

THE ROLE OF DIGITAL TOURISM MARKETING: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN IMMERSIVE TOURISM AND METAVERSE ON BLEISURE TRAVELERS AT MALANG HOTELS

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Article Info	Abstract
Keywords: Digital Tourism Marketing, Immersive Tourism, Metaverse Experience, Bleisure Travel, Tourism Behaviour	This study explores the relationship between digital tourism marketing, immersive tourism, and the metaverse in the context of bleisure travelers visiting Batu Tourism City. By understanding how digital marketing can facilitate immersive tourism experiences, this study is expected to offer assistance to stakeholders in the tourism industry in designing more effective marketing strategies. The rapid development of technology and the increasing dependence of consumers on technology when selecting tourist destinations heighten this relevance. This research is an exploratory study that uses a quantitative approach to explore the relationship between several variables in the context of tourism. The two independent variables analyzed are immersive tourism and metaverse experience. In addition, there is one mediating variable, namely tourism digital marketing, and one dependent variable, namely bleisure. Results from the study showed that immersive tourism and metaverse experiences have a strong effect on digital tourism marketing, and that metaverse experiences directly improve bleisure behavior. Additionally, digital tourism marketing serves as a vital mediator between metaverse experiences and bleisure behavior. Therefore tourism in Batu needs to integrate digital technologies such as the metaverse and AR/VR to enhance global competitiveness and tourist attraction.
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INTRODUCTION

The background of this research focuses on the role of digital tourism marketing in the context of immersive and metaverse tourism, especially for bleisure travelers visiting Batu Tourism City. Batu City, located in East Java, Indonesia, is known for its natural beauty, cool air, and various intriguing tourist attractions, such as Jatim Park, Batu Night Spectacular, and Museum Angkut. With these characteristics, Batu City is one of the favorite destinations for domestic and foreign tourists. Data from the Batu City Tourism Office shows that the level of tourist visits to Batu City has fluctuated recently. The following table presents data on tourist visits to Batu City from 2018 to 2022:

Year	Number of Tourist Visits (People)	Growth (%)
2018	1.500.000	-
2019	1.800.000	20%
2020	600.000	-67%
2021	900.000	50%
2022	1.200.000	33%

The table above shows that the number of tourist visits to Batu City experienced a drastic decline in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but began to show recovery in 2021 and 2022. This recovery shows that tourist interest in visiting Batu City remains high, especially after the implementation of better health protocols and the launch of mass vaccinations. Promotional activities carried out by the Tourism Office also contributed to the increase in the number of visits, where various digital marketing strategies began to be implemented. Digital tourism marketing is very important in this context. With the increasing use of digital technology, tourism industry players in Batu City need to utilize various digital platforms to attract tourists. Digital marketing includes not only social media and websites but also immersive technologies such as virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR). This technology can provide a more engaging and interactive experience for visitors, creating unforgettable moments. According to research by Tussyadiah (2020), the use of immersive technology in tourism marketing can increase visitor engagement and satisfaction. By providing an immersive experience, tourists can feel the appeal of Batu City before they make a physical visit.

Furthermore, the concept of bleisure, which combines business and leisure travel, is also increasingly popular among travelers. Many business travelers use their free time to explore tourist destinations, including Batu City. Research by Bălăcescu and Bălăcescu (2021) shows that bleisure travelers tend to seek unique and different experiences, which can be fulfilled through effective digital marketing. Batu City, with its various attractions and natural beauty, can be an ideal choice for bleisure travelers who want to make their business trips more memorable.

This study explores the relationship between digital tourism marketing, immersive tourism, and the metaverse in the context of bleisure travelers visiting Batu Tourism City. By understanding how digital marketing can facilitate immersive tourism experiences, this study is expected to provide useful insights for stakeholders in the tourism industry in designing more effective marketing strategies. This is becoming increasingly relevant considering the development of rapid technology and changes in consumer behavior that progressively rely on technology in choosing tourist destinations. Previous research shows

that digital marketing can improve customer engagement and experience. The table below presents some relevant research to support this background:

Researcher	Year	Key Findings
Tussyadiah	2020	The use of immersive technology in tourism marketing increases visitor engagement and satisfaction.
Bălăcescu & Bălăcescu	2021	Bleisure travelers seek unique and differentiated experiences through effective digital marketing.
Sigala & Wilson	2021	Good digital marketing can increase brand awareness and attract more tourists.
Li et al.	2022	The integration of AR and VR technology in tourism marketing provides a more immersive experience for visitors.

In addition, this study also seeks to identify the challenges and opportunities faced by tourism industry players in Batu City in implementing digital marketing and immersive technology. These challenges may include a lack of understanding of technology, a limited budget for digital marketing, and increasingly fierce competition in the tourism industry. On the other hand, the opportunities include the increasing public interest in technology, as well as the willingness to try new experiences in tourism. With increasing competition in the tourism industry, it is important for Batu City to remain relevant and attractive to tourists, especially in the post-pandemic era. This study is expected to provide a significant contribution to the development of innovative and effective marketing strategies, which can increase tourist visits to Batu City, as well as provide a better experience for leisure travelers. This study will also contribute to the literature on digital tourism marketing and immersive tourism, as well as provide recommendations for the development of tourism policies in Batu City.

Through this research, it is expected to find new ways to utilize digital and immersive technology to increase the attractiveness of Batu City as a tourist destination. With the right approach, Batu City can be an example for other regions in utilizing digital marketing for sustainable and innovative tourism. This research will not only benefit tourism industry players in Batu City, but also provide benefits for visitors who are looking for a unique and memorable tourism experience. Thus, this research is expected to provide a meaningful contribution to the development of tourism in Batu City and a better understanding of the interaction between digital marketing, immersive tourism, and leisure travelers.

METHOD

This research is an exploratory study that uses a quantitative approach to explore the relationship between several variables in the context of tourism. The two independent variables analyzed are immersive tourism (X_1) and metaverse experience (X_2). In addition, there is one mediating variable, namely tourism digital marketing (Z), and one dependent variable, namely leisure (Y). The main focus of this study is visitors in Batu City, including locations such as hotels, tourist destinations, entertainment venues, and malls. The researcher used the Hair Jr. method to calculate the sample size, as the number of user populations remains undetermined. This method involves multiplying the number of indicators, which is 26, by a number between 5 and 10. The calculation results show that the set sample size reached 230 respondents. To analyze the data, researchers used multiple regression tests with two models that aim to explore the relationship between variables in



the context of tourism and tourist experiences in Batu City. In addition, researchers have used validity and reliability tests as measures for data instruments. The indicators used in this study will be presented in detail so as to provide a deeper understanding of the dynamics that occur. With this approach, it is hoped that this study can reveal previously unknown facts about the influence of immersive tourism and metaverse experiences on tourist behavior, as well as their interest in bleisure activities in the tourist city of Batu.

Table 1. Research Instruments

Indicator	Statement 1	Statement 2
Bleisure (Y)		
Travel Duration	I tend to extend my stay to explore Batu Tourist City.	I prefer to visit Batu City longer than a regular business trip.
Expenditure	I usually spend more on recreation when I'm on bleisure in Batu Tourism City.	I am more comfortable spending money on culinary and tourism.
Activities Carried Out	I enjoy joining local tours and cultural events in my free time.	This activity provides an opportunity to experience local culture.
Availability of Facilities	I prefer hotels with facilities for working and relaxing.	I was looking for accommodation with a gym and spa for work-leisure balance.
Customer satisfaction	I feel more satisfied when my trips are balanced between business and leisure.	I believe this balanced experience improved my mental well-being.
Immersive Tourism (X₁)		
Emotional Engagement	I felt an emotional connection to the local culture through the immersive experience.	I feel more connected to the local community in Batu city.
Practical Experience	I love getting involved in activities to learn new skills.	This practical experience made my trip more meaningful.
Social Interaction	I look for opportunities to interact with local people.	This interaction enriched my travel experience.
Depth of Knowledge	I want to understand more about the history and culture of the places I visit.	I felt satisfied when I dug up in-depth information during the trip.
Diversity of Experience	I love a variety of experiences, such as local cuisine and art.	The diversity of experiences made my trip more interesting and memorable.
Metaverse Experience (X₂)		
Experience	I felt involved in virtually exploring the hotel facilities before visiting.	I enjoy immersive experiences that help plan travel activities.
Virtual Facilities	I appreciate the virtual conference room for business meetings in Batu city.	I like to relax in the social area after work.
Social Interaction	I felt connected when interacting with other guests in Batu city.	Social interaction made my experience more valuable.
Customize Experience	I enjoy setting up rooms to reflect personal style in Batu city.	Customizing the experience makes me more satisfied.
Accessibility of Information	I appreciate having access to information about local activities after work.	I feel more prepared to plan my free time thanks to the information available.
Promotions and Offers	I am interested in special offers that combine business and leisure services.	Attractive promotions make the hotel experience more valuable.
Tourism Digital Marketing (M)		
Online Visibility	I find it easier to find tourist information in Batu Tourism City with a strong online presence.	I believe good online visibility increases my trust in a tourist destination.

Indicator	Statement 1	Statement 2
Use of Social Media	I often look for tourist recommendations on social media before visiting Batu Tourist City.	I feel more connected to a tourist spot when I see interesting content on social media.
Interesting Content	I was more interested in visiting after seeing interesting photos and videos of the facilities in Batu Tourism City.	Interesting stories of visitors' experiences influenced my decision to visit.
Reviews and Testimonials	Visitor experience stories influence my decision.	Positive reviews from other visitors made me more confident in choosing a tourist spot.
SEO (Search Engine Optimization)	Search engine optimization makes it easier for me to find information about tourist attractions in Batu Tourism City.	Good SEO helps me find the best deals for visiting Batu Tourism City.
Email Marketing	I often open emails with attractive offers about tourist attractions in Batu Tourism City.	I feel appreciated when I receive personalized emails with special offers from attractions.

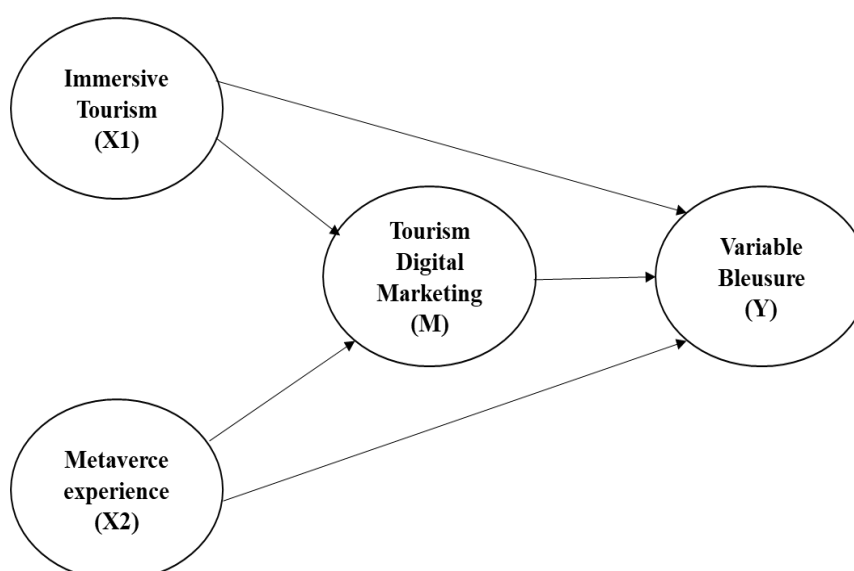


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Description

The following is a description of respondents in tabular form based on gender, occupation, status, and region of origin for a sample size of 230 people.

Table 2. Recapitulation of Respondent Characteristics

Category	Information	Amount	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	120	52.2
	Female	110	47.8
Profession	Student	60	26.1
	Private Employee	90	39.1
	Entrepreneur	50	21.7
	Freelancer	30	13.0



Status			
	Single	120	52.2
	Ever Married	70	30.4
	Already Married	40	17.4
Region of Origin			
	Batu City	150	65.2
	Malang	50	21.7
	Outside Malang	30	13.0

Source: Processed primary data, 2024

In the gender category, respondents consisted of 120 males, which covered 52.2% of the total sample, and 110 females, which amounted to 47.8%. This finding indicates that there are slightly more males than females among the respondents. In the occupation category, the majority of respondents were private employees, with a total of 90 people, or 39.1%. These were followed by 60 students, who made up 26.1% of the total, 50 entrepreneurs, who made up 21.7%, and 30 freelancers, who made up 13.0%. This distribution indicates that respondents have diverse occupational backgrounds. Based on the status category, 120 respondents or 52.2%, were unmarried. Respondents who had been married numbered 70 people, equivalent to 30.4%, and 40 people, or 17.4%, were married. This composition indicates that the majority of respondents were individuals who were not yet married. Finally, in the category of regional origin, 150 respondents came from Batu City, which constituted 65.2% of the total sample. There were 50 respondents from Malang, amounting to 21.7%, and 30 respondents came from outside Malang, which covered 13.0%. This finding shows that most of the respondents came from Batu City.

Instrument Testing

We conduct a validity test to assess the validity of the data obtained from the questionnaire. Based on the results of SPSS processing of the frequency distribution of each variable, the results of the validity test show that all questions for each variable are valid. This conclusion is drawn from the rule that the rcount value must be greater than the rtable value and that the significance value is less than the alpha level of 5%. After declaring all question items valid, we conduct data reliability testing to assess the consistency of the compiled questionnaire. The analyzed reliability test results follow. Based on the results of the reliability test in the table above, it can be concluded that all variables have a reliability coefficient value greater than the Cronbach's alpha value (0.600).

Multiple Regression Test 2 Models

This study uses path analysis with a two-model regression method. In the first model, the influence of independent variables on intermediate variables will be analyzed. Furthermore, in the second model, the influence of independent variables and intermediate variables on dependent variables will be analyzed.

1. First Model Regression Results

The following table presents the results of the regression equation test for model 1:

Table 3. Multiple Regression Results of the First Model

Description	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Immersive Tourism	0.652	0.056	0.575	11.561	0,000
Metaverse experience	0.303	0.045	0.333	6.685	0,000
Dependent Variabel	Tourism Digital Marketing				
R	0.842				
R ²	0.711				
R ² Adjusted	0.701				
F _{Count}	273.144				
Probability	0,000				
Line Equation I	$Z = \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2$				
Result	$Z = 0.575 X_1 + 0.333 X_2$				

Source: Processed primary data, 2024

The results of the model 1 path coefficient and significance test show the significance value of immersive tourism (X_1) = 0.000 and metaverse experience (X_2) = 0.000. It can be concluded that immersive tourism and metaverse experiences have a significant effect on tourism digital marketing. The value of R² or RSquare is 0.842, which means that the contribution given by each variable analyzed to tourism digital marketing is 84.2%, and the remaining 15.8% is the contribution of other variables not analyzed in this study. The results of the regression output of model 1 obtained a calculated F value of 185.268 and a significance value of 0.000, meaning that immersive tourism and metaverse experience together have an effect on tourism digital marketing.

2. Results of the Second Model Regression

The following table presents the results of the regression equation test for model 2:

Table 4. Multiple Regression Results of the Second Model

Description	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Immersive Tourism	-0,036	0.101	-0,032	-0,361	0,719
Metaverse experience	0,263	0.070	0,291	3,753	0,000
Tourism Digital Marketing	0,418	0,094	0,421	4,455	0,000
Dependent Variabel	Bleasure				
R	0,638				
R ²	0,407				
R ² Adjusted	0,399				
F _{Count}	51,764				
Probability	0,000				
Line Equation I	$Y = \beta_4 X_1 + \beta_5 X_2 + \beta_6 X + \beta_7 Z$				
Result	$Y = 0.345 X_1 - 0.025 X_2 - 0.087 X_3 + 0.717 Z$				

Source: Processed primary data, 2024

The results of the test model 2 path coefficients and significance show the significance value of immersive tourism (X_1) = 0.719, metaverse experience (X_2) = 0.000,



and tourism digital marketing (Z) = 0.000. It can be concluded that immersive tourism, metaverse experiences, and tourism digital marketing have a significant effect on bleisure. The value of R^2 or RSquare is 0.407, which means that the contribution given by each variable analyzed to the net interest is 40.7%, and the remaining 59.3% is the contribution of other variables not analyzed in this study.

3. Hypothesis Testing Analysis

Table 5. Recapitulation of Path Analysis Results

Description	Direct Effect	Sig.	Indirect Effect	Total Effect	Information
Immersive Tourism \rightarrow Tourism Digital Marketing	0.575	0,000			Significant
Metaverse Experience \rightarrow Tourism Digital Marketing	0.333	0,000			Significant
Immersive Tourism \rightarrow Bleisure	-0,032	0,719			No Significant
Metaverse Experience \rightarrow Bleisure	0,291	0,000			Significant
Tourism Digital Marketing \rightarrow Bleisure	0,421	0,000			Significant
Immersive Tourism \rightarrow Bleisure \rightarrow Tourism Digital Marketing			-0,032 x 0,421 = -0,0135		Significant
Metaverse Experience \rightarrow Bleisure \rightarrow Tourism Digital Marketing			0,291 x 0,421 = 0,123		No Significant

Source: Processed primary data, 2024

The direct effect of immersive tourism on tourism digital marketing shows a coefficient value of 0.575 with a significance level of 0.000, which means this effect is significant. This study shows that an increase in immersive tourism can increase the effectiveness of digital marketing in the tourism sector. Similarly, metaverse experience also shows a significant direct effect on tourism digital marketing with a coefficient of 0.333 and a significance of 0.000, indicating that the experience in the metaverse contributes positively to digital marketing strategies.

However, the effect of immersive tourism on bleisure is not significant, with a coefficient value of -0.032 and a significance of 0.719. This result indicates that immersive tourism does not have a reliable direct impact on the level of satisfaction or use of leisure services. In contrast, metaverse experience has a significant positive effect on bleisure, with a coefficient of 0.291 and a significance of 0.000, indicating that experiences in the metaverse can increase satisfaction in leisure activities.

Tourism digital marketing also contributes significantly to bleisure, with a coefficient of 0.421 and a significance of 0.000. This shows that an effective digital marketing strategy can enhance the leisure experience. When looking at the influence of immersive tourism on bleisure through tourism digital marketing, although the direct influence is not significant, the indirect analysis shows a value of -0.0135, which is considered significant, indicating an interaction between the two variables in the marketing context. On the other hand, the indirect influence of metaverse experience on bleisure through tourism digital marketing produces a value of 0.123, which is not significant, indicating that although there is an interaction, the influence is not strong enough to be accepted as significant.

Immersive Tourism has an Impact on Tourism Digital Marketing

This study shows a significant direct influence between immersive tourism and tourism digital marketing, with an influence value of 0.575 and a significance level of 0.000. This shows that an increase in the immersive tourism experience contributes positively to the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies in the tourism sector. The higher the level of immersive tourism, the greater the impact on the success of digital marketing, which can be used to attract consumer interest and engagement. The results of this study are in line with previous findings, which suggest that immersive experiences can increase consumer engagement in marketing. Pine and Gilmore (1999) state that experience can be a strategic tool to differentiate brands and create added value for customers. However, the main difference between this study and previous studies lies in the context and focus. Previous studies tend to be more general in discussing customer experience, while this study specifically explores how immersive tourism can be integrated into modern digital marketing. Thus, the results of this study confirm the importance of immersive tourism as a key element in designing effective marketing strategies in the digital era. This provides insights for stakeholders in the tourism industry to design more immersive and interactive experiences in order to increase customer attraction and engagement.

Metaverse Experience Influences Tourism Digital Marketing

This study found a significant direct effect between Metaverse Experience and Tourism Digital Marketing, with an effect value of 0.333 and a significance level of 0.000. This finding suggests that the experience provided in the metaverse can effectively enhance digital marketing strategies in the tourism industry. The interactive and immersive experiences offered by the metaverse create new opportunities for marketers to engage consumers, allowing them to engage with the destination in more depth before traveling. The results of this study are in line with previous studies showing that new technologies, such as the metaverse, can change the way marketing is done in the tourism sector (Tussyadiah, 2020). Previous studies have emphasized the potential of virtual experiences in increasing customer engagement. However, the main difference lies in the more specific focus on the metaverse in this study, while previous studies have been more general in discussing digital technologies in general. The results of this study emphasize the importance of utilizing metaverse experiences as an integral part of digital marketing strategies in tourism. This provides insights for stakeholders to integrate interactive elements in their marketing campaigns to increase customer attraction and engagement. The success of utilizing metaverse experiences can be a determining factor in attracting the attention of consumers who are increasingly accustomed to digital technology.

Immersive Tourism Influences Bleisure

This study shows that the direct effect of immersive tourism on bleisure is negative, with an influence value of -0.032 and a significance level of 0.719. This result indicates that there is no significant relationship between the two variables. The high significance value indicates that immersive tourism does not contribute to improving the bleisure experience, which includes a combination of recreation and quality travel experiences. This finding differs from previous studies that show that immersive experiences in tourism can generally improve customer satisfaction and experience. (Tung & Ritchie, 2011). The study emphasizes that rich and interactive experiences can add value to tourists. However, in the context of this study, the negative effect suggests that while immersive tourism may be



theoretically appealing, its application in enhancing bleisure may not be as effective as expected. This difference may be due to contextual factors, such as the type of experience offered or how tourists respond to the experience. Thus, the results of this study provide important insights for stakeholders in the tourism industry to better understand the factors that influence bleisure. This suggests the need for a deeper evaluation of specific elements of immersive tourism that can be optimized to enhance the tourist experience.

Metaverse Experience Influences Bleisure

This study revealed a positive and significant influence between Metaverse Experience and Bleisure, with an influence value of 0.291 and a significance level of 0.000. This finding indicates that the experience gained in the metaverse can effectively enhance Bleisure, which includes the integration of recreation and quality travel experiences. The immersive experience offered by the metaverse allows tourists to explore tourist destinations virtually, thus creating a greater sense of interest before they physically travel. The results of this study are in line with previous studies showing that digital experiences can add value to travel and increase tourist satisfaction. (Li et al., 2020). The study emphasizes that fun and interactive experiences can enrich travel, and these results support the idea that metaverse experiences can contribute to more satisfying travel experiences. However, the difference lies in the focus on the metaverse as a specific platform. While previous studies often discuss digital technologies in general, this study explores the specific impact of metaverse experiences in the context of bleisure. As such, the results of this study provide important insights for stakeholders in the tourism industry to design experiences that are integrated with metaverse technologies to increase tourist attraction and engagement.

Tourism Digital Marketing Influences Bleisure

This study found a significant relationship between tourism digital marketing and bleisure, with an influence value of 0.421 and a significance level of 0.000. This finding suggests that an effective digital marketing strategy can significantly enhance bleisure, which includes a combination of recreation and quality travel experiences. The better the digital marketing strategy implemented, the more likely it is to enhance the tourist experience, attract attention, and encourage them to explore the destinations offered. The results of this study are in line with previous studies showing that digital marketing can increase tourist interest and satisfaction. (Chaffey, 2019). The study emphasizes that innovative and targeted marketing approaches are essential to enhance consumer engagement in the tourism sector. However, the key difference lies in the specific focus on bleisure in the context of this study, which provides deeper insight into how digital marketing can collaborate with quality tourism experiences. The findings of this study provide important implications for stakeholders in the tourism industry to develop and implement more effective digital marketing strategies. This can include the use of social media, interactive content, and other technologies to create engaging and satisfying experiences for tourists. Optimizing digital marketing becomes a crucial aspect in enhancing bleisure, thereby creating added value for customers and supporting the growth of the tourism industry as a whole.

Immersive Tourism Influences Bleisure through Tourism Digital Marketing



This study reveals that the total influence of tourism digital marketing on the relationship between immersive tourism and bleisure is -0.0135. Although there is a negative direct influence of immersive tourism on bleisure, the analysis through the tourism digital marketing channel shows that this influence becomes more significant. However, the negative total value indicates that the impact of immersive tourism becomes smaller and not positive when through this channel. This shows that although digital marketing plays a role in promoting immersive experiences, its contribution to increasing bleisure remains limited. This finding differs from previous studies that noted that immersive experiences can increase satisfaction and added value in travel. (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). The study suggests that immersive tourism should be able to enhance the tourist experience. However, in this context, the results of the study indicate that although digital marketing can increase awareness of immersive tourism, its influence on bleisure is not as strong as expected. The results of this study imply the importance of a deeper understanding of the factors that influence the tourist experience. Stakeholders in the tourism industry need to evaluate the specific elements of immersive tourism and the digital marketing strategies used. This will help in optimizing the tourist experience and simultaneously enhancing bleisure.

Metaverse Experience Influences Bleisure through Tourism Digital Marketing

This study shows that the total effect of Metaverse Experience on Bleisure through Tourism Digital Marketing is 0.123. Although there is a positive effect, this value is not significant, which means that this path does not make a significant contribution to increasing bleisure. This finding highlights that, although metaverse experiences can attract tourists, their impact on quality travel experiences remains limited when promoted through digital marketing strategies. The results of this study differ from previous studies that have shown that virtual experiences can enrich tourist interactions, increase satisfaction, and drive better travel decisions. (Buhalis & Leung, 2018). The study notes that digital technologies, including metaverses, can be an effective tool to enhance the travel experience. However, in the context of this study, the potential of the Metaverse Experience was not matched by its impact on bleisure, which was weaker than expected. The results of this study provide important insights for stakeholders in the tourism industry. They need to consider that while the use of metaverses in digital marketing is interesting, a more holistic and integrated strategy may be needed to enhance the overall traveler experience. A deeper evaluation of the specific elements of the Metaverse Experience and how they relate to bleisure is an important step towards achieving more positive outcomes in the future.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the role of digital tourism marketing in the relationship between immersive tourism, metaverse experiences, and bleisure behavior in the context of Batu Tourism City. Using quantitative methods and multiple regression analysis, we found that immersive tourism and metaverse experiences both significantly influence digital tourism marketing, and metaverse experiences also have a direct positive effect on bleisure behavior, while immersive tourism does not show a direct significant effect on bleisure. Last but not least, digital tourism marketing plays a crucial role in enhancing the

bleisure experience, acting as a mediator between metaverse experience and bleisure behavior.

We propose the following policy recommendations, based on the findings. Develop digital infrastructure for immersive tourism with local and national tourism authorities should promote digital infrastructure to support the integration of immersive tourism experiences, such as augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR). This can enhance the promotional efforts of destinations like Batu, drawing more tech-savvy tourists for The first step is to establish incentives for technology companies to collaborate with tourism service providers in developing and implementing immersive tourism solutions. Second is incorporate metaverse experiences into marketing strategies, given the direct influence of metaverse experiences on bleisure travelers, tourism marketing strategies should focus on creating virtual tourism experiences. This could include virtual city tours, hotel previews, or digital exploration of local culture, accessible to potential travelers before visiting Batu. For follow-up, organize training programs for local tourism businesses to understand and leverage metaverse marketing, potentially through partnerships with tech companies and universities. Third is strengthen digital tourism marketing. It is meant that the significant impact of digital tourism marketing on bleisure suggests that there should be increased focus on personalized and interactive marketing campaigns. This could include targeted social media campaigns, influencer partnerships, and the use of immersive content (such as 360-degree videos or virtual experiences). For follow-up, we can establish a digital marketing task force within local tourism organizations to foster collaboration between businesses in Batu, ensuring a unified and effective online presence. Fourth is enhanced bleisure packages. Based on the study, metaverse experiences and digital marketing can lead to higher engagement from bleisure travelers. Therefore, tourism policymakers should create customized tourism packages that blend business and leisure experiences, showcasing Batu as a bleisure destination. For Follow-up Develop a promotional campaign that highlights Batu as an ideal bleisure destination, incorporating both the physical and virtual experiences of the area. The fifth point is to increase digital literacy in tourism. As digital marketing and immersive experiences become more integral to tourism, it is essential to invest in digital literacy programs for tourism providers in Batu, ensuring that they can fully utilize these technologies to attract visitors. For follow-up, an Organize workshops and seminars for local tourism operators, hotels, and other stakeholders to learn about the latest trends in digital tourism marketing and technology integration.

The findings suggest that there are several key implications for tourism policy. Integration of technology in tourism development policymakers should formally integrate digital technologies like immersive tourism and metaverse experiences into the tourism development plan. This would not only enhance the attractiveness of the destination but also support the global competitiveness of Batu as a tourism hub. Encouraging public-private collaboration means public and private sectors must collaborate to develop and implement the necessary digital infrastructure that supports immersive and metaverse experiences. This can include investments in 5G networks, AR/VR hubs, and specialized tourism platforms. Leveraging digital marketing for post-COVID recovery as tourism recovers post-pandemic, digital tourism marketing offers a cost-effective solution for reaching a global audience. Tourism authorities should prioritize online promotion of Batu's attractions through engaging digital formats that cater to both leisure and business travelers. Also need a balancing traditional and digital tourism models while embracing



digital innovations, it is crucial that tourism policies also retain the essence of traditional tourism in Batu. The combination of digital and physical tourism experiences should be seen as complementary rather than replacing one another, ensuring the area retains its authentic charm while leveraging new technology. The last is sustainability and digital tourism, as digital experiences grow in importance, tourism policies should also address the sustainability of digital tourism initiatives. This includes managing data privacy, reducing digital waste, and ensuring that virtual experiences do not overshadow environmental sustainability goals. These insights and recommendations aim to guide Batu's tourism stakeholders in developing strategies that effectively integrate digital technologies, creating a sustainable and competitive tourism destination for both business and leisure travelers.

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