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FACTORS AFFECTING TOURIST VISITS TO MERESE HILL IN CENTRAL LOMBOK REGENCY

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Abstract

Tourism plays a vital role in regional economic development, particularly in priority destinations such as Mandalika in Central Lombok, yet limited research has examined the key determinants of tourist visits to specific sites within this area. This study aims to assess the effects of attractiveness, facilities, accessibility, and promotion on the number of tourist visits to the Merese Hill tourist destination, which is part of the Mandalika Special Economic Zone (KEK), Central Lombok. The research addresses a gap in understanding how these four factors interact to influence visitor behavior in newly developed tourism areas. The study adopts a quantitative approach using a multiple linear regression model. Primary data were collected through accidental sampling by distributing questionnaires to 100 tourists who visited Merese Hill in June 2025. The findings revealed that the four independent variables significantly affect the level of tourist arrivals, both simultaneously and partially. Among them, attractiveness emerged as the most influential factor, followed by promotion, facilities, and accessibility. These findings underscore the importance of managing destination attractiveness and optimizing digital promotion strategies to strengthen Mandalika's competitiveness in the national and international tourism markets.

Keywords: Attractiveness, Accessibility, Facilities, Promotion, Tourist Visit

1. INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry has become a strategic sector for supporting regional economic development, particularly in priority destination areas such as Mandalika in Central Lombok Regency. Merese Hill, a constituent of the Mandalika Special Economic Zone (KEK), possesses considerable potential to attract both domestic and foreign tourists. The variable nature of tourist visits to this destination necessitates a scientific study to ascertain the factors that significantly influence it. This research is designed to examine the implications of attractiveness, promotional efforts, amenities, and accessibility on the volume of tourist visits to Merese Hill. To this end, multiple linear regression models will be employed to analyze the data.

In practice, the management of Merese Hill faces several challenges that hinder sustainable tourism growth. Infrastructure limitations, including inadequate access roads and limited supporting facilities such as sanitation, information boards, and rest areas, often reduce visitor comfort. In addition, digital promotional efforts remain inconsistent, with minimal creativity and engagement across social media platforms. The lack of

integrated management and coordination among tourism stakeholders, including local government, destination managers, and community organizations, has also resulted in fragmented development. These conditions highlight the urgent need for evidence-based strategies to strengthen the competitiveness of Merese Hill and enhance its role within Mandalika's tourism ecosystem.

One of the fundamental factors influencing tourist's decisions to visit is the attractiveness of the destination. Attractions can manifest in the form of unique natural panoramas, cultural values, and distinctive experiences offered. According to Kawatu and Mandey (2020) research, the tourist attractiveness of a region directly impacts the interest of visitors in returning to that location. The visual appeal and exotic nature of a destination are identified as the primary factors contributing to tourists' decision to make repeat visits (Kawatu & Mandey, 2020). This phenomenon is further substantiated by the research conducted by Siagian & Mita (2022), which revealed that the distinctiveness of natural landscapes and local attractions fosters an escalation in the frequency of repeat tourist visits.

In addition to attractiveness, promotion is an important instrument in influencing tourist's perceptions and awareness of a destination. Through effective promotion, information about the beauty and selling power of tourist attractions can reach a wide audience. Research by Tanjung et al. (2022) underlines that digital promotion through social media significantly increases tourists desire to visit. A well-targeted promotional strategy can increase expectations and form a positive image of tourist destinations.

Supporting facilities in destinations also have a strategic role in creating tourist comfort and satisfaction. The existence of facilities such as rest areas, sanitation, trekking trails, and food and beverage facilities support the quality of the tourist experience. Siagian & Mita (2022) prove that service facilities contribute significantly to tourist satisfaction. Research by Nurchomariyah & Liliyan (2023) on the Umbul Ponggok destination also confirms the importance of facilities in attracting visits.

Accessibility is another factor that influences tourist's decisions about where to travel. The effectiveness of tourist visits depends on factors such as ease of transportation, travel distance, road conditions, and availability of mobility facilities. A study by Nurbaeti and Rahmanita (2021) indicates that accessibility significantly affects interest in visiting Cipondoh Lake. In the context of merese hill, which is located in a hilly area, accessibility is a major determining factor, especially for foreign tourists who rely on ease of navigation and local transportation.

Previous studies show that the four factors followed by attractiveness, promotion, facilities, and accessibility significantly influence tourist visits. This study adopted a quantitative approach using multiple linear regression models to test the simultaneous and partial relationships between the variables. The analysis results are expected to provide empirical contributions to help tourism managers and local governments formulate sustainable destination development strategies.

Accordingly, the main objective of this study is to analyze the effects of attractiveness, facilities, accessibility, and promotion on tourist visits to Merese Hill using a multiple linear regression approach. The results are expected to provide useful insights for policymakers and tourism stakeholders in formulating integrated strategies that enhance visitor experience, improve marketing effectiveness, and strengthen the long-term competitiveness of Mandalika's tourism destinations.

The selection of Merese Hill as the object of study is not without reason. As part of the Mandalika Special Economic Zone (SEZ), Merese Hill is one of the strategic tourist

nodes expected to promote tourism in the Central Lombok regency. However, few studies have specifically evaluated the factors influencing tourist visits to this location. Therefore, this research is important in filling the void in the literature and providing data-based recommendations to stakeholders of the tourism destination.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Tourist Visits

Tourist visits are a behavioral phenomenon that can be explained by consumer behavior theory and travel motivation. In this study, the push and pull theory serves as the conceptual foundation connecting all independent variables with tourist visits. The push factors represent tourists' internal motivations to travel, including the desire for exploration, rest, and self-fulfillment (Dann, 1977). The pull factors, on the other hand, refer to the external attributes of a destination that attract tourists, such as attractiveness, facilities, accessibility, and promotion (Saputra, 2022). Each of these external elements functions as a stimulus that influences tourists' behavioral intentions and decision-making processes when choosing a destination like Merese Hill. Therefore, understanding how these four pull factors interact is essential to explain variations in tourist behavior and to formulate destination management strategies that align with tourists' motivational patterns.

2.2 Attractiveness

Attractiveness functions not only as a motivational factor but also as an emotional and cognitive driver that shapes tourists' perceptions of value (Kawatu & Mandey, 2020). In natural destinations such as Merese Hill, scenic landscapes and distinctive topographical features play an important role in building the destination image (Siagian & Mita, 2022). When combined with cultural narratives and creative digital storytelling, attractiveness can strengthen visitors' emotional attachment and stimulate positive word of mouth communication, which ultimately increases the number of visits.

2.3 Promotion

Empirical evidence shows that promotion often acts as a connecting mechanism that reinforces the influence of attractiveness on tourist visits (Tanjung et al., 2022). Appealing natural scenery will not necessarily result in high visitation without sufficient promotional exposure (Saputra, 2022). In the case of Merese Hill, limited use of digital media and the absence of integrated branding have weakened its visibility within the broader Mandalika tourism area. Therefore, promotion is a crucial variable that converts tourists' awareness into actual visitation decisions.

2.4 Facilities

Beyond their functional role, facilities also influence perceived service quality, which contributes to satisfaction and revisit intentions (Sari & Suyuthie, 2022). According to the service quality framework, the availability of amenities such as clean sanitation, rest areas, and accessible information points enhances tourists' perceived value of the destination (Bangun & Lubis, 2022). For natural attractions such as Merese Hill, where activities often involve walking and trekking, the adequacy of facilities is an essential determinant of the overall tourist experience.

2.5 Accessibility

Accessibility serves as a structural factor that either supports or constrains the influence of other destination attributes (Nurbaeti & Rahmanita, 2021). Even when a site possesses strong attractiveness and effective promotion, inadequate access routes or transportation infrastructure can significantly reduce tourist visits. In the case of Merese Hill, its hilly terrain and the limited availability of public transportation create challenges, especially for international tourists who are not familiar with local routes (Nurchomariyah & Liliyan, 2023). Therefore, improving accessibility is a fundamental step toward ensuring equal opportunities for visitation and achieving sustainable tourism growth.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This research took place at Merese Hill, a tourist attraction situated in Pujut District, Central Lombok Regency, West Nusa Tenggara, during June 2025. Merese Hill is included within the Mandalika Special Economic Zone (SEZ), which has been designated as a super-priority tourism development area at the national level. The study utilized primary data obtained through questionnaires distributed directly to visitors at Merese Hill. The population in this study consisted of all tourists visiting Merese Hill during the research period in June 2025. Because the exact number of visitors was unknown and the flow of tourists varied daily, the study applied an accidental sampling technique. This non-probability sampling method was selected because it allows researchers to collect data directly from visitors who happened to be present and willing to respond at the site (Sugiyono, 2021). The technique was considered appropriate for this research, which aimed to explore behavioral patterns in naturally occurring visitor flows rather than from a fixed sampling frame.

To ensure representativeness, respondents were approached systematically throughout different times of the day and week (morning, afternoon, and weekend periods) to capture variation in visitor profiles. This approach helped minimize potential bias by ensuring that both domestic and international tourists, as well as various age groups, were proportionally represented in the final sample of 100 respondents.

The research involves one dependent variable, namely the number of tourist visits (Y), and four independent variables: attractiveness (X1), facilities (X2), accessibility (X3), and promotion (X4). Each variable was measured using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The validity of the instrument was then examined using the Pearson Product Moment correlation method, which tests the correlation between each item score and its total construct score (Sugiyono, 2021). Items with correlation coefficients greater than the critical r-table value ($r > 0.195$, $n = 100$, $\alpha = 0.05$) were considered valid. Reliability testing was conducted using Cronbach's Alpha to measure internal consistency. A Cronbach's Alpha value greater than 0.70 indicated that the instrument was reliable and suitable for data collection (Yunita & Kartini, 2021). The validity and reliability tests ensured that all questionnaire items accurately reflected the intended constructs and consistently measured the same dimensions across respondents.

Data were analyzed using multiple linear regression with the assistance of SPSS software. The regression model was used to determine both the simultaneous and partial effects of the independent variables on tourist visits. Before performing regression analysis, the data were subjected to a series of classical assumption tests to ensure that the model met the statistical requirements for unbiased estimation (Yunita & Kartini, 2022).

3.1 Multiple Linear Regression

Multiple linear regression represents a statistical method to analyze the influence of more independent variables on one dependent variable on a quantitative scale. This analytical model is commonly used in research to examine causal relationships between independent and dependent variables (Siregar, 2022). Typically, the general form of the multiple linear regression is expressed as follows:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \varepsilon \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots [1]$$

Y: dependent variable, β_0: constant, $\beta_{1,2,3,4}$: regression coefficient $X_{1,2,3,4}$: independent variable dan ε: error

The model is applied to assess the simultaneous and individual impacts of every independent variable in relation to the dependent variable.

3.2 Normality Test

The test is implemented to examine the extent to which the residuals are normally distributed. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test is employed, according to the established decision-making rule, if the significance value $Sig > 0{,}05$ value is then H_0 is rejected. So it can be indicating that the residuals follow a normal distribution. (Yunita & Kartini, 2021).

3.3 Multicollinearity Test

To examine whether the independent variables are strongly correlated. The decision criteria are revealed from the tolerance and VIF values. If the Tolerance > 0.10 and VIF < 10 values are high, there is no multicollinearity (Firmansyah & Suryani, 2020).

3.4 Heteroscdasticity Test

To see if the residual variance is constant. The analysis can be performed through the interpretation of the scatterplot graph. If the data on the scatterplot graph spreads on the right and left sides of 0, it is said to be constant (Rizki & Sholihah, 2021).

3.5 Autocorrelation Test

Used to see if there is a correlation between residuals. Testing is done with the Durbin-Watson test with the criteria if the DW value is between 1.55 - 2.46, then it can be said that there is no autocorrelation (Mahyudin, 2023).

After confirming that all assumptions were satisfied, multiple linear regression analysis was carried out to estimate the relationship between the independent variables (attractiveness, facilities, accessibility, and promotion) and the dependent variable (tourist visits). The analysis included the F-test to evaluate the simultaneous significance of all independent variables and the t-test to assess the partial significance of each variable (Siregar, 2022).

3.6 F-Test (Simultaneous)

In multiple regression analysis, the F-test is utilized to determine the overall significance of the regression model by testing whether all independent variables collectively exert a statistically meaningful influence on the dependent variable. (Siregar, 2022).

$$F = \frac{R^2/k}{(1-R^2)/(n-k-1)} \quad \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots [2]$$

R^2:coefficient of determination, k: number of independent variables, dan n: sample.

The test hypotheses are
H_0: There is no simultaneous influence between $X_{1,2,3,4}$ to Y
H_1: There is simultaneous influnce between $X_{1,2,3,4}$ to Y
The evaluative criteria for making decisions is H_0 rejected if Sig $< 0{,}05$ the value of.

3.7 T-Test (Partial)

The t-test is applied to evaluate the individual contribution of every independent variable to the dependent variable. The equation for the t-test is as follows:

$$t = \frac{b_i}{SE(b_i)} \quad \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots [3]$$

b_i: regression coefficient of each variable and $SE(b_i)$: error standard from b_i.

The test hypothesis is
H_0: There is no effect of variable X_i on Y
H_1: There is effect of variable X_i on Y
The evaluative criteria for making decisions criteria is H_0 rejected if $Sig < 0{,}05$ the value of.

3.8 Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

The coefficient of determination indicates the contribution of the total variation in the dependent variable that can be explained collectively by the independent variables. The equation is (Sugiyono, 2021)

$$R^2 = \frac{SSR}{SST} = 1 - \frac{SSE}{SST} \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots [4]$$

SSR: Sum of Squares Regression, SSE: Sum of Squares Error, SST: Total Sum of Squares. The value of R^2 ranges from 0 to 1. The nearer the R^2 value is to 1, the higher the proportion of variation in variable Y explained by variable X.

The coefficient of determination (R^2) was also calculated to determine the proportion of variance in tourist visits explained by the four independent variables.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Merese Hill is one of the natural tourist destinations located in Mandalika SEZ, Central Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara. The hill is known for offering stunning panoramic views, especially during sunrise and sunset, with a landscape of green hills directly facing the Indian Ocean and beautiful coastlines such as Tanjung Aan Beach and Seger Beach. Access to merese hill is quite easy, both for local and foreign tourists, making it one of the favorite spots for photography, light trekking, or simply enjoying the beauty of nature. The unspoiled natural charm and calm atmosphere make merese hill an icon of outdoor tourism in Mandalika which is always crowded, especially during the holiday season and major events in the surrounding area.

The respondent characteristics examined in this research consisted of tourists visiting merese hill, with a total of 100 respondents. the majority of respondents were in the age range of 21-35 years (62%), which is a productive age group and active in tourism activities. Most respondents were female (55%) and came from outside West Nusa Tenggara (68%), both from other parts of Indonesia and abroad. In order to confirm the validity and accuracy of the questionnaire as the study instrument, validity testing and reliability testing of all question items were carried out. The test results are as follows,

4.1 Validity Test and Reliability Test

Table 1. Instrument Validity Test

Questions	R Table	R Counts	P-Value	Description
X1.1	0,195	0,307**	0,002	Valid
X1.2		0,249*	0,012	
X1.3		0,266**	0,007	
X2.1		0,400**	0,000	
X2.2		0,234*	0,019	
X2.3		0,334**	0,001	
X3.1		0,307**	0,002	
X3.2		0,207*	0,039	
X3.3		0,284**	0,004	
X4.1		0,326**	0,001	
X4.2		0,287**	0,004	
X4.3		0,295**	0,003	
Y.1		0,290**	0,003	
Y.2		0,219*	0,028	
Y.3		0,251*	0,012	

Source: Researchers (2025)

Validity testing is conducted to evaluate how far the question items reflect in the questionnaire actually measure the intended constructs. In this research constructs, validity was tested using construct validity through item-total correlation analysis (Product Moment Pearson). Each indicator (item) of each variable is tested by correlating the item score with the total variable score (the sum of all items in one variable). The correlation values are evaluated by referencing the critical r-table value at the 5% significance level, because the number of respondents is 100 respondents, then r table ≈ 0.195. Based on the validity test results, all variables X1, X2, X3, X4, and Y have a correlation value > r table, the result it can be deduced that all items in the questionnaire are valid and suitable for data collection.

Reliability test is used to measure the extent to which a measurement instrument is consistent and stable in measuring a concept. Reliability testing was carried out using the Cronbach's Alpha method. Based on the results of calculations using SPSS, the Cronbach's Alpha value for all variables is 0,89 > 0.70, which means that the instrument has good reliability. Thus, this questionnaire instrument is declared consistent and reliable in measuring the variables studied.

4.2 Classical Assumption Test

a. Normality Test

The purpose of conducting a normality test is to examine determine whether the residual data (the difference between the observed value and the predicted value) is normally distributed. Testing is done using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test. The test

results show that the residuals are normally distributed with a significance of 0.2 ≥ 0.05, Therefore, it may be inferred that the residuals are normally distributed and fulfill the assumption of normality.

b. Multicollinearity Test

The purpose of the multicollinearity test is to identify whether there is a very strong relationship between the independent variables, which can cause the regression results to be unstable. The results of this test are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Multicollinearity Test Result

Variable	Tolerance	Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)
X1	0,989	1,011
X2	0,971	1,030
X3	0,958	1,044
X4	0,985	1,016

Source: Researchers (2025)

All variables have a Tolerance value > 0.10 or VIF < 10, which means indicating that multicollinearity is not detected in the regression model. Tolerance value all the variables ≥ 0.10 and VIF value ≤ 10 so multicollinearity not detected.

c. Heteroscedasticity Test

Heteroscedasticity test is conducted to determine to determine if an inequality exists in the variance of the residuals (errors) for each predicted value in the regression model. One way to do this is through a scatterplot between residuals and predicted values (fitted values).

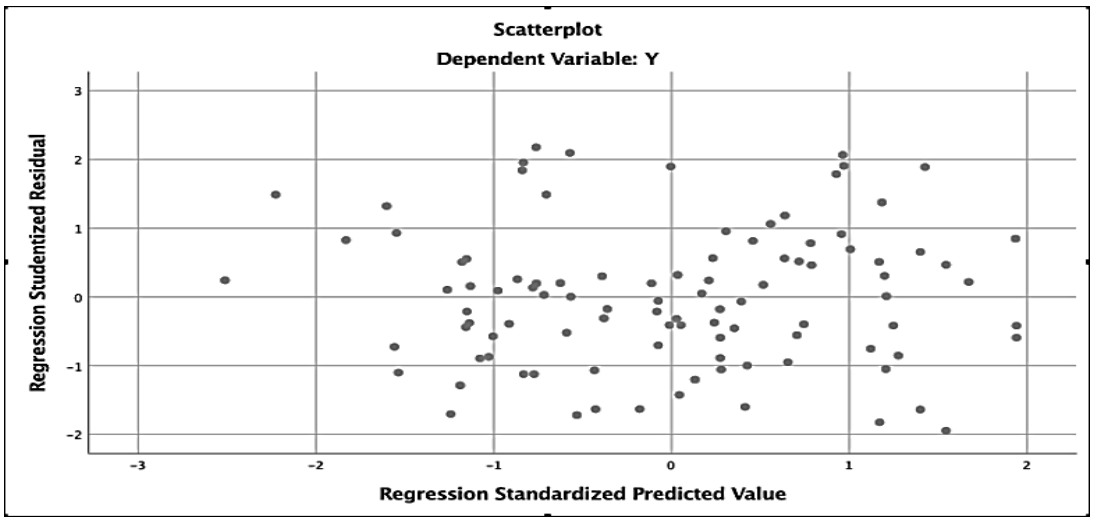

Figure 1. Scatter Plot
Source: Researchers (2025)

The scatterplot of residuals against the predicted values in this regression model shows that the residuals are randomly distributed, with no discernible pattern, and are spread both above and below the zero line. This suggests that the variance of the residuals remains relatively constant across all predicted values. Hence, it can be inferred that the regression model does not exhibit heteroscedasticity and satisfies the assumption of homoscedasticity.

d. Autocorrelation Test

The autocorrelation test is intended to examine whether residuals from one observation are correlated with those from another. Using the Durbin-Watson test, a statistic of 2.439 was obtained. As this value lies within the acceptable interval of 1.5 to 2.5, it suggests that no autocorrelation is present. Thus, the regression model can be considered free from autocorrelation problems.

Considering the results of testing the four classical assumptions, this indicates that the regression model in this study fulfills all classical assumptions. Therefore, the regression model used is suitable for interpretation and further analysis.

4.3 Regression Analysis Results

After the data is declared valid, reliable, and meets all classical assumption tests, the next step is to perform multiple linear regression analysis. The purpose of this analysis is to determine the effect of each independent variable on the dependent variable, both simultaneously and partial. The analysis results in multiple linear regression equations in the form of:

Table 3. Regression Analysis Results

Coefficientsa						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-0,020	0,219		-,092	0,927
	Attractiveness (x_1)	0,490	0,028	0,744	17,514	0,000
	Facilities (x_2)	0,256	0,027	0,401	9,365	0,000
	Accebility (x_3)	0,090	0,027	0,146	3,373	0,001
	Promotion (x_4)	0,274	0,027	0,439	10,326	0,000

Source: Researchers (2025)

From Table 3, the regression model is:

$$y = -0{,}20 + 0{,}490x_1 + 0{,}256x_2 + 0{,}090x_3 + 0{,}274x_4$$

The interpretation of the model:

Among these, attractiveness recorded the highest standardized coefficient (β = 0.744), followed by promotion (β = 0.439), facilities (β = 0.401), and accessibility (β = 0.146). These results highlight that destination attractiveness and promotional efforts are the two most dominant factors influencing the number of tourist visits to Merese Hill.

a. Determination of Coeffficient

Table 4. Determination of Coefficient

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,911a	,831	,823	,29826

Source: Researchers (2025)

As derived from the results of the regression analysis, the coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.831. This shows that 83.1% of the variation that occurs in tourist visits (Y) can be explained by the variables of attractiveness, facilities, accessibility and promotion in the model. While the remaining 16.9% is explained by

other variables not included in the model such as individual factors, the environment, or other variables. Therefore, this regression model can be said to have a fairly good explanatory ability.

b. F Test (Simultaneous)

The F-test is applied to assess whether the independent variables, when considered simultaneously, exert a significant influence on the dependent variable.

Table 5. Anova

ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	41,440	4	10,360	116,461	0,000b
	Residual	8,451	95	,089		
	Total	49,891	99			

Source: Researchers (2025)

Referring to Table 5, the F-test yields a value of 116.461 with a significance level of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. The result supports the decision to reject the null hypothesis (H_0), indicating that attractiveness, facilities, accessibility, and promotion have a statistically significant simultaneous effect on the dependent variable, which is tourist visits.

c. T Test (Parcial)

The t-test results further revealed that each variable individually has a significant positive influence ($p < 0.05$).

- The Effect of Attractiveness ($\boldsymbol{x_1}$) on Tourist Visit ($\boldsymbol{y}$)

  The attraction variable has a significance value of 0.000 <0.05, indicating that both rejections and attractions partially affect tourist visits. The results indicate that attractiveness remains the most decisive factor driving tourist visits. The natural panorama of Merese Hill, overlooking Tanjung Aan Beach and the Indian Ocean, provides strong visual appeal and emotional experiences that align with the pull dimension of the push and pull theory (Dann, 1977). This finding supports Kawatu and Mandey (2020), who stated that unique landscape and aesthetic experiences significantly increase tourist loyalty. However, unlike other natural destinations, Merese Hill's attractiveness is closely tied to its accessibility and facility quality. Visitors perceive the natural landscape as more enjoyable when supported by comfortable trekking paths, shaded areas, and adequate photo spots. Thus, the interaction between attractiveness and facilities forms a complementary relationship that enhances overall visitor satisfaction.
- The Effect of Facilities ($\boldsymbol{x_2}$) on Tourist Visit ($\boldsymbol{y}$)

  The facility variable has a significance value of 0.000 < 0.05, suggesting that both the rejection of facilities and their partial impact on tourist visits are statistically significant. Tourism facilities represent a pivotal element in establishing a pleasurable and memorable travel experience. In the context of destination development, the quality and availability of facilities are frequently the pivotal factors that influence tourists' decisions to visit, extend their stay, or even make repeat visits to a tourist spot. The quality of facilities has been identified as a contributing factor to the perception of attractiveness (Marchha & Sunarta, 2024). The analysis revealed that enhancing venue amenities, such as

shade structures, gardens, and seating arrangements, can result in an increase in visit duration and tourist expenditure, with a maximum increase of 50% observed in some cases.

- The Effect of Accessibility (x_3) on Tourist Visit (y)

  The accessibility variable has a significance value of 0.000 < 0.05, indicating that both accessibility and its partial effect on tourist visits are statistically significant. Accessibility is a pivotal factor in the development of tourism, as it determines the ease with which tourists can reach a destination. Accessibility elements encompass the availability and quality of transportation infrastructure (e.g., roads, airports, and ports), ease of digital navigation, and travel time and costs. Tampubolon & Sarjana (2025) emphasize the importance of accessibility in increasing visits to tourist destinations. A disparity in transportation infrastructure can diminish the region's appeal, despite its considerable tourism potential.

- The Effect of Promotion (x_4) on Tourist Visit (y)

  The promotion variable has a significance value of 0.000 < 0.05, so reject and promotion partially affect tourist visits. Promotion, identified as the second most influential factor, also plays a vital role in transforming destination potential into real tourist flows. Effective promotion amplifies the impact of attractiveness by broadening awareness through digital media and storytelling. The current promotional efforts for Merese Hill remain largely dependent on user-generated content rather than structured marketing campaigns. Strengthening digital branding through coordinated social media management and collaboration with the Mandalika Tourism Authority would help position Merese Hill as a flagship nature-based attraction within the Mandalika SEZ. This aligns with the findings of Tanjung et al. (2022), who emphasized that digital promotion significantly influences tourists' decisions, particularly among younger demographics.

The findings have several implications for destination management in Merese Hill and the broader Mandalika SEZ. First, the dominance of attractiveness and promotion underscores the need for a dual strategy: maintaining environmental quality through sustainable tourism practices while simultaneously enhancing promotional visibility. Management should prioritize eco-friendly infrastructure such as viewing decks, shaded resting points, and improved sanitation facilities to maintain visitor comfort without damaging the natural landscape. Second, destination managers, in collaboration with the Indonesia Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) and local communities, should strengthen digital branding and promotional consistency across platforms to attract both domestic and international markets. Finally, improving accessibility through road maintenance, signage, and transportation connectivity will enhance the overall competitiveness of Merese Hill as a gateway attraction within Mandalika's tourism cluster.

5. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrated that attractiveness, facilities, accessibility, and promotion significantly influence tourist visits to Merese Hill, with attractiveness emerging as the most dominant factor. These findings align with the push and pull motivation theory (Dann, 1977), in which external destination attributes serve as pull factors that stimulate tourists' internal motivations to travel. The results also reinforce the concept of destination competitiveness, showing that Merese Hill's performance depends

on the integration of natural appeal, supporting infrastructure, and promotional effectiveness. Together, these factors shape visitors' behavioral intentions and determine the destination's capacity to attract and retain tourists within the Mandalika SEZ.

Theoretically, this research contributes to tourism studies by validating the push–pull framework and extending its application to emerging destinations in developing regions. Practically, it provides guidance for destination managers and policymakers to prioritize sustainable infrastructure, enhance digital promotion, and preserve natural attractions to strengthen competitiveness. Future studies should include variables such as destination image, service quality, and environmental management to deepen the understanding of how these elements collectively sustain tourism growth in Mandalika and similar areas.

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