

## BUILDING WORD-OF-MOUTH IN EDUCATIONAL TOURISM DESTINATIONS: THE ROLE OF MEDIATION PERCEIVED VALUE AND TOURIST SATISFACTION

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### ABSTRACT

*This research aims to examine the mediating role of perceived value and tourist satisfaction on the influence of the destination's image on word of mouth at Blitar Chocolate Village as an educational tourism destination. This explanatory research used incidental sampling techniques to determine tourist respondents who were on educational tour visits as many as 130 people. The data is analyzed using partial least squares (PLS) with SmartPLS 4.0 software to analyze the data.. As a result, Perceived value is not able to mediate the image of the destination to word of mouth, but tourist satisfaction is able to mediate the image of the destination to word of mouth Blitar Chocolate Village. For further research, other variables can be added to find out updates and developments regarding factors that can affect perceived value, tourist satisfaction, and word of mouth.*

**Keywords:** *Word Of Mout, Perceived Value, Tourist Satisfaction*

#### Article history:

Received: 15 Juli 2023

Revised: 23 Juli 2023

Accepted: 30 Juli 2023

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3336/6/ref.v10i2.4928>

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## INTRODUCTION

Blitar Chocolate Village is an educational tourist spot that focuses on cocoa cultivation and processing. Blitar Chocolate Village offers education related to the history of chocolate, the process of making chocolate, with various tour packages offered to tourists. Based on tourist data from Blitar Chocolate Village, in 2016-2022 there has been an volatile number of tourist visits which can be seen in Table 1 below.

**Table 1. Number of Tourists from Blitar Chocolate Village in 2016-2022**

Year	Number of Tourists
2016	437,077
2017	589,119
2018	382,894
2019	418,382
2020	234,824
2021	161,488
2022 (until March)	82.103

Source: Blitar Chocolate Village, 2023

However, there was an increasing number in 2017, reaching 589,119. The number of these visits can be influenced by several factors, such as the addition of facilities, the results of recommendations from people who have visited Kampung Cocoa Blitar, tourists who are interested in the image of educational tourism from Kampung Cocoa Blitar, and tourists who are interested in promotions from various social media. However, a decrease occurred again in 2018, so the number of tourist visits was 382,894 tourists, and there was an increase again in 2019, as many as 418,382 tourists. In 2020 the decline in the number of tourists at Kampung Coklat Blitar occurred because, in April and May 2020, Kampung Coklat was temporarily closed. However, in 2021 the number of tourists decreased to 161,488 tourists.

Word-of-Mouth (WOM) is an activity that involves many people sharing information with other people verbally, including face-to-face, via telephone, or in reviews on the internet or social media channels (Brilliant et al., 2022). Word-of-Mouth can be an effective marketing strategy for minimizing promotion costs (Priansa, 2017, p. 338). WOM can spread quickly if it has a wide network.

Tourist satisfaction can be understood as the level of satisfaction of a tourist who has assessed the results of the performance of the tourism product offered with what he has got (Alana & Putro, 2020). Ensuring tourist satisfaction is an important issue in determining the long-term success of a tourist destination so that in the future, it can also bring benefits to various tourism stakeholders (Hariani et al., 2020). Blitar Chocolate Village strives to increase tourist satisfaction so that tourists also share their experiences during their visit with others. This is in line with research conducted by Wiyono (2019) proves that tourist satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on word of mouth.

Perceived value or the perception of tourism value is a form of customer appreciation for the benefits of tourism products tour service providers provide (Rohwiyati & Praptiestrini, 2020). Tourists perceive the value placed by service providers in tourist destinations, which influences post-visit evaluations and future visit decisions.(Nabila and Armida, 2020). Therefore, Blitar Chocolate Village needs to pay attention to the value that can be felt by tourists so that tourists feel the benefits from their visit are greater than the sacrifices that

have been made so that tourists feel satisfied that there is an interest in recommending Blitar Chocolate Village to others. Jung and Kim (2020) prove that perceived value has a significantly significant effect on tourist satisfaction is supported by Rimba et al. (2022), which gets the same result.

Destination image can be understood as an impression that arises in tourists for the service or product performance of a tourist destination that originates from processing information obtained from various parties from time to time that can be found by tourist (Lestari et al., 2022). A positive perception or image of a destination will gain a competitive advantage and be able to influence tourist perceptions (Sitanggang et al., 2020). Blitar Chocolate Village realizes the importance of maintaining a positive image by holding various social events, improving educational services, and adding facilities to increase tourist satisfaction, which can trigger tourists to recommend the tour to others. Susilowati (2019) and Suryaningsih (2020) prove that destination image has positive and significant effects on tourist satisfaction and word of mouth. Rizqan et al. (2022) also found research results, namely, destination image has an influence on variable perceived value and tourist satisfaction.

From the explanation of the background, researchers want to know the extent to which perceived value and tourist satisfaction has an effect to the destination image to mediate word of mouth at the Blitar Chocolate Village tourist attraction. It is known that Blitar Chocolate Village is not the only all-chocolate tourist spot in Indonesia. On the other hand, Blitar Chocolate Village has an entrance ticket price that tends to be more expensive than other chocolate educational tourist spots and this also affects the number of tourists. Blitar Chocolate Village is the place educational tours that focus on cocoa cultivation and processing. However, for tourists who only pay a ticket of Rp. 20,000 education offerings are only about the history of chocolate, the history of the founding of Kampung Cocoa Blitar, knowledge about the cocoa tree, and chocolate drying. For tourists who want to enjoy some of the rides provided, tourists can choose tickets at a price of Rp. 35,000. If tourists want to find out more about chocolate, chocolate processing, and be accompanied by experienced employees, visitors must take the package offered.

Other educational tourist spots offer almost the same facilities, but the ticket prices are lower. Therefore, important for Blitar Chocolate Village to build popularity to increase the number of tourist visits. In addition, the research gaps found are based on research results Fadiryana and Chan (2020), destination image doesn't have significant effect to tourist perceived value. Therefore, this research was conducted to test the mediation of perceived value and tourist satisfaction on the influence of destination image on word of mouth at Blitar Chocolate Village.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This research is explanatory. In this research model, there is one independent variable (destination image), two mediating variables (perceived value & tourist satisfaction), and one dependent variable (word of mouth). Research data were analyzed using partial least squares (PLS) using SmartPLS 4.0 application. All tourists that visit Blitar Chocolate Village are the population of this study. While determining the number of samples obtained from

incidental sampling or direct sampling techniques. The researcher selects tourists who are suitable to be respondents. (Sugiyono, 2018, p. 144). The respondents were tourists who had visited the object at least once and at least 17 years old. The selection criteria for the respondents are based on consideration that these respondents can understand the contents of the questionnaire and answer the questionnaire independently (Kusuma et al., 2022, p. 27). According to Hair et al. (2018:770), the acceptable sample size is  $10 \times$  the number of indicators. In this way, it was found that the number of research respondents was  $13 \times 10 = 130$  respondents.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The instrument test uses 30 respondents so that the score distribution approaches the normal curve. The number of 30 respondents are tourists who already know or have visited Kampung Cocoa Blitar. This instrument test was carried out before distributing the questionnaires to tourists to test its validity and reliability. Test instruments. for this study, namely: measurement indicators are said to be valid if the correlation value is greater ( $r_{count} > r_{table}$ ).

**Table 2. Validity Test Results**

Variabel	Item	Rhitung	Rtabel	Signifikan	Keterangan
Perceived Value (Y <sub>1</sub> )	Y1.1	0,683	0,349	0,000	Valid
	Y1.2	0,779	0,349	0,000	Valid
	Y1.3	0,774	0,349	0,000	Valid
	Y1.4	0,695	0,349	0,000	Valid
Kepuasan Wisatawan (Y <sub>2</sub> )	Y2.1	0,848	0,349	0,000	Valid
	Y2.2	0,784	0,349	0,000	Valid
	Y2.3	0,915	0,349	0,000	Valid
Citra Destinasi (X <sub>1</sub> )	X1.1	0,854	0,349	0,000	Valid
	X1.2	0,889	0,349	0,000	Valid
	X1.3	0,841	0,349	0,000	Valid
Word of Mouth (Y <sub>3</sub> )	Y3.1	0,915	0,349	0,000	Valid
	Y3.2	0,974	0,349	0,000	Valid
	Y3.3	0,944	0,349	0,000	Valid

Based on Table 2., it is known that destination Image (X<sub>1</sub>), Perceived Value (Y<sub>1</sub>), Tourist Satisfaction (Y<sub>2</sub>), and *Word of Mouth*(Y<sub>3</sub>) has a value of  $r_{count} > r_{table}$ , which means that the indicator meets validity.

Reliability is a measurement index of how far a measuring instrument can be trusted. Table 3 shows the results of reliability testing on all variable instruments that are reliable because the Cronbach's alpha value is  $> 0.70$ .

**Table 3. Reliability Test Results**

Variabel	Cronbach's Alpha	Standar Reliabilitas	Keterangan
Perceived Value (Y <sub>1</sub> )	0,713	0,70	Reliabel
Kepuasan Wisatawan (Y <sub>2</sub> )	0,800	0,70	Reliabel
Citra Destinasi (X <sub>1</sub> )	0,824	0,70	Reliabel
Word of Mouth (Y <sub>3</sub> )	0,937	0,70	Reliabel



Path diagram construction is carried out by knowing the inner model and outer model which are processed from the SmartPLS Software. The outer loading value with the highest score is found in the perceived value variable indicator, namely social value or social value (Y1.2) with a score of 0.820. The highest outer loading on the variable Tourist Satisfaction is an indicator of willingness to recommend (Y2.3) which has a value of 0.850. The highest outer loading on the destination image variable is the affective destination image indicator (X1.3) with a score of 0.893. While on variables *word of mouth* recommendation indicator (Y3.2) with a score of 0.929 has the highest value.

The level of validity of the indicators on convergent validity can be known based on their loading factor. It is known that with a loading factor between 0.5 to 0.6 it is sufficient and adequate to be said valid. The loading factor values can be seen in table 4.

**Table 4. Convergent Validity Results**

Variabel	Item	Loading Factor		Keterangan
		Score	Rule of Tumbs	
Perceived Value (Y1)	Y <sub>1,1</sub>	0,802	0,70	Valid
	Y <sub>1,2</sub>	0,820	0,70	Valid
	Y <sub>1,3</sub>	0,710	0,70	Valid
	Y <sub>1,4</sub>	0,768	0,70	Valid
Kepuasan Wisatawan (Y2)	Y <sub>2,1</sub>	0,755	0,70	Valid
	Y <sub>2,2</sub>	0,804	0,70	Valid
	Y <sub>2,3</sub>	0,850	0,70	Valid
Word of Mouth (Y3)	Y <sub>3,1</sub>	0,873	0,70	Valid
	Y <sub>3,2</sub>	0,929	0,70	Valid
	Y <sub>3,3</sub>	0,924	0,70	Valid

In Table 4, all the indicator of the variables observed have a loading factor value > 0.7 so that it is known to have good convergent validity (Noor, 2014; 149). Meanwhile, discriminant validity values are presented in Table 5 below. The AVE value is known to be > 0.50. Thus it can be said that all variables are valid.

**Table 5. Results Average Variance Extracted**

Variabel	Average Variance Extracted		Keterangan
	Score AVE	Rule of Tumbs	
Perceived Value (Y1)	0,603	0,50	Valid
Kepuasan Wisatawan (Y2)	0,646	0,50	Valid
Citra Destinasi (X1)	0,692	0,50	Valid
Word of Mouth (Y3)	0,826	0,50	Valid

**Table 6. Discriminant Validity Results**

Variabel	X1	Y1	Y2	Y3
X1	<b>0,832</b>			
Y1	0,583	<b>0,776</b>		
Y2	0,619	0,656	<b>0,804</b>	
Y3	0,625	0,479	0,690	<b>0,909</b>

In Table 6 is the result of the calculation of the AVE roots which are known to be greater than their respective correlations construct so that it is known to have good

discriminant validity. The indicators have also fulfilled Composite reliability above > 0.70 (Noor, 2014:150) which can be seen in Table 7. the following:

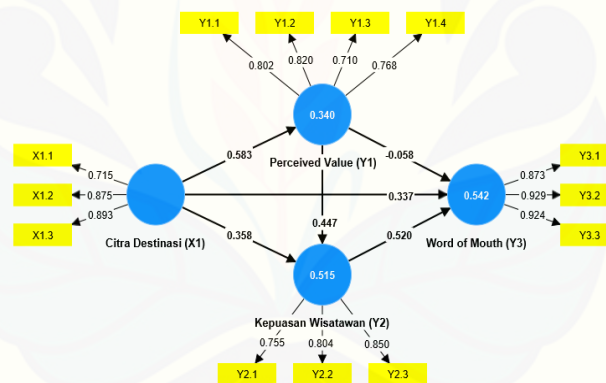
**Table 7. Results Composite Reliability**

Variabel	Composite Reliability		Keterangan
	Score	Rule of Tumbs	
Citra Destinasi (X <sub>1</sub> )	0,870	0,70	Reliabel
Perceived Value (Y <sub>1</sub> )	0,858	0,70	Reliabel
Kepuasan Wisatawan (Y <sub>2</sub> )	0,845	0,70	Reliabel
Word of Mouth (Y <sub>3</sub> )	0,934	0,70	Reliabel

In Table 7. all variables in this study are reliable and have a Composite Reliability value othat greater > 0.70. Therefore it can be continued on hypothesis testing.

Inner model testing is done by knowing the construct relationship, significance value and R-square, Q-square, and Goodness of Fit values. R-square value *perceived value* of 0.340 which means 34% *perceived value* explained by destination image variables, 66% not explained in the model. The R-square value of tourist satisfaction can be interpreted that 51.5% variability tourist satisfaction by the destination image, and the word of mouth R-square value 0.542 can be noticed that 54.2% of the variability is explained by the destination image, while 45.8% is explained by other variables that is not examined.

**Picture1. Path Diagram Construction**



**Table 8. Results R-square**

Variabel	R-square
Perceived Value (Y <sub>1</sub> )	0,340
Kepuasan Wisatawan (Y <sub>2</sub> )	0,515
Word of Mouth (Y <sub>3</sub> )	0,542

Next is the Q-square value. The closer to 1 the better the model. It is known that the value of  $\square^2 = 0.200$  means 20%, meaning that the model can explain the phenomenon of this research by 20%, for the variable tourist satisfaction is  $\square^2 = 0.311$  or 31.1%, it means that the model can explain the phenomenon of this research by 31.1%, and for the variable word of mouth of  $\square^2 = 0.430$  or 43%, meaning that the model can explain the phenomenon of this research by 43%.The Q-square value can be seen in the following table.

**Table 9. Q-square results**

Variabel	SSO	SSE	Q <sup>2</sup> (=1-SSE/SSO)
Citra Destinasi (X <sub>1</sub> )	390,000	390,000	
Perceived Value (Y <sub>1</sub> )	520,000	415,942	0,200
Kepuasan Wisatawan (Y <sub>2</sub> )	390,000	268,819	0,311
Word of Mouth (Y <sub>3</sub> )	390,000	222,369	0,430

That is, the model can be said to be good. Furthermore, testing the inner model is done by looking for the value of Goodness of Fit.

$$GoF = \sqrt{AVE \times R^2}$$

$$GoF = \sqrt{0,692 \times 0,466}$$

$$GoF = 0,568$$

Small GoF value = 0.1, medium GoF = 0.25, big GoF = 0.38(Astawa et al., 2021:159). From the test above, it is known that the result of the GoF calculation is 0.568. So that it can be seen that the results of this test indicate that the model as a whole has a predictive relevance value that meets the requirements.

Hypothesis testing in this study is divided into two parts, the first is direct testing and the second is indirect testing using the sobel test using the bootstrap resampling method. The results of direct influence are presented below :

**Table 9.1 Hypothesis Test Results**

Variabel	Original Sample (O)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (IO/STDEV)	P Values	Keterangan
X <sub>1</sub> -> Y <sub>1</sub>	0,583	0,060	9,695	0,000	Signifikan
X <sub>1</sub> -> Y <sub>2</sub>	0,358	0,071	5,049	0,000	Signifikan
X <sub>1</sub> -> Y <sub>3</sub>	0,337	0,103	3,258	0,001	Signifikan
Y <sub>1</sub> -> Y <sub>2</sub>	0,447	0,078	5,744	0,000	Signifikan
Y <sub>1</sub> -> Y <sub>3</sub>	-0,058	0,087	0,673	0,501	Tidak Signifikan
Y <sub>2</sub> -> Y <sub>3</sub>	0,520	0,120	4,345	0,000	Signifikan
X <sub>1</sub> -> Y <sub>1</sub> -> Y <sub>3</sub>	-0,034	0,051	0,672	0,502	Tidak Signifikan
X <sub>1</sub> -> Y <sub>2</sub> -> Y <sub>3</sub>	0,186	0,064	2,933	0,004	Signifikan

*Sobel test* carried out with the aim to knowing whether the relationship of independent variable to the dependent variable through intervening variable is significantly able to become a mediator in this relationship. The Sobel test is carried out by the Sobel calculator to find the Sobel test values and p values. Based on the Sobel test, the following results are obtained:

a. The Effect of Perceived Value Mediating Destination Image on Word of Mouth

The Sobel test was carried out to prove that there is an influence between the perceived value variables mediating the destination image on word of mouth; the count results are 0.665 or 0.665 < 1.96 z table and a p-value of 0.506 or 0.506 > 0.05, so H<sub>1</sub> is rejected. This means that the perceived value variable cannot mediate the image of the destination to the word of mouth of Blitar Chocolate Village.

b. Tourist Satisfaction mediating Destination Image to Word of Mouth

The sobel test was carried out to prove that there is an influence between the perceived value variables mediating the destination image on word of mouth, the z count results are

5,249 or  $5,249 > 1.96$  z table and the p-value is 0.000 or  $0.000 < 0.05$ , so that  $H_1$  is accepted. This means that the variable tourist satisfaction is able to act as the intervening variables between the destination image to the word of mouth of the destination observed.

### **Effect of Destination Image on Perceived Value**

The result obtained are in line with Purwianti and Patricia (2021) and Rizqan et al., (2022) found that the image of the destination raises perceived value. In this study, the destination image is proven has a positive and significant influence to perceived value. The tourist's image of the destination's image depends on the subjective perception of resources and existing facilities. The image of a destination represents a tourist's perception of a destination after tourists have experienced that destination (Suryaningsih, 2020).

In this study, destination image significantly affects perceived value because, in Table 4.8, it can be seen that the average value and the largest mode are cognitive destination image indicators ( $X_{1.1}$ ), with a percentage of 60.8% or 79 out of 130 respondents answered strongly agree. This is very reasonable because Blitar Chocolate Village has adequate infrastructure. Then in Table 4.6, it can be seen that the statement items with the largest average value and mode are quality indicators or quality values ( $Y_{1.3}$ ), with a percentage of 50.8% or 66 out of 130 respondents answered strongly agree. In accordance with the questionnaire results, this proves that Blitar Chocolate Village has good quality in terms of service friendly. This means that most respondents agree that a good destination image also makes the perceived value of Blitar Chocolate Village good.

In addition, it was based on the characteristics of respondents based on the last level of education. The majority of respondents are tourists whose last education is a high school/equivalent 51.5% or 67 respondents, and the last level of education of tourists can enable tourists to assess the image of a destination and the benefits obtained when traveling. It is in line with Maritona et al. (2022), who concluded that the level of education could influence the demand for service quality, and facilities offered by tourist attractions can be useful for education for visitors.

### **The Effect of Destination Image on Tourist Satisfaction**

The results in line with Susilowati (2019), Jung and Kim (2020), as well as Rizqan et al. (2022) which states that, destination image has a significant effect on tourist satisfaction. Table 4.8 showed the average value and the largest mode are cognitive destination image indicators ( $X_{1.1}$ ) with a percentage of 60.8% or 79 out of 130 respondents answered strongly agree. This is very reasonable because Blitar Chocolate Village has adequate infrastructure. Then it can be known based on the statement items that have an average value and the largest mode is an indicator of interest in reusing or revisiting ( $Y_{2.2}$ ) and willingness to recommend ( $Y_{2.3}$ ) of 4.3.

Tourists aged 17 - 25 years are dominated by students/students who are on vacation and learning about cocoa. In addition, tourists aged 26-35 years tend to look for a place to relax and take a break from work with their children. This is in line with Hudiono (2022) who explained that an increasingly mature age reflects the ability to choose tourist attractions that



are useful and have advantages for the people around them. If a destination or tourist spot is able to provide benefits and benefits for tourists, it can increase tourist satisfaction.

### **The Effect of Destination Image on Word of Mouth**

The results in line with Anita (2019) and Susilowati (2019) which states that the image of the destination has a positive and significant effect on word of mouth. A positive destination image can trigger tourists to recommend the destination to others. The better the image of a tourist destination, it will affect tourist behavior and the number of tourists visiting a destination and will cause them to return to visit and recommend these tourist destinations. (Elvera, 2020:5).

In this study, destination image has a significant effect on word of mouth, because in Table 4.8 it can be seen that the average value and the largest mode are cognitive destination image indicators (X1.1) with a percentage of 60.8% or 79 out of 130 respondents answered strongly agree. This is very reasonable because Blitar Chocolate Village has adequate infrastructure.

Based on the characteristics of the respondents based on gender, tourists from Blitar Chocolate Village are dominated by women. Women prefer to travel, then search for information and share photos or videos of their holidays on social media (Indriyani, 2020). A good destination image can certainly make tourists more enthusiastic about uploading the experiences gained when traveling in Blitar Chocolate Village.

### **The Effect of Perceived Value on Tourist Satisfaction**

The results in line with Jung and Kim (2020), Purwianti and Patricia (2021), Libre et al., (2022), Kumar and Lata (2022), as well as Rizqan et al., (2022) which states that perceived value significantly influences tourist satisfaction. If the perceived benefits are greater than the costs incurred, the customer will be satisfied with the product or service received. Satisfaction will occur when tourists get more value than expected by considering the price, time and effort used.

Blitar Chocolate Village has good qualities such as friendly service. This means that the majority of respondents agree that a good destination image makes the perceived value of Blitar Chocolate Village also good. Whereas in the tourist satisfaction variable, the statement items that have the largest average value are indicators of intention to reuse or revisit (Y2.2) and willingness to recommend (Y2.3) of 4.3.

Based on the characteristics of the respondents based on the last level of education, it can be seen that the majority of respondents were tourists whose last education was SMA/equivalent at 51.5%. The level of education can affect tourism activities because it can provide inspiration, insight and knowledge for visitors (Putra et al., 2023). Visitors with a higher educational background tend to have a broader mindset and can feel the tourist attractions they visit provide benefits or not. If the tourist attractions they visit bring benefits, tourists will feel satisfied and can recommend the tourist attractions they have visited to others.

In addition, based on the characteristics of the respondents based on the number of visits, it can be seen that as many as 84.6% or 110 respondents have visited Blitar Chocolate

Village more than 2 times. This shows that Blitar Chocolate Village is an attractive tourist spot and makes tourists satisfied when visiting.

### **The Effect of Perceived Value on Word of Mouth**

The results of this study are not in accordance with the research conducted by Khademi and Mirzaei (2021) as well as Rimba et al., (2022) which states that perceived value has a significant effect on word of mouth. However, the results of this study support the research conducted by Karlina and Haryanti (2021) which states that there is no effect of perceived value on word of mouth. This condition is caused because tourists feel that the price of the entrance ticket paid is not in accordance with what is obtained during the tour so that it cannot attract tourists to talk about Blitar Chocolate Village to other people.

In accordance with the results of the questionnaire, this proves that Blitar Chocolate Village has good quality in terms of friendly service. This means that the majority of respondents agree that a good destination image makes the perceived value of Blitar Chocolate Village also good. Whereas in the word of mouth variable, the statement item that has the largest average value is the recommendation indicator (Y3.2) and solicitation or encouragement (Y3.3) of 4.3 with a mode value of 4 which means that the majority of respondents answered that they agreed.

### **The Effect of Tourist Satisfaction on Word of Mouth**

The results of this study are in accordance with research conducted by Susilowati (2019) as well as Wiyono (2019) which states that tourist satisfaction has a positive effect and significant to word of mouth. Satisfied tourists are tourists who will share their satisfaction with producers or service providers, even satisfied tourists will share their experiences with other tourists (Ardiwidjaja, 2018:20).

Based on the frequency distribution test, it can be seen that the tourist satisfaction variable that has the largest average value is an indicator of intention to reuse or revisit (Y2.2) and willingness to recommend (Y2.3) of 4.3. Indicators of intention to reuse or revisit (Y2.2) has a percentage of 50.8% and 44.6% the majority of respondents answered agree. Based on the characteristics of the respondents, it shows that the work is dominated by others who are housewives. Tourists are dominated by housewives who are traveling with their families. out of 130 respondents as many as 40 respondents or with a percentage of 30.8% worked as others which were dominated by housewives. So that Blitar Chocolate Village, which is known as an educational tourist spot, is certainly an option for traveling because of housewives. This is reinforced by Hudiono (2022) who explained that in general, women travel with their children to play. in a relationship between men and women, it is the women who plan more details of the trip, recommend favorite destinations to relatives or like to do research in traveling.

### **The effect of Perceived Value mediates Destination Image on Word of Mouth**

The results are in line with Azhar and Iskandarsyah (2019) which explains that by knowing the perceptions of tourists regarding the image of a tourist destination, it will impact on the desire to provide recommendations to other tourists. In this study, perceived

value has no significant effect and is unable to mediate the image of the destination on word of mouth. The existence of Blitar Chocolate Village, which is known as an educational tour about cocoa, does not make Kampung Cocoa Blitar tourists feel that the value spent (cost) is not in accordance with what is obtained during the tour so that it cannot make tourists interested in talking about Kampung Cocoa Blitar to other people. The image of a destination influences tourist behavior such as interpreting information based on experience to understand the value of the tourist experience while in a destination. If the value obtained is in accordance with what is expected, it can make tourists recommend the destination to other people to visit. And vice versa, if the value obtained is not as expected, it can make tourists not recommend the destination to others.

Based on the results of the frequency distribution test for the destination image variable, it can be seen that Blitar Chocolate Village has adequate infrastructure. Then on the perceived value variable it can be seen that the statement item that has the highest average value and mode is the quality indicator or quality value (Y1.3) with a percentage of 50.8% or 66 out of 130 respondents answered strongly agree. In accordance with the results of the questionnaire, this proves that Blitar Chocolate Village has good quality in terms of friendly service. It means the majority of respondents agree that a good destination image makes the perceived value of Blitar Chocolate Village also good.

### **The Influence of Tourist Satisfaction mediates Destination Image on Word of Mouth**

Tourist satisfaction has a significant effect and have the mediation role between destination image on word of mouth Susilowati (2019). Destination image is kind of a manifestation of tourist expectations, so that if these expectations can be fulfilled, tourists will feel satisfied. Tourist satisfaction can be considered through the overall rating of tourists. This assessment is related to the quality of the results of tourism destinations obtained by tourists.

The majority of respondent's age were 17-25 years and 26-35 years with a percentage of 31.5% or 41 respondents. Tourists aged 17 - 25 years are dominated by students/students who are on vacation and learning about cocoa. This goes along with Hidayat (2022) who explained that tourists from the age range of 17-25 years are an active and energetic age group so they tend to like tourism activities that can channel their energy and abilities. In addition, tourists aged 26-35 years tend to look for a place to relax and take a break from work with their children. According to Agapa et al. (2021) the age range of 26-35 years to become interested in tourism is caused by several internal factors from prospective tourists such as financial conditions that have started stable and still in strong physical condition to travel locally and outside the region and for external factors that are might be able to attract the interest of tourists is the attraction of tourist sites to be visited or to gather experience.

### **CONCLUSION**

Based on the analysis of the results of the study, it was found that perceived value was not able to mediate between the destination image and the word of mouth of Kampung Coklat Blitar. Meanwhile, tourist satisfaction has a significant effect and is able to mediate the image of the destination on word of mouth. Some suggestions that can be put forward as



consideration are for further research if you are interested in researching the same object, you can add other variables to find out updates and developments regarding factors that can affect perceived value, tourist satisfaction, and word of mouth. If the variables used are the same, you can add other indicators that have not been included in this study. Meanwhile, Kampung Coklat Blitar is expected to pay more attention to aspects of tourist satisfaction. By providing training and adding facilities to increase tourist knowledge, it is hoped that tourists will be more satisfied when visiting Kampung Cocoa Blitar and make tourists talk about positive things about Kampung Cocoa Blitar.

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