

The Impact of E-WOM, Accessibility, and Attractiveness on Revisit Intention to Wediombo Beach Yogyakarta: The Mediating Role of Tourist Experience

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to examine the influence of electronic word-of-mouth, accessibility, and attractiveness on the intention to revisit Wediombo Beach, as influenced by the tourist experience. This research uses an explanatory quantitative approach with data collected from a survey of 120 respondents who have visited Wediombo Beach. Path analysis, utilizing the SmartPLS program and the Sobel test to measure mediation variables, serves as the analysis technique. Hypothesis testing reveals that electronic word of mouth and attractiveness have a positive and significant influence on revisit intention, with the tourist experience acting as a mediator. The tourist experience also mediates the significant impact of accessibility, despite its negative value, on revisit intention. In regulating the impact of electronic word of mouth, accessibility, and attractiveness on revisit intention, the tourist experience serves as a partial mediating factor. Furthermore, researchers can suggest managerial implications for the Special Region of Yogyakarta Tourism Office and related tourism managers to improve the accessibility factor, which can start with making clear directions and improving the road quality to Wediombo Beach.

Keywords: Accessibility; Attractiveness; E-WOM; Revisit Intention; Tourist Experience

A. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the leading economic sectors because of its significant impact on foreign exchange (Rahma, 2020). The tourism sector makes a major contribution to the social field, and tourism activities also play a significant role in absorbing job vacancies through various kinds of business opportunities that are directly or indirectly related to tourism (Meuraxa et al., 2023). Well-developed tourism activities can also reduce unemployment and increase the level of the production sectors that contribute to regional income (Aji et al., 2018). The Special Region of Yogyakarta is one of the provinces rich in various potential tourist destinations. It has unique offerings to tourists, ranging from natural and cultural tourism to tourist villages (Suhartapa & Sulisty, 2021). These different forms of tourist destinations are considered capable of bringing growth in the number of tourist visits to the Special Region of Yogyakarta, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic. The Special Region of Yogyakarta Tourism Office noted that in 2021, there was an increase in tourist visits by 132%, whereas in 2019, the Special Region of Yogyakarta experienced a 72% decrease in the number of tourist visits. However, the number of tourist visits in 2021 still could not exceed those in 2017-2019 (Dinas Pariwisata DIY, 2021).

One of the most prominent tourist destinations in Yogyakarta is marine tourism. The south coast of the Special Region of Yogyakarta region has its charm for tourists even though its location is quite far from the city center. Tourist destinations must have a solid uniqueness to attract tourists to visit (Nurchomariyah & Liliyan, 2023). One beach with unique and high tourist attraction value is Wediombo Beach in Gunung Kidul Regency. Unfortunately, this beach is relatively unknown to tourists compared to other beaches on the south coast of Yogyakarta (Nugraha et al., 2023). Wediombo Beach offers various tourist attractions, ranging from white sand, unique coral clusters, and exotic waves to the beach's shape resembling a bay (Dimiyati, 2020). In addition, the beach also supports various activities such as fishing, snorkeling, and surfing. Furthermore, Wediombo Beach

is also listed as Gunung Sewu UNESCO World Nature Reserve, which is part of the Global Geoparks Networks (Arifin, 2017).

Tourist destinations with high attractiveness and uniqueness will be visited by more tourists (Zaenuri, 2012), where the charm of tourist destinations is the foremost driving force that can attract visitors (Basiya & Rozak, 2012). The choice of tourist destination attraction is a tourism product attribute often used as a reference by tourists in determining the quality of tourism. The attributes obtained are used to measure tourist attractions based on the principle of tourism activities, which are something to see, something to do, and something to buy (Silvandi & Mandalia, 2021). Furthermore, previous research found that tourist attractions or attractiveness have a positive and significant impact on tourist revisit interest (Kawatu et al., 2020; Murdani & Martha, 2023), but previous research also found that tourist attractions do not affect visiting decisions (Nurchomariyah & Liliyan, 2023) or even tourist revisit interest (Nursoliah & Sigit, 2023).

Apart from attractiveness, accessibility is also one of the dominant factors in tourism management that encourages tourists to visit, including making revisit intentions (Hidayat et al., 2017). Accessibility is essential to supporting tourism development because it relates to cross-sectoral development (Silvandi & Mandalia, 2021). The accessibility of tourist destinations can be measured from several elements, such as distance, travel time, travel costs, land use intensity, and tourist income (Sefaji et al., 2018). Furthermore, previous research shows that tourist destinations with good accessibility tend to be more attractive to tourists and can ultimately lead to increased visitation and satisfaction (Guiver & Stanford, 2014; Ramyar & Halim, 2020). However, some previous studies have also found that accessibility does not affect visit intention or revisit intention (Al Gazzally et al., 2023; Ramadhani et al., 2021).

Both the attractiveness and accessibility of each tourist destination can be popularized through the role of Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM). The impact of E-WOM on the tourism industry is increasingly recognized as a crucial factor driving tourists' interest in visiting particular destinations (Kurniawan & Amali, 2024). All forms of information related to the beach can be communicated widely with the help of the Internet. E-WOM is a form of informal contact between consumers who discuss a specific product or service (Paisri et al., 2022). In this era of the internet and social networks, E-WOM plays a vital role because of its ability to increase exposure and reduce marketing costs (Andriputra et al., 2021). The correct measurement to see the success of E-WOM is by looking at the quality, quantity, and senders' expertise elements of various forms of E-WOM circulating on the internet (Lin et al., 2013). Furthermore, previous studies have found that E-WOM has a significant impact on tourist revisit intention (Salah et al., 2023), but previous research has also found that E-WOM does not affect revisit intention (Delvi & Saroyini, 2023).

Revisit intention can be understood as the desire a person has to revisit the same destination a second time (Atmari & Putri, 2021). One of the determinants of revisit intention is the tourist experience, where an experience is a form of consumer experience, a complex interaction between consumers' subjective responses and product features (Mittal et al., 2022). In contrast, in the principle of revisit intention, the plan to visit again and the desire to return exist in tourists (Prayag & Ryan, 2012). Furthermore, in looking at revisit interest, the concept of interest in general can be used, which can be measured through four dimensions of interest: transactional, preferential, referential, and exploratory (Ferdinand, 2014). Previous research found that revisit intention can be influenced by tourist experience (Chang et al., 2014). On the other hand, previous research also found that experience does not influence interest in revisiting (Djuang et al., 2023).

The tourist experience is essentially relative because each person will feel it differently and cannot be completely the same. A memorable tourist experience is a complex thing that consists of various dimensions but has characteristics that can generally be associated with unique, memorable, and personal experiences (Bigne et al., 2020). Even so, differences in tourist experience can be a midpoint or mediation for tourists to determine whether they intend to visit again or not. Furthermore, tourist experience can be measured through four dimensions of quality of travel experience: hedonics, peace of mind, involvement, and recognition (Chen & Chen, 2010). The tourist experience is something that tourist destination managers must appropriately manage to realize a quality tourist experience, where creating a tourist experience is not just a matter of providing many product features but also an excellent delivery (Lim et al., 2021). Revisit intention is an interesting subject in tourism communication management. Tourism business executors have built many strategies to foster this revisit interest. It ensures the ongoing success and sustainability of tourism destinations. By inspiring visitors to return, tourism managers help sustain a steady flow of loyal patrons (Mirzaalian & Halpenny, 2021), which is vital for the economic resilience of the tourism industry.

This research aims to analyze the factors that may impact tourists' revisit intention to Wediombo Beach Yogyakarta. The variables to be tested and analyzed in this research are E-WOM, accessibility, attractiveness, tourist experience, and revisit intention. The novelty in this research arises from the research model that uses tourist experience as a mediating variable. Based on the above description, the three main hypotheses built in this research are: (1) there is an impact of E-WOM on revisit intention mediated by tourist experience (2) there is an impact of accessibility on revisit intention mediated by tourist experience, and (3) there is an impact of attractiveness revisit intention mediated by tourist experience.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses an explanatory quantitative method to find the causal relationship between variables and provide a fundamental analysis based on statistical calculations (Kriyantono, 2009). Path analysis was conducted using the SmartPLS program as data technique analysis. SmartPLS is a Partial Least Squares (PLS) program that can be used for path analysis. Moreover, PLS is an adaptable approach for data analysis, which can be enhanced further through different adaptations or adjustments aimed at specific data types. This approach pertains to a particular category of models fundamentally distinct from traditional regression models commonly used in data analysis (Wold et al., 2001). Primary data was gathered by surveying 120 respondents who had visited Wediombo Beach for this research. In multivariate PLS-SEM research, such as this study, the sample size is recommended to be over ten times the amount of indicator variables (questions) in the research model structures to make this sample size acceptable (Hair et al., 2017). Meanwhile, the secondary data was gathered from a literature study on E-WOM, accessibility, attractiveness, tourist experience, and revisit intention. Secondary data such as media coverage, statistical reports, and various marketing literature are also used to strengthen the urgency of the research problem. Furthermore, Respondents were also categorized by sex, age, occupation, and income to explain the phenomena better. Moreover, the researchers used a Likert scale, namely: (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neither agree nor disagree, (4) agree, and (5) strongly agree for the variable measurement scale.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Respondent Data

Table 1 shows that Wediombo Beach visitors are primarily young adults, with the largest age group being 17-22 years (36.7%), followed by those aged 23-28 (26.7%). Most visitors are male (61.7%) and students (33.3%), indicating a youthful demographic likely drawn to the beach attractions. This trend is likely linked to Yogyakarta's reputation as a "student city," known for its many universities and diverse student population. With Yogyakarta hosting a large number of students from various regions, many of them might explore local tourist destinations like Wediombo Beach during their studies, contributing to the high proportion of young visitors. Moreover, most of these respondents have lower to moderate monthly incomes, with 35.0% earning between Rp. 1,500,001,- and Rp. 2,500,000,- and another 21.7% earning less than Rp. 1,500,000,- This suggests that Wediombo Beach may appeal to younger, budget-conscious visitors, especially those who may be balancing work or studies. In terms of visit frequency, 48.3% of respondents have visited the beach only once, while 34.2% have visited twice, showing that most visitors are not frequent returnees. This pattern may imply that visitors view the beach as a one-time or occasional destination rather than a regular spot. Only 5.0% of respondents have visited more than three times, hinting at the potential for further engagement efforts to encourage revisit intentions.

Table 1. Respondent Data

Attribute	Category	Percentage
Sex	Male	61.7%
	Female	38.3%
Age	< 17	13.3%
	17-22	36.7%
	23-28	26.7%
	29-34	15.0%
	35-40	5.0%
	> 40	3.3%
Occupation	Students	33.3%
	Private sector employee	21.7%
	Government sector employee	15.0%
	Self-employed	8.3%
	Freelancer	10.0%
	Other	11.7%
Income per month	< Rp. 1.500.000	21.7%
	Rp. 1.500.001 - Rp. 2.500.000	35.0%
	Rp. 2.500.001 - Rp. 3.500.000	23.3%
	Rp. 3.500.001 - Rp. 4.500.000	8.3%
	> Rp. 4.500.000	11.7%
Number of Visits to Wediombo Beach	1 Time	48.3%
	2 Times	34.2%
	3 Times	12.5%
	> 3 Times	5.0%

Source: Data analyzed by the researcher, 2023

Outer Model: Validity and Reliability Test

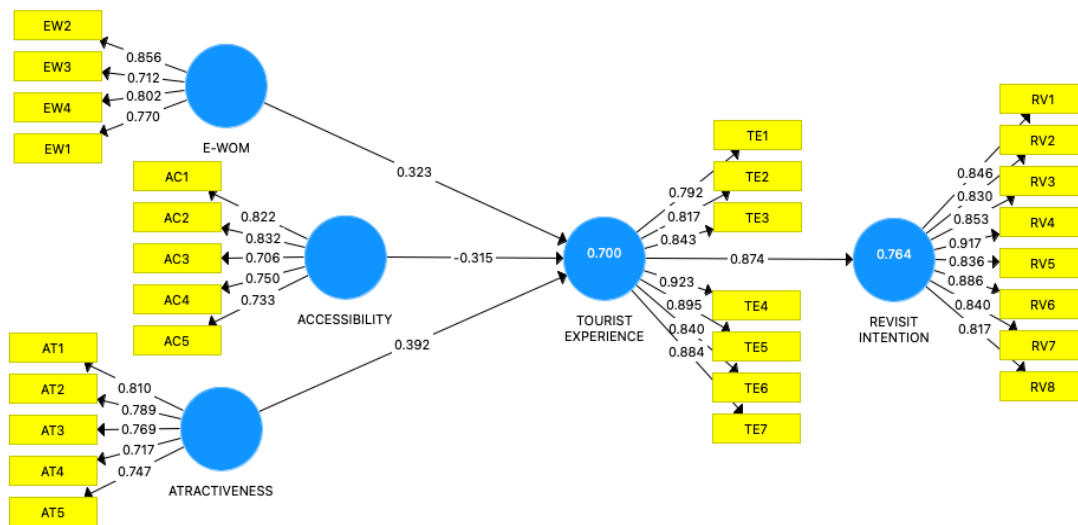


Figure 1. Outer Model PLS Algorithm
 Source: PLS processing, 2023

In data analysis using SmartPLS, the validity test can be carried out through examination of the average variance extracted (AVE) and loading factor values in the outer model, which are assessed with the PLS Algorithm features. If the AVE value exceeds 0.50 and the loading factor value exceeds 0.70, the research data is assumed to be valid (Ghozali, 2008). In this study, the AVE values for each variable exceeded 0.50 (Table 2), which meets the validity requirements, and after removing two invalid indicators, each indicator's loading factor values also exceeded 0.70 (Figure 1). Moreover, Cronbach's Alpha was used for the reliability test, with acceptable reliability indicated by values above 0.60 (Abdi & Williams, 2013), where in this research, each variable has exceeded 0.60 of Cronbach's Alpha value (Table 2).

Table 2. Validity and Reliability Test

Variable	AVE	Cronbach's Alpha
E-WOM (EW)	0.619	0.794
Accessibility (AC)	0.594	0.827
Attractiveness (AT)	0.588	0.825
Tourist Experience (TE)	0.735	0.939
Revisit Intention (RI)	0.729	0.947

Suouce: PLS Algorithm Output, 2023

Structural Model Test: Outer Model

The structural model's effectiveness in this research is evaluated by examining the R-square value, which indicates the model's influence or predictive accuracy. The general guideline for interpreting R-square values is 0.25 for a weak model, 0.50 for a moderate model, and 0.75 for a strong model (Hair et al., 2017). According to the outer model test (Figure 1), the R-square value for revisit intention is 0.764, indicating that this research model is considered strong. This means that the three independent and mediation variables collectively have a 76.4% influence on tourists intention to revisit Wediombo Beach. Furthermore, the R-square calculation also suggests that factors outside this model influence the remaining 23.6% of revisit intentions.

Meanwhile, if calculated separately by looking at the path coefficients, E-WOM has a positive relationship value of 0.323 or 32.3% to the tourist experience. Accessibility has a negative relationship value of -0.315 or 31.5% to the tourist experience. Attractiveness has a positive relationship value of 0.392 or 39.2% to the tourist experience. Furthermore, as a mediating variable, the tourist experience has a positive relationship value of 0.874 or 87.4% to the tourist revisit intention to Wediombo Beach. The existing path coefficient shows that most variables in the model have a positive relationship, except accessibility.

Based on the findings of the Structural Model Test mentioned above, it's evident that attractiveness exerts a more decisive influence than E-WOM and accessibility. The attractiveness factor of tourist destinations plays a significant role in shaping a positive tourist experience, fostering visitors' revisit intention to Wediombo Beach. However, tourist destinations with high attractiveness and uniqueness will be visited by more tourists (Zaenuri, 2012). An appealing destination provides visitors with unique and memorable experiences and can create lasting impressions. These experiences create positive memories and enhance their satisfaction with the trip, increasing their likelihood of revisiting. As with previous research which found that tourist attractions can generate revisit intention (Kawatu et al., 2020; Murdani & Martha, 2023)

Hypothesis Testing: Inner Model

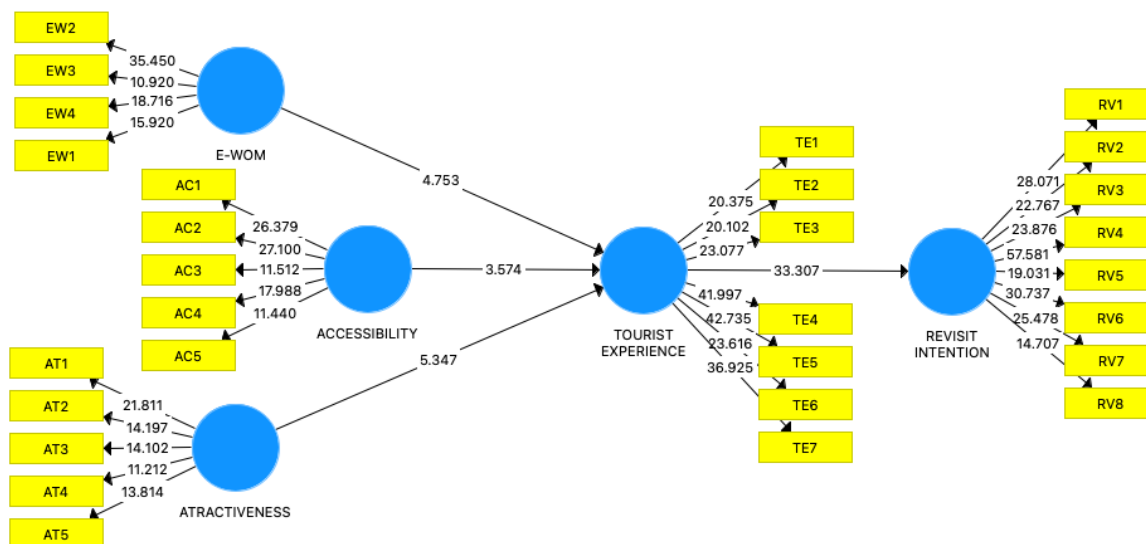


Figure 2. Inner Model PLS Bootstrapping
 Source: PLS processing, 2023

Hypothesis testing or inner model through SmartPLS can be done using calculations through the bootstrapping method (figure 2). This test aims to minimize issues related to data distribution. In the PLS model, unlike the regression model on SPSS, the sampling method in PLS allows for freely distributed data without requiring assumptions of normal distribution (Ghozali, 2008). Furthermore, the hypothesis test used in this research is the significance test of t-statistic and P-value where the t-statistic value must be greater than the t-table threshold of 1.658 for 120 samples, and p-values must be greater than 0.050 (Sugiyono, 2018).

Table 3. Path Coefficients

	O	M	Std. Error	T-Statistic	P-Value	
Direct Effect						
EW → TE	0.323	0,335	0.068	4.753	0.000	Significant
AC → TE	-0.315	-0.305	0.088	3.574	0.000	Significant
AT → TE	0.392	0.390	0.073	5.347	0.000	Significant
Indirect Effect						
EW → TE → RI	0.283	0.294	0.059	4.759	0.000	H1 Accepted
AC → TE → RI	-0.275	-0.268	0.081	3.415	0.001	H2 Accepted
AT → TE → RI	0.342	0.342	0.063	5.419	0.000	H3 Accepted

Source: PLS Bootstrapping Output, 2023

According to Table 3, all existing variables have a significant effect when viewed from the resulting t-statistic and P-value. T-statistic values exceed the critical t-table threshold of 1.658, with a p-value below 5% (0.050), indicating statistical significance. The PLS bootstrapping results confirm that all hypotheses are supported, including the mediating effect (indirect effect) of the tourist experience variable in the model. These results indicate a good-fit model, aligning with the accepted hypotheses. A good-fit model suggests that the model's constructs have high reliability and validity. The model is well-specified, fits the data well, and shows predictive power for the dependent variables (Hair et al., 2017). In this case, the bootstrapping results indicate that all hypotheses are supported, and the mediating effect is confirmed. Furthermore, in terms of effect direction, nearly all variables in the model have a positive impact, except for accessibility, which shows a negative original sample (O) value in Table 3.

The differences impact like this can occur because, in some cases, tourists consider that accessibility to some tourist attractions is still poor, but this does not discourage them from visiting these tourist destinations (Fitriani et al., 2021), including accessibility to Wediombo Beach. Most respondents considered that the tourist destination was too far from the city and the access was not easy, but this still made them intend to revisit Wediombo Beach. The interpretation of these hypothesis test results shows that E-WOM and attractiveness positively impact tourists' revisit interest through tourism experience. The more positive E-WOM and attractiveness, the more positive the tourism experience, and the greater the tourists' revisit interest. However, accessibility negatively impacts revisit interest mediated by tourism experience. Even though accessibility is negative, the tourist experience is still positive due to the impact of E-WOM and attractiveness variables in the model, which also affect revisit intention.

Furthermore, the Sobel test must be calculated to assess the nature of the mediating variables. Full mediation occurs if the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable becomes insignificant when the mediating variable is included. Meanwhile, partial mediation occurs if the independent variable still significantly affects the dependent variable, even when the mediating variable is included (Amali, 2024; Ghozali, 2008). Moreover, to measure the mediation function, the Sobel test calculation is implemented by inputting the number of original sample (O) and standard error for both the direct and indirect effects on the path coefficients of the E-WOM, accessibility, and attractiveness on revisit intention, with the tourist experience variable as a mediator. The Online Sobel Test Calculator available at <http://quantpsy.org/sobel/sobel.htm> is used in this research (Preacher & Leonardelli, 2001).

Table 4. Sobel Test Calculation

TE Control	Std. Error	T-Statistic	P-Value	Mediation Role
EW → RI	0.027	3.375	0.000	Partial Mediation
AC → RI	0.035	2.463	0.014	Partial Mediation
AT → RI	0.035	3.818	0.000	Partial Mediation

Source: Sobel test calculator, 2023

By comparing the t-table value of 1.658 with the t-statistic in Table 4 and examining the significance value from the Sobel test, it can be concluded that tourist experience serves as a partial mediator when controlling the relationship between E-WOM, accessibility, attractiveness, and tourist revisit intention. Although it was rated negatively by respondents based on accessibility factor, tourist experience exists as a variable that can mediate the emergence of revisit interest. Tourist experience is the experience of tourists during travel related to visiting, seeing, learning, and enjoying different lifestyles during travel (Chang et al., 2014). A memorable and enjoyable experience while traveling makes tourists ignore the existing accessibility factor, so they still intend to visit repeatedly.

Revisit intention is the intention of tourists to make repeat visits to certain tourist destinations (Sari & Najmudin, 2021). The concept of repeat visit interest is the same as the concept of repurchase in marketing communication, where when consumers feel suitable for a product, they will likely buy the product in the future (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2004). Understanding tourists' intentions is crucial for the tourism industry, as it helps businesses, destinations, and policymakers design effective marketing strategies, improve services, and create experiences that cater to tourists' needs and preferences. Tourist destination managers must appropriately manage the tourist experience to realize a quality tourist experience so that tourists are willing to visit again in the future (Lim et al., 2021). Revisit intention can be understood as a form of tourist desire to visit a destination (Lin, 2014), wherein the principle of revisit intention, the plan to visit again and the desire to return really exists from their point of view (Prayag & Ryan, 2012).

Overall, Internet exposure has significantly transformed tourism by enhancing the reach and impact of E-WOM, improving tourist destinations' attractiveness, and increasing accessibility. The high publicity effect of internet exposure will tremendously influence public opinion formation in a relatively short time (Deslia & Amali, 2023). Through online reviews, testimonials, and influencer endorsements, E-WOM allows potential tourists to access authentic, user-generated information that influences their travel decisions (Gosal et al., 2020; Thaothampitak & Wongsuwatt, 2022). This leads to greater trust and a higher likelihood of visiting a destination. Social media platforms further amplify the attractiveness of destinations by showcasing visually compelling content, creating aspirational experiences that entice travelers (Bastrygina et al., 2024).

Additionally, the internet has made information about travel logistics, accommodations, and activities more accessible, simplifying the planning process and allowing tourists to compare options and make informed decisions easily (Tandafatu et al., 2024). However, internet and user-generated content across social media platforms play an increasingly important role in the tourism industry (Mirzaalian & Halpenny, 2021). These factors combined contribute to a seamless and satisfying tourist experience, where destinations are desirable, easy to explore, and enjoyable. Therefore, revisiting the tourist destination can be a good option for tourists. It also ensures the ongoing success and sustainability of tourism destinations, which is vital for the economic resilience of the tourism industry.

D. CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion of the research, it can be concluded that (1) there is an impact of E-WOM on revisit intention that is partially mediated by tourist experience, (2) there is an impact of accessibility on revisit intention that is partially mediated by tourist experience, and (3) there is an impact of attractiveness on revisit interest partially mediated by tourist experience. This phenomenon shows us that four variables in this research significantly contribute to tourist revisit intention. Furthermore, the managerial implication that researchers can suggest for the Special Region of Yogyakarta Tourism Office and related tourism managers (BUMDES & POKDARWIS) is to improve accessibility to Wediombo Beach, considering this variable has a negative value based on respondents' perceptions. This accessibility improvement can start with making clear directions and improving the road quality to Wediombo Beach. Meanwhile, for future research, it is recommended that additional variables such as facilities, marketing mix, tourist satisfaction, or social media exposure be explored. It would also be valuable to examine these variables' roles, whether as moderating variables, mediators, antecedents, or other relevant functions.

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