
The Influence of Service Quality and Business Communication on Customer Retention at Hayujalan Tour & Event

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Abstract: This study examines the influence of service quality and business communication on customer retention at Hayujalan Tour & Event. The research adopts a quantitative approach using a structured questionnaire measured with a Likert scale distributed to 77 respondents selected through purposive sampling, specifically customers who have previously used the company's services and were directly involved as project coordinators. Data analysis was conducted using multiple linear regression with SPSS, including validity and reliability testing, classical assumption tests, and hypothesis testing (t-test and F-test). The results of the simultaneous test (F-test) indicate that service quality and business communication jointly have a significant effect on customer retention ($F = 37.561$; $\text{Sig.} = 0.000 < 0.05$). However, partial testing (t-test) reveals that service quality does not have a significant effect on customer retention ($\text{Sig.} = 0.374 > 0.05$), while business communication has a significant positive effect ($\text{Sig.} = 0.000 < 0.05$). These findings suggest that effective communication plays a more dominant role than service quality in influencing customer retention within the observed context. This study contributes to the customer retention literature by emphasizing the importance of communication strategies in tourism services and provides practical implications for companies to strengthen customer relationships through more responsive and effective communication practices.

Keywords: Service Quality, Business Communication, Customer Retention, Tourism, Travel Agent.

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INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry in West Java is currently facing significant challenges due to changes in regional government policies. The decline in tourism sector performance was triggered by the West Java Governor's Circular Letter Number 64/PK.01/KESRA in 2024 and subsequent regulations in the following year, Circular Letter Number 42/Pk.03.04/Kesra in 2025, which tightened the implementation of study tours and activities outside of school. This policy has had a direct impact on declining market demand in the tourism sector in West Java, especially from the school segment. This condition has created pros and cons among the public and tourism businesses. In response, tourism service businesses are required to prepare more mature strategies to survive and overcome the fluctuating impact of government restrictions that have led to a decline in the number of customers from school students (Permadi & Krisiandi, 2025).

Hayujalan Tour & Event is a travel management and event organizer company in West Bandung Regency, established in 2017. Hayujalan Tour & Event offers services that reach various market segments, including company tours and events, meetings and conferences, team building, educational trips for schools, industrial visits for universities, and private trips. During its journey, Hayujalan Tour & Event experienced two low points, namely during the Covid-19 pandemic and in early 2025, due to a regulation issued by the Governor of West Java, which contributed to a decline in market demand, particularly in the school segment. This situation forced Hayujalan Tour & Event to continue working diligently to develop various strategies to ensure the company's survival. In 2026, Hayujalan Tour & Event aims to re-enter and strengthen the school market with various alternatives that do not only focus on study tours (Wibawa, Personal Communication, September 2025).

The tourism service industry has experienced significant growth in recent years, driven by increasing consumer demand for personalized travel experiences and digital transformation. In this context, customer retention has become a strategic priority, as maintaining existing customers is often more cost-effective than acquiring new ones. Service quality and business communication are widely recognized as key determinants influencing customer retention in service-based industries.

Previous studies have emphasized the importance of service quality in shaping customer satisfaction and loyalty. For instance, Osman et al (2024) found that service quality significantly influences customer retention through customer satisfaction as a mediating variable. Similarly, Hapsari et al (2024) highlighted that customer experience and engagement play a crucial role in transforming first-time visitors into loyal customers in the tourism sector. In addition, relationship marketing has been identified as a strategic approach to strengthen long-term customer relationships Rosário & Casaca (2023). However, while these studies provide valuable insights, most of them tend to examine variables in isolation and focus on hospitality contexts such as hotels, leaving travel service providers relatively underexplored.

Moreover, prior research often adopts a descriptive approach without critically examining inconsistencies across findings or contextual differences between tourism sub-sectors. For example, some studies report that service quality has a direct effect on retention, while others suggest that the relationship is indirect and mediated by trust or satisfaction (Isikwei & Amadi, 2024). This inconsistency indicates the presence of unresolved issues in understanding how various factors interact to influence customer retention, particularly in tour and event service companies.

In this dynamic situation, a company's ability to maintain business continuity is highly dependent on a strong internal strategy, particularly in the aspects of service quality and business communication to ensure customer retention is maintained in the digital era (Hadiwantoro, 2024). Referring to: Integrated Marketing Communication Theory (Kotler & Keller, 2016); Interpersonal Communication Theory (DeVito, 2016); Relationship Marketing Theory (Berry, 1995) Business Communication is a step to convey information about services, manage consumer needs, process transactions, and maintain continuous communication relationships before, during, and after the travel experience (Candra et al., 2022).

Likewise, Hayujalan Tour & Event does one of its strategies in maintaining business communication by utilizing the network of relationships owned by each employee, both from professional and personal relationships with individuals working in various institutions, such as companies, schools, and other organizations. These established relationships are then well maintained and nurtured so that they can be used as a promotional tool through Word of Mouth (WOM). Through informal and trust-based communication, information about Hayujalan Tour & Event services can be disseminated more widely and convincingly (Resmana, Personal Communication, December 2025).

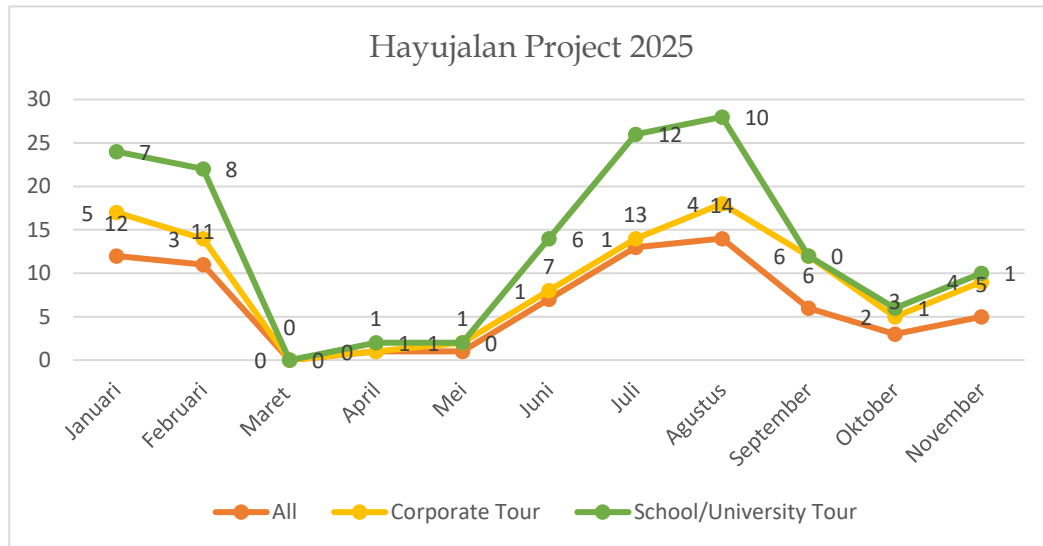


Figure 1. Hayujalan Operational Performance in 2025
Source : Hayujalantour (2025)

Figure 1 presents data related to customer trends at Hayujalan Tour and Event Organizer, which are relevant to the study variables. The figure indicates fluctuations in customer participation and retention over the observed period. A noticeable decline in repeat customers suggests potential issues related to service quality and business communication.

These patterns highlight the importance of improving service consistency and strengthening communication strategies to maintain customer loyalty. The data provide an initial indication that customer retention in tourism services is closely associated with how service quality is delivered and how effectively the company communicates with its customers. This pattern shows that the school/university tour segment dominates the number of trips throughout the year and by expanding the focus to the corporate segment is Hayujalan Tour's strategy to reduce the risk of seasonal fluctuations in the education sector and maintain the stability of the company's income in a sustainable manner.

In an era of increasingly fierce business competition, a company's ability to build and maintain long-term relationships with customers is a key factor in maintaining business sustainability (Triwijayati et al., 2023). Relationship marketing is a strategic approach that emphasizes the importance of building long-term relationships with customers to increase customer loyalty, satisfaction, and retention (Martin, 2024).

Customer retention is a tangible manifestation of loyalty where consumers demonstrate resilience against competitive pressures to switch products or services. Customers with high retention have been shown to resist switching despite numerous competing offers, ultimately benefiting the company through lower operational costs, insensitivity to price changes, and increased market share (Moenardy et al., 2025).

As in a study conducted by Yulianto (2023) where a case study at the Jatim Park 3 tourist attraction showed that the use of Social CRM and promotional activities on Instagram increased

customer engagement, which had a positive impact on revisit intentions and retention. This opinion is supported by a study conducted by Wijaya (2023) that the importance of service personalization and relevant communication in the implementation of internal strategies is crucial for building long-term relationships with customers, responding to changing market conditions, and ensuring business continuity can be improved through product quality, service customization, effective communication, and the overall customer experience. Therefore, these strategies are proven to increase customer loyalty and good business continuity.

Although many previous studies have been conducted, there are limitations that pose gaps for this research. The majority of previous studies, such as those by (Osman et al., 2024) and (Samosir, 2025), focus more on the digital, e-commerce, or banking sectors and tend to position satisfaction or loyalty as mediating variables. Few studies have specifically examined the direct influence of service quality and business communication in the context of the experiential tourism industry and multiphase communication (pre-travel, during, and post-travel) on improving customer retention relationships.

Therefore, there is a need for a more integrative analysis that not only compares previous findings critically but also identifies gaps in the existing literature. Specifically, limited research has addressed the combined role of service quality and business communication in influencing customer retention within the context of tour and event services. This gap highlights the importance of conducting empirical research that captures the unique characteristics of this sector.

Based on these considerations, this study aims to analyze the influence of service quality and business communication on customer retention in the tourism service industry, particularly in tour and event companies. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of a more comprehensive understanding of customer retention strategies and provide practical implications for tourism service providers.

This study presents a novel aspect that aims to test whether the variables of service quality and multi-phase-based business communication simultaneously influence customers' decisions to continue using Hayujalan Tour & Event services amidst tight market competition and prove that customer retention has been firmly established. The methodology used in this study is quantitative with an associative approach. Data were collected through questionnaires distributed to Hayujalan Tour & Event customers selected using purposive sampling techniques, then analyzed using multiple linear regression to measure the magnitude of the influence between variables. The results of this study are expected to empirically prove that improving the quality of operational services combined with effective business communication will contribute significantly to increasing customer retention, which ultimately becomes a vital strategy for the sustainability of the tourism business after changes in government policy.

METHODS

This study uses a quantitative approach with an associative design that aims to analyze the effect of service quality and business communication on customer retention at Hayujalan Tour & Event. The study was conducted on customers who have used Hayujalan Tour & Event services with the research period being carried out in 2025–2026. The population in this study were all customers who have used Hayujalan Tour & Event services, especially in 2025. The sampling technique used purposive sampling and in this study, the selected sample was 77 people who acted as PIC or project committee who used Hayujalan Tour & Event services in 2025. The sample selection was based on the consideration that PIC or committee is a party directly involved in the planning and implementation of the trip, so it is considered to have adequate understanding and experience to be able to provide relevant and representative information to the research objectives.

The sample size of this study consists of 77 respondents. This number is considered adequate based on methodological considerations in quantitative research. The sample size in this study refers to the minimum requirement for multiple linear regression analysis as suggested by Green (1991), which states that the sample size should be at least $N \geq 50 + 8m$, where m represents the number of

independent variables. In this study, with two independent variables, the minimum required sample size is 66 respondents. Therefore, the sample size of 77 respondents is considered sufficient to conduct the regression analysis, although it remains relatively small for broader generalization. Given the number of indicators employed in this research, a sample size of 77 respondents meets the minimum requirement and is sufficient to perform reliable statistical analysis. Additionally, similar studies in the field of tourism and service marketing have used comparable sample sizes, supporting the appropriateness of this sample. Therefore, the use of purposive sampling and a sample size of 77 respondents is justified as it aligns with the research objectives and ensures the validity and reliability of the findings.

The data used in this study consisted of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through questionnaires distributed to respondents who were Hayujalan Tour & Event customers. The data in this study were collected using a structured questionnaire designed to measure the variables of service quality, business communication, and customer retention. The measurement of each variable was conducted using a Likert scale, which is commonly used in quantitative research to capture respondents' perceptions and attitudes.

A five-point Likert scale was applied in this study, where respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with each statement. The scale ranges from 1 to 5, where 1 indicates "strongly disagree" ; 2 indicates "disagree" ; 3 indicates "moderately agree" ; 4 indicates "agree" ; and 5 indicates "strongly agree". This scale was chosen because it provides a balanced range of responses and allows for effective statistical analysis.

The use of the Likert scale enables the researcher to quantify subjective opinions and transform them into numerical data suitable for further analysis, such as validity testing, reliability testing, and regression analysis. Therefore, the application of a five-point Likert scale is considered appropriate for capturing customer perceptions in the context of tourism service research.

Meanwhile, secondary data were obtained from internal company documents, field observations and internal interviews, as well as scientific literature such as journals and books relevant to the research topic. The primary data collection process was carried out by distributing questionnaires through online media to respondents who had been determined based on research criteria. The collected data were then processed using SPSS version 27 statistical software to conduct data analysis. The analysis stages included descriptive analysis, validity testing, and reliability testing. Multiple linear regression is a statistical analysis technique used to determine the effect of independent variables on one dependent variable partially and simultaneously and to answer the research objectives empirically (Yuliara, 2016).

The research instrument used in this study was a questionnaire compiled based on indicators from each research variable, namely service quality, business communication, and customer retention. The service quality variable was measured using the SERVQUAL dimension, which includes tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy, reflecting travel facilities, service accuracy, team responsiveness, security and comfort assurance, and personal attention to customers (Sari & Barusman, 2025). The business communication variable was measured through the communication process that occurs at three service stages: pre-travel, during travel, and post-travel, which includes clarity of package information, transparency of travel preparation, responses to customer questions or complaints, and post-travel follow-up (Candra et al., 2022). Meanwhile, the customer retention variable was measured through the customer's tendency to reuse the service, recommend it to others, and maintain relationships and trust in the company (Wardhana, 2021).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Research result

In this section, the researcher presents the results of a discussion regarding research findings related to the influence of service quality and business communication on customer retention at Hayujalan Tour & Event. The discussion is conducted systematically, linking the results of statistical analysis, theoretical studies, and findings from previous research to provide a more in-depth interpretation of the research results.

Table 1. Respondents' Demographic Characteristics

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	30	39.0
	Female	47	61.0
	Total	77	100.0
Age	<20	11	14.3
	20 – 29	38	49.4
	30 – 39	15	19.5
	>= 40	13	16.9
	Total	77	100.0

Source: Data Proceed, 2026

Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents involved in this study based on gender and age. Based on gender distribution, the majority of respondents were female (47 people) (61.0%), while male respondents numbered 30 people (39.0%). Viewed from the age group, the majority of respondents were in the 20–29 years age range (38 people) (49.4%), respondents aged 30–39 years (15 people), respondents aged ≥40 years (13 people) (16.9%), and respondents aged <20 years (11 people). These findings indicate that users of Hayujalan Tour & Event services are dominated by women and young adults who generally have high levels of mobility and participation in tourism travel activities.

Table 2. Type of Project Respondents have Taken with Hayujalan

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Company/Family Gathering	28	36.4
Industrial Visit	29	37.7
Study Tour/Edukasi	17	22.1
Team Building	2	2.6
Event	0	0
Other	1	1.3
Total	77	100.0

Source: Data Proceed, 2026

Table 2 illustrates the types of projects or travel activities that respondents have participated in with Hayujalan Tour & Event. The results show that most respondents participated in industrial visits (29 people) while 28 respondents (36.4%) participated in company or family gatherings. 17 respondents (22.1%) participated in study tours or educational activities, indicating that the travel segment is educational. Only 2 respondents (2.6%) participated in team building activities, and only 1 respondent (1.3%) participated in activities in other categories. These results indicate that Hayujalan Tour & Event services are mostly utilized for industrial visits and gathering activities, both institutional and recreational.

Table 3. Frequency Distribution of Service Usage Experience

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Frequency of using Hayujalan Tour & Event services	1 time	27	35.1
	2-3 time	31	40.3
	More than 3 time	19	24.7
Total		77	100.0
Last time using Hayujalan Tour & Event services	<Last 6 Month	43	55.8
	Last 6 – 12 Month	20	26
	> 1 Years Ago	14	18.2
Total		77	100.0

Source: Data Proceed, 2026

Table 3 shows the distribution of respondents based on their experience in using Hayujalan Tour & Event services. Based on the frequency of service use, most respondents used the service 2–3 times, namely 31 people (40.3%), then used the service once with a total of 27 people (35.1%), and used the service more than three times with 19 people (24.7%). Meanwhile, based on the last time of service use, 43 people (55.8%) used the service within a period of less than 6 months. Furthermore, 20 respondents (26%) used the service within a period of 6–12 months, and 14 respondents (18.2%) used the service more than a year ago. These findings indicate that respondents have experience using the service in the period 2025 and have used the service more than once. This indicates a fairly good level of customer engagement with the services provided by Hayujalan Tour & Event.

Based on the results of data testing conducted, including validity and reliability tests, descriptive analysis, and classical assumption tests such as normality tests, it was found that all data in this study met the criteria required for statistical analysis according to Ghazali (2009) in (Sudariana & Yoedani, 2022). Thus, the data were declared suitable for further analysis using the multiple linear regression method, with the following output results:

Table 4. Determination Coefficient Test Results

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.710 ^a	.504	.490	2.969

a. Predictors: (Constant), Komunikasi Bisnis, Kualitas Layanan

Source: SPSS data processing 2026

Based on the analysis results in the Model Summary table, an R value of 0.710 was obtained. This value indicates a strong relationship between each variable, indicating that the service quality and business communication variables have a significant impact on customer retention rates. The R Square value of 0.504 indicates that 50.4% of the variation in customer retention can be explained by the service quality and business communication variables used in the research model. The remaining 49.6% is influenced by factors outside the research model that were not examined in this study, such as service price, travel experience, company image, and the customer's emotional connection to the company.

Table 5. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) Results

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	662.104	2	331.052	37.561	.000 ^b
	Residual	652.208	74	8.814		
	Total	1314.312	76			

a. Dependent Variable: Retensi Pelanggan

b. Predictors: (Constant), Komunikasi Bisnis, Kualitas Layanan

Source: SPSS data processing 2026

Based on the results of the simultaneous test in the ANOVA table, the calculated F value was 37.561 with a significance value of 0.000. This significance value is smaller than the significance level used in this study, namely 0.05 ($0.000 < 0.05$). Therefore, it can be concluded that service quality and business communication simultaneously have a significant effect on customer retention. Based on the calculated F value with the F table, the calculated F value was 37.561 and the F table value was 3.12 ($\alpha = 0.05$; $df_1 = 2$ and $df_2 = 74$). Because the calculated F value of $37.561 > F$ table 3.12, then as the basis for decision making in the F test, it can be concluded that service quality (X1) and business communication (X2) simultaneously have an effect on customer retention (Y).

Table 6. Results of Multiple Linear Regression Data Processing

Coefficients ^a					
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	8.088	3.922		.043
	Kualitas Layanan	.137	.153	.111	.374
	Komunikasi Bisnis	.744	.149	.622	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Retensi Pelanggan

Source: SPSS data processing 2026

The Coefficients table provides information on the regression equation and whether or not the service quality and business communication variables have a partial (individual) influence on the customer retention variable. The formula for the multiple linear regression equation is as follows:

$$Y = b_0 + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + \varepsilon \quad \dots(1)$$

b_0 = a constant value of the unstandardized coefficients. In this study, the value is 8.088.

b_1, b_2 = regression coefficient numbers. The values are 0.137 for the Service Quality variable (X1) and 0.744 for the Business Communication variable (X2).

So the regression equation is as follows:

$$Y = 8,088 + 0,137X_1 + 0,744X_2 + \varepsilon \quad \dots(2)$$

The regression equation shows that if service quality (X1) increases by one unit, customer retention (Y) will increase by 0.137, assuming other variables are held constant. Furthermore, if business communication (X2) increases by one unit, customer retention (Y) will increase by 0.744. In

the Coefficients table, a t-test was conducted to determine whether service quality and business communication partially influence customer retention.

The first t-test was conducted to determine whether there was an influence of service quality (X1) on customer retention (Y).

The hypothesis for research on variable X1 is:

H0: Service Quality (X1) has no effect on Customer Retention (Y)

H1: Service Quality (X1) has an effect on Customer Retention (Y)

In the Coefficients table it can be seen that:

- a. Based on the significance value (Sig.), the significance value of the service quality variable (X1) is 0.374. Since the sig. value of $0.374 > 0.05$, it can be concluded that H0 is accepted. This means that service quality does not have a significant effect on customer retention.
- b. Based on the calculated t and t table values, it is known that the calculated t value of the service quality variable (X1) is 0.895, while the t table value is 1.993 ($\alpha = 0.05$; $df = 74$). Because the calculated t is $0.895 < t$ table 1.993, it can be concluded that H0 is accepted, which means there is no influence of service quality on customer retention.

The second t-test was conducted to determine whether there was an influence of business communication (X2) on customer retention (Y).

The hypothesis for the research on variable X2 is:

H0: Business Communication (X2) has no effect on Customer Retention (Y)

H1: Business Communication (X2) has an effect on Customer Retention (Y)

In the Coefficients table it can be seen that:

- a. Based on the significance value (Sig.), it is known that the significance value of the business communication variable (X2) is 0.000. Because the sig. value of $0.000 < 0.05$, it can be concluded that H0 is rejected. This means that business communication has a significant effect on customer retention.
- b. Based on the calculated t value and t table, it is known that the calculated t value of the business communication variable (X2) is 5.013, while the t table value is 1.993. Because the calculated t value is $5.013 > t$ table value is 1.993, it can be concluded that H0 is rejected, which means that business communication has a significant effect on customer retention.

CONCLUSION

The analysis results show that partially, service quality does not significantly influence customer retention at Hayujalan Tour & Event. This study concludes that service quality and business communication significantly influence customer retention in the tourism service sector. Both variables play an important role in encouraging customers to continue using the company's services. In the context of the travel industry, service quality is often perceived as a basic standard that must be met by service providers, so it is not always a differentiating factor in influencing customers' decisions to use the same service again. Previous research has shown that service quality does have a relationship with customer satisfaction and loyalty, but the effect can be indirect through other variables such as customer satisfaction or experience (Rosário & Casaca, 2023)

Furthermore, the analysis of business communication variables showed a partial positive and significant effect on customer retention. This indicates that effective communication between

companies and customers plays a crucial role in building long-term relationships. This concept aligns with the Relationship Marketing theory proposed by Leonard L. Berry in (Isikwei & Amadi, 2024), which states that consistent and ongoing communication is a key element in building trust and maintaining long-term relationships with customers. Relationship marketing strategies have been proven to increase customer satisfaction, trust, and commitment, ultimately resulting in increased customer retention.

From an academic perspective, this study contributes to the development of customer retention theory by providing empirical evidence on the combined effect of service quality and business communication in the context of tour and event services. This finding extends previous studies by highlighting the importance of integrating multiple variables in understanding customer retention behavior.

Furthermore, simultaneous test results indicate that service quality and business communication significantly influence customer retention. This suggests that a company's success in retaining customers is not influenced by a single factor alone, but rather by a combination of complementary factors. In the travel industry, customer experience is shaped by the interaction between service quality and company communication throughout the service process. When these two factors function optimally, the customer experience will be more positive and potentially increase customer loyalty and retention (Hapsari et al., 2024).

From a managerial perspective, the findings suggest that tourism service providers should prioritize improving service quality and strengthening business communication strategies. Companies are encouraged to enhance responsiveness, maintain service consistency, and build long-term relationships with customers to improve retention rates.

Thus, the results of this study confirm that although service quality does not show a significant partial effect, its presence still contributes to the research model when combined with effective business communication. Therefore, companies like Hayujalan Tour & Event need to optimize their communication strategies with customers while maintaining service quality standards to create a better customer experience and increase long-term customer retention.

Future research is recommended to include additional variables such as customer satisfaction, trust, and brand image, as well as to expand the research scope to different tourism sectors for broader generalization.

1. Suggestion

Future research is recommended to adopt more advanced analytical approaches by incorporating mediation or moderation models to better understand the underlying mechanisms between service quality, business communication, and customer retention. For instance, variables such as customer satisfaction, trust, or brand image may act as mediating or moderating factors that influence the strength and direction of these relationships. Additionally, future studies are encouraged to employ longitudinal research designs to capture changes in customer retention behavior over time, providing deeper insights into causal relationships. Comparative studies across different tourism sectors, such as hospitality, travel agencies, and event services, are also suggested to examine whether the findings of this study are consistent across various contexts. These approaches will enhance the robustness and generalizability of future research in the field of tourism services.

2. Research Limitations

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the use of a cross-sectional research design limits the ability to capture changes in customer retention behavior over time, as the data were collected at a single point in time. Consequently, the study cannot

fully explain causal relationships or long-term effects between service quality, business communication, and customer retention.

Second, the relatively small sample size of 77 respondents may limit the generalizability of the findings. Although the sample is considered adequate for the statistical analysis conducted, it may not fully represent the broader population of tourism service customers. Therefore, the results of this study should be interpreted with caution when applied to different contexts or larger populations.

In addition, this study focuses on a single tourism service provider, which may restrict the applicability of the findings across other sectors within the tourism industry. Future research is encouraged to address these limitations by employing larger sample sizes, longitudinal research designs, and broader research settings.

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