to concert visitors at Gelora Bung Karno Stadium and National Stadium Singapore, selected to represent large-scale concert venues in Jakarta, for comparative analysis, using a Likert scale (1-4). This approach allows for more accurate identification of respondents' responses, whether they tend to agree or disagree, thereby producing more relevant and meaningful findings. (Sugiyono, 2014). This study used non-probability, purposive sampling, meaning not all population elements had the same chance of selection. Therefore, the number of people is unknown (Ghozali, 2016).

The data were analysed using PLS SEM. PLS, a causal-predictive approach to SEM, focuses on explaining variance in the model's dependent variables (Chin et al., 2020; Hair et al., 2021). This technique was chosen for its accuracy in explaining relationships between variables, confirming or developing theories, and its suitability for limited sample sizes. Other advantages include the ability to perform PLS SEM without a strong theoretical foundation, the absence of a requirement for normally distributed data, and direct parameter estimation without the need for goodness-of-fit criteria (Latan & Ghozali, 2015). The data analysis stages included an outer model to test validity and reliability, factor loadings, average variance extracted (AVE), and composite reliability (CR). The inner model, which tested causal relationships between variables, used the R-square (R<sup>2</sup>), and hypothesis testing, which used the T-statistic, P-values, and bootstrapping. For determine the sample size, multiply the number of indicators by 5 to 10; the recommended range is 100 to 200 (Hair et al., 2021). In this study, using a minimum of 115 respondents per venue, totalling 230 respondents. Respondents were limited to Indonesian visitors at both venues. This decision was made to prevent cultural factors from influencing the comparison results, allowing venue quality to be measured more objectively. However, this sampling has a potential bias. Restricting respondents to single nationality may reduce the generalizability of findings to broader multicultural concert audiences. The variables in this study are used to create research questions.

**Table 1.** Variable of research

Variable	Dimension	Indicator
Venue Quality (Greenwell, 2014)	Interaction	Quality of interactions between staff and visitor Friendliness and responsiveness of staff in assisting visitors Staff's ability to handle visitor complaints and questions
	Environment	Physical aspects of the venue, such as facilities, comfort, and cleanliness; The event atmosphere, The venue's ability to accommodate event needs
	Value	The alignment between cost and quality offered, strategic location, branding Fullfillment of expectations, Overall satisfaction
Visitor Satisfaction (Kotler et al., 2018)		
Visitor Loyalty (Yuruk et al., 2017)		Revisit Intention, Recommendation, Preference

The research question was developed based on gaps identified in prior studies. Previous research has primarily examined venue quality in single-venue or sports contexts with limited cross-country comparisons and insufficient attention to the visitor's perspective (Greenwell et al., 2014; Ho Voon et al., 2014; Bidasari et al., 2019; Sari et al., 2020). Addressing these gaps, this study investigates how venue quality, measured through interaction, environment, and value dimensions, influences visitor loyalty via visitor satisfaction, comparing two international concert venues.

**Table 2.** Validity test, reliability test, average variance extracted test, composite reliability test in Gelora Bung Karno

Variable Indicator	Loading Factor	AVE	CR	Cronbach's Alpha	Information
Quality Place (Interaction)		0.739	0.934	0.912	Reliable
KVI1	0.872				Valid
KVI2	0.848				Valid
KVI3	0.905				Valid
KVI4	0.881				Valid
KVI5	0.788				Valid
Quality Place (Environment)		0.618	0.890	0.846	Reliable
KVE1	0.814				Valid
KVE2	0.754				Valid
KVE3	0.781				Valid
KVE4	0.773				Valid
KVE5	0.806				Valid
Quality Place (Value)		0.600	0.857	0.785	Reliable
KVV1	0.742				Valid
KVV2	0.792				Valid
KVV3	0.816				Valid
KVV4	0.746				Valid
Visitor Satisfaction		0.854	0.921	0.829	Reliable
KP1	0.922				Valid
KP2	0.926				Valid
Visitor Loyalty		0.742	0.920	0.885	Reliable
LP1	0.720				Valid
LP2	0.902				Valid
LP3	0.894				Valid
LP4	0.915				Valid

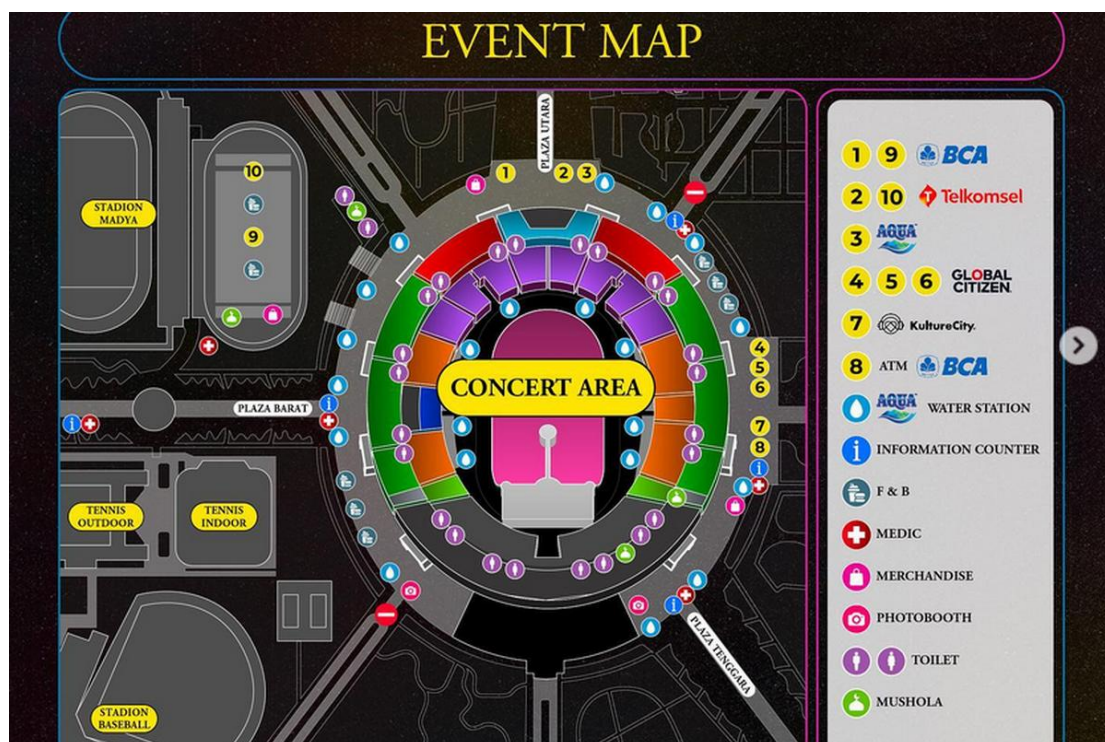
**Table 3.** Validity test, reliability test, average variance extracted test, composite reliability test in National Stadium Singapore

Variable/ Indicator	Loading Factor	AVE	CR	Cronbach's Alpha	Information
Quality Place (Interaction)		0.965	0.965	0.951	Reliable
KVI2	0.916				Valid
KVI3	0.930				Valid
KVI4	0.904				Valid
KVI5	0.985				Valid
Quality Place (Environment)		0.830	0.830	0.610	Reliable
KVE1	0.768				Valid
KVE5	0.912				Valid
Quality Place (Value)		0.832	0.832	0.634	Reliable
KVV1	0.740				Valid
KVV3	0.939				Valid
Visitor Satisfaction		0.951	0.975	0.948	Reliable
KP1	0.974				Valid
KP2	0.976				Valid
Visitor Loyalty		0.678	0.863	0.790	Reliable
LP1	0.794				Valid
LP2	0.780				Valid
LP3	0.892				Valid

## Results and Discussions

### *Gelora Bung Karno and National Stadium Singapore*

According to official information from the GBK website, the Gelora Bung Karno (GBK) Complex is an integrated sports area strategically located in the heart of Jakarta. Established in 1962 to host the IV Asian Games, GBK has become a national sporting icon and a central hub for various large-scale events, both national and international. The Gelora Bung Karno Complex has now evolved into a multi-functional area equipped with various modern facilities. A wide selection of venues is available ranging from outdoor and indoor venues to parks which can be tailored to various types of events. Furthermore, supporting facilities such as hotels, restaurants, places of worship, and vast green areas make GBK a comfortable and complete destination for visitors of all ages. When organizing events with a massive capacity exceeding 20,000 people, organizers typically choose the GBK Main Stadium, which is one of the largest venues in the GBK area. Following major renovations ahead of the 2018 Asian Games, SUGBK has been transformed into an international-standard stadium with highly comprehensive and sophisticated facilities. Boasting some of the brightest stadium lighting in the world, SUGBK is now ranked among the best stadiums in Southeast Asia. According to GBK's official reservation system, the Coldplay concert fell under the highest stadium rental category: Regular Event C. Under this category, organizers are entitled to use the entire stadium area for 12 hours, including the main stands, performance support facilities such as sound and lighting systems, and various functional spaces like VIP rooms and the media centre. The Coldplay concert in Indonesia was a single-day event successfully held on November 15, 2023. This concert marked Coldplay's debut performance in Indonesia as part of their "Music of the Spheres" world tour. Ticket prices varied based on the seating layout, ranging from 800,000 IDR to the most expensive category at 11 million IDR.

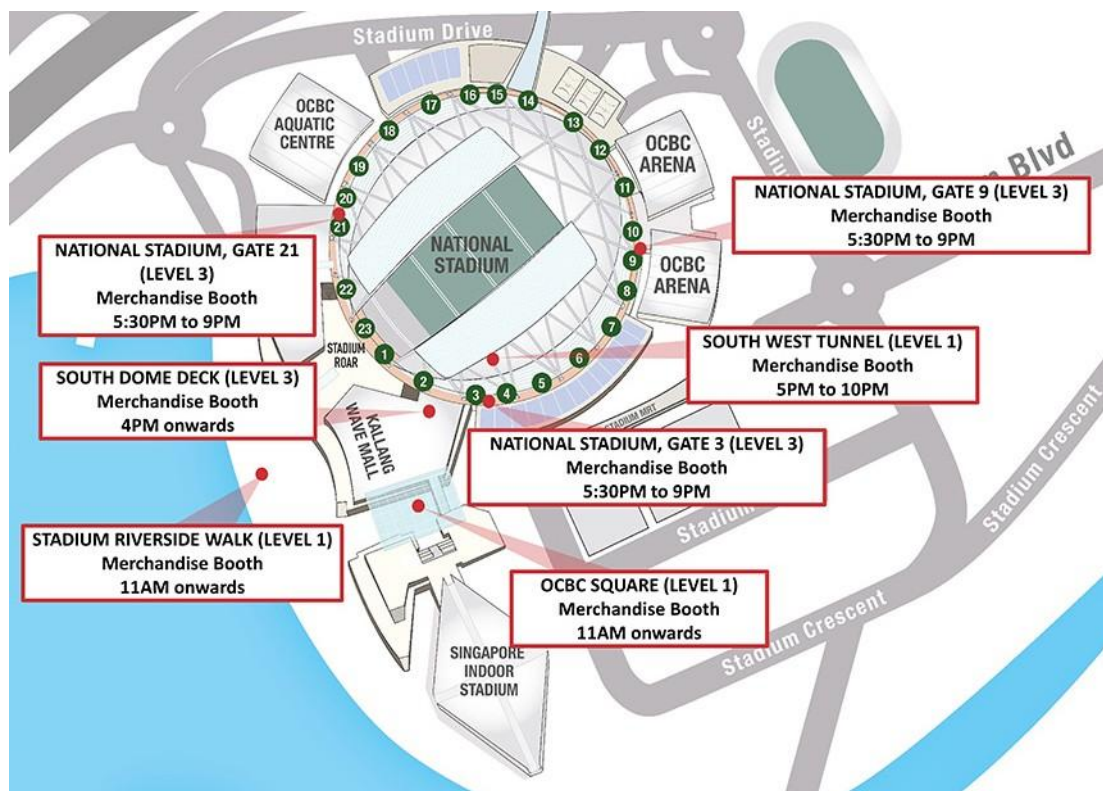


(Source: Gelora Bung Karno, 2024)

**Figure 1.** Venue map of Gelora Bung Karno

Meanwhile, National Stadium Singapore is the largest venue in Singapore, serving not only as a sports arena but also as a hub for entertainment and lifestyle. With a capacity of 55,000 spectators, the stadium offers views of the Singapore sea and skyline. It features the world's largest dome, a retractable roof, and a comfortable cooling system specifically designed to

withstand Singapore's tropical climate. The retractable roof is also equipped with 20,000 LEDs that function as a giant screen, visible from both inside and outside the stadium. The National Stadium features unique tiered seating, where configurations can be adjusted according to the specific event taking place. The venue is located within the Singapore Sports Hub complex in the Kallang area. The Coldplay concerts held at the National Stadium Singapore spanned six (6) days, specifically on January 23–27 and 30–31, 2024. The event was organized by one of Singapore's leading promoters, Live Nation. Ticket prices varied according to the seating layout, ranging from SGD 68 (approx. 758,000 IDR) to the most expensive standard category at SGD 298 (approx. 3.3 million IDR). In addition to standard tickets, the promoter offered specialized ticket packages providing enhanced visitor experiences, including the Kublik Experience, Supersolis Experience, and Ultimate Spheres Experience. These packages ranged from SGD 538 to SGD 1,098 (approx. 12.3 million IDR). Singapore remains a primary destination for Indonesian spectators to watch their favorite bands due to its proximity to Indonesia.



Source: Live Nation Instagram, (2024)

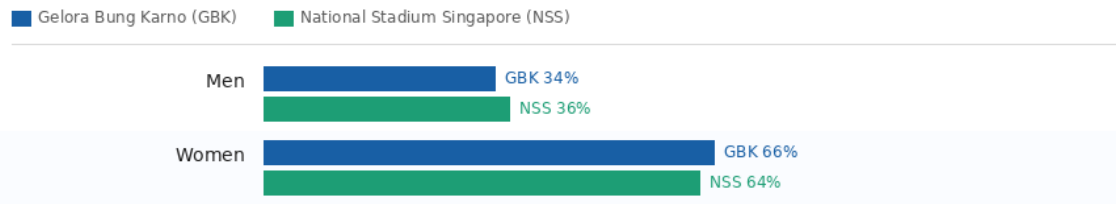
**Figure 2.** Venue map of National Stadium Singapore

### Respondents Characteristic

Based on the results of distributing questionnaires to 115 respondents per venue, a picture of respondents was obtained which was divided based on gender, age, education level, work, and region. The characteristics of respondents at Gelora Bung Karno and National Stadium Singapore.

RESPONDENT PROFILE

**SEX**



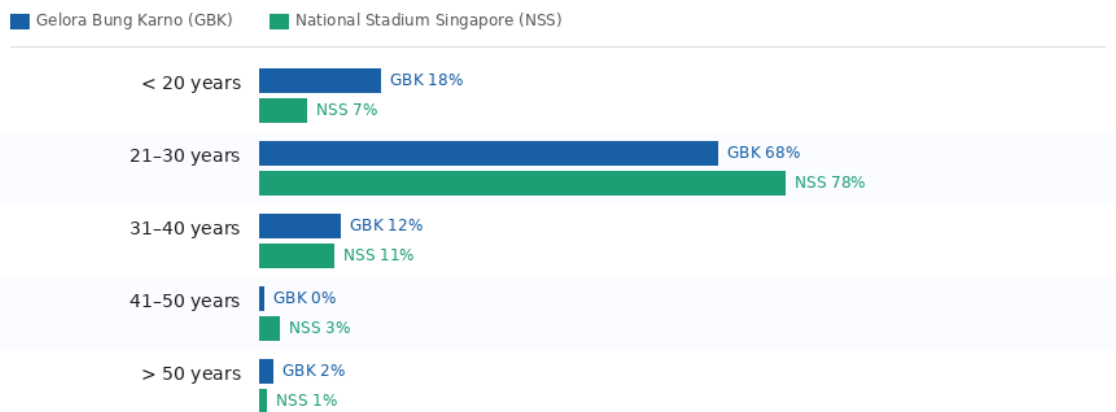
Source: Data processing by author, (2026)

**Figure 3.** Characteristic of respondent by gender

In terms of gender, the majority of respondents at both venues were female, with GBK recording 66% (n=76) and NSS 64% (n=73). This relatively balanced composition shows the dominance of female visitors in the types of events studied in both stadiums.

RESPONDENT PROFILE

**AGE**



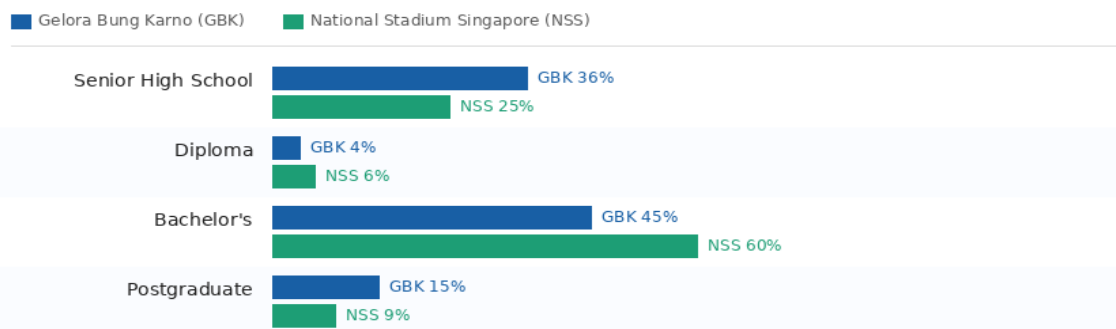
Source: Data processing by author, (2026)

**Figure 4.** Characteristic of respondent by age

The 21-30 age group dominated at both venues 68% at GBK and 78% at NSS. GBK attracted proportionally more visitors under 20 years (18% vs 7%), suggesting a younger teenage audience base, while NSS skewed toward young working adults. Respondents over 40 were minimal at both venues.

RESPONDENT PROFILE

**EDUCATION LEVEL**

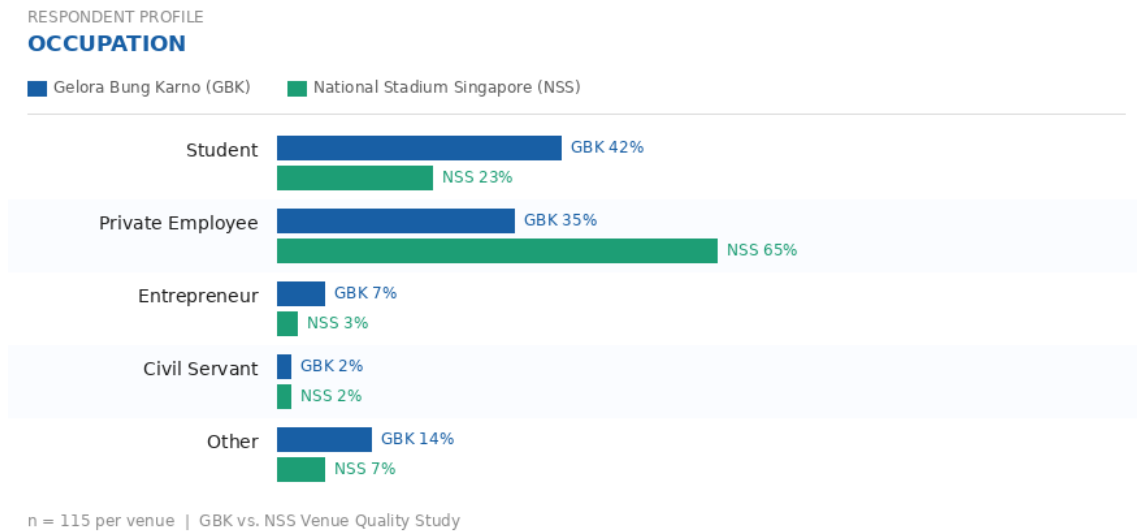


n = 115 per venue | GBK vs. NSS Venue Quality Study

Source: Data processing by author, (2026)

**Figure 5.** Characteristic of respondent by education level

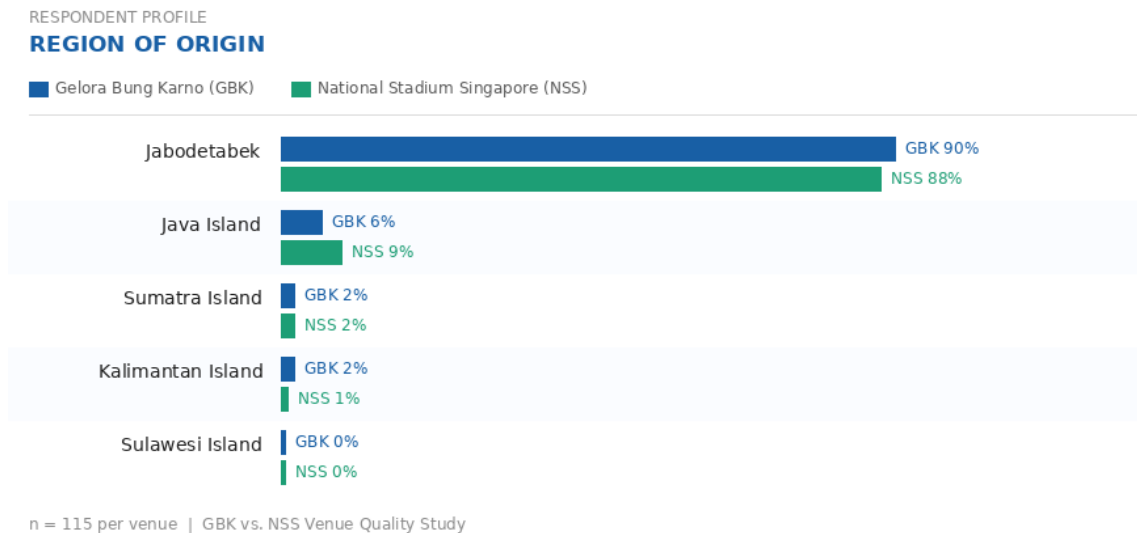
The majority of respondents at both venues held a bachelor`s degree, with NSS showing a higher proportion (60%) than GBK (45%). GBK had more senior high school graduates (36% vs 25%), consistent with its younger age profile. Postgraduate representation (S2/S3) was higher at GBK (15% vs 9%).



Source: Data processing by author, (2026)

**Figure 6.** Characteristic of respondent by occupation

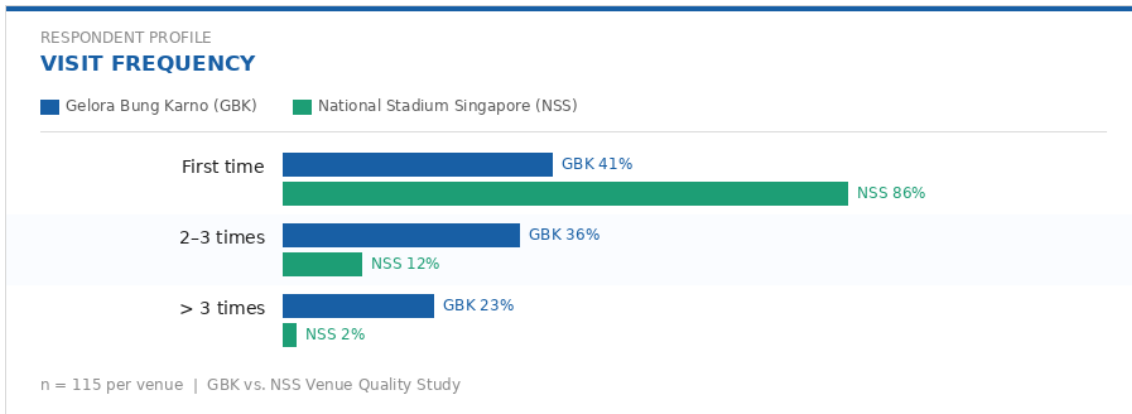
A notable difference emerged in occupation are GBK`s largest group was student (42%), while NSS was strongly dominated by private sector employees (65%). This reflects a significant difference in visitor segmentation between the two venues, likely influenced by the type of event and location. The "other" category at GBK (14%) is also relatively large.



Source: Data processing by author, (2026)

**Figure 7.** Characteristic of respondent by region

Respondents from Jabodetabek area dominated at both venues 90% at GBK and 88% at NSS, indicates that Jabodetabek area has good connectivity and easy access to the venues.



Source: Data processing by author, (2026)

**Figure 8.** Characteristic of visit frequency

GBK shows a significantly higher repeat visit rate than NSS, 36% of GBK respondents had visited 2-3 times, and 23% had visited more than 3 times, while at NSS, 86% were first time visitors. This finding reflects the differences in accessibility and familiarity of respondents to each venue, with GBK being a well-known local venue, compared to NSS being a newer destination.

### Assessment of the measurement model

Establishing reliability and validity is essential before hypothesis testing. Indicator loadings above 0.708 are recommended, as they show the construct explains more than 50% of the indicator's variance and provide acceptable indicator reliability. For loadings between 0.40 and 0.708, consider removal if deleting the indicator increases internal consistency reliability or convergent validity. If the indicator loading is below 0.40, it should always be removed from the measurement model (Hair et al., 2022). In addition, the average extracted variance (AVE) across all indicators in the construct has a minimum AVE of 0.50, indicating that the construct explains 50% or more of the variance in its indicators (Hair et al., 2022, 2025). These findings confirm that the model has good power and does not show any issues of discriminant validity, allowing each construct to be clearly distinguished from the others.

**Table 4.** Construct reliability and validity for Gelora Bung Karno of Indonesian respondents

Construct	Loading Factor	AVE	CR	Cronbach's Alpha
Quality Place (Interaction)		0.739	0.934	0.912
KVI1	0.872			
KVI2	0.848			
KVI3	0.905			
KVI4	0.881			
KVI5	0.788			
Quality Place (Environment)		0.618	0.890	0.846
KVE1	0.814			
KVE2	0.754			
KVE3	0.781			
KVE4	0.773			
KVE5	0.806			
Quality Place (Value)		0.600	0.857	0.785
KVV1	0.742			
KVV2	0.792			
KVV3	0.816			
KVV4	0.746			
Visitor Pengunjung		0.854	0.921	0.829
KP1	0.922			
KP2	0.926			
Visitor Loyalty		0.742	0.920	0.885

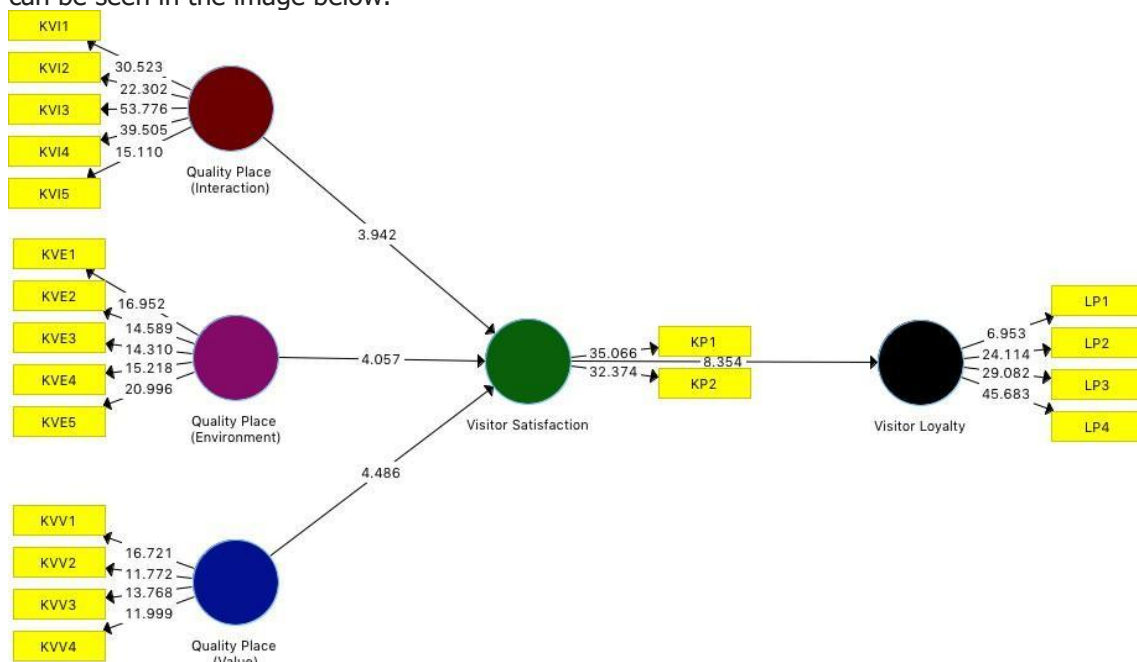
LP1	0.720
LP2	0.902
LP3	0.894
LP4	0.915

**Table 5.** Construct reliability and validity for National Stadium Singapore of Indonesian respondents

Construct	Loading Factor	AVE	CR	Cronbach's Alpha
Quality Place (Interaction)		0.965	0.965	0.951
KVI2	0.916			
KVI3	0.930			
KVI4	0.904			
KVI5	0.985			
Quality Place (Environment)		0.830	0.830	0.610
KVE1	0.768			
KVE5	0.912			
Quality Place (Value)		0.832	0.832	0.634
KVV1	0.740			
KVV3	0.939			
Visitor Satisfaction		0.951	0.975	0.948
KP1	0.974			
KP2	0.976			
Visitor Loyalty		0.678	0.863	0.790
LP1	0.794			
LP2	0.780			
LP3	0.892			

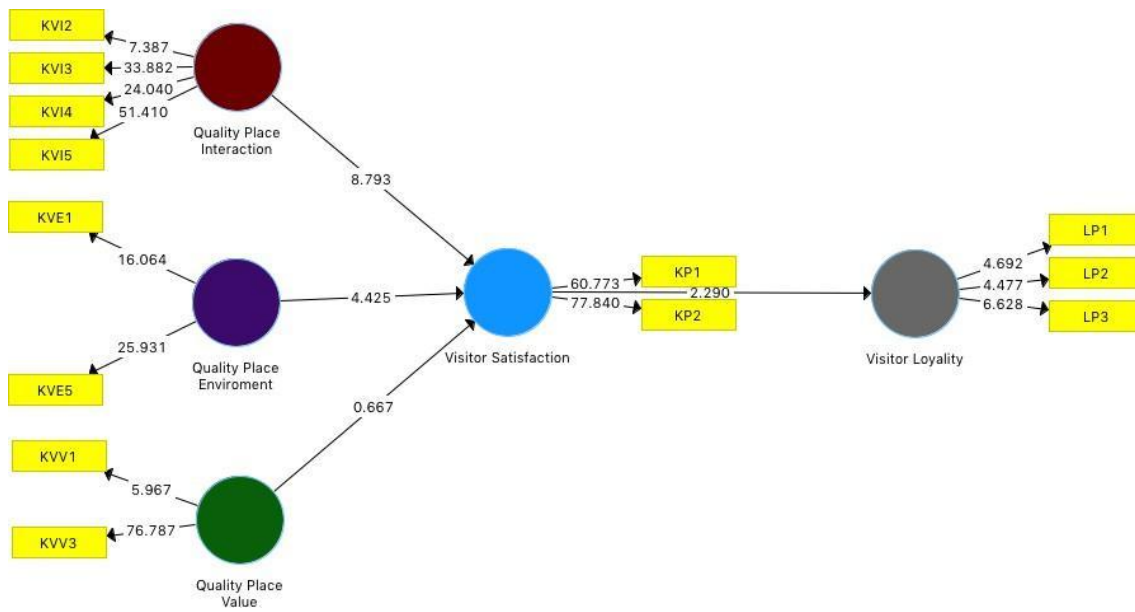
**Assessment of the Structural Mode**

Test results using the bootstrapping method based on Partial Least Square (PLS) analysis can be seen in the image below.



(Source: Data Processing Results with Smart PLS 3.2.9 Software)

**Figure 9.** Result of hypothesis testing on venue quality at Gelora Bung Karno



(Source: Data Processing Results with Smart PLS 3.2.9 Software)

**Figure 10.** Result of hypothesis testing on venue quality at National Stadium Singapore

### Hypothesis Testing

The results of hypothesis testing at Gelora Bung Karno confirm that all four hypotheses are accepted. The interaction dimension of venue quality significantly positively influences visitor satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.306$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). A venue staff welcomed visitors with smiles and friendly greetings, provided information quickly and efficiently regarding event schedules. This finding aligns with the SERVQUAL framework, adapted for live concert settings, in which staff service and site elements consistently emerge as the strongest predictors of overall satisfaction (Jamal et al., 2025). The Stimulus-Organism-Responses (SOR) Paradigm further explains that these interactions between staff and visitors serve as external stimuli that stimulate positive emotional and intellectual states in attendees, ultimately generating satisfaction as a behavioral response (Zhu et al., 2025). Likewise, based on the Expectation Confirmation Theory (ECT) (Oliver, 1980; Ramasamy et al., 2024), when staff performance meets visitor expectations, positive disconfirmation directly elevates satisfaction and promotes subsequent loyalty. Meanwhile, the environment dimension of venue quality also has a positive and significant effect on visitor satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.357$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), making it the strongest path among the three dimensions of quality due to the completeness of its facilities such as the arena, toilets, waiting room, audio-visual equipment, internet access, and entrance access for people with disabilities, to the Royal Lounge, Sky Lounge, Royal Box, Sky Box, press conference room, media room, and secretariat room.

Based on servicescape theory (Bitner, 1992), the physical environment of a service setting functions as a holistic stimulus that shapes customers' cognitive, emotional, and bodily responses, ultimately influencing their behavioral intentions. In live music event contexts, a 2025 study using PLS-SEM and IPMA analysis found that visual and symbolic design, ambient conditions, and engagement opportunities are the highest priority servicescape elements for improving attendee satisfaction (Fakfare et al., 2025). The value dimension of venue quality significantly influenced satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.299$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) due to its tiered ticket pricing structure, strategic location with multimodal access, and surrounding accommodation ecosystem, which ensures that the functional and hedonic benefits perceived by visitors are commensurate with their total expenditure. Consistent with previous research, venue location and accessibility are important factors not only in the decision to participate but also in creating visitor satisfaction (Wan & Chan, 2013). From a theoretical perspective, satisfaction correlated with antecedents (quality, destination image, environment, perceived value, hedonic value, utility value, and monetary value) (Ladeira et al., 2016). Similarly, the study conducted by Mulya (2022) found that interaction,

environment, and outcome quality significantly influence visitors satisfaction in sport events. High venue and event quality increases perceived value which acts as the essential bridge between both types of service quality physical and interactive and future customer behaviours, notably revisiting and recommending the venue (Ratten, 2016). The integration of these three dimensions of venue quality (H1, H2, and H3) yields a very strong positive effect of visitor satisfaction on visitor loyalty ( $\beta = 0.602$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ).

**Table 6.** Result of Hypothesis Testing on Venue Quality at Gelora Bung Karno

	Hypothesis Test	Estimate	Standard Deviation	P-Value	Hypothesis
H1	Quality of Venue (Interaction) on Visitor Satisfaction	0.306	0.078	0.000	Ha Accepted
H2	Quality of Venue (Environment) on Visitor Satisfaction	0.357	0.088	0.000	Ha Accepted
H3	Quality of Venue (Value) on Visitor Satisfaction	0.299	0.067	0.000	Ha Accepted
H4	Visitor Satisfaction towards Visitor Loyalty	0.602	0.072	0.000	Ha Accepted

Hypothesis testing at National Stadium Singapore displays a distinct pattern: H1 (Interaction, = 0.626,  $p < 0.001$ ), H2 (Environment, = 0.311,  $p < 0.001$ ). and H4 (satisfaction to loyalty, = 0.190,  $p = 0.022$ ) are accepted, while H3 (value, = 0.054,  $p = 0.505$ ) are rejected hypothesis. The interaction dimension of venue quality has the greatest influence on visitor satisfaction at NSS, with the highest coefficient across all NSS tables and more than twice that in the GBK table. A staff member proactively provided event information, assisted, and delivered solutions to visitors. According to a previous study, staff reliability and responsiveness are the most critical factors influencing visitor satisfaction at large-scale entertainment events (Howat et al., 2008; Jia et al., 2025). A venue can be analyzed based on place attraction and identity resulting from interactions with visitors (Kim, 2021). Environmental dimensions also positively and significantly influence satisfaction. Organizers usually choose a venue to consider various factors to achieve visitor satisfaction, including service facilities, design, atmosphere, and ambiance (Abbasian et al., 2021; Borges et al., 2016) NSS has distinctive features, such as adjustable seating, a giant LED screen, a retractable roof, and an active air-cooling system. These findings are consistent with previous research indicating that the environmental aspect of venue quality is a primary component of the service experience that influences customer satisfaction (Ho Voon et al., 2014).

**Table 7.** Result of Hypothesis Testing on Venue Quality at National Stadium Singapore

	Hypothesis Test	Estimate	Standard Deviation	P-Value	Hypothesis
H1	Quality of Venue (Interaction) on Visitor Satisfaction	0.626	0.071	0.000	Ha Accepted
H2	Quality of Venue (Environment) on Visitor Satisfaction	0.311	0.070	0.000	Ha Accepted
H3	Quality of Venue (Value) on Visitor Satisfaction	0.054	0.082	0.505	Ha Rejected
H4	Visitor Satisfaction towards Visitor Loyalty	0.190	0.083	0.022	Ha Accepted

However, it is worth noting that the environmental coefficient in NSS ( $\beta = 0.311$ ) is slightly lower than in GBK ( $\beta = 0.357$ ). This difference reflects structural dynamics. In GBK, where 70,000 visitors share a single physical space, environmental conditions and the availability of facilities shape the experience before human interaction occurs, thereby increasing the environment's relative importance. In NSS, with its smaller capacity of 55,000 and more technology-mediated

comfort management, the contribution of the environment to satisfaction is partially absorbed by the stronger interaction effect.

The most theoretically significant finding in the NSS is the rejection of H3 ( $\beta = 0.054$ ,  $p = 0.505$ ), which states that the value dimension does not strongly influence satisfaction. This result cannot be explained solely by a lack of venue quality. It reflects the phenomenon of perceived value displacement driven by the structure of cross-border concert attendance. From Monroe's (1990) perceived value framework, value is conceptualized as a cognitive trade-off between perceived benefits and perceived sacrifices. For Indonesian visitors attending the NSS, the perceived sacrifice component is structurally increased by external costs outside the venue itself, such as international airfare, accommodation in one of the most expensive cities in Southeast Asia, and currency losses arising from the IDR–SGD exchange rate difference (Rookayyah et al., 2024). These external costs so dominate the total perceived sacrifice that the venue's price and accessibility attributes (the core operationalization of the value dimension) lose their influence on satisfaction. In other words, when total travel expenditure is heavily dominated by pre-arrival costs, visitors' satisfaction evaluations are effectively independent of venue-specific value perceptions. The second mechanism reinforces these findings by drawing on Expectancy Confirmation Theory (Oliver, 1980). International visitors form their satisfaction expectations during the trip planning phase, when they commit to airfare, accommodations, and currency exchange, rather than upon arrival at the venue. By the time they enter the NSS, the hedonic calculations have become anchored in artist-driven motivations rather than venue economics. This is consistent with Mulder and Hitters (2021), who determined that the primary motivation for attending a concert is attraction to the performers, leaving location and ticket price secondary in the overall satisfaction equation. The value dimension, therefore, does not fail because the NSS offers poor value, but because the evaluative framework through which Indonesian cross-border visitors assess the concert experience places less weight on place value relative to performer value.

This context dependent finding advances the perceived value literature by identifying the cost structure of cross-border travel as a moderating condition where the place value-satisfaction relationship breaks down at a boundary condition not previously articulated in the sports or entertainment venue quality literature. Despite the rejected value hypothesis, visitor satisfaction arises from strong interactions and environments venue quality was sufficient to yield modest but statistically significant loyalty ( $\beta = 0.190$ ,  $p < 0.022$ ).

### **Comparative Discussion**

As part of the Music of the Spheres world tour, the coldplay concerts at Gelora Bung Karno Jakarta and National Stadium Singapore represent two of Southeast Asia's most prominent international entertainment events. Both venues hosted concerts of comparable scale for the same music group, making them ideal comparative case studies to examine how venue quality shapes visitor satisfaction and loyalty.

The Interaction dimension of venue quality explains the relationship between venue employees and clients. The venue employees referred to include parking attendants, ushers, ticketing staff, and security personnel (Greenwell et al., 2020). Interaction positively influenced visitor satisfaction at both venues. H1 was accepted at GBK ( $\beta = 0.306$ ) and NSS ( $\beta = 0.626$ ), yet the magnitude differs substantially. At GBK, visitors most valued staff friendliness and information provision, whereas at NSS, visitors greatly appreciated staff responsiveness in resolving problems. The higher NSS coefficient indicates the greater importance of staff guidance for international visitors navigating an unfamiliar venue, corroborating the SERVQUAL finding that the staff service effect is amplified for first-time attendees (Jamal et al., 2025). The S-O-R paradigm (Zhu et al., 2025) explains the mechanism, staff interactions serve as environmental stimuli that activate positive internal states, driving satisfaction as a behavioral response. With a high level of qualification, staff can provide excellent service, overcome challenges that may arise, and ensure the smooth running of the event (Biscaia et al., 2024). The success of an event depends on the quality of interactions among event organizers, staff, and tourists, which strengthen positive experiences and thereby influence both satisfaction and behavioral intentions

(Jia et al., 2025; Lin et al., 2020; Tzetzis et al., 2014). Thus, this study concludes that the venue quality in the interaction aspect has met visitor expectations, thereby influencing satisfaction.

The environment dimension of venue quality encompasses the venue's surroundings, including facilities, comfort, cleanliness, and the event's atmosphere, all of which are primary considerations when choosing an international-scale location (Greenwell et al., 2014). Environmental quality positively influenced satisfaction at both GBK ( $\beta = 0.357$ ) and NSS ( $\beta = 0.311$ ), confirming that both venues meet the qualifications for hosting international-scale events. The higher GBK coefficient reflects the outsized importance of the physical environment for Indonesian visitors at a large-capacity stadium, when 70,000 people share a single space, ambient conditions, layout clarity, and facility availability become the primary experience shapers before any human interaction occurs, enhancing visitors' perceptions of the convenience and enjoyment of the host destination, thereby increasing satisfaction (Milovanović et al., 2021). In line with research by Hind et al. (2023), decor, lighting, and music can create an atmosphere that aligns with the event theme and leaves a lasting impression on the audience. Besides that, NSS's technologically advanced infrastructure, adjustable seating, retractable roof, and active air-cooling delivered consistent comfort, though its coefficient was slightly lower; visitors' satisfaction there was more strongly governed by interaction quality. Servicescape theory (Bitner, 1992; Fakfare et al., 2025) explains that the physical, technological, and symbolic dimensions of the environment generate affective responses that aggregate into overall satisfaction evaluations. By paying attention to venue design, atmosphere, and comfort, event organizers can increase participant satisfaction and achieve overall event goals (Berridge, 2020). Consequently, this study concludes that venue quality in the environmental aspect has met Indonesian visitors' expectations for comfort and safety during the Coldplay concert which influences satisfaction.

The value dimension of venue quality in this study encompasses price, accessibility, and added value (Greenwell et al., 2014). At GBK, value quality significantly influenced satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.299$ ); the variety of pricing options offered, multi-modal accessibility, and surrounding accommodation enabled visitors to perceive their total expenditure as commensurate with benefits received, consistent with the perceived value framework (Monroe, 1990). This finding aligns with (Jeong & Kim, 2019), who found that perceived value has a significant impact on tourist satisfaction, providing empirical evidence that tourist satisfaction fully mediates the relation between perceived value and destination loyalty at sporting events. Generally, Coldplay ticket prices in Jakarta tend to be higher than those for other music concerts due to the band's popularity, production, and operational costs, but travel costs are relatively low and remain within the same country. The Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy's statement on the factors behind the high price of Coldplay tickets in Indonesia has a strong basis. It highlighted the concentration of concert organizing costs into a single day as one of the primary factors. The GBK venue is strategically located with easy access to several star-rated hotels, shopping centers, and various culinary options. This provides convenience for spectators, especially those from out of town, as indicated by respondent data from Kalimantan, Sumatra, and Java, to enjoy diverse entertainment options. The proximity to these facilities makes the total concert expenditure feel more worthwhile.

At NSS, value quality did not significantly influence visitors' satisfaction from Indonesia ( $\beta = 0.054$ ,  $p = 0.505$ ). The high total cost of cross-border travel, including airfare, inflated accommodation, and currency disadvantages, dominated cost perceptions and weakened the value's contribution to satisfaction. This result is supported by (Armbrecht, 2021), who found that when consumers perceive less value, they are less likely to feel satisfaction and to recommend or revisit an event, which may be due to comparatively greater financial and logistical costs. For Indonesian visitors attending events in Singapore, the currency disadvantage amplifies the perceived sacrifice component in the value equation (Monroe, 1990). Additionally, the primary motivation to attend a concert is interest in the performers rather than a preference for the venue (Mulder & Hitters, 2021).

The difference in value coefficients between locations in GBK ( $\beta = 0.299$ , significant) compared to NSS ( $\beta = 0.054$ , not significant) is the most analytically important finding of this comparative study. This is not simply a difference in degree, but a difference in kind at GBK, value serves as an active driver of satisfaction, while at NSS, value is effectively rendered

insignificant due to the structural dominance of cross-border travel costs. This finding has a direct parallel in the tourism price competitiveness literature, where differences in destination currencies have been shown to alter tourists' perceived sacrifice calculations in ways that alter the standard quality satisfaction relationship (Rookayyah et al., 2024). Overall, the value coefficients across the two locations reveal that the same location quality dimensions can make a meaningful contribution or become statistically irrelevant, depending entirely on the economic and geographic context surrounding the tourist's presence. These findings challenge venue managers and event promoters to reconceptualize value not as a universal quality attribute, but as a context-sensitive construct that should be evaluated in relation to the total cost burden borne by the target visitor segment.

Visitor satisfaction positively influenced loyalty at both GBK ( $\beta = 0.602$ ) and NSS ( $\beta = 0.190$ ). The markedly stronger GBK path reflects the structural advantage. This is evident in all venue elements prepared by management, which were designed with visitors in mind. There was positive interaction among venue staff, visitors, facilities, and the environment, which supported visitor comfort and perceived value, particularly when the costs incurred were deemed commensurate with the benefits received. Finally, the audience felt satisfied with the quality of the Gelora Bung Karno venue and expressed a willingness to recommend the experience and attend similar concerts in the future. This research is consistent with customer satisfaction theory, which holds that high satisfaction levels lead to customer loyalty (Kotler et al., 2018). Essentially, if visitors feel satisfied with an event, they will become loyal (Yuruk et al., 2017). At NSS, despite the rejected value hypothesis, satisfaction from strong interaction and environmental venue quality was sufficient to yield modest but statistically significant loyalty. Visitors expressed a willingness to recommend NSS and to attend future concerts, although the statistical data were significantly weaker than those for GBK. Several previous studies have shown that consumer satisfaction significantly influences the likelihood of recommending and revisiting an event (Erhan & Bangun, 2025; Tan et al., 2023). Both findings together suggest that venue managers can reliably build loyalty through satisfaction, but the conversion efficiency depends critically on the structural conditions of their visitor base.

## Conclusions

Based on the research conducted, venue quality significantly influenced visitor satisfaction at the Coldplay concerts at both GBK and NSS, with the three dimensions being interaction, environment, and value, contributing variously across venues. First, regarding the interaction dimension, both GBK and NSS successfully created a positive experience between visitors and staff, albeit with different quality emphases: GBK visitors most valued the friendliness and warmth of staff, while NSS visitors prioritized staff responsiveness and problem-solving efficiency, in line with the higher guidance needs of first-time international visitors. Second, both venues met international standards in the environmental dimension, with comprehensive facilities and immersive atmospheres; however, GBK's thermal comfort remains an area for improvement, given Jakarta's climate. Third, the value dimension yielded the most contextually distinct findings: GBK visitors perceived strong added value due to flexible pricing tiers, multi-modal accessibility, and the surrounding integrated hospitality ecosystem, whereas in the present study setting, where respondents were cross-border visitors incurring substantial pre-arrival costs, including international airfare, accommodation in Singapore, and currency exchange with an unfavorable IDR–SGD exchange rate. The value dimension did not significantly influence satisfaction in NSS ( $\beta = 0.054$ ,  $p = 0.505$ ). It reflects the structural reality that when total perceived sacrifice is dominated by pre-arrival expenditures beyond the venue's control, venue-level value attributes lose their discriminatory influence on satisfaction evaluations. Overall, both GBK and NSS successfully delivered positive venue experiences that led to visitor satisfaction, which in turn drove loyalty outcomes, with participants indicating a willingness to return and recommend both venues to others. This research provides a significant theoretical contribution to event management and service quality literature. The central theoretical advancement lies in demonstrating that venue quality is not a rigid, singular concept but rather a context-sensitive construct whose dimensional weights shift according to the geographical and economic conditions

surrounding the event and the characteristics of the attendees. In other words, the most influential aspects of venue quality can vary depending on where the event is held and who attends. One of the most interesting theoretical findings is the breakdown of the absolute relationship between value and visitor satisfaction at the National Stadium Singapore (NSS). This indicates that in the phenomenon of international concert, high external costs such as airfare, accommodation, and cost of living can sever that correlation. When travel costs swell, satisfaction is sustained purely by the quality of the artist's performance rather than the economic value offered by the venue. Furthermore, this study demonstrates variations in interaction quality; Gelora Bung Karno (GBK) visitors tend to value affective aspects like staff friendliness more highly, while NSS visitors prioritize functional quality in the form of service speed and efficiency in the venue. In practical terms, the results of this study formulate several crucial managerial recommendations for venue managers and music promoters, The primary focus that must be immediately addressed is the modernization of the air-conditioning system to improve the thermal comfort of spectators amidst Jakarta's climates. Since staff friendliness is proven to be a competitive advantage for GBK, hospitality training for field officers must be maintained. For NSS, the practical recommendations provided not only beyond just improving visitor flow speed. Using a real-time crowd monitoring system can help staff quickly move to crowded areas during busy periods. NSS should also create a special program to assist international visitors, such as signs in multiple languages, a mobile app for navigation and digital payments, to ensure international visitors feel guided and comfortable throughout their visit. Although this research provides deep insights, there are several limitations that offer gaps for future research development. The limitation of this study is the scope of respondents, which only focuses on the perspective of visitors from Indonesia. This limits a more global understanding, as the expectations of international tourists regarding venue facilities and value could differ significantly the dominance of quantitative methods successfully mapped what visitors felt but was not yet able to explain why those preferences were formed. The use of in-depth interviews or focus group discussions is highly recommended to explore the psychological motives of spectators more organically. Replicating the research across different music genres or sports events would be useful to determine if visitor expectations regarding venue quality are consistent or change depending on the type of event.

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## Sustainable spiritual tourism experience: Transforming melukat ritual in Sawan Village, Bali

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**Abstract:** This study explores the transformation of the Melukat ritual into a spiritual tourism experience and examines its contribution to sustainable tourism development in Sawan Village. A qualitative approach was employed using purposive sampling to select key informants, including local community members, traditional leaders, temple stakeholders, and tourism actors involved in or knowledgeable about the Melukat ritual at Pura Batu Bolong. Data were collected through field observations, in-depth semi-structured interviews, and document analysis, and were analyzed using inductive thematic analysis. The findings reveal that the Melukat ritual can be systematically transformed into a spiritual tourism experience through the preservation of ritual authenticity, community-based governance, and active tourist participation. The ritual generates transformative experiences, including purification, emotional healing, inner peace, and self-reflection, which attract both domestic and international tourists seeking meaningful and spiritually enriching journeys. These experiences contribute to spiritual sustainability by safeguarding the sacredness of holy water and the spirit of place, while simultaneously supporting sustainable rural development through cultural preservation, environmental conservation, and local economic opportunities. Nevertheless, its tourism potential remains underdeveloped due to limited promotion, weak destination management, and the absence of structured governance and carrying-capacity regulations. This study contributes to spiritual tourism literature by proposing an integrated framework linking ritual transformation, transformative tourist experiences, spiritual sustainability, and sustainable rural development. The findings also offer practical insights for local stakeholders to design tourism experiences that maintain ritual sacredness while enhancing community welfare and destination competitiveness.

**Keywords:** Community Based Tourism, Melukat Ritual, Spiritual Tourism, Sustainable Rural Tourism, Tourist Experience, Village Tourism

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### Introduction

Spiritual tourism has gained increasing attention within contemporary tourism studies as tourists seek not only leisure and entertainment but also meaningful experiences that foster inner healing, self-reflection, personal transformation, and spiritual fulfilment. This shift reflects a broader transition from consumption-oriented tourism toward experience-oriented tourism, where visitors actively engage with local cultures, traditions, and belief systems. Bali represents a particularly relevant context for spiritual tourism due to its strong cultural identity, living religious traditions, and the integration of spirituality into everyday community life. Among the many spiritual practices embedded within Balinese Hinduism, *Melukat* a sacred purification ritual involving holy water holds significant potential as a tourism experience that combines spirituality, culture, and local wisdom. Beyond its religious function, *Melukat* provides opportunities for participants to experience sacred atmospheres, emotional renewal, and deeper connections with local spiritual values (Choe & Mahyuni, 2023; Şahin & Güzel, 2024).

Spiritual tourism is commonly understood as travel motivated by the search for meaning, transcendence, healing, and personal growth. According to Şahin & Güzel (2024) spiritual tourism

experiences encompass several interconnected dimensions, including transformation, healing, sacred atmosphere, transcendence, escape from daily routines, and divine connectedness. These dimensions align closely with the characteristics of the *Melukat* ritual, which engages participants physically, emotionally, and spiritually through a process of self-purification. Consequently, *Melukat* can be viewed not merely as a cultural attraction but as an immersive and transformative tourism experience in which visitors actively participate rather than passively observe. This perspective is consistent with contemporary tourism trends that emphasize co-created experiences, authenticity, and meaningful engagement with local communities and traditions (Buzinde, 2020; Şahin & Güzel, 2024).

The growing interest in transformative tourism has also encouraged scholars to examine the role of rituals in shaping tourist experiences and destination identity. Rituals contribute to emotional engagement, symbolic meaning, and the construction of memorable experiences that differentiate destinations from conventional tourism products. Research suggests that rituals can enhance tourist participation and cultural understanding. However, the integration of sacred rituals into tourism systems remains a complex issue because tourism development often introduces commercial pressures that may alter ritual meanings and practices (Chen et al., 2024). As a result, the transformation of rituals into tourism experiences requires careful consideration of cultural authenticity, community authority, and the preservation of sacred values.

Despite increasing scholarly attention to ritual-based tourism, existing literature tends to approach ritual transformation primarily through the lens of commodification, often portraying the process as a linear conversion of sacred practices into tourism products. Such perspectives insufficiently address the dynamic negotiations that occur between religious meanings, community interests, cultural preservation, and tourism market demands. In reality, ritual transformation involves ongoing interactions among multiple stakeholders who seek to balance economic opportunities with the protection of sacred traditions. Consequently, there remains a need for a more integrated analytical framework capable of explaining how sacred rituals can be transformed into tourism experiences while preserving their spiritual significance and cultural integrity. This theoretical gap is particularly relevant in destinations where religious practices remain actively embedded within community life.

From a sustainability perspective, the development of spiritual tourism requires balancing economic benefits with cultural preservation, environmental protection, and community participation. Romanelli et al., (2021) argue that religious and pilgrimage tourism can contribute to local development when managed through collaborative stakeholder approaches. However, conventional sustainability frameworks often emphasize economic, social, and environmental dimensions while overlooking spiritual sustainability, including the preservation of sacred meanings, ritual authenticity, and the spirit of place. This limitation is especially important in spiritual destinations where cultural and religious values constitute the primary tourism resource. The challenge therefore extends beyond maintaining physical resources and visitor satisfaction to safeguarding living spiritual systems that provide meaning to both local communities and visitors.

This issue is particularly significant in Bali, where tourism development has generated contrasting patterns between highly commercialized destinations in the south and less-developed rural areas that continue to maintain strong cultural and spiritual traditions. While South Bali has experienced intensive tourism growth accompanied by increasing commodification of cultural elements, many rural communities continue to preserve authentic ritual practices and community-based governance systems. Within this context, Sawan Village in Buleleng Regency offers a compelling case for examining the relationship between spirituality, tourism, and sustainability. The village possesses significant natural, cultural, and spiritual resources, including the *Melukat* ritual conducted at Pura Batu Bolong, where holy water from a sacred spring is believed to facilitate purification, healing, and spiritual balance. Importantly, the ritual remains governed by customary regulations designed to maintain sacredness and protect the site from spiritual pollution, locally known as *leteh*.

Despite its considerable potential, the spiritual tourism value of *Melukat* in Sawan Village remains relatively underdeveloped due to limited promotion, insufficient destination management, and the absence of structured governance mechanisms that regulate visitor

management and carrying capacity. Without appropriate safeguards, tourism development may contribute to ritual commodification, environmental degradation, and the weakening of local community authority over cultural heritage. These challenges highlight the need for tourism models that simultaneously support economic opportunities, ritual preservation, environmental sustainability, and community empowerment.

Previous studies have examined spiritual tourism experiences, transformative tourism, ritual transformation in tourism contexts, sustainable religious tourism development, and the preservation of sacred places. Nevertheless, these studies remain fragmented in their analytical focus and rarely integrate ritual transformation, sacredness preservation, community-based governance, transformative tourist experiences, spiritual sustainability, and sustainable rural development within a single conceptual framework. Addressing this gap, the present study explores how the *Melukat* ritual at Pura Batu Bolong can be transformed into a sustainable spiritual tourism experience and examines its contribution to tourism development in Sawan Village. By proposing an integrated framework linking ritual transformation, community-based governance, transformative experiences, spiritual sustainability, and sustainable rural development, this study contributes both theoretically and practically to the growing discourse on spiritual tourism and sustainable destination management. Other scholars have also emphasized the importance of preserving sacred places and spiritual sustainability within tourism systems (Aulet & Duda, 2020).

## Methodology

### Research Design and Study Site

This study employed a qualitative research approach to explore the transformation of the *Melukat* ritual into a spiritual tourism experience and its contribution to sustainable tourism development in Sawan Village, Bali. A qualitative approach was selected because it enables an in-depth understanding of social phenomena, meanings, interactions, and cultural practices within their natural context (Dull & Reinhardt, 2014).

The research was conducted at Pura Batu Bolong in Sawan Village, Buleleng Regency, Bali. The site was selected because it is recognized for its *Melukat* ritual and sacred water source, which embody significant spiritual, cultural, and tourism values. As a living religious site that continues to be governed through customary regulations, Pura Batu Bolong provides an appropriate context for examining how spiritual traditions can be developed as tourism attractions while maintaining their authenticity and sacredness.

### Participant Selection

Participants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure that all informants possessed relevant knowledge, experience, and involvement related to the *Melukat* ritual and its tourism potential. Purposive sampling is widely used in qualitative research because it enables the selection of information-rich participants capable of providing in-depth insights relevant to the research objectives (Sharp, 2003).

Three selection criteria were applied: (1) active involvement in the management, preservation, or utilization of Pura Batu Bolong; (2) substantial knowledge of the history, spiritual meaning, and customary regulations associated with the *Melukat* ritual; and (3) the ability to explain the tourism potential and community implications of ritual-based tourism development. A total of six key informants participated in this study, representing diverse yet complementary perspectives on the spiritual, cultural, environmental, governance, and economic dimensions of the *Melukat* ritual. Data collection continued until thematic saturation was reached, where no substantially new information emerged from subsequent interviews.

**Table 1.** Profile of research informants

Code	Informant Role	Duration of Involvement	Relevance to the Study
R1	Customary Leader (Bendesa Adat)	More than 10 years in customary governance and ritual oversight	Responsible for customary governance, implementation of <i>awig-awig</i> (customary

R2	Deputy Customary Leader (Wakil Kelian Desa Adat)	More than 5 years assisting in customary and ritual management	law), and the preservation of religious and socio-cultural life in Sawan Village. Supports the implementation of customary regulations, visitor coordination, and oversight of ritual activities and community participation.
R3	Traditional Figure	More than 70 years of cultural and historical involvement	Possesses extensive historical knowledge regarding the origin, development, and sacred significance of Pura Batu Bolong and the tradition of <i>nunas tirta</i> .
R4	Community Leader	More than 20 years of involvement in community and religious activities	Provides insights into customary procedures, community values, and the importance of preserving ritual authenticity and sacred meaning.
R5	Local Resident	Lifelong participation as a community member and regular temple user	Familiar with local beliefs regarding the healing properties of the sacred water and the environmental significance of the holy spring.
R6	Community Stakeholder	More than 10 years of involvement in local community and tourism-related activities	Identifies potential economic opportunities for local residents through offerings, food, and other supporting services for visitors.

Source: Primary data collected by the authors, 2025.

Research informants are determined using purposive sampling. This technique is applied to select individuals who possess relevant knowledge, experience, and direct involvement in the *Melukat* ritual and tourism development in Sawan Village. Purposive sampling is appropriate in qualitative research as it allows the researcher to obtain in-depth information aligned with the research focus (Sharp, 2003).

### Data Collection

Data were collected between August 2024 and March 2025 through field observations, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. Multiple data collection methods were employed to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the *Melukat* ritual and to strengthen the credibility of the findings through methodological triangulation.

Field observations were conducted during several visits to Pura Batu Bolong. The researchers acted as non-participant observers and documented the physical setting, ritual procedures, visitor behaviour, community involvement, supporting facilities, and environmental conditions using field notes and an observation checklist. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with six key informants to explore perceptions regarding the spiritual significance of *Melukat*, tourism development opportunities, community participation, management challenges, and sustainability concerns. Documentary materials, including village documents and supporting records, were also reviewed to provide contextual information and support data triangulation.

### Data Analysis

The data were analysed using Braun and Clarke's reflexive thematic analysis approach (Byrne, 2022). This approach was selected because it allows themes to emerge inductively from participants' experiences and perspectives rather than being imposed through predetermined theoretical categories. The analysis began with repeated reading of interview transcripts, observation notes, and documentary materials to achieve familiarity with the data. Meaningful segments of text were then coded manually and grouped into broader categories through an iterative process of comparison and interpretation. Subsequently, related categories were refined into overarching themes that represented recurring patterns across the dataset. Major themes emerging from the analysis included Spiritual Healing, Active Tourist Participation, Community Based Economic Opportunities, Cultural Preservation, and Environmental Sustainability.

Manual coding was selected because the dataset was relatively small and consisted of six in-depth interviews, observation records, and supporting documents. This approach enabled close

engagement with the data and facilitated continuous comparison between emerging codes, field observations, and contextual meanings. The researcher repeatedly reviewed transcripts and compared findings across different data sources to ensure consistency and analytical rigor throughout the coding process.

### Reflexivity

Given the researchers' familiarity with Balinese culture and religious traditions, reflexivity was maintained throughout the research process. Reflexive notes were used to critically examine assumptions, interpretations, and potential biases during data collection and analysis. During observations and interviews involving sacred practices, the researchers adopted a respectful and non-intrusive stance and complied with local cultural protocols and customary regulations.

### Trustworthiness and Ethical Considerations

To enhance trustworthiness, the study employed source triangulation and method triangulation. Source triangulation involved comparing information obtained from different informants, while method triangulation compared findings derived from interviews, observations, and documentary sources. Member checking was also conducted by confirming key interpretations with selected participants to ensure that the findings accurately reflected their perspectives.

Participation in the study was voluntary, and all participants were informed of the research objectives prior to data collection. The researchers respected customary regulations and cultural protocols throughout the study, particularly when observing and discussing sacred rituals at Pura Batu Bolong.

## Results and Discussions

### Results

The findings revealed five interrelated themes that explain the transformation of the *Melukat* ritual into a sustainable spiritual tourism experience in Sawan Village: Spiritual Value, Tourism Experience, Economic Impact, Cultural Preservation, and Environmental Sustainability. Together, these themes illustrate the relationships among ritual transformation, community participation, and sustainability.

Table 2 presents illustrative examples of how interview excerpts were interpreted and organized into broader analytical themes.

**Table 2.** Illustrative examples of theme development

Informant Quote (Verbatim)	Initial Code	Theme
R1 (Customary Leader): " <i>Melukat</i> in Sawan is focused on spiritual tourism, not for commercial purposes, but for seeking tranquility, self-purification, and inner cleansing."	Spiritual purification, inner peace, non-commercial orientation	Spiritual Value
R2 (Deputy Customary Leader): "Visitors are expected to come with sincere intentions, not merely to create social media content that may diminish the sacred atmosphere of the ritual."	Respectful participation and meaningful engagement	Tourism Experience
R3 (Traditional Figure): "Pura Batu Bolong was originally a place for <i>nunas tirta</i> , where people came to request holy water believed to bring purification and spiritual peace."	Historical sacred function and healing significance	Spiritual Value
R4 (Community Leader): "The ritual must continue to follow customary procedures so that its sacred meaning and authenticity are preserved."	Ritual authenticity and customary regulation	Cultural Preservation
R5 (Local Resident): "The holy water flowing from the rocks is believed to help heal certain skin diseases."	Importance of sacred water resource	Environmental Sustainability

R6 (Community Stakeholder): "Local residents can provide offerings, food, and other supporting services for visitors."	Community income opportunities	Economic Impact
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Source: Author's analysis based on interview transcripts

The identified themes provide the analytical foundation for understanding how the *Melukat* ritual can be transformed into a sustainable spiritual tourism experience. The following sections discuss each theme and its implications for spiritual tourism development in Sawan Village.

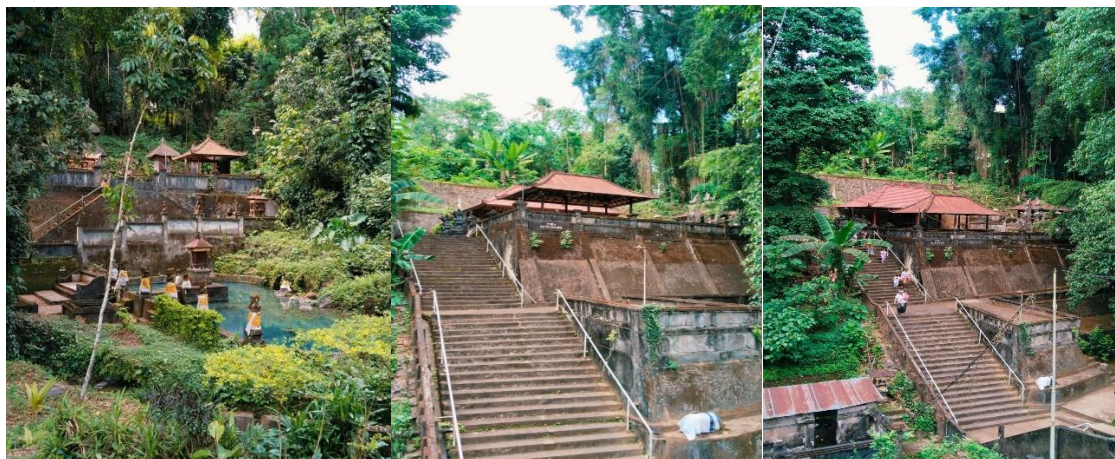
### *Melukat as a Spiritual Tourism Experience*

The findings indicate that the *Melukat* ritual at Pura Batu Bolong in Sawan Village has strong potential to be developed as an experience-based spiritual tourism attraction. As the Customary Leader (R1) explained, "Melukat in Sawan is not intended for commercial purposes, but for seeking inner peace, self-purification, and spiritual cleansing." This statement confirms that the primary value of the ritual lies in its sacred and transformative meaning rather than in its economic potential. During field observations, visitors were observed preparing offerings, waiting quietly near the sacred spring, and following purification procedures under the guidance of temple custodians. Many participants engaged in silent prayer and remained in the temple area after the ritual for reflection and meditation. These observations indicate that Pura Batu Bolong offers a sacred atmosphere and participatory setting that support transformation, healing, and emotional release.

The uniqueness of this ritual lies in the use of holy water flowing from natural rock formations, which is believed by the local community to carry meanings of purification, healing, and inner balance. In the context of spiritual tourism, the primary strength of *Melukat* does not merely reside in the beauty of the site or the uniqueness of the ritual itself, but in the inner experience felt by tourists during the purification process. This aligns with (Şahin & Güzel, 2024), who explain that spiritual tourism experiences encompass dimensions such as transformation, healing, atmosphere, transcendence, escape, and divine connectedness.

Field observations conducted during several visits revealed that visitors generally demonstrated respectful and focused behavior throughout the *Melukat* ritual process. Most participants wore traditional Balinese attire and followed the purification procedures solemnly and attentively. Some visitors appeared deeply engaged in prayer and self-reflection during the ritual, while others interacted respectfully with local community members to seek information regarding ritual procedures and temple regulations without disrupting ongoing religious activities. Visitors who came only to observe the ritual were also expected to follow temple regulations. During the observation process, individuals who did not wear appropriate traditional Balinese attire were not permitted to enter the sacred ritual area. These practices demonstrate that local customary rules and community supervision play an important role in maintaining the sacredness and spiritual integrity of the ritual despite increasing tourism interest. The observations further indicate that visitor participation in the *Melukat* ritual is shaped not merely by tourism consumption, but by spiritual engagement, cultural respect, and adherence to local religious values.

*Melukat* is not only a ritual activity but also a holistic tourism experience that involves the body, emotions, beliefs, and sacred atmosphere. Tourists participating in *Melukat* do not merely observe the ritual process but actively engage in each stage of purification. This level of involvement enables tourists to gain more personal, reflective, and meaningful experiences. (Cheer et al., 2017) highlight that spiritual tourism provides space for individuals to step away from daily routines and engage in spiritual quests through travel.



(Source: Author's documentation, 2025)

**Figure 1.** Picture of Pura Batu Bolong

Figure 1 presents Pura Batu Bolong as the physical and spiritual setting of the *Melukat* ritual in Sawan Village, Buleleng Regency, Bali. The images highlight several landscape and environmental characteristics that support its development as a spiritual tourism destination. The temple is situated within a lush forested area characterized by dense tropical vegetation, natural rock formations, and a tranquil atmosphere. The left image shows the holy water pool, which serves as the central element of the *Melukat* ritual. Surrounded by greenery and temple shrines, the water source illustrates the close relationship between spirituality and the natural environment. In the Balinese Hindu context, holy water (*tirta*) functions not only as a medium for ritual cleansing but also as a symbol of healing, balance, and spiritual renewal. The central and right images reveal the scale of the temple complex and the surrounding forest, emphasizing the sense of seclusion, serenity, and connection with nature that enhances the visitor experience.

From an observational perspective, Figure 1 demonstrates several elements that support spiritual tourism developments. The presence of a sacred natural setting that creates a peaceful and contemplative atmosphere, the holy water source as the core ritual and symbolic resource, temple architecture and shrines that reinforce cultural authenticity, wide access pathways that accommodate visitors while maintaining ritual order and the integration of built and natural environments that preserves the spirit of place. The visible presence of visitors in the temple area also suggests that the site is accessible and capable of accommodating tourism activities without diminishing its sacred character.

Overall, Figure 1 provides visual evidence that Pura Batu Bolong offers more than a scenic attraction. The combination of sacred water, temple structures, forest surroundings, and tranquil atmosphere creates an environment conducive to purification, emotional healing, and self-reflection. These characteristics support the argument that the *Melukat* ritual at Pura Batu Bolong possesses strong potential to be developed as an authentic and sustainable spiritual tourism experience rooted in cultural preservation and environmental stewardship.

Based on observations and interviews, several key themes emerge in the development of *Melukat* tourism in Sawan Village. These themes include spiritual values, tourist experiences, economic impacts, cultural preservation, and environmental sustainability. Together, these themes demonstrate that *Melukat* cannot be understood solely as a religious ritual or a tourism attraction, but rather as a multidimensional experience that integrates spiritual, social, economic, cultural, and ecological aspects simultaneously. A summary of these key themes is presented in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Key themes of *Melukat* tourism development

No	Theme	Description
1	Spiritual Value	<i>Melukat</i> as a purification ritual with healing meaning
2	Tourism Experience	Tourists actively participate in the ritual
3	Economic Impact	Increased income through tourism services
4	Cultural Preservation	Maintaining Balinese traditions and rituals

5	Environmental Sustainability	Protection of sacred water resources
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Source: Author's analysis, 2026.

Table 3 shows that spiritual value serves as the primary foundation in the development of *Melukat* tourism. *Melukat* is understood as a purification ritual that embodies healing in physical, emotional, and spiritual dimensions. This value distinguishes *Melukat* from conventional cultural tourism attractions. While cultural tourism often positions tourists as observers, *Melukat* provides space for them to directly experience the process of self-purification. This finding reinforces (Buzinde, 2020) argument that spiritual tourism is closely related to the search for meaning, self-reflection, and subjective well-being.

The second theme in the table highlights that the *Melukat* tourism experience is participatory in nature. Tourists are not merely spectators but actively engage in the ritual process under the guidance of temple priests (*pemangku*) or local facilitators. This participation creates a deeper experience, as tourists directly encounter the sacred atmosphere, the touch of holy water, prayers, and ritual procedures. This aligns with the concept of experiential spiritual tourism, which emphasizes direct involvement, emotional engagement, and personal meaning-making in tourism activities (Şahin & Güzel, 2024).

The economic theme in the table indicates that the development of *Melukat* tourism can generate income opportunities for local communities. Spiritual tourism activities may stimulate the emergence of services such as guides, ritual facilitators, food and beverage providers, local transportation, accommodation, and souvenirs. However, these economic benefits must be managed carefully to avoid shifting the sacred meaning of the ritual into mere tourism commodification. (Choe & Mahyuni, 2023) emphasize that spiritual tourism development in Bali should be inclusive, community-based, and provide direct benefits to local communities.

The themes of cultural preservation and environmental sustainability reveal that *Melukat* carries two primary responsibilities. First, the ritual must be preserved in accordance with the values, procedures, and cultural authority of the local community. Second, the holy water source as the core element of the ritual must be protected from pollution and pressures resulting from tourism activities. (Aulet & Duda, 2020) argue that the sustainability of sacred sites largely depends on the ability of stakeholders to maintain their original meaning, spiritual values, and sense of place. Therefore, the development of *Melukat* as a spiritual tourism attraction must balance tourist experience, cultural preservation, economic benefits, and environmental protection.

The potential of *Melukat* as a form of spiritual tourism has been clearly identified. The ritual demonstrates strong attributes in its sacred values, participatory experience, local economic potential, cultural preservation, and the sustainability of water resources. The five themes presented in Table 3 indicate that *Melukat* can be developed as an authentic and sustainable spiritual tourism experience. These findings contribute to the broader discourse on spiritual tourism by demonstrating that local rituals in Balinese villages can serve as sources of transformative experiences, rather than merely functioning as complementary cultural attractions or commercial wellness products (Bowers & Cheer, 2017; Choe & Mahyuni, 2023; Şahin & Güzel, 2024).

### *Economic Potential and Strengthening Community-Based Tourism*

The findings indicate that the development of *Melukat* tourism can create economic opportunities for the local community of Sawan Village. These opportunities may arise through services such as local guiding, provision of ritual materials, food and beverages, local transportation, accommodation, and souvenirs. This finding suggests that *Melukat* not only holds spiritual value but can also function as a driver of the local economy when managed under the principles of community-based tourism. (Choe & Mahyuni, 2023) emphasize that the development of spiritual tourism in Bali should adopt an inclusive model that actively involves local communities and supports small-scale rural enterprises.

As stated by a community stakeholder (R6), "Local residents can provide offerings, food, and other supporting services for visitors." This statement demonstrates that spiritual tourism

can generate direct income opportunities for local households while encouraging the growth of small-scale community enterprises. The economic potential identified in this study is closely linked to the spiritual and experiential dimensions of the *Melukat* ritual. The sacred value of the ritual attracts visitors seeking purification, healing, and inner peace. As the number of visitors increases, demand for supporting services also expands, allowing community members to participate as guides, offering providers, food vendors, transportation operators, and homestay hosts. In this way, the spiritual experience becomes the foundation for destination attractiveness, which subsequently creates local economic benefits.

However, the findings also indicate that economic development should not be separated from cultural and environmental considerations. As emphasized by the Customary Leader (R1), "*Melukat* in Sawan is focused on spiritual tourism, not for commercial purposes, but for seeking tranquility, self-purification, and inner cleansing." This statement highlights those economic activities must remain subordinate to the primary spiritual purpose of the ritual. Tourism development should therefore enhance community welfare without reducing *Melukat* to a purely commercial product.

The themes identified in this study are strongly interconnected. Spiritual value forms the foundation of the tourism experience, which generates destination attractiveness and economic opportunities. At the same time, these benefits can only be sustained when cultural authenticity is preserved through customary regulations (R4) and when the sacred water source is protected as an essential environmental resource (R5). This relationship demonstrates that economic impact is not an isolated outcome but part of an integrated system linking ritual transformation, transformative experiences, cultural preservation, and environmental sustainability.

These findings suggest that the development of *Melukat* tourism should follow the principles of community-based tourism, in which local communities act as owners, managers, and primary beneficiaries. The active involvement of customary institutions, village leaders, and local residents is essential to ensure that economic gains are distributed equitably while maintaining the sacred character of the ritual. When managed in this way, *Melukat* tourism can strengthen rural livelihoods and contribute to sustainable tourism development in Sawan Village.

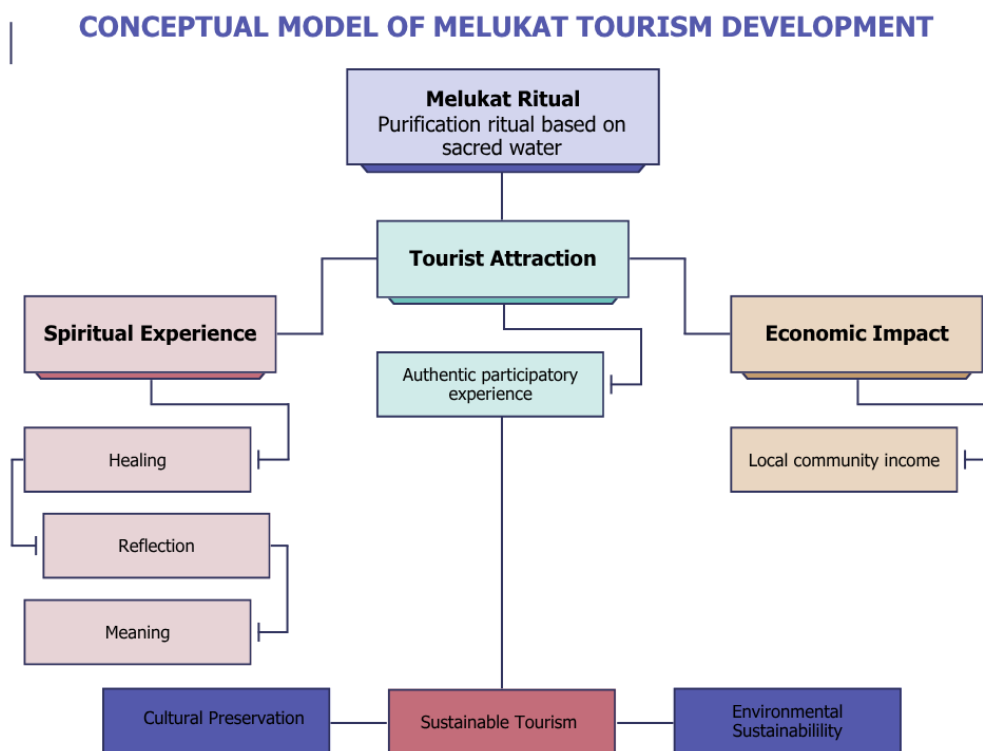
These economic potentials do not emerge independently from the spiritual values of the ritual. On the contrary, the spiritual value of *Melukat* forms the foundation of the tourism experience, which in turn generates destination attractiveness. When this attractiveness is effectively managed, it encourages tourists to engage with local services such as guides, transportation, food, accommodation, and souvenir products. Therefore, the relationship between ritual, experience, attractiveness, economic impact, and sustainability can be understood as an interconnected development pathway. This relationship model is illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 2 illustrates that the *Melukat* ritual serves as the starting point for the development of spiritual tourism in Sawan Village. The ritual generates a spiritual experience, as tourists gain opportunities for purification, self-reflection, inner peace, and connection with local cultural values. This spiritual experience subsequently forms a tourist attraction, as visitors not only enjoy the physical setting but also engage in meaningful experiences. This finding aligns with (Şahin & Güzel, 2024), who argue that spiritual tourism experiences encompass dimensions such as transformation, healing, atmosphere, transcendence, escape, and divine connectedness.

The next stage in the model shows that tourist attraction can generate economic impact for the local community. As tourists visit to participate in *Melukat*, the demand for supporting services increases. Local residents can engage as guides, providers of ritual materials, parking attendants, food vendors, homestay operators, transportation providers, and small business actors. (Romanelli et al., 2021) explain that religious and spiritual tourism can contribute to local socio-economic growth when managed through collaboration among stakeholders.

However, these economic benefits can only be sustained if local communities become the primary actors in tourism management. The community should not merely function as a cultural backdrop or supporting labor, but must hold roles as owners, managers, and main beneficiaries. This principle is crucial to prevent economic leakage, external domination, and unequal distribution of benefits. (Choe & Mahyuni, 2023) emphasize that spiritual tourism in Bali should support small enterprises and local communities to ensure more inclusive tourism development.

Figure 2 also emphasizes that economic impact must be directed toward sustainable tourism. This means that increasing community income should not compromise the sacred values of the ritual, local social structures, or the preservation of water resources. If development focuses solely on increasing visitor numbers, *Melukat* risks becoming commodified. (Chen et al., 2024) note that while rituals can shape tourism experiences and meanings, their development requires a clear management framework to prevent them from being reduced to mere tourist consumption. From a promotional perspective, Pura Batu Bolong is still not widely recognized as a spiritual tourism destination. This condition highlights the need for communication strategies that emphasize the uniqueness of the ritual, the significance of holy water, visitation ethics, and benefits for local communities. Promotion should not focus solely on visual appeal but must also convey the meaning of the experience gained by tourists. (Şahin & Güzel, 2024) stress that spiritual tourism marketing should recognize that tourists seek meaning, healing, and transformative experiences, rather than merely physical facilities.



(Source: Author's elaboration, 2026)

**Figure 2.** Conceptual model of *Melukat* tourism development

Figure 2 further clarifies that the development of *Melukat* tourism should be conducted in a gradual and integrated manner. The *Melukat* ritual forms the foundation of the spiritual experience; this experience becomes the tourist attraction; the attraction creates economic opportunities; and these economic impacts must be directed toward sustainable tourism. These findings address the research objective by demonstrating that *Melukat* plays a significant role in supporting tourism development in Sawan Village. However, this role must be managed through a community-based approach, educational promotion, stakeholder collaboration, and the protection of the ritual's sacred values.

## Cultural and Environmental Sustainability in the Development of Melukat Tourism

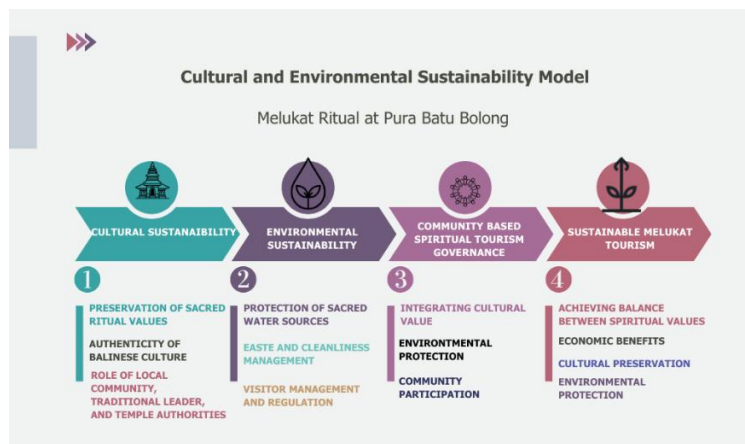
The findings indicate that cultural and environmental sustainability form the primary foundation for the development of *Melukat* tourism at Pura Batu Bolong, Sawan Village. The *Melukat* ritual depends not only on the existence of sacred spaces and religious practices but also on the quality of the natural environment that supports it, particularly the holy water source. Therefore, the development of *Melukat* tourism cannot be solely oriented toward increasing visitor numbers but must also focus on preserving the sacredness of the ritual, cultural authenticity, and environmental sustainability simultaneously (Aulet & Duda, 2020; Yanti et al., 2024). As emphasized by a community leader (R4), "The ritual must continue to follow customary procedures so that its sacred meaning and authenticity are preserved." This statement highlights that cultural preservation involves safeguarding both the practice and the spiritual significance of the ritual.

The historical significance of Pura Batu Bolong further reinforces its cultural value. A traditional figure (R3) explained that "Pura Batu Bolong was originally a place for *nunas tirta*, where people came to request holy water believed to bring purification and spiritual peace." This account demonstrates that the site has long functioned as a sacred space for spiritual cleansing and healing, making its cultural authenticity a critical component of the tourism experience. Preserving this historical and spiritual identity is essential to ensure that *Melukat* remains rooted in Balinese religious traditions rather than becoming a commodified attraction detached from its original meaning.

From an environmental perspective, the holy water at Pura Batu Bolong is the core element that determines both the continuity of the ritual and the attractiveness of spiritual tourism. Water is not merely understood as a natural resource but also as a symbol of purification, healing, and spiritual balance. These findings suggest that the protection of water sources must be a priority in the management of *Melukat* tourism. Any contamination, decline in water quality, or pressure from uncontrolled visitor flows may reduce both the spiritual value of the ritual and the quality of the tourism experience. This aligns with the view that the sustainability of sacred sites largely depends on the ability of stakeholders to preserve the *spirit of place* and the environmental resources that sustain it (Aulet & Duda, 2020; Choe & Mahyuni, 2023). A local resident (R5) stated that "The holy water flowing from the rocks is believed to help heal certain skin diseases." This belief underscores the importance of the sacred spring as both a spiritual and ecological resource. Any decline in water quality, pollution, or overuse caused by uncontrolled visitation could reduce the ritual's healing significance and diminish the authenticity of the spiritual experience.

From a cultural perspective, the transformation of *Melukat* into a tourism attraction must maintain its sacred values, ritual procedures, and the cultural authority of the local community. As part of Balinese Hindu religious practice, the ritual cannot be treated as a conventional tourism attraction. The findings show that cultural preservation involves not only maintaining the external form of the ritual but also safeguarding its meaning, rules, and the social structures surrounding it. In this context, cultural authenticity becomes a crucial factor to ensure that *Melukat* tourism remains rooted in Balinese identity rather than evolving into a commodified product that loses its spiritual significance (Chen et al., 2024; Yanti et al., 2024).

To clarify the relationships among these elements, Figure 3 presents a model of cultural and environmental sustainability in the development of *Melukat* tourism. The model positions the *Melukat* ritual at Pura Batu Bolong as the starting point, which then branches into two main dimensions: cultural sustainability and environmental sustainability. Within the cultural dimension, key elements include the preservation of sacred ritual values, the authenticity of Balinese culture, and the role of customary communities and temple custodians (*pengempon*). Within the environmental dimension, important aspects include the protection of holy water sources, waste and cleanliness management, and the regulation of tourist visits. These two dimensions converge within a community-based spiritual tourism management framework supported by tourist education, cultural interpretation, and stakeholder collaboration, with the ultimate goal of achieving sustainable *Melukat* tourism (Asmoro & Cahyadi, 2022; Ernawati et al., 2022).



(Source: Author's elaboration, 2025)

**Figure 3.** Cultural and environmental sustainability model in the development of *Melukat* tourism

The model presented in Figure 3 emphasizes that the sustainability of *Melukat* tourism requires community-based governance. Local communities, temple custodians (*pengempon*), traditional leaders, village authorities, and tourism village managers must act as the primary stakeholders in determining development directions, visitor limits, ritual regulations, and environmental protection mechanisms. This principle aligns with the concept of community-based tourism, which positions local communities as owners, managers, and primary beneficiaries of tourism. Accordingly, the development of *Melukat* tourism not only strengthens local cultural identity but also prevents external dominance and economic leakage from the village (Ernawati et al., 2022; Romanelli et al., 2021).

Beyond governance, tourist education and cultural interpretation are essential components in ensuring sustainability. Visitors need to understand the meaning of *Melukat*, appropriate dress codes, etiquette within the temple, limitations on documenting rituals, and the importance of maintaining cleanliness in sacred areas. Effective cultural interpretation helps tourists recognize that *Melukat* is not merely a tourism activity but a spiritual experience rooted in the value system of Balinese society. This is consistent with findings in IJASTE-related studies, which highlight that the success of sustainable tourism development is strongly influenced by governance, stakeholder involvement, and the ability of destinations to communicate cultural values responsibly (Asmoro & Cahyadi, 2022; Yanti et al., 2024).

The development of *Melukat* tourism at Pura Batu Bolong must be grounded in a balance between cultural preservation and environmental protection. Figure 3 demonstrates that the sustainability of *Melukat* tourism cannot be achieved solely through promotion or infrastructure development. Instead, it must be built through the protection of holy water sources, preservation of sacred values, active involvement of customary communities, tourist education, and stakeholder collaboration. These findings address the research objective by confirming that *Melukat* can be developed as a sustainable spiritual tourism attraction when managed ethically, community-based, and with respect for the interconnections between ritual, culture, and the environment (Aulet & Duda, 2020; Ernawati et al., 2022; Yanti et al., 2024).

These findings contribute to the broader literature on spiritual tourism by proposing an integrated framework linking ritual authenticity, transformative experiences, community-based governance, and spiritual sustainability as foundations for sustainable rural tourism development.

## Discussion

The findings demonstrate that the *Melukat* ritual in Sawan Village has evolved beyond its traditional religious function and has become a meaningful spiritual tourism experience. The ritual provides opportunities for visitors to engage in spiritual cleansing, self-reflection, and cultural learning while maintaining its sacred values and authenticity. This finding supports previous

studies that identify spiritual tourism as a transformative experience that combines personal well-being, cultural engagement, and spiritual fulfilment.

The study also highlights the important role of local communities in managing and preserving the Melukat ritual. Community participation contributes not only to the protection of cultural traditions but also to the development of community-based tourism initiatives. Consistent with previous research on community-based tourism, the involvement of local stakeholders strengthens local ownership, enhances visitor experiences, and creates opportunities for sustainable economic benefits.

Another significant finding is the integration of cultural preservation and environmental sustainability within the development of spiritual tourism. The continued protection of sacred spaces, customary regulations, and natural resources demonstrates that tourism development can coexist with cultural and environmental conservation. This supports the growing perspective that sustainable tourism should balance economic opportunities with the preservation of cultural heritage and ecological integrity.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the literature on spiritual tourism by demonstrating how traditional religious practices can be transformed into sustainable tourism experiences without diminishing their sacred meaning. The study further proposes an integrated perspective that connects spiritual experience, community participation, cultural preservation, and environmental sustainability within the context of rural spiritual tourism development. Practically, the findings provide guidance for local communities, tourism managers, and policymakers in developing spiritual tourism destinations that prioritize authenticity, community participation, cultural preservation, and environmental sustainability.

## Conclusions

This study concludes that the *Melukat* ritual at Pura Batu Bolong demonstrates strong potential to be developed as a spiritual tourism attraction in Sawan Village, Bali. The findings reveal that elements such as sacred water, ritual atmosphere, purification meaning, and active visitor participation collectively create a meaningful spiritual tourism experience characterized by healing, reflection, cultural learning, and personal transformation. *Melukat* is therefore not only a religious ritual but also a potential experiential tourism product that offers visitors opportunities for inner peace and self-discovery. This study makes a theoretical contribution by demonstrating how a living ritual can be systematically transformed into a spiritual tourism product that generates transformative tourist experiences while supporting sustainable rural tourism development. Specifically, the findings establish a conceptual link between ritual transformation, spiritual experiences, community-based governance, and rural sustainability. The study also introduces the notion of spiritual sustainability, emphasizing that the long-term viability of spiritual tourism depends on preserving sacred meanings, protecting holy water resources, and maintaining the spirit of place. The study further shows that *Melukat* tourism can contribute to cultural preservation, environmental sustainability, and local economic development. From a cultural perspective, *Melukat* supports the continuity of Balinese ritual traditions and reinforces local identity. From an environmental perspective, the sacred water source represents a critical resource that must be protected through responsible, ethical, and controlled tourism management. From an economic perspective, the development of *Melukat* tourism creates opportunities for local communities, including roles as guides, providers of ritual materials, food and beverage operators, accommodation providers, transportation services, and producers of local souvenirs. From a practical and policy perspective, the findings highlight the need for the managers of Sawan Tourism Village to establish a structured community-based governance system involving customary leaders, temple custodians, village authorities, and tourism stakeholders. Operational priorities include the development of standard operating procedures for visitor participation, digital promotion strategies emphasizing healing and transformation, training for local guides and facilitators, and educational interpretation to communicate ritual meanings and ethical conduct. In addition, this study underscores the urgency of local regulations concerning visitor management and carrying capacity to protect the sanctity of the holy water source and the surrounding environment of Pura Batu Bolong. Such regulations should include

limits on visitor numbers, codes of conduct, waste management procedures, and regular monitoring of water quality to ensure that tourism development does not compromise the ritual's sacredness or ecological integrity. From a broader perspective, this study highlights the importance of developing tourism products grounded in local culture, spirituality, and community participation within the Indonesian tourism and hospitality sector. Spiritual tourism presents a meaningful alternative to mass tourism by offering more personal, reflective, and responsible travel experiences. In Bali and other Indonesian destinations, sacred rituals and living traditions can serve as valuable tourism assets when managed with respect, supported by clear cultural interpretation, active community involvement, and strong environmental protection. However, this study has several limitations. First, it focuses specifically on the *Melukat* ritual at Pura Batu Bolong, which limits the generalizability of the findings to other *Melukat* sites in Bali that may differ in cultural context, management practices, and tourism dynamics. Second, the study relies on qualitative data from selected informants and does not quantitatively assess tourist satisfaction, carrying capacity, economic valuation, or environmental impacts. Future research is recommended to address these limitations by adopting mixed-method or quantitative approaches. Subsequent studies may measure tourist satisfaction and transformative outcomes, assess community readiness and infrastructure capacity, evaluate visitor management strategies, and examine the economic and environmental impacts of spiritual tourism. Comparative research across different *Melukat* sites in Bali would also provide a broader understanding of how local variations influence the development of sustainable spiritual tourism.

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