



## *Social Media Utilization and Tourist Experience Towards Revisit Intention Through Content Creation At Sabda Alam Garut Water Park Tourist Attractions*

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study discusses the influence of the use of social media and tourist experience on the intention to revisit, with content creation as an intermediate variable, using the Sabda Alam Garut Water Park as the object of research. The quantitative method was applied by purposive sampling of 100 respondents, and the data were analyzed using SmartPLS. The results show that the use of social media significantly affects both content creation and intention to revisit, while travelers' experience significantly influences intention to revisit but does not affect content creation. Content creation also positively mediates the relationship with the intention to revisit. These findings emphasize the importance of digital marketing and user-generated content in strengthening traveler loyalty.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology, especially social media, has fundamentally changed the landscape of the tourism industry. Social media no longer only functions as a means of communication, but has evolved into a very effective marketing tool, with the number of active users in Indonesia reaching 212 million people. Platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube now play a crucial role in shaping travelers' perceptions, influencing travel decisions, and significantly driving return intent (P et al., 2024) (Fibri Ernawati, 2025; Junaedi et al., 2025). This phenomenon underscores a paradigm shift in the way tourist destinations interact with potential visitors, as well as how travel experiences are shaped, shared, and replicated (Cheung & Cheah, 2021). Strategic use of social media not only increases the visibility of the destination, but also creates deep engagement with the audience, creates a community around the destination's brand, and ultimately, drives traveler loyalty.

Revisit *intention* is a key indicator of the success of a tourist destination, reflecting a tourist's strong desire to return after a satisfying experience (Chen & Wang, 2023; Wang & Xu, 2021). Social media facilitates this process by providing a space for travelers to share digital experiences and content, which in turn helps shape the image of destinations and influences other travelers' decisions (Ecohumanism, 2024).

Sabda Alam Garut Water Park, as one of the leading natural tourism destinations in West Java, has been actively utilizing social media for promotion. Attractions such as hot springs, beautiful natural scenery, and family-friendly atmosphere contribute to tourist satisfaction and potential revisit intention (Hidayat & Sari, 2022; Putra & Dewi, 2021). However, even though the level of visits is quite high, there are still fluctuations in the number of tourists who return to visit every year. This phenomenon shows that the intention to revisit the Sabda Alam Water Park is not yet completely stable and sustainable, so a deeper understanding of the factors that affect it is needed. Apart from being a leading destination, the hot spring area in Garut also has strategic value in the development of thematic tourism such as halal tourism. Research by Susilawati et al. (2020) shows that local tourists in the Cipanas Garut area prioritize attractions and facilities over awareness of halal aspects, which indicates the importance of innovation in tourism content and experiences to remain competitive in the regional tourism market.

Some traveler reviews on platforms such as Google Reviews and Instagram show that while many visitors are satisfied with the hot spring facilities and natural beauty, some complain about the attraction's limited innovation and less attractive variety of digital promotional content. This condition indicates the potential to strengthen revisit intention through improving travel experiences and more participatory content creation strategies.

In addition, although several studies have examined the influence of social media on return intent (Seow et al., 2024) and the impact of traveler experience on loyalty (Monteiro et al., 2023), there is still limited research that comprehensively integrates these three variables of social media utilization, traveler experience, and content creation with a focus on the mediating role of content creation on revisit intent. especially in the specific context of the Sabda Alam Garut Water Park. The urgency of this research is further strengthened by the need for tourist destinations to understand the dynamics of tourist behavior in the digital era, where user-generated content becomes a valuable asset in marketing strategies and long-term loyalty building.

However, there is still a research gap in comprehensively understanding how *social media utilization, tourist experience, and content creation* interact in influencing *revisit intention*, especially in local destinations such as Sabda Alam Garut Water Park. Previous research has generally examined these variables separately e.g. Anderson & Clark (2024) and Wang & Xu (2021) have focused on the relationship between social media and travel experiences, while Mariani et al. (2022) and Nguyen & Patel (2025) have emphasized the role of *user-generated content* without directly linking it to revisit intent.

Thus, this study seeks to fill the gap that occurs by integrating the three variables into a conceptual model to analyze their influence on revisit intention in the Sabda Alam Garut Water Park. It is hoped that the results of the study can contribute to the literature on digital tourist behavior theoretically and have an impact on the marketing strategy of content-based destinations in a practical way.

## 2. METHOD

A quantitative approach was applied to this study by adopting a causal-comparative design to test the causality relationship between the variables studied (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

All individuals who have visited the Sabda Alam Garut Water Park became the population in this study. The respondents' criteria included: (1) individuals who had visited the Sabda Alam Garut Water Park, (2) over 17 years old, and (3) were active social media users (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016).

The research instrument was developed based on indicators from each variable: social media utilization, tourist experience, content creation, and intention to return to visit. The validity and reliability of the instruments were tested through reliability testing (*Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability*) and convergent validity testing (outer loading and AVE) (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Its capability in dealing with model complexity, data abnormalities, relatively small sample size, and focus on prediction and theory development are the reasons why researchers choose to utilize PLS-SEM (Henseler., 2015). Validity and reliability testing is involved in the evaluation of *the outer model*.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1. RESULTS

The distribution of respondent demographics based on gender and the most frequently used social media platforms, as well as confirmation of whether the respondents have visited the Sabda Alam Garut Water Park Table 1 presents. This data provides an initial overview of the respondents' personal data in this study.

**Table 1** Characteristics of Respondents

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Continue to Grow</b>
Male – Male	41	41%
Woman	59	59%
Total	100	100%
<b>Social Media</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Tiktok	28	28%

Posted on Instagram	70	70%
Posted on Facebook	2	2%
Total	100	100%
<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	79	79%
Not	21	21%
Total	100	100%

Based on respondent characteristics data, the majority of respondents are women (59%), with Instagram as the social media with the highest user ratings (70%), followed by TikTok (28%), while Facebook is only used by 2% of respondents. In addition, most respondents (79%) have visited Sabda Alam Garut Water Park in the past six months, showing the relevance of respondents' direct experience with the object of the research.

Figure 1 shows the structural model of the research tested using SmartPLS, illustrating the direct and indirect relationship between the variables Social Media Utilization, Tourist Experience, Content Creation, and Revisit Intention.

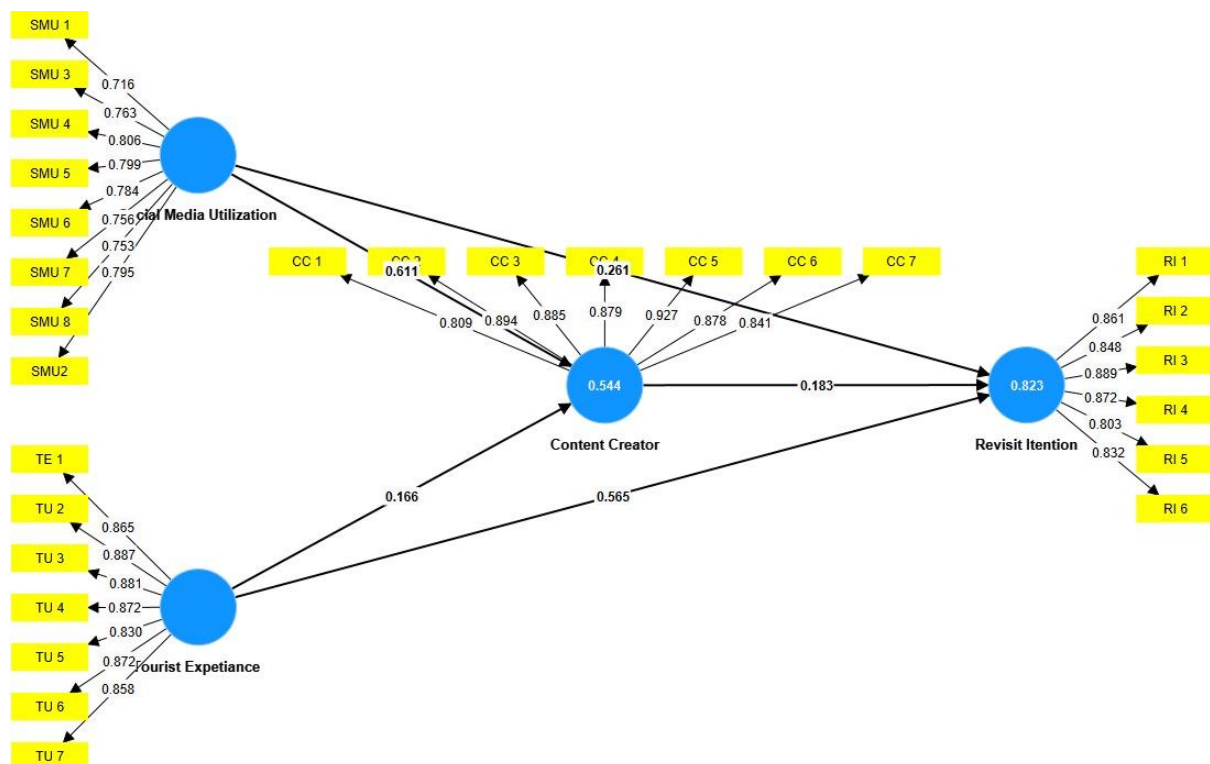


Figure 1 Research Model in SmartPLS

Validity and reliability testing is included in the evaluation of *the outer model*. In order to measure the value *of the loading factor* of each indicator, a validity test is applied where if the value is  $\geq 0.70$ , the valid property is owned by the indicator.

Information :

SMU	= Social Media Utilization
SMU1	= Ease of obtaining tourist information through social media
SMU2	= Interaction with social media content
SMU3	= Trust in the content of tourist information
SMU4	= Frequency of searching for tourist information through social media
SMU5	= Interest in tourism promotion content
SMU6	= The influence of social media on visiting decisions
SMU7	= Visual display quality of travel content
SMU8	= Influence of tourist reviews/reviews
TE	= Tourist Experience
TE1	= A pleasant tourist experience
TE2	= Quality of tourist facilities
TE3	= Unique and memorable experience
TE4	= Quality of service of officers
TE5	= Cleanliness and safety
TE6	= Satisfaction with the available rides
TE7	= Price compatibility with experience
CC	= Content Creator / Content Creation
CC1	= Habit of creating content while traveling
CC2	= Frequency of uploading tourism content
CC3	= Desire to share experiences on social media
CC4	= Creativity of tourism content created
CC5	= Response or engagement from other users
CC6	= Intent to create content on the next visit
CC7	= Satisfaction when content gets appreciation
RI	= Revisit Intention
RI1	= Desire to return to tourism
RI2	= Willingness to recommend to others
RI3	= Sabda Alam as the main choice of vacation
RI4	= Satisfaction drives repeat visits
RI5	= Positive memories influence return intentions
RI6	= Real plans to visit again
RI7	= Loyalty to tourist destinations

Table 2 presents the results of the reliability *and* convergent validity tests for each construct in the research model. These values show internal consistency and the ability of the indicator to measure the construct in question.

**Table 2** Construct Validity Feasibility – Overview

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (rho_a)	Composite Reliability (rho_c)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Content Creation	0.948	0.950	0.958	0.764
Revisit Intention	0.915	0.923	0.933	0.668
Social Media Utilization	0.903	0.904	0.922	0.596
Tourist Experience	0.945	0.945	0.955	0.751

Reliability is very high for all constructs in *Cronbach's Alpha* column because the value is  $> 0.90$ .

All constructs in the *Composite Reliability* column have a  $>$  value of 0.90, exceeding the 0.70 threshold recommended by Fornell & Larcker (1981). This proves that the consistency of the inside to reflect the construct is possessed by the indicators of each variable.

The AVE value of the entire construct  $> 0.50$ , exceeding the 50% variance of the indicator that can be explained by the measured construct. According to Fornell & Larcker (1981), convergent validity is fulfilled when the AVE value is  $\geq 0.50$ , meaning that the construct can be adequately explained by the indicator.

The  $R^2$  and Adjusted R-square values for the endogenous variables in the model are shown in Table 3. These values indicate the ability of independent variable variability in explaining dependent variables as well as mediating in the model.

**Table 3** R-square - Overview

	R-square	Adjusted R-square
Content Creation	0.544	0.538
Revisit Intention	0.831	0.828

Based on the results of the analysis of the R-square overview, the R-Square value ( $R^2$ ) is used to assess the ability of independent variables to explain their dependent variables. In this study, the number 0.544 is the  $R^2$  value of the *Content Creation* variable, so it can be concluded that 54.4% of the variability of *Content Creation* can be explained by *Social Media Utilization* and *Tourist Experience*. The other 45.6% are likely to be explained by other factors not present in the model.

The number 0.831 is the  $R^2$  value of the *Revisit Intention* variable, so it can be concluded that 83.1% of the variability of *Revisit Intention* can be explained by the *Content Creation*, *Social Media Utilization*, and *Tourist Experience* variables. The remaining 16.9% was explained by other factors not found in the model.

The results of the direct hypothesis test between variables in the model, including path coefficient values, standard deviation, T-statistics, and P-values are shown in Table 4. These values are used to determine the significance of causal correlations between variables.

**Table 4** Path Coefficients

	Original Sample	Sample Mean	STDEV	T Statistics	P Values
Content Creation -> Revisit Intention	0.209	0.210	0.066	3.175	0.002
Social Media Utilization -> Content Creation	0.611	0.616	0.081	7.568	0.000
Social Media Utilization -> Revisit Intention	0.208	0.213	0.066	3.156	0.002
Tourist Experience -> Content Creation	0.166	0.161	0.086	1.918	0.055
Tourist Experience -> Revisit Intention	0.597	0.590	0.062	9.573	0.000

Table 5 presents the results of testing the indirect effects (mediation) between variables. This value shows the extent to which the dependent variable is influenced by the independent variable through the mediation variable.

**Table 5** Path Coefficients

	Specific Indirect Effects
Social Media Utilization -> Content Creation -> Revisit Intention	0.128
Tourist Experience -> Content Creation -> Revisit Intention	0.035

Based on the results of the path coefficient test, several relationships between variables can be described. *Content Creation* had a significant effect on *Revisit Intention* with an original sample value of 0.209, T-statistic of 3.175, and a P-value of 0.002. These findings support the research of Yoo & Gretzel (2021) which states that *user-generated content* is effective in building destination imagery and driving loyalty, and is reinforced by recent studies showing the influence of eWOM on return intent (Ecohumanism, 2024; PMC NCBI, 2022).

The influence of *Tourist Experience* on *Content Creation* was not significant (original sample 0.166; T-stats 1,918; P-value 0.055), which indicates that positive experiences don't necessarily drive content creation. On the other hand, *Tourist Experience* had the strongest influence on *Revisit Intention* with an original sample of 0.597, a T-statistic of 9.573, and a P-value of 0.000.

The influence of *Tourist Experience* on *Revisit Intention* has an original sample value of 0.597 with 9.573 as a T-statistic and 0.000 as a P-value. Therefore, it can be concluded that *Revisit Intention* is significantly influenced by *Tourist Experience*.

### 3.2. DISCUSSION

The results of the study show that *Content Creation* influences *Revisit Intention* significantly and positively. This confirms that repeat visits will increase as more and more content is created by tourists about tourist destinations. This study is in line with a study by Yoo & Gretzel (2021) which stated that *user-generated content* is effective in building a destination image and driving loyalty. In other words, traveler-generated content not only serves as a personal documentary, but can also be a powerful marketing tool that influences other travelers' decisions and strengthens the intention to return. In the context of the Garut Nature Sabda Water Park, encouraging tourists to share their experiences in the form of photos, videos, or reviews on social media can significantly increase the potential for repeat visits. The quality of content, such as engaging visuals and authentic narratives, is key in attracting attention and building the trust of potential travelers. This is in line with a study conducted by Hadiwianto et al. (2025) which stated that commercial videos with an attractive visual narrative that are consistent with brand identity are able to increase audience engagement and strengthen brand awareness, especially on interactive platforms such as Instagram. However, the effectiveness of digital content also depends on cross-platform distribution strategies and a clear *call-to-action* in visual messages.

*Social Media Utilization* for *Content Creation* and *Revisit Intention* was also found to be significant. This shows that the active presence of the Sabda Alam Garut Water Park on social media, as well as the encouragement for tourists to interact with the platform, is very important. Travelers who are active on social media tend to be exposed to information about destinations more often, which in turn can trigger their desire to create content and come back to visit. Studies by Rathore et al. (2017) confirm the importance of social media as a source of information and a tool of interaction for travelers, which directly contributes to travel and loyalty decisions. Therefore, an integrated digital marketing strategy, not only focused on one-way promotion but also on facilitating interaction and user-generated content, will be very beneficial for the Sabda Alam Garut Water Park. Such an integrated approach is also affirmed in the research of Hadiwianto et al. (2025), where the application of *Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC)* and *Media Richness Theory* has been proven to strengthen the effectiveness of digital campaigns through message consistency, interactivity, and synergy between social media and video content. Thus, Sabda Alam Water Park can optimize its social media potential through a consistent and attractive cross-platform communication strategy.

*Tourist Experience* has no significant effect on *Content Creation*, although it does significantly affect *Revisit Intent*. This indicates that positive experiences at Sabda Alam Garut Water Park do encourage tourists to return, but do not automatically make them content creators. This phenomenon can be explained by several factors, such as motivational differences between enjoying and sharing experiences, limitations in creativity, or lack of incentives. Thus, not only the improvement of the travel experience needs to be done by destination managers but also the development of strategies to encourage *Content Creation*, such as thematic photo spots, digital content competitions, or collaborations with influencers.

In this study, *Tourist Experience* to *Content Creation* is also supported by a study by Nguyen & Patel (2025) which states that *user-generated* content acts as a link between *digital experience* and *tourist loyalty behavior*. In the context of Sabda Alam, the content uploaded

by tourists on platforms such as TikTok or Instagram is able to build an "affective revisit drive" through pleasant visual memories and emotional engagement with the destination.

In this study, *Tourist Experience on Revisit Intention* was found to be consistent with the model developed by Mariani et al. (2022), related to the fact that tourist engagement on social media contributes to the formation of a positive image of the destination, which ultimately strengthens *Revisit Intention*. This means that the more often tourists interact with destination content on social media, the greater their chances of returning to visit.

Based on statistical results, the direct influence of *Social Media Utilization* on *Revisit Intention* is significant showing a double effect both as a promotional medium and a source of digital experience. This reinforces the view of Xiang & Gretzel (2020) that social media is not only an information tool, but also an experiential space that influences tourists' perceptions before, during, and after a visit.

These findings also suggest that *Revisit Intention* in the digital age is not only shaped by physical satisfaction during a visit, but also by sustained emotional engagement through content and online interactions. According to Zhang, Wang, & Chen (2023), exposure to post-visit visual content creates a nostalgic effect and a desire to relive an enjoyable experience. In the context of Sabda Alam, this means that post-visit content management is an important strategy to maintain the sustainability of tourist interest.

Overall, this study emphasizes the crucial role of social media *and Content Creation* in encouraging revisit intention at the Sabda Alam Garut Water Park. While the traveler's experience is the primary foundation for return intent, social media and user-generated content act as a catalyst that strengthens those relationships. The practical implication is that Sabda Alam managers must adopt a holistic marketing approach by combining satisfying travel experiences, creative content strategies, and ongoing digital engagement to strengthen long-term traveller loyalty.

### 3. CONCLUSION

This study analyzes the influence of *Social Media Utilization* and *Tourist Experience on Revisit Intention* through *Content Creation* mediation at Sabda Alam Garut Water Park. The results show that *Content Creation* and *Revisit Intention* are significantly and positively influenced by *Social Media Utilization*, confirming the role of social media as an important means in increasing tourist engagement and return visitation intentions. *Tourist Experience* has also been shown to have a significant effect on *Revisit Intention*, but not on *Content Creation*, which suggests that memorable experiences encourage travellers to return but do not necessarily motivate content creation. In addition, *Content Creation* has a significant influence on *Revisit Intention*, emphasizing the strategic role of user content in strengthening revisit intent.

In practical terms, these findings encourage destination managers to optimize their digital marketing strategies by increasing the use of social media, providing a satisfying travel experience, and creating initiatives to encourage content creation such as incentives, competitions, or supporting facilities. Traveler-generated content can be an authentic promotional tool that reinforces the imagery of the destination and attracts repeat visitors. The limitations of this study lie in the focus of one destination and the limited number of respondents, so follow-up studies are recommended to involve more locations, a larger sample, and explore other factors that influence *Content Creation*.

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