

# THE INFLUENCE OF SERVICE QUALITY AND DESTINATION IMAGE ON DESIRING TO REVISIT IS MEDIATED BY DIVING TOURIST SATISFACTION IN WAKATOBI DISTRICT

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## Abstract

This study aims to examine the influence of: 1) Service quality on the desire to visit again; 2) The image of the destination towards the desire to visit again; 3) Tourist satisfaction of diving with the desire to visit again; 4) Service quality to tourist satisfaction of diving; 5) The image of the destination to tourist satisfaction of diving; 6) The quality of service to the desire to visit again is mediated by tourist satisfaction of diving; 7) The image of the destination towards returning visits is mediated by tourist satisfaction of diving. This study uses the incidental sampling method or determination of samples based on chance with the SEM Partial Least Square (PLS) analysis technique. The study population is domestic and foreign tourists. This study estimates parameters in the form of 11 indicators using 132 samples. Based on the results of the analysis and discussion mentioned above, there are several research conclusions, namely: 1) Service quality has a positive and insignificant effect on the desire to visit again; 2) The image of the destination has a positive and significant effect on the desire to return to the destination; 3) Tourist satisfaction of diving has a positive and significant effect on the desire to visit again; 4) Service quality has a positive and significant effect on tourist satisfaction diving; 5) The image of the destination has a positive and significant effect on tourist satisfaction of diving; 6) Service quality has a positive and significant effect on the desire to visit again mediated by tourist satisfaction of diving; 7) Image has a positive and significant effect on the desire to visit again mediated by tourist satisfaction of diving in Wakatobi Regency.

**Keywords:** Service Quality, Destination Image, Tourist Satisfaction of Diving, and Desire to Return Visit.

## INTRODUCTION

Currently, providing high quality services is considered an important strategy for success and survival in a competitive tourism environment (Rusdin & Rashid, 2018; Zeithaml et al., 1996). In addition, research reveals that the lack of tourists in tourist destinations is related to tourist dissatisfaction with the lack of safety, security, facilities and infrastructure factors so that tourists are reluctant to revisit the destination (Yusof, Rahman, & Iranmanesh, 2015; Pourahmad et al., 2010; Arabatzis & Grigoroudis, 2010). These results indicate that assessing service quality is important to ensure diving tourist satisfaction and tourists' desire to visit again.

Diving tourist satisfaction is a major issue in the tourism context. According to Oliver (1980), satisfaction is a user's assessment of the services they have received. In addition, user satisfaction also means users' emotional feedback regarding the difference between their expectations and what they receive from their experiences, products and services (Oliver, 1980).

However, the different service characteristics in each destination are not something that can be underestimated (Frochot & Hughes, 2000). Poor service quality is always seen as a negative influence on tourist visits and intentions to revisit in the future. In ecotourism destinations, most employees have insufficient knowledge to serve

tourists, especially in developing countries (Libosada, 2009). This is one of the reasons why studies on diving tourist satisfaction in ecotourism areas are needed. Clifton and Benson (2006) found that most of the research that has been conducted in the natural environment on aspects of ecotourism has mostly been in developing countries.

Tourist loyalty to a destination results from the provision of tourism services and how tourists perceive these services (Al-Hawari, 2015; Sivadas & Baker-Prewitt, 2000). There is a clear research gap in determining the key correlations between service quality and customer loyalty and this has not been thoroughly researched in the context of tourism destinations (Kim et al., 2013; Kislali et al., 2020). Because this destination is constantly changing it requires further analysis and research (Martín-Cejas, 2006). Tourism marketing is firmly rooted in the quality of tourism services and highlights various tourism contexts. Consequently, destination loyalty has become a basic concept for providing high-quality services in tourist destinations (Obenour et al., 2006).

It has been found that many other factors (e.g. intellectual, emotional factors) must be researched and understood in tourism marketing both locally and internationally to explore the relationship between tourism service quality and destination loyalty. Research by Wantara & Irawati (2021) found that service quality has a positive and significant effect on diving tourist satisfaction and tourists' intention to revisit. This shows that when someone has a good experience with a service, they tend to have positive intentions to return to using that service in the future. Research by Kumar et al. (2019) found that service quality has a positive and significant effect on intention to revisit. This is because tourists who feel cared for and appreciated tend to become loyal customers.

Diving tourist satisfaction is a vital component in all organizational policies in the tourism industry because diving tourist satisfaction can have an impact on the future of service providers, especially in tourist destinations that provide experiences and services to visitors (Maruthaiah & Rashid, 2014). Diving tourist satisfaction is a vital component in all organizational policies in the tourism industry because diving tourist satisfaction can have an impact on the future of service providers, especially in tourist destinations that provide experiences and services to visitors (Maruthaiah & Rashid, 2014). Previous research found that service quality has a positive and significant effect on diving tourist satisfaction (Chan et al., 2021). This shows that tourists expect tourism service providers to respond to their needs and requests quickly and effectively. If service providers are able to provide good and responsive responses to tourist requests, this can increase their satisfaction.

Diving tourist satisfaction is one of the main consumer assessments by evaluating tourism services (Bowen and Clarke, 2002). Research by Luvsandavaajav et al. (2022) found that destination image has a positive and significant effect on diving tourist satisfaction. This shows that a positive destination image can form positive expectations from tourists before they visit a place. If their expectations are met or even exceeded, then they are likely to feel satisfied with their travel experience.

Destination image is an interactive system of thoughts, feelings, opinions, intentions and visualizations of a particular place that not only recognizes its multiplicity of elements (cognitive, affective and conative) but is also an influential factor in decision making (Prayag & Ryan, 2012). Research by Luvsandavaajav et al. (2022) found that

destination image has a positive and significant effect on the desire to visit again. This shows that if a tourist has a positive experience during his visit, the image of the destination will become more positive.

## LITERATUR REVIEW

### Service Quality

Service quality is a total experience that can only be evaluated by experience (Zeithaml et al, 1988). Service quality is the expected level of excellence and control over that level of excellence to fulfill customer desires (Wyckof) in Lovelock (1998). Service quality is one of the factors that determines a company's success in marketing the goods/services it produces to consumers, because if not, consumers will move to other companies. Rangkuty (2002) provides a definition of perception as a process where individuals select, organize and interpret stimuli received through their senses into meaning. Service quality is the level of difference between consumers' expectations of services and their perceptions of actual service performance (Akdere et al, 2020; Parasuraman et al, 1985). According to Tjiptono (2005) that service quality has a big influence on customer satisfaction, word of mouth communication, repeat purchases, customer loyalty, market share and profitability. After consumers evaluate the quality of services provided by the company/organization and meet expectations, it will give rise to feelings of satisfaction and conversely, service quality that does not meet consumer expectations will give rise to feelings of dissatisfaction.

### Destination Image

Image is a construct widely applied in marketing and behavioral sciences to represent people's perceptions of products, objects, behaviors, and events driven by beliefs, feelings, and impressions (Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997; Crompton, 1979). In the field of tourism destination marketing, image has been given various definitions. Most of them agree that destination image is a collection of impressions, ideas, hopes and emotional thoughts that a person has towards a particular place (Assaker, 2014; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). According to Echtner & Ritchie (in Jørgensen, 2004; 15) destination image is defined not only as destination attributes but also the overall impression displayed by the destination. Destination image consists of functional characteristics that relate to the tangible aspects of the destination and psychological characteristics that relate to intangible aspects. In addition, destination image can be arranged on a continuum starting from characteristics that can be used to compare all unique destinations to very few. Swarbrooke and Horner (2009) as quoted by Basiya and Rozak (2012) stated that tourism products that many consumers consider when deciding to travel (buy tourism products), one of which is the decision to choose a destination is the attractiveness of the tourist destination they want to visit.

### Tourist Satisfaction

The word satisfaction has an important meaning in the marketing concept and is usually associated with a motto of satisfying customer needs and desires. The use of the term satisfaction in the modern era tends to be widespread and is related to the words satisfactory (suitability) and satisfy (making it enjoyable). However, the term customer satisfaction in marketing management itself has a very specific meaning. Consumer satisfaction depends on estimates of product performance to provide value, relative to buyer expectations. Buyers are satisfied if performance meets expectations. Buyers are not satisfied if product performance is much lower than consumer

expectations (Kotler and Armstrong, 2014). According to Kotler (2009), satisfaction is a person's feelings regarding comfort or disappointment as a result of a comparison between the perceived product performance (outcome) in relation to his expectations. So whether the buyer is satisfied after purchasing is dependent on the performance offered in conjunction with at least the buyer's expectations being met. Tjiptono (2008) defines consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction as the consumer's response to the perceived disconfirmation between initial expectations before purchasing (or other performance norms) and the actual performance felt after use.

### Desire To Revisit

Intention to revisit a tourist destination has been defined as an individual's readiness or willingness to repeat visits to the same destination, providing the most accurate prediction of actual revisit decisions, e.g. repurchase of holiday packages (Han & Kim, 2010). Cole and Scott (2004) consider it to be the desire to visit, within a certain time period, a previous destination a second time. As Um, Chon, & Ro (2006, p. 1141) argued, "Revisit intention has been considered as an extension of satisfaction rather than an initiator of the hindsight decision-making process". Loyal tourists are more likely to revisit and recommend the destination to their friends and family through word of mouth marketing (Assaker & Hallak, 2013; Jumanazarov et al, 2020). Loyalty theory explains that revisit intention refers to repurchase intention. Visitors are willing to revisit a destination when they have a good and satisfying tourism experience at that destination (Allameh et al, 2015; Chien, 2016; Konuk, 2019; Mat Som et al, 2012). Intention to revisit is the main goal of industry players to get repeat visitors (Nurul & Rosmalina, 2018).

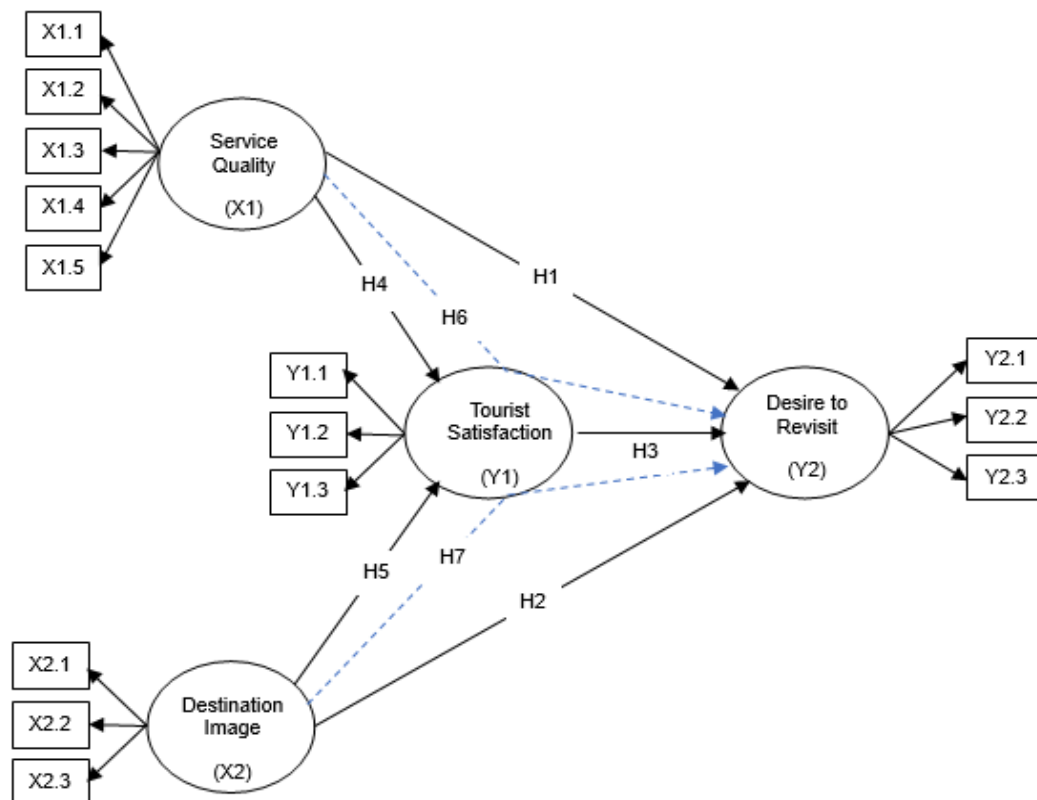


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

## Research Hypothesis

- H1: Service Quality has a positive and significant effect on the Desire to Revisit
- H2: Destination Image has a positive and significant effect on the Desire to Revisit
- H3: Tourist Satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on the Desire to Revisit
- H4: Service Quality has a positive and significant effect on Tourist Satisfaction
- H5: Destination Image has a positive and significant effect on Tourist Satisfaction
- H6: Service Quality has a positive and significant effect on the Desire to Revisit, mediated by Diving Tourist Satisfaction
- H7: Destination Image has a positive and significant effect on the Desire to Revisit, mediated by Diving Tourist Satisfaction

## METHODS

This research was carried out in Wakatobi Regency. The reason for choosing this location was because Wakatobi is one of the best marine tourism destinations in Indonesia. The islands in Wakatobi are surrounded by beautiful coral reefs and have very high biodiversity. The population in this study is visitors to diving tourist destinations in Wakatobi Regency, both domestic and foreign tourists, the number of which is unknown.

Thus, Roscoe (1975) proposed a rule of thumb to follow when determining sample size, namely the number of participants in a questionnaire should be greater than 30 and less than 500. Roscoe (1975) stated that in multivariate research such as multiple regression analysis, the sample size should be at least 10 times or greater than the number of indicators in the study. In this research there are 11 predictor variable indicators.

Thus, the sample size for this study is 5 to 15, and in this study the number of samples is  $12 \times 11 = 132$  samples. So that the data obtained was more accurate, the researchers determined a sample of 132 respondents. To determine the value of the research statistical t-test, this research data was analyzed using SmartPLS software.

### Operational Definition Of Variables

Service quality is a form of service provided by Wakatobi destination managers to diving tourists. Indicators used in service quality variables include: Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy. Destination image is the belief, idea, impression felt by tourists about the Wakatobi destination. Indicators of employee innovative behavior are: Cognitive image, unique image and affective image.

Diving tourist satisfaction is the feeling of tourists expressing pleasure after traveling to Wakatobi. Indicators of diving tourist satisfaction are: Tourists' feelings of happiness regarding the decision to travel to Wakatobi, Belief that choosing to travel to Wakatobi was the right thing, and Overall level of satisfaction while traveling to the Wakatobi destination. The desire to visit again (revisit intention) is the willingness of diving tourists to visit Wakatobi again. The indicators of the desire to visit again are: Word of mouth (WOM), Purchase intention, and Price sensitivity.



## RESULT

### Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity aims to test to what extent the latent construct is truly different from other constructs. A high discriminant validity value indicates that a construct is unique and able to explain the phenomena being measured. Discriminant validity using ( $\sqrt{AVE}$ ). If the ( $\sqrt{AVE}$  value of each variable is greater than the AVE value and the correlation between the latent variable and other latent variables, then the variable instrument is said to be discriminant valid. The results of the PLS program computation of the discriminant validity value are presented in the following table:

**Tabel 1: AVE Value,  $\sqrt{AVE}$  and Correlation between Latent Constructs**

Research Variables	AVE	$\sqrt{AVE}$	Correlation			
			Quality of Service	Destination Image	Diving tourist satisfaction	Desire to Revisit
Quality of Service	0,613	0,783	1,000			
Destination Image	0,878	0,937	0,609	1,000		
Diving Tourist Satisfaction	0,767	0,876	0,834	0,827	1,000	
Desire to Revisit	0,736	0,858	0,820	0,801	0,783	1,000

Source: PLS Data Processing Results, 2024

Based on table 1, it shows that each latent construct has good discriminant validity, because the square root of average variance extracted ( $\sqrt{AVE}$ ) value of each variable is greater than the AVE value and the correlation between other latent variables. This means that the latent variable constructs, HR practices, employee competence, work involvement and organizational effectiveness have good discriminant validity. Thus, it can be concluded that overall the latent constructs in this study are stated to be unique and able to explain the phenomena being measured.

### Composite Reliability

Composite reliability tests the reliability value between indicators of the constructs that form it. Composite reliability results are said to be good if the value is above 0.70 (Ghozali, 2015). The results of the composite reliability test of the measurement model of this study can be presented in the following table:

**Tabel 2: Results of Reliability Testing of Measurement Models and Instruments**

Variable	Composite Reliability	Result
Quality of Service (X1)	0,886	Reliabel
Destination Image (X2)	0,956	Reliabel
Diving Tourist Satisfaction (Y1)	0,907	Reliabel
Desire to Revisit (Y2)	0,893	Reliabel

Source: PLS Data Processing Results, 2024

The test results in Table 2 obtained composite reliability values of service quality, destination image, diving tourist satisfaction, and the desire to revisit indicate that the four latent variables studied have good reliability because their values are greater than 0.70. Thus, all instruments used in this study have met the criteria or are suitable for use in measuring the overall variables of service quality, destination image, diving tourist satisfaction, and the desire to revisit because they have good reliability or level of suitability and reliability.

### Goodness of Fit Model Evaluation

Testing on the structural model is evaluated by considering the percentage of explained variance, namely by looking at the R2 value for the dependent latent variable. The closer the value is to 1, the better the model. Likewise, if it is below 0 (zero), it indicates that the model has less predictive relevance. The results of the analysis are presented in the following table:

**Table 3: Goodness of Fit Model test results**

Structural Model	Dependent Variable Model	R- Square
1	Diving Tourist Satisfaction (Y1)	0,776
2	Desire to Revisit (Y2)	0,646

Source: PLS Data Processing Results, 2024

Based on the coefficient of determination (R2) value, Q2 can be determined using the following calculation:

$$\begin{aligned}
 Q^2 &= 1 - \{(1 - R_1^2) (1 - R_2^2) \dots (1 - R_n^2)\} \\
 &= 1 - \{(1 - 0,776) (1 - 0,646)\} \\
 &= 1 - (0,224) (0,354) \\
 &= 1 - 0,079 \\
 &= 0,921
 \end{aligned}$$

Based on the calculation results, the predictive-relevance value is obtained as much as Q2 = 0.921 or 92.1%. This means that the accuracy or precision of this research model can explain the diversity of service quality variables, destination image, desire to revisit and satisfaction of diving tourists by 92.1% and the remaining 7.9% is explained by other variables not included in this research model. Therefore, the model is said to be good because it has a Q2 value greater than 60%.

### Hypothesis Testing and Direct Influence Path Coefficients

Hypothesis testing and direct influence path coefficients between service quality variables to revisit intentions, destination image to revisit intentions, diving tourist satisfaction to revisit intentions, service quality to diving tourist satisfaction and destination image to diving tourist satisfaction. Of the five direct influences tested, 4 of them have a positive and significant effect. The output/results of the PLS model are shown in table 4 as follows:

**Table 4: Path Coefficient and Hypothesis Testing**

Influence Between Variables	Path Coefficient (β)	P Values	Note
Service Quality (X1) -> Desire to Revisit (Y2)	0.055	0.302	Rejected
Destination Image (X2)-> Desire to Revisit (Y2)	0.304	0.016	Accepted
Diving Tourist Satisfaction (Y1)-> Desire to Revisit (Y2)	0.479	0.000	Accepted
Service Quality (X1)-> Diving Tourist Satisfaction (Y1)	0.196	0.006	Accepted
Destination Image (X2)-> Diving Tourist Satisfaction (Y1)	0.716	0.000	Accepted

Source: PLS Data Processing Results, 2024

Based on the hypothesis testing results, service quality has a positive but not significant effect on revisit intention, with a path coefficient value of 0.055 and a p-value of 0.302 > α = 0.05. Thus, the first hypothesis (H1) is rejected. Conversely,

destination image is proven to have a positive and significant effect on revisit intention, with a path coefficient value of 0.304 and a p-value of  $0.000 < \alpha = 0.05$ , supporting the second hypothesis (H2). Additionally, diving tourist satisfaction also shows a positive and significant effect on revisit intention, with a path coefficient value of 0.479 and a p-value of  $0.000 < \alpha = 0.05$ , confirming the third hypothesis (H3). Furthermore, service quality has a positive and significant effect on diving tourist satisfaction, with a path coefficient value of 0.196 and a p-value of  $0.006 < \alpha = 0.05$ , supporting the fourth hypothesis (H4). Destination image is also proven to have a positive and significant effect on diving tourist satisfaction, with a path coefficient value of 0.716 and a p-value of  $0.000 < \alpha = 0.05$ , confirming the fifth hypothesis (H5). Overall, the findings indicate that destination image and diving tourist satisfaction play a significant role in influencing revisit intention, while service quality has a stronger impact on diving tourist satisfaction rather than directly on revisit intention.

### Hypothesis Testing and Indirect Influence Path Coefficients

The mediation effect test aims to detect the position of the intervening variable in the model. The results of the mediation test analysis can be seen in table 5 below:

**Table 5: Path Coefficients and Indirect Effect Hypothesis Testing**

Influence Between Variables	Indirect Influence	Direct Influence	Proof
Service Quality (X1) -> Diving Tourist Satisfaction (Y1) -> Desire to Revisit (Y2)	0,094	0.055	Full Mediation
Destination Image (X2) -> Diving tourist satisfaction (Y1) -> Desire to revisit (Y2)	0,343	0,304	Full Mediation

Source: PLS Data Processing Results, 2024

## DISCUSSION

### The Influence of Transformational Leadership Style on Organizational Commitment

Based on the mediation analysis, diving tourist satisfaction is proven to fully mediate the effect of service quality on revisit intention in Wakatobi. The direct effect has a path coefficient of 0.055, while the indirect (mediated) effect has a higher path coefficient of 0.094. The positive coefficients indicate that the presence of diving tourist satisfaction enhances the impact, confirming the sixth hypothesis (H6). Similarly, diving tourist satisfaction also fully mediates the effect of destination image on revisit intention. The direct effect has a path coefficient of 0.304, whereas the mediated effect has a higher path coefficient of 0.343. This result highlights the significant role of diving tourist satisfaction in strengthening the relationship, supporting the seventh hypothesis (H7). Overall, these findings demonstrate that diving tourist satisfaction acts as a full mediator for both service quality and destination image in influencing revisit intention.

### The Influence of Service Quality on Desire to Revisit

The analysis found that service quality positively but insignificantly influences revisit intention in Wakatobi. While better service quality can enhance revisit intention, its effect remains limited. This is attributed to suboptimal perceptions of certain service quality dimensions, such as physical evidence, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. For instance, physical facilities are deemed sufficient for a first visit but lack uniqueness to motivate a return. Similarly, while staff are friendly and responsive,



their service does not leave a lasting impression. Assurance and empathy also fail to significantly influence revisit intention when experiences only meet minimal expectations. These findings highlight that tourist loyalty depends not only on service quality but also on emotional experiences, economic value, and destination differentiation. To increase the impact of service quality on revisit intention, destination managers should enhance emotional experiences and unique offerings. This aligns with theories emphasizing the role of exceptional service quality in fostering loyalty (Zeithaml et al., 1996). However, the results suggest that other factors, such as destination appeal, exploration motivation, and emotional attachment, often play a more significant role in revisit decisions. To boost revisit intention among diving tourists, strategic approaches are needed, including improving tourist experiences, fostering emotional connections, enhancing loyalty, implementing effective marketing, and ensuring sustainable destination management. Strengthening Wakatobi's uniqueness and appeal will not only improve revisit rates but also increase its competitiveness in the national and international tourism markets.

### **The Influence of Destination Image on Desire to Revisit**

The analysis revealed that destination image has a positive and significant impact on revisit intention in Wakatobi. A strong destination image, encompassing cognitive, unique, and affective dimensions, fosters positive perceptions and enhances tourists' desire to return. Positive cognitive image highlights Wakatobi's marine biodiversity, pristine coral reefs, and rich underwater life, reinforcing its appeal as a premier diving destination. Unique image sets Wakatobi apart from other destinations through its preserved coral reefs and traditional culture, offering distinctive experiences that encourage repeat visits. Meanwhile, affective image captures emotional impressions such as tranquility, inspiration, and the warmth of the local community, which create a lasting emotional connection and nostalgia for the destination. These findings align with Echtner and Ritchie's (1993) theory, which emphasizes that a strong destination image not only attracts new tourists but also fosters loyalty among returning visitors. Strengthening Wakatobi's destination image through effective promotion, environmental conservation, and community empowerment is essential to ensuring consistent positive experiences for tourists. By doing so, Wakatobi can enhance revisit intention and build long-term loyalty, contributing to its competitiveness in the tourism market.

### **The Influence of Diving Tourist Satisfaction on the Desire to Revisit**

The analysis indicates that diving tourist satisfaction positively and significantly influences revisit intention in Wakatobi. Higher satisfaction levels, reflected in tourists' happiness with their decision to visit, trust in their choice, and overall enjoyment during their stay, contribute to an increased likelihood of returning. Tourists who feel satisfied with their experiences are more likely to revisit and recommend the destination to others. The findings reveal that the indicator of happiness with their decision to visit is perceived as the most favorable, indicating that tourists feel comfortable and satisfied with their choice to visit Wakatobi. Trust in choosing Wakatobi as a destination is also highly rated, reflecting tourists' confidence in their decision, inspiration from their experiences, and pride in their choice. Furthermore, the overall satisfaction level, with 86.73% agreeing or strongly agreeing to positive statements, confirms that tourists generally have a positive perception of their experiences in Wakatobi. Empirical findings suggest areas for improvement, particularly in evaluating factors contributing

to overall satisfaction, ensuring tourists feel delighted with their experiences, confident in their decisions, and trusting of Wakatobi as a destination. Unique and memorable experiences, such as exploring marine biodiversity or interacting with local culture, significantly drive revisit intention. Satisfied tourists also promote the destination through word-of-mouth, indirectly strengthening their own desire to return. These results support Oliver's (1997) customer satisfaction theory, which states that satisfied customers are more likely to become loyal. They also align with Pine and Gilmore's (1999) concept of extraordinary experiences in tourism, which emphasizes emotional and interactive engagements. Strategies for enhancing diving tourists' satisfaction and revisit intention include personalized diving packages (e.g., night diving or rare coral reef exploration) and integrated cultural and ecological experiences, such as visits to Bajo tribal villages, which create emotional connections and lasting impressions.

### **The Influence of Service Quality on Diving Tourist Satisfaction**

The study showed that service quality including tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy had a positive and significant effect on the satisfaction of diving tourists in Wakatobi Regency. Tourists were satisfied with modern facilities, quality diving equipment, responsive service, and personal attention from resort staff, which provided a pleasant experience during their visit. This supports the theory of Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988) on the SERVQUAL model, which emphasizes the importance of tangible, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy aspects in increasing customer satisfaction. Furthermore, based on the concept of "Experience Economy" (Pine & Gilmore, 1999), unique experiences such as personalized diving packages, educational tours, and interesting narratives can increase the value of tourist experiences. In the context of sustainability, Butler's theory (1980) suggests managing tourist capacity and involving local communities to protect marine ecosystems while providing positive socio-economic impacts. The application of this theory-based approach not only increases tourist satisfaction but also supports the sustainability of Wakatobi as a world-class diving destination.

### **The Influence of Destination Image on Diving Tourist Satisfaction**

The analysis shows that the destination image has a significant positive impact on diving tourists' satisfaction in Wakatobi. A better destination image, including its cognitive, unique, and affective aspects, leads to higher satisfaction. Tourists who have a positive perception of Wakatobi, based on its natural beauty, local culture, and emotional experiences, are more likely to be satisfied. This satisfaction often results in recommendations and repeat visits. Wakatobi's destination image is viewed positively, with high ratings for its natural beauty, hospitality, cultural diversity, tourism facilities, and environmental cleanliness.

Cognitive image, reflecting tourists' knowledge of the destination, is seen as favorable, as tourists acknowledge the beauty, facilities, and safety of Wakatobi. The unique image, highlighted by local traditions and underwater beauty, is also rated positively, while the affective image, based on tourists' emotional experiences, reflects satisfaction and positive memories. However, improvements are needed in promoting Wakatobi's unique attractions, such as its culture and environmental sustainability. Cognitive image plays a vital role in providing clear information about the destination's biodiversity and diving conditions, setting high expectations that are confirmed through direct experience. The unique and emotional aspects of the destination, including local

traditions and the peaceful environment, enhance tourists' satisfaction and create lasting memories.

These findings align with the theory of Echtner and Ritchie (1993), which states that a destination image is shaped by cognitive, unique, and affective factors. Strengthening these elements will improve the overall tourist experience. To further enhance Wakatobi's image, strategies like promoting its unique features, consistent branding, improving infrastructure, and sustainable marketing can be implemented, increasing satisfaction and encouraging loyalty (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry, 1988).

### **The Role of Diving Tourist Satisfaction in Mediating the Effect of Service Quality on Desire to Revisit**

The research shows that diving tourists' satisfaction partially mediates the relationship between service quality and the intention to revisit Wakatobi. This means that satisfaction bridges the gap between service quality and the desire to return. While service quality has a direct but moderate impact on the intention to revisit, tourist satisfaction strengthens this relationship. When tourists are satisfied with the services they receive, their intention to return increases. Good service quality creates a satisfying experience, particularly through physical evidence and responsiveness. Tourists who feel their needs are met tend to be more satisfied, and this satisfaction drives their intention to revisit.

Modern facilities, responsive staff, and friendly service leave a positive impression, which influences the decision to return. Satisfaction also strengthens emotional connections to the destination. When tourists are happy with their experience, they develop greater loyalty, which further increases the intention to revisit. This finding supports the theory of Anderson and Srinivasan (2003), which states that customer satisfaction plays a crucial role in linking service quality to customer loyalty. In tourism, satisfaction connects tourists' perceptions of service quality to their intention to return.

### **The Role of Diving Tourist Satisfaction in Mediating the Influence of Destination Image on Desire to Revisit**

The research shows that diving tourists' satisfaction partially mediates the relationship between destination image and the intention to revisit Wakatobi. A strong destination image creates high expectations, and when these are met or exceeded through a positive experience, tourists feel satisfied, strengthening their intention to return. Satisfaction serves as a bridge between the destination image and the desire to revisit, as a positive image alone is not enough to ensure repeat visits without fulfilling expectations.

Tourists are more likely to choose Wakatobi for future visits if their experiences, such as underwater beauty, local culture, and hospitality, exceed expectations. This emotional connection strengthens their intention to revisit. The findings align with the expectancy-disconfirmation theory (Oliver, 1999), where satisfaction arises when experiences exceed or meet expectations, reinforcing the desire to return.

Furthermore, the relationship marketing theory suggests that customer satisfaction is essential for loyalty (Anderson & Srinivasan, 2003), which in this context, translates to revisiting intentions in tourism. This also supports Fornell et al. (1996), who argue that customer satisfaction strengthens the impact of product or service attributes on loyalty. A positive destination image, when followed by a satisfying experience, enhances tourists' desire to revisit Wakatobi.

## CONCLUSIOAN

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that service quality has a positive but insignificant effect on the desire to revisit in Wakatobi Regency, because several aspects of service quality have not been optimally perceived by tourists. On the other hand, destination image is proven to have a positive and significant effect on the desire to revisit, which shows that the better the destination image, the higher the intention of tourists to return. Diving tourist satisfaction also has a positive and significant effect on the desire to revisit, because high satisfaction encourages tourists to return. In addition, service quality has a positive and significant effect on diving tourist satisfaction, because good service creates a positive perception of the destination. Destination image also has a positive and significant effect on diving tourist satisfaction, with a good image increasing tourist satisfaction. Diving tourist satisfaction is proven to mediate the effect of service quality on the desire to revisit, strengthening the relationship between the two. Likewise, diving tourist satisfaction mediates the effect of destination image on the desire to revisit, where a positive destination image increases satisfaction and intention to return. Further research is recommended to add tourism facilities and infrastructure variables to increase satisfaction and intention to revisit the tourist destination.

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