

The Effect of Service Quality and Destination Image on Revisit Intention at Al-Akbar National Mosque Surabaya as a Religious Tourism Destination

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Abstract

The development of Al-Akbar National Mosque Surabaya as a religious tourism destination requires service management and destination positioning that can encourage repeat visits. This study examines the effects of service quality and destination image on visitors' revisit intention. A quantitative causal-explanatory design was applied to 240 visitors selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected through an online five-point Likert questionnaire and analyzed using SPSS, including descriptive statistics, validity and reliability testing, classical assumption tests, multiple linear regression, partial and simultaneous significance tests, and the coefficient of determination. The final instrument comprised 23 analyzable items covering service quality, destination image, and revisit intention. The results show that service quality has a positive and significant effect on revisit intention ($B = 0.303$; $t = 19.028$; $p < 0.001$), while destination image also has a positive and significant effect ($B = 0.056$; $t = 2.538$; $p = 0.012$). The model explains 62.0% of the variance in revisit intention. These findings indicate that repeat-visit intentions at a mosque-based religious destination are shaped jointly by functional service performance and the cognitive, affective, and spiritual image of the destination. Management should therefore maintain facility quality, clarity of information, security, staff responsiveness, and a peaceful spiritual atmosphere.

Keywords:

destination image; religious tourism; revisit intention; service quality

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INTRODUCTION

Religious tourism combines mobility, spiritual motivation, cultural learning, and interaction with sacred places. In Indonesia, mosques increasingly function not only as places of worship but also as public spaces for education, social activity, cultural expression, and tourism. This expanded role creates an opportunity for mosque management to develop visitor experiences without reducing the sacred function of the institution. Studies of mosque-based tourism show that historical meaning, architecture, community activity, accessibility, and religious atmosphere jointly shape the attractiveness of a destination (Suprasetio et al., 2019). In this context, visitor retention is strategically important because repeat visitors provide a relatively stable basis for destination sustainability and positive word of mouth.

Al-Akbar National Mosque Surabaya, hereafter referred to as MAS, represents this transformation. The mosque is recognized as an urban religious landmark and provides a combination of worship facilities, educational spaces, meeting areas, public parks, and supporting amenities. Its positioning as a religious tourism destination is therefore determined not merely by architectural visibility, but by the total experience created through facilities, personnel, information, security, cleanliness, accessibility, and spiritual atmosphere. Such a context requires an integrated understanding of functional service performance and the image retained in visitors' minds.

Service quality is a central antecedent of post-visit behavior. The SERVQUAL perspective explains service quality through tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy (Parasuraman et al., 1988). At a religious destination, these dimensions take a specific form: clean worship areas and ablution facilities, reliable information, responsive staff, a secure environment, and sensitivity to visitors' spiritual needs. When those elements are evaluated positively, visitors are more likely to perceive the destination as dependable and worth revisiting. Empirical tourism research similarly demonstrates that perceived service quality can strengthen satisfaction, attachment, loyalty, and revisit intention (Abbasi et al., 2021; Manyangara et al., 2023; Timur, 2018).

Destination image is equally relevant because tourism decisions are influenced by the cognitive and affective representation of a place. Cognitive image concerns beliefs about attributes such as architecture, facilities, cleanliness, location, and accessibility, whereas affective image concerns feelings such as peace, comfort, pride, and spiritual meaning (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). A favorable image can persist after a visit and become a mental reference when tourists evaluate future destination choices. Prior research links destination image to memorable experience, attachment,

satisfaction, and repeat visitation (Dagustani et al., 2018; Nguyen Viet et al., 2020; Stylos et al., 2017; Zhang et al., 2018).

However, most studies on revisit intention have focused on hotels, general leisure destinations, natural attractions, heritage areas, or commercial tourism settings. Evidence from mosque-based religious tourism remains limited, although the visitor experience in this setting contains a distinctive combination of public service, architecture, religiosity, emotional calm, and spiritual symbolism. Moreover, existing models often position satisfaction, place attachment, nostalgia, or memorable experience as mediating mechanisms. The direct effects of service quality and destination image on revisit intention within an active mosque have received less attention.

This study addresses that gap by testing the direct effects of service quality and destination image on revisit intention among visitors to MAS. Its contribution lies in integrating functional service evaluation with cognitive, affective, and spiritual destination image in a mosque-based tourism context. The study therefore asks whether better service quality and a more positive destination image increase visitors' intention to return. The findings are expected to provide an empirical basis for managing a religious destination that remains spiritually authentic while also responsive to contemporary visitor expectations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theory of Planned Behavior and Revisit Intention

The Theory of Planned Behavior explains intention as the immediate motivational antecedent of behavior. Intention develops through attitudes toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991). Later clarification of the theory emphasizes that beliefs formed from experience influence behavioral evaluation and the strength of intention (Ajzen, 2020). In tourism, a positive experience can create a favorable attitude toward returning, while perceived ease, resources, and social encouragement influence whether that intention is maintained. Tourism research has successfully extended this framework to explain revisit intention in destinations and accommodation settings (Abbasi et al., 2021; Meng & Cui, 2020).

In this study, revisit intention refers to the visitor's tendency to return to MAS, plan a future visit, repeat the religious tourism experience, recommend the destination, and prefer it to comparable religious attractions. It is treated as a post-consumption behavioral intention formed after visitors assess the service received and the overall image of the destination.

Service Quality and Revisit Intention

Service quality is the visitor's overall judgment of whether the delivered service meets or exceeds expectations. The multidimensional SERVQUAL model identifies tangible evidence, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy as key dimensions (Parasuraman et al., 1988). At MAS, tangible evidence includes the cleanliness and condition of buildings and supporting facilities; reliability concerns consistent service and accurate information; responsiveness reflects the willingness and speed of staff assistance; assurance concerns competence and security; and empathy reflects attention to visitors' needs, including spiritual needs.

High service quality reduces uncertainty and creates confidence that a future visit will provide a similarly positive experience. Studies in tourism show that service quality directly or indirectly strengthens revisit intention through perceived value, satisfaction, image, and loyalty (Liu et al., 2025; Manyangara et al., 2023; Timur, 2018). From a planned-behavior perspective, positive service evaluation strengthens attitudes toward repeating the visit. Accordingly, the first hypothesis is formulated as follows.

H1: Service quality has a positive and significant effect on revisit intention among visitors to Al-Akbar National Mosque Surabaya.

Destination Image and Revisit Intention

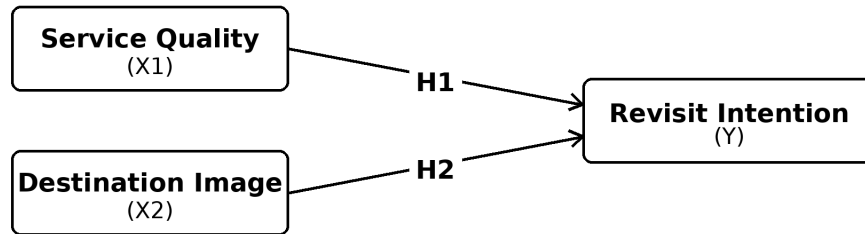
Destination image is a composite representation of what visitors know, believe, and feel about a place. Cognitive image is related to observable attributes, whereas affective image reflects emotional evaluation (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). In a religious destination, this representation is also strengthened by spiritual meaning, tranquility, solemnity, and emotional closeness to religious values. Thus, the image of MAS is generated not only by its physical and functional attributes but also by the meaning experienced during worship and religious tourism activities.

A positive destination image reduces perceived risk, improves preference, and helps visitors retrieve favorable memories when considering future travel. Prior studies have shown that image, memorable tourism experience, satisfaction, and place attachment are associated with revisit intention (Nguyen Viet et al., 2020; Stylos et al., 2017; Wei et al., 2024; Zhang et al., 2018). In religious tourism, the role of religiosity and spiritual experience can make destination image especially salient in the decision to return (Rehman et al., 2022). Therefore, the second hypothesis is proposed.

H2: Destination image has a positive and significant effect on revisit intention among visitors to Al-Akbar National Mosque Surabaya.

Figure 1.

Research Framework



Note:

Source: Author's work based on the thesis research model

RESEARCH METHOD

This research used a quantitative causal-explanatory design to test the direct effects of service quality and destination image on revisit intention. The study was conducted in the context of Al-Akbar National Mosque Surabaya, with the research process extending from November 2025 to June 2026. The target population consisted of people who had visited MAS and were able to evaluate its religious tourism experience. Because the exact population size was not available, the population was treated as indefinite.

A non-probability purposive sampling technique was applied. Respondents were required to have visited MAS and to possess sufficient direct experience to assess its service quality and destination image. Based on the indicator-to-sample ratio used in the thesis, 240 respondents were selected as the final sample. The sample size was considered adequate for multiple regression and for producing stable parameter estimates (Malhotra, 2016).

Data were collected through a structured Google Form distributed via WhatsApp, Instagram, and Telegram. The questionnaire used a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The final analyzed instrument consisted of 23 items: 10 service-quality items covering tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy; 8 destination-image items covering cognitive and affective evaluations, including spiritual meaning; and 5 revisit-intention items. Before the main survey, the instrument was tested on 30 eligible respondents. Item validity was evaluated using Pearson correlations against an r-table value of 0.361, and reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha with a minimum criterion of 0.70.

Data analysis was performed using SPSS. Descriptive analysis summarized respondent characteristics and construct means. Classical assumption testing included the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test,

tolerance and variance inflation factor for multicollinearity, and the Glejser test for heteroscedasticity. The hypotheses were tested with multiple linear regression expressed as $RI = a + b_1SQ + b_2DI + e$, where RI represents revisit intention, SQ represents service quality, and DI represents destination image. Partial effects were evaluated with t-tests at a 5% significance level, the joint model was evaluated through the F-test, and explanatory power was assessed using R square and adjusted R square (Ghozali, 2018).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Profile and Descriptive Findings

The sample comprised 240 visitors. Women represented 53% of the respondents and men 47%. The largest age group was 17–25 years (43%), indicating substantial participation by younger visitors. Worship was the most frequently reported primary purpose (36%), followed by religious tourism (30%), social activities (22%), and education (12%). The construct means were 3.94 for service quality, 3.97 for destination image, and 4.07 for revisit intention, all within the “agree” category. These values indicate that respondents generally evaluated the service and image positively and showed a relatively strong inclination to return.

Table 1.

Respondent Profile and Construct Descriptive Statistics

Category	Group/Construct	Frequency or Mean	Percentage/Interpretation
Gender	Male	112	47%
Gender	Female	128	53%
Age	17–25 years	103	43%
Age	26–35 years	51	21%
Age	36–45 years	48	20%
Age	46–52 years	38	16%
Primary purpose	Worship	87	36%
Primary purpose	Religious tourism	73	30%
Primary purpose	Social activities	52	22%
Primary purpose	Education	28	12%
Construct mean	Service quality	3.94	Agree
Construct mean	Destination image	3.97	Agree
Construct mean	Revisit intention	4.07	Agree

Source: Processed primary data from the thesis (n = 240)

At the item level, the service-quality indicator with the highest index concerned the physical condition and attractiveness of the mosque building (4.00), while service consistency and staff willingness to help produced the

lowest indexes (3.89). For destination image, spiritual value and religious meaning received the highest index (4.03); architectural grandeur and a calm atmosphere obtained the lowest, although still positive, index (3.94). Revisit intention showed an important contrast: preference for MAS over similar religious destinations was very high (4.44), whereas the general statement of future return intention was lower (3.68). This pattern suggests that strong preference does not automatically remove practical barriers to repeat visitation.

Measurement Quality, Model Assumptions, and Hypothesis Testing

All indicators exceeded the validity threshold of 0.361. Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.834 to 0.911, showing satisfactory internal consistency. The residuals were normally distributed, multicollinearity was absent, and the Glejser test indicated homoscedasticity. The resulting regression equation was $RI = 6.638 + 0.303SQ + 0.056DI + e$. The overall model was significant at $p < 0.001$ and explained 62.0% of the variance in revisit intention, with an adjusted R square of 0.616.

Table 2.

Measurement Quality, Assumption Tests, and Regression Results

Analysis	Statistic	Value	Interpretation
Validity	Service quality r range	0.579–0.837	All items valid
Validity	Destination image r range	0.688–0.905	All items valid
Validity	Revisit intention r range	0.613–0.862	All items valid
Reliability	Service quality α	0.911	Reliable
Reliability	Destination image α	0.908	Reliable
Reliability	Revisit intention α	0.834	Reliable
Normality	Kolmogorov-Smirnov p	0.285	Normal residuals
Multicollinearity	Tolerance; VIF	0.985; 1.015	No multicollinearity
Heteroscedasticity	SQ p; DI p	0.229; 0.301	No heteroscedasticity
Regression	Constant	$B = 6.638$; $t = 7.420$; $p < 0.001$	Significant
H1	Service quality	$B = 0.303$; $t = 19.028$; $p < 0.001$	Supported
H2	Destination image	$B = 0.056$; $t = 2.538$; $p = 0.012$	Supported
Model fit	R; R ² ; Adjusted R ²	0.787; 0.620; 0.616	Model significant, $p < 0.001$

Source: SPSS output reported in the thesis

Effect of Service Quality on Revisit Intention

The first hypothesis was supported. Service quality had a positive and statistically significant effect on revisit intention ($B = 0.303$; $t = 19.028$; $p < 0.001$). Its coefficient was substantially larger than the coefficient of destination image, indicating that the operational experience received during a visit was the strongest direct predictor in the model. A one-unit increase in perceived service quality was associated with a 0.303-unit increase in revisit intention, holding destination image constant.

This result is consistent with the logic of planned behavior. Positive evaluations of cleanliness, comfort, information, staff assistance, competence, and security strengthen the attitude that another visit will be worthwhile. Visitors to an active mosque repeatedly interact with physical facilities and operational arrangements; therefore, consistency becomes particularly important. A destination may possess strong symbolic meaning, but if basic facilities or staff responses are unreliable, the intention to repeat the experience can weaken.

The finding supports previous research showing that service quality encourages repeat visitation either directly or through destination image, satisfaction, and perceived value (Abbasi et al., 2021; Manyangara et al., 2023; Timur, 2018). The practical implication is that service quality should not be treated as a supporting element secondary to architecture or spirituality. At MAS, the religious tourism experience is produced through the simultaneous provision of worship facilities, public information, security, circulation, cleanliness, and human assistance. Maintaining these elements consistently can reduce the gap between high destination preference and the lower score recorded for concrete future-return intention.

Effect of Destination Image on Revisit Intention

The second hypothesis was also supported. Destination image positively and significantly affected revisit intention ($B = 0.056$; $t = 2.538$; $p = 0.012$). Although the effect was smaller than that of service quality, it remained statistically meaningful after service quality was controlled. This means that visitors' beliefs and feelings about MAS contribute independently to the decision to return.

The descriptive results clarify the nature of that image. The highest destination-image score concerned spiritual value and religious meaning, whereas architectural grandeur and peaceful atmosphere received slightly lower scores. Thus, the image of MAS is not based solely on visible monumentality. It is reinforced by the ability of the destination to support worship, calmness, pride, and a personally meaningful religious experience. This spiritual component differentiates mosque-based tourism from purely recreational destinations.

The result is aligned with studies indicating that favorable cognitive and affective images create memorable experiences, stronger attachment, and repeat intentions (Nguyen Viet et al., 2020; Stylos et al., 2017; Wei et al., 2024; Zhang et al., 2018). It also corresponds with evidence that religious meaning and religiosity can strengthen revisit intention toward sacred attractions (Rehman et al., 2022). For management, destination-image development should therefore combine physical maintenance and accessible information with protection of the atmosphere required for worship and reflection. Over-commercialization or uncontrolled crowding may weaken the spiritual image even when physical facilities continue to improve.

Theoretical and Managerial Implications

Theoretically, this study demonstrates that revisit intention in mosque-based religious tourism can be explained through the joint influence of a functional construct and a symbolic-experiential construct. Service quality captures the reliability of the visitor experience, while destination image captures the meaning retained after the experience. The simultaneous significance of both variables and the model's 62.0% explanatory power indicate that repeat-visit intention is neither purely operational nor purely emotional. It emerges from the interaction between tangible service delivery and the cognitive, affective, and spiritual representation of the destination.

Managerially, MAS should prioritize consistent maintenance of toilets, ablution areas, prayer spaces, parking, public areas, and supporting facilities; improve the clarity and accuracy of visitor information; strengthen staff responsiveness and competence; and maintain security. In parallel, management should preserve tranquility, religious meaning, and the visual identity of the mosque. Periodic educational, spiritual, and community programs may provide new reasons to return, helping translate the already strong destination preference into actual repeat visitation. Coordination with local tourism stakeholders can further improve access, communication, and promotion without reducing the mosque's primary religious function.

CONCLUSIONS

This study concludes that service quality has a positive and significant effect on revisit intention among visitors to Al-Akbar National Mosque Surabaya. Better evaluations of facilities, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy are associated with a stronger intention to return. Service quality was the dominant predictor in the regression model.

Destination image also has a positive and significant effect on revisit intention. Visitors are influenced not only by physical attributes and accessibility but also by emotional and spiritual impressions. The strong score for religious meaning indicates that the destination's spiritual identity is a

central element of its competitive position. Together, service quality and destination image explain 62.0% of the variation in revisit intention. Consequently, sustainable religious tourism management at MAS requires simultaneous improvement of operational service and preservation of an authentic, peaceful, and meaningful destination image.

LIMITATION & FURTHER RESEARCH

The study is limited to one mosque-based religious destination, so the findings should not be generalized automatically to pilgrimage sites, religious heritage areas, or mosques with different management systems. Purposive non-probability sampling also means that not every member of the visitor population had an equal probability of selection. In addition, the data were collected through an online self-report questionnaire, which may contain recall error, subjective interpretation, and response bias.

The model included only service quality and destination image. The remaining 38.0% of variance may be related to satisfaction, memorable tourism experience, religious motivation, accessibility, promotion, facility quality, perceived value, or place attachment. Future research should test these mechanisms, apply probability-based or multi-site samples, compare mosque destinations, and use longitudinal designs to determine whether stated revisit intention is converted into actual repeat visitation.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION

Muhammad Zharif Ishamy: conceptualization, research design, methodology, data collection, statistical analysis, interpretation, writing the original draft, and manuscript preparation. The author has read and approved the final version of the paper.

Declaration of interest

The author declares that there are no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have influenced the work reported in this paper.

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