GEOPARK TOURISM: THE INFLUENCE OF DESTINATION PERSONALITY, REPUTATION, AND PREFERENCE ON TOURIST VISIT INTENTIONS TO IJEN GEOPARK

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ABSTRACT

Ijen Geopark, recognized by UNESCO as a UGG site, is a unique global tourist destination known for its geological, ecological, and cultural attractions. Highlights include the rare Blue Fire phenomenon at Ijen Crater, sulphur mining, waterfalls, megalithic sites, beaches, and lava flows. This study examines how destination personality, preference, trust, and reputation influence tourists' intention to visit. Data were collected via online surveys from both past visitors and potential tourists. Using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), results show that destination personality significantly impacts preference and reputation, which in turn strongly influence visit intention. Surprisingly, destination trust does not directly affect visit intention. These findings contribute to geopark tourism, sustainable tourism, and destination marketing, offering practical insights for enhancing Ijen Geopark's appeal. Future research could explore additional psychological and behavioral factors influencing tourist decisions at geopark sites.

KEYWORDS: Destination Marketing, Consumer Behavior, Sustainable Tourism, Geopark Tourism, Ijen Geopark.

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism in geoparks is a sustainable tourism model that combines conservation efforts with local economic development and cultural preservation. According to Kusnadi (2023), in a geopark, tourism attempts to find an equilibrium between tourism growth and conservation of the environment. This, however, is not totally correct because for conservation to occur, economic and human activities may need to be hindered. Despite these problems, geopark tourism develops harmoniously in balance with the continuity of geological, biological, and cultural diversity to become national pride, just as UNESCO acknowledged Indonesia's Ciletuh Geopark. Moreira et al. (2021) present, on one hand, how geopark tourism has the potential to develop regional economies and manage environmental conservation while creating conditions for sustainable tourism. On the other hand, it underlined that scientific and educational content had to be present parallel to the preservation of the geosites. However, Nuh et al. (2024) describe geopark tourism as those tourism destinations attracting visitors interested in the aesthetics of an area, touting major roles in raising awareness and appreciation of both geological and cultural heritage that it has greater implications for regional economic growth and cultural appreciation. According to Özgeriş and Karahan (2021), geopark tourism is in harmony with the principles of geotourism not only by helping in the protection of the natural environment and cultural heritage but also through the generation of employment and alleviation of poverty due to tourism incomes. Further, Skibiński et al. (2021) consider that geopark tourism is knowledge-based tourism which integrates interdisciplinary tourism, conservation, and natural heritage interpretation while engaging the public in sustainable tourism practices. Furthermore, global organizations like the UNESCO Global Geopark Network also take part in the management of geopark development so that these parks would act not only as tourist attractions but also as educational and scientific sites (Suhud. Allan, & Gaffar. 2023;Suhud, Allan, & Wong, 2025). Tourism of geoparks involves all kinds of natural geological features, including mountains, waterfalls, caves, and fossils, which are an important component of sustainable destination management. In view of this, when geoparks are increasingly recognized as an economic and environmental jewel in the future, research should focus on how to strike a balance between conservation and commercialization, how to optimally involve a local community by increasing

its visibility and international appeal through digital marketing means for visits with sustainability. Additionally, visit intention to geoparks is influenced by various environmental, promotional, and psychological factors that shape tourists' decision-making processes. According to Megerle (2021), restrictions to travel and the rediscovery of local environments have resulted in increasing visitors to natural areas such as geoparks for recreation activities including hiking and cycling. But this also leads to environmental negative impacts such as improper waste disposal and overcrowding, which may challenge the sustainability of any sensitive geological site. In the same way, Moreira et al. (2021) point out that interpretation concerning education, different tourism activities, effective promotion, and community involvement play an important role in motivating the intention of tourists to visit geoparks. Thus, these factors increase involvement in the experience, enhancing both appreciation for geological heritage and visitor engagement. Other important factors that may determine visit intention are awareness of environmental sustainability. The findings of Patwary et al. (2022) indicate that the environmental knowledge of tourists is highly influencing their intention to choose environmentally friendly accommodations. This is because the literature evidence that with increased awareness, people's intention to use certain brands, products, or services will increase, and tourism is not an exception. In the same direction, the findings of Flavián et al. (2022) point to awareness as a key driver for the acceptance of new services; hence, increasing tourists' awareness of geoparks will enhance their likelihood of visiting such geoparks. In addition, the relevant components of geopark visit intention include the reputation, personality, and trust of the destination. For example, Suhud, et al. (2023) observe that destination reputation and identity help create brand perception in tourists for forming expectations and preferences for visiting a destination, whereas destination personality and trust are the key means toward ensuring that confidence is reached at a higher level. These are psychological drivers that will eventually lead to emotional and cognitive connections, thus increasing visitor intentions in visiting geoparks. Besides, according to Ihzaturrahma and Kusumawati (2021), brand awareness can affect the purchase intention of something, which can be connected with tourism, meaning that tourists will more likely visit the well-known and reputable geopark. Various aspects have been considered while investigating the factors influencing tourists' visit intention to

geoparks in relation to sustainable tourism, environmental awareness, and destination attractiveness. Indeed, several studies have examined the influence of destination image, trust, accessibility, and efforts toward environmental conservation on motivational factors among tourists visiting geoparks. For example, earlier studies have identified destination reputation and awareness as crucial for building visitor perceptions and decision-making. Moreover, research has been done to comprehend how education through interpretation, promotional efforts, and local community involvement develop the visitors' response of interest and appreciation for the geoparks. While the geopark tourism literature is increasing, only a limited number of studies have been conducted investigating destination personality, reputation, and preference as predictors of visit intention. While destination reputation has been recognized as one of the most important trust and value drivers in tourism destinations, its effect on visit intention has still been somewhat under investigated in the context of geoparks. In addition, although destination personality-that is, the unique and human-like traits attributed to the destinations-has been vastly researched in branding and marketing research, its impact on visit intention to geoparks has not been widely examined. While destination preference refers to the tourists' attitude in choosing one destination over another, because of personal factors that represent a motivational force to visit there due to its perceived value, destination preference has seldom been examined as an antecedent for visit intention. Considering these, the current study discusses how development of destination personality and reputation determines or influences the visit intention of Ijen Geopark tourists and helps in enriching the body of knowledge related to geopark tourism studies by providing some messages relevant for formulating an effective marketing strategy of destinations and sustainable tourism management. Ijen Geopark is one of the most distinctive and ecologically important tourism areas in the world, where geological, biological, and cultural diversity blends with sustainable tourism development. This geopark is further characterized by beautiful natural landscapes comprising mountains, forests, and volcanic craters, identified as main attractions for eco-tourism and educational tourism combined (Siddiq et al., 2024). **It has one of the most iconic features** Kawah Ijen, which hosts the very rare Blue Fire phenomenon, draws both domestic and international tourists (Siddiq et al., 2023). Erek-Erek Geoforest is also one of the main

avitourism hotspots in Indonesia, where at least 57 species of birds have been documented, thus representing a very important site for ornithologists and bird conservationists (Sabila et al., 2024). This geopark is also important for the preservation of cultural heritage, as it contains several historical sites representing the geo- and socio-cultural evolution of the region. The selection of Ijen Geopark as the focus of this study is based on its rich tourism potential and strategic importance in sustainable tourism development. Recognized by UNESCO as a geopark, it offers a balanced combination of conservation, community engagement, and economic development (Mastika et al., 2023). In the case of Bali, tourism models are being put in place under the pentahelix approach, whereby government, businesses, local communities, academia, and media join together to make sure that there is an integrated and inclusive tourism management strategy (Afandi et al., 2024). Besides, Ijen Geopark could be one of the best-case studies because there has been a good interaction between the preservation of natural conservation with growing tourism demand, which also offers opportunities and challenges to reach sustainable tourism (Khoiron, Rokhmah, & Istiaji, 2022). The efforts are still continuously improving infrastructures, boosting digital marketing, or the involvement of local; Ijen geopark provides an example which represents an integrated concept of responsible tourism as such, resulting in high relevance/ value for additional research (2021).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Destination Personality

Destination personality refers to the unique features of a destination in terms of psychological and human-like characteristics that distinguish it from other destinations. Ervina and Octaviany (2022) define destination personality as a psychological expression of the image of the destination in the minds of tourists that shapes their emotional attachment, intentions to visit, and recommendation of the destination to others. On the other hand, Chen et al. (2024) explain that the personality traits of a destination include aspects like competence, excitement, sophistication, and ruggedness, all of which constitute elements of the physical environment, social responsibility, and the interaction with natives, which effectively determine the consequences on tourist flows and behaviours to visit the destination in the future and willing to pay the price for services offered. Besides the psychological and emotional dimensions, destination personality is closely related to cultural attributes.

Ismail et al. (2023) emphasize that the cultural uniqueness of a destination adds to its perceived personality and, therefore, affects its appeal and positioning in the minds of tourists. Further, Kovaćrić and Šagovnović (2023) explain destination personality as a set of human-like characteristics ascribed to a tourism destination, which influences the emotional reactions and overall satisfaction for tourists. Further expounding on this, Kovaćić et al. (2020) draw an analogy with brand personality in marketing, where destinations create their unique identities to help in the creation of connectivity, trust, and loyalty among visitors. This goes in agreement with Kovaćić et al. (2022), who identify that the personality of the destination has always got to play a vital role in distinguishing one destination from another and hence is an indispensable part of any destination branding and marketing policies.

2.1.1. Destination Personality and Destination Preference

Although the connection of destination personality and destination preference has only recently come into the focus of research (Suhud et al., 2024), few studies tried to examine its influences on the tourists' decision-making. Various studies note that destination personality forms visitors' preferences by informing their perception of the general character of the destination, the emotional appeal, and personal values. Zhang et al. (2022) have pointed out that with high degrees of personality traits, such as sincerity, excitement, and hospitality, a destination would exert a positive influence on tourist preference and behavioural intention; hence, the higher the perceived personality of a destination, the more it would attract and retain visitors. Besides, self-congruity between a destination's personality and tourists' self-concept reinforces destination preference because people like to visit places that reflect their traits and desired self. Beyond self-congruity, personality traits of tourists may also shape variation in destination preferences. For an example, results from Kovaćić et al. (2020) found that openness for experience is linked to a passion for passive touristic activities, while people with extroverted personalities tend to like company tours in general. Similarly, Fanea-Ivanovici et al. (2023) demonstrate, based on the Big Five Traits Personality model, that highly open tourists have a greater probability to explore new destinations, while highly neurotic individuals might be less adventurous and more risk-averse. The findings thus suggest that destination preference is influenced by the perceived personality of the tourist destination but also by the

psychological traits of the tourists themselves. In addition, destination personality influences the strategies of destination marketing as it shapes tourists' perceptions and emotional connections. According to Šagovnović and Kovaćić (2021), those destinations that appear sophisticated or exciting are most likely to create repeat visits and positive recommendations through word of mouth. Further, Halkiopoulos et al. (2021) postulate that personality of the destination influences tourists' motivational processes and decision-making hence influencing how they seek information and assess various travel destinations. This goes hand in hand with Fanea-Ivanovici et al. (2023), **who established that destination personality influences the way in which travellers interact with electronic word-of-mouth-e-WOM** extroverts share more experiences and recommend destinations online.

2.1.2. Destination Personality and Destination Trust

Although it plays a crucial role in shaping tourist perceptions and behavior, limited research has explored the relationship between destination personality and destination trust. Few studies have examined the influence of brand personality on consumer trust. Their findings suggest that a well-defined and positive personality reinforces the dimensions of credibility and loyalty. Adha and Utami (2021) and Ahmad and Thyagaraj (2015) have reported that brand personality has a direct positive effect on brand trust, whereby the attributes of reliability and sincerity create consumer confidence and long-term brand relationships. Elsewhere, Borzooei and Asgari (2013) have mentioned that personality traits such as honesty, competence, and excitement help in building brand trust, thus reinforcing that building trust through personality is important in marketing strategy. In tourism, research on the impact of destination personality on trust is still in its early stages, and findings remain limited. Among the few direct investigations of this relationship, Chen and Phou (2013) confirmed that destination personality exerts both direct and indirect influences on destination trust, with tourists being more likely to trust destinations that possess well-defined and positive personality traits. In this respect, Bekk et al. (2016) state that the higher the congruence between tourists' personal characteristics and the personality of a destination, the higher levels of satisfaction and trust, which, in turn, have an impact on recommendation behaviour and revisit intentions. Similarly, the work of Azam et al. (2013), within the same framework, investigated the role of

personality traits in the process of forming trust in digital environments using the Big Five personality framework and established openness and agreeableness as significant factors in trust development.

2.1.3. Destination Personality and Destination Reputation

Destination personality plays an important role in developing perceptions, emotional engagement, and behavioural intentions among tourists in terms of visit intention and destination loyalty. In this line, Lam and Ryan (2020) identify that where the destination personality is strongly positive, the resultant attitudes by visitors to the destination ensure that they will be more likely to visit or revisit that destination. In other words, tourists who perceive a destination as warm and welcoming tend to have a higher travel intention, which confirms that destination personality is one of the factors contributing to visitor loyalty and brand positioning. Likewise, Suryaningsih et al. (2020) found that destination personality positively influences behavioural intention, especially in self-image congruity, which implies that the higher the congruity between tourists' self-perception and the personality of the destination, the higher their visit intention. Beyond personality traits, the interaction among destination personality, motivation, and memorable experiences of tourism become yet another critical antecedent of visit intention. Tešin et al. (2023) indicate that tourists who are open to new experiences and have engaging travel motivations are more likely to create more memorable experiences, which in turn strengthens their intention to revisit and recommend the Destination. Furthermore, Yang et al. (2020) confirm that destination personality indirectly influences visit intention through self-congruity. According to the authors, positive emotional experiences such as joy and excitement also may act as mediators in this relationship between personality perceptions and revisit intention. Zhang et al. (2022) used destination personality to reiterate the importance of destination branding and competitiveness, where strong personality traits of sincerity, excitement, and hospitality reinforce destination image and self-congruity to act as moderators of the relationship between personality and behavioural intention. This is in concert with the belief that those tourists who experience a sense of identity with the personality of a destination will be more emotionally attached to the place and thus lead to higher revisit intentions and positive word-of-mouth recommendations.

2.2. Destination Preference

Destination preference is tourists' choices or preference for destination places to travel, based on influential factors. Osti and Nava (2020) explain that destination preference involves tourists choosing specific types of destinations such as beaches, mountains, or cultural cities; these choices are likely to shift in the face of perceived health risks, particularly in the era of the COVID-19 health crisis. Li et al. (2021) also indicate that the aspect of safety during and after the pandemic made people strongly interested in tour destination choice preference, which had the tourist flow to destinations perceived as safe while countries and places viewed to have the highest cases of virus attack were avoided. Such tourists showed preference for tours domestically or proximal to their areas on the ground of prioritizing local tourism attractions on health and safety grounds. The formation of destination preferences is influenced not only by health-related factors but also by environmental and situational ones. For example, Wang et al. (2020) refer to cases where unfavourable weather conditions, such as fog, influence tourist preferences by shifting interest from nature and cultural attractions to recreational sites, which leads to visitor number fluctuations in different types of destinations. Liao and Chuang (2020) further present an analysis of the preferences of tourists from Taiwan in selecting tour packages to Japan, outlining a number of significant choice attributes like attractions, accommodation, trip length, price, food, transportation, and seasonal differences. Destination preference also depends on other than general tourist behaviour, which is cultural and religious influences. Hassani and Moghavvemi (2020) discussed destination preferences related to Muslim tourists, where they stated that the choices of destination are dictated by different types of motivation, namely generic travel motivation, Islamic motivational factors, and non-Islamic motivational factors. The study also points out how religiosity and motivations of travel vary among the Muslim travellers from diverse backgrounds, such as Iranian and Malaysian students. Moreover, Alrasheed et al. (2020) identify a set of determinants for destination preference, which include preferred weather conditions, desired attractions, travel dates, accommodation budget, and other individual factors that may affect the decision to select travel destinations.

2.2.1. Destination Preference and Destination Visit Intention

Meanwhile, the relationship between destination preference and visit intention remains a less explored

area in tourism studies. However, it is supported in literature from various contexts that preference is an essential factor toward shaping behavioural intentions, including visit intention. Indeed, Arisman et al. (2024) established that tourist preference significantly influences revisit intention; whenever travellers develop a great deal of preference for a destination, they are most likely to revisit it. Correspondingly, Dinda and Ghosh (2021) found that preference for an urban park correlates positively with visit intention, indicating that aesthetic and psychic benefits drive people to visit Greenspaces. These findings are supported by Gómez-Rico et al. (2023) reporting that brand preference significantly influences tourists' intentions of visiting wineries; hence, the role of preference in shaping tourism-related decision-making. Although the literature on destination preference and visit intention is scant in the context of tourism, evidence from other domains supports such a linkage between preference and intention. Anaya-Sánchez et al. (2020) found that website design preference influences consumers' purchase intentions in social commerce, showing usability and aesthetic appeal are drivers of behavioural intentions. Moreover, Grüner and Krüger (2021) added that an individual preference for vaccination leads to an intention to become vaccinated, showing personal predispositions in order to create impacts on decision making in various domains. As Henkel and Toporowski (2021) did not find a direct relationship between preference and visit intention in respect to pop-up stores, related literature suggests that destination preference is likely to be an important factor impacting tourists' decision to visit a destination. Such implications mean that there is a call for additional research to enable further insights as to how, from the geopark tourism setting, destination preference could lead to an intention to visit, especially due to sustainable tourism.

2.3. Destination Trust

Destination trust refers to tourists' beliefs in the ability, integrity, and credibility of a destination that influence them to decide whether to go and their actions after visiting a destination. Ability, goodwill, and credibility have been mentioned in several studies as antecedents for destination trust, such as Dewi and Pratomo (2023) and Han et al. (2022). A destination that fulfils its promise, provides good services, is safe, and ensures satisfaction for tourists sustains a high level of credibility among visitors. Put differently, Anggraeni and Astini (2020) developed that trust relied on Honesty, benevolence, and the role of public institutions, while Hefny (2021)

discussed the local community as also influencing that trust, through showing hospitality and service quality to tourists. In addition to building initial visit intentions, destination trust is vital in ensuring visitor loyalty and repeat visits. Indeed, studies have demonstrated that a destination into which tourists have trust is one they could visit again and recommend to other people (Han et al., 2022; Osadchuk et al., 2021). Moreover, trust acts as a moderating factor to reduce perceived risks to travel, especially in uncertain situations, such as health crises or geopolitical instability (Elbaz et al., 2023). In addition, destination trust is fundamental to the long-term sustainability of a tourism destination since it enhances credibility and transparency of marketing while strengthening stakeholder relationships. Given the strong power of destination trust in driving visit intention, satisfaction, and destination loyalty, its interaction with digital reputation, service innovation, and sustainability efforts needs further investigation in order to better implement tourism marketing strategies.

2.3.1. Destination Trust and Destination Visit Intention

Destination trust is significant both at the initial stage of travel decisions and in revisit behaviour in forming tourists' visit intentions. Indeed, several studies confirm that a higher trust in a destination leads to a greater likelihood of visitation. Al-Bourini et al. (2021) established that tourists are confident in their intention to visit tourism centres, which means trust creates a sense of security and dependability in a travel destination. Elbaz et al. (2023) further underlined the fact that trust in a destination has a positive effect on visit intention, more so in the context of medical tourism, because of its health value. Han et al. (2022) further reinforced that trust is indeed an important aspect in sustaining long-term relationships between tourists and destinations where trust positively affects visitor loyalty and continuity in destination engagement. Apart from the intention to visit for the first time in life, revisit intentions are also influenced by trusting a destination. Hassan and Soliman (2021), and Poon and Koay (2021) all proved that with a higher level of trust there will be a higher likelihood of going back to the destination for tourists. In their work, the authors have identified that trust does not only promote a first visit but also repeat tourism. More recently, Jebbouri et al. (2022) have meta-analysed the literature and systematically discussed evidence supporting the fact that trust plays an important mediating role in the relationship between

destination image and behavioural intentions. The above findings broaden the ideas rooted in tourism studies, wherein it has been stated that trust contributes to stronger emotional and cognitive bonds of travellers toward their destinations, leading to continued visitation and positive word-of-mouth recommendations. Based on these findings, destination marketers and tourism stakeholders should focus on building and maintaining trust in the destination through transparent communication, high-quality service, and strong strategies in destination management that will contribute to enhancing tourists' confidence and creating long-term visit intentions.

2.4. Destination Reputation

Destination reputation implies the perceived image and credibility of a tourism destination among visitors and stakeholders. It is shaped by various factors, such as cultural and historical attractions, accessibility, safety, available activities, quality of accommodations, and overall hospitality (Arumugam et al., 2023). A good reputation enhances the attractiveness of a destination, visitor loyalty, and competitive position within the tourism industry. Other factors contributing to the destination's reputation include trust, credibility, community involvement, and sustainable development initiatives. Traditional and digital information sources anchor destination reputation formation. According to Azinuddin et al. (2022), word-of-mouth, digital media, print, and broadcast media tend to be instrumental in the creation of perceptions among the general public toward a destination. Besides, Baber and Baber (2023) pay special attention to how social media manages and monitors a destination's online reputation, while digital platforms become important factors to affect tourists' decision-making. The paper by Gorji et al. (2023) further elaborates that sanctions, perceived risks, and the preconceived perceptions of the travellers themselves affect destination reputation, hence the intention of tourists to visit a destination. A good reputation not only attracts first-time visitors but also encourages repeat visits and positive recommendations, which contribute to the sustained popularity of a destination. Whilst, Guo et al. (2024) define destination reputation as a combination of goodwill and trust that results from past experiences in tourism, together with all the performances accrued. The organizational culture, quality of service, and marketing practices will therefore contribute to reinforcing the destination image. Good reputation performance can thus directly affect the competitiveness of places of destination, their visit intention, and loyalty from tourists. In this vein, Hassan and Soliman (2021) mention that a good destination reputation is surely going to build tourists' trust, hence affecting not only the visit intentions but also revisit ones. Positive experiences, travellers' reviews, destination promotion, and corporate social responsibility efforts further contribute to how a destination is perceived by potential tourists.

2.4.1. Destination Reputation and Destination Trust

The relationship of destination reputation and destination trust is relatively an area not much explored in academic research. However, research into brand and corporate reputation provides effective parallels of the fact that reputation essentially makes a lot of difference where trust is concerned. Reputation critically plays a role in forming consumer perceptions, building trust, and ensuring long-term loyalty. This review synthesizes key findings from the numerous studies to understand the broader implications of reputation on trust. Broad (2020) emphasizes transparency's effect on reputation, something that, to Square Roots, is a form of marketing strategy used to determine levels of confidence that its products boast over those offered by industrial food manufacturers. The research proposal suggests that consumers would have the highest level of trust in any products and notions that come forth from firms, once corporate reputation is integrated with transparency. Therefore, wherever some form of reputation exists and given transparency and ethical considerations, one would realize high levels of trusted behaviour, and this would indeed be the case in tourism destinations. On one side, the work of Hayran and Ceylan (2023) suggests that in the case of a brand crisis or social media blunders, reputation is one of the decisive elements in gaining consumer trust. The work identifies good reputation as an asset that helps mitigate the impacts of controversies and regain consumer confidence. This might mean that a positive reputation at the destination site should act like a protecting mechanism against any happening that results because of a crisis and therefore build tourists' trust in the destination site. Tong et al. (2022) mentioned that reputation is one of the precursors in determining brand trust and can most affect consumer perceptions of competence, integrity, and goodwill. The findings revealed that a good reputation decreases perceived risks and ultimately boosts brand loyalty and purchase intention. In terms

of tourism, this generally implies that reputably portrayed destinations will be trusted more by visitors, which leads to repeat visits and favourable word-of-mouth marketing. This argument is furthered by Joshi and Yadav (2018), who have discussed the role of parent brand reputation in shaping the consumer trust. They underline that consumers who are not known about a new brand will probably use the parent company's reputation as a signal of trust. Translated in the tourism context, this would mean that destinations associated with well-reputed tourism organizations or governments can leverage the reputation of the latter to win greater trust from visitors, even when the destination itself is not particularly known as a place for either travel or tourism. Reputation also plays a vital role in the financial sector, as Basaran-Brooks (2022) shows how bank reputation influences public trust and to what extent. Loss of consumer trust might occur not only about the bank itself but also regarding the whole functioning of financial systems due to improper compliance with anti-money laundering regulations. This underscores a more general dimension of reputation for destinations beyond individuals - for example, where there is poor media coverage, issues with safety, or questionable business practices, then these destinations may be unlikely to gain visitors' trust. For instance, Klein and Cohn (2022) discuss the law and finance issues of trust, especially the publicity rights of a tax aspect. This research study has no relevance to tourism, but it can be inferred that there is a great connection between reputation and governance structures to the extent that in tourism, it would mean regulations and proper tourism ethics as well as sustainable tourism, which contributes to improving a destination's reputation and hence maintaining visitor trust for the long-term.

2.4.2. Destination Reputation and Destination Visit Intention

It proves that destination reputation plays a critical role in visit intention among tourists, shaping both decision-making and whether the destination will be revisited. Several studies can be found identifying significant links between reputation and intention across diverse contexts. In the study conducted by Akbari et al. (2021), it is established that there is a significant influence of reputation on revisit intentions, which also proves that with established good reputation, it is possible to gain customer loyalty even in the hotel business. In the same light, Chang (2015) indicated that positive reputation does not only influence direct

consumption decisions but also increases customers' chances to recommend travel agencies' services. These findings support the thought that a fine destination reputation may not only attract first-time visitors but also influence repeat visits and word-of-mouth recommendations, further strengthening its market position. Beyond tourism, there is support for reputation's role in influencing behavioural intentions from research across industries. The findings indicated that corporate reputation influences customers' trust and identification, and the latter, in turn, significantly affects purchase intention and pays premium prices. In this line, Foroudi et al. (2020) have noted that the reputation of every university influences students to decide whether or not to join the institution, which therefore suggests that perceived reputation has a significant impact on different sectors with regard to engagement. García-Jurado et al. (2021) also highlighted that online reputation affects the credibility of reviewers and thus the value greater or lesser-of their recommendations, reinforcing the importance of reputation in decision-making processes. Though Dafoe et al. (2014) **discussed reputation in the context of political decision-making and conflicts, the underlying conceptual core remains the** same reputation influences motivation and strategic choices. Translated into the tourism perspective, a good destination reputation engenders trust and word-of-mouth, which then creates a greater intention to visit. Since there is a very established relationship between reputation and intention, future studies should examine the interaction of destination reputation with other drivers like trust, experience, and digital influence in the context of tourist behaviour, specifically geopark tourism.

Figure 1 presents the theoretical framework of the interrelationships between destination personality, trust, reputation, preference, and visit intention. The model hypothesizes that destination personality significantly influences the destination preference (H1), trust (H2), and reputation (H3), meaning a tourist's perception of the characteristics of a destination shapes the level of trust and preference for visiting a place and its overall reputation. Besides, destination reputation is supposed to cultivate trust in the destination - thus, H6 - and is to have a direct relationship to visit intention, H7, thereby proving the reputation to be important in keeping standing in the tourism industry.
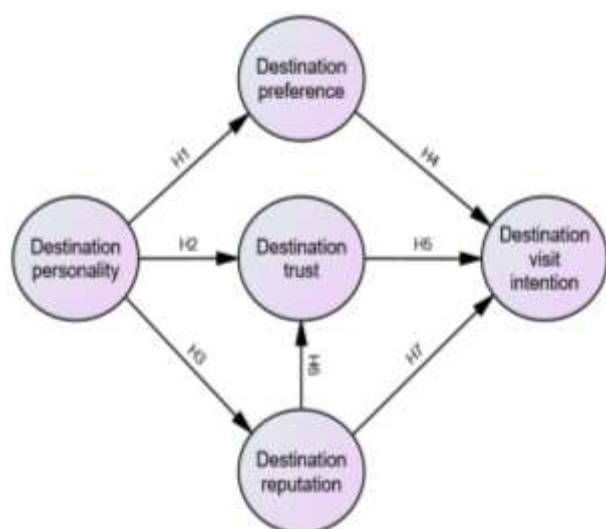
Figure 1: The Theoretical Framework.

3. METHODS

3.1. Measures

3.1.1. Data Analysis Methods

Analysis Model of Quantitative data was used for testing the feasibility and validity and robustness-reliability test both for the measurement and the structural model with four steps in testing. Namely, with step one, EFA will be analysed to test its validity using the SPSS 29 version that indicators considered as valid whose loading factor values reach 0.4> and above. Second, Cronbach's alpha; a construct is termed reliable in cases where the given alpha score is 0.7 and above. Similarly, the minimum threshold for average variance extracted could be taken as well above 0.5 or greater AVE value ensuring that it falls above the prescribed threshold value with a minimum specification of 0.5 or larger. Lastly, hypothesis testing uses the Structural Equation Model (SEM) in AMOS version 29, where a hypothesis is accepted when the CR value is greater than or equal to 1.96. These analytical techniques permit **a deep analysis of the relationships among all variables** destination personality, trust, reputation, preference, and visit intention. In the model fit, both EFA and SEM should satisfy the criteria as identified in Table 1 below. The cutoff criteria of a well-fitted model are that the probability value lies within the range of 0.05 to 1.00 as shown by Schermelleh-Engel et al., 2003. $X^2/DF \leq 2.00$ (Tabachnick et al., 2007), which implies that the model is a good fit to the data. Additionally, the CFI should also be brought to a minimum of 0.95 or greater, which assuredly reflects that the model will explain such relationships observed within the data analyses. Finally, the RMSEA should be below a

minimum of 0.05, expressing that the model has perceptively fitted well and with very little error. These tight statistical procedures give a guarantee for the study's reliability regarding providing robust insights on tourists' behaviour and the strategies of destination marketing in the Ijen Geopark area.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Participants

Table 1: Profile of Participants.

Profile		Frequency	Percent
Sex	Male	107	48.2
	Female	115	51.8
	Total	222	100.0
Level of education has been completed	Less than high school	42	18.9
	Diploma	53	23.9
	Undergraduate	55	24.8
	High school	72	32.4
Marital status	Unmarried	177	79.7
	Separated/divorced	1	0.5
	Married	44	19.8
Occupational status	Employed	96	43.2
	Unemployed	107	48.2
	Self-employed	18	8.1
	Retired	1	0.5
Group of age	17-20	80	36.0
	21-24	53	23.9
	25-29	59	26.6
	30-34	23	10.4
	35-39	7	3.2
Experience visiting Ijen Geopark	No	79	35.6
	Yes	143	64.4

The sample comprised 222 respondents, with a nearly equal distribution of males (48.2%, 107 participants) and females (51.8%, 115 participants). In terms of education, the majority of participants had completed high school (32.4%), followed by those with an undergraduate degree (24.8%), a diploma (23.9%), and those with education below the high school level (18.9%).

The marital status unmarried 79.7%, followed by married participants which are 19.8%, and only separated/divorced status constitutes 0.5%. Occupational status amongst the respondents comprises 48.2% unemployed, 43.2% employed, 8.1 % self-employed, and 0.5% retired. The participants in the study had been grouped into different age groups wherein 36.0% were within the age bracket of 17 to 20 years, followed by 26.6% of the participants between the age of 25-29 years, 23.9% between the age bracket of 21-24 years, 10.4% between 30-34 years, and the least number of participants fell in the group of 35-39 years of age, accounting for 3.2%. The respondents' experience regarding their visits to Ijen

Geopark indicated that 64.4% had visited the geopark, while 35.6% had never visited it. These demographic characteristics show the distribution of the sample used in this study, which was dominated by young and unmarried people, with most respondents not working, representing probably the visitor profile of Ijen Geopark (Table 1).

4.2. Validity, AVE, and Reliability Tests

Table 2: Results of Validity, AVE, and Reliability Tests.

	Variables and Indicators	Factor Loadings	AVE	Cronbach's Alpha
	Destination Personality		0.584	0.936
Dp3	Ijen Geopark is smart.	0.855		
Dp2	Geopark Ijen is honest.	0.850		
Dp6	Geopark Ijen is exciting.	0.817		
Dp9	Geopark Ijen is passionate.	0.738		
Dp12	Geopark Ijen is charming.	0.734		
Dp4	Geopark Ijen is successful.	0.715		
Dp8	Geopark Ijen is authentic.	0.695		
Dp7	Geopark Ijen is brave.	0.679		
Dp10	Geopark Ijen is friendly.	0.654		
Dp5	Geopark Ijen is good	0.623		
Dp11	Geopark Ijen is family-oriented.	0.587		
Dp1	Geopark Ijen is reliable.	0.523		
	Destination Visit Intention		0.526	0.842
Dv9	I can tell my friends about traveling to Ijen Geopark with confidence.	0.769		
Dv8	I want to experience traveling to Ijen Geopark as often as possible.	0.719		
Dv3	If everything is as I expected, I will plan to travel to Ijen Geopark.	0.713		
Dv5	I really want to visit Ijen Geopark.	0.642		
Dv6	I am very interested in traveling to Ijen Geopark.	0.623		
Dv2	I prefer visiting Ijen Geopark than other destinations.	0.512		
Dv1	I hope that I will visit Ijen Geopark in the future.	0.476		
	Destination Trust		0.751	0.917
Dt4	I believe there are clear guidelines for services at Ijen Geopark.	-0.888		
Dt2	I hope the service facilities at Ijen Geopark will be humane.	-0.859		
Dt1	I hope the management of Ijen Geopark will actively offer assistance when I am in trouble.	-0.829		
Dt3	I believe that the management of Ijen Geopark will try to understand my needs.	-0.814		
Dt5	I believe there are clear service management standards at Ijen Geopark.	-0.799		
	Destination Preference (1)		0.922	0.824
Dpr4	I intend to visit destinations other than Ijen Geopark in the near future.	0.891		
Dpr3	I am more interested in visiting other destinations besides Ijen.	0.890		
	Destination Preference (2)		0.876	0.696
Dpr2	Geopark Ijen is more interesting than other destinations.	0.810		
Dpr1	Geopark Ijen is my first choice.	0.679		
	Destination Reputation		0.911	0.793
Dr4	People speak very well about Ijen Geopark.	-0.754		
Dr1	Ijen Geopark has a very good reputation.	-0.646		

As depicted in Table 2, the validity, AVE, and reliability tests are the indications of the strength of the measurement model to describe the destination personality, trust, reputation, preference, and visit intention of Ijen Geopark. The factor loadings of most indicators exceed the 0.50 threshold, showing satisfactory individual item reliability. The AVE for all the constructs is greater than 0.50, showing that there is sufficient convergent validity, thus indicating that the indicators are representative of their respective latent variables. Among these, the AVE of destination personality is very high, at 0.854, indicating that this construct is well-defined by its indicators. The other constructs, namely destination trust, destination reputation, and destination preference, also meet the validity criteria with AVE values greater than 0.50. As it is observed, the Cronbach's Alpha for all constructs is above 0.70, thus showing strong internal consistency and reliability. For instance, destination personality has a

Cronbach's Alpha of 0.936, showing excellent reliability, while for destination trust, this is 0.917, destination preference is 0.876 and 0.922, and destination reputation is 0.911, thus all highly reliable. In the case of the destination visit intention construct, both AVE is a bit lower at 0.626 and Cronbach's Alpha is 0.842, yet it also meets the acceptable standards of reliability. During the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), the items originally designed to measure Destination Preference did not load uniformly onto a single factor. Instead, they split into two distinct but related sub-dimensions, which were retained and labelled Destination Preference (1) and Destination Preference (2) to reflect their differing orientations. The resultant outcomes from all the above confirm that the measurement model is valid and reliable and hence constructs used in this study are appropriate to capture the perceptions of tourists and their behavioural intentions to visit Ijen Geopark. These findings support the robustness of the model and provide confidence in applying it further for analysis and decision-making in tourism research.

4.3. Hypotheses Tests

Several keys fit indices showed that the structural model in Figure 2 is a good fit. The probability value of 0.057 means that the model is not significantly different from the observed data, thus acceptable. The CMIN/DF value of 1.236 falls within the recommended range ≤ 3, indicating a well-fitting model with a balanced complexity-to-fit ratio. With a CFI of 0.986, which is above the conventional threshold of 0.95, this further signals a good model fit. Furthermore, with a value of 0.033, the RMSEA falls short of the 0.05 criterion, thus indicating that the model fits the data well with relatively minimal error. In general, these fit indices support the view that the proposed model is a good representation of the relationships among destination personality, trust, reputation, preference, and visit intention.
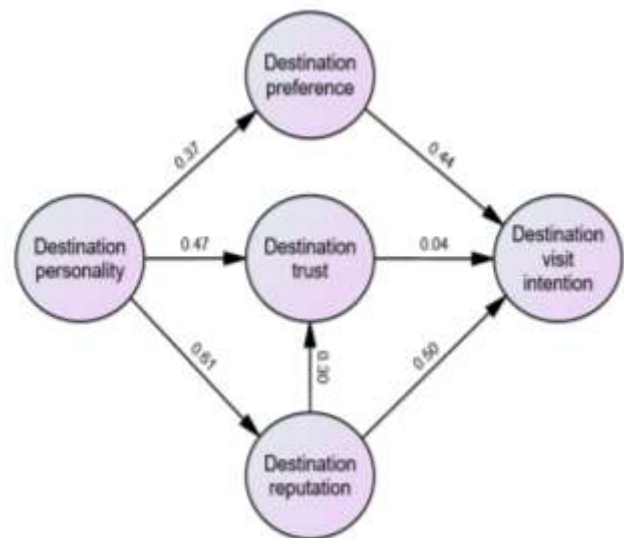

Figure 2: Structural Model of the Hypotheses Tests.

Results of hypothesis testing in Table 3 show that destination personality, reputation, trust, preference, and visit intention are significantly related. The results confirm that destination personality significantly influences destination preference, H1: C.R. = 3.931, p < 0.001, destination trust, H2: C.R. = 5.264, p < 0.001, and destination reputation, H3: C.R. = 6.614, p < 0.001. This means that the personality of a destination, as perceived by tourists, is crucial in shaping their preferences, trust, and overall perception of reputation. Besides, destination preference has a significantly positive influence on visit intention (H4: C.R. = 5.012, p < 0.001), which shows that the higher the preference of tourists for Ijen Geopark, the more they will visit the area. Similarly, destination reputation positively influences both destination trust (H6: C.R. = 3.577, p < 0.001) and visit intention (H7: C.R. = 5.202, p < 0.001), reinforcing the concept that the better the reputation, the greater the confidence and encouragement of tourists to visit. Whereas, surprisingly, destination trust does not affect visit intention significantly: H5: C.R. = 0.408, p = 0.684, rejected. This would thus imply that though trust is an important constituent in building confidence about the destination, it might not be a direct driver of visit intention. Reputation and preference seem to be stronger drive factors for visit intention. In sum, findings suggest that destination personality and reputation make an impact on tourist behaviour, with reputation contributing a crucial role in raising visit intention. Such findings provide useful insights into building a strong destination image, enhancement of reputation, and tourist experience that will drive a greater number of visits to Ijen Geopark by destination marketers and tourism

planners.

Table 3: Results of the Hypotheses Tests.

Hypotheses	Paths	C.R.	P	Results
H1	Destination personality > Destination preference	3.931	***	Accepted
H2	Destination personality > Destination trust	5.264	***	Accepted
H3	Destination personality > Destination reputation	6.614	***	Accepted
H4	Destination preference > Destination visit intention	5.012	***	Accepted
H5	Destination trust > Destination visit intention	0.408	0.684	Rejected
H6	Destination reputation > Destination trust	3.577	***	Accepted
H7	Destination reputation > Destination visit intention	5.202	***	Accepted

5. DISCUSSION

Therefore, the acceptance of H1, which is destination personality significantly influences the destination preference suggests that such distinctive destination personality would indeed have greater effects on influencing tourists' preference towards Geopark Ijen. It further reinforces Zhang et al. (2022) with high destination personality that determines increasing emotional attachment by visitors, since a person will enjoy going or repeating his or her visits to the place that they love. In line, Fanea-Ivanovici et al. (2023) also expressed the fact that personality traits are influential in travel choices, in which destinations perceived as adventurous, culturally rich, or serene attract tourists with matching personalities. Sagovnović and Kovaćić (2021) emphasize that destination personality strengthens differentiation and loyalty, raising appeal. Thus, Geopark Ijen, with its geological uniqueness, sustainability focus, and richness in culture, shapes a strong destination personality that ultimately drives tourist preference and visit intention.

The acceptance of H2, from Destination Personality → Destination Trust in regard to Geopark Ijen, proved a destination personality featuring uniqueness that may induce trust among tourists when visiting a location, enabling confidence in their decisions made. This was further corroborated by the concept put forward by Adha and Utami (2021) and Ahmad and Thyagaraj (2015), focusing on how strong brand personality features help build familiarity and hence strengthen trust. This is attested to in a similar kind of research by Borzooei and Asgari (2013), who observe that traits like honesty, competence, and excitement destination personality are positively related to tourists' trust levels. As for Geopark Ijen, the trait it has shaped-from natural beauty and environmental conservation to cultural significance-reinforced this image of a trustworthy geopark regarding tourist confidence and thereby assured safety or reliability.

H3 would be Destination Personality → Destination Reputation accepted in Geopark Ijen, indicating that a destination reputation is partly enabled through its very distinct personality. This again supports Lam and Ryan (2020), who had expressed the belief that a clearly defined destination personality enhances destination image and credibility, which, in turn, affects the perception of tourists. Similarly, Suryaningsih et al. (2020) explained that positive personality traits, such as excitement and sincerity, result in stability of reputation, which makes a place more attractive to visitors. More importantly, according to Tešin et al. (2023), a memorable tourism experience of the destination's personality leads to the development of its reputation via positive word-of-mouth and revisit intentions. It is expected that for Geopark Ijen, the typical geological feature, cultural heritage, and appeal of adventure will help develop a singular personality that enhances the destination's reputation, adding value to make the place more viable in sustainable tourism.

The acceptance of H4 (Destination Preference → Destination Visit Intention) in the context of Geopark Ijen confirms that tourists' preference for a destination significantly influences their intention to visit. This finding aligns with Arisman et al. (2024), who demonstrated that tourists' preference for a destination increases their likelihood of revisiting. Likewise, Dinda and Ghosh (2021) imply that strong preference toward certain tourism environments is such as to impact visit intentions where the level of preference impacts the visit frequency of urban park visitors. If preferences between tourist and destination have good alignment again then engagement results. Furthermore, Gómez-Rico et al. (2023) have found that preferences towards the brand result as a foremost determinant for visiting intentions since there would be larger rates of visiting as the preferable rate would be better. In the case of Geopark Ijen, unique natural features, geological significance, and adventure tourism appeal create a

strong preference among visitors, thus reinforcing their intention to visit. This supports strategic marketing efforts emphasizing tourists' preferences to boost visit intention.

The rejection of H5 (Destination Trust → Destination Visit Intention) in the context of Geopark Ijen suggests that trust in the destination does not directly lead to an increased intention to visit. This finding is contrary to previous studies such as Al-Bourini et al. (2021) and Elbaz et al. (2023), which found that destination trust significantly influences visit intention, especially in medical and heritage tourism. This research has, therefore, been able to indicate that perhaps trust may not be sufficient in realizing visit intention unless complemented by other factors such as destination reputation, preference, or emotional engagement. Destination trust may play a more passive role in the decision-making process, supporting the choice to visit but not actively driving the intention itself. Trust might be overshadowed by other considerations, such as promotional campaigns, social influences, or a tourist's past experiences. In this context, while trust remains a key element of the overall tourist experience, its direct influence on visit intention may be less pronounced than other factors. This evidence the requirement of a holistic marketing strategy that integrates trust with the experiential and emotional appeal of the service.

The acceptance of H6 Destination Reputation → Destination Trust implies that destination reputation has a significant impact on tourists' trust in a destination. There is strong empirical support of this linkage. This is on par with Broad (2020) when he held that corporate reputation, through transparency, had much to do with consumer trust. Similarly, Hayran and Ceylan (2023) pointed out that a good brand reputation diminishes negative crises and allows rebuilt trust to show that reputation has resilience in maintaining consumer confidence. In their study, Joshi and Yadav (2018) remarked that a consumer not aware of the brand highly relies on the good reputation of the company to derive trust from it. These findings imply that the good destination reputation increases tourists' confidence in the choices they make and reduces perceived risks and builds trust. That is another meaning of destination reputation, which determines whether a traveller decides to visit this place or not.

The acceptance of H7 Destination Reputation → Destination Visit Intention shows that destination reputation plays a very significant role in shaping the tourists' intention to visit the destination. Thus, this relationship finds empirical support. Other studies support this outcome in that a positive reputation of a destination increases tourists' perceived value and visit intentions. The more valuable a destination is perceived to be, the greater is the visitor's intention to visit it, while a high level of tourist value leads to higher satisfaction among tourists. In similar meaning, Chang (2015) underscored that the reputation of the destination affects potential visitors' emotional and cognitive evaluation of a destination and hence their intention to visit the place. Also, according to Foroudi et al. (2020), a good reputation can add value to a brand of a destination by leading to stronger visitors' behavioural intention. Therefore, H7 is supported, reinforcing that places with strong and positive reputation can attract more tourists, since it acts as one of the most relevant factors in gaining the credibility and reliability needed to form the decision processes of travellers.

6. CONCLUSION

This study was performed to examine the effects of destination personality, preference, trust, and reputation on visit intention by tourists to Ijen Geopark. The results, as revealed in the table, have highlighted some important points.

First, destination personality significantly influences the trust and reputation of destination preference, which simply means that tourists' perception about the character of a destination develops their trust in, preference for, and assessment of the reputation of the destination. Second, destination preference and reputation have been found to influence visit intention significantly positive, which therefore means that once tourists prefer Ijen Geopark as a destination for travel and perceive it as highly reputed, they will visit the park. While trust of a destination does not affect visit intention significantly, the fact that it does not drive tourists to visit suggests that even if it is considered important in other destination branding contexts. On the contrary, destination reputation affects destination trust and visit intention significantly; this again identifies the fact that good and positive reputation may enhance confidence to visit among tourists. Overall, the results of this study confirm that destination personality significantly influences the development of preference, trust, and reputation in destinations, while visit intention relies more on destination preference and reputation rather than on trusting the destination alone. These results bear meaningful implications for destination marketers and tourism stakeholders through the confirmation of the significance of building strong destination personality and maintaining good reputations for

accommodating visit intentions to the Ijen Geopark. In general, the basis of this research on destination branding and consumer behaviour theories focused remarkably on the importance of variables such as destination personality, reputation, trust, and preference as important constructs, which determined visit intention by tourists in Ijen Geopark. Destination personality refers to human-like personality qualities given to a place. In this respect, there are considerations that it is important for building tourist perceptions and preferences for destinations, building trust, and thereby enhancing the repute of a place. A clear definition of personality bears greater connotations for higher levels of preference and trust in its development and thereby improves the repute of that place. Other relevant factors influence destination reputation. Reputation is partly formed based on the experiences, word-of-mouth, and promotions of tourists, among other travelers. The results indicate that reputation in destination substantially influences destination trust as well as a visit intention, denoting that high reputation will surely raise the level of chances among tourists to make Ijen Geopark their destination, and similarly, favourable destination preference that leads to making them visit them. While rather surprisingly, destination trust has not been found to directly affect visit intention significantly, it can be inferred from this that even though trust is an important factor in the shaping of perceptions, it might not necessarily be the dominant one that may lead a tourist to decide whether or not to pay a visit to the destination. On the other hand, preference and reputation emerge as better predictors of the intention to visit a destination. It, therefore, implies that destination marketers and stakeholders need to focus on developing a character and personality for Ijen Geopark, aiming to enhance visitor preference through a greater intention in people. These findings provide significant managerial implications for stakeholders in tourism but more so in the promotion and management of Ijen Geopark. The results showed that destination personality, reputation, and preference are vital factors that significantly affect the tourists' visit intentions, while the destination trust did not show up as significant. Therefore, managers of the destination should foster the destination personality with uniqueness associated with Ijen Geopark through strong and distinctive messages, emphasizing its volcanic landscapes, blue flame, and rich biodiversity. By doing so, the destination personality of Ijen Geopark will show deeper emotional contact with potential visitors.

Furthermore, effective digital marketing, enhancing the visitor experience, and strategies inducing positive word-of-mouth will maintain a good reputation toward positioning Ijen Geopark as an eco-tourism destination of high class. Social media engagement, influencer partnerships, and sustainable tourism initiatives can further add to the reputation. In addition, facility improvement for visitors and access will also add value to destination preference and make tourists favour Ijen Geopark. The destination trust itself is not significant to visit intentions. However, in the longer term, and for destination credibility, safety sustainability and transparency do need to be maintained. On the other side, destination managers should shift away from merely building destination trust to utilizing reputation and preference as stronger drivers of visit intentions. Moreover, when it comes to such policies in sustainable tourism and conservation programs along with eco-tourism regulations that establish the destination ranking in the world, then the respective country's policymaker and the local authorities will have to support UNESCO, Environmental organizations, as well as with the local community. It can be inferred that by embedding branding strategies, digital marketing, improvement of the visitor experience, and sustainability policies, Ijen Geopark will further strengthen its competitive advantages in attracting ecotourists. This will be a guarantee of long-term success and the road to sustainability of Ijen Geopark as an eco-tourism destination of excellence. Despite these remarkable results on how the personality of a place, preference for visiting the place, trust in it, and its reputation make tourists willing or not to pay a visit to Ijen Geopark, some limitations of the research must be put right in investigations that will follow. The data in the survey are principally self-reported and could be vulnerable to social desirability bias and subjective perceptions, failing to express real behaviours of the tourists. Longitudinal data or observational methods in future studies can serve to further verify these relationships both over time and in real-life settings. Secondly, the sample size was limited to 222 respondents, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, the demographic composition of the sample may not fully represent the broader population of domestic and international tourists to Ijen Geopark. Thirdly, the study is limited to Ijen Geopark, which may affect the generalizability of the findings to other geoparks or destinations with different cultural, geographic, or economic contexts. To enhance the broader applicability of the results, future research could

include cross-geopark comparative studies or explore other types of eco-tourism sites, allowing the findings to be more widely applicable. It is also found in this study that destination trust does not differ much in visit intention, which contrasts with some findings of the prior literature. Regarding this, it is plausible to consider that other mediating or moderating variables like destination image, perceived risk, or even past travel experience may influence such a relationship between trust and visit intention. Future studies should be designed with the integration of additional psychological or behavioural factors to better understand how tourists make their decisions about travel. Lastly, this study does not explore the role of digital marketing and social media in shaping destination personality, reputation, and preference. Given the growing influence of online platforms, future research should examine how digital engagement, influencer marketing, and online reviews impact tourists' perceptions and visit intentions. Addressing these limitations would offer valuable insights into destination branding strategies, ultimately contributing to the sustainable development of tourism in Ijen Geopark and other destinations.

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