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The Influence of Tourist Perceptions and Tourist Experiences on Positive Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) in the Pantai Indah Kapuk Area as an Urban Tourist Attraction

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Abstrak. Fenomena yang berkembang dari berbagi ulasan perjalanan secara daring telah menjadi fokus utama dalam pemasaran tujuan wisata perkotaan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh persepsi wisatawan dan pengalaman wisatawan pada electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) positif mengenai tujuan wisata Pantai Indah Kapuk. Sampel terdiri dari 205 wisatawan yang mengunjungi Pantai Indah Kapuk dalam satu tahun terakhir dan merupakan pengguna media sosial aktif, dipilih menggunakan purposive sampling. Data dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner dan dianalisis menggunakan metode Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Square (SEM-PLS). Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa persepsi wisatawan dan pengalaman wisatawan memiliki efek positif dan signifikan pada e-WOM positif. Di antara keduanya, pengalaman wisatawan muncul sebagai faktor yang paling dominan dalam mendorong e-WOM positif. Analisis menggunakan SEM-PLS mengungkapkan bahwa persepsi wisatawan (koefisien jalur = 0,232; $p = 0,001$) dan pengalaman wisatawan (koefisien jalur = 0,479; $p = 0,000$) secara positif dan signifikan mempengaruhi e-WOM positif, dengan pengalaman wisatawan sebagai faktor yang paling dominan. Secara teoritis, studi ini memperkuat penerapan Teori Perilaku Terencana dalam konteks pariwisata digital. Penelitian ini terbatas pada satu destinasi perkotaan dan responden yang sebagian besar berusia muda dan aktif di media sosial. Studi selanjutnya disarankan untuk mencakup destinasi yang lebih luas, mencakup segmen wisatawan yang lebih beragam, dan menerapkan desain longitudinal untuk menangkap dinamika perilaku dari waktu ke waktu. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa pengelola destinasi sebaiknya tidak hanya berfokus pada narasi branding, tetapi juga pada peningkatan pengalaman wisatawan secara keseluruhan melalui peningkatan fasilitas, acara yang menarik, dan strategi keterlibatan media sosial yang efektif.

Kata kunci: Persepsi Wisatawan; Pengalaman Wisatawan; E-WOM; Pariwisata Perkotaan; Pantai Indah Kapuk.

Abstract. The growing phenomenon of sharing travel reviews online has become a key focus in urban tourism destination marketing. This study aims to analyze the influence of tourist perception and tourist experience on positive electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) regarding the Pantai Indah Kapuk tourist destination. The sample consists of 205 tourists who visited Pantai Indah Kapuk within the past year and are active social media users, selected using purposive sampling. Data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using the Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Square (SEM-PLS) method. The results indicate that both tourist perception and tourist experience have a positive and significant effect on positive e-WOM. Among the two, tourist experience emerged as the most dominant factor in encouraging positive e-WOM. The analysis using SEM-PLS revealed that both tourist perception (path coefficient = 0.232; $p = 0.001$) and tourist experience (path coefficient = 0.479; $p = 0.000$) positively and significantly influence positive e-WOM, with tourist experience as the most dominant factor. Theoretically, this study reinforces the application of the Theory of Planned Behavior in digital tourism contexts. The research is limited to one urban destination and respondents who are mostly young and active on social media. Future studies are recommended to cover broader destinations, include more diverse tourist segments, and apply a longitudinal design to capture behavioral dynamics over time. These findings suggest that destination managers should focus not only on branding narratives but also on enhancing the overall tourist experience through improved facilities, engaging events, and effective social media engagement strategies.

Keywords: Tourist Perception; Tourist Experience; E-WOM; Urban Tourism; Pantai Indah Kapuk.

Introduction

The tourism industry in Indonesia is undergoing a significant transformation with the increasing role of urban tourism destinations that are integrated with digital infrastructure and urban lifestyles. The Pantai Indah Kapuk (PIK) area in Jakarta is a representative example of this phenomenon. With a variety of culinary attractions, green open spaces, artificial beach areas, and thematic entertainment venues, PIK has grown into a domestic tourism magnet that has gone viral on social media (JPNN.com, 2025). However, behind the digital popularity, challenges began to emerge in the form of a gap between tourists' expectations and real experiences during visits. The mismatch phenomenon between digital imagery and on-the-ground reality is reflected in the rise of tourist complaints on various platforms such as Instagram, Pergikuliner, and Reddit. Common complaints relate to traffic congestion, long queues, facility inconvenience, and unsatisfactory tenant services.

These discrepancies have the potential to influence Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM), especially in the form of negative reviews that spread rapidly through social media (Faluti *et al.*, 2022). In the era of digital communication, travelers' initial perceptions are formed no longer by conventional promotions, but by experiences shared by fellow users through E-WOM (Zhang *et al.*, 2020). Although research on Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) in tourism has advanced considerably, studies that simultaneously examine the influence of tourist perception and tourist experience on positive e-WOM in urban tourism destinations remain very limited. Most existing studies have focused on nature-based or cultural destinations, where tourists' motivations, expectations, and interactions are fundamentally different from those in urban contexts. Urban destinations such as Pantai Indah Kapuk (PIK) are characterized by a strong integration with digital lifestyles, a variety of artificial attractions, high accessibility, and intense exposure to social media. In these urban settings, tourists often build their expectations through digital narratives and

online reviews before visiting, but their actual experience during the visit is what ultimately shapes their positive or negative e-WOM. The gap between digital expectations and on-site reality is often more pronounced in urban destinations due to the massive impact of digital promotions and the high risk of negative viral content when experiences do not meet expectations (Faluti *et al.*, 2022; Sari *et al.*, 2024). The main differences between urban and non-urban destinations are reflected in the sources and forms of tourist expectations, the vulnerability to mismatches between digital perceptions and actual experiences, and the polarization of tourist experiences. Urban tourists are strongly influenced by digital trends, influencer recommendations, and lifestyle-oriented attractions, while tourists in nature or cultural destinations tend to seek authenticity, uniqueness, and interaction with local environments or traditions (Nanggong & Mohammad, 2020; Cupian *et al.*, 2023). Moreover, the risk of dissatisfaction going viral is higher in urban tourism, where negative experiences such as congestion, long queues, or impersonal service are more likely to be rapidly disseminated via social media.

From a theoretical standpoint, the selection of tourist perception and experience as variables in this study is grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991). According to TPB, behavioral intentions such as the intention to share e-WOM are shaped by attitudes, which are in turn influenced by initial perceptions, and are reinforced by actual experiences (Han *et al.*, 2010). While previous studies have independently confirmed the role of positive perception (Cupian *et al.*, 2023) or positive experience (Sihombing *et al.*, 2022; Lemy *et al.*, 2021) in increasing e-WOM, there is a lack of comprehensive research that investigates both factors simultaneously within the highly dynamic and digitalized context of urban tourism. A systematic review of similar models also reveals a research gap: Nanggong and Mohammad (2020) found that experience is more influential than perception in cultural destinations but did not address urban digitalization. Cupian *et al.* (2023) explored perception in halal tourism, but did not include experience as a variable. Aspariyanthi and Agustina (2024) demonstrated the mediating

role of memorable experience in e-WOM for cultural performances, but did not consider the complexity of urban tourism. Studies by Sihombing *et al.* (2022) and Lemy *et al.* (2021) focused on rural or nature-based tourism. To date, almost no studies have comprehensively examined the simultaneous influence of tourist perception and experience on positive e-WOM in urban tourism destinations, particularly using a quantitative approach and SEM-PLS modeling. Thus, this study fills a significant gap by empirically testing both variables in an urban, digitally driven context, providing both theoretical and practical insights for tourism destination management in aligning digital promotion with actual tourist experiences to foster positive e-WOM. *Electronic Word of Mouth* (E-WOM) is a form of informal communication between consumers conducted through digital media and has a significant influence on traveler decisions (Hennig-Thurau *et al.*, 2004). In the context of tourist destinations, *positive E-WOM* acts as a form of indirect promotion that is more trusted than formal advertising (Kotler *et al.*, 2017). Therefore, it is important to understand the factors that drive the formation of positive reviews from tourists, especially in urban tourism destinations such as PIK which rely heavily on digital presence.

The two main factors that are considered to influence E-WOM are traveler perception and traveler experience (Goeltom *et al.*, 2019). Traveler perceptions are formed in the pre-visit stage, through information from social media, review sites, or other digital recommendations (Cupian *et al.*, 2023). These perceptions include assessments of destination image, safety, cleanliness, and service expectations (Agatha *et al.*, 2020). The study by Apriliani *et al.* (2024) confirmed that positively formed perceptions will increase tourists' intention to share their good experiences through E-WOM. Meanwhile, the tourist experience includes all emotional, cognitive, and sensory interactions experienced during the visit, including social interactions, service quality, and attraction uniqueness (Rohima, 2022); (Juliana *et al.*, 2022; Juliana *et al.*, 2020; Juliana *et al.*, 2021, 2024; Aditi, *et al.*, 2022). A pleasant experience will increase tourist satisfaction and significantly

encourage them to convey positive recommendations to other tourists (Aspariyanthi & Agustina, 2024); (Sihombing, *et al.*, 2022; Lemy *et al.*, 2021; Pramezvary *et al.*, 2021). Previous research has discussed separately the effect of perception or experience on E-WOM. For example, Nanggong & Mohammad's (2020) research emphasizes that cultural tourism experiences have an impact on destination image and E-WOM. However, research that simultaneously examines the influence of tourist perceptions and experiences on *positive E-WOM* in urban tourist destinations such as PIK is still very limited. This shows a significant gap in the literature, considering that the character of urban destinations is different from natural or cultural destinations in general. The theory used in this study is the *Theory of Planned Behavior* (Ajzen, 1991), which states that behavioral intentions are influenced by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. In this context, travelers' perceptions and experiences influence their attitudes towards the destination, which in turn influences the intention to share the experience digitally (Han *et al.*, 2010). Support from friends, online reviews, and ease of sharing information through social media strengthen tourists' subjective norms and perceived behavioral control in conducting E-WOM (Syahputra & Baik, 2022).

Therefore, it is important for destination managers to understand how tourists' perceptions and experiences play a role in shaping positive digital communication. This study aims to analyze the influence of tourist perceptions and experiences on *positive E-WOM* at the Pantai Indah Kapuk (PIK) urban tourist destination. Specifically, this study aims to answer three questions:

- 1) Does tourist perception affect *positive E-WOM*?
- 2) Does tourist experience affect *positive E-WOM*?
- 3) Between the two, which is the most dominant?

Tourist perception is a key factor influencing tourist attitudes and behavior, including their tendency to share experiences through e-WOM. Positive perceptions of a destination, such as

service quality, cleanliness, safety, and environmental beauty, can increase tourist satisfaction and encourage them to provide positive reviews (Sabrina *et al.*, 2022). Based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), positive tourist perceptions will shape favorable attitudes toward the destination, which in turn increases the intention to share experiences through e-WOM. Furthermore, research by Hennig-Thurau *et al.* (2004) shows that positive tourist perceptions of a destination significantly influence their tendency to provide positive reviews (Sofi Apriliani *et al.*, 2024). Tourist experience encompasses all interactions, emotions, and perceptions experienced by tourists during their visit to a destination. Positive experiences, such as comfort, friendly staff, beautiful locations, and enjoyable activities, can increase tourist satisfaction and encourage them to share their experiences through e-WOM (Martalia *et al.*, 2022).

Based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), if a tourist's experience meets or exceeds their expectations, satisfaction will increase, which in turn will encourage the intention to leave a positive review. Research by (Reza Jalilvand & Samiei, 2012) also shows that positive tourist experiences significantly increase their likelihood of leaving positive reviews and recommendations (Aspariyanti & Agustina, 2024; Prasetyo, 2024). Based on this explanation, the hypothesis of this study is as follows:

H1: Tourist perceptions have a positive and significant influence on *positive E-WOM* in the Pantai Indah Kapuk area.

H2: Tourist experience has a positive and significant influence on *positive E-WOM* in Pantai Indah Kapuk area.

Given the importance of the contribution of *positive electronic word of mouth* in shaping destination image and driving repeat visit decisions, this study has broad practical implications for managers of urban tourist destinations. In the post-pandemic era, promotional strategies based on digital experiences and interactions have proven more effective in reaching millennial and Generation Z travelers who are highly active on social media (Sari *et al.*, 2024). Therefore, empirically

understanding how travelers' perceptions and experiences shape *positive E-WOM* is key to developing adaptive and data-driven destination communication strategies. This research adds a theoretical contribution by integrating the *Theory of Planned Behavior* (TPB) approach in the context of urban tourist destinations, which until now has been relatively rarely explored specifically. By placing perceptions and experiences as determinants of tourist communication behavior attitudes and intentions, this study emphasizes the importance of managing expectations and actual experiences in a balanced manner. The results of this study are expected to provide a relevant conceptual framework for further research in the field of digital tourism, as well as encourage the development of empirical literature related to tourist behavior in an increasingly dynamic online interaction space. This research is expected to not only provide academic contributions in the development of theories of tourist behavior and digital communication, but also practical contributions for urban tourism destination managers in developing strategies based on tourists' experiences and perceptions to improve destination reputation through E-WOM.

Research Methodology

This study applies a quantitative approach with a survey method to examine the influence of tourist perceptions and tourist experiences on *positive electronic word of mouth* (positive E-WOM) at the urban tourist destination Pantai Indah Kapuk (PIK), Jakarta. This approach was chosen because it is in accordance with the explanatory research objectives, namely explaining the causal relationship between variables through numerical measurement and statistical analysis (Sekaran & Bougie., 2016). The research design used was a quantitative survey with a questionnaire as the main instrument. The questionnaire was prepared based on theoretical indicators and adaptations from previous research, then validated through a pretest. The instrument measured three main variables, namely tourist perception, tourist experience, and positive E-WOM, using a six-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 6 =

strongly agree). Data collection was conducted online through the distribution of survey forms to respondents who met the inclusion criteria. The population in this study is all tourists who have visited Pantai Indah Kapuk within the last year. Because the population is not known with certainty, the sampling method used is non-probability sampling with a purposive sampling technique. Respondent inclusion criteria include: (1) at least 17 years old, (2) have visited PIK in the past year, and (3) actively use social media or digital platforms to share travel experiences. The sample size was determined with the help of the latest version of G*Power software. Assuming a *medium effect size* and a 5% significance level, a minimum sample size of 176 respondents was obtained. To increase statistical power and external validity, the final number of samples collected and analyzed was 205 respondents. This study involves one dependent variable and two independent variables which are operationalized as follows: Traveler perception (X1): individual perceptions of destination attributes such as service, safety, accessibility, and destination image (Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; Kotler *et al.*, 2017).

Traveler experience (X2): travelers' affective and cognitive responses to overall interactions during the visit, including enjoyment, engagement, authenticity, and memory (Pine & Gilmore, 2011; Kim *et al.*, 2012). Positive E-WOM (Y): travelers' propensity to voluntarily share positive experiences through digital media, including social media and online review platforms (Hennig-Thurau *et al.*, 2004; Jalilvand & Samiei, 2012). Each variable was measured using five indicators and was tested for validity and reliability before being used in the final analysis. Data were analyzed using the *Structural Equation Modeling - Partial Least Square* (SEM-PLS) approach, using SmartPLS 4.0 software. This technique was chosen because it can analyze structural models with high complexity and moderate sample size, and does not require the assumption of multivariate normal distribution (Hair *et al.*, 2021). The analysis was conducted in two main stages. First, testing the measurement model (outer model) to assess convergent validity, discriminant validity, and construct reliability using *outer loading* indicators,

composite reliability, and *average variance extracted* (AVE). Second, testing the structural model (inner model) to evaluate the strength of the relationship between latent variables through the *path coefficient* test, *R-square* value, *f-square*, and *predictive relevance* (Q^2). The significance level is set at $\alpha = 0.05$. Prior to the main data collection, the research instrument was validated through a pilot test involving 30 respondents who met the study's inclusion criteria. This pilot phase aimed to assess the clarity, reliability, and content validity of all questionnaire items. Furthermore, the instrument was reviewed by two academic experts specializing in tourism and quantitative research to ensure content and construct validity, with adjustments made according to their feedback.

The study employed purposive sampling, targeting tourists who had visited Pantai Indah Kapuk within the past year and were active on social media. While purposive sampling and online data collection may introduce selection bias, we established strict inclusion criteria and distributed the survey through a variety of digital platforms, including social media, tourism communities, and travel forums, to reach a diverse respondent pool. Author used filtering questions to confirm eligibility and monitored response patterns to remove inconsistent or duplicate entries, thereby enhancing the quality of the data. Ethical considerations were rigorously addressed: all participants were provided with detailed information regarding the study objectives, their rights as respondents, and the confidentiality of their data. Informed consent was obtained electronically prior to survey participation, and all data were anonymized and stored securely in compliance with the university's research ethics guidelines.

Results and Discussion

Results

This study presents the results from the testing of validity, reliability, and hypotheses as part of the evaluation of both the outer and inner models using the Partial Least Squares (PLS) method. The validity tests, including convergent

and discriminant validity, ensured that the constructs measured in the model were reliable and represented the data appropriately. The reliability analysis, including measures such as Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability, confirmed that the instruments used were internally consistent. Hypothesis testing was conducted using path coefficients to examine the relationships between the variables, and the results demonstrated the significance of these relationships. All tables, along with their

respective values and statistical results, are presented as they appear in the source documents, accompanied by detailed explanations to facilitate interpretation. The outcomes of these tests provide essential insights into the structural model and contribute to understanding the influence of tourist perception and experience on positive electronic word of mouth (e-WOM).

Table 1. Outer Loading Test Result

Tourist Perception	Positive E-WOM	Tourist Experience
PW1 = 0.796	PEWOM1 = 0.869	TE1 = 0.888
PW2 = 0.840	PEWOM2 = 0.879	TE2 = 0.707
PW3 = 0.841	PEWOM3 = 0.795	TE3 = 0.914
PW4 = 0.714	PEWOM4 = 0.757	TE4 = 0.877
PW5 = 0.900	PEWOM5 = 0.741	TE5 = 0.874

Table 1 shows that all indicators in each construct have an outer loading value above 0.70, which means that the indicator meets the requirements of convergent validity. This indicates that each question item developed successfully represents the construct being measured, both for tourist perceptions, positive

E-WOM, and tourist experience. The highest value is found in the TE3 indicator (0.914), which indicates that authentic experience plays a major role in shaping the tourist experience construct.

Table 2. Reliability Test Results

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Rho_A	Description
Tourist Perception	0.877	0.911	0.882	Reliable
Positive E-WOM	0.868	0.905	0.870	Reliable
Tourist Experience	0.906	0.931	0.909	Reliable

The results in Table 2 show that all variables in this study have a high level of reliability. The Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values of the three constructs are more than 0.70, indicating that the instruments used have strong internal consistency. This ensures that respondents give consistent answers to each

indicator in the same construct. *Tourist Experience* has the highest reliability value, which indicates that the aspects of tourist experience have the strongest cohesion in forming the construct.

Table 3. Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Variable	AVE	Description
Tourist Perception	0.674	Valid
Positive E-WOM	0.657	Valid
Tourist Experience	0.731	Valid

Table 3 shows that all constructs have an AVE value of more than 0.50, which is the minimum threshold for convergent validity. With the

highest AVE value on *Tourist Experience* (0.731), it can be said that the indicators on this construct are very good at explaining the

variance it has. This reinforces the finding that a strong, well-rounded tourist experience has

high representative power in this model.

Table 4. Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT)

	Tourist Perception	Positive E-WOM	Tourist Experience
Tourist Perception			
Positive E-WOM	0.659		
Tourist Experience	0.816	0.729	

Table 4 presents the results of the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) test for discriminant validity. The findings indicate that all the HTMT values are below the threshold of 0.9, which confirms that the discriminant validity of the constructs is established. As a result, it can

be concluded that the variables in this study are distinct from one another and do not exhibit high correlations with each other, supporting the validity of the constructs used in the model.

Table 5. F-Square

Path	Positive E-WOM	Description
Tourist Perception -> Positive E-WOM	0.0456	Small effect size
Tourist Experience -> Positive E-WOM	0.1938	Large effect size

Table 5 presents the f-square values for the relationships between tourist perception and tourist experience on positive electronic word-of-mouth (E-WOM), showing that tourist perception has a small effect size ($f^2 = 0.0456$), while tourist experience demonstrates a large effect size ($f^2 = 0.1938$). This indicates that although tourist perceptions contribute modestly to positive E-WOM, it is the actual tourist experience that plays a much more

significant role in driving tourists to share positive feedback online. These findings suggest that destination managers and marketers should prioritize enhancing the overall tourist experience to maximize positive E-WOM, as supported by current literature which highlights experience as a stronger determinant of electronic recommendations than perception alone (Hair *et al.*, 2022; Chen & Rahman, 2018).

Table 6. Hypothesis Test Results (Path Coefficient)

Hypothesis	Original Sample	T-Statistic	P-Value	Decision
Tourist Perception → Positive E-WOM	0.232	2.278	0.001	Supported
Tourist Experience → Positive E-WOM	0.479	5.128	0.000	Supported

Table 6 displays the results of hypothesis testing using the bootstrapping method. Both tested relationship paths produced p-values <0.05 and t-statistics > 1.96 , which means they are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level. Tourist Experience has the greatest influence on Positive E-WOM with a coefficient of 0.479 and the highest t-statistic of 5.128. This means that the experience felt by tourists plays a greater role than initial perceptions in encouraging them to spread positive reviews online. This result strengthens the Planned Behavior theory (Ajzen, 1991) which states that individual behavior is influenced by beliefs about the outcome of an

action (perception) and experience. In addition, this result is in line with research by Aspariyanthi & Agustina (2024) and (Apriliani *et al.*, 2024), which emphasize the importance of memorable and enjoyable tourism experiences in shaping tourists' positive behavior, including the intention to leave an online review. Although tourists' initial perceptions are significant, their smaller coefficient values compared to experience suggest that service quality, authenticity of the experience, and emotional engagement during the visit are more decisive in the formation of positive E-WOM. Therefore, destination managers should not only focus on visual promotion or online

branding but also on the management of real and quality field experiences. The findings of this study reveal that tourist experience exerts a stronger influence on positive e-WOM compared to tourist perception. This result may be attributable to several factors, particularly the unique characteristics of urban destinations like Pantai Indah Kapuk, where visitors are exposed to a dynamic environment, diverse attractions, and high levels of digital engagement. In such urban contexts, the actual on-site experience encompassing service quality, atmosphere, and engagement with modern amenities appears to have a greater impact on tourists' willingness to share positive reviews than initial perceptions shaped by digital media. Moreover, the demographic profile of respondents, who were predominantly young and digitally savvy, may amplify the significance of direct experience, as this segment tends to be more active in creating and disseminating content on social media platforms.

These findings align with previous research in urban tourism, which similarly emphasizes the primacy of lived experience in driving e-WOM (Han *et al.*, 2010), yet differ from studies in nature or cultural destinations, where pre-visit perceptions and destination image often play a more dominant role (Nanggong & Mohammad, 2020; Cupian *et al.*, 2023). This contrast highlights the necessity of contextualizing the relationship between perception, experience, and e-WOM within different tourism settings. From a theoretical standpoint, these results contribute to the ongoing development of tourist behavior theory in the digital era. Specifically, the findings reinforce and extend the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), suggesting that in highly digitalized urban environments, the behavioral intentions underlying e-WOM are more strongly shaped by actual experiences than by perceptions alone. This underscores the importance of integrating context-specific factors such as digital infrastructure, real-time interaction, and social media engagement into models of tourist behavior. Despite these contributions, the study has several limitations. Methodologically, the use of purposive sampling and online survey distribution may

have introduced selection bias, with respondents predominantly representing younger, digitally active tourists. Substantively, the research did not explore how demographic characteristics (such as age, gender, or socioeconomic status), the types of social media platforms used, or the timing of visits (including seasonality or special events) might moderate the relationships among perception, experience, and e-WOM. Addressing these factors in future research, along with employing more diverse samples and longitudinal or mixed-methods designs, would provide a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the dynamics influencing positive e-WOM in various tourism contexts.

Discussion

The findings of this study show that both tourist perceptions and tourist experiences have a significant impact on positive Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) in the Pantai Indah Kapuk (PIK) area, with tourist experience being the dominant factor. These results align with previous research which indicates that tourist experiences, particularly those involving comfort and service quality, have a stronger influence than tourist perceptions of the destination (Aspariyanti & Agustina, 2024). In the context of Pantai Indah Kapuk, the actual experience that tourists have such as interactions with staff, the quality of facilities, and the uniqueness of attractions plays a key role in encouraging them to share positive reviews. This supports the findings of Hennig-Thurau *et al.* (2004), who noted that e-WOM is more influenced by personal, satisfying experiences than by perceptions formed beforehand through digital promotions. Tourist perceptions of the destination, formed through information gathered prior to the visit, were also shown to influence positive e-WOM. Research by Cupian *et al.* (2023) and Faluti *et al.* (2022) revealed that perceptions of destination attributes such as cleanliness, safety, and destination image impact tourists' decisions to visit a place and support their positive perceptions of the experience to come. However, while these perceptions are important, their effect is smaller compared to the actual experiences felt during the visit. This suggests that, although information shared

through social media or online reviews may shape tourists' expectations, the reality of what they experience during their visit is more decisive in determining whether they will share positive feedback. The tourist experience at PIK is strongly influenced by service quality and the atmosphere at the location, which corresponds with findings from Nanggong & Mohammad (2020), who emphasized the importance of tourist experiences in both cultural and urban destinations in shaping e-WOM. This study also supports the argument by Sari *et al.* (2024), who stated that tourist motivation and perceptions significantly affect their decision to share positive experiences on social media. Moreover, Rohima (2022) also highlighted the importance of authentic and enjoyable experiences in motivating tourists to provide positive recommendations to others.

This finding is also relevant to the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), which states that the intention to engage in e-WOM is influenced by attitudes shaped by both perceptions and experiences. While initial perceptions do play a role, this study emphasizes that the actual tourist experience has a greater influence on forming positive attitudes and intentions to share experiences digitally. Therefore, to encourage positive e-WOM, destination managers need to focus on enhancing the tourist experience, ensuring that what tourists experience aligns with the expectations set by digital promotions. Practically, the findings of this study have important implications for destination managers to focus more on improving the quality of experiences offered to tourists rather than relying solely on digital promotion or destination image. Ensuring that the facilities, services, and attractions provided meet the expectations shaped by online marketing will increase the likelihood of tourists sharing positive reviews online. Thus, destination managers should ensure that there is a balance between digital promotion and the actual experience tourists encounter at the destination.

Conclusion

This study aims to analyze the effect of tourist perceptions and tourist experiences on *positive electronic word of mouth* (positive E-WOM) at the Pantai Indah Kapuk (PIK) urban tourist destination. The results of the analysis using the Partial Least Square (PLS) method show that both independent variables have a positive and significant influence on positive E-WOM. However, tourist experience is proven to have a more dominant influence than tourists' initial perceptions. This finding reinforces the role of direct experience in shaping tourists' digital behavior, especially in the context of tourism that relies heavily on online reviews and word of mouth. Within the framework of Planned Behavior theory, the results of this study confirm that tourists' real experiences have a strong driving force in creating positive attitudes and sharing intentions. The impact of this study is both practical and theoretical. Practically, these results provide implications for destination managers to focus more on creating authentic, enjoyable, and visitor-expectation tourism experiences.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the development of a model of tourist behavior in a digital context, as well as opening up space for the integration of perception and experience variables in social media-based tourism studies. This study has several limitations that need to be considered. First, the geographical scope of the study is limited to one urban tourism area, Pantai Indah Kapuk in Jakarta. Second, the respondents are dominated by young tourists who are active on social media, so these findings do not reflect the diversity of the tourist segment at large. Thirdly, the research design is cross-sectional, so it is unable to capture changes in perceptions and experiences over time. The practical implication of these results is the importance of improving the overall quality of the tourism experience to create a positive viral effect on social media. Destination managers need to ensure that promotional information matches actual conditions to maintain alignment between expectations and reality. Scientifically, this study contributes to strengthening the TPB-based digital tourist behavior model and opens up

space for exploring the integration between psychological, social, and experiential variables in contemporary tourism studies. Recommendations for future research include expanding the sample population to be more representative of all age segments and backgrounds and adding mediating variables such as traveler satisfaction or emotional attachment. Longitudinal research is also recommended to analyze the dynamics of variable relationships on an ongoing basis in the tourist behavior cycle.

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