

The Impact of Service Quality, Tourist Satisfaction, and Memorable Tourism Experience on Intention to Recommend: A Case Study of Keviandra Tour & Travel in Yogyakarta

Eny Endah Pujiastuti¹, Hastho Joko Nur Utomo², Ahmad Zaki³, Susanta⁴, Dyah Widowati⁵, Dafa Taruna Satya⁶

^{1,2,3,4,6} Business Administration Departement, Universitas Pembangunan Nasional Veteran Yogyakarta

⁵Business Administration Departement, Universitas Pembangunan Nasional Veteran Jawa Timur

ABSTRACT: This study investigates the interconnected roles of service quality, tourist satisfaction, and memorable tourism experiences in shaping tourists' intention to recommend. Conducted at Keviandra Tour & Travel in Yogyakarta during the post-COVID-19 recovery period, the research applies Structural Equation Modelling (SEM-AMOS) to analyse data from 167 respondents. Grounded in the Service Quality Model, Experience Economy Theory, and memory-based consumer decision frameworks, the study empirically tests six hypotheses. Results reveal that service quality significantly influences both tourist satisfaction and memorable experiences, which in turn mediate the intention to recommend. Furthermore, service quality also exerts a direct positive impact on recommendation intentions. The findings underscore the critical role of emotionally engaging experiences and service excellence in driving word-of-mouth advocacy. This research contributes to the tourism literature by offering a comprehensive model of post-visit behaviour and provides practical insights for tour operators aiming to enhance customer loyalty and destination competitiveness in a post-crisis context.

KEYWORDS: service quality, tourist satisfaction, memorable tourism experience, intention to recommend, tourism recovery

I. INTRODUCTION

Health crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic (2019–2021) posed significant threats to various industries, particularly tourism, including bankruptcy risks. However, these crises also accelerated innovation and spurred advancements in the sector, pushing hospitality businesses toward more sustainable development. Tour and travel businesses faced unprecedented challenges among the affected tourism sectors, compelling them to adapt their strategies to survive and grow during the pandemic. Critical survival and innovation strategies were necessary, with a strong emphasis on customer health and safety.

Tour and travel businesses encountered numerous challenges, including physical distancing measures, COVID-19 health protocols, and stay-at-home campaigns, drastically reducing tourist mobility. This aligns with prior research indicating that health threats can significantly alter travellers' behaviour (Cahyanto et al., 2016). Recent studies further explore how tourists modified their transportation choices to minimise infection risks during the pandemic (Vallejo-Borda et al., 2022; Villacé-Molinero et al., 2021 ;Parady et al., 2020). These findings underscore the need for tour operators to limit vehicle passenger capacity as a precautionary measure.

In response to these challenges, travel agencies adopted various adaptive strategies to ensure business continuity. Many shifted their offerings to short-distance, single-day tour packages, catering to travellers seeking minimal exposure risks. To comply with health regulations, operators replaced large buses with standard vehicles, reducing passenger capacity while adjusting seating layouts to enforce safe occupancy limits. The pandemic also accelerated digital transformation in the industry, with agencies integrating contactless solutions for bookings and payments to minimise physical interactions. Additionally, strict health protocols—including mandatory mask-wearing, hand sanitisation, and enhanced sanitation procedures—were implemented to reassure tourists.

These adaptations reflect four interconnected marketing strategies: cost-based, product/service-based, market-oriented, and community-based approaches. Such strategies bolstered organisational resilience and enabled businesses to navigate crises, recover efficiently, and uncover innovative growth opportunities amid adversity (Fehrer et al., 2024). Despite the pervasive

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challenges, the tour and travel industry demonstrated remarkable adaptability. As Salman et al. (2024) observed, a segment of tourists appeared less influenced by health concerns and more motivated to reclaim lost travel experiences. This behavioural shift underscores that travel demand during and post-crisis is not exclusively governed by fear, revealing a persistent market viability that allowed agile businesses to sustain operations.

During the crisis, tourists were exposed to positive and negative information, whether transport-specific (e.g., reports of infection cases and protective measures in public transit systems) or destination-related (e.g., risks associated with visiting locations), collectively shaping their risk perceptions. The evolving nature of COVID-19, with emerging variants and new research findings, further altered travellers' perspectives over time (Naveen & Gurtoo, 2022; Chatterjee et al., 2020). Risk communication psychology is critical in ensuring appropriate public responses during hazards (Abrams & Greenhawt, 2020) (DiClemente & Jackson, 2016). In this context, strategically cultivating and reinforcing tourists' positive memories has emerged as a practical approach to enhance competitive advantage in the tourism market (J. H. Kim & Ritchie, 2014)

Creating memorable travel experiences represents a fundamental expectation for tourists when initiating journeys (Eviana, 2024). Consumers rely on these memories to inform their search processes and determine future purchase probabilities (Çevrimkaya & Zengin, 2023). Destinations that analyse visitors' emotional responses and optimise their experiential offerings can significantly boost visitation rates (Rendusara, 2019)

Customer satisfaction plays a pivotal role in building trust and fostering loyalty. Delivering superior service quality is essential for long-term success in the service industry (Shahin & Dabestani, 2010). Service quality represents a critical competitive differentiator (Jiang & Zhang, 2016) and a core organisational strength (Carvalho et al., 2020). Destination competitiveness heavily depends on effective management that enhances core attractions and complementary service quality (Sun et al., 2018). Notably, (Oh et al., 2007) demonstrate that memorable experiences constitute the most influential and reliable information source for shaping future travel decisions. This highlights the transformative potential of positive tourism experiences in driving post-crisis recovery and sustainable growth.

This study addresses critical contradictions in tourism behaviour literature. While (Abubakar et al., 2017) and (Agustina & Artanti, 2020) established a mutual influence between *revisit intention* and *novelty seeking*. Barkah & Febriasari, (2022) and Kumbara et al., (2020) found no significant positive relationship. Further inconsistencies emerge in tourist motivation: Kumbara et al., (2020) and (Syafriana et al., 2022) identified it as a predictor of *revisit intention*, whereas Zyadzya et al., (2020) reported insignificant effects. These unresolved contradictions highlight a gap in understanding the determinants of post-experience tourist behaviour, particularly regarding how service quality, satisfaction, and memorable experiences collectively shape recommendation intentions—an understudied outcome compared to revisit intentions.

By integrating the Service Quality Model (Parasuraman et al., 1988), Experience Economy Theory (Pine & Gilmore, 1998), and Memory-Dependent Decision-Making frameworks (J. H. Kim & Ritchie, 2014), this research advances consumer behaviour literature in tourism. It offers practical insights for tour operators to design services that enhance satisfaction, create memorable experiences, and ultimately foster customer advocacy—a critical yet underexplored driver of post-crisis recovery.

II. THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL FOUNDATIONS

This study is grounded in several key theoretical constructs that explain the relationships between service quality, tourist satisfaction, memorable tourism experiences (MTE), and intention to recommend.

Service quality

Service quality is a fundamental driver in tourism, characterised by its intangible, inseparable, and variable nature (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Building on the SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman et al., 1988; Zeithaml et al., 1990), service quality comprises five critical dimensions: (1) *tangibles* (physical facilities and staff appearance), (2) *reliability* (consistent and accurate service delivery), (3) *responsiveness* (prompt assistance), (4) *assurance* (employee competence and trustworthiness), and (5) *empathy* (personalised customer care). These dimensions collectively shape tourists' perceptions of service excellence.

Tourist satisfaction

Tourist Satisfaction refers to the end state of a process in which customers evaluate the perceived benefits derived from using a service (Oliver, 2010). Tourist satisfaction specifically denotes a positive psychological response following a pleasant travel experience (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2022). Furthermore, according to Nowacki (2013), tourist satisfaction is an attitude formed after undergoing a particular experience, reflecting an emotional state that emerges as a result of engaging with a tourism product.

Memorable Tourism Experience

Memorable Tourism Experiences (MTEs) refer to positive travel experiences that are vividly recalled and remembered after the activity has concluded (J. H. Kim, 2018). A memorable tourism experience is characterised as a particular condition that leaves

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a strong impression on tourists and elicits positive emotions (Gonzalez & Svensson, 2011). According to (Tung & Ritchie, 2011), memorable tourism experiences are subjectively remembered by tourists and are shaped by emotional, physical, spiritual, and intellectual components throughout the journey.

Empirical studies by Tung & Ritchie, (2011) as well as Kim & Fesenmaier, (2017) highlight two critical aspects of memorable tourism experiences. First, the tourism experience must leave a meaningful and positive impression that prompts tourists to reflect upon and recall the experience long after the trip ends. Second, memorable tourism experiences can foster important marketing outcomes such as repeat visitation and positive word-of-mouth recommendations, thereby enhancing the destination's competitiveness and sustainability. To be considered memorable, a tourism experience should comprise seven core elements. According to Kim et al. (2012), these seven dimensions of memorable tourism experiences are Hedonism, Refreshment, Novelty, Culture, Social Interaction, Knowledge, and Meaningfulness.

Intention to Recommend

Intention to recommend reflects a tourist's willingness to advocate for a destination or service provider based on their experiences (Yu et al., 2019). This construct is central to word-of-mouth marketing, capturing informal yet influential communication about travel experiences (Kang & Choi, 2018)

Connections to Prior Research

This study stands on the shoulders of significant empirical work while carving its niche in tourism research. Previous scholars have laid important groundwork – (Khoo, 2022) examination of the service quality-satisfaction nexus and Pujiastuti et al., (2023) Investigations into how service quality shapes memorable tourism experiences have been particularly influential. The comprehensive work of (Çevrimkaya & Zengin, 2023) further enriched our understanding by mapping the complex relationships between tourist satisfaction, memorable experiences, and recommendation intentions.

However, the current research breaks new ground in several important ways. First, it extends these established relationships into the novel context of post-pandemic tourism recovery, offering timely insights for an industry still navigating the aftermath of global disruptions. Second, it proposes an innovative direct pathway from service quality to recommendation intentions, a connection that previous studies have surprisingly overlooked despite its theoretical plausibility. Third, methodologically, the study employs sophisticated structural equation modelling (SEM-AMOS) techniques, providing more robust validation of these relationships than earlier approaches could offer. By weaving together these theoretical strands, the study presents a more complete picture of how service excellence, customer satisfaction, and memorable experiences work in concert to generate tourist advocacy. This integrated framework is valuable for understanding tourism dynamics in crisis-affected destinations like Yogyakarta, where rebuilding tourist confidence and word-of-mouth promotion are critical to recovery. The findings promise to advance academic discourse and practical strategies for tourism operators navigating the post-pandemic landscape. Based on the synthesis of prior literature and identified research gaps, this study proposes the following conceptual model (Figure 1):

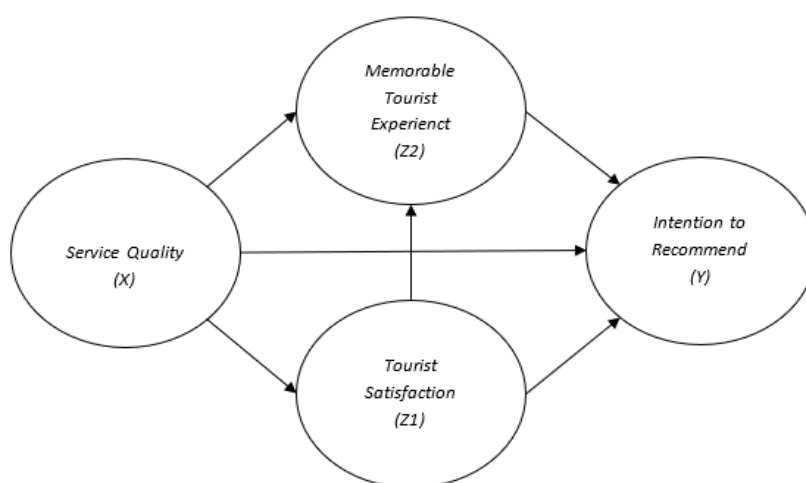


Figure 1. Conceptual Model

III. HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

The study will test this relationship in the specific setting of post-pandemic tourism recovery, contributing to the ongoing academic discourse on service quality outcomes in changing market conditions. The hypothesis is grounded in the theoretical framework of

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the Service Quality Model (Parasuraman et al., 1988) and Expectation-Confirmation Theory (Oliver, 2010), which posit that meeting or exceeding service expectations leads to higher satisfaction levels. This relationship becomes particularly salient in the tourism context as service encounters often form the core of the tourist experience. Based on the predominant evidence from both theoretical and empirical studies, and considering the specific context of tour operators in Yogyakarta, we propose the following hypothesis:

Service Quality and Tourist Satisfaction

Extensive research in service marketing has consistently demonstrated a strong relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction across various industries (Ahrholdt et al., 2017; Famiyeh et al., 2018; Priporas et al., 2017). Customer satisfaction is regarded as a critical outcome of superior service quality (Hussain et al., 2015), particularly in tourism and hospitality. Empirical evidence strongly supports this connection. (Cheng et al., 2019) found that hotel guests receiving high-quality service were significantly more satisfied with their stays and developed positive overall perceptions of the establishment. Similarly, in the banking sector, (Zameer et al., 2018) demonstrated that service quality positively influences corporate image, which is closely tied to customer satisfaction. Research focusing specifically on the hospitality industry has identified service quality as one of the most important determinants of customer satisfaction (Abbasi et al., 2019).

Tourism-specific studies further reinforce these findings. (Wu & Li, 2015) investigation of Macau museum visitors revealed that service quality is crucial in enhancing visitor satisfaction. More recently, (Kasiri et al., 2017) confirmed that service industries, including tourism, can significantly boost customer satisfaction through improved service quality. These studies collectively suggest that tourists inherently expect and require good service, and when this expectation is met, it naturally leads to higher satisfaction levels. However, it is important to note the contrasting findings of Sitepu & Rismawati, (2021), who reported no significant effect of service quality on satisfaction in their research context. This divergence highlights the potential moderating role of contextual factors that may influence the service quality-satisfaction relationship. Therefore, the following hypothesis can be proposed:

H1: Service quality has a positive and significant influence on tourist satisfaction.

Service Quality and Memorable Tourism Experience (MTE)

The relationship between service quality and memorable tourism experiences has received mixed empirical support. While (Ng et al., 2022) found no significant positive effect of café service quality on MTE in tea destinations, other studies suggest that superior service quality can contribute to more memorable experiences through enhanced customer engagement and emotional connection (Fitri et al., 2019). This hypothesis proposes that in the context of tour operators, where service interactions are intensive and personalised, high-quality service will significantly contribute to creating memorable experiences. Therefore, the following hypothesis can be proposed:

H2: Service quality has a positive and significant influence on memorable tourism experience (MTE)

Tourist Satisfaction and Memorable Tourism Experience (MTE)

Building on the work of Çevrimkaya & Zengin, (2023), this hypothesis acknowledges the bidirectional relationship between satisfaction and memorable experiences. Satisfied tourists are more likely to process and emotionally encode their experiences as memorable cognitively. The hypothesis suggests that satisfaction is an affective filter that enhances the memorability of tourism experiences, particularly in service-intensive contexts like guided tours. Therefore, the following hypothesis can be proposed:

H3: Tourist satisfaction has a positive and significant influence on memorable tourism experience (MTE)

Tourist Satisfaction and Intention to Recommend

Substantial evidence supports this relationship across multiple tourism contexts. Sharma and Nayak (2019), Eid et al. (2019), Cham et al. (2021), and Chen et al. (2021) consistently demonstrate that satisfied tourists become voluntary ambassadors for destinations and services. This hypothesis builds on expectation-confirmation theory, positing that when service experiences meet or exceed expectations (satisfaction), customers are motivated to share these positive experiences through recommendations. Therefore, the following hypothesis can be proposed:

H4: Tourist Satisfaction has a positive and significant influence on Intention to Recommend

Memorable Tourism Experience and Intention to Recommend

The literature presents strong consensus on this relationship. Multiple studies (Marschall, 2012; Sharma & Nayak, 2019; Riptiono et al., 2023; Kim, 2018; Chen & Rahman, 2018) confirm that memorable experiences create powerful emotional triggers that motivate word-of-mouth behaviour. This hypothesis is particularly relevant in tourism, where memorable experiences often become part of tourists' self-narratives and social identity expressions. Therefore, the following hypothesis can be proposed:

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H5: Memorable Tourism Experience has a positive and significant influence on Intention to Recommend

Service Quality and Intention to Recommend

Existing literature suggests that service quality can influence recommendation intentions not only indirectly through satisfaction and memorable experiences but also through a direct pathway. This proposition is supported by research demonstrating that exceptional service quality creates immediate positive impressions that translate into advocacy behaviour, even before customers fully evaluate their overall experience. Khan and Rahman (2019) found that in high-contact service industries, perceived professionalism and reliability—core dimensions of service quality—directly foster trust, which in turn motivates customers to recommend a service provider without waiting for complete experience confirmation. This is particularly relevant in guided tour contexts, where initial service interactions (e.g., booking responsiveness, staff knowledge, and safety protocols) can shape recommendation intentions early in the customer journey. Further supporting this notion, Hu et al. (2021) argue that superior service quality in tourism operates as a form of "social currency," where customers derive status and validation from sharing their encounters with high-quality providers. Their study reveals that visibly differentiated service standards—such as personalized attention or exceptional problem resolution—encourage tourists to recommend a business as part of their social identity construction, independent of their overall satisfaction levels. Therefore, the following hypothesis can be proposed:

H6: Service Quality has a positive and significant influence on Intention to Recommend

IV. METHODOLOGY

Type of Research

This study adopts an explanatory research design employed by Timotius (2017) to provide a deeper understanding of specific events and phenomena. This type of research is chosen to explain the relationships among variables involved in the study: *service quality* as the independent variable influencing *intention to recommend* as the dependent variable, with *tourist satisfaction* and *memorable tourist experience* functioning as intervening variables.

Population, Sample, and Sampling Technique

The research population comprises customers who have used the services of **Keviandra Tour Travel Yogyakarta**. The exact number of customers is unknown. Therefore, the sample size was calculated using the formula proposed by Matchin, Campbell, Tan, and Tan (2009), resulting in a sample of 167 respondents. The sampling technique employed was **purposive sampling**, which selects participants based on specific criteria (Sugiyono, 2019). In this study, the criterion applied was that respondents must have used Keviandra Tour Travel services more than once.

Data Collection Technique

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire distributed via Google Forms. The questionnaire was shared directly with customers who met the sampling criteria and were willing to participate in the study.

Measurement Scale

This study employed a Likert scale to assess individuals' or groups' attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions regarding the investigated social phenomena (Sugiyono, 2019). The scale enabled quantitative analysis of subjective constructs such as satisfaction and experience.

Research Indicators

The indicators for service quality were adapted from the study by Wantara and Irawati (2021). Indicators for tourist satisfaction were drawn from the work of Zhong et al. (2017). For the memorable tourist experience, this study utilised indicators developed by Ng et al. (2022). Similarly, intention to recommend was measured using indicators provided by Ng et al. (2022). **Analytical Technique**

Both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were employed. Descriptive statistics were used to characterise respondents' perceptions of service quality, tourist satisfaction, memorable tourism experiences, and intention to recommend. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was conducted using AMOS version 22 software for inferential analysis. A significance level of 5% was adopted for hypothesis testing.

V. RESULT

Evaluating model fit, called *goodness-of-fit*, is essential when analysing data using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) techniques. This step ensures that the proposed model adequately represents the observed data. As presented in Table 1, the cut-off values recommended by Ghazali (2017) were employed to assess the fit of the research model across various indices of model adequacy.

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Table 1. Goodness-of-Fit Indices

Goodness of fit index	Cut-off value	Model Value	Interpretation
Chi-Square Statistic	As low as possible	322,451	
Probability Value	≥ 0.05	816,531	Marginal Fit
RMSEA	≤ 0.08	0,000	Marginal Fit
GFI (Goodness of Fit)	≥ 0.90	0,053	Good Fit
AGFI (Adjusted GFI)	≥ 0.90	0,800	Marginal Fit
CMIN/DF (χ^2 /df Ratio)	≤ 2.0	0,772	Marginal Fit
TLI (Tucker-Lewis Index)	≥ 0.90	1,474	Good Fit
CFI (Comparative Fit)	≥ 0.90	0,947	Good Fit

Hypothesis Testing

After completing the assumption checks for **Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)**, the next step involves testing the research hypotheses. In this study, **five hypotheses** were evaluated. Each hypothesis was tested based on the **Critical Ratio (CR)** values derived from the causal relationships between constructs, as summarised in **Table 2**.

Table 2. Hypothesis Testing Results

Hipotesis			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P-Value	Conclusion
SQ	→	TS	0,842	0,089	9,477	0,000	Supported
SQ	→	MTE	0,707	0,094	7,554	0,000	Supported
TS	→	MTE	0,269	0,076	3,544	0,000	Supported
TS	→	IR	0,373	0,085	4,359	0,000	Supported
MTE	→	IR	0,173	0,087	1,994	0,046	Supported
SQ	→	IR	0,250	0,123	2,038	0,042	Supported

Source: SEM analysis using AMOS software

Note: * indicates statistical significance at the 0.05 level

Abbreviations: SQ: Service Quality, TS: Tourist Satisfaction, MTE: Memorable Tourist Experience, IR: Intention to Recommend

Service Quality and Tourist Satisfaction

The hypothesis testing results in Table 2 indicate a p-value of 0.000 when examining the effect of service quality (SQ) on tourist satisfaction (TS). Since the p-value is lower than the conventional threshold of 0.05, this indicates a statistically significant relationship. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 is supported, confirming that service quality significantly impacts tourist satisfaction. The critical ratio (CR) of 9.477 further reinforces this conclusion, suggesting a strong and reliable relationship. The standardised estimate for this path is 0.842, indicating that service quality explains approximately 84.2% of the variance in tourist satisfaction. This strong positive correlation implies that the higher the perceived service quality by customers of Keviandra Tour Travel, the greater their level of satisfaction. Conversely, a decline in perceived service quality is likely to result in a decrease in tourist satisfaction. The findings highlight the pivotal role of high-quality service delivery in fostering customer satisfaction in the tourism service industry.

Service Quality and Memorable Tourism Experience (MTE)

The test of the impact of service quality (SQ) on memorable tourist experience (MTE) yielded a p-value of 0.000, which is below the 0.05 significance threshold, indicating a statistically significant relationship. Thus, Hypothesis 2 is accepted, affirming that service quality significantly affects a memorable tourist experience. With a critical ratio (CR) of 7.554 and a standardised estimate of 0.707 (70.7%), it can be concluded that higher service quality positively influences the degree of memorable tourist experiences. This strong positive correlation suggests that when customers perceive high service quality from Keviandra Tour Travel, they are more likely to report emotionally engaging and unforgettable travel experiences. Conversely, inadequate service quality may hinder the formation of such memorable moments.

Tourist Satisfaction and Memorable Tourism Experience (MTE)

A p-value of 0.000 was obtained to test the relationship between tourist satisfaction (TS) and memorable tourist experience (MTE), which is well below the 0.05 threshold. This result indicates a statistically significant effect, supporting Hypothesis 3: tourist satisfaction significantly influences a memorable tourist experience. The critical ratio (CR) is 3.544, with a standardised estimate

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of 0.269 (26.9%), indicating a modest yet positive influence. The findings suggest that the more satisfied tourists are with the services provided, the more likely they are to develop lasting and memorable travel experiences. A decline in satisfaction may, therefore, diminish the emotional impact of the tourism experience.

Tourist Satisfaction and Intention to Recommend

The analysis revealed a p-value of 0.000 when assessing the influence of tourist satisfaction (TS) on intention to recommend (IR). Since the value is below the 0.05 level, Hypothesis 4 is supported, confirming a significant and positive relationship. With a critical ratio (CR) of 4.359 and a standardised estimate of 0.373 (37.3%), the results show that greater tourist satisfaction leads to a stronger intention to recommend the service to others. This underscores the critical role of customer satisfaction in encouraging word-of-mouth referrals, suggesting that dissatisfaction may significantly reduce such intentions.

Memorable Tourism Experience and Intention to Recommend

The influence of memorable tourist experience (MTE) on intention to recommend (IR) was tested. It yielded a p-value of 0.046, slightly below the significance level of 0.05, indicating a statistically significant relationship. Therefore, Hypothesis 5 is accepted. The critical ratio (CR) is 1.994, and the standardised estimate is 0.173 (17.3%), demonstrating a positive but relatively modest effect. This implies that tourists with emotionally memorable and meaningful experiences are more likely to recommend the travel service. Conversely, a lack of impactful experiences may reduce the likelihood of customers endorsing the service to others.

Service Quality and Intention to Recommend

The effect of service quality (SQ) on intention to recommend (IR) yielded a p-value of 0.042, less than the conventional threshold of 0.05. This result indicates that the relationship is statistically significant; thus, Hypothesis 6 is accepted. The corresponding critical ratio (CR) is 2.038, and the standardised estimate is 0.250, indicating that service quality positively influences 25.0% of intention to recommend. These findings suggest that when customers perceive Keviandra Tour Travel's high service quality, they are more likely to develop an intention to recommend the service to others. Although this effect is not as strong as the influence of tourist satisfaction, it is nevertheless meaningful in the context of customer loyalty behaviour. This further supports the notion that service quality enhances satisfaction and experience and directly fosters positive word-of-mouth intentions, reinforcing its central role in the service delivery model.

VI. DISCUSSION

The Influence of Service Quality on Tourist Satisfaction

The findings reveal that service quality significantly influences tourist satisfaction, aligning with extensive tourism and hospitality research evidence. Service quality contributes directly to forming favourable attitudes and emotions during service consumption, leading to higher customer satisfaction. According to Tran et al. (2025), perceived service quality has a direct and substantial impact on tourist satisfaction, and this satisfaction acts as a mediator between quality and loyalty behaviour. Moreover, positive service experiences increase tourists' willingness to recommend the provider to others. As stated by Wang et al., (2024), when tourists encounter high-quality services, they tend to form strong emotional attachments and satisfaction, which consequently enhances post-purchase behaviours such as intention to recommend.

The Influence of Service Quality on Memorable Tourist Experience

This study also reveals that service quality significantly affects a memorable tourist experience. Tourists with a positive impression of a destination, such as its local hospitality, natural beauty, cultural uniqueness, and high-quality service, tend to report more enjoyable and memorable experiences. Service quality at the destination is a crucial factor influencing satisfaction and emotional responses. In hospitality settings, food quality, staff behaviour, and overall service levels are important customer experience determinants [Qiu et al., 2022]. Well-trained, professional staff significantly convey an organisation's image and core values while enhancing customers' affective responses such as emotional memory and delight (Oh et al., 2007)

The Influence of Tourist Satisfaction on Memorable Tourist Experience

This study confirms that tourist satisfaction significantly contributes to the formation of memorable tourist experiences. Satisfied tourists are more emotionally engaged and cognitively involved in the experience, strengthening memory encoding and recall. Li and Phuong (2025) emphasise that satisfaction boosts emotional bonding, an essential element of memorable tourism experiences, particularly in culturally immersive destinations.

The Influence of Tourist Satisfaction on Intention to Recommend

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The results also suggest a significant positive impact of tourist satisfaction on intention to recommend. Satisfied tourists are more likely to express favourable opinions and endorse the destination to others. This behaviour is aligned with the post-consumption evaluation model, which posits that satisfaction is a critical antecedent to loyalty behaviours such as recommendations (Bautista Jr. et al., 2025).

The Influence of Memorable Tourist Experience on Intention to Recommend

The study further establishes that a memorable tourist experience significantly affects intention to recommend. Recommend intention refers to a consumer's willingness to recommend a service provider after having a meaningful travel experience. Previous experiences stored in memory play a significant role in shaping future decisions, as consumers often rely on them when making judgments [Kim et al., 2010; Kim, 2018]. Emotional and highly memorable consumption experiences increase the likelihood that tourists will recommend the service or destination. Thus, destinations should aim to provide unique and unforgettable experiences that enhance the likelihood of post-visit recommendation behaviour. As supported by Sharma & Nayak (2019), post-visit evaluations influence future consumer decisions such as recommendation intentions. Past experiences stored in memory are highly reliable and therefore act as persuasive references for others.

The Influence of Service Quality on Intention to Recommend

The results show that service quality directly influences tourists' intention to recommend. This finding highlights that when tourists experience consistent, high-quality services, they are more inclined to advocate for the brand or destination through personal networks and online platforms. Imran et al. (2025) found that service quality enhances satisfaction and shapes positive behavioural intentions such as recommendation and revisit willingness.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

This study concludes that service quality is pivotal in shaping the tourism experience, with significant and positive effects on multiple outcome variables. Specifically, service quality was found to significantly enhance tourist satisfaction, indicating that the perceived value and efficiency of services delivered directly influence how tourists evaluate their experiences. Furthermore, service quality also substantially impacted the formation of memorable tourist experiences, underscoring its importance in creating emotionally resonant and enduring impressions. The findings also confirm that tourist satisfaction is a crucial antecedent to memorable experiences and behavioural outcomes. A high level of satisfaction enriches the emotional depth of the tourist experience and strengthens the intention to recommend the service or destination to others. Notably, memorable tourist experiences emerged as a significant predictor of recommendation behaviour, suggesting that emotionally meaningful and engaging experiences catalyse tourists to act as brand advocates. Additionally, service quality directly influences the intention to recommend, highlighting its dual role in both immediate customer satisfaction and long-term loyalty behaviour. These findings reinforce the integrated and interdependent nature of service quality, satisfaction, and memorable experience in shaping post-visit behavioural intentions. For destination managers and tourism service providers, this emphasises the need to invest in consistently high service standards while designing experiences that are both emotionally compelling and personally meaningful, thereby fostering a greater likelihood of customer advocacy and sustained competitive advantage.

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